

Gender Differences in Academic Resilience Among International Students

Dr. Preeti Bala , Associate Professor, School of Education, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India, Email ID: preeti.bala@lpu.co.in

Abstract

The study was conducted on 500 International students studying in five universities of Punjab and Chandigarh. As per the nature of the study, descriptive survey method was applied. The study mainly focused on finding the gender differences among international students regarding academic resilience. The data was further divided on the basis of nationality as well. The results of the study indicated that international students differ significantly regarding academic resilience. Academic resilience was found more in female students as compared to male international students.

Keywords: Academic Resilience, International students

Introduction

Contemporary era is the era of globalisation. This globalisation is pervasive in every field. Same is applicable in education sector as well resultant large no. of students are moving out of their native land to pursue higher education but these international students are facing many challenges.

With the passage of time international students are able to adapt themselves as per the needs and requirements of prevailing circumstances in host country. This adaptation instils confidence in them and makes them emotionally stable as well. But this pace of adaptation differs in students. Some can adapt within no time whereas others remain in the condition of culture shock for long period of time. This culture shock further escalates many problems. In other words, it points out successful adaptation of an individual towards the challenging and threatening environment. In actual sense, resilience aids an individual to attain success in academics even in the presence of certain barriers which make it problematic for them to achieve success. (Bernard, 1991). Those students who possess high level of resilience also

face problematic experiences or trauma in their life but some way, they are able to confront and come out of such kind of depressive conditions (Bryan, 2005). With the resilience only, students are able to successfully with academic failures, anxiety, and academic stress in the process of learning.

Certain attributes like adjustable disposition, flexibility, tolerance of uncertainty, Positive attitude, expectation of glitches, problem solving ability, inquisitiveness, internal locus of control and achievement motivation are all related to people who have ability of academic resilience in them. Hence academic resilience carries greatest importance for entire student community especially students from foreign land.

Academic Resilience

As life has turned more competitive and challenging these days, still one can witness the presence of such people who manage to keep their morale high in such circumstances also. Such people do not give up the task easily rather they struggle with circumstances and successfully deal with obstacles. Such people are termed as Resilient one. Precisely these people use some motivational statements.

Resilience corresponds to the capacity that young students obtain in order to adjust or recover from adverse environmental circumstances such as failure in school, college or university, being victim of child abuse, having delinquency, being poverty prone, or experiencing violence. As per Richardson (1990) resilience is “the process of coping with disruptive, stressful, or challenging life events in a way that provides the individual with additional protective and coping skills than prior to the disruption that results from the event.” Resiliency, or resilience, is generally interpreted in the reference to a concept which mainly includes two different aspects including, the contact with hardship and optimistic adjustment results of that hardship (Luther & Cicchetti, 2000).

Academic resilience is identified as student's capability to successfully tackle with impediments, pressure and challenges in the school settings. Also, it may be defined as the heightened probability of emerging out as a winner in various life undertakings even in the presence of negative circumstances that are brought by early traits experiences and conditions. Such students show improved performance even after being confronted with stressful conditions as well as events due to which they fall under the probability of performing poorly at school level or consequently leaving the school. (Alva, 1991). Even

though there are large number of students who consistently exhibit poor performance but still there remains certain students who somehow manage to change their academic misfortunes. (Martin & Marsh 2006). In other words, academic resilience may be understood as the ability on the part of students to be able to perform in satisfactory manner even in the presence of such circumstances which stops the large number of other with the similar circumstances from becoming successful.

Significance of the Problem

Academic resilience is a field not so much explored in India, though all students face the problem of poor adjustment in classrooms as well as outside the classroom at all stages. Sometimes they are not able to understand the language as well as their own fellow students. Hence their mental health is also affected. This study provided a base which will aid educators to come up with useful educational interventions to be applied for resilient and non-resilient students. It has been mentioned earlier also that as these International students come from far off places and are more prone to remain aloof or isolated which may exert negative impact on their mental health. The present research has clearly helped out to highlight the difficulties that International students experience in adjusting to a new academic and social environment so conclusion helps in focusing on perspective related to possible approaches for improvement of their experiences.

