



शोध भूमि

शिक्षा एवं शिक्षण शास्त्र विषय की पूर्व-समीक्षित शोध पत्रिका

Assessing Resilience In Adolescents From Single And Dual-parent Families

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Abstract

Resilience is a psychological construct that is characterized by an individual's ability to adapt and successful cope after difficult life periods. Parenthood plays a major part in the development of personality of individual. A supportive relationship from parents is one of the primary drivers in the fostering resilience in adolescent. In dual parent family structure, both parents are responsible for this completing this job. Both of the parents together may provide good models and coping strategies among adolescents. However, in a Single-parent family structure either the single mother or the single father takes up the responsible for upbringing the child and their welfare. The aim of the present study is to assess and compare the level of resilience among adolescents from single parent and dual parent families. A quantitative research method was employed in the present study; the data was collected using Brief resilience scale. The sample consisted of adolescents from single parent families residing in Kannauj district since the early years of their lives, as well as adolescents from dual parent families.

The result showed statistically significant difference in the level of resilience in the adolescents of single parent and dual parent families. Adolescents raised by single mother shows a slightly higher level of resilience as compared to adolescents living with single father but this difference was not statistically significant.

Keywords - Single parent child, resilience, resilience in adolescent

Introduction

Where there is life, there is adversity. It is evident that no life is completely free from sufferings. 'Man is sometimes extraordinarily, passionately, in love with suffering, and that is a fact' as quoted by Russian philosopher Fyodor Dostoevsky. No matter how much an individual tries to prevent himself from harshness of life, it eventually finds him and afflicts him with troubles. For some people, there are much troubles while for some others there are few. Many times, a person experiences stress throughout challenging life transitions, such as social and developmental changes. At some times, terrible life situations, such as loss and grief, poverty, community violence, etc. affect the individual badly. Germain and Gitterman (1996).

Since there is no escape from difficulties and adversities, it is important to understand what human beings can do to deal with such difficult situations. In the effort of understanding what gives power to human beings to fight difficult life situations, psychologists came up with a psychological construct which they called 'Resilience'.

In psychology, resilience refers to the ability to adapt and recover from difficult or stressful life experiences, such as trauma, adversity, or loss. Resilience is not about avoiding or denying problems, but rather about facing them with a positive attitude and a belief in one's ability to cope. Resilience is the process and result of effectively adjusting to tough or challenging life circumstances, particularly through behavioral, emotional, and mental flexibility and adaptability to pressures from both the inside and the outside. (APA). Resilience exists when the person uses "mental processes and behaviors in promoting personal assets and protecting self from the potential negative effects of stressors". Robertson, I. T. et. al., (2015)

According to Richardson and Glenn (2002), resilience is the ability to adjust one's physical, mental, and spiritual characteristics to a variety of "good or bad" situations. It is a cohesive sense of self that can sustain normal developmental tasks that take place at different phases of life. It's crucial to keep in mind that resilience refers to the ability to "competently function" after enduring a very stressful experience. A person who is resilient can overcome hardships and emerge stronger and more resourceful.

Resilient individuals are able to maintain a sense of control, purpose, and hope in the face of adversity, and they are able to bounce back from setbacks and challenges. They are also able to learn from their experiences and use them as opportunities for personal growth and development.

According to Masten (1994), Psychological resilience is most commonly understood as a process. It is a skill that one can utilise and something that one learns over time. Others believe it to be a personal attribute, which is more commonly referred to as "resiliency".

According to Rutter (1999), Resilience is a protective factor that expedites positive outcomes for adolescent who are confronted with adverse life events. Genetic, individual, and environmental variables frequently interact to create these risk and protective factors.

Resilience is not an innate quality that some people possess and others do not. Rather, it is a set of skills and traits that can be developed and strengthened over time through various strategies, such as social support, cognitive reframing, problem-solving, and self-care. Research has shown that resilience can have numerous benefits for mental and physical health, such as reduced stress, improved coping skills, and better overall well-being.

The majority of studies now demonstrates that individuals' capacity to connect with their settings and take part in activities that either foster wellbeing or shield them from the overwhelming influence of risk factors is what leads to resilience. Zautra, A.J., et. al., (2010).

