

Original Research Article

Impact of Negative Life Events And Socio-Economic Status On The Development Of Resilience In Secondary School Children

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ABSTRACT

Background: The purpose of this study is to examine whether socio-economic status and negative life events experienced by secondary school children have impact on the development of resilience. First, is socio-economic status lead to increase or decrease adversities, which have effect on development of resilience and second is there any significant difference among group of children from different socio-economic background and experienced adversities have impact on development of resilience.

Methodology: The sample consisted of 90 participants (secondary school children) from different schools within Mumbai. Participants will be both girls and boys of ages 13 years to 16 years from different schools. The administration of self-report questionnaires and two-way ANOVA, to compare the development of resilience in other groups (i.e. negative life events (NLE) and socio-economic status (SES)) was examined. The study will involve a quasi-experimental design with one independent variable being socio-economic status having three levels i.e. high, middle and low and two dependent variables being score on resilience scale and experiences of negative life events. Resilience Scale and Kuppaswamy's Socio-Economic Scale were administered.

Results: Results reported non-significance between the group of scores on negative life-events and resilience. However the results have important implications for understanding some other factors that enhance the resilience within the urban area of city.

Conclusions: The study found that there is no significant impact of NLE and SES on the development of resilience. However obtained mean and SD for negative life events was found to be higher with low SES children indicates that, the experienced adversities can be higher in low socio-economic strata.

Key Words: Negative life events, Adversities, Resilience, Secondary school children, Socio-economic-status.

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INTRODUCTION

Resilience, Adversities and Socio-economic status

According to Carver [1], Resilience is the ability to bounce back or to adapt to stressful situation and functioning above the norm in spite of stress. The root for the English word "Resilience" is the word 'resile', which means "to bounce back or spring back". Resilience is a two way construct which includes adversities and positive outcomes of that adversity. However adversity refers to experience of any negative life conditions, which are difficult for adjustment such as poverty, failure of a grade in schools, increased

absence of parent from home etc. Researchers have suggested that resilience and vulnerability are opposite poles on the same continuum, but this may not always be the case.

Condly [2] stated that, resilience research is especially applicable to schools because they directly tackle the achievement gaps that can characterize children who grow up under conditions of poverty or social disadvantage.

Resilience theory, though it is concerned with risk exposure among children, is focused on strengths rather than deficits. Although the relationship between SES and mental health is inversely linear, the interactive effect of low SES appear to more adversely affect minorities than when examining either variable alone. Some researchers propose that with regards to Low-SES, minority status adds a unique set of disadvantages [3].

Models of Resilience

In addition to identifying potential factors related to resiliency, there are multiple models that attempt to predict the ways in which these diverse factors might lead to positive outcomes for children. These models fall into three major categories:

1. **Compensatory model:** This seeks to identify factors that neutralize the negative consequences of exposure to risk. For example, a child with high self-esteem may be able to overcome stress and achieve a high level of competence. In this type of model, compensatory factors do not interact with risk factors, but rather have a direct and independent influence on the outcome [4].
2. **Challenge model:** Treat stressors as potential enhancers of successful adaptation. Challenging experiences, when dealt with successfully, improve the child's ability to cope with future challenges [5].
3. **Protective factor model:** Protective factors moderate the effect of a risk on the predicted outcome, and modify the child's response to the risk factors. For example, one study revealed that assertiveness reduced the negative effect of parental conflict. The protective factor model is in part a combination of the compensatory and challenge models, and is the most widely studied of the three [6].

It is recognized that resilience is a dynamic quality, not a permanent capacity. In other words, resilient individuals demonstrate Social Competence, Problem-solving skills, Autonomy, purpose and future, Goals, educational aspirations, persistence, hopefulness, and a sense of a bright future; whereas less resilient individuals find themselves worn down and negatively impacted by life stressors. The current study will focus on the development of resilience in secondary school children based on the adversities experienced and its relationship to the socio-economic status.

Resilience and Socio-economic status

Socioeconomic status (SES) is often measured as a combination of education, income, and occupation. It is commonly conceptualized as the social standing or class of an individual or group. When viewed through a social class lens, privilege, power, and control are emphasized. Furthermore, an examination of SES as a gradient or continuous variable reveals inequities in access to and distribution of resources. SES is relevant to all realms of behavioural and social science, including research, practice, education, and advocacy [7]. Family socioeconomic status, parental monitoring, and open parental communication have compensated for the risk of peer sexual behaviour. Paul and others [8] reported for their 21-year longitudinal study of 1020 participants in New Zealand that school attachment and self-esteem helped compensate for the risk of sexual intercourse before age 16 associated with mothers having had a child before the age of 20.