The study also leads to development of suggestions for the educational (teaching and learning strategies) as well as socio- cultural aspect (communication patterns) for improving academic resilience in International students.

Objectives

To compare the Academic Resilience of International students on the basis of gender.

- a) To compare the academic resilience of male and female International students from Nigeria.
- b) To compare the academic resilience of male and female International students from Bhutan.
- c) To compare the academic resilience of male and female International students from Afghanistan.
- d) To compare the academic resilience of male and female International students from Nepal

- e) To compare the academic resilience of male and female International students from Tanzania

Research Methodology

The research was conducted on 500 international students from 5 universities of Punjab and Chandigarh with the use of judgement sampling and by verifying null hypotheses mainly.

Results and Interpretation

To find out the difference between 250 female and 250 male International students, regarding their academic resilience t-test was computed. The computed values are depicted in the table 1.

Table 1: Showing difference between Male and Female International Students regarding Academic Resilience

Variables	Gender	Mean	t-value	p-value	Remarks
Academic Resilience of Total Sample	Male	157.96	2.08	.038*	Significant
	Female	161.57			
Academic Resilience of Nigerian Students	Male	154.55	1.82	.072	Insignificant
	Female	160.82			
Academic Resilience of Bhutanese Students	Male	163.55	.312	.756	Insignificant
	Female	162.51			
Academic Resilience of Afghanistani Students	Male	157.82	1.76	.081	Insignificant
	Female	150.79			
Academic Resilience of Nepali Students	Male	162.41	.692	.490	Insignificant
	Female	165.09			
Academic Resilience of Tanzanian Students	Male	151.43	-3.748	.000*	Significant
	Female	167.01			

Hypothesis : There exists no significant difference in Academic Resilience of International students on the basis of gender.

From table 1 shows the t-value regarding significance of difference between Means regarding academic resilience among male and female International students as 2.08 ($p=.038$) which stands significant at .05 level, whereas this calculated t-value has also been found greater than table value for the same which came out as 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the hypothesis that there exists no significant difference in Academic Resilience of International students on the basis of gender is not retained. The corresponding Mean value further clarifies that academic resilience is more in female international students.

The reason behind such results may be due to the availability of educational opportunities given to female students nowadays. Earlier females lacked in terms of educational motivation due to scarcity of educational opportunities for them. Availability of educational opportunities for female in the contemporary world has motivated them to prove their mettle which has further made them resilient in academics. In addition to this, as mentioned earlier for long females were deprived of their rights, especially educational one. Nowadays it is the era of women empowerment. Therefore, Government is paying special attention towards the empowerment of females in every field of life. Out of these educational field is most prominent one. Another important observation which needs to be highlighted is that from the result analysis in past many years at school/ college/ university level, it can be clearly analysed that female students have outshined male students with their diligent efforts. Resultantly somewhat similar trend is reflecting in the results of the present study as well.

Such results are in line with a study conducted by Stewart (2007) on 1109 males and 1163 females (2492) to assess self-perception of resilience and associative factors among school children of Australia in which female students were found more resilient than male students. Similar trend was also evident in a study conducted by Lee (2009) on 91 students of Georgia .

On the similar pattern Rajan et al.(2017) conducted study on 155 High School students of Kerala in which significant difference was found between male and female students with regard to their academic resilience. Female students were at upper edge as compared to male students.

Similarly, Cecilia (2017) in a study on school students of Kiambu County, Kenya explored that female students had higher level of academic resilience than male students. Maintaining contradiction, few studies which yielded contrary findings to the present study as

Sarwar (2010) in a study on secondary level students of Pakistan found male students as more academically resilient. Similarly, Houpy (2017) analysed medical students of University of Chicago found resilience more in male students in comparison to females.

Hypothesis (a): There exists no significant difference in academic resilience of male and female International students from Nigeria.

