

RESILIENCE: AN INDISPENSABLE VIRTUE TO BE FOSTERED

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Abstract

Sometimes individuals become vulnerable to situations such as family conflict sexual abuse bullying, body Shaming and .drug abuse. These situations may adversely affect the normal intellectual, social, and emotional development of children and youth. On the other hand, many children face such situations with fortitude. They bounce back after going through setbacks and .maybe be considered to be resilient. The current paper is an endeavor to comprehend the environmental as well as protective factors of resilience . The paper also highlights the role of school in fostering resilience among students.

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Introduction

Certain children fail to thrive and scale up the ladder of success due to the ordeals they face in their lives (Rak & Patterson, 1996). Family conflict poverty childhood sexual abuse bullying, disparaging attitudes of parents and family, body shaming, and lack of communication among family members are a few factors that can be implicated in development of dysfunctional and imbalanced personalities in children. Generally, people are of the opinion that such individuals will not be able to lead a meaningful life and will encounter difficulties in establishing and sustaining meaningful relations with other people. However, many children who face difficulties in life thrive despite their exposure to myriad obstacles and hardships. (Alvord & Grados, 2005; Brooks, 2006; Masten, 2007, 2011; Masten, Best, & Garnezy, 1991; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998; Rak & Patterson, 1996; Werner, 1986). Children who thrived despite various challenges have been identified as resilient. Such individuals possess virtues that facilitate their growth and development. Such virtues empower them to overcome the most difficult situations of life. It is imperative to comprehend what environmental factors individuals are vulnerable to and what protective factors may be nurtured to enhance resilience in children (Alvord & Grados, 2005). The paper throws light on the environmental factors and protective factors of resilience as well as the interventions designed at the school level to develop resilience among children.

Environmental Factors

Individuals may become vulnerable due to (a) poverty, (b) the education level of parents, and (c) family conflict (Brooks, 2006; Luthar, 1991; Masten, 2011; Rak & Patterson, 1996). Traumatic life experiences (e.g., bullying, childhood sexual abuse, body shaming, neglect) are predictors of negative life outcomes (Brooks, 2006; Luthar, 1991; Masten, 2011; Rak & Patterson, 1996). Minority status (Luthar, 1991; Masten, 2011) and racial discrimination (Brooks, 2006) has been implicated as a risk factor that opens a poor personality or dysfunctional personality. For example, children of African and Hispanic descent are often disproportionately disadvantaged due to living in severely distressed neighborhoods with reduced accessibility to social supports, community services, employment opportunities, and high-quality schools. Accumulation of these risks at one point in time or leads to dysfunctional outcomes (Brooks, 2006; Masten, 2001) including substance use (Brooks, 2006; Resnick, 2000), aggressive behavior (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005; Resnick, 2000), poor academic achievement, school dropout (Brooks, 2006), teenage pregnancy, juvenile crime, mental health issue, and emotional trauma (Resnick, 2000). The extent of problems such as these demands solutions

promoting positive development in children and youth to address underlying problems (Brooks, 2006).

Resilience Defined

According to Alvord and Grados (2005), numerous definitions of resilience require conditions of an identified risk or challenge followed by some defined measure of a positive outcome. ability to learn from hardships and setbacks It has been suggested that a resilient individual must exhibit a positive attitude across multiple domains in life (Cicchetti & Rogosch, 1997). Moreover, resilience means the possession of myriad skills that help a person overcome challenges (Alvord & Grados, 2005).

Resilience refers to achieving positive outcomes despite challenging or threatening circumstances (Brooks, 2006; Masten, 2001; Masten et al., 1991), coping successfully with traumatic experiences, and avoiding destructive routes. (Garmezy, Masten, & Tellegen, 1984; Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000; Werner, 1992). An essential requirement of resilience is the presence of risk and protective factors promoting positive growth and the development of constructive coping strategies (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). Resilience focuses on understanding of the development of positive outcomes (Masten, 2001).

