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CONTRIBUTIONS OF WOMEN RESEARCHERS

Saluting The Spirit of "NIRBHAYA"!
May, her Sacrifice Awaken Indian
Consciousness and Conscience!

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Resilience and Personality: The Literature Review

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Abstract
The “Resilience” has been a topic of investigation for developmental theorists for years. Resilience has been defined as an ability to thrive in the face of stress and adversity. While understanding the pathways and trajectories of individual development, role of personality is an important theme. Various research studies have been conducted to predict resilience with reference to personality traits. There are multiple models which explain interaction between resilience and personality. Studies report that the traits like optimism, social dominance are positively related with resilience whereas traits like anger and neuroticism have negative associations. The other traits which tend to differentiate high and low resilient individuals include affiliation, cognitive structure, dominance, endurance, exhibition, impulsivity, nurturance and understanding. The current paper aims to review resilience with respect to personality by integrating various research findings and their practical implications.

Introduction
Stress has been an important ingredient of human life and development. Though some of the people tend to shatter during adversity, while others take adversity as a challenge and produce highly positive adaptational outcomes. Infact, it appears that some individuals who are challenged by adversity emerge stronger, with greater capacities that they may not have otherwise (Higgins, 1994). This capacity to bounce back in spite of stress and adversity is labeled as 'Resilience' in psychological taxonomy. It also refers to the process of overcoming the negative effects of risk exposure, coping successfully and avoiding the negative trajectories. The resilience has been a major research theme for developmental theorists for years. Initially, resilience was studied focusing on the within person factors, however in years, the eco-systemic perspective was also considered in resilience research. The literature provides the studies identifying the factors that are present in lives of those who thrived in face of adversity as compared to those who did not. Distinct studies have been conducted to identify the protective factors promoting 'Resilience'. Some of such individual factors promoting resilience are the intellectual ability (Prince-Embury, S., 2008, Baldwin et al., 1993; Brooks, 1994; Jacelon, 1997; Luthar & Zigler, 1991, 1992; Masten, Burt, & Coatsworth, 2006; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998; Rutter, 1987; Wolff, 1995; Wright & Masten, 1997), easy temperament (Jacelon, 1997; Luthar & Zigler,
Taking into consideration the various factors predicting, promoting and affecting the resilience, the studies have predicted the 3 higher order categories for resilience: (a) individual dispositional attributes, (b) family support and cohesion, and (c) external support systems. Individual characteristics include psychic robustness, sociability, intelligence, communication skills, and such personal attributes as self-efficacy and talent (Olsson et al, 2003). Research on family characteristics shows that at least one parent or parental substitute is crucial in this process. External support systems include peers, teachers, neighbors, and others that facilitate an individual's attempts to overcome adversity (Werner, 1993; Brooks, 1994; Prince-Embury, S., 2008). In addition, it is critical to have someone outside the family that is available during times of trouble, and to have hobbies that require social interaction and cooperation. Oddgeir Friborg et al, 2005 did the confirmatory factor analysis to give 5 factor structure of resilience measuring 'personal strength, social competence', 'structured style', 'family cohesion' and 'social resources' thereby confirming to multidimensional nature of resilience.

Resilience & Personality:

Taking into consideration the factors promoting resilience, personality has an important role. Personality tends to express what we are as humans. The most empirical and the most popular structure for personality is the Big Five Model of personality. The term "Big Five" was coined by Goldberg (1993) and was originally associated with studies of personality traits used in natural language. The Big Five are so universal that they show up when people are asked to describe themselves and they are associated with predictable patterns of behavior and social outcomes (John & Srivastava, 1999; Fayombo, G., 2010). Considering the five factor model of personality, the human personality is hypothesized to be made of 5 factors each in turn consisting of six facets. The five factors of this model of personality consist of neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Neuroticism includes anxiety, depression, hostility, impulsiveness, self-consciousness, and vulnerability. Extraversion is characterized by warmth, gregariousness, assertiveness, activity, excitement seeking, and positive emotions.
Openness includes openness to fantasy, aesthetics, feelings, actions, ideas, and values. The facets of agreeableness include altruism, compliance, modesty, straightforwardness, tender-mindedness, and trust. Conscientiousness includes achievement striving, competence, deliberation, dutifulness, order, and self-discipline (Costa & McCrae, 1992). There is girth of studies relating Big five personality factors with Resilience. Upcoming descriptions will highlight the association of these five factors with the facet of resilience.

a) **Resilience and Neuroticism:**

The people with neurotic personality traits have an enduring tendency to experience negative emotional states like anxiety, depression, anger, aggression, guilt and depressed mood. (Mattheus & Deary, 1998). As per Goleman (1999) the neurotic personality individual tends to misinterpret the neutral/ordinary situations as challenging and is also likely to intensify the minor failures and frustrations as major setbacks causing them to feel helpless in difficult situations. They also tend to be self-conscious & shy with difficulty in controlling urges & delaying the gratifications. There are reports of linking neuroticism with low emotional regulation, poor motivation & lack of interpersonal skills. Such individuals are more vulnerable to mental disorders like phobia, depression, panic & other anxiety disorders where 'internalization' is an evident defense. (Hettema, Neale, Myers, Prescott, & Kendler, 2006).