The t-value regarding significance of difference between Means of academic resilience among male and female International students from Nigeria was found to be 1.82 ($p = .072$) which stands insignificant at .05 level, whereas this calculated t-value is also less than table value for the same, which came out as 1.96 and 2.59 at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. So, the hypothesis that there exists no significant difference in Academic Resilience of male and female International students from Nigeria is retained. Close view of Mean values of both samples also supports the inference of the present study, as not much difference is found in the Means values of male and female International students from Nigeria. And whatever difference is visible, does not stand statistically significant to draw inference in favour of any one particular gender with respect to academic resilience. Thus, it can be mentioned that such results came out as in case of Nigerian International students, gender does not play any key role in determining their academic resilience.

Results corroborated prior research conducted by Esteban (2014) to explore relationship between resilience and school completion in 94 immigrant youth in Spain, belonging to different nationality, age group, residence time and incorporation in education system and found that no significant differences were evident based on gender as well as other parameters.

Hypothesis (b): There exists no significant difference in academic resilience of male and female International students from Bhutan

Table 1 clearly indicates that the t-value regarding significance of difference between Means of academic resilience among male and female International students from Bhutan is came out as .312 ($p = .756$) which stands insignificant at .05 level, whereas this calculated t value is also less than table value for the same, which came out to be 1.96 and 2.59 at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. Resultantly the hypothesis that there exists no significant difference in Academic Resilience of male and female International students from Bhutan is accepted. Mean Value of both samples also supports the analysis. Mean value is 163.55 in

male International students and 162.51 in female International students from Bhutan. So, it is quite apparent from Mean value of both samples that there lies very minute difference in the academic resilience of male and female International students from Bhutan. Such minute difference falls insignificant statistically.

Hypothesis (C): There exists no significant difference in academic resilience of male and female International students from Afghanistan.

Table 1 clearly shows that the t-value regarding significance of difference between Means pertaining to academic resilience among male and female International students from Afghanistan was found to be 1.76 ($p=.081$) which stands insignificant at 0.05 level, whereas this calculated t value is also less than table value for the same, which came out as 1.96 and 2.59 at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. So, the hypothesis that there exists no significant difference in Academic Resilience of male and female International students from Afghanistan is retained. The corresponding Mean values regarding academic resilience are 157.82 and 150.79 in case of male and female International students from Afghanistan. Such results indicate that both male and female International students do not differ considerably in being resilient at academic front meaning thereby in case of International students from Afghanistan, gender differences do not play any significant role in determining academic resilience.

Hypothesis (d): There exists no significant difference in academic resilience of male and female International students from Nepal.

Table 1 shows t-value of significance of difference between Means of academic resilience among male and female International students from Nepal as .692 ($p=.490$). This p-value stands insignificant at .05 level, whereas this calculated t value is also greater than table value for the same which came out as 1.96 and 2.59 at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, the hypothesis that there exists no significant difference in academic resilience of male and female International students from Nepal is accepted. Such insignificant difference in the both the samples is also visible from Mean value also which is 162.41 in case of male and 165.09 in case of female International students from Nepal. Not much difference was found in the Mean value of both samples. It indicates that International students from Nepal are somewhat equally competent to bounce back at academic hardships irrespective of their gender differences.

Hypothesis (e): There exists no significant difference in the academic resilience of male and female International students from Tanzania.

Table 1 clearly indicates p-value regarding significance of difference between Means of academic resilience among male and female International students from Tanzania was found out to be -3.748 ($p=.000$) which stands significant at .05 level, whereas this calculated t value is also greater than table value for the same, which came out as 1.96 and 2.59 at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, the hypothesis that there exists no significant difference in Academic Resilience of International students from Tanzania is not accepted. Mean value of both samples also supports the results. Mean value is 151.43 in case of male and 167.01 in case of female International students from Tanzania meaning thereby that female International students from Tanzania are more academically resilient than their male counterparts.