A large number of studies assert that the major factor for the building of resilience is social support. Gagnon, A. J., Stewart, D. E. (2013) Social support and connections with others are necessary for social support, but these connections also need to be characterised by mutual duty, intimacy, and the presence of trust and solidarity (Perlin, L. 1981) both within and outside the family. Abraham, R., et. al., (2018)

In the society, single parenthood is becoming more prevalent. As a result of divorce, death, violence, or unmarried pregnancies, families dissolved or run by single parents, and these families occasionally have to adjust to fundamental alteration in the structure and conditions of the family. The challenges encountered by single parents rearing children in rural or underdeveloped areas are unique.

Being a single parent is not always the result of a family dissolution; in light of a growing cultural shift in society, it may also be a choice. The subject of research in India in recent years has shifted to children of single-parent families. In studies it is found that children in single parent families are likely to report feelings of loneliness, withdrawal, fear and anger. They are likely to experience social and emotional issues, intense conflict, and reduced family cohesion.

A couple of studies have previously involved in identifying the positive aspects of single-parent families rather than only the drawbacks. Atlas S. (1981) According to these researches, 75% of adolescent in single-parent families were determined to be emotionally stable as individuals. The study's findings include the following: adolescent may adjust to a variety of custody arrangements, single-parent households typically need a time of 1-2 years to adjust. Barry A. (1979)

Significance of the study

There could be various factors that lead to adverse and stressful life situations in one's life. However, loss of one's father/mother due to death or divorce/separation is one of the most painful feeling few people have to bear. Separation or death of parents can be a traumatic experience for children. It causes abrupt changes in family dynamics, as well as in socioemotional and financial conditions. In adolescent of single parents, unaddressed traumatic experiences may lead to psychological and physical issues.

According to the US census bureau “Almost a quarter of U.S. individuals under the age of 18 live with one parent and no other adults (23%). In comparison, 3% of adolescent in China, 4% of adolescent in Nigeria and 5% of adolescent in India live in single-parent households.” (US Census) In the United States, 80% of single parents are mothers. (Dawn, 2021)

Approximately 4.5% of all Indian families are taken care by single mothers alone, as per a UN report which attracts attention towards the increasing number of single parent families in the country. The UN Women report states the number of single mother families in India is nearly 13 million. Which means in India, almost 90% of single parent are mothers. (Times of India)

Psychologists and mental health workers can work together to better treat the challenges that the adolescent of single families confront as a result of enduring trauma. In order to better

comprehend the experiences of such adolescents today, as well as any strengths that these kids may eventually develop, it is necessary to explore the resilience in children which is a protective factor to safeguard them from negative impacts of stressful situations.

While there are many factors influencing one's level of resilience. One of the most important factors which helps to build resilience is 'supportive relationship from parents.' In dual parent family structure, a child may get enough support from the parents. But in single parent child relationship, the only father/mother has to serve the role of both parents. Therefore, the present research explores the level of resilience in single-parent families' adolescents in comparison to the dual-parent families' adolescents.

Hypotheses –

H01: There is no significant difference between the level of resilience of adolescents of single-parent family and adolescents of dual-parent family.

H02: There is no significant difference between the level of resilience of adolescents living with single-mother and adolescents living with single-father.

Method – This is a descriptive quantitative study

Sample – The sample was selected through purposive sampling method. 110 adolescents of age 12-17 were selected to conduct this study. 46 adolescents from single parent and 64 from dual parent from Kannauj District U.P. were taken as sample.

Tool- Brief Resilience Scale BRS - The Brief Resilience Scale was used to assess the resilience among adolescents. The scale was developed to assess resilience, consisting of both positively and negatively worded items. The possible score range on the BRS is from 1 (low resilience) to 5 (high resilience). Odd items i.e. 1, 3 and 5 are positive and even items i.e. 2, 4 and 6 are negative. The BRS is scored by adding the sum of all each item score and then averaging it. Smith, B.W. et. al., (2013)

BRS has good criterion validity, with other measures of well-being, optimism, self-esteem, self-efficacy and mental health, as suggested in the resilience literature. The BRS with ($\alpha= 0.71$) showed good internal consistency. The CFA results for the BRS suggest it to be a good model fit. Fung S. F. (2020).

Statistical technique- In the study, data analysis was done by using MS-Excel. Inferential and descriptive statistics was used. Mean, mode, media were calculated. T test was used to analyze the data.

