



Analyzing the Relationship Between Resilience and Depression Among Students of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at Kabul University

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Abstract

This research aims to identify and analyze the relationship between resilience and depression to contribute to a better understanding of how resilience affects the reduction of depression symptoms and to offer strategies for enhancing resilience and decreasing depressive disorders among students. Through this study, I hope to provide a foundation for the development of effective intervention strategies and the promotion of psychological well-being within the student population. The present study was conducted in a descriptive-analytical manner. The statistical population of this research consisted of male students from the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at Kabul University, totaling 444 students. The sample size was calculated using Morgan's table, resulting in a sample of 208 students selected through simple random sampling. Resilience and depression assessment scales were distributed in person to the students. To examine the research hypotheses, Spearman correlation tests were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 25 software. The results of the Spearman correlation analysis, with a correlation coefficient of (-0.480) and a significance level of (0.000), indicate that increased resilience is associated with a reduction in depression. This study found that resilience is inversely and significantly related to depression among students of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at Kabul University. These findings emphasize the importance of strengthening resilience as an effective strategy for reducing depression.

Keywords: *Resilience; Depression; Students; University; Psychological Interventions*

Introduction

In contemporary societies, psychological disorders, particularly depressive disorders, have become a serious mental health concern. According to reports from the World Health Organization

(WHO, 2023), depression is considered one of the leading causes of disability worldwide, and its negative impacts are undeniable, not only on the affected individual but also on society. On the other hand, resilience has emerged as a significant concept in positive psychology, referring to an individual's ability to cope with challenges and maintain mental well-being in difficult circumstances (Masten, 2021).

Resilience is defined as an individual's ability to cope with stress, pressures, and life challenges. This trait enables a person to effectively confront problems and return to a normal state. Resilience encompasses adaptability, flexibility, and the capacity for recovery and growth in the face of difficulties and crises (Masten, 2001).

Depressive disorder is a psychological condition characterized by symptoms such as feelings of guilt, hopelessness, changes in sleep and appetite, and a diminished interest in daily activities. This disorder can negatively impact an individual's daily functioning and lead to a reduced quality of life (Beck, 1967).

Due to psychological pressures related to academic studies, career prospects, and social issues, students are considered one of the high-risk groups for developing mental health disorders, particularly depression (Ibrahim, Kelly, Adams, & Glazebrook, 2013). However, some students, despite facing these pressures, are able to maintain their mental well-being, which may be related to their resilience (Smith et al., 2018).

This study examines the relationship between resilience and depressive disorder among students of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences. The aim of this research is to determine the extent to which resilience influences the likelihood of developing depression in this group. The findings of this study can contribute to improving intervention and educational programs in universities, helping students strengthen their resilience and prevent depression.

According to reports, the prevalence of depression among students has significantly increased. Academic pressures, anxiety about career prospects, and social issues have been identified as the primary factors contributing to the onset of depression in this group (Ibrahim et al., 2013). In this context, understanding protective factors such as resilience, which can help reduce the severity and prevalence of depression, is of particular importance.

The Role of Resilience in Coping with Stress: Resilience is recognized as a crucial factor in maintaining mental health and dealing with life stressors (Masten, 2021). Individuals with higher resilience are better equipped to handle problems and pressures, and this trait can act as a preventive factor against depression (Smith et al., 2018). A thorough examination of the relationship between resilience and depression can help identify effective strategies to enhance resilience and reduce the risk of depression.

Depression can directly impact students' academic performance, including reduced motivation, impaired concentration, and decreased efficiency (Bayram & Bilgel, 2008). These issues can lead to lower grades, dropping out, and social problems. Therefore, finding effective ways to reduce depression and enhance resilience can help improve students' academic performance and quality of life.

Evidence suggests that resilience can act as a protective factor against depression. A study by Smith et al. (2018) in the area of resilience and stress coping demonstrated that individuals with high resilience are generally less likely to experience depression and are better able to cope with life's challenges. This research indicates that resilience can help reduce the severity and prevalence of depression (Smith, 2018).

Numerous studies have demonstrated that depression can adversely affect the academic performance and quality of life of students. Research conducted by Bayram and Bilgel (2008) revealed

that depression among students leads to decreased motivation, impaired concentration, and lower grades. These issues may contribute to dropout rates and a decline in both the social and individual quality of life for students (Bayram & Bilgel, 2008).

Studies indicate that intervention and educational programs can help enhance resilience and reduce depression. Windle et al. (2011) emphasized the importance of resilience measurement scales in their study and showed that programs focusing on strengthening resilience can aid in reducing psychological problems and improving the quality of life for students (Windle et al., 2011).

This evidence clearly indicates that the relationship between resilience and depression among students is a serious and significant issue. Understanding this relationship can aid in the design and implementation of intervention programs aimed at increasing resilience and reducing depression, ultimately leading to improvements in the mental health and quality of life of students.