Conclusions

- As per the findings, female International students have higher academic resilience as compared to male International students. The reason behind such results may be due to the availability of educational opportunities given to female students nowadays. Availability of educational opportunities for female in the contemporary world has motivated them to prove their mettle which has further made them resilient in academics. In addition to this, as mentioned earlier for long females were deprived of their rights, especially educational one. Therefore, Government is paying special attention towards the empowerment of females in every field of life. Out of these educational field is most prominent one. Another important observation which needs to be highlighted is that from the result analysis in past many years at school/ college/ university level, it can be clearly analysed that female students have outshined male students with their diligent efforts. Resultantly somewhat similar trend is reflecting in the results of the present study as well wherein female students have been found to be more academically resilient as compared to male students.

- (a): Results indicate insignificant difference in the academic resilience of male and female International students from Nigeria. Not much difference found in the Means values of male and female International students from Nigeria.
- (b): It was found that no significant difference exists in the academic resilience of male and female International students from Bhutan.
- (c): It came to light that there exists no significant difference in the academic resilience of male and female International students from Afghanistan.
- (d): No significant difference was found with regard to academic resilience of male and female International students from Nepal.
- (e) Female International students from Tanzania have been found more academically resilient in comparison to their male counterparts.

REFERENCES

- Alva, S. A. (1991). Academic invulnerability among Mexican-American students: The importance of protective resources and appraisals, *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 13, 18-34.
- Andrew, J.M., & Herbert. M. (2006). Academic resilience and its psychological and educational correlates: A construct validity approach. *Psychology in the Schools*, 43, 267-281.
- Attewell, P., Lavin, D., Domina, T., & Levey, T. (2006). New evidence on college remediation. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 77(5), 886-924
- Bartley, M., Schoon, I., Mitchell, R., & Blane, D. (2010). Resilience as an asset for healthy development. In *Health Assets in a Global Context*, Springer, New York, NY.101-115
- Benard, B. (1991). *Fostering resiliency in kids: Protective factors in the family, school, and community*. available online at: [http://www.hopeworks.org/formation/documents/Fostering Resiliency.pdf](http://www.hopeworks.org/formation/documents/Fostering%20Resiliency.pdf) (accessed 04 June 2014)
- Benard, B. (1995). *Fostering resilience in children*. ERIC Digest. Champaign, IL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 386 327)

- Bryan, J. (2005). Fostering educational resilience and academic achievement in urban schools through School-family-community partnerships. *Professional School Counseling*, 8(3), 219-227.
- Catterall, J.S. (1998) Risk and Resilience in Student transitions to high school. *American journal of Education*, 106, 302-333.
- Cecilia Nyambura Mwangi & Anthony Muriithi Ireri.(2017). Gender Differences in Academic Resilience and Academic Achievement among Secondary School Students in Kiambu County, Kenya, *International Journal of psychology and behavioural sciences*, Juniper Publisher, 5(5), DOI: 10.19080/PBSIJ.2017.05.555673
- Cheng, V., & Catling, J. (2015). The Role of Resilience, Delayed Gratification and Stress in Predicting Academic Performance. *Psychology Teaching Review*, 21(1), 13-24.
- Esteban, M. P. S., & Martí, A. S. (2014). Beyond compulsory schooling: resilience and academic success of immigrant youth. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 132, 19-24.
- Fallon, M (2010) School factors that promote academic resilience in urban latino high school students, Ph.D. thesis, Loyola University Chicago.
- Gardynik, U. (2008). *Defying the odds: Academic Resilience of Students with Learning Disabilities*. Doctoral thesis, University of Alberta, Edmonton.
- Gerdes, H. & Malinckrodt, B. (1994). Emotional, social and academic adjustment of college students: A longitudinal study of retention. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 72, 281 – 288.
- Gonzalez, R., & Padilla, A. M. (1997). The academic resilience of Mexican American high school students. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 19(3), 301-317.
- Hartley, M. T. (2011). Examining the relationships between resilience, mental health, and academic persistence in undergraduate college students. *Journal of American College Health*, 59(7), 596-604.
- Henderson, N. (2007). Resiliency-building “hidden” predictors of academic success. *Resilience in Action*. Ojai, CA: Resiliency in Action, Inc, 39-43.
- Higgins, G. O. (1994). *Resilient adults: Overcoming a cruel past*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Houpy, Jennifer C; Lee, Wei Wei; Woodruff, James N; Pincavage, Amber T.(2017). Medical student resilience and stressful clinical events during clinical

