

Exploring the link between emotional intelligence and psychological resilience: A study of adolescents

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Abstract: Adolescence is possibly the most difficult period of life, because it is the beginning of a series of changes in both the internal and external aspects of the body. For this reason, we all have a series of psychological mechanisms, resilience and emotional intelligence, which allow us to adapt to these periods of change. In this way, the present study aims to analyse through a systematic review the results obtained in different studies to better understand the current situation. Adolescence is one of the most difficult periods of life as it is subject to a series of changes that mark the transition from childhood to adulthood. During this period, young people undergo a series of psychological, biological, social and cognitive changes. Fox compares young people to monsters, because the body changes, our parents become terrible people to them, they start to behave differently, and so on. These maturational changes prepare the young person for adulthood by making the first decisions for themselves without the influence of their parents. Therefore, adolescents often show maladaptive behavioural patterns such as alcohol, tobacco, drugs or sex consumption, among others. Moreover, during this period young people have to deal with the ability to cope with distress, fear and pain because they have to face many challenges such as interpersonal relationships, social influence, new responsibilities, academic demands, peer group pressure or different tasks, among others. Emotional intelligence and resilience are two essential factors during this stage because they can predict one's life outcomes. In fact, it has been shown that emotionally intelligent people lead fuller and happier lives, and resilient people experience less stress and pain.

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Introduction:

Adolescence is a transitional phase that fills the gap between childhood and adulthood; it revolutionizes one's physical, emotional, mental and social setting. It normally begins between the ages of 11 and 13 with the emergence of secondary sex characteristics and terminates at the age of 18 to 20 with the completion of adult development. Many researchers have identified the adolescence phase as the most stressful developmental stage (Clarke et. al., 1988; Harper et. al., 1991).

Emotional intelligence (also called emotional quotient or EQ) is the capacity to realise, use, and deal with your own feelings positively to assuage pressure, efficiently communicate, be empathetic to other people, overcome difficulties and manage conflict. Emotional intelligence encourages you construct more grounded connections, prevail at school and work, and accomplish your vocation and individual objectives. It can likewise assist you with interfacing with your emotions, transform expectation right into it, and settle on educated choices about what makes a difference most to you. (Salovey and Mayer, 1990). Emotional intelligence is a kind of social insight that includes the capacity to

screen one's own and others' feelings, to segregate among them, and to utilize the data to manage one's reasoning and activities (Salovey and Mayer, 1990). The extent of emotional intelligence incorporates the verbal and nonverbal examination and articulation of feeling, the guideline of feeling in oneself as well as other people, and the usage of enthusiastic substance in critical thinking. Daniel Goleman also provides a perspective on how emotional intelligence can be a critical factor affecting a person's resilience during crises. The systematic study of resilience in psychology emerged from the study of children at risk for problems and psychopathology (Masten, 1999; Masten & Garmezy). By the 1960s, psychiatrists and psychologists interested in the cause of abnormality, begun to observe and work on children over time who were considered to be at chance of risk for serious issues either because of their biological attribute (e.g., either parent with schizophrenia), prenatal hazards (e.g., premature birth), or because of their environments (e.g., poverty) or because he or she may have lost either parent. Some of these investigators were struck by seeing the children with evidently at high risk for problems and they were developing quite well. In the

press about such phenomenon and the early publications on resilience were said to be as “stress-resilient”, “invulnerable” or “resilient”. Finally, resilient became the most salient term for reporting such individuals. psychological resilience is characterized as the person's capacity to effectively adjust to life errands even with social disservice or profoundly unfavourable conditions. Adversity or stress can come in the shape of family or relationship problems, workplace or financial problems, health problems, etc. In 2006, Rutter characterized resilience as, an intuitive idea that is worried about the mix of genuine danger encounters and a generally sure mental result in spite of those encounters (Rutter, 2006). Rather, resilience is defined as designed to reflect the capacity for recovery and maintained adaptive behavior that may follow initial retreat or in capacity upon initiating a stressful event. To be resilient, Garmezy states that one needs to show functional adequacy (the maintenance of competent functioning despite and interfering of emotionality) as a benchmark of resilient behavior under stress (Garmezy, 1991a).

The word resilience is used to state coping and overall adaptability and it can be divided into four categories. Psychological resilience is our ability to mentally withstand or adapt to challenges, uncertainty and adversity. People who have psychological resilience develop capabilities and coping strategies which enable them to be remain