Resilience, as an important psychological trait that helps individuals effectively cope with life's challenges, has been addressed in various psychological theories. Examining the relationship between resilience and depression can contribute to the expansion of resilience theories and explore new aspects of this concept. For example, the results of this research may help strengthen resilience models and identify factors that influence its enhancement (Smith et al., 2018).

Research on the impact of resilience on depression can contribute to a better understanding of the mechanisms associated with this disorder. Depression theories typically focus on biological, psychological, and social factors (Beck, 1967). By incorporating resilience into these theories, a deeper understanding of how to prevent and mitigate the severity of depression can be achieved, thereby facilitating the improvement of existing theories in this area.

Examining the interaction between resilience and depression can facilitate the development of new theoretical frameworks based on the findings of empirical research. These frameworks can focus on identifying and analyzing the key factors that influence both resilience and depression, leading to more precise theorizing about the relationship between these two variables (Blazer, 2004).

The results of this research can contribute to the development of new theoretical models designed for predicting and managing depression and enhancing resilience. These models can assist researchers and clinical professionals in providing more effective strategies for the prevention and treatment of depression and in designing better intervention programs (Windle et al., 2011).

The research, by providing empirical evidence on the relationship between resilience and depression, can contribute to the development and strengthening of existing theories in this field and lead to a deeper understanding of the psychological mechanisms related to resilience and depression.

The results of this research can serve as a basis for developing intervention and educational programs for universities. These programs can focus on enhancing resilience and reducing depression, thereby aiding in the improvement of students' mental health. For example, educational programs that include stress management techniques and resilience enhancement can help reduce psychological issues among students (Windle et al., 2011).

Resilience was identified as a protective factor against depression among students. Students with higher levels of resilience experienced fewer symptoms of depression. This research emphasized that resilience skills, such as problem-solving and stress management, can help mitigate the negative impacts of academic stress on mental health. Additionally, the findings indicated that promoting resilience through educational and counseling programs can help reduce the incidence of depression in this group (Smith et al., 2015).

Resilience acts as a key factor in reducing depression in the workplace. Employees with high resilience experienced fewer symptoms of depression, and improved resilience led to reduced job stress and enhanced overall well-being in the work environment. Researchers recommended that organizations should implement programs to strengthen employee resilience to improve mental health and increase productivity (Zhang et al., 2016).

Resilience is recognized as an important factor in reducing depression across various age groups. This study, particularly concerning older individuals and those facing social and economic pressures, demonstrated that resilience can significantly mitigate the negative effects of depression. The findings of this research indicate that enhancing resilience can contribute to improving quality of life and reducing psychological issues in different age groups (Werner & Smith, 2001).

Resilience can effectively contribute to the reduction of depressive symptoms in individuals experiencing significant life crises, such as natural disasters or traumatic events. Resilience has been identified as a critical coping mechanism that helps mitigate the negative effects of crises and promotes psychological recovery (Jones, 2007).

Resilience has been identified as a key factor in reducing depression among adolescents. Teenagers with higher levels of resilience reported significantly lower levels of depressive symptoms. The research findings indicate that enhancing resilience through psychological interventions can lead to a substantial improvement in the mental health of adolescents (Denson, 2017).

Overall, an in-depth study of the relationship between resilience and depression not only enhances the understanding of these two variables but can also lead to the design and implementation of effective strategies for improving mental health among students. This can have positive impacts on academic success and the quality of life of students, ultimately contributing to an overall improvement in the mental health status of the educational community.

Numerous studies have indicated a significant increase in the prevalence of depression among students. Research conducted by Ibrahim et al. (2013) demonstrated that the incidence of depression among university students is markedly high, which can lead to adverse effects on their mental health and academic performance. This study highlights that factors such as academic and social pressures contribute to the emergence of depressive symptoms. The results of this research can facilitate the development and implementation of effective intervention and therapeutic programs aimed at reducing depressive symptoms and enhancing resilience among the student population. By identifying the factors that strengthen resilience and aid in coping with depression, programs can be specifically designed to meet the psychological needs of students (Smith et al., 2018). These programs may encompass educational workshops, individual and group counseling, and various psychological interventions.

Enhancing Student Quality of Life: Strengthening resilience and reducing depression can significantly improve the quality of life for students. Studies have shown that depression can have negative impacts on academic performance, social relationships, and physical health among students (Bayram & Bilgel, 2008). By improving resilience, students can better cope with academic and social pressures, thereby enhancing their quality of life and academic success.

The findings of this research can assist educational policymakers and academic counselors in developing more effective policies and programs to support the mental health of students. For example, the insights gained from this research could aid in designing educational and counseling programs that focus on strengthening resilience (Windle et al., 2011). These initiatives may include depression prevention programs and the enhancement of coping skills.

