

EFFECTIVENESS OF RESILIENCE-BUILDING SKILLS TRAINING FOR
IMPROVING RESILIENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH OF ADOLESCENTS



ZAHYREEN KOUSAR
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requirements for the award of the degree of
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Scholar's Name: Zahyreen Kousar
Registration No. 43416
Program of Study: Doctor of Philosophy in Professional Psychology (Clinical Psychology)
Thesis Title: Effectiveness of Resilience-Building Skills Training for Improving Resilience and Mental Health of Adolescents.

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**I would like to dedicate this thesis to my parents who are not physically with me but
their belief in me made me what I am today and to my beloved husband,
for his constant love and support**

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ABSTRACT

Most mental health issues in adulthood begin during adolescence, particularly in older adolescents. However, most existing studies have primarily focused on treatment rather than prevention. The present research proposed as a school-based, scalable intervention to examine the effectiveness of resilience-building skills for improving resilience and mental health in adolescents. For this, it has been hypothesized that there will be a significant difference in the resilience (increase in sense of mastery, relatedness & decrease in emotional reactivity) of adolescents after receiving resilience-building skills training; there will be a significant decrease in vulnerability index and an increase in resource index of adolescents after receiving resilience-building skills training; there will be a significant increase in the mental health (emotional, social & psychological well-being) of adolescents after receiving resilience-building skills training; there will be a significant difference in resilience of adolescents in the experimental group (increased sense of mastery, relatedness & decreased emotional reactivity) as compared to wait-list control group; adolescents in the experimental group will have decreased vulnerability index and increased resource index as compared to wait-list control group; adolescents in the experimental group will have better mental health (emotional, social & psychological well-being) as compared to wait-list control groups.

For this purpose, a pre- test post-test non-equivalent control group quasi experimental research design was used. In the first phase, 609 participants were initially screened out by using The Mental Health Continuum-Short Form (MHC-SF; Keyes, 2009), and participants who scored in the languishing to moderate range were further selected and administered the Resilience Scale for children and adolescents (RSCA; Prince-Embury, 2006). For the second phase, a total of 100 participants were selected through purposive sampling. Participants who scored below average on the resource index and high on the vulnerability index on RSCA were divided into groups of 50 participants each i.e., experimental, and wait-list control groups. A matched technique based on age,

gender, and grade was used. The participants were selected from different private schools in Karachi between 15-18 years of age. To identify the effectiveness of the intervention, participants were assessed through RSCA and MHC-SF at post-test and at follow-up as well. Ten sessions of group therapy, along with pre-and post-session, using Resilience building skills training were conducted with a follow-up session after one month. The pre-test, post-test, and follow-up results were analyzed through repeated measure ANOVA and Independent Sample t-test via SPSS version 21.

Results of the mental health continuum (MHC) indicated that the scores on the post-test were significantly higher ($M=45.8$, $SD=9.64$) as compared to the scores on the pre-test ($M=20.58$, $SD=6.11$) and were stable in follow-up ($M=44.48$, $SD=10.69$), $F(2,98) = 141.33$, $MSE=71.35$, $p=.000$, $\eta^2=.74$ with large effect size. Results indicated a significant difference in post-test after intervention on resource ($M=45.75$, $SD=7.48$) as compared to the scores on pre-test ($M=32.51$, $SD=8.17$), and stable in follow-up ($M=45.36$, $SD=7.18$), $F(1,83) = 73.04$, $MSE=45.64$, $p=.000$, $\eta^2=.61$ with large effect size. Results indicated a significant difference in the post-test after intervention on vulnerability ($M=6.46$, $SD=14.49$) as compared to the scores on the pre-test ($M=32.50$, $SD=18.11$), and stable in follow-up ($M=4.06$, $SD=15.03$), $F(1,74) = 70.74$, $MSE=232.03$, $p=.000$, $\eta^2=.60$ with large effect size.

There is a significant difference in the vulnerability index scores of the experimental group ($M=6.46$, $SD=14.49$) and control group ($M=28.86$, $SD=20.26$). After the resilience-building skills training to the experimental group, ($t(98) = -6.35$, $p<0.05$) indicated improved resilience as compared to pre-tests. Independent sample t-test results indicated a significant difference in the Mental health continuum scores of the experimental groups ($M=45.82$, $SD=9.65$) and the wait-list control group ($M=24.56$, $SD=11.28$) after the resilience-building skills training, to the experimental group, ($t(98) = 10.12$, $p<0.05$) as compared to mental health continuum pre-test. Based on the significantly improved resilience- building findings, it is recommended that future research include introducing training for resilience-building skills to all segments or groups in educational settings in Pakistan.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	TITLE	PAGE
	APPROVAL FOR EXAMINATION	ii
	AUTHOR'S DECLARATION	iii
	PLAGIARISM UNDERTAKING	iv
	DEDICATION	v
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
	ABSTRACT	vii
	TABLE OF CONTENTS	ix
	LIST OF TABLES	xiii
	LIST OF FIGURES	xiv
	LIST OF APPENDICES	xv
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 Problem Statement	6
	1.2 Research Objectives	8
	1.3 Research Question	8
	1.4 Significance of The Research	9
	1.5 Operational Definition of Key Terms	10
	1.6 Structure of Thesis	15
	1.7 Summary	16
2	LITERATURE REVIEW	17
	2.1 Adolescence	17
	2.2.1. Psychopathology in Adolescents	18
	2.2. Developmental Psychopathology Framework	19
	2.2.1. Biological Development Process and Resilience	20
	2.2.2 Psychological Development Process	24
	2.2.2.1 Cognitive Influences	24
	2.2.2.2 Emotional Influences	25
	2.2.2.3 Behavioral Influences	27
	2.2.3 Social Development Process	30
	2.2.3.1 Attachment Influences	31
	2.2.3.2 Family Influences	32
	2.3 Resilience	38
	2.4 History of Resilience	39

