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NURTURING RESILIENCE: THE FAMILY FACTOR.

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to review how family provides an important foundation for an individual's emotional and psychological development and how resilience plays a role to adapt and thrive in the face of adversity. Several literatures have been reviewed to collect pertinent, timely research on the chosen topic, and synthesized it into a cohesive summary of existing knowledge in the field. One of the main objectives of this paper is to examine the role of family support, communication, and cohesion in fostering resilience among individuals facing adversity or challenges. It may be concluded that families play a multifaceted role in the development of positive resilience by acting as role models, and teaching children healthy coping mechanisms. On the other hand, negatively by exposing them to unfavourable familial adverse experiences like parental separation, physical and mental abuse, and alcoholism. Some individuals acquire resilience instinctively when they go through difficulties in life during their growing up years.

Keywords: Resilience, Family, Family Dynamics, Human Development, Adversity, support systems

INTRODUCTION

Every person has to deal with unpleasant situations at some point in their lives. How we deal with these traumatic occurrences has a direct relationship to our mental and physical health (Pennebaker, 1999) [1]. Therefore, comprehending how to develop and enhance coping skills is essential for not only promoting ways to cope but also reducing maladaptive coping and stress response in mental illnesses. Resilience, the astonishing ability to overcome adversity and prosper in the face of life's obstacles, is a talent that we all fundamentally possess. Since resilience depends on successful responses to environmental obstacles and overall resistance to the negative impacts of anxiety, a deeper understanding of the factors that favour these outcomes is essential (Graham, L. 2018) [2].

Resilience is defined as the ability to overcome barriers such as trauma, tragic occurrences, risks, or major causes of suffering (Windle, 2011) [3]. The American Psychological Association (APA) defines resilience as the method and outcome of effectively adjusting to challenging or difficult situations in life, through adaptability in one's emotional, cognitive, and behavioural adaptability to both inner and outer circumstances, i.e., the ability to recover from adversity. (APA) A human being's disposition is stronger than all that is tossed at it, two factors contribute to this resilience, pressure from within as well as outside. Individual feels that focusing on your internals is the most effective way to reclaim your vitality (APA,2014) [4], (Stoler,2015[5]. Resilience is important for mental health because it can help people overcome adversity and prevent them from developing mental health problems. Despite adversity, resilient people are much more likely to achieve optimal mental well-being results. Many different types of factors can influence resilience, including genetics, coping strategies, social support, and early exposure to stress Stainton,2019[6], (Folke, 2016) [7], (Hornor ,2017) [8].

The various research from different part of the world highlights the substantial impact of early-life experiences on the development and improvement of resilience, send important messages about how to raise children (Luecken, 2010) [9]. Numerous extensive, long-term studies have examined resilience in individuals from their early years to their transition into adulthood. These studies have consistently shown that essential elements such as healthy family dynamics, positive peer interactions, strong connections with caring adults and supportive romantic partners, effective planning, self-control, and cognitive aptitude play pivotal roles in facilitating a smoother transition to adulthood and fostering greater resilience (Afifi,2016) [10] ,(Wood, 2018) [11].

The meta-analysis conducted by Black and Lobo (2008) in the field of resilience as a characteristic of one's personality or the outcome of parental participation on roughly 465 papers found that resilience is an important component of the involvement of parents, either as a personality trait or as a result. It is essential for children's development to be successful in terms of overall performance (Black ,2008) [12]. In another investigation, the methods of parenting of 439 elderly Chinese residents in the community, whose ages ranged from 60 to 91, were examined in relation to their levels of resilience. The results showed that older people with parents who employed supportive and authoritarian parenting techniques had higher levels of mental toughness and lower levels of anxiety and depressive symptoms. On the other hand, those who had an authoritarian parenting style exhibited greater amounts of anxiety and depressive emotions in addition to lower psychological strength (Zhong, 2016) [13].

Parenting has very important role in children mental health as well as resilience (Armstrong ,2005) [14]. Another study that examined the mediated impact of family conflict and parenting self-efficacy on kids' mental health found a connection between the two that was detrimental to kids' resilience, especially in women with poor self-control (Cassé,2018) [15]. Children who experience rapid shifts in their family structure may face more developmental issues than those raised in stable, two-parent households. The association between multiple household transitions and negative child outcomes can have a negative impact on children's resilience (Fomby, 2007) [16]. The relationship between family stability and cognitive results is strongly correlated with

emotional well-being, which can have a direct impact on children's self-esteem and capacity for overcoming challenges throughout their lives (Osborne, 2007) [17]. Sibling interactions may both increase the likelihood and provide protection against the emergence and maintenance of emotional and behavioural dysfunction, which affects a person's capacity for resilience (Dirks, 2015) [18].

