

## Meaning in life: Forerunner of resilience

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**Statement of the Problem:** Human beings frequently encounter stress as part of their survival, and resilience plays a vital role in their ability to bounce back from challenging situations. Meaning in life is one of the significant internal factors of resilience. Over the years, the understanding of health has evolved, and these two concepts have gained prominence in the field of positive psychology. Both these factors contribute significantly to individuals' flourishing and overall well-being. Thus, it becomes essential to study the relationship between these two interlinked factors which are crucial for human growth and development. To utilize this relationship for enhancing resilience and well-being, understanding how stress impacts this relationship is needed.

**Methodology:** Two experiments were carried out using mixed methods design to investigate the relationship between meaning and resilience among young adults, with a specific focus on how stress affects this relationship. Total 70 participants were equally divided into experimental and control groups. All participants completed a consent form, a demographic data sheet, and the General Health Questionnaire-12 (GHQ-12). In experiment 1, the experimental group performed a meaning-making task and control group performed a neutral task followed by completion of the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS) measuring resilience. In experiment 2, stress was induced in both groups using the Sing a Song Stress Test (SSST). After that the same procedure was followed as in experiment 1. Quantitative data was analyzed using t test and mediation analysis. For qualitative data, content analysis was done.

**Findings:** In experiment 1, participants in the experimental group demonstrated higher levels of resilience compared to the control group ( $t=3.04$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Qualitative content analysis showed that meaning making helps in enhancing other resilience related factors such as self-care, positive self-image, sense of control, interpersonal relationships, social support etc. In experiment 2, experimental group was higher on resilience than control group ( $t= 3.74$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). However, stress didn't mediate the relationship between meaning and resilience.

**Conclusion and Significance:** Meaning in life positively influences resilience even in presence of stress. Meaning making promotes resilience related other internal and external factors which in turn strengthen resilience. The positive association between meaning and resilience despite stress can be a strong key factor in formulating meaning focused interventions to deal with stressful situations by enhancing resilience. These interventions would help people to flourish and promote their well-being.

Joint Event

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**Biography**

Sayli Agashe is a clinical psychologist. Her broad area of PhD research is positive psychology specifically focusing on the process of meaning making and its effect on resilience. Further she has explored the impact of this relational link on overall functionality which includes affect, cognitive functions, and psychological states. Experimental approach has helped to get deeper understanding of two variables resilience and meaning, crucial for well-being.