Navigating through Resilience: Young Adults in Kuwait

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Individual's behaviors, mindset and personality is greatly affected by their social circle and shaped by their past experiences, leading the individual to develop resilience against stressful situations and adversaries. Such situations are mainly experienced during adolescence stage presenting an opportunity to understand how individuals think they will react to stressful times and what measures do they consider if and when crises hit. The inevitable goal of this research is to find out how and if individuals build resilience to negative situations and find themselves to express and feel happiness instead of succumbing to negative emotions and behaviors. For a better understanding of their self-resilience, we created a framework of Internal and External Resilience to guide us with the findings. This research was conducted during the early stage of the COVID-19 spread, which did not present to be a pandemic at the time and had not affected one's life as gravely. In gathering our research, questions that will be kept in mind but are not limited to, include: how do two individuals who experience similar situations react in different ways, one left negatively affected while the other unaffected? Do past experiences make individuals more resilient to situations that they came into contact with? With those probing questions, we would be able to further understand the relationship between building resilience and experiencing hopelessness in times of crises.

Keywords: *resilience, adversaries, crises, hopelessness, psychological immune system*

Introduction

In physical science, resilience is the capacity of a strained body to recover its size and shape after some deformation caused by compressive stress (Merriam-Webster n.d.) In psychology, resilience may be thought of as the process of functioning as well or better than unstressed individuals in the face of adversity. In other words, resilience is the capacity for an individual to overcome stressful and difficult situations that may arise in life. This topic of study came about when researchers realized that there were some people who "worked well, played well, loved well, and expected well" despite major stresses (Werner and Smith 1992, p. 262). Resilience, then, requires two conditions: (1) the person must be, now or in

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the past, exposed to adversity, and (2) the person must be doing well. Resilience requires that young adults be exposed to adversity, stress, or risk. A risk factor is any individual or environmental characteristic that increases the likelihood of some negative outcome. Our research would like to uncover how individuals react to situations they are put into based on their past experiences, trauma or personal difficulties. The aim is to find out how happiness is expressed or on the contrary, how happiness is not being expressed, in individuals who have had tough pasts. Similar to the glass half full or half empty concept, we would be able to deduce if some negative situations can impact individuals in different ways.

In the article "Relationship of Resilience to Personality, Coping, and Psychiatric Symptoms in Young Adults" resilience is typically seen less in children whom have been exposed to disadvantages and trauma (Campbell-Sills et al. 2006). With regards to children exposed to traumatic experiences it has been found that when they have higher exposure to trauma they manifest higher levels of psychiatric symptoms and lower levels of resilience. The level of resilience in children and adolescents is associated with certain personality traits and characteristics they have as well as the type of coping mechanism they use to deal with stressors. In addition to one's personality and coping techniques, one's resiliency levels vary depending on how they view the world and the stressful events they experience. Whether one looks at an experience with a positive outlook or a negative outlook, the levels of their resilience will vary. Resilience is said to be higher in individuals who have close relationships with friends/family and have a positive outlook on negative situations. Whereas individuals who don't have close friends/family relationships and have a pessimistic outlook, are more prone to exhibiting less resilience when faced with adversaries.

The age of 18-25 is a crucial phase in one's life, as it is the time where individuals graduate from high school or university, or are pursuing their career. This period is filled with stress and emotional burnouts, which is why this age range is very important to study and understand how they practice resilience. According to Ong et al. (2006), one way in which resilience is practiced is through the adaptation and maintenance of positive outcomes towards stressful events (Ong et al. 2006, p. 730). As it was discovered that stressful events cause negative emotions, thus, adaptation and perseverance would invoke positive emotions. Nonetheless, resilience is found to have a contribution in the process of strengthening resistance to and recovery from stress (Ong et al. 2006, p. 731).

Literature Review

Resilience is illustrated by Gooding et al. (2012) as a protective or in other words defense mechanism for stressors (Gooding et al. 2012, p. 262). In young adults, resilience seems to be related to social support, this is understandable as at this age, people tend to create relationships and social ties outside their familial circle (Gooding et al. 2012, p. 262). According to Gooding et al. (2012) there are predictors for psychological resilience which are "emotional health and well-being, self-rated successful ageing, social contact with family and friends, optimism

and a lack of cognitive failures" (Gooding et al. 2012, pp. 262–263). Therefore, people who score low in the hopelessness scale will undoubtedly have greater resilience, as tough times would bring out their coping skills (Gooding et al. 2012, p. 262).

Nevertheless, there are protective factors that bestow resilience. Some of which are characteristics developed throughout the individual's life. According to Lereya et al. (2016) those include and are not limited to positive characteristics, self-control, empathy, intelligence, self-esteem and problem-solving skills (Lereya et al. 2016, pp. 1–2). Environments also play a huge role, such as environments both in the familial circle and outside of it, examples are functional family relationships and a supportive environment outside the family (Lereya et al. 2016, p. 2). This is important as having a support system, whether it's a family member or members or friends or teachers, can help boost an individual's confidence and the idea that they have someone to fall back onto (Lereya et al. 2016, p. 2). Functional family relationships create positive development and subsequently help them cope with stressful events (Lereya et al. 2016, p. 2). As for outside the family, a supportive environment whether it be in schools, workplace or even between friends is recognized to be a possible protective factor against stressors (Lereya et al. 2016, p. 2).