Resilience is a remarkable capacity of people to adapt, develop and retain psychological and emotional well-being in the face of adversity or major life challenges. It is a dynamic process that is influenced by many variables, including heredity, personality, and the outside environment. It is not a static attribute, clearly contribute to adaptive capacity. The familial environment is one of the major aspects that significantly influences a person's resilience. This article seeks to clarify the idea of resilience, its significance in human development, and the ways in which families help to foster resilience.

OBJECTIVES

1. To identify factors that influence resilience.
2. To examine the role of family support, communication, and cohesion in fostering resilience among individuals facing adversity or challenges.
3. Suggest remedial measures that may help children develop resilience.

METHODOLOGY

Several literatures have been reviewed to collect pertinent, timely research on the chosen topic, and synthesized it into a cohesive summary of existing knowledge in the field which include Google Scholar, SpyNet, PubMed, Academia, SSRN, Research Gate, Z-Library, and other websites.

1. Definition of Resilience from the Viewpoint of Developmental Processes

A system's ability to successfully respond to difficulties that endanger its ability to function, survive, or evolve in the future is known as resilience. Although individual differences in personality or cognitive abilities undoubtedly contribute to adaptive ability, resilience is not a feature (Skodol, 2010) [19]. It is not a static trait but a dynamic process influenced by various factors, including genetics, personality, and external environment. The ability of an individual to overcome obstacles is dependent upon how they interact with other individuals and external structures through different educational mechanisms (Shean, 2015) [20]. A young child is protected by strong attachment relationships with a carer and good parenting in many ways that are not physically present in the child. According to attachment theory, interactions with erratic, unreliable, or insensitive attachment figures prevent people from building a solid mental foundation, decrease their ability to handle stressful life events, and increase their risk of experiencing a psychological collapse in a crisis (Seifer, 1995) [21]. Among these factors, the family environment plays a pivotal role in shaping an individual's resilience.

Numerous studies have demonstrated how supportive families can protect kids from the effects of stressful life experiences. Which explains a caring, sensitive, safe home environments and positive parenting foster emotional adjustment as well as resilience in a child (Rutter, 2023). [22].

2. Role of attachment and support inside the family

According to attachment theory the need of developing stable emotional ties between children and their primary carers, usually their parents, throughout infancy. These stable attachments serve as the foundation for trust, emotional self-regulation, and self-assurance development. These ties are developed with parents during birth and childhood, who are relied on for safety, solace, and support is defining attachment by as a motivational and behavioural mechanism that drives youngsters to seek proximity to a known carer when faced with stressful conditions, with the expectation of getting protection and emotional support. Attachment behaviour is a fundamental part of human nature that remains from infancy to adulthood, however it is most noticeable in early childhood (Bowlby,1979) [23], (Shaver, (2009) [24], (McLeod 2009) [25].

Numerous research studies have revealed that attachment security is linked to various adverse outcomes, such as limited problem-solving abilities, ineffective coping strategies, and low self-esteem. Furthermore, a few family-related characteristics that are likewise regarded as sources of attachment security in the context of attachment theory have been found to be essential protective components linked to resilience (Burt, 2012) [26]. Werner and Smith (1982) found that supportive interactions between parents and children and support from other family members had a protective effect (Werner,1989) [27]. Like this, Rutter (1987) found that having a warm and non-critical relationship with at least one parent served as a protective barrier against the hazards associated with family conflicts. He concluded that rather than the person with whom the relationship is created, the protective effect is more influenced by the quality, strength, and stability of the relationship (Rutter, 1987) [28].

When considering attachment as a concept that spans across a person's entire lifespan, it has its roots in the initial relationships formed during infancy and toddlerhood with their mother, father, or primary caregiver. The robustness of these early attachment bonds significantly influences the nature of the relationships forged during adolescence and contributes to resilience, which is characterized as a favourable outcome of secure attachment. Children who consistently receive love and support from their families are more inclined to cultivate a robust sense of self-esteem and resilience (Brooks, 2023) [29].

3. Communication and Problem-Solving

Communication is the lifeblood of a family (Brotherson, 2001) [30]. It encompasses the multifaceted exchange of information, emotions, and interactions among family members. Communication involves both verbal and non-verbal elements, and it is essential for building and maintaining healthy relationships, resolving conflicts, and fostering a strong sense of connection, provides a supportive and loving environment for all family members to grow and thrive. Without effective communication, a family can struggle to function harmoniously and may face challenges in maintaining strong bonds.

