



COMPARATIVE STUDY REGARDING THE RESILIENCE OF THE BACHELORS FIRST YEAR AND MASTERS STUDENTS FROM THE PSYCHOLOGY SPECIALIZATION

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Abstract

Concerns about the harmonious and complementary development of the human being have been major objectives of various domains and sciences. Well-being has been and is the indirect objective of developing the resilience of today's students and young people. Resilience is often understood more intuitively than procedural. In some cases, it is understood as a resistance to stressors, and in other cases it is described as a means of returning from certain shocks or the ability to overcome unpleasant events and adaptation to change. For a better assessment of multiple concepts, a resilience check-up questionnaire was applied to students of the bachelors first year and masters of psychology faculty. From the scientific point of view, we are interested in the level of resilience of the two groups and the way they are reorganized for optimal operation in the context of changes imposed from the outside or inside. The purpose of these comparisons and checks was realized for better understanding of the mechanism defined as resilience and its level in bachelor students and master students.

Keywords: *resilience, students, masters, psychology specialization.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In nowadays, resilience seems to be a common skill at all levels of existence regardless the environment where a particular person is operating. Moreover, resilience is an ability that can be learned and developed by almost anyone. Resilience should be considered a process rather than a specific feature possessed by a particular individual (Chesla & Leonard, 2017).

Many authors correlate the factor or family environment with the level of

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resilience. This aspect refers to the general atmosphere that develops within the family and can have repercussions on individual behaviour outside of the family (Hooper, 2009). In more studies, evidence of resilience has been usually based on proper functioning in a given field (such as good harmonious social relations, success in professional activity) after exposure to a significant risk such as the growth of a mentally ill parent or the disappearance of a husband or father. The risk was considered significant because most of the normally people exposed to it had symptomatic or dysfunctional behaviour and therefore was appear the possibility of comparisons (Patterson, 2002). Family life includes background understandings of society taken by itself, the adversities of the everyday world that members share and which undoubtedly accept them as real. Thus, family resilience is defined as the family's ability to adapt to a challenge within and outside of the family. Family resilience implies the holistic acceptance of a challenge by modifying the set of family habits, practices and concerns (Chesla & Leonard, 2017).

Defining resilience

At the level of social systems, resilience is understood as the degree of elasticity as well as its ability to return or recover after suffering a certain stress or shock. It is indicated by the degree of flexibility and persistence of certain functions (Pelling, 2011). Walker has shown that resilience is not simply synonymous with adaptation and can undermine it when adaptation in one direction or sector undermines resilience in another sector (Walker apud Pelling, 2011).

In Pagett's opinion, building resilience is the key to resisting shocks that will push human society towards sustainable and meaningful development (Pagett, 2018). "Resilience is the capacity to maintain essential services during a range of circumstances from normal to extreme. It is achieved through the ability of assets, networks and systems management to anticipate, absorb and recover from disturbance. This has to be accomplished while ensuring that the environment and ecosystem support services are also able to recover to their original state" (Pagett, 2018).

Resilience is the power and speed of our response to adversity (buildable). It's not about having a backbone. It is about strengthening the muscles around the spine (Sandberg & Grant, 2017). Strengths and virtues work to protect against adversities and psychological disorders and can be the key to building resilience. The best therapists do not get involved in curing the effects, they help people identify and build their strengths and virtues (Seligman, 2004), (Rizeanu, 2013).

"Resilience is popularly understood as the degree of elasticity in a system, its ability to rebound or bounce back after experiencing some stress or shock. It is indicated by the degree of flexibility and persistence of particular functions." (Pelling, 2011). Another perspective, define the resilience as change "Resilience is the capacity of a system to absorb disturbances and reorganize while undergoing change. At the end of an event the system should more or less retain its original

structure and function, and therefore its identity” (Folke apud Yan & Galloway, 2017).

As personal methods to strengthen resilience, some authors recommend “Teaching meditation as a method for psychospiritual exploration into the deep structure of the psyche can facilitate important new capacities for resilience and secure existential attachment.” (Kass, 2017).

2. OBJECTIVE AND HYPOTHESES

2.1. OBJECTIVE

The research objectives are:

- Identifying the level of resilience at students of the bachelor first year and master students;
- Emphasize the possible differences between the two groups of students;
- Establishing possible correlations between the gender, the background, the age categories, and the resilience of the students.

