



Resilience, Psychological Distress, and Self-Esteem among Undergraduate Students in Kollam District, Kerala

Harikrishnan U.¹ Arif Ali²



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ABSTRACT: Resilience decrease the risk of psychological distress enhances self-esteem, it also helps in developing effective coping mechanisms when faced with stress and trauma. The study aimed to assess resilience, psychological distress, and self-esteem among the undergraduate students in Kollam district, Kerala. A cross-sectional study among undergraduate students from arts and commerce background was selected through a purposive sampling method. Total enumeration method was used for the selection of college students. A total of 411 students participated in the study, only 294 students were included in the analysis due in-complete perform. Regression model, self-esteem variables contributed significantly to the prediction of overall resilience of undergraduate students ($F(4,289) = 6.942, p < .05$ accounting for 8.8 percent variance. Self-esteem strongly contributed to the difference in the overall resilience score (Beta = -.269, $t = 4.629, p = .000$). Psychological distress and self-esteem among university students is associated with resilience; it is essential to promote resilience among university students. The ability of the students to adapt skillfully and cope with stressors in college and university depends upon the level of resilience. Findings of the study show that there is a need to develop resilience-based interventions among university students to prevent psychological distress.

Keywords: Psychological distress, self-esteem, resilience, students.

INTRODUCTION

During the stressful life situations, healthy adaptations results in resilience (Rutter et al., 1990). It is often considered in the psychological context in so much as it refers to the cognitive capacity to avoid psychopathology despite difficulties (Tugade et al., 2004). Resilience is a perception of inner strength which thereby manifests that strength and that is why resilience is a psychological phenomenon (Carver, 1998; Stenhardt & Dolbier, 2008). According to WHO, an estimate of 5.8% of men and 9.5% of women experience a depressive episode annually (WHO, 2001). Making a transition from school to a college environment can be stressful for many students (Wolf, 1994). Psychological distress is shown to negatively impact students' physical, mental and academic well-being (Foster et al., 2014; Ali et al., 2013). University students can experience increased levels of academic stress and psychological distress, resulting in many students leaving university without completing studies. Studies have shown that higher levels of resilience have been linked to lower levels of psychological distress among university students (Hjemdal et al., 2006; Stallman, 2010). Resilience helps to reduce the psychological distress of students developing mental health problems, thus enabling students to thrive under academic pressures. In enhancing social and personal well-being, adjustment and reducing stress in

¹ Fellowship in psychosocial Support Disaster Management, Department of Psychiatric Social Work, National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences, Bengaluru, India

² Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatric Social Work, LGBRIMH, Tezpur, India

university students, resilience act as a protective factor and reduce the likelihood of adverse outcomes. The present study was conducted with the aim to assess resilience, psychological distress, and self-esteem among college students.

Objectives

- To understand the level of Resilience among undergraduate students
- To examine the level of with psychological distress among undergraduate students.
- To measure the self-esteem among undergraduate students.
- To know the association of psychological distress, self-esteem, resilience and among undergraduate students.

Methodology

The present study followed the cross-sectional descriptive study design. The participants were the students of Bachelor of Arts with streams and Bachelor of Commerce in Anchal, Kollam district, Kerala. There were 411 undergraduate students in the college. Total enumeration method was used for the selection of the college students. A total of 294 students filled the complete questionnaire and thus 117 respondents were rejected. The permission was taken from the collage principle to conduct a research study.

Tools of data collection

Four tools were used to collect data, and Sociodemographic Performa was constructed to collect data regarding the domains like age, sex, class, family details, academic performance, and other details. Then a self-administered Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale -DASS questionnaire was used along with a socio-demographic questionnaire to collect data (Henry & Crawford, 2005). The Respondents' level of self-esteem was assessed by using the Rosenberg self-esteem scale (1965). In addition to that English version of Resilience Scale - RS-14 was also used in this study (Wagnild, 2010).