The way families communicate about stressful events likely influences individuals' capacity to handle the situations. Through their communication, families impart valuable lessons to children on how to manage their emotions, cope with stress, and adapt to challenges. According to Olson's circumplex model (2011), families that prioritize communication to establish and sustain an optimal equilibrium between togetherness and

adaptability tend to have more resilient members, regardless of the quantity or severity of adverse experiences (Olson, 2021) [31]. Essentially, the way a family communicates to address and manage adverse circumstances takes precedence over the circumstances themselves. Unlike family adversity, which may be beyond control, family functioning can be adjusted by modifying communication patterns, allowing families to shift along the cohesion and flexibility dimensions. Even families that have encountered substantial adversity can potentially support the resilience of their members by emphasizing the creation of a harmonious balance between togetherness and adaptability through their communication (Carr, 2013) [32].

Communication facilitates understanding, resolves conflicts, nurtures relationships, and provides a supportive and loving environment for all family members to grow and thrive. Without effective communication, a family can struggle to function harmoniously and may face challenges in maintaining strong bonds which impact the resilience of the individual.

4.Role Modelling inside the family.

According to Albert Bandura's social learning theory, modelling and observation are crucial components of how and why people pick up new skills (Bandura,1969) [33]. As family is the primary source of childhood socialisation, it has an indelible impact on the development of people and, by extension, society as role models. The beliefs, habits, and identities that are instilled in families ripple outward, influencing communities and societies. Families are the key socialisation agents for children, moulding their views, values, and coping techniques. Parents and carers who demonstrate resilience by efficiently managing stress, solving issues, and having a positive attitude set a good example for their children.

The ineffectual behaviour of parents has a huge impact on children. Children can be affected by physical abuse, neglect, mental abuse, undesired disputes, and family problems. Alcoholism in a parent can have a tremendous impact on their children is one of the examples of such condition. Children from alcoholic or drug-addicted homes are more likely to develop a mental or substance-related problem. Parental substance-related disorders, particularly internalising and externalising disorders, can have variable effects on children's physical, mental, and cognitive health at different stages of development (Capaldi, 2008) [34]. Sibling misconduct has a negative impact on the children (Pfouts, 1976) [35].

Children pick up a lot from their parents and other members of their family. Parents that demonstrate resilience in the face of adversity create a good example for their children. Children are more likely to develop resilient attitudes and behaviours when they see their family members dealing with adversity in a constructive and positive manner.

5.Family Stability

Family stability refers to the consistency and predictability of the home environment, which is widely recognised as a vital aspect in ensuring proper growth and development of children. Major structural family changes, such as changes in parental marital status or movements in family place of residence, may be attributed to this stability. However, it should be mentioned that the consistency of daily family routines and activities is also an important factor that contributes to overall family stability (Baldrige, 2011) [36].

The increase in the number of vulnerable families is cause for concern because significant research has consistently demonstrated that children raised in non-traditional, unmarried family structures have poorer outcomes than children reared in traditional married households. Family instability has become rather common in today's modern world, and it is heartbreaking to see its negative impact on the mental and physical well-being of children (Engle, 1996) [37].

Waldfoegel and her colleagues shed light on this topic by stating that children born to two married biological parents, which symbolises the conventional family structure, are less likely to become high school dropouts, teenage parents, or idle people (Waldfoegel, 2010) [38]. Furthermore, these youngsters tend to do better in their adult lives. Subsequent research on younger children has found that those born with divorced parents have a lower socio-emotional wellness and physical health, as well as lesser cognitive scores (Mariani, 2017) [39].

6. Family Resilience

The capacity of a family to adapt constructively to a difficult circumstance and come out stronger, more resourceful, and more self-assured than before is known as family resilience (Simon, 2005) [40]. When a family unit is resilient, it creates an environment that supports and nurtures the development of resilience in its individual members, including children.

The feelings of safety and connection are frequently associated with resilience. When families foster a strong sense of family identification and connection, children feel secure and comforted. A child's resilience can be strengthened by this sense of belonging, which can operate as a calming influence in trying circumstances. In stable households, coping skills are frequently taught to the kids (Kanewischer, 2022) [41]. They might promote stress-relieving practises like mindfulness, exercise, or making friends. These coping skills become essential tools for kids as they handle their own challenges.

