

Role of Resilience in Enhancing Wellness Among College Students



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Abstract

The present study was carried out to explore the role of resilience on enhancing psychological wellbeing among college students. Resilience is the ability to bounce back in adversity and positive adaptation in context of adversity or risk. This may lead to enhancing the wellness and remove psychological distress in a person life. In the present scenario of high level of stress among college students, it is indeed an important area to explore. Data was collected from a sample of two hundred and fifty students pursuing graduation from various colleges in Guwahati city Assam. Resilience was measured by a scale developed by Gail M. Wagnild and Heather M. Young in 1987. Psychological well-being was measured by an scale developed by Carol Ryff in 1989. The correlational analysis showed that resilience and psychological well-being positively significantly correlated. Further regression analysis showed that resilience was a significant predictor of well-being among college students.

Keywords: Resilience, wellness, psychological wellbeing, distress

Introduction

Life is full of ups and downs. It is a journey of a person through various stages. Each of us has difficulties, challenges in life and we have the capabilities to get back and move on in life. This is called as resilience. Masten and Reed defined resilience as a class of phenomena characterized by patterns of positive adaptation in the context of significant adversity or risk (Masten and Reed, 2002). Avolio and Luthans defined as is the ability to bounce back from adversity and also very positive , challenging events and the will to go beyond the normal , to go beyond the equilibrium point. (Avolio & Luthans 2006).

Several factors have been identified as contributing to the development of resilience in a person. These factors can be grouped as assets, risk factors and values. In earlier work done on resilience particularly in the area of child psychology, researchers emphasize that building resilience should necessitate the development of adaptive system in a person (Masten , 2001). Resilience can have a clear impact on performance. Work in positive psychology suggest that highly resilient individuals tend to be effective in a variety of life experiences such as happiness, well-being , mental health and also adjustment and development under a variety of life course threatening conditions.(Block & Kremen, 1996; Coutu , 2002, Masten , 2001). Highly resilient people tend to be creative, adaptive , persistent in dealing with adversity which lead to better performance and well-being in the person. Therefore it can be an important factor among college students. There is lots of pressure on college students. They have pressure from families, friend for performing well, get a good job, have high position in society and also to maintain a balanced social life. There can be sudden ups and downs in college life. Resilience can play important role in promoting wellness in them.

Empirical studies have shown that positive emotions enhance resilience in the face of negative events which means that it is a state like quality (Tegude & Fredrickson , 2004). Resilience can increase and grow when an individual returns to normal after adversity (Richardson, 2002). Individuals become more resilient every time they return from adverse situation. Research on resilience earlier focused on 'who' was resilient to 'what' characteristics a resilient person can have. Positive psychologists explain that resilience involve everyday skills and psychological strengths which can be identified, measured , nurtured in individuals of all ages and psychological conditions (Masten & Reed , 2002). Masten specially noted that resilience comes from everyday magic of ordinary normative human resources and demand deep knowledge in part of the individual's for promoting competence and human capital in

individuals and society. It was found that cognitive abilities, positive self-perceptions, positive outlook on life, emotional stability, self-regulation, sense of humor etc. are important assets which can lead to high self-resilience (Masten, 2001). These abilities should be strengthened among college students. In a society to develop self-resilience among its members, there should be more emphasis on effective parenting, pro-social and rule-abiding peers and collective efficacy. Gorman (2005) emphasizes upon important role of personal factor and relationship factors as assets of resilience. Therefore family life especially parents play important role in self-efficacy.

Secondly, researchers also mentioned some factors as risk factors for resilience because these can cause increased probability of an undesirable outcome. These factors can lead individuals exposing to undesirable events and if individuals fail to manage and use the assets as resource to overcome the risks, then there will be decrease in the level of resilience. The risk factors can be exemplified as destructive life experiences, drug and alcohol abuse, trauma and violence, stress, poor health, unemployment etc. A person can avoid these risks totally but presence of these risks becomes something necessary for growth of resilience. By facing the risks, individuals can exercise their strengths and resources which help the person to bounce back and develop resilience. It is like immunization a process that exposes the person to a small dose of a disease in order to build long-term strength, endurance. In a college students' life all these risk factors can be presented and therefore it is important to assess and find its impact on well-being of a student.

