

## **Resilience, Big five personality traits and Spiritual well-being among college students**

**<sup>1</sup>Divya B Kumar, <sup>2</sup>Jikku Mariam John**

*<sup>1</sup>UG - Bsc Psychology, Kristu Jyoti College of Management and Technology, Chethipuzha*

*<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor, Psychology, Kristu Jyoti College of Management and Technology, Chethipuzha*

### **ABSTRACT**

The present study investigates the relationship between spiritual well-being, Big five personality and resilience in college students. The research sample consisted of 202 college students of which there are 101 males and 101 females. The sampling technique used in the study was convenient sampling and the statistical analysis method was Spearman rank correlation. The Spiritual Well-Being Scale, Brief Resilience Scale and brief Big five personality inventory were used in the study. The results of the study showed that there is a significant and negative relationship between spiritual well-being and big five personality traits. The present study found that there's a significant positive relationship between neuroticism and resilience among college students also a negative relationship between spiritual well-being and resilience was also founded.

**Keywords:** *Spiritual Well-being, Big five personality traits, Resilience*

### **Introduction**

India is a population which has shown resilience throughout its history on all levels physical, mental, emotional, cultural and social. Recent research has established a causal relationship between failure and future success, proving German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche's adage that "what does not kill me makes me stronger."

A community health survey conducted in East London Adolescents which collected data on mental health measured by the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire and on various aspects of individual and family circumstances found that the largest part of the variability in adolescents' strengths and difficulties' was associated with individual characteristics. A joint study by Child Rights and You and Tata Institute of Social Sciences found that India's students have shown utmost resilience during these times to cope with the deadly virus and the ensuing lockdown. The Indian workforce is among the most resilient and engaged in the world, a study commissioned by global HR and payroll company ADP has said.

But the dark side is according to the NCRB's Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India (ADSI report 2020), around 8.2% of students in the country die by suicide. Failure in exams, parental expectations, substance abuse, unemployment, and poverty are common reasons for these suicides. Adolescent resilience delays the timing of life transitions such as marriage and parenthood to a more 'age-appropriate' time, as well as provides individuals with the resources to handle the stresses involved in these transitions (Sacker et al 2002; Sacker and Schoon 2007). India is a country where people are resilient but at the same time, India has the highest suicide rate in the South-East Asian region, according to the World Health Organization's report(2016).

What makes these differences is that some people can cope with life's uncertainties while others perish in that struggle. This study attempts to find how spiritual well-being and big five personality traits are related to one's resilience. The term resilience originally comes from the Latin word *resiliens* which refers to the pliant or elastic quality of a substance (Joseph, 1994). The term resilience requires an individual to be sourceful, have a sense of sturdiness of character, be flexible in response to environmental circumstances, and be able to adapt positively (Luthar, Crossman, & Small, 2015; Newland, 2014). Psychological research demonstrates that the resources and skills associated with more positive adaptation can be cultivated and practised by the Big Five personality model, a model of the primary dimensions of individual personality differences. The dimensions are extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience, though the labels vary

somewhat among researchers. Indian Students Show high resilience to pressure with an active schedule than their peers in the 10 countries surveyed for Cambridge International's Global Education Census 2018.

Spiritual well-being can be defined as a feeling of communicating with others, having meaning and goals in life and having belief and relation with an exalted power (Hawks, et al. 1995). Not much research has been conducted to find a relationship between these three variables. Hopefully, this study will shed some light on it. This study aims to study the relationship between spiritual well-being, Big five personality traits and resilience.

