

# A Study of Resilience In Relation To Happiness and Anxiety among Adolescents of Lower Socio- Economic Status

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### Abstract

Adolescence is the stage of confusion and adolescents face a lot of problems during this period. Some have the ability to overcome the problems and effectively deal with the negative outcomes, others may not have. Resilience is the ability to cope with the stressful events. The present study tries to understand the relation between resilience, happiness and anxiety among adolescents of lower socio-economic status. Happiness depends on various pre-determined factors which play an important role. For the present study a sample of 100 students (50 Males and 50 Females) were randomly selected from various schools of Ludhiana. The subjects were assessed for Resilience, Happiness and Anxiety using Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (Connor & Davidson 2003), Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (Hills & Argyle, 2002) and Beck Anxiety Inventory (Beck, 1988) respectively. Results showed the significance gender differences on Resilience, Happiness and anxiety. Study revealed that Resilience is correlated with Happiness and Anxiety.

**Keywords:** Adolescence, Resilience, Happiness, Anxiety.

### Introduction

Kohn (1976) suggested that lower –class children are brought up in an atmosphere that encourages a ‘conformist orientation’ without the flexibility necessary to deal with a stressful situations. Stott (1978) emphasized the contribution of prenatal stressors to the increased rate of mental illness among less privileged segments of society. McLeod & Kessler (1990) found that lower SES vulnerability persists across all types of personal events. It is not only confined to income but also extends to education and occupational status as well. People from low SES compared to those from (high SES) face many disadvantages such as reduced public /private services, accessibility to jobs, and informal social support. They are also subjected to environmental stressors such as homelessness, illegal drugs etc (Shinn & Gillespie, 1994). Recent research has shown the effects of poverty on intelligence, school achievement and socio emotional functioning. Low socio economic status along with lower teacher expectancies contribute to lower levels of school achievement (McLoyd, 1998).

Despite these adversities, some people overcome odds and succeed. A research by Schoon (2006) was conducted on individuals who were exposed to high versus low levels of socio economic deprivation, behavioral adjustment, health and psychological well-being. The findings indicated that resilience enabled these individuals to overcome adverse childhood and move on to rewarding lives in adulthood. According to Chen and Miller (2012) there are large number of reasons why people from low SES maintain good health despite worst life situations. The ‘Shift-and-Persist’ model states that the environmental resources help them to overcome and find the ways to deal with the stressful situations. The study finds the relationship between happiness and a host of socio-economic variables. The data set consists of a random sample of over 5,000 individuals from the Swedish adult population. Happiness is measured by a three-point categorical measure of overall happiness (not happy, happy sometimes, happy most of the time), and an ordered probit model is used to econometrically estimate the happiness equation. The results were consistent with the theoretical predictions and show that happiness increases with income and education and decreases with unemployment,

urbanization, being single, and male gender (Gerdtham & Johannesson, 1997).

Resilience has a direct and positive impact on adolescent's happiness and well-being (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005). Katherine (2014) studied 299 undergraduate and found that there is a positive relation between resilience and happiness. The study revealed that spirituality and happiness are the two important predictors of resilience. It is found that adverse experiences in childhood are positively related to happiness and resilience. Lyubomirsky (2001) defined that happy people are more likely to deal with and face the stressful circumstances in better way as compared to unhappy people. Sharma & Gulati (2015) studied 360 adolescents of 15-18 years of age. Results revealed that despite the hard conditions of living under low social conditions, they perceived higher degree of happiness. Also females showed high level of happiness as compared to males in the study.

Anxiety is very common problem in school going children (Costello et al.2003). Several recent studies have reported the association between resilience and anxiety and depression among people experiencing major stressors (e.g., Beasley et al., 2003; Southwick et al., 2005; Hoge et al., 2007).

The participants in another study, with higher resilience scores had significantly lower anxiety and depression than participants with lower resilience. Further, those participants who showed clinically significant anxiety or depression also had significantly lower resilience scores than their non-clinically significant anxious and depressed colleagues. These findings replicate and extend those from previous studies (e.g., Beasley et al., 2003; Southwick et al., 2005; Hoge et al., 2007) and confirm the general association between resilience and these two psychological disorders.

**Objectives**

The present study has been designed by keeping in mind the following objectives:

1. To determine the correlation between resilience, happiness and anxiety among adolescents.

2. To assess gender differences on Resilience, Happiness and Anxiety.

**Sample**

A sample of 100(N=100) adolescents with age ranging between 16-18 years were randomly selected from various schools of Ludhiana, Punjab, India. The adolescents belonged to Lower socio-economic status. Equal number of boys (N=50) and girls (N=50) were included for the same.

