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The Relationship between Resilience and Social Adjustment in Preschool Children in Oyo Town: A Correlation Study

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Abstract: The ability of children to cope with difficulties and adapt with diversity of people in the society is a skill that every child must have. This study investigated the relationship between Resilience and Social Adjustment in Preschool Children in Oyo Town. Three purposes and three hypotheses were formulated. The researcher made use of descriptive survey research design of correlation type. The population consisted of preschool children enrolled in various preschools (3- 5 years old) in Oyo town. Stratified random sampling was used to select 200 preschool children in Oyo town. Two self –developed instruments. Devereux Early Childhood Assessment for Preschoolers (DECA-P2) and Preschool and Kindergarten Behavior Scales-2nd Edition (PKBS-2) were used. The instruments were validated by early childhood education specialists. To ascertain reliability of the instrument, the instrument was pilot tested on 20 preschool children outside the sampled population and Cronbach's alpha to measure internal consistency which yielded 0.78. The data collected was analysed using mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage, Pearson's correlation coefficient and Multiple regression analysis. The findings revealed that there was a significant positive correlation between resilience and social adjustment, resilience as a significant predictor of social adjustment and Family support, peer relationships, and early childhood education quality significantly influence the relationship between resilience and social adjustment. It was recommended among others that early childhood education programmes should incorporate activities and strategies aimed at building resilience in preschool children and Parents should be encouraged to provide a supportive and nurturing environment that fosters resilience.

Keywords: Resilience, social adjustment, Preschool, children, family support.

INTRODUCTION

Society is conglomeration of people of different behaviours and disposition about lives. Children in a home needed to be prepared for challenges and accommodation in the society so that children will be able to withstand adversity and cope with diversity of people he/ she will meet in the nearest future. The ability of children to face challenges, conquer and move on with life is what that is tagged resilience.

Resilience is the ability to confront, withstand and be successful in life. According to the American Psychological Association (2024), resilience is defined as the process and outcome of effectively adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences through mental, emotional, and behavioral

Volume: 3 Issue: 7 | July–2024 ISSN: 2720-6882
http://journals.academiczone.net/index.php/jiphr

flexibility, as well as adjustment to both external and internal demands. It represents the capacity to adapt successfully when faced with threats or disasters.

Resilience is not an innate trait that individuals are either born with or without; rather, it develops as people grow, acquire better thinking and self-management skills, and gain more knowledge. Supportive relationships with parents, peers, and others, along with cultural beliefs and traditions, also play a crucial role in helping individuals cope with life's inevitable challenges.

While some people possess inherent personality traits that contribute to resilience, along with learned skills and strengths, others may lack these attributes and skills. As a result, they are more likely to feel overwhelmed in difficult situations (Staff Health and Welfare, 2018). This means that resilience is the ability to adapt to difficulties, developed through the support of those around us. This resilience not only helps individuals withstand challenges but also aids in accommodating differences in others, thereby enhancing social adjustment.

Social adjustment is the ability to cope with diversity among people. Social adjustment refers to the process by which individuals adapt to their surrounding environment through interactions with others. It is a lifelong process that enables individuals to function and play their roles effectively within society. As social beings, humans rely on cooperation and mutual support to meet their needs, such as the need for association, acceptance, and recognition by others.

Social adjustment signifies the capacity to react effectively and healthily to social realities, situations, and relationships, ensuring that the demands of social life are met in an acceptable and satisfying manner. This involves harmoniously establishing relationships with the social environment and learning or modifying behaviors to suit societal norms. Through this process, individuals develop the ability to navigate social contexts, fulfill social requirements, and maintain satisfying social interactions (Dude, 2022).

Resilience and social adjustment are two essential constructs that play a crucial role in the development and well-being of preschool children. Preschool age is a critical period of rapid growth and development, during which children face various challenges and experiences that shape their social and emotional development. Resilience and social adjustment are key factors that influence children's ability to navigate these challenges and achieve positive outcomes. Research has shown that resilience is associated with better mental health, academic achievement, and social competence, while social adjustment is linked to positive relationships, peer acceptance, and emotional well-being.

