

## POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY & RESILIENCE

### Abstract

The intention of this chapter is in the direction of the discussion about the association between positive psychology and resilience. The discipline of resilience, the historical overview of positive psychology and resilience, models of resilience in relation to positive psychology, resilience and trauma recovery, and multicultural considerations in positive psychology and resilience will be examined and discussed. Previous research and literature propose that there is a direct relationship among positive psychology and resilience. The construct of resilience is considered as a skill to adequately manage with stressors and is often discussed with positive long-term physical and emotional health outcomes.

**Key words:** Resilience, Positive Psychology, Trauma Recovery

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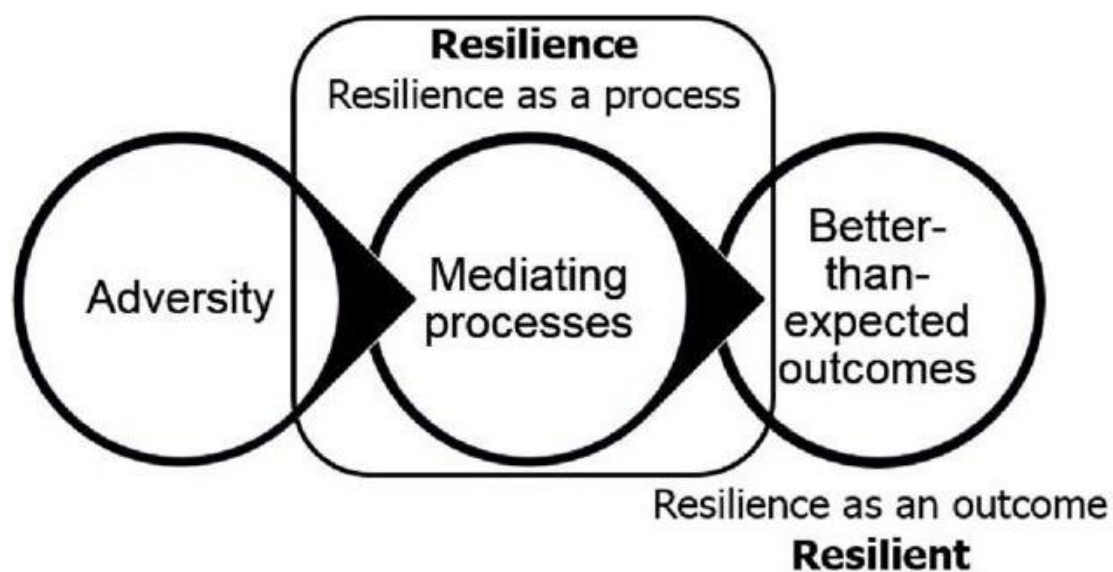
## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Resilience is regarded as both a characteristic and a process that develops over time. As per American Psychological Association (2014), resilience is referred as a procedure of adjusting excellently during the time of difficulty, shock, calamity, fears, or even important causes of stress. Recent research has provided proof regarding a mutually increasing link between resilience and optimistic mental health (Sang Z, Zhang X-C, Wu Y, and Margraf J, 2020). Additionally, previous literature has shown significant correlation among resilience and affirmative psychological health pointers, such as life gratification and subjective happiness (Vitale, 2015; Weinberg and Tomy 2016). Investigation on Resilience and positive psychology have a mutual connect (Lyman, E. L, Crossman, E. J. & Luthar, S. S. 2014). Additionally, Contemporary researchers suggest that resilience features differ in diverse risk backgrounds and thereby inferred that resilience is a procedure. Hence to define there silience procedure in a particular setting, it is essential to recognize and find out the danger involved and in turn the apparent judgment and old shock also need to be considered. Individuals are capable of adapting to new encounters and are seen maintaining ability in managing with their coping up skills. It's found that early in life of humans, biological parts and the brain are very much adaptable. Hence the growth that a person acquires in the early years helps in laying a strong foundation for the irrepressible behaviors.