Thirdly, an important factor related to resilience is the value of an individual. These values in individuals shape and guide them for better life.

Values and beliefs help individuals to overcome not only present difficulties but also future.

Till the college level a student learns most of the values and beliefs in particular society and own family. These values and beliefs help in maintaining resilience through various psychological and physical challenges (Wong and Mason, 2001, Holaday and McDherson, 1997). It was found that those people who follow moral values in their actions constantly experience increased freedom, energy and resilience (Richardson, 2002). These values contributed to the process of developing resilience by providing stability in taking judgments, carrying out principles and services to others in society (Coutu, 2002 & Kobsa, 1982). Because of these values, person sticks to some actions and mission as having deep beliefs in it. This strong belief seems to enhance resilience level and factors that help in developing resilience. Therefore all these three factors play important role in sustaining resilience. In simple way we can express that either positively or negatively if we are pushed beyond our threshold capacity level, we are at the front of using resilience. It helps the college students as a person to find out his/her own capacity.

Psychological well-being can be defined as a person's evaluative reaction to his or her life either in terms of life satisfaction or effective balance or to extent to which the psychological well-being resides

within the experience of the individual (Campbell, Converse and Rodgers, 1976). Psychological well-being means having a good emotional and mental health as the pillar of quality of life in a particular individual in diverse contents. Therefore psychological well-being is a dynamic result which is in constant change established in the evaluation of functional or contingent relation among individual, their condition of life and environment (Ballesteros & Cayeedo, 2002).

Well-being is a complex construct that concerns optimal psychological functioning and experience. Well-being has been studied extensively by social psychologists (Campbell, 1981; Ryan & Deci, 2001). General quality of well-being refers to optimal psychological functioning and experience. This reflects the increasing awareness that just as positive effect is not the opposite of negative effect (Cacioppo and Bernston, 1999). Two broad psychological traditions have historically been employed to explore well-being. The hedonic view equates well-being with happiness and often is marked as the balance between positive and negative effect (Ryan and Deci, 2001). The eudemonic perspective assesses how well people are living in relation to their true selves (Waterman, 1993). For more than twenty years, the study of psychological well-being has been guided by two primary conceptions of positive functioning. One concept is traceable to Bradburn's (1969) seminal work which differentiated between positive and negative effect and define happiness as the balance between these two. The second conception includes life satisfaction as the key indicator of well-being.

For a college student wellness resilience seems to be an important factor. Previous researches mostly were conducted in the field of clinical and work setting. This can play important role in successful adjustment, achievement by enhancing well-being of the students at college level. Therefore following objectives are formulated.

Aim of the Study

1. To study the level of resilience and well-being among the college students.
2. To study the relationship between resilience and well-being among college students.

Hypothesis

H1

There will be significant positive correlation between resilience and psychological well-being among college students.

H2

There will be significant influence of resilience on psychological well-being among college students.

Method

Sample

For the present investigation a sample of 250 students were taken from various colleges located in Guwahati city area. The average age of the sample was 22 years. The total participants included male and female students from various departments of different colleges. The selection criteria included that student should be from regular class and non-technical course from graduation level.

Materials

The Resiliency scale

This scale was developed by Gail M. Wagnild and Heather M. Young in 1987. This scale has 14 items. The purpose of the scale is to identify the degree of individual resilience (personal competence and acceptance of self and life); a positive personality characteristic that enhances individual adaptation. The Resilience Scale is a tool with excellent content and face validity. Its reliability is strong, and likewise construct validity has been consistently supported. It is a self administered scale. Scoring has been done on seven point scale 1-7. The total score will be sum of all the items scores.

Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from .72 to .94 supporting the internal consistency reliability of the Resilience Scale.

Psychological Well-being Questionnaire

This test is developed by Carol Ryff in 1989. This questionnaire measures psychological well-being in six dimensions which indicated that six construct in combination constitute the concept of psychological well-being. It is a self administered questionnaire. Participants respond using a six-point format: strongly disagree-strongly agree. The multidimensional structure of psychological well-being, as measured by the Ryff inventory, has been tested and validated on a nationally representative sample of English-speaking adults age 25 and older.

