Introduction

• Psychological Body Armor presented a theoretical framework about resilience (Everly, 2000). According to Everly, overall resilience is a combination of both
  • proactive (resistance and immunity) and
  • reactive (ability to bounce back) resilience pathways.

• While previous studies have found that age may be positively correlated with resilience (Cohen, Baziliansky, & Beny, 2014; Diehl & Hay, 2010), no studies have examined how age is related to the separate resilience pathways.

• The purpose of our study was to examine if age is a predictor of overall resilience through the proactive and reactive resilience pathways (N = 202).

Research Question

• How does age, a maturation characteristic, impact reactive, proactive, and overall resilience levels?

Methods

• IRB approval was attained through Andrews University (17-143).

• Data was collected from 202 American participants using Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk).

• The 10-item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC; Campbell-Sills, L., & Stein, M., 2007) was used as a measure for overall resilience.

• Proactive resilience was measured by the 9-item Self-Acceptance subscale and the 9-item Purpose in Life subscale from the Scale of Psychological Well-Being (PSW; Ryff, 1989), the 4-item Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS; Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999), and a 1-item Spirituality scale.

• Reactive resilience was measured by the 9-item Relationships with Others subscale from the PSW, the 2-item Perceived Stress Scale (PS; Buchanan & McConnell, 2017), the 18-item Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI-18; Derogatis, 2000), the 1-item Sleep scale, the 1-item Fitness scale, and the 3-item Nutrition scale.

Results

• The M_age of participants was 37.7 years (SD = 11.6) and ranged from 22 to 76 years.

• After controlling for age, hierarchical regressions revealed that age did not significantly contribute to overall resilience, or to either the proactive or reactive resilience pathway (R^2 = 0.016 for the full model).

• However, variables that measured innate well-being traits contributed significantly to predicting resilience for both pathways (Proactive R^2 = .454 and Reactive R^2 = .390).

Discussion

• Results suggest that maturation (age) is not a strong predictor of overall resilience for either the reactive or proactive resilience pathway.

• However, well-being traits for both pathways (i.e., subjective happiness, self-acceptance, purpose in life, perceived stress, relationship with others, and overall psychological distress) were better contributors to overall resilience.

• This implies that age is not a protective resilience factor, but rather the robustness of one’s well-being traits when facing adverse life events.

Limitations and Critiques

• MTurk is an online tool used to generate subjects so the results may not be as representative as we would have liked. Subjects could also have rushed through some parts of the study.

• Self-reported measures were used so a subject’s bias could influence what he reports.

• Most of the subjects in our study identified themselves as white/non-Hispanic (85.6%).

References