Resilience and Negative life events

Resilience is not directly measured, but is inferred from the presence of significant stress and adversity that has the potential to threaten healthy development coupled with the observation of positive outcome [9-10]. Risk and protective factors are important considerations within the resilience research. An increasing number of children are impacted by natural disasters, concurrent with a parallel growth in the incidence of several socially induced stressors, although these events can impact at any life time juncture. However,

despite the unfavorable correlates of these adverse experiences, some children and youth who are exposed to them demonstrate more positive outcomes than others. These children exhibit resilience, evidencing normal development in the face of adversity [11].

Specifically, the current research aims to scrutinize the following research questions –

- Does the experienced negative life event have impact on the development of resilience?
- Does socio-economic status have relation to the development of resilience?
- Are there significant differences in the level of resilience as a function of negative life events and Socio-economic status?

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The total no. of participants will be 90 secondary school children i.e. N=30 from each socio-economic background respectively (High, Middle and low). Participants in 8th to 10th STD ranging in the age group of 14 to 16 will be randomly selected from the schools in Mumbai and each group i.e. girls and boys will be assigned to solve the resilience scale and negative life event scale for the purpose of data collection.

Research Design

The study will involve a quasi-experimental design with one independent variable being socio-economic status having three levels i.e. high, middle and low and two dependent variables being score on resilience scale and experiences of negative life events.

Measures/Instrumentation

1. **Resilience Scale (TM)** : It comprises of 14- items, self-rating scale that measures resilience. It is based on Likert type responses; where participants have to give one answer ranging from 1 being strongly disagree to 7 being strongly agree. Then the responses of the participants will be obtained and totalled and interpreted with the help of scoring categories as given below:

Scores	Interpretation
14-64	Low
65-73	Moderately Low
74-81	Moderately High
82-98	High

The Resilience Scale is a tool with excellent content and face validity. Its reliability is strong, and likewise construct validity has been consistently supported. The resilience scale showed Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the RS-14 was 0.81. The correlation of RS with RS-14 ($r = 0.97$; $p = 0.000$), the HADS depression ($r = -0.28$; $p = 0.017$) and anxiety ($r = -0.26$; $p = 0.028$) subscales, were significant. The corresponding t-test values for the means of RS and RS-14 scores for both cases and non-cases as determined by HADS, were significant at $p < 0.05$ and $p < 0.01$ for the depression and anxiety subscales respectively. Hence the index of reliability is 0.81. The present index of reliability implies that the test measures true reliability of the subjects to the extent of 81%. That means the validity of the questionnaire is 0.81 [12-13].

2. **Kuppuswamy's socio-economic scale**: It will be used to define the SES of secondary school children; it is a composite score of education and occupation of the head of the family along with monthly income of the family, which yields a score of 3-29. This scale classifies the study populations into high, middle, and low SES. The reliability coefficient is 0.83 while measured through spearman- Brown formula. Hence the index of reliability is 0.91. The present index of reliability implies that the test measures true reliability of the subjects to the extent of 91%. That means the validity of the questionnaire is 0.91 [14].

A modified scale has been developed for non-adults. Similar to the adult scale, stress points for life events in the past year are added and compared to the rough estimate of how stress affects health. Hence to know the negative life experiences the score on this scale will be used.

Data Collection

The informed consent from schools will be taken and children from different schools according to the socio-economic status of school within Mumbai will be given a 25-items resilience scale and negative life events scale to solve for the purpose of collecting data. The proper instructions will be giving about the test and the response style and children will be given their own time to complete it.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The two independent variables involves three levels i.e. SES (lower, middle and upper) and Negative life events (High, Middle and upper); however the two dependent variable i.e. score of participants on resilience scale hence to assess the significant difference of two independent on dependent variable, Two-way ANOVA repeated design shall be appropriate to administered and to see is there any statistical significance.

RESULTS

In total 90 participants i.e. 30 participants from each socio-economic background responded to the questionnaire, for the purpose of the study, sample was selected as secondary school children from different schools in Mumbai and following result were obtained.