Family resilience acts as a protective factor that can enhance a child's ability to develop resilience. When families create an environment that promotes emotional support, problem-solving, and positive coping strategies, children are more likely to learn and internalize these skills. Ultimately, a resilient family can provide a secure and nurturing foundation for children to thrive and effectively navigate life's challenges.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Resilience is an important life trait that enables children to face adversity, overcome obstacles, and prosper in an ever-changing world. Development of resilience is critical not only for their immediate well-being, but it is also important for their long-term happiness. Fortunately, there are practical tactics and consequences that parents, caretakers, and teachers can use to help children develop resilience. Some of the practical implications are explained below,

1. Training Problem-Solving Skills

Educate children and families how to deal with problems that allow them to distinguish between manageable and unpredictable situations and challenges. Counsellors and parents can model problem solving by discussing

a specific circumstance and suggesting next steps. To encourage children to produce alternatives and options, questions should be asked. Through teaching children problem-solving skills, we give them the self-assurance they need to face challenges.

2. Encouragement emotional self-regulation.

Emotional well-being is strongly linked to resilience. Encourage youngsters to express both good and negative emotions. Emotional upheaval is natural during and after stressful experiences, and children require the opportunity to express what they are feeling. Teach children healthy ways to express their emotions, such as the use of art, journaling, or open dialogue. Children can deal with stress and disappointments more effectively if they understand and regulate their emotions. Families should be encouraged to set aside time for relaxing and positive relationships with one another

3. Encourage a Sense of Self-Sufficiency.

Encourage youngsters to exercise autonomy and make decisions and choices that are considered appropriate for their age. Motivate them to accept responsibility for their acts and for the consequences of those actions. This promotes a sense of autonomy and self-efficacy, both of which are essential traits that contribute to resilience. Children benefit from traditions and a feeling of order in their lives. By setting for them high but attainable goals, parents can help their children and themselves believe in themselves. In this approach, parents impart to their kids the lesson that they can affect change for the better by being proactive.

4. Teach relaxation techniques and mindfulness.

Traditions and a sense of order in children's life are beneficial. Parents can encourage their kids and themselves to believe in oneself by setting ambitious but attainable objectives for them. With this strategy, parents teach their children the importance of being proactive in order to bring about positive change. Participation in sports and physical activity can also help to relax. Distracting a child with some sort of activity can assist take his attention off his anxiety and help them manage their thoughts and feelings.

5. Provide a Safe and Helpful Environment.

Create a safe and stable home environment where children feel secure. Consistent routines, clear boundaries, and a loving atmosphere provide a strong foundation for resilience. A sense of security allows children to venture out into the world with confidence.

6. Create realistic goals and foster a sense of responsibility.

Inspire others to explore their hobbies and interests to the fullest. Motivate them to participate in activities which provide them with a feeling of purpose and meaning. Having a feeling of purpose might help you stay motivated and resilient during challenging circumstances. Assist children in setting attainable objectives and expectations for themselves. Expectations that are unattainable can cause emotions of inadequacies and reduce resilience. Celebrate their accomplishments, regardless of how minor, and appreciate them for what they have done (Taormina,2015) [42], (Walsh,2002) [43], (Maurović, 2020) [44].

DISCUSSION

The capacity of a person to develop and maintain resilience is significantly influenced by the family system. As previously noted, family members contribute to resilience in a variety of ways, ranging from emotional support and communication to modelling conduct and fostering an atmosphere of safety and security. Families can build resilience in two important ways: by providing psychological assistance and by communicating honestly and openly. This raises their psychological awareness while also giving them crucial coping abilities. Children learn by observing their parents' and carers' ways of behaving, which is known as modelling behaviours. When parents demonstrate resilience in their own lives by dealing with adversity, failure, and hurdles with grace and perseverance, they establish the groundwork for their children to follow. The relationship between parents and children has a significant impact on an individual's ability to create and maintain resilience.

As stated above, a family's effect on resilience can take many different forms, from providing emotional assistance and encouraging communications to setting up a secure atmosphere and demonstrating proper conduct. Through emotional support and honest, open conversation, families may help children develop resilience (Petitpas, 2005) [45]. This will increase their emotional intelligence while also giving them crucial abilities to cope. Children pick up skills through watching how their parents and other adults behave, or by "modelling" good behaviour. When parents provide an example for their children by handling disappointments, obstacles, and losses in their own lives in a graceful and determined manner. Resilience is based on family stability, both emotionally and structurally. Children can enter the world with confidence if there are regular routines, clear limits, and a loving and secure environment. Children are more capable of overcoming obstacles outside the house when they feel safe and predictable in their family environment.

CONCLUSION

Reviewing several relevant literatures, it may be concluded that family plays a significant role in fostering resilience. Parents prepare children for the challenges of tomorrow by encouraging resilience within the family unit.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY.

The research on how families shape their children's capacity to overcome hardship sheds light on the critical role that families play in this process. Looking ahead, several significant implications become apparent that point to potential directions for further study as well as intervention programmes that could offer more doable methods for enhancing resilience.

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