## **II. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND RESILIENCE**

Positive Psychology is the side of behavior discipline that studies and promotes the best of humanity. Looking into the historical context of positive psychology, in the 1900s life expectancy in the United States was 45 years. There were increased deaths of infants, many women died during delivery, males during their occupations, and from illnesses, like diabetes, flue, tuberculosis etc This promoted researchers in the health field to think about quality of life. In the mid of twentieth century University of Pennsylvania psychologist Martin Seligman sparked the recent blast of curiosity in positive psychology. The term positive psychology was actually put forth by Abraham Maslow when he used it as a section heading in the book Motivation and Personality, which was written in 1954. The field of positive psychology that we learn today is all about positive subjective experience. In the past experience, it is considered happiness and satisfaction. In the present experience it is joy, the sensual pleasures, and happiness and upcoming experiences are positivity, hope and trust. Now let's look at the difference between normal psychologies against positive psychology. Normal psychology gives importance to undesirable behavior and numerous types of dysfunctions. Whereas, Positive psychology focuses on positive know-hows and constructive personality or virtues. To establish the connection between positive psychology and resilience, in the latter part of the 1980s, researchers argued that resilience was a process, and not a trait. Three such procedures were identified, constructing a optimistic self-image, dipping the effect of the danger issues and breaking a destructive cycle so that new opportunities are opened up for the people. This set of courses signifies "the interaction between person and environment, in which individuals under adverse conditions utilize internal and external resources to achieve positive adaptation". Further these were directly correlated to positive psychology (Pan & Chan, 2007).

1. **Positive Psychology and Resilience Theory:** The Theory of Resilience claims that it's not the type of difficulty that is most important, but our dealing mechanism of the difficulty. According to Van Breda (2018), Resilience theory, is the investigation or research of the factors that make this phenomenon complete. A study conducted in the early 2000's found indication where psychological flexibility was found as one means that connected confidently to work contentment and the job gratification, together with performance in job and obligation towards the organization. Though there is an instinctive appeal for resilience theory, there is a lack in a consensual foundation. The theory of resilience has its origins in the research of hardship and acuriosityin how opposing life skills influenced amaginglyon people. Current resilience theory progressively offers care to accepting resilience within wider social schemes, and to interacting with matters of authority and social fairness.



**Figure 1:** As a process and outcome –Resilience

Individual anxiety levels are on the rise with higher amount of work, reduced budget, and changing demands as the professional life demands more. People are required to adapt to universal economical markets as well as fluctuating communal, scientific and climatic situations. Resilience needn't be just genetic, but can be an intertwining of personal characteristics based on environmental factors. Each of us has an inherent resilience but how we shape upon these depends on our being's conditions and reactions. In fact, it is more important and should be addressed upon. Well, on the other hand, genetic bounce-back qualities only may not suffice as resilience levels are also a product of our environment. The support system that we have and the level of engagement we have with the people around us promotes resilience. Positive and affirmative rather than negative environments are very valuable and create encouragement.

Positive psychology and Resilience are anxious about the way in which primitive features work, and both gaze in what way a 'beneficial' concept can enable our comfort (Luthar et al., 2014). Moreover, they can be used in daily life to help humanity, and both resilience and positive psychology are very thoroughly focused on the significance of social relationships.

There are certain important variances between resilience and positive psychology Research, amongst the best noticeable among which one is concern of life hardships. Lessons of resilience assumption to extreme difficult situation, and positive psychology are concerning all persons, not just persons who have gone through key dangers. The second dissimilarity is about the criticality of progressive matters, which are indispensable of the study of resilience (Masten, 2001; Luthar, 2000) not just at the time of babyhood and youth, but also during adulthood.

Positive psychology has been concentrated largely on grown-ups, though there are now accumulative calls for consideration to developing differences, judgmentally inspecting whether answers on specific adult models might take a broad view to kids and to grown-ups at dissimilar phases of the lifecycle. Third, lessons of flexibility, grounded definitely in the domain of developmental psychopathology, obey a central, important characteristic of this arena: that lessons of usual progress help us in the understanding of atypical process and, contrariwise, lessons of the unusual update our thoughtfulness of normative growth whereas in the positive psychology, we find that the inclination is to “practice the standard as a basement from where we comprehend the unusual. The fourth variance relates to operationalization of optimistic results.

Notwithstanding these zones of variance, it can be highlighted that the resilience study have got multiple resemblances to positive psychology. Both of the arenas have seen an importance on guaranteeing that study that is dealt with in a set of robust forming theory, with exact proposals volunteered in this regard. Presently, there is an excess of hypotheses incorporated in the arena of positive psychology, stretching from happiness, altruism, selflessness, gratitude, and wisdom.