**Measures**

To assess the Resilience, Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (Connor & Davidson, 2003) was used. It includes 25 items which is 0-4 point rating scale. The range of score lies between 0-100. Higher score indicate higher resilience. To assess Happiness among students Oxford Happiness Scale (Hills &Argyal, 2002) was used. It consists of 29 items. It is a 6 point rating scale. The score range between 29-174. Higher scores indicate higher happiness. To assess Anxiety the Beck Anxiety Inventory was used. It is a 21 item inventory on 4 point rating scale. The total score ranges from 0-63. Higher scores indicate high anxiety.

**Procedure**

First of all rapport was built with the subjects and the informed consent was taken. The subjects were debriefed about the study. The study was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, socioeconomic status scale was randomly administered to the subjects. Out of which 100 (boys=50, girls=50) students of lower socio economic status were selected purposively. In the second phase, the tests of Resilience, Happiness and Anxiety were administered to the subjects personally to the selected sample. The instructions were given very clearly. The Resilience, Happiness and Anxiety were measured using the standardized scales. After the subjects filled the scales, the scoring was done using the manuals and keys. Statistical analysis was done using the SPSS. Correlations were calculated among the variables with the help of Pearson's product moment method. T-test was calculated to determine the gender differences on all the variables. Results are presented below in the form of tables.

**Results**

**Table No.1 Shows The Mean, Standard Deviation, Skewness and Kurtosis of The Total Sample.**

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Resilience	67.13	6.51	0.40	-0.32
Happiness	119.45	12.22	-0.89	1.09
Anxiety	19.96	8.52	0.97	1.65

**Table No. 2 Shows The Mean And Standard Deviation Of Resilience, Happiness And Anxiety Among Boys.**

	Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Resilience	Boys	50	70.22	6.75
Happiness	Boys	50	122.10	11.13
Anxiety	boys	50	18.86	7.21

**Table No. 3 shows the mean, standard deviation of resilience, happiness and anxiety among girls.**

	Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Resilience	Girls	50	64.04	4.53
Happiness	Girls	50	116.80	12.79
Anxiety	Girls	50	21.06	9.61

**Table No. 4 correlation between Resilience, Happiness and Anxiety among Total sample**

	Resilience	Happiness	Anxiety
Resilience	1	.486**	-.359**
Happiness		1	-.447**
Anxiety			1

**Table No. 5 correlation between Resilience, Happiness and Anxiety among Boys**

	Resilience	Happiness	Anxiety
Resilience	1	.515**	-.335*
Happiness		1	-.495**
Anxiety			1

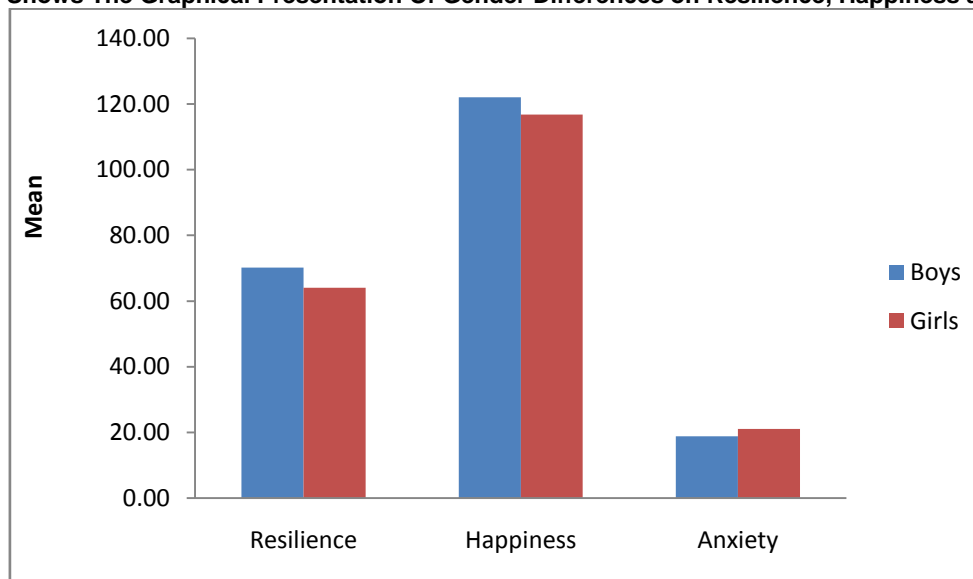
**Table No. 6 correlation between Resilience, Happiness and Anxiety among Girls**

