

ACADEMIC RESILIENCE AMONG INDIAN UNDERGRADUATES: A MIXED METHOD APPROACH

ABSTRACT

Academic resilience is described as achieving academic accomplishment in the face of adversities. There are disagreements over the definition's validity, and its measurement remains a problem. Most quantitative studies fix the criterion of academic success as students' grades on a curriculum-based exam, whereas qualitative studies encompass a wide range of contexts, adversities, and academic outcomes. Being the most populous nation of the world, Indian college systems cater to a huge range of students and research in the field of academic resilience becomes imperative to tackle the mounting stress and competition among college students. In order to add to the existing sparse literature on academic resilience pertaining to India, the aim of the present study was to investigate this process among Indian college students and developing a basic measurement tool based on the findings. Two qualitative studies – (i) semi -structured interviews of 37 undergraduate students – during pre-pandemic period (ii) two-wave longitudinal study using interviews of 22 students – during and post pandemic period, were done. Data analyzed thematically, revealed the following major themes - (a) the dynamicity of college life (b) the facilitators and hinderers of academic resilience (c) the multi-pronged goals of education (d) need for college resilience programs. Longitudinal study revealed prominent changes in academic experience, peer learning and communication as a result of the pandemic, and the steadfast integration of technology in education. Meanwhile, a quantitative study was also conducted to construct a tool for assessing the facilitators of academic resilience. A fifteen-item scale with four factors namely self-efficacy, perseveration, motivation, and social support was developed that showed satisfactory psychometric properties. This study is the first of its type to probe comprehensively, using mixed method, to understand academic resilience and develop a tool for measuring it in the Indian context. A college resilience program outline has been proposed along with the study's future scope, its theoretical and practical implications.

Keywords: Academic resilience, qualitative, thematic analysis, tool construction, Indian college students