**2. The Science of Resilience:** Resilience will vary across different period as a function of growth and a person's communication with the atmosphere (e.g., Kim-Cohen & Turkewitz, 2012). The resilience trajectory is considered by a moderately short-lived span of imbalance, but otherwise constant fitness (Bonanno, 2004; Bonanno et al., 2011). Commonly, it is not simply the lack of psychopathology, but is different from other forms of answer to possibly disturbing actions, several of which are neither pathological nor strong (Bonanno et al., 2011, Kaniasty, & LaGreca, 2010, Bonanno, 2004, 2012; Brewin, Bonanno). In 2011, Wong documented the four pillars of a decent life as importance, virtue, resilience, and happiness, which are all formed by culture. As we know, resilience is due to a energetic communication between internal tendencies and outer capabilities. Wisdom to manage manageable pressures to our bodily and social well-being is important in the growth of resilience. The fact that the capabilities that trigger resilience can be reinforced at any age can be an implication for the policies and practice. Adults who reinforce these abilities in themselves can model optimistic behaviors for their children, thereby refining the resilience of the next cohort.

### III. MODELS OF RESILIENCE IN RELATION TO POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Resilience is an intrinsic trait which can be strengthened by individuals. Resilience is related to positive psychology by being a positive adaptation of a person to successfully adapt to stressful situations or changes. The most researched models of resilience include “compensatory model, the challenge model and the defensive factor of immunity versus vulnerability model” (Ledesma, 2014). To relatively understand the models of resilience with the scientific theory of happiness in positive psychology the PERMA (positive emotion, engagement, relationship, meaning and accomplishment) model, let’s see how each of these can be connected.

- 1. Compensatory model of resilience in relation to PERMA:** Resilience is seen as a factor that neutralizes exposure to risk in the compensatory model. Connecting it to the PERMA model provides evidence to how resilience can help people to remain optimistic with positive outcomes. Compensatory model is constructive in that it is engaging and increases positive emotional capabilities. Staying connected makes life meaningful, so relationships are crucial in our well-being. Compensatory model of resilience also promotes relationship building by gaining other people’s positive attention through healthy emotional bonding. Being resilient can create a tendency to perceive difficult experiences in a positive light and find meaning in it, this in turn can lead to the next level of happiness model, which is accomplishment. Resilience is positively correlated with positive emotion, engagement, relationship, meaning, and competence in life (Huppert and So, 2013).
- 2. Challenge model of resilience in relation to PERMA:** The challenge model is also considered as a model of inoculation. Resilience is also a form of inoculation. The challenge model relates well to resilience in that challenges in life can make one see the adversities of life positively. Thus, with the challenge model resilience is accepted as a fundamental tenet of positive psychology.
- 3. Protective factor model of resilience in relation to PERMA:** Positive emotion within the PERMA model provides a protective role in enhancing individual well-being. Resilience has been found to be a strong predictor and source of well-being and life satisfaction (Bajaj & Pande, 2016).

### IV. RESILIENCE AND TRAUMA RECOVERY

Oftentimes, resilience is viewed as a buzz word from a trauma informed perspective, but it is not. Resilience is a neuroscientific concept which refers to the ability of an individual to return to a state of internal stability following a major stressful or traumatic event. Earlier resilience was considered as a trait, recent studies show that resilience is considered as an outcome or an outcome-oriented approach is taken to building resilience. According to Feldman (2020), the three tenets of resilience are plasticity, sociality and meaning. Neuroplasticity of the brain which is a common phenomenon in all living matter is identified as a tenet of resilience.