The personality traits of the person also tend to predict the coping styles. (Vollrath, Torgersen & Alnaes, 1995). Infact, in similar conceptualization, it is suggested that coping is 'personality' in action. Thus, with years of research on personality and coping we have enough evidence to show the significant association between personality variables and coping styles. The facet of neuroticism has consistently been positively associated with avoidant coping strategies (McCrae & Costa, 1986; Parkes, 1986; Rim, 1987; Bolger, 1990; Endler & Parker, 1990) and negatively associated with approach coping strategies. (Epstein & Meier, 1989; Endler & Parker, 1990; Amirkhan, Risinger & Swickert, 1995; Gomez, K Holmbeý, 1999) A study by Furnham, Crump & Whelan (1997) found a strong negative association between resilience and neuroticism. Similar findings were also observed by Motoyuki Nakaya (2006) who found significant negative correlation of scores on Adult Resilience Scale and Neuroticism dimension of Big Five Personality questionnaire accounting for 35% variance.

b) **Resilience and Openness to experience:**

Openness to Experience is also referred as intellectual imagination. It refers to how willing a person is to make adaptations & adjustments to his beliefs, notions, and actions in relation to the novel needs & situations. (Goldberg, 1993; McCrae & John, 1992). It includes traits like having wide range of interests/ hobbies, being open to fantasy and imagination,
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being insightful and attentive to inner feelings. Such individual tends to prefer variety and possess intellectual curiosity (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Thus, such individuals are more politically liberal and tolerant of or open to diverse cultures & lifestyles. A study by Grace Fayombo, 2010 reported the positive correlation of openness with resilience. Since one of the factors of resilience is personal strength which includes abilities to make adequate adjustments, which is very closely similar to the openness traits and hence such positive associations are very likely. Such positive correlations between resilience and openness to experience were also reported by Motoyuki Nakaya, 2006

c) Resilience and conscientiousness:

The characteristic of individuals high on conscientiousness includes high level of thoughtfulness, good impulse control and goal directed behavior. Usually, such people are highly planned and organized. Infact, the conscientiousness has also been studied in the realm of perfectionism. A study by Salgado (1997) reported that people high on the conscientiousness proves to be more reliable, more motivated and more hard working at their workplace. Considering impulse control in the domain of conscientiousness, Annalakshmi Narayanan, 2008 attempted to identify the differences between high and low resilient individuals on impulse control. The sample comprised of 155 young adults who were university students. Taking into consideration, the median scores the two criterion groups with high and low resilience were formed. Further, it was found that the high resilience group had an impulsivity mean score of 5.91(SD=3.30) and the low resilience group had impulsivity mean score of 7.26(SD=2.86). Thus, impulse control was a defining feature of resilience. A study by Hitoshi, reported positive correlation between conscientiousness and resilience accounting for 18 percent variance. In another similar study on children aged 7-17 years Huey & Weisz (1997) also observed similar results of positive correlation between conscientiousness and resilience.

d) Resilience and Agreeableness:

Agreeableness measures the degree of compatibility with other people. It's a tendency to be pleasant & accommodating in social situations which needs cooperation. The common traits of people high on agreeableness include being empathetic, considerate, friendly, kind, helping & optimistic. A study by Grace, 2010 on 397 adolescents measuring psychological resilience and Big Five personality traits reported positive correlation of resilience with agreeableness. Also, there was positive correlations of agreeableness with openness and conscientiousness which themselves are predictors of resilience. Agreeableness alone contributed to 28 percent variance towards resilience. Similar reports were also given by Graziono et al (2007).
e) Resilience and Extraversion:

Extraversion is also referred to as surgency. It is the act, state or habit of being predominantly concerned with and obtaining gratification from outer sources. Thus, people high on extraversion show keen interest in other people and external events (Eiven, 1998). However, the objective traits of extrovert people are talkativeness, energetic, gregarious and assertive. There is enough evidence of positive correlation between extraversion and resilience (Campbell-Sills, Cohan & Stevi, 2006; Makaya, Oshio, Kaneko, 2006).

Summary & Conclusions

The dynamic construct of resilience is significantly associated with various facets of personality. The personality facet like neuroticism has negative correlation with resilience. Whereas other facets like extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience have the positive correlation with resilience. Looking at such rich literature with respect to the association between resilience and personality, one can say with precision the role the personality factors in predicting individual resilience. However, the literature also gives a girth of factors moderating and mediating the path of resilience. Moreover, resilience is not a permanent capacity but is a dynamic construct. The relationship between resilience and personality traits can be seen as circulatory. While certain personality traits contributes to resilience, and at same time being resilient enhances positive personality growth and development. Thus, there is great deal of relativity in the concept of resilience and personality.

References


"7th International Congress on Excellence"
Chandigarh, India, October 2015

"7th International congress on Excellence" will be held at Panjab University, Chandigarh, India. Professor Jitendra Mohan has been elected as the President of this Congress and Society. Professor Lars-Eric Unestahi, President of Scandinavian International University in Orebro, Sweden, founded the International Society of Mental Training and Excellence in Malaysia in 1989. This new society was formed to bring together a group of scientists and practitioners to present the latest evidenced research and applied treatments based upon works in real world settings.

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The Congress emphasizes on the following areas: Psychology, Sports, Performing arts, Education, Management, Health, Interpersonal Relations and World Peace. "7th International Congress on Excellence" will take place at Panjab University, Chandigarh, India. From 19th to 23rd October, 2015.

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