For each dimension internal consistency was measured and it was found to be (coefficient alpha) = .83 for autonomy, .86 for environmental mastery, .85 for personal growth, .88 for positive relations with others, .88 for purpose in life, and .91 for self-acceptance. For validity, the present 84 items test was correlated with the 20 –item parent test. The correlation coefficient values are ranging from 0.97 to 0.99 for all the six dimensions.

Procedure

The study was conducted on college students pursuing graduation. The consent was taken from the students and authority for the data collection.

The questionnaires were distributed in classroom in a group of 8-10 students at a time. At first basic instructions were given about the data collection. The psychological tests were administered to the students. All the tests are self reported so students filled these by themselves. Lastly they were thanked for their participation in the research. Each set of tests require almost one hour to complete. Data were collected by the investigator herself from the field.

Result and Discussion

The present investigation was carried out to assess the level of resilience and psychological well-being among the college and the relationship between resilience and psychological well-being among college students. After the data were examined, at first mean and standard deviation values were calculated. It could be found out from table 1 that there was a good level of resilience and psychological well-being among the college students. The psychological well-being was measured in six sub dimensions also.

Table 1
Showing Mean and Standard Deviation Values of the Both Variables.

Variables	Mean	SD
Resilience		
Psychological Well-Being	348.18	44.495
a. Personal Relation	59.24	9.607
b. Autonomy	52.41	8.314
c. Environmental Mastery	57.01	8.268
d. Personal Growth	62.31	8.924
e. Purpose In Life	60.18	9.197
f. Self Acceptance	57.02	19.924

Table 2
Showing Coefficient of Correlation Between Resilience and Psychological Well-Being Among College Students.

	Psychological Well-Being	Personal Relation	Autonomy	Environmental Mastery	Personal Growth	Purpose in Life	Self-Acceptance
Resilience	0.335**	.275**	.255**	.279**	.285**	.291**	.132*

The results in Table 2 showed the correlation coefficient values between psychological well-being and its dimensions and positive psychological capital. The results showed that resilience has positive significant correlation with Psychological well-being and dimensions of it among undergraduate students. It meant that if there were increase in resilience then there would be increase in psychological well-being and dimensions of it such as personal relation, autonomy of a person, his/her environmental mastery, growth at personal level, have better purpose in life and more self acceptance in life. Resilience was having positive significant correlation with psychological wellbeing and all the dimensions of it.

The first hypothesis stated that there will be significant positive correlation between resilience and psychological well-being among undergraduate students. The results showed that resilience was having positive significant correlation with psychological well-being and its dimensions individually also show. Therefore the first hypothesis was accepted. This result shows that if a student would have higher level of resilience then he is likely to develop better psychological well-being which included better personal relation, greater autonomy, more control over environment, more personal growth, better purpose in life more self acceptance.

Table 3
Showing Regression Analysis Between Positive Psychological Capital and four
Dimensions of it and Psychological Well-Being Among UG Students.

Predictor Variable	Criterion Variable: Psychological Well-Being			
	R Square	St. Error Of Estimate	F Values	Significance
Resilience	.112	42.004	31.408	.01

The results in Table 3 showed that resilience was significant predictor of psychological well-being variable among undergraduate students. The predictor variable resilience was found to predict 11.2% of total psychological well-being variable. The second hypothesis stated that there will be significant influence of resilience on well-being among undergraduate students. The present result showed that resilience was significant predictor of psychological well-being of the students. Therefore the second hypothesis was found to be accepted. So it showed that if there is high level of resilience among the students then these could lead to better psychological health. It means if a person has the ability to bounce back from adversity, then he or she can attain more well-being in life. Because of the strengths of a person to fight and win over difficulties makes him less susceptible to distress. Through increasing the resilience ability a person can attain more positive life outcomes.

Conclusion

The present study revealed very significant result about resilience which is a positive resource within the person. The results showed that resilience significantly influence well-being of college students.

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