### **Review of Literature**

A case study which used mixed methods research approach, which incorporated both single- and multicase study techniques found a clear association between adolescent spiritual well-being and adolescent resilience( Lindsay Smith, Ruth Webber, John DeFrain, 2013)

A meta-analysis which investigated the relationships between resilience and Big Five personality traits found stronger negative relationships with Neuroticism, and stronger positive relationships with Openness and Agreeableness were obtained with ego-resiliency, compared with trait resilience( Atsushi Oshio, KanakoTaku, Mari Hirano, Gul Saeed,2018)

Another study conducted on university students found a positive relationship between personal meaning production and two factors namely agreeableness and neuroticism. A significant relationship appeared between transcendental awareness and openness also. ( Sarita Sood, Arti Bakhshi, Richa Gupta,2012)

A study conducted on undergraduate students found that all the sub-dimensions of the big five personality traits presented statistically significant differences based on being resilient or non-resilient found that three sub-dimensions of the big five personality traits—namely conscientiousness, neuroticism and extroversion—together accounted for 34% of the total resilience scores of the participants( Hülya Ercan,2017)

A study among adults which used stepwise regression and cluster analysis showed three main personality types (resilient, controllers, and emotionally dysregulated) and individuals high in conscientiousness, openness and neuroticism were found to be associated with more change in emotional resilience. ( Shalini Sahni, Shyama Kumari, Prachi Pachaury,2020)

A study conducted among college students showed that physical activity was positively associated with resilience, and the three basic needs such as competence need, autonomy need, and relatedness need played significant mediating roles between physical activity and resilience. ( Shanshan Xu, Zongyu Liu, Siyu Tian, Zhiyao Ma, Cunxian Jia, and Guoxiao Sun,2021)

### **Hypotheses**

1. There will be no significant relationship between Resilience and openness to experience among college students.
2. There will be no significant relationship between Resilience and conscientiousness among college students.
3. There will be no significant relationship between Resilience and Extraversion among college students.
4. There will be no significant relationship between Resilience and Agreeableness among college students.
5. There will be no significant relationship between Resilience and Neuroticism among college students.
6. There will be no significant relationship between openness to experience and Spiritual well-being among college students
7. There will be no significant relationship between spiritual well-being and conscientiousness among college students

8. There will be no significant relationship between spiritual well-being and extraversion among college students
9. There will be no significant relationship between spiritual well-being and Agreeableness among college students
10. There will be no significant relationship between spiritual well-being and neuroticism among college students.
11. There will be no significant relationship between Resilience and Spiritual well-being among college students.

### **Objectives**

1. To assess the significant relationship between Resilience and openness to experience among college students
2. To assess the significant relationship between Resilience and conscientiousness among college students.
3. To assess the significant relationship between Resilience and Extraversion among college students.
4. To assess the significant relationship between Resilience and Agreeableness among college students.
5. To assess the significant relationship between Resilience and Neuroticism among college students
6. To assess the significant relationship between openness to experience and Spiritual well-being among college students
7. To assess the significant relationship between spiritual well-being and conscientiousness among college students.
8. To assess the significant relationship between spiritual well-being and extraversion among college students
9. To assess the significant relationship between spiritual well-being and Agreeableness among college students
10. To assess the significant relationship between spiritual well-being and neuroticism among college students
11. To assess the significant relationship between Resilience and Spiritual well-being among college students.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The study was conducted among college students in the age group 18-25. The sample size of the study was 202 which includes 101 males and 101 females. A convenient sampling technique was used in the study. The responses were collected from various districts of Kerala such as Alappuzha, Kottayam, Pathanamthitta etc.

Google form was used to collect data online. The survey was conducted based on the consent taken from the participating students. They were given instructions on how to respond to each statement. Confidentiality was ensured. The collected data was analyzed for drawing conclusions based on the aim of the study. Spearman rank correlation was the statistical method used in the study.

SPSS software was used for statistical analysis. Brief Big five personality inventory, Brief Resilience Scale and Spiritual well-being scale were the variables.

#### **Brief Resilience Scale**

The brief resilience scale was developed by Smith, B. W., Dalen, J., Wiggins, K., Tooley, E., Christopher, P., & Bernard, J. (2008). It consists of 6 items. There are five options ranging from strongly agree to disagree and scoring was done by summing up responses. The scale has a test-retest reliability of 0.69 and convergent validity was established.