Depression and psychological disorders can result in academic attrition and educational difficulties (Ibrahim et al., 2013). By enhancing resilience and mitigating depressive symptoms, it is possible to reduce dropout rates and improve student retention in higher education institutions.

Investigating the relationship between resilience and depressive disorders among students can yield significant implications across multiple academic and practical realms. These implications may facilitate the advancement of students' psychological well-being, inform the development of educational policies, and contribute to the formulation of new theoretical frameworks.

Overall, this research has the potential to yield positive and far-reaching impacts across various academic and practical domains, contributing to the enhancement of both the psychological well-being and academic performance of students.

Research Method

This study is characterized as descriptive-analytical in nature, with applied objectives, and employs a correlational methodology. The correlational approach enables the researcher to investigate and quantify the extent and nature of the relationships between two or more variables. This method is particularly relevant when the research aim is to identify and analyze the existing relationships among variables without implementing any manipulations or controls over them. In this study, the main objective is to investigate the relationship between resilience and depressive disorders among students. Resilience is operationalized as an independent variable, whereas depressive disorder is regarded as a dependent variable. The researcher seeks to determine whether a statistically significant correlation exists between the students' levels of resilience and the severity of their depressive symptoms.

Statistical Population and Sampling

Statistical Population: The statistical population for this study consists of all students enrolled in the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at Kabul University during the 1403 academic year. According to the available data, the total number of students in this faculty amounts to 444. This population encompasses students across all academic levels, from first year to fourth year, engaged in various disciplines within psychology and educational sciences. The comprehensiveness of the selected population enables it to accurately reflect the research findings. As a result, the generalizability of these findings to similar student populations in other universities is also achievable to a certain extent.

Sampling: In this study, a simple random sampling method was employed to select a representative and valid sample from the statistical population. To determine the appropriate sample size, Morgan's table was utilized. Based on Morgan's table and considering the size of the statistical population of 444 individuals, the suitable sample size for this research was determined to be 208 participants.

Data Collection Instrument

The data collection tool used in this study is the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), which is one of the most well-known and validated instruments for measuring resilience. The scale was developed by Connor and Davidson in 2003. The Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (2003) consists of 25 items, each rated on a 5-point Likert scale (Always, Mostly, Sometimes, Rarely, Never), and has been used in global research. The scoring method ranges from 5 to 1, with higher scores indicating higher levels of resilience. In studies conducted within Iran, and considering the cultural similarities between Iran and Afghanistan, this instrument was administered by Mohammadi (2005) to a sample of 248 individuals. Its reliability, assessed through Cronbach's alpha for internal consistency, was reported to be 0.89 (Mohammadi, 2005). In a study by Samani et al. (2007), which used this questionnaire to assess resilience among university students, the reliability was calculated using Cronbach's alpha and found to

be 0.87 (Samani et al., 2007). Additionally, in a study by Amini (2013), the reliability of the scale was determined to be 0.83 (Amini et al., 2013). In this study, the validity of the questionnaire, after localization to the target population, was confirmed by three faculty members from Kabul University. To assess its reliability, Cronbach's alpha was calculated, yielding a value of 0.75, which was deemed acceptable.

The 21-item Beck Depression Inventory (BDI), one of the most widely used and validated tools for measuring the severity of depression, developed by Aaron T. Beck and colleagues in 1961, was utilized. This instrument has been employed in numerous international studies, and its reliability and validity have been confirmed. Research has demonstrated that the tool possesses strong internal consistency and satisfactory test-retest reliability. The 21-item Beck Depression Inventory (BDI), one of the most widely used and validated instruments for assessing the severity of depression, developed by Aaron T. Beck and colleagues in 1961, was utilized. This tool has been employed in numerous international studies, and its reliability and validity have been confirmed. Research has shown that the instrument demonstrates strong internal consistency and satisfactory test-retest reliability. The BDI has been translated and used across various cultures and languages, successfully maintaining its validity in different social and cultural contexts.

Data Analysis Method

In this study, for the analysis of the collected data, after gathering the questionnaires, the data were electronically entered and coded using the statistical software SPSS (version 25). At this stage, each respondent was identified with a unique code, and the scores for each question in the questionnaires were entered into the software as numerical data. The data were then checked for entry errors and missing values, which were subsequently corrected.

In the first stage of data analysis, descriptive statistics were used to summarize and describe the data. These statistics included the calculation of the mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum, and variance for the resilience and depression questionnaire scores. These indicators help the researcher to better understand the distribution of scores and the overall state of the sample under study.

To examine the relationship between resilience and depression, Spearman's correlation test was used. This test measures the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the two variables.