According to Masten and Coatsworth (1998), resilience is an inferential and contextual construct necessitating two key kinds of judgments. First, there must be a significant threat to an individual's development. Secondly, there must be current or past dangers judged to have the potential to disrupt normal development. In other words, risk must be present. Everyone is born with an innate capacity for resilience. Resilient children work well, play well, well, and develop well (Bernard, 1993,). Resilient children have five attributes: (a) social competence, (b) problem-solving skills, (c) critical consciousness, (d) autonomy (Bernard, 1993, 1995), and (e) sense of purpose (Bernard, 1995). Social competence includes qualities such as empathy, caring, flexibility, communication skills, and a sense of humor (Bernard, 1993, 1995). Children who have social competence establish positive relationships with adults and peers helping them bond with their family, school, and community. Problem-solving skills incorporate the ability to think abstractly giving children the ability to generate alternative solutions for cognitive and social problems. Planning and resourcefulness in seeking help from others. these are two important problem-solving skills. . Autonomy is a person having a sense of his or her own identity, the capability to act independently, and the ability to exert some control over the environment. Finally, a sense of purpose, according to Bernard (1995), involves having goals, educational aspirations, and a strong faith in a bright future.

Protective Factors

According to Rutter (1979), Many children do not succumb to adversities it is imperative to figure out or identify why such people do exceptionally well despite miserable situations in life. Garmezy et al. (1984) and Rutter (1986) stressed the crucial need to understand the impact of life experiences on children. Furthermore, it is essential to understand why those experiences elicit such a range of responses in different individuals. Resilience is impeded by risk factors and facilitated by protective factors (Alvord & Grados, 2005; Benzie & Mychasiuk, 2009; Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005; Martinez-Torteya, Bogat, von Eye, & Levendosky, 2009; Masten et al., 1991; Rak & Patterson, 1996; Walsh, 2003). Protective factors alter responses to adverse events so that potential dysfunctional outcomes can be avoided. On the other hand, risk factors are circumstances that jeopardize individuals subjective as well as well as psychological being

- (a) Individual characteristics The results of numerous longitudinal studies demonstrate that certain personality factors distinguish resilient children from those who succumb to adversities (e.g., Garmezy et al., 1984, Murphy & Moriarty, 1976; Rutter, 1985, 1986; Werner, 1984, 2000; Werner & Smith, 1982). According to Werner (1984), resilient children have temperamental characteristics that evoke positive responses from people. Murphy and Moriarty (1976) demonstrated that resilient children had more autonomy and a strong social orientation. Other characteristics include (a) deep and meaningful relationships with people, (b) autonomy (c) an optimistic view of their experiences in life, and (d) pro-social behavior (Masten 2001). Moreover, parsons, connections and attachments (Alvord & Grados, 2005), coping skills, temperament, (Benzie & Mychasiuk, 2009), and internal motivation (Masten, 2001) contribute to resilience.
- (b) Self-regulation Self-regulation is one of the most fundamental protective factors (Alvord & Grados, 2005; Benzie & Mychasiuk, 2009; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998). Researchers have identified a good self-regulation as being a protective factor in resilience (e.g., Buckner, Mezzacappa, & Beardslee, 2003; Eisenberg et al., 2003; Werner, 1993). Rydell, Berlin, and Bohlin (2003) conducted a longitudinal study of five-year-olds and found that low regulation of positive emotions and exuberance predicted problem behavior and low levels of pro-social behavior. On the other hand, positive emotions and exuberance were associated with high levels of pro-social behavior. Resilient individuals are confident in their ability to overcome hurdles. Masten (2001) found that those who are resilient avail opportunities

and resources around them. Hardships are viewed as learning experiences that make them stronger. Resilient people are able to evolve strategies to achieve positive outcomes in life (e.g., availing opportunities to build their strengths striving to build and sustain a positive and meaningful relationship with people pursuing educational opportunities, participating in extracurricular activities).