#### **Big five inventory**

Big Five Inventory-10 (BFI-10) was adapted from Rammstedt, B. & John, O. P. (2007).

---

It consists of 10 items. Five options were given ranging from disagree strongly to agree strongly. BFI-10 scales retain significant levels of reliability and validity.

### Spiritual Well-Being Scale

The Spiritual Well-Being score is a measure of perceived overall well-being. Ray Paloutzian and his friend and colleague Craig W. Ellison developed the Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWBS) during the years 1979-1982. There were a total of 10 items and the options ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The test-retest reliability of the scale is 0,96 and has good face validity.

### Results

The collected data was analyzed based on the formulated objective and hypothesis. The findings have been presented in the respective tables.

**Table 1**  
**Analysis of relationship between big-five personality traits, spiritual well-being and resilience among college students.**

Big five personality traits	Spiritual Well-Being	Resilience
Openness to experience	-0.059	0.007
Conscientiousness	-0.267**	-0.132
Extraversion	-0.158*	-0.68
Agreeableness	-0.165*	0.093
Neuroticism	0.090	0.294**

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The analysis of the relationship between big-five personality traits, spiritual well-being and resilience among college students is shown in Table 1. Openness to experience was negatively correlated to Spiritual Well-Being ( $r = -0.059$ ). Thus, the null hypothesis which states that there's no significant relationship between spiritual well-being and openness to experience among college students is rejected.

Conscientiousness has a negative correlation with Spiritual Well-Being ( $r = -0.267^{**}$ ). The value is significant at 0.01 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis there's no significant relationship between spiritual well-being and conscientiousness among college students is rejected. Extraversion has a negative correlation with Spiritual well-being ( $r = -0.158^*$ ). The value is **significant at 0.05 level**. Thus, there's no significant relationship between spiritual well-being and extraversion among college students is rejected. Agreeableness has a negative correlation with Spiritual well-being ( $r = -0.165^*$ ). The value is **significant at 0.05 level**. Thus the null hypothesis there's no significant relationship between spiritual well-being and Agreeableness among college students is rejected. Neuroticism was positively correlated to Spiritual Well-Being ( $r = 0.090$ ). Thus, the null hypothesis there's no significant relationship between spiritual well-being and neuroticism among college students is rejected. Extraversion and Agreeableness have a significant and negative correlation with Spiritual well-being while neuroticism and openness to experience have a positive and negative correlation with Spiritual well-being respectively and that relation isn't significant. Resilience is positively correlated with openness to experience (0.007). Thus the null hypothesis there's no significant

relationship between Resilience and openness to experience among college students is rejected. A negative correlation was found between Resilience and conscientiousness( $r = -0.132$ ). Thus the null hypothesis there's no significant relationship between resilience and conscientiousness among college students is rejected. A negative correlation was found between Resilience and extraversion( $r = -0.8$ ). Thus the null hypothesis that there's no significant relationship between Resilience and Extraversion among college students is rejected. A positive relationship between resilience and Agreeableness( $r = 0.093$ ) was found. Thus the null hypothesis that there's no significant relationship between Resilience and Neuroticism among college students is rejected. A positive correlation was found between Resilience and neuroticism( $r = 0.294^{**}$ ).The value is significant at 0.01 level. Thus the null hypothesis there's no significant relationship between Resilience and Neuroticism among college students is rejected.

**Table 2**  
**Analysis of the relationship between spiritual well-being and resilience**

Variable	Total Resilience
Spiritual well-being	-.033

From Table 2 a negative correlation was found between resilience and Spiritual Well-Being (  $r = -0.033$ ) and that relationship isn't statistically significant. Thus the null hypothesis which states that there exists no correlation between Resilience and Spiritual well-being is rejected.