Result

The description of the main variables of the study:

Table Number (1) Description of Main Variables in the Study

Main Variables	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Variance
resilience	208	94.75	14.87	55	151	221.36
depression	208	15.29	10.51	0	50	110.56

Based on Table 3, it can be stated that the mean resilience score is 94.75, with a standard deviation of 14.87, a minimum value of 55, a maximum value of 151, and a variance of 221.36. The variable of depression has a mean of 15.29, a standard deviation of 10.51, a minimum value of 0, a maximum value of 50, and a variance of 110.56.

Question 1: What is the level of resilience among students at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at Kabul University?

Table Number (2) Frequency Distribution of Different Levels of Resilience

Resilience Levels	Frequency	Percentage
Low Resilience	5	2.4%
Moderate Resilience	75	36.1%
High Resilience	128	61.5%
Total	208	100%

According to Table 2, which illustrates the different levels of resilience, it can be articulated that there are 5 students categorized as having low resilience, representing 2.4%. There are 75 students classified as having moderate resilience, accounting for 36.1%. Furthermore, 128 students are identified as having high resilience, constituting 61.5%.

Question 2: What is the prevalence rate of depressive disorders among students at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at Kabul University?

Table Number (3) Distribution of Frequency of Different Levels of Depression

Levels of Depression	Frequency	Percentage
Healthy (No Depression)	83	39.9%
Mild Depression	45	21.6%
Needs Consultation with Psychiatrist	27	13.0%
Moderately Depressed	33	15.9%
Clinical Depression (Severe)	12	5.8%
Excessive Depression	8	3.8%
Total	208	100%

According to Table 3, which illustrates the various levels of depression, it can be stated that there are 83 students in the healthy (no depression) category, constituting 39.9%. There are 45 students categorized as having mild depression, making up 21.6%. Additionally, there are 27 students who require consultation with a psychiatrist, representing 13.0%. Furthermore, 33 students are classified as moderately depressed, accounting for 15.9%. There are 12 students in the clinical (severe) depression category, which corresponds to 5.8%. Finally, 8 students are experiencing excessive depression, comprising 3.8%.

Question 3: What is the relationship between resilience levels and the severity of depressive disorders among students of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at Kabul University?

Table Number (4) Spearman Correlation Coefficients for Analyzing the Relationship Between Resilience and the Depression Variable.

Variable	Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level
Depression	-0.480	$p < 0.001$

There is a relationship between depression and resilience. Considering the results reported in Table 4, there is a statistically significant correlation between resilience and the level of depression ($p < 0.01$). Furthermore, the correlation coefficient ($r = -0.480$) indicates that this correlation is of a negative nature.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, which examines the relationship between resilience and depression among students of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at Kabul University, the results indicate a significant inverse relationship between the two variables. The Spearman correlation coefficient between resilience and depression was -0.480 , with a significance level of 0.000 . This result suggests that as resilience increases among students, the level of depression decreases. In this section, the research findings are discussed and analyzed in light of relevant theories and previous studies, as well as considering the specific characteristics of the sample population.

The findings of this study are consistent with numerous previous studies that have reported a significant negative correlation between resilience and depression. For instance, a study conducted by Wagnild and Young (1993) demonstrated that high resilience significantly prevents the onset of depression. Similarly, the research by Karmen and Vingerhoets (2012) emphasized that individuals with higher levels of resilience are less likely to experience depression when facing life challenges, particularly during their academic years.

Other studies have also demonstrated that resilience, as a protective factor, can mitigate the negative effects of stress and prevent the onset of psychological issues such as depression. These studies support the findings of the present research, highlighting that resilience is one of the most crucial psychological factors that can help individuals manage and cope with life's challenges.

The findings of the present study can be interpreted in light of the Psychological Capital Theory (Luthans et al., 2007). According to this theory, resilience is one of the core components of psychological capital that enables individuals to effectively recover and cope with challenging and adverse conditions. This theory explains why individuals with higher resilience are less likely to experience depression in stressful academic environments. Their ability to navigate challenges and potential setbacks helps them better manage stress and negative emotions.

Moreover, the interactionist theory emphasizes the role of the interaction between individual characteristics (such as resilience) and environmental conditions (such as academic pressures) in the development of psychological disorders. According to this theory, students with higher levels of resilience are better equipped to manage academic and social stressors, thereby being less susceptible to depression.

One of the most important reasons for the negative relationship between resilience and depression can be attributed to coping strategies. Individuals with high resilience tend to employ more effective strategies for dealing with daily stressors and challenges. These individuals typically rely on approaches such as problem-solving, planning, and utilizing social support, whereas those with lower resilience are more likely to resort to maladaptive strategies such as avoidance, isolation, or denial, which can exacerbate depressive symptoms.

Social support is also a significant factor in reducing depression. Individuals with high resilience typically have greater social support and possess better skills in establishing and maintaining social relationships. This support acts as a buffer against stressors and contributes to the reduction of depression.

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