Results

Table 1 – Socio-demographic details (N=294)

Variables		N	%	
Sex	Male	59	20.1	
	Female	235	79.9	
Religion	Hindu	194	66	
	Christian	33	11.2	
	Muslim	67	22.8	
Education	Bachelor of Arts	Sociology	58	19.7
		History	39	13.3
		English	43	14.6
		Malayalam	22	7.5

	Bachelor of Commerce	132	44.9
<i>Marital Status</i>	Married	16	5.4
	Un married	278	94.6
<i>Family type</i>	Nuclear	248	84.4
	Joint	46	15.6
<i>Socio demographic details</i>	Lower middle	88	29.9
	Upper middle	134	45.5
	Upper	72	24.6

Table 1 indicates the socio-demographic details of the undergraduate students. In the study majority of the participants were female(79.9%), belong to Hindu religion (66.0%), most of the participants are from Bachelor of Arts (55.1%), unmarried (94.6%), hailing from nuclear family (84.4%) and majority of them are from the upper middle socioeconomic background (45.5%).

Table 2 – Distribution of Psychological distress, self-esteem and Resilience N= 294 (%)

	<i>Normal</i>	<i>Mild</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Severe</i>	<i>Extremely Severe</i>
<i>Depression</i>	133 (45.2)	84 (28.6)	49 (16.7)	28 (9.5)	0
<i>Anxiety</i>	85 (28.9)	83 (28.2)	90 (30.6)	21 (7.1)	15 (5.1)
<i>Stress</i>	209 (71.1)	44 (15.0)	32 (10.9)	7 (2.4)	2 (0.7)

	<i>Very High</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Very Low</i>
<i>Resilience</i>	26 (8.8)	123 (41.8)	93 (31.6)	42 (14.3)	10 (3.4)

	<i>Low</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>High</i>
<i>Self Esteem</i>	129 (43.9)	150 (51.0)	15 (5.1)

In the psychological distress, 28.6% had mild depression, 16.7% had moderate depression, and 9.5 % had severe depression. In the anxiety the 28.2 were having mild anxiety, 30.6% were having moderate, 7.1%were having severe anxiety and 5.1% were having extremely severe anxiety. In stress, 15.0% had mild Stress, 10.9% had moderate Stress, 2.4% had severe Stress, and 0.7% had extreme Stress. (Table2). In resilience, 41.8% had high resilience, 31.6% had average resilience, 14.3% had low resilience, and 4% were having very low resilience (Table 2).In self-esteem, 43.9% of the respondents had low self-esteem, 51.0% had average self-esteem, 5.1 % were having high self-esteem (Table 2).

Table 3: Correlation between resilience, self-esteem, DASS score

□

	Resilience	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
Self esteem	.286**	-.186**	-.237**	-.199**
Resilience	-	-.124*	-.117*	-.102

* $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$

Correlation between resilience, self-esteem, DASS score (Table 3) showed there were a significant positive correlation between self-esteem and resilience ($r = .286$, $p = 0.01$). Self-esteem has a significant negative correlation with depression ($r = -.186$, $p = 0.01$), anxiety ($r = -.237$, $p = 0.01$), stress ($r = -.199$, $p = 0.01$). In the study it was found that resilience has a significant negative correlation with depression ($r = -.124$, $p = 0.05$), anxiety ($r = -.117$, $p = 0.05$).

Table 4 shows the Regression Analysis Summary of Depression, Anxiety, Stress, and Self-esteem on resilience (N=294)**Table 4: ANOVA Analysis**

	Df	SS	MS	F	Sig
Regression	4	6627.956	1656.989	6.942	.000
Residual	289	68981.826	238.691		

R	R ²	Adjusted	Standard
.296	.088	.075	15.450

Variables	B	Std error	Beta	t	Sig.
Depression	-.351	.384	-.062	-.913	.362
Anxiety	-.129	.431	-.021	-.299	.765
Stress	-.019	.394	-.004	-.049	.961
Self-esteem	1.004	.217	.269	4.629	.000
Constant	49.555	4.443		11.153	.000

As shown in the regression summary table (4) above, the regression model that included Depression, Anxiety, Stress, and Self-esteem. Self-esteem variables contributed significantly to the prediction of overall resilience of undergraduate students ($F(4, 289) = 6.942$, $pp < .05$ accounting for 8.8 percent variance. The remaining 91.2 percent was attributed to variables not

included in the study. Self-esteem strongly contributed to the variance on the overall resilience score (Beta=-.269, $t=4.629$ $p=.000$).