Table 1: Mean and SD of scores on Negative Life Events Scale and Resilience Scale

	N	Negative Life Events Score	Resilience Score
Mean	90	201.93	75.51
SD	90	117.16	19.91

As shown in Table 1, equal number of Participants were selected for the sample (n=90) and means and standard deviations for all variables in terms of negative life events and resilience scores were break down. It was found that the mean and SD of Scores on negative life events scale (NLS) were 201.93 and 117.16 respectively. However total mean and SD of 90 participants on 7-point rating scale of resilience was found to be 75.15 and 19.91 respectively.

Table 2 – Comparison of Mean of Scores on Negative Life Events and Resilience based on Socio-Economic Status (SES)

	N	Negative Life Events	Resilience
High SES	30	81.39	138.76
Middle SES	30	176.97	138.75
Low SES	30	344.78	77.84

Table No. 2 shows the comparison of scores based on participant's socio-economic status (SES); indicates that negative life events scores were high in low SES (344.78) compare to other SES, However the mean of resilience scale score were found to be lowest (77.84) with low socio-economic children.

The mean resilience score (138.76) was found to be higher in children belong to high class. Another interesting finding was middle class children were found comparatively average scores on negative life events scale (176.97) and leaning towards the highest score (136.75) on resilience scale.

Table 3 – Comparison of SD of scores on NLE and resilience based on SES

	N	Negative Life Events	Resilience
High SES	30	45.92	11.84
Middle SES	30	33.27	10.30
Low SES	30	36.51	15.03

Table No. 3 explains comparison of Mean scores on Negative life events scale (NLE) and resilience scale based on socio-economic status (SES). The Standard deviation for negative life events scales (NLE) found to be highest (45.93) for high socio-economic status (SES) compare to other groups; where Standard deviation was found to be lowest (33.27) for middle SES and average (36.5) for low SES. However Standard deviation for resilience score was found to be highest (15.04) for low SES compare to other groups; where Standard deviation on resilience score was found to be lowest (11.84) in high SES and average (10.30) in middle SES.

The test of between subjects' effects showed that the obtained F-ratio for Negative life events score compared to resilience score was 0.895 which was significant at 0.648 level with degrees of freedom 64; found to be more than P value at 0.5 level ($P > 0.05$). This indicate that there were more than 5% of chances for getting such result hence in this case, we accept the null hypothesis that; there is no significance in the negative life events and resilience score. However the interaction within the scores on negative life events and socio-economic status was 0.000; which was not possible as socio-economic status was a string variable. The errors were 2239.58 with degrees of freedom 23 and mean squares 97.373. The corrected total was 8692.900 with degrees of freedom 89.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research is to study the experienced negative life events (NLE) and socio-economic status (SES) has impact on development of resilience. The study found that there is no significant impact of NLE and SES on the development of resilience. However obtained mean and SD for negative life events was found to be higher with low SES children indicates that, the experienced adversities can be higher in low socio-economic strata. This could be explained by Bronfrenbrenner's ecological perspective [15]; the child developing within a complex system of relationships affected by multiple levels of the surrounding environment. The environment is defined as a series of nested structures made up of the microsystem (the child's immediate environment), the mesosystem (interactions among microsystem factors), the exosystem (factors in the wider community), and the macrosystem (consisting of values, laws, customs, etc.).

However, the obtained mean on resilience scale was found to be almost similar among high and middle class children; which indicate that, children belongs to middle class and high class families would be more resilient than low class children. Hence the hypothesis i.e. the children belong to low SES will experience high NLE and be more resilient was rejected and null hypothesis was accepted. Wells [16] studied resilience in children and older adults living in rural, suburban and urban areas to determine if the resilience levels varied as a result of location. In multiple regression analysis, the strongest predictor of resilience was higher perceived health status. Higher income was associated with lower resilience but that could be because of inflation in market.

However in another study it was found that socio-economic status had an insignificant impact on the amount and kind of resilience. The differences were in the number of resilience factors used for resilience behavior, with families in poverty using fewer factors. The confusion seems to be that children who are

successful in school and come from upper and middle class homes are resilient because they are not as involved in drugs, sex or delinquency as children in poverty. The research, however, indicates that the families of these children protect them from such adversities by involving them in other activities or organizations [17].

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study have important implications for parents, teachers and care givers as it was seen that negative life events was a factor that influenced resilience in children, particularly to the group of low socio-economic strata. The findings of the present study help us to understand that the theories of resilience. Finally the findings and implications of this study would have a great importance for theorists in the field of socialization to understand the influence of ecological factors on the development of resilience, more specifically in Mumbai which will expand knowledge of the socialization of children in the Indian cultural context.

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