	Resilience	Happiness	Anxiety
Resilience	1	.393**	-.390**
Happiness		1	-.394**
Anxiety			1

**Table No 7. Shows the t-ratio among Boys and Girls on Resilience, happiness and Anxiety**

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	
Resilience	Boys	50	70.22	6.75	5.375**
	Girls	50	64.04	4.53	
Happiness	Boys	50	122.10	11.13	2.211*
	Girls	50	116.80	12.79	
Anxiety	Boys	50	18.86	7.21	1.295
	Girls	50	21.06	9.61	

**Figure 1.1 Shows The Graphical Presentation Of Gender Differences on Resilience, Happiness and Anxiety.**



**Discussion**

In Table 1, the descriptive analysis showed the mean, standard Deviation, Skewness and Kurtosis of the total sample (N=100). The value of Resilience is 67.13± 6.51, Happiness is 119.45±12.22 and the value of anxiety is 19.96±8.52. The value of Skewness is 0.40, -0.89 and 0.97 for Resilience, Happiness and Anxiety respectively. The value of Kurtosis for Resilience, Happiness and Anxiety is -0.32, 1.09 and 1.65 respectively.

In Table 2 Descriptive findings among boys revealed the value for boys in Resilience as 70.22±6.75, Happiness as 122.10±11.13 and Anxiety as 18.86±7.21.

In Table 3 Descriptive findings showed the values for girls. For Resilience the value is 64.04±4.53, for Happiness the value is 116.80±12.79 and value of Anxiety is 21.06±9.61.

For total sample Table No 4. Shows that Resilience has a significant positive correlation with Happiness (.486\*\*) at p=0.01 level. Significant negative correlation of resilience with Anxiety (-.359\*\*) at p=0.01 level is revealed in the study. Happiness has a significant negative correlation with Anxiety (-.447\*\*) at p=0.01 level.

For boys Table No. 5 shows that Resilience has significant positive correlation with Happiness (.515\*\*) at p=0.01 level and significant negative correlation with Anxiety (-.335\*) at p=0.05 level. Happiness is negatively correlated with Anxiety (-.495\*\*) at p=0.01 level.

Table No. 6 shows the correlation result among girls. The study revealed that Resilience has a significant positive correlation with Happiness (.393\*\*) at p=0.01 level and significant negative correlation with Anxiety (-.390\*\*) at p=0.01 level. Happiness has

a significant negative correlation with Anxiety (-.394\*\*) at  $p=0.01$  level.

Table No 7 is presenting the gender differences on Resilience, Happiness and Anxiety. t-ratio on Resilience came out to be 5.37\*\* which indicates the difference on Resilience among boys and girls. As the result shows that mean value of boys (70.22) on Resilience is more than mean value of girls (64.04). t-ratio on Happiness came out to be 2.21\* which shows that there is a difference between happiness among boys and girls. The mean value of boys on Happiness (122.10) is more than girls (116.80).

The current study shows that Resilience has a positive relation with Happiness and negative relation with Anxiety. The study revealed that Happiness also has a negative relationship with Anxiety. Further, the study showed that boys are more Resilient and happier than girls. The study showed that girls are more anxious than boys.

#### **Conclusion and Implication**

The aim of the present study was to explore the relationship between Resilience, Happiness and Anxiety among adolescents of lower socio- economic status. There are many studies that showed Resilience is positively correlated with well-being (Scoloveno 2013). The trait of being happy is more commonly found in resilient people (Ong et al. 2006). This study indicates that resilience is negatively correlated with Anxiety. The results of the study showed that higher resilience scores predicted lower scores on levels of depression, anxiety, and stress and obsessive-compulsive symptoms after controlling age and gender. There are studies that indicate adolescents with higher resilience score shows correlation with internalizing than externalizing problems (Hjemdal et al.2010).

There are many studies that support the gender differences on resilience scores. Studies state that males are more resilient than females (Abukari & Laser, 2013). There are studies that show significant differences on happiness scores between two genders. It was found that there are clear and significant gender differences not only in the level of happiness but also in the factors affecting their happiness. The result shows the female score lower on happiness than men. A study on 360 adolescents (15-18 years) found that among two genders the mean happiness score was significantly different with females scoring higher as compared to male adolescents. It shows that females perceived more happiness as compared to male adolescents ( $p < 0.05$ ), (Hori, 2014). The degree of anxiety also varies among boys and girls. The women experience anxiety at more deeper level as compared to males (Fujita, Diener & Sandvik, 1991). Understanding of resilience is important in order to prevent the development of common mental disorders like depression, anxiety and stress reactions (Connor & Zhang, 2006).

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