Research conducted by Oshio et al. (20013) focused on the measurement of resilience in adolescence as significant psychological and social changes occur throughout that time period and the outcome of coming into contact with those adversities will indicate factors of resilience in the individual (Oshio et al. 2003, p. 1217). They used a multitude of scales designed to assess the construct validity of the Adolescent Resilience Scale (Oshio et al. 2003, p. 1218). They hypothesized that resilient adolescent individuals (ages 19 to 23) are capable to maintain a positive mental health even after experiencing adversities and painful life experiences (Oshio et al. 2003, p. 1218). Their findings show that resilience scores did not have any connection to experiencing negative life events; however, there was a relationship between resilience and general health (Oshio et al. 2003, p. 1219). As well as, a relationship between negative life events and general health (Oshio et al. 2003, p. 1219). Their research showed that adolescent resilience score indicates features that exhibit resilience after experiencing negative events in life, which led them to conclude the validity of the Adolescent Resilience Scale (Oshio et al. 2003, p. 1221). The authors explained that further studies should be conducted to further identify information on the psychological recovery process of individuals whose features of resilience were identified through the Adolescent Resilience Scale.

Cultural

Kuwait is a very small country, located in the Arabian Gulf, and is considered to be coastal. In the old days, prior to the discovery of oil, people came from all over the Gulf and settled in Kuwait for pearl diving, fishing and trading. This has become Kuwait's trade mark, and to this day Kuwaitis take pride in this aspect of their heritage. To reiterate, Kuwait is a small-sized country and its population is

quite small as well, where the majority of people living in it are predominantly non-Kuwaitis, with almost a third of the population are Kuwaiti citizens. Citizenship in Kuwait has a great worth, people who are Kuwaiti are provided with many privileges that non-Kuwaitis do not necessarily get. Due to the importance of citizenship, only Kuwaiti males can pass down their citizenship to their children even if they married a non-Kuwaiti. While female Kuwaitis cannot pass down their citizenship to their children if they were married to a non-Kuwaiti. The reason being is that in Kuwait citizenship is considered to be more than just a document, it is deeply intertwined to the idea that one belongs to a certain family that goes way back in Kuwait's history. With the citizenship, Kuwaitis are entitled to certain societal range of privileges, which some wouldn't necessarily prefer to share with others whom are not "part of them". This sheds light on how the Kuwaiti society is shaped today.

Kuwait is based on a very close-knit society, where almost everyone knows or is related to everyone else. This is due to the way the society is structured; it is a collectivist society, where it is essential to have family as a huge part of life. In this part of the world, the entire family lives in the same house until they get married, and if they do not, they continue to live in their family home. It is believed that everyone in a family is responsible for each other, and the family reputation must remain intact as it is too is a major part of the culture in this region. The respect for family and the elderly as well is considered to be a huge factor affecting the cultural behaviors.

Modules

Understanding how one's brain leads and supports our cognitive selves through difficult times can be derived from numerous behavioral and psychology modules. These modules explain how the human brain reacts to trauma, learns from trauma and how to cope with it and with potential similar situations, with the main objective of protecting us from further trauma, thus forming coping mechanism through resilience. Such behaviors are greatly affected by the individual's outlook about life, self-belief, self-esteem and capabilities, in addition to how they perceive their role as part of their social circle. For the purpose of our study, we will be deucing the results based on the following modules:

Psychological Immune System (PIS)

Just like how our immune system defeats invading cells, we have a psychological one. Psychological immune system in other words is the mental defense system. We can define psychological immune system as "an integrated system of cognitive, motivational and behavioral personality dimensions that should provide immunity against stress, promote healthy development and serve as stress resistance resources or psychological antibodies" (Dubey and Shahi 2011, p. 37). Similarly to our immune system once our body identifies the invading cells and how to protect us from it, our brain functions in the same approach. Once our brain has experienced stress or other mental threats, our brain will know how to

deal with it in a way that does not harm us, and thus our mental health will potentially improve and help us adapt (Bóna 2014, p. 14). Our brain knows how to deal with such events through the knowledge gained from previous exposure of stressors (Bóna 2014, p. 15). Thus, our mind becomes and is adapted to better resilience post stressful event.

Biopsychosocial

Biopsychosocial is a model that illustrates how biological, psychological and social factors determine why someone acts in a certain way or suffer from a certain disorder or how they developed throughout their life. This theory indicates but is not limited to the idea that an individual's social environment, biological makeup, and psyche encourage how they would act in certain occasions. In the face of stressors, an individual's resilience is influenced by their biopsychosocial. Especially the social environment, as social environment has a huge impact on how someone deals with stressors, whether someone has a secure social environment or not, and that would influence their psychological response (Sharpe 2002).

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem can be defined as your opinion about yourself and your self-worth. One's self-esteem can come from one's experiences and interpersonal relationships with others. Just by simply saying self-esteem is a broad word, it is important to note that self-esteem has a scale spectrum. Individuals can fall on different ends on the spectrum and will have different outcomes and effects in their personal lives (Mruk 2006, p. 2). Disorders such as depression and anxiety are likely to develop in individuals who possess a