### Discussion

The goal of the present research was to study spiritual well-being, Big five personality traits and resilience. A negative relationship was found between openness to experience and spiritual well-being. People who are on a spiritual path will be more laser focused that they won't be indulging in different areas of life sometimes they may not be interested in building new relationships like Buddha left his family their only focus will be on attaining salvation. The analysis found a negative and significant relationship between conscientiousness and spiritual well-being. Conscientious individuals entail the ability to set and keep long-term goals, spiritual people are more in tune with the reality and uncertainties of life. They have understood that life is meaningful on its own and they can find a sense of purpose and meaning with everything they do that it's not about merely achieving goals. As the relation between extraversion and spiritual well-being was evaluated a negative and significant relationship was found. More self-aware individuals' possessed greater spiritual well-being and extraverts who are naturally focused on the external world may tend to have low self-awareness. The analysis of agreeableness and spiritual well-being found a negative and significant correlation between them. Spiritual journey makes one take unfamiliar paths, explore the unexplored and question everything sometimes one's existence itself that 'why' can turn into low agreeableness to the existing situation. A feeling of insufficiency with ordinary life and a quench to experience something beyond can occur only through this questioning mindset. A positive relationship was found between neuroticism and spiritual well-being. Neuroticism was positively related to all dimensions of spirituality as per the findings of Hiebler-Ragger et al(2018) but that relationship wasn't statistically significant.

As the relationship between openness to experience and agreeableness and resilience was evaluated a positive correlation was found between them. It was consistent with the results in the study conducted by Gul Saeed, Atsushi Oshio and Kanako Taku(2018) where they found a positive correlation between resilience and openness to experience. A negative correlation was found between resilience and the sub-dimensions conscientiousness and extraversion. Extraversion and introversion

are in a single continuum, so to be high in one necessitates being low in the other. Introversion can work as a magic ingredient to overcome the struggles in one's life. People who are low in conscientiousness tend to prioritize having fun and responding to the demands of the moment this can be the reason behind the negative correlation. A positive and significant correlation was found between neuroticism and resilience. One of the major pillars of resilience is self-awareness, Neurotic individuals' highly intrapsychic experiences can be the reason behind this positive correlation. A negative correlation was found between Resilience and Spiritual well-being. Associating spirituality with magical thinking can lead to repression of emotions and can be a barrier to resilience.

### Conclusion

It can be concluded that the Big five personality traits have more of a negative correlation with Spiritual well-being excluding neuroticism which has a positive correlation with Spiritual Well-being. In the case of resilience and big five personality traits conscientiousness and extraversion has a negative correlation while the remaining three have a positive correlation. Spiritual well-being and resilience are negatively correlated.