Discussion

In the present study revealed that the level of resilience was average (31.6%), similar findings were found in other studies (Rani, 2014; Masten et al., 1990; Garmezy, 1991; Mushtaq et al., 2016). In the study, it was found that in psychological distress, mild depression was found in 28.6% of the respondents, moderate depression in 16.7% and severe depression in 9.5 % of the respondents. There is a high prevalence rate of depression has been seen in Indian (Anshuman et al., 2015; Ajith et al., 2010; Basnet et al., 2012; Ganesh et al., 2012) and in western studies Ross et al., 2006; Ahmadi et al., 2004; Paul, 2012). In the present study 28.2% reported the mild level of anxiety, 30.6% reported the moderate level of anxiety, 7.1% reported the severe level of anxiety and 5.1% reported the extremely severe level of anxiety. In the current study, 15.0% reported the mild level of stress, 10.9% reported the moderate level of stress, 2.4% reported the severe level of stress and 0.7% reported extreme level of stress. Most of the studies reported that the stress and anxiety were high among the professional undergraduate students (Singh et al., 2010; Redhwan et al., 2009; Salam et al., 2013; Niemi & Vainiomaki, 1999). While in India, Saddichha and Christoday (2010) found that the prevalence of current depression, anxiety, and stress-related symptoms among young adults, ranging from mild to extremely severe, which was 18.5%, 24.4%, and 20% respectively. Beiter et al. (2015 March 1) reported that the prevalence of depression, anxiety, and stress in a sample of college students had been increased before the earlier studies. Depression, anxiety and stress levels in the youth are considered as important indicators for mental health.

The present study found that more than half of the participants 51.0% were having an average level of self-esteem. A study found that there was low self-esteem among the non-professional students, because of less attentive toward their goal, lack of involvement in career-oriented activities, lack of family support, are more pessimist and experience low level of self-esteem (Shaheen, 2015). In the current study, there was a significant positive correlation between self-esteem and resilience ($r=.286$, $p=0.01$). Self-esteem was found to have a significant negative correlation with depression ($r=-.186$, $p=0.01$), anxiety ($r=-.237$, $p=0.01$), stress ($r=-.199$, $p=0.01$). Resilience has a significant negative correlation with depression ($r=-.124$ $p=0.05$), anxiety ($r=-.117$, $p=0.05$) in the present study. Hjedmdal et al. (2006) stated that higher levels of resilience had been associated with lower levels of psychological distress among university students. Desrosiers et al. (2013) found that university students with higher levels of psychological distress have reported lower levels of resilience. Stallman (2010) reported that resilience in students help them to adapt and cope with stressors unique to university life and prevent psychological distress. The regression analysis summary found in the present study, a significant association between self-esteem and resilience score. Kapikiran & Acun-Kapikiran (2016) found that self-esteem is a full mediator between resilience and depressive symptoms. Depression, anxiety, and stress exist existing in high rate among undergraduate students that require early intervention. Pidgeon, Rowe, Stapleton, Magyar, & Lo (2014) reported that students undergoing might have deleterious effects on the mental health of students, resilience, can moderate the negative effects of stress and promotes adaptation, and can enhance psychological well-being.

There were some limitations of our study, we had chosen a cross-sectional study, and purposive sampling was used for the selection of the college which has the disadvantage of being unable to establish the incidence rate of the mental health status college students. The sample size was small in the present study. Since our research was done only among the undergraduate students in two streams (arts and commerce), science streams were not included in the study; science students are likely to have high levels of stress, then compare to arts and commerce students. Further, no gender comparison or streams comparisons was done. The study might not be representative of the general population because this study only focuses on undergraduate students.

Conclusion

There was a negative relationship between resilience, depression, anxiety, and stress; self-esteem found to be the strongest predictors of resilience in undergraduates student in the current study. The finding reveals a clear picture of the undergraduate students were having psychological distress. There is a need to provide psychosocial intervention and guidance, counseling for reducing the depression anxiety and stress level, enhancing self-esteem and promoting resilience.

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