training.Medical Education Online; Abingdon,
22(1). DOI:10.1080/10872981.2017.1320187

- Ibeagha, P. N., Balogun, S. K., & Adejuwon, G. A. (2004). Resiliency of Inner-City Yoruba University Undergraduates in South Western Nigeria. *Studies of Tribes and Tribals*, 2(2), 125-129.
- Lee, D. D. (2009). Impact of Resilience on the Academic Achievement of At-Risk Students in the Upward Bound Program in Georgia.
- Martin, A. J., & Marsh, H. W. (2003). Academic resilience and the four Cs: Confidence, control, composure, and commitment.
- Martin, A. J., & Marsh, H. W. (2006). Academic resilience and its psychological and educational correlates: A construct validity approach. *Psychology in the Schools*, 43(3), 267-281.
- Martin, A. J., & Marsh, H. W. (2009). Academic resilience and academic buoyancy: Multidimensional and hierarchical conceptual framing of causes, correlates and cognate constructs. *Oxford Review of Education*, 35(3), 353-370.
- Martin, A.J. (2010). *Building Classroom Success: Eliminating Academic Fear and Failure*. New York: Continuum.
- Masten, A. S., Best, K. M., & Garmezy, N. (1990). Resilience and development: Contributions from the study of children who overcome adversity. *Development and psychopathology*, 2(4), 425-444.
- Masten, A.S. (2001). Ordinary magic: Resilience processes in development. *American Psychologist*, 56(3), 227-238.
- Masten, A.S., Best, K.J., & Garmezy, N. (1991). Resilience and development: Contributions from the study of children who overcome adversity. *Development and psychopathology*, 2, 425-444.
- McClendon, C., Nettles, S. M., & Wigfield, A. (2000). Fostering resilience in high school classrooms: A study of the PASS Program (Promoting Achievement in School through Sport). *Schooling students placed at risk: Research, policy, and practice in the education of poor minority adolescents*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 289-307.
- McGillivray, C. J., & Pidgeon, A. M. (2015). Resilience attributes among university students: a comparative study of psychological distress, sleep disturbances and mindfulness. *European Scientific Journal*, 11(5), 33.

- McMillan, J. H., & Reed, D. F. (1994). At-risk students and resiliency: Factors contributing to academic success. *The Clearing House*, 67(3), 137-140.
- Morales, B. L. (2016). *Building resilience in the university environment* (Doctoral dissertation, Keiser University).
- Muhammad Irfan Arif & Munawar S. Mirza. (2017). Effectiveness of an Intervention Program in Fostering Academic Resilience of Students at Risk of Failure at Secondary School Level. *Bulletin of Education and Research*, 39(1), 251-264.
- Narayanan, S. S., Onn, W., & Cheang, A. (2016). The influence of perceived social support and self-efficacy on resilience among first year Malaysian students. *Kajian Malaysia: Journal of Malaysian Studies*, 34(2).
- Nettles, S. M., Mucherach, W & Jones, D. S. (2000). Understanding resilience: The role of social resources. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 5, 47-60.
- Paul, H., Subalukshmi, S. S. S., & Mala, V. (2014). Resilience, academic motivation and social support among college students. *Indian Journal of Positive Psychology*, 5(4), 430.
- Pidgeon, A. M., Rowe, N. F., Stapleton, P., Magyar, H. B., & Lo, B. C. (2014). Examining characteristics of resilience among University students: An international study. *Open journal of social sciences*, 2(11), 14.
- Rajan, S. K., Harifa, P. R., & Pienyu, R. (2017). Academic resilience, locus of control, academic engagement and self-efficacy among the school children. *Indian Journal of Positive Psychology*, 8(4), 507-511.
- Richardson, G.E., Neiger, B.L., Jensen, S., & Kumpfer, K.L. (1990). The Resiliency Model. *Health Education*, 21(6), 33-39.
- Riley, J. R., and Masten, A. S. (2005). "Resilience in context," in *Resilience in Children, Families, and Communities: Linking Context to Practice and Policy*, eds R. D. Peters, B. Leadbeater, and R. McMahon (New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum), 13–25.
- Rudwan, S., & Alhashimia, S. (2018). The Relationship between Resilience & Mental Health among a Sample of University of Nizwa Students-Sultanate of Oman. *European Scientific Journal, ESJ*, 14(2).
- Russo, Rebecca and Boman, Peter (2007) Primary School Teachers' Ability to Recognise Resilience in their Students. *The Australian Educational Researcher* 34(1), 17-32.