### References

1. Adapted from Rammstedt, B. & John, O. P. (2007). Measuring personality in one minute or less: A 10-item short version of the Big Five Inventory in English and German. *Journal of Research in Personality*.
2. Anasuri, S & Anthony, K., (2018). Resilience Levels Among College Students: A Comparative Study from Two Southern States in the USA. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322509473\\_Resilience\\_Levels\\_Among\\_College\\_Students\\_A\\_Comparative\\_Study\\_from\\_Two\\_Southern\\_States\\_in\\_the\\_USA](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322509473_Resilience_Levels_Among_College_Students_A_Comparative_Study_from_Two_Southern_States_in_the_USA)
3. Dutt, Anonna., (2018, Sep 13). Suicide biggest killer among 15-39 year olds: Study. *Hindustan Times*. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/health/suicide-biggest-killer-among-15-39-year-olds-study/story-ZxXWgdg5C67t4jNWXKDY0I.html>
4. Ellison, W.C & Paloutzian, R. (2010). *Spiritual Well-Being Scale* Westmont
5. Ercan, H., (2017). The Relationship between Resilience and the Big Five Personality Traits in Emerging Adulthood. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318858002\\_The\\_Relationship\\_between\\_Resilience\\_and\\_the\\_Big\\_Five\\_Personality\\_Traits\\_in\\_Emerging\\_Adulthood](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318858002_The_Relationship_between_Resilience_and_the_Big_Five_Personality_Traits_in_Emerging_Adulthood)
6. Friedli, L., (2009). Mental health, resilience and inequalities. *World Health Organization*
7. Gnanaprakash, C. (2013). Spirituality and Resilience among Post-Graduate University Students. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/273884115\\_Spirituality\\_and\\_Resilience\\_among\\_Post-Graduate\\_University\\_Student](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/273884115_Spirituality_and_Resilience_among_Post-Graduate_University_Student)
8. Gupta, R., (2019, Sep 19). India has the highest suicide rate in South-East Asia: WHO. *D own to earth*. <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/health/india-has-the-highest-suicide-rate-in-south-east-asia-who-66625>
9. Hiebler-Ragger, M., Fuchshuber, J., Dröscher, H., Vajda, C., Finkand, A., & Unterrainer, F. H., (2018). Personality Influences the Relationship Between Primary Emotions and Religious/Spiritual Well-Being. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.00370>
10. Oshio, A., Taku, K., Hirano, M & Saeed, G., (2018). Resilience and Big Five personality traits: A meta-analysis. *ScienceDirect*. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0191886918300576>
11. Sahi, M., & Raghavi, M. A Study of Personality in Relation to Resilience and Stress. *International Journal for Innovation Education and Research*. [https://www.academia.edu/33650415/A\\_Study\\_of\\_Personality\\_in\\_Relation\\_to\\_Resilience\\_and\\_Stress](https://www.academia.edu/33650415/A_Study_of_Personality_in_Relation_to_Resilience_and_Stress)

12. Sahni., S & Kumar., S & Pachaury., P . (2020).Building Emotional Resilience with Big Five Personality Model Against COVID-19 Pandemic.<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/2319714520954559>
13. Sarkar, B.(2021, Feb 17). India has one of the world’s most engaged and resilient workforces: Survey. The Economic Times. [https://m.economictimes.com/news/company/corporate-trends/india-has-one-of-the-worlds-most-engaged-and-resilient-workforces-survey/articleshow/81051203.cms#amp\\_tf=From%20%251%24s&aoh=16586422837440&referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com](https://m.economictimes.com/news/company/corporate-trends/india-has-one-of-the-worlds-most-engaged-and-resilient-workforces-survey/articleshow/81051203.cms#amp_tf=From%20%251%24s&aoh=16586422837440&referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com)
14. Smith, L.,&Webber, R.,&DeFrain, J.(2013).Spiritual Well-Being and Its Relationship to Resilience in Young People: A Mixed Methods Case Study.<https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244013485582>
15. Sood., S & Bakhshi., A &Gupta., R . (2012).Relationship between personality traits, spiritual intelligence and well-being in university students.
16. [https://www.academia.edu/50477987/Relationship\\_between\\_personality\\_traits\\_spiritual\\_intelligence\\_and\\_well\\_being\\_in\\_university\\_students](https://www.academia.edu/50477987/Relationship_between_personality_traits_spiritual_intelligence_and_well_being_in_university_students)
17. Smith, B.W., Dalen, J., Wiggins, K., Tooley, E., Christopher, P. and Bernard, J. (2008). The Brief Resilience Scale:Assessing the Ability to Bounce Back. International Journal of Behavioral Medicine
18. TATA INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND CHILD RIGHTS AND YOU-CRY. (n.d.). UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN’S EXPERIENCES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: STRESSORS, RESILIENCE, SUPPORT AND ADAPTATION.<https://www.cry.org>
19. VandenBos,R.G.(2015).APA Dictionary of Psychology. (second edition). American Psychological Association
20. Xu,S.,Liu, Z.,Tian,S.,Ma,Z.,Jia,C &Sun,C.(2021).Physical Activity and Resilience among College Students: The Mediating Effects of Basic Psychological Needs.[https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8038173/#\\_ffn\\_sectitle](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8038173/#_ffn_sectitle)