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSTRUCT

The concept of emotional intelligence reflects the convergence and interaction of thoughts and emotions. Emotional intelligence is defined as a person's ability to monitor their own as well as other feelings and emotions, to distinguish between them, and to utilize that information to guide their thinking and actions (Salovey et al., 1990). Thus, the core elements of emotional intelligence are the basic insight into emotional states, a proper understanding of their nature, and the ability to regulate our own as well as others' emotions (Mayer et al., 1997). Nowadays, emotional intelligence is more accepted and acknowledged as a basic parameter for success and achievement among students. It has been shown that emotional awareness and the ability to regulate our feelings can influence our success more than IQ in every walk of life (Fernandes, 2016). From an academic standpoint, emotional intelligence has been found to be positively associated with overall psychological and emotional wellbeing, as well as self-efficacy and empathy among secondary school

calm and focused in a difficult situation or in crisis and they move on with long term positive consequences. People who are emotionally resilient understand what they are feeling and why. They use both internal and external resources and usually knock into realistic optimism, even during the crisis. That is why they are able to manage stressors and emotions in a positive and healthier ways. Physical resilience refers to the body's ability to adapt to the challenges, sustain stamina and strength and recover quickly and efficiently. Its individual's ability to recover and function in illness or any other physical demands. Community Resilience is the ability of groups of people to react to and recuperate from adverse situations like natural disasters, financial crisis or any other challenge to their community. Generally, resilience alludes to positive transformation, or the capacity to keep up or recapture psychological well-being, in spite of encountering misfortune¹². Definitions have advanced as logical information has expanded. Resilience is concentrated by scientists from different orders, including brain research, psychiatry, humanism, and all the more as of late, organic orders, including hereditary qualities, epigenetics, endocrinology, and neuroscience. Notwithstanding, no agreement on an operational definition exists. The focal inquiry is the means by which a few young ladies, young men, ladies, and men

students (Kokkinos et al., 2012), and negatively associated with stress (Por et al., 2011), depression (Araddila et al., 2014), and negative emotions (Pekrun et al., 2014). Studies of children of schizophrenic mothers played a crucial role in the emergence of childhood resilience as a major theoretical and empirical topic (Garmezy, 1974; Garmezy & Streitman, 1974; Masten et al., 1990). Dr. Emmy Werner, called the "mother of resiliency," is a person-focused resilience researcher. In her research (1955-1995), she examined the dispositions of at-risk children along with the physical and social resources of the youngsters who faced these disadvantages and found that both are important contributors to development of resilience. Following Werner's groundbreaking studies on children (Werner et al., 1971; Werner & Smith, 1977), research on resilience expanded to include multiple adverse conditions such as socio-economic disadvantage and associated risks (Garmezy, 1991), parental mental illness (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998), maltreatment (Cicchetti & Rogosch, 1997). Early efforts were

primarily focused on personal qualities of “resilient children,” such as autonomy or high self-esteem (Masten & Garmezy, 1985). In some early writings, those who did well despite multiple risks were labelled “invulnerable” (Anthony, 1974). As research evolved, it became clear that positive adaptation despite exposure to adversity involves a developmental progression, such that new vulnerabilities and/or strengths often emerge with changing life circumstances (Werner & Smith, 1982). Thus, the term “resilient,” describe the relative as opposed to fixed nature of the concept, came to encompass those once referred to as “invulnerable.”

RELATIONSHIP OF RESILIENCE WITH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence is also one of the major psychological factors which contribute to resilience as explained below. John Mayer and Peter Salovey (1990) suggested that processing information about emotions entailed abilities different from those required to process information about verbal, mathematical or visuo-spatial problems contained in traditional intelligence tests. Gardner (1983) argued that there were many other intelligences besides that measured by traditional IQ tests and these included the ability to understand and regulate one’s own emotions (intrapersonal intelligence) and the ability to understand and manage relationships (interpersonal intelligence). The argument put forward in Goleman’s book was that success at work and in achieving valued life goals was largely due, not to IQ, but to emotional intelligence—the capacity to recognise and manage one’s own emotions and those of others in significant interpersonal relationships. The concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to accurately perceive, access and generate emotions, assist thought processes, and reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004). EI addresses self-regulatory processes of emotions and motivation that enable people to make adjustments to achieve individual, group, and organizational goals (Froman, 2010). According to Armstrong, Galligan, and Critchley (2011), EI may well be directly connected to resilience, such that emotionally intelligent behaviour in stressful circumstances is adaptive. Salovey, Bedell, Detweiler and Mayer (1999) theorize that persons with higher EI cope better with the emotional demands of stressful encounters because they are able to “accurately perceive and appraise their emotions, know how and when to express their feelings, and

can effectively regulate their mood states”. EI is thus postulated to buffer the effects of aversive events through emotional self-awareness, expression and management. Moreover, we agree with Armstrong et al. (2011) that EI is antecedent to resilience (Matthews, Zeidner, & Roberts, 2002) rather than encompassing resilience (Bar-On, 1997), such that EI functions through its composite dimensions to facilitate resilience. As cited by Tugade and a convergence across several research methodologies indicates that resilient individuals have optimistic, and energetic approaches to life, are curious and open to new experiences, and are characterized by high positive emotionality (Block & Kremen, 1996). Additional evidence suggests that high-resilient people proactively cultivate their positive emotionality by strategically eliciting positive emotions through the use of humour (Werner & Smith, 1992), relaxation techniques (Wolin & Wolin, 1993), and optimistic thinking (Kumpfer, 1999).