- Rutter, M. (March, 1984). Resilient children. *Psychology Today*, 57-65.
- Sabouripour, F., & Roslan, S. B. (2015). Resilience, optimism and social support among international students. *Asian Social Science*, 11(15), 159.
- Sarwar, M., Inamullah, H., Khan, N., & Anwar, N. (2010). Resilience and academic achievement of male and female secondary level students in Pakistan. *Journal of College Teaching & Learning*, 7(8), 19-24.
- Seligman, M. (1995). *The optimistic child*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Shilpa. S, & N. L. Srimathi. (2015). Role of Resilience on Perceived Stress Among Pre- University and Under-Graduate Students. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 2(2)
- Subhan, M., Amat, S., Bakar, A. Y. A., Abdidin, M. H. Z., Faisal, R. A., Tohirin, T., & Kamin, A. H. (2015). Level of Resilient Among International Students in Public Higher Education Institutions in Malaysia. *Scientific Journal of PPI-UKM*, 2(4), 181-188.
- Uwah, C., McMahon, H., & Furlow, C. (2008). School belonging, educational aspirations, and academic self-efficacy among African American male high school students: Implications for school counselors. *Professional School Counseling*, 11(5), 296-305.
- Wang, M.C., & Haertel, G.D., & Walberg, H.J. (1994). Educational resilience in Inner Cities. In M.C. Wang & E. W. Gordon (Eds), *Educational resilience in inner-city America: Challenges and Prospects*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Wolin, S.J. & Wolin, S. (1993). *The resilient self: How survivors of troubled families arise above adversity*. New York, NY: Villard.

WEBSITES

- <http://www.mondofacto.com/facts/dictionary?social+adjustment> accessed on 7th June 2014
- http://psychology.wikia.com/wiki/Social_adjustment accessed on 7th June 2014
- <http://www.slideshare.net/janlue03/motivation-and-social-adjustment> accessed on 7th June 2014
- <http://www.alleydog.com/glossary/definition.php?term=Adjustment#ixzz33z1QMPja> accessed on 7th June 2014
- www.eric.com. accessed in June 2014

- www.preservearticles.com accessed on 7th June 2014
- <http://www.reference.md/files/D012/mD012917.html> accessed for Campbell, Psychiatric Dictionary, (1996) on 7th June 2014
- <https://www.theeducatoronline.com/asia/news/singapore-students-third-most-resilient-in-world/246194> accessed on 3rd Dec 2018
- <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/adjustment> accessed on 3rd Dec 2018
- <http://www.reference.md/files/D012/mD012917.html> accessed on 3rd Dec 2018
- <http://www.oxfordreference.com/search?q=social+adjustment&searchBtn=Search&isQuickSearch=true> accessed on 3rd Dec 2018
- http://psychology.wikia.com/wiki/Social_adjustment accessed on 3rd Dec 2018
- <https://www.ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=mental+health> accessed on 3rd Dec 2018