- 1. Neuroplasticity and Resilience in Trauma Recovery:** One of the biggest achievements in the field of trauma informed care is the ability of the brain to change. Neuroplasticity is considered as the key to brain health. Some of the practices that are found to increase neuroplasticity include physical exercise, learning new skills, meditation, sleep, intermittent fasting, herbal supplements and good nutrition. On the other hand, increased stress, neurotoxins, physical and mental inactivity, poor nutrition and traumatic brain injury is found to decrease neuroplasticity. One of the personality traits that play an important role in resilience is optimism (Babic, Babic, Rastovic, Curlin, Šimic, Mandic, & Pavlovic, 2020). This has close association with neuroplasticity of the brain, specifically with the activation of neural circuits of the reward system. According to Babic et al. (2020), “Positive emotions, capacity for self-regulation, social competence, social support, close connections to helpers, lower level of denial, avoiding behavior and retreat, greater flexibility of thinking and open-mindedness, dispositional optimism, are very important components of resilience.”
- 2. Sociality and Resilience in Trauma Recovery:** An innate tendency of mammals is to survive in groups. Survival in mammalian groups are enhanced by coordinated action among individuals in the group. Social collaboration increases bonding which confers resilience. Regular social care is also an important step in building resilience and thereby promoting trauma recovery. Positive psychology puts forth some tips for social care to build resilience. One of them is building connections, which can either be done by prioritizing relationships or joining some social groups virtually or face to face. As individuals we can also foster wellness through practicing mindfulness, avoiding negative outlets and taking care of our body. By practicing these tips one can find a purpose, embrace wellness and healthy thoughts in life.
- 3. Meaning and Resilience in Trauma Recovery:** Meaning making for experiences is a special ability in human beings. This meaning making system helps to sustain resilience by associating the experiences to how individuals perceive it. There is a mounting focus on the drive and meaning in life as a key forecaster of longstanding health consequences and fundamental neurophysiology. Meaning in life has been defined in a diversity of different ways. According to Stegar (2012), significance in life is taking a path in the life, linking to somewhat bigger one than oneself, feeling that one's life is respected and useful, and that there is a drive to what one does. Having accomplishments in life is directly related to exploring meaning in life (Ledesma, 2014). Thus, meaning promotes a sense that one's life matters, which in turn is linked to resilience related to improved bodily health, decreased humanity risk, and greater life fulfillment (Stegar, 2012).

## **V. MULTICULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS IN POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND RESILIENCE**

Cultural variances give added evidence about powers known in every culture and methods in which constructive life results are accomplished and tracked. “Culture is the set of values, beliefs, and routine practices that are transmitted between individuals and strengthened through social dialogue (Ungar, 2013). Meaning for the decent life seems to increase according to the growing difficulty of the universe. Results from investigations that take a positive psychology method are already manipulating involvements that aid people improve their powers and develop their abilities for better happiness and gratification

with life. Specific resilience happens when there is an atmosphere that enables admittance to possessions and it is provided to individuals based on their needs in congruence to their culture (Ungar, 2013). In the early 2000's Grotberg, was the first researcher to question the cultural sensitivity of resilient adaptation (Pan & Chan, 2007). She found some common factors and disparities in the protective factors of resilience among individuals. She suggested that it is important to study the effect of cultural differences on the protective factors that contributed to resilience. It is worth studying positive psychology and resilience based on the ecological model.

## VI. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Reciprocal transformation between resilience study and exercise of positive psychology need to be discovered further. Practically, both fields are basically practical in nature, looking for making a change. In both circumstances, an early technical curiosity in revealing rudimentary emotional processes that has directed to responses that the vital areas are to value humankind. Persons are normally greatly affected intensely by bad feedback like denial than by optimistic ones like compliments. In case of positive psychologists, this may infer the necessity for clear credit that if persons are to grow, know-hows of good optimistic feelings (e.g., joy or hope) should together be more than the skills of undesirable ones (such as dread, grief, or blame) by a proportion as great as 3:1 (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005). Positive psychology in relation to resilience research can have a strength perspective and have both theoretical and practical applications to the field of trauma recovery and wellbeing. Practical implications that can arise with resilience and positive psychology in Indian societies could be an interesting topic for future research. Additionally, in a pluralistic and multicultural country like India, it is highly recommended to have more culturally relevant evidence-based positive psychology interventions for promoting resilience.

## VII. CONCLUSION

This chapter was an intentional attempt to study resilience in relation to positive psychology. In this chapter resilience is conceptualized as a process that is developmental in nature rather than a trait. Resilience provides a framework to understand positive psychology from a strength-based perspective. This is possible because "firstly, resilience is the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to resources that sustain well-being; secondly resilience is the capacity of individuals physical and social ecologies to provide these resources; and finally resilience the capacity of individuals, their families and communities to negotiate culturally meaningful ways for resources to be shared" (Ungar, 2013). By bringing together resilience and positive psychology there is an increased focus on innovative interventions in the field of behavioral sciences.

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