RESILIENCE IN ADOLESCENCE

Various researchers have adopted different approaches to define resilience in the best possible way, but debate is still on whether resilience is a trait or a process or an outcome. In this present study, resilience is considered as an attribute or personal trait. This trait-based approach defined resilience as a positive personality attribute that promotes successful adaptation in the face of adversities (Wagnild et al., 1993; Connor et al., 2003). Resilience involves a series of individual attributes that foster their ability to cope successfully with stressful life events (Hoge et al., 2007). Enhancing resilience is thus an important way to promote adolescents’ psychological and social development. Being resilient, adolescents can become more competent and sturdier in the face of adversities. Adolescence is a risky period (Hill, 1993). Opportunities for developing a wide variety of psychological problems abound this period of life. It has been found that resilient students are able to translate difficult environments into a source of motivation by maintaining high expectations and aspirations, being goal-oriented, having good problem-solving skills, and being socially competent (Wang, Haertel, & Wahlberg, 1994). Resilience can manifest as reaction to a particular event or be a broader response to the high-risk environments individuals encounter. For many African American students, especially those educated in urban or inner-city schools, academic success is contingent on their ability to demonstrate resilience in the face of racism, poverty, and environments with few resources

(Swanson & Spencer, 1991). Findings of research by Griffin & Allen (2006) indicate students at both schools- well-resourced, suburban high school and low-resourced urban school, encounter barriers (i.e., racial climate and a lack of resources) that inhibit their college preparation. Despite these obstacles, participants demonstrated resiliency, which kept them focused on their educational goals and desire to attend college. Adolescents are more likely to show good adjustment if they have an easy temperament and a high level of intellectual ability. A high level of self-esteem, and optimistic attributional style, a general belief in control over one's life and a specific belief that factors related to specific stresses may be controlled (high self-efficacy) are all associated with good adjustment. These traits (high IQ and easy temperament) and positive belief-systems probably render youngsters less vulnerable to becoming overly physiologically aroused and aggressive or demoralised and depressed when faced with life stresses. Adolescents are less adversely affected by life stresses if they have good planning skills, a sense of humour and the capacity to empathise with others. All of these coping skills can help youngsters detach from deviant or incapacitated attachment figures (such as criminal or incapacitated parents) and deviant peers and seek out more resourceful and prosocial attachment figures and peers. Selecting or creating a positive social network (through marriage, positive school experiences, good friendships, or talented performance in sports or arts) can halt negative chain reactions or start positive chain reactions that facilitate personal development. Better adjustment to life stress occurs when adolescents come from higher socio-economic groups, have good social support networks comprising family members and peers and attend schools that provide a supportive yet challenging educational environment. The absence of childhood separations, losses, bereavements, parental mental health problems, criminality and marital discord also characterise the families of children who are resilient in the face of stress (Carr, 2004).

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN RESILIENCE

Gender is a prominent feature that influences how individuals manage stressful life events. Research reveals that males and females achieve resiliency differently. There are numerous paths to resilience, and males and females go about it with different mechanisms (Bonanno, 2008). Women in general experience more social support and less expressed anger which is predictive of less depressive

symptoms and therefore a protective factor (Galambos, Barker, & Krahn, 2006). Young females experience higher levels of depressive symptoms compared to males in adolescence, these symptoms decline more rapidly for females during emerging adulthood. Girls cope with daily stressors by seeking social support and utilising social resources while boys use physical recreation such as sports to cope with adversity (Frydenberg & Lewis, 1993). Resilience is more likely to result when relationships are positive and self-esteem is high. Evidence suggests that females are more social during stressful events (Hampel & Petermann, 2005) but the female students were consistently found to have higher scores than boys for individual characteristics in communication, empathy, help-seeking and goals and aspirations. They are also more likely to report positive connections with parents, teachers, and adults in the community, peer relations and autonomy experiences, than boys. Numerous studies have shown that females tend to face more difficulties within the workplace. In a study by Isaacs (2014), results indicated that female deans had a higher level of resilience as compared to male deans. Presumably the accumulation of these challenges has enhanced resilience for women. In another research by Boardman et al., (2008) heritability of resilience was found to be higher among men compared to women. Also, it was shown that self-acceptance is one of the most important aspects of psychological functioning that accounts for the heritability of resilience among both men and women. However, compared to women, men appear to derive additional benefits from environmental mastery that may enable otherwise sex-neutral resilient tendencies to manifest.

Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence is the most demanding and prime facet that every youngster should possess, in order to develop a positive vision for their bright future. Along with emotional intelligence skills, resilience is equally important to create a protective buffer while dealing with negative and stressful life events. A substantial number of studies in the area of positive psychology have evidenced the importance of emotional intelligence in predicting resilience. Because most stressful events have emotional components, and people's ability to manage these emotions effectively is often considered as another positive factor while determining resilience (Troy et al. 2011). Another study on high school students confirmed the fact that emotional intelligence predicts resilience more strongly in comparison to

cognitive intelligence (Jowkar, 2007). Likewise, Armstrong et al. (2011) also indicate that emotionally intelligent behavior in a stressful circumstance is adaptive, therefore it is directly connected and antecedent to psychological resilience. Positive affectivity allows people to deal well with adversity and stress because it increases one's cognitive resilience levels (Gloria et al., 2013).

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