2.5	Theoretical Prospect of Resilience	42
2.6	Conceptualization of Resilience as a Trait or Process	42
2.7	The Adolescent Risk and Resilience Model	44
2.8	Models of Resilience Based on Risk and Protection	46
2.8.1	Kumpfer's Resilience Model	46
2.8.2	Other Models of Resilience	47
2.9	The Resilience Process	48
2.9.1	Sense of Mastery	48
2.9.2	Sense of Relatedness	50
2.9.3	Emotional Reactivity	52
2.10	Mental Health	54
2.10.1	Mental Health and Adolescent	57
2.10.2	Mental Health and Resilience	58
2.11	Positive Psychology	59
2.11.1	Positive Psychology and Resiliency	62
2.11.2	Positive Psychology and Well-Being	63
2.11.3	Positive Psychology, Mental Health, and Wellness	65
2.11.4	Conceptualization of Positive Psychology and Mental Health	66
2.11.5	Resilience, Positive Psychology, Islamic Perspectives, and Spirituality	69
2.12	Impact of Resilience Program in Educational Setups	71
2.12.1	Mental Health, Character Strength, Resilience and Education Policy	73
2.13	Resilience to Specific Contexts and Cultures	74
2.14	Cognitive Behavior Therapy with other Techniques	77
2.15	Summary	81
3	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	82
3.1	Hypotheses	89
3.2	Summary	90
4	METHOD	91
4.1	Research Design	91
4.2	Participants	91
4.3	Inclusion Criteria	94
4.4	Exclusion Criteria	94
4.5	Measures	95
4.6	Procedure	99

	4.7 Intervention Plan	100
	4.8 Ethical Consideration	111
	4.9 Summary	111
5	RESULTS	112
	5.1 Summary	144
6	DISCUSSION	145
	6.1 Conclusion	160
	6.2 Implication of the Research	161
	6.3 Limitations and Recommendations	162
	REFERENCES	163
	Appendices A – N	209-242
	Resources A – K	243-259

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	Summary of Resilience-Building Interventions for Adolescents	78
5.1	Demographic Characteristics of the Participants of Initial Screening for the Identification of Mental Health States (N=609)	112
5.2	Descriptive Statistics and Alpha Reliability Coefficient, Univariate Normality of Mental Health (N=609)	113
5.3	Frequency and Percentages of Mental Health States of Adolescents (N=100)	114
5.4	Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Variables for the Experiment and the Wait-list Control Group (N=100)	114
5.5	Descriptive Statistics of Resilience (N=100)	116
5.6(a)	Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance for Training Effects on Factors of Resilience of Experimental Group (n=50)	117
5.6(b)	Post Hoc Analysis for Significant Difference Among Factors of Resilience in Experimental Group (n=50)	122
5.6(c)	Post Hoc Analysis for Significant Difference Among Sub Scale of Resilience in Experimental Group (n=50)	123
5.7(a)	Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance for Training Effects on Mental Health and its Dimensions of Well-being (n=50)	125
5.7(b)	Post Hoc Analysis for Significant Difference Among Mental Health and its Dimensions of Well-being	127
5.8a	Independent Samples t-test of Resilience Factors of the Experimental (n=50) and the Wait-list Control Group (n=50) Before Intervention	128
5.8b	Independent Samples t-test of Resilience Factors of the Experimental (n=50) and the Wait-list Control Group (n=50) After Intervention	129

5.9 (a)	Independent Sample t-test Showing comparison of Resilience Factors and its Sub-Scale Scores of Experimental (n=50) and the Wait-list Control Group in Pre-test (n=50)	131
5.9(b)	Independent Sample t-test Showing comparison of Resilience Factors and its Sub-Scale Scores of Experimental (n=50) and the Wait-list Control Group in Post-test (n=50)	133
5.10	Independent Samples test of Mental Health of the Experimental (n=50) and the Wait-list Control Group Before and After Intervention (n=50)	134
5.11a	Independent Samples t-test of Mental Health Sub Scales Scores of the Experimental (n=50) and the wait-list Control Group (n=50) Before and After Intervention	136
5.11b	Independent Samples t-test of Mental Health Sub Scales Scores of the Experimental (n=50) and the wait-list Control Group (n=50) Before and After Intervention	137
5.12	Mental Health States Languishing, Moderate and Flourishing in the Experimental and the Wait-list Control Group (N=100)	139
5.13 (a)	Frequency and Percentages of Mental Health Aspects in Pre-test of Experimental Group (n=50)	140
5.13 (b)	Frequency and Percentages of Mental Health Aspects in Post-test of Experimental Group (n=50)	141
5.13 (c)	Frequency and Percentages of Mental Health Aspects Response Set in Follow Up test of Experimental Group (n=50)	142
5.14	Independent Sample t-test Showing Difference in Resilience and Mental Health Based on Gender in Post-test and Follow-Up of the Experimental Group (n=50)	143