Result -

Demographic Data

Parents type	Single Mother	Single Father	Both Parents
No of Participants	32	14	64

Table 1.1 No. of participants according to being with single/dual parents

Male	Female
48	62

Table 1.2 No. of participants according to gender

Inferential Stats

	N	Mean	S.D.	Significance
Single Parent	N= 46	3.08	0.45	(p-value=0.045<0.05)
Dual Parent	N= 64	3.31	0.72	H01 - rejected
Single Mother	N= 32	3.15	0.40	(p-value=0.20>0.05)
Single Father	N = 14	2.94	0.55	H02 - retained

Table 1.3 Mean and S.D. of Single and Dual parents

Discussion

Resilience is a protective factor which encourages the growth of individual even after the adversity. This is considered both as a personality trait and a skill.

In this study the null hypothesis H01 is rejected which implies that there is significant difference in the resilience level of adolescents from single parent (M=3.08) and adolescents from dual parent families (M=3.31). However, this difference in the means scores appear numerically small, its statistical significance underscores the potential role family structure plays in shaping resilience among adolescents. This finding is consistent with existing research, which suggests that the presence of both parents in a child's life contributes to emotional security, social learning, and access to multiple forms of support (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998; Werner, 2000).

Recent Indian studies support this view. Choudhary and Kumar (2021) found that adolescents from dual-parent families scored significantly higher in resilience and psychological well-being than their counterparts from single-parent households, highlighting the buffering role of family stability and social support within the Indian socio-cultural context. Similarly, Sharma and Vaid (2020) emphasized the crucial role of parental involvement in fostering resilience, noting that consistent emotional availability from both parents helps adolescents navigate stress more effectively. Dual-parent families are usually able to provide complementary parenting styles which is clearly lacked in single-parent families. A complementary parenting style ensures a broader support system, and balanced emotional scaffolding, which may foster greater resilience in children dealing with developmental challenges.

Conversely the second null hypothesis H02 which assumed no difference in the resilience level of adolescents raised by single mother and those raised by single father, was retained. Though mean difference between the two groups is found as shown in the table 1.3, but the result was not statistically significant at 0.05.

This suggests that within single-parent households, the gender of the parent may not substantially influence the adolescent's resilience. Resilience, being a multi-determined construct, likely depends more on the quality of parenting, emotional warmth, and coping resources provided by the caregiver rather than merely on whether the parent is a mother or a father. This finding supports studies by Luthar (2006) and others, who emphasize the importance of parental involvement, emotional support, and consistent discipline practices,

irrespective of parental gender.

The notable difference in the resilience levels of adolescents from dual-parent families and those from single-parent families indicates towards the larger psychosocial contribution that both parents can provide to a child's upbringing. In addition to care and stabilizing socio-economic conditions, both parents can model a variety of ways of coping, regulating emotions, and provide a broader emotional support network, all of which are essential parts of the resilience equation. The absence of one parent may inadvertently reduce the availability of coping models, leading to comparatively lower resilience among adolescents in single-parent households.

It is also to consider that while this study found a significant difference, the effect size is very small. This suggests that family structure is not the sole determinant of resilience. Factors such as peer support, socio-economic status, personality traits, community resources, and individual coping strategies also contribute significantly to an adolescent's resilience (Garmezy, 1991; Rutter, 1987). In fact, Singh and Misra (2015) noted the role of broader social networks and emotional connectedness in promoting psychological well-being, which indirectly contributes to resilience across age groups, including adolescents.

Moreover, cultural factors might moderate these findings. In collectivist societies like India, where extended family networks often compensate for the absence of a parent, the impact of single parenting on resilience may be buffered compared to individualistic societies. This contextual aspect warrants further investigation.

Limitations and Implications

One major limitation of the present study is its reliance on quantitative tools alone, which may not capture the subtle, complex experiences of adolescents navigating single-parent family dynamics. Qualitative interviews or narrative analysis may help explore how adolescents perceive resilience in the context of their family atmosphere. The sample size and demographic diversity (urban/rural, socio-economic status) could influence generalizability. Future studies could examine larger, more diverse samples and explore other mediating variables such as parental involvement quality, attachment styles, or adolescent temperament.

The findings have important implications for the social workers, psychologists, counsellors working with adolescents.

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