- (c) Self-concept Research indicates that self-concept also plays a crucial role in the development of resilience (e.g., Beardslee & Podorefsky, 1988; Bolig & Weddle, 1998; Jens & Gordon, 1991; Marton, Golombek, Stein, & Korenblum, 1988; Rutter, 1986; Werner, 1984, 1986). Marton et al. (1988) found that positive self-esteem was related to having a sense of self and a sense of significant attachment figures. Studies indicate that threatening and challenging situations made individuals stronger rather than aggravating their mental health (Bolig & Weddle, 1998; Jens & Gordon, 1991; Rutter, 1986; Werner, 1986). It seems that difficulties boost their self-concept. Werner (1984) found that resilient individuals have a strong belief in their capabilities and an optimistic approach toward life.

(d) Family conditions A longitudinal study in 1959, found that the authoritative parenting style was associated with optimal competence in different domains (Baumrind, 1989). According to Baumrind (1991), authoritative parents follow the most balanced approach to parenting. They set boundaries for the children but at the same time are responsive to the children's emotional needs. Responsive parents are supportive, understanding and exhibit warmth in their behavior while also providing an intellectually stimulating environment. Moreover, they are demanding in the sense they are firm, rational, and consistent, but do not impose wishes on children. Eisenberg et al. (2003) found that children's social competence and adjustment are related to positive parenting. Other family protective factors of resilience include (a) family structure, (b) mother-father relationships, (c) supportive parent-child interactions, (e) stimulating environments, (f) social support, and (g) adequate resources (Benzies & Mychasiuk, 2009). (f) Community supports It has been found that role models outside the family can be a strong source of social support for individuals exposed to challenging and vulnerable situations (Beardslee & Podorefsky, 1988; Bolig & Weddle, 1988; Garmezy et al., 1984; Masten, 2001; Werner, 1984, 1986, 2000). Role models outside the family may include teachers, school counselors, and good neighbors. Environments and social structures are

important elements of an effective community (Alvord & Grados, 2005). Community protective factors include (a) early prevention and intervention programs, (b) safety in neighborhoods, (c) relevant support services (d) recreational facilities and programs, (e) accessibility to adequate health services including Mental Health Services, (f) economic opportunities for individuals and (g) religious and spiritual organizations (Alvord & Grados, 2005; Benzies & Mychasiuk, 2009).

Fostering Resilience in Schools

There are several ways to foster resilience in schools. First, schools can design programs since many of these programs have not only build resilience but also helps in fostering virtues such as positive self-image, positive self esteem and empathy that are considered crucial in the development of resilience. Moreover, these programs can foster prosocial attitudes, and an optimistic outlook toward the future which are crucial for cultivating adolescents' resilience. The teachers should make sure that they celebrate students progress not just success. In order to build resilience and willingness to grow it is imperative that Students focus on progress, not just success. Teachers should give open feedback so students focus on their efforts and not just the outcome. Students should explore and avail opportunities that would enable them to develop their latent talents and skills. Students should be given an opportunity to set the goals . because that would enable them to develop autonomy which means that they would be able to develop a strong sense of independence. Is considered crucial for the development of resilience

Second, it has been found that attachment to adults other than a child's parents has a positive impact on how well the child is able to overcome said bags .healthy relationships with counselors and school teachers development of positive virtues. Therefore, schools can develop a culture that promotes two primary and interdependent components of school bonding: (i) attachment: meaningful and positive relationships with teachers at school and (ii) commitment: vacation towards School tasks and doing well in school . Third, encourage the students to explore the opportunity to build skills and moreover in order to achieve this objective extracurricular activities should be organized in school. Besides, counseling sessions can be conducted for students who need more intensive intervention due to the severity of adversity.

Therapies and strategies employed in counseling sessions should be tailored according to the needs of the students In addition, specialized intervention programs such as individual group and family counseling counseling can be employed.

Finally, school teachers and counselors can collaborate with students' parents to encourage parental involvement and support in fostering the development of students resilience. In general, the school can adopt a holistic approach to involve diverse stakeholders in the schoolfamily, and community to nurture the development of adolescents' resilience.

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