2.2. HYPOTHESES

1. We estimate that there are no differences in resilience between student from bachelor first year and master students;

2. We admit that there are some correlations between the gender, the area of origin, the age categories and the resilience of the students

3. METHOD

3.1. Participants

112 students were involved in the research. 74 students were from the bachelor first year of study of which 16 (21.68%) male and 58 (78.38%) females. Of these, 64 (86.5%) are urban and 10 (13.5%) rural. 28 (37.8%) 18-24 year olds, 8 (10.8%) of the age group 25-30 years, 26 (35.1%) in the 31-40 age group, 9 (12.2%) in the 41-50 age group and 3 (4.1%) in the 51-60 age group.

38 Master students were involved, of which 5 (13.2%) male and 33 (86.8%) female. Of these, 35 (92.1%) are urban and 3 (7.9%) rural. In the age categories, 7 (18.4%) of 18-24 year old students, 6 (15.8%) of the age group 25-30 years, 11 (28.9%) of the 31-40 age group, 13 (34.2%) in the 41-50 age group and 1 (4.1%) in the 51-60 age group.

3.2. INSTRUMENT

The resilience questionnaire used was *Resilience - How Resilient Are You?* by Al Siebert (Siebert, 2005) with 20 questions and a final score varying between 20

and 100 points. The scores were divided into the following Likert scales: 81 or higher very resilient; 66-80 better than most; 51-65 slow, but adequate; 41-50 you're struggling; 40 or under seek / need help (Siebert, Interpretation - How Resilient Are You?).

With some question marks on the questionnaire, the consistency of the items was checked by the Cronbach's Alpha test. The internal consistency of the items was at 0.866 or 87%, which is a "Good" internal consistency.

3.3. EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

The questionnaire was introduced to Google Docs and then sent the link to the students. Collected data was processed in SPSS.

4. RESULTS

In both groups, normality tests did not reveal anything significant. The Shapiro-Wilk test for year I was close to statistically significant results ($p = .061$) with a strong negative asymmetry (Skewness = -0.586 , where we infer that the subjects achieved higher scores, so they are more resilient) compared to the subjects of the master who at the same point had an asymmetry of -0.073 . However, the averages obtained by the two groups (year 1 = 79.65 , master students = 82.34) place the subjects from the master with a little over those of year 1, also confirmed by the Mann-Whitney test, where the average ranks were 61.50 masters and at those in the bachelor first year of 53.93 . From the prospecting of the same normality analysis, it could be observed that in the subjects of the master the dispersion of the scores was higher (Kurtosis = -1.034) compared to the year 1 (Kurtosis = $.597$).

In the t test for independent samples no statistical significance was obtained between the averages of the two groups.

For several reasons, non-parametric tests were used for intra-group comparisons. Thus at year 1 from the gender perspective, the Mann-Whitney test revealed differences in the mean scores of the two groups: male = 27.47 , females = 40.27 and $p = 0.035$. This is the fact that the female part is more resilient than the male part. No other types of statistical differences have been recorded (from the perspective of age groups or backgrounds).

The master students did not notice any notable difference between genres, the background or the age groups.

At Pearson correlations, only two low-intensity positive correlations between level of resilience and gender ($r = 0.272$, $p = 0.019$) and between resilience and age ($r = 0.262$, $p = 0.024$) were recorded.

4.1. TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1 – Cronbach’s Alpha, internal consistency test

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.866	20

Table 2 – Pearson correlations

		Gender	Area of origin	Age groups	Student scores
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	-.080	.174	.272*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.496	.139	.019
	N	74	74	74	74
Area of origin	Pearson Correlation	-.080	1	-.208	-.148
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.496		.075	.209
	N	74	74	74	74
Age groups	Pearson Correlation	.174	-.208	1	.262*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.139	.075		.024
	N	74	74	74	74
Student scores	Pearson Correlation	.272*	-.148	.262*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.019	.209	.024	
	N	74	74	74	74

5. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results obtained, we can state that there are no statistically significant differences between the students of the bachelor first year and the master students regarding the level of resilience. Thus the first hypothesis was confirmed. As an extension of the observation of these differences, we can compare the data in the boxplot diagram, from which it follows that masters are closer to higher levels of resilience while students of the bachelor first year have subjects that tend to medium-low levels. Thus, in dividing the 74 students of the bachelor first year on the Likert scale, the results were as follows: Very resilient 39 (52.7) students; Better than most 31 (41.9) students; Adequate 3 (4.1) students; You're struggling 1 (1.4) student. When dividing the 38 master students on the Likert scale, the results were as follows: Very resilient 22 (57.9) students; Better than most 16 (42.1) students.

Regarding the second hypothesis, the two Pearson correlations (both positive) recorded in students of the bachelor first year between the level of resilience and gender and between resilience and age justify us to consider that the second

hypothesis was partially confirmed. The two correlations obtained could be understood as follows: The female genre is more resilient than the male gender, and a higher age means higher resilience.

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