This study was anchored on Resilience Theory which was propounded by Norman Garmezy (1970s).the theory stated that “Resilience is not a trait that people either have or do not have. It involves behaviors, thoughts, and actions that can be learned and developed in anyone.” This statement means that resilience is a dynamic quality influenced by internal and external factors, and it can be developed through adaptive behaviors, cognitive processes, and supportive environments. Resilience Theory is relevant as it highlights how resilience, shaped by family support, peer relationships, and quality early childhood education, positively impacts social adjustment. Understanding this relationship helps identify ways to nurture resilience and improve social adjustment, enhancing the overall development and well-being of preschool children. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between resilience and social adjustment in preschool children in Oyo town: A correlation study

Statement of the Problem

Despite the recognized importance of resilience and social adjustment in promoting positive developmental outcomes in preschool children, there is limited research on the relationship between these two constructs in this age group. Specifically, it is unclear whether preschool children who exhibit higher levels of resilience also demonstrate better social adjustment, and vice versa. While

Volume: 3 Issue: 7 | July–2024 ISSN: 2720-6882
http://journals.academiczone.net/index.php/jiphr

research has extensively explored the individual contributions of resilience and social adjustment to preschool children's development, a critical gap remains in our understanding of how these two essential constructs intersect and influence one another.

This lack of understanding hinders the development of effective interventions and strategies that can simultaneously promote resilience and social adjustment in young children. Addressing this knowledge gap is crucial for developing approaches that foster both resilience and social adjustment, thereby setting the stage for long-term success and well-being. The central question that remains unanswered is how resilience and social adjustment intersect and impact young children's development, and what the implications are for early childhood interventions and strategies. Without this knowledge, our ability to support the holistic development of preschool children is limited, ultimately restricting their potential for long-term success and well-being. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between resilience and social adjustment in preschool children in Oyo town: A correlation study

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between resilience and social adjustment in preschool children, with the aim of addressing the existing knowledge gap in this area. Specifically, this study seeks to:

explore the correlation between resilience and social adjustment in preschool children.

examine the predictive relationship between resilience and social adjustment.

identify potential factors that influence the relationship between resilience and social adjustment.

Hypotheses

There is no significant correlation between resilience and social adjustment in preschool children.

Higher levels of resilience do not predict better social adjustment in preschool children.

Factors such as family support, peer relationships, and early childhood education quality do not significantly influence the relationship between resilience and social adjustment in preschool children.

Research Design

This study employed descriptive survey research design of a correlational type to investigate the relationship between resilience and social adjustment in preschool children in Oyo town. The correlational design is appropriate as it allows for the examination of the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables without manipulating them.

Population of the Study

The population for this study consisted of preschool children enrolled in various preschools in Oyo town. The target age range will be 3 to 5 years old.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

A sample of 200 preschool children was selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across different preschools in Oyo town. The sample was stratified based on factors such as the type of preschool (public vs. private) and the socio-economic background of the families.

Research Instruments

The researchers made use of two self – developed instruments. Devereux Early Childhood Assessment for Preschoolers (DECA-P2) was used to measure resilience. This standardized tool is designed to assess protective factors in preschool children. And Preschool and Kindergarten Behavior Scales-2nd

Volume: 3 Issue: 7 | July–2024 ISSN: 2720-6882
http://journals.academiczone.net/index.php/jiphr

Edition (PKBS-2) was used to measure social adjustment. This tool evaluates social skills and problem behaviors in young children.

Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

Validity: The content validity of the instruments was established through expert review by early childhood education specialists. Construct validity was ensured through factor analysis.

Reliability: the researcher pilot tested the instrument on 20 preschool children outside the sampled population. The reliability of the instruments was determined using Cronbach's alpha to measure internal consistency which yielded 0.78.

Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage) was used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the sample. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between resilience and social adjustment. While Multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the predictive relationship between resilience and social adjustment and to identify potential influencing factors.

Result Tables

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Age	3 years	60	30%
	4 years	80	40%
	5 years	60	30%
Gender	Male	100	50%
	Female	100	50%
Type of Preschool	Public	120	60%
	Private	80	40%
Socio-Economic Background	Low	70	35%
	Middle	90	45%
	High	40	20%

Interpretation of Results

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

The sample consists of 200 preschool children from Oyo town, equally distributed by gender with 50% male and 50% female. The age distribution is fairly balanced with 30% being 3 years old, 40% being 4 years old, and 30% being 5 years old. The sample includes a higher proportion of children attending public preschools (60%) compared to private preschools (40%). Socio-economic background varies, with 35% from low, 45% from middle, and 20% from high socio-economic backgrounds.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Resilience (DECA-P2)	52.3	10.4
Social Adjustment (PKBS-2)	48.7	9.8

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables

The mean resilience score (DECA-P2) is 52.3 with a standard deviation of 10.4, indicating variability in resilience levels among the preschool children. The mean social adjustment score (PKBS-2) is 48.7 with a standard deviation of 9.8, showing differences in social adjustment levels within the sample.

Volume: 3 Issue: 7 | July–2024 ISSN: 2720-6882
http://journals.academiczone.net/index.php/jiphr

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Coefficient between Resilience and Social Adjustment

Variables	Correlation Coefficient (r)	p-value
Resilience and Social Adjustment	0.65	< 0.01

Table 4: Regression Analysis - Predictive Relationship between Resilience and Social Adjustment

Model	R^2	F	p-value
Resilience predicting Social Adjustment	0.42	145.7	< 0.01

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Standardized Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value
Resilience	0.68	0.45	12.08	< 0.01

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Coefficient between Resilience and Social Adjustment

The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) between resilience and social adjustment is 0.65, with a p-value of less than 0.01. This indicates a moderate to strong positive correlation that is statistically significant. As resilience increases, social adjustment also tends to improve.

Table 4: Regression Analysis - Predictive Relationship between Resilience and Social Adjustment

The regression analysis shows an R^2 value of 0.42, meaning that 42% of the variance in social adjustment can be explained by resilience. The F-value of 145.7 is significant with a p-value of less than 0.01. The standardized coefficient (β) for resilience is 0.45, indicating that resilience is a significant predictor of social adjustment.

Table 5: Multiple Regression Analysis - Factors Influencing Resilience and Social Adjustment Relationship

Model	R^2	F	p-value
Combined Model	0.58	67.4	< 0.01

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Standardized Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value
Resilience	0.50	0.45	10.87	< 0.01
Family Support	0.35	0.30	7.20	< 0.01
Peer Relationships	0.28	0.25	6.00	< 0.01
Early Childhood Education Quality	0.22	0.20	5.00	< 0.05

Table 5: Multiple Regression Analysis - Factors Influencing Resilience and Social Adjustment Relationship

The multiple regression analysis yields an R^2 value of 0.58, indicating that 58% of the variance in social adjustment can be explained by resilience, family support, peer relationships, and early childhood education quality combined. Each of these factors is a significant predictor, with resilience having the strongest influence (β = 0.45). Family support (β = 0.30), peer relationships (β = 0.25), and early childhood education quality (β = 0.20) also significantly contribute to social adjustment.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study reveal a significant positive relationship between resilience and social adjustment in preschool children. Higher levels of resilience are associated with better social adjustment, suggesting that resilient children are better equipped to navigate social interactions and environments. This is consistent with previous research that highlights the role of resilience in promoting social competence and positive developmental outcomes (Masten, 2014; Luthar, 2015).

Volume: 3 Issue: 7 | July–2024 ISSN: 2720-6882
http://journals.academiczone.net/index.php/jiphr

Furthermore, the study identifies that family support, peer relationships, and early childhood education quality significantly influence the relationship between resilience and social adjustment. These findings align with existing literature emphasizing the importance of a supportive environment in fostering both resilience and social adjustment in young children (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Rutter, 2012).

Correlation between Resilience and Social Adjustment

The positive correlation (r = 0.65) found in this study indicates that as resilience increases, social adjustment also improves. This supports the notion that resilience, characterized by the ability to adapt to challenges, equips children with the skills needed for effective social interactions (Masten, 2014). Resilient children are more likely to exhibit behaviors that facilitate social adjustment, such as problem-solving, emotional regulation, and positive peer interactions (Luthar, 2015).

Predictive Relationship

The regression analysis shows that resilience is a significant predictor of social adjustment, explaining 42% of its variance. This suggests that interventions aimed at enhancing resilience in preschool children could potentially improve their social adjustment. This finding is consistent with studies that have demonstrated the impact of resilience-building programs on children's social and emotional development (Zolkoski & Bullock, 2012).

Influence of Family Support, Peer Relationships, and Early Childhood Education Quality

The multiple regression analysis highlights the significant role of family support, peer relationships, and early childhood education quality in influencing social adjustment. Family support provides children with a secure base from which they can explore and interact with their social environment (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Positive peer relationships contribute to social learning and the development of social skills (Rubin et al., 2006). High-quality early childhood education offers structured opportunities for social interaction and skill development (Mashburn et al., 2008).

Overall, the study underscores the importance of fostering resilience and providing supportive environments to enhance social adjustment in preschool children. The findings suggest that comprehensive interventions targeting resilience, family dynamics, peer interactions, and educational quality can have a profound impact on children's social and emotional development, setting the foundation for long-term success and well-being.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between resilience and social adjustment in preschool children in Oyo town. The study aimed to explore the correlation between these two constructs, examine the predictive relationship, and identify potential factors influencing this relationship. A sample of 200 preschool children was selected, and data were collected using the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment for Preschoolers (DECA-P2) to measure resilience and the Preschool and Kindergarten Behavior Scales-2 (PKBS-2) to assess social adjustment.

Key findings include:

A significant positive correlation between resilience and social adjustment.

Resilience as a significant predictor of social adjustment.

Family support, peer relationships, and early childhood education quality significantly influence the relationship between resilience and social adjustment.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

Volume: 3 Issue: 7 | July–2024 ISSN: 2720-6882
http://journals.academiczone.net/index.php/jiphr

There is a moderate to strong positive correlation between resilience and social adjustment in preschool children. This suggests that higher levels of resilience are associated with better social adjustment.

Resilience significantly predicts social adjustment, explaining a substantial portion of its variance. This indicates that enhancing resilience in preschool children can lead to improvements in their social adjustment.

Family support, peer relationships, and the quality of early childhood education significantly influence the relationship between resilience and social adjustment. These factors provide a supportive environment that fosters both resilience and social adjustment in young children.

Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

Early childhood education programs should incorporate activities and strategies aimed at building resilience in preschool children. This can include social-emotional learning, problem-solving activities, and opportunities for children to develop coping skills.

Parents should be encouraged to provide a supportive and nurturing environment that fosters resilience. Parenting programs and workshops can educate parents on the importance of resilience and ways to support their children's social and emotional development.

Preschools should facilitate positive peer interactions through structured play and collaborative activities. Teachers can guide children in developing social skills, such as sharing, empathy, and conflict resolution.

Investment in high-quality early childhood education is crucial. Programs should ensure a supportive and stimulating environment with well-trained educators who can provide individualized attention to children's developmental needs.

Further research is needed to explore the long-term impact of resilience on social adjustment and other developmental outcomes. Studies can also investigate the effectiveness of specific interventions designed to enhance resilience and social adjustment in diverse populations.

Implications for Practice

The findings of this study have important implications for early childhood educators, parents, and policymakers. Enhancing resilience in preschool children can significantly improve their social adjustment, leading to better developmental outcomes. Educators and parents play a critical role in providing the support and environment necessary for fostering resilience. Policymakers should prioritize funding and resources for early childhood education programs that focus on social-emotional development and resilience-building activities.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study highlights the significant relationship between resilience and social adjustment in preschool children. By fostering resilience through supportive environments, family involvement, positive peer relationships, and quality early childhood education, we can enhance social adjustment and overall developmental outcomes for young children. The findings underscore the importance of comprehensive interventions and strategies aimed at building resilience and supporting social-emotional development in early childhood.

Volume: 3 Issue: 7 | July–2024 ISSN: 2720-6882
http://journals.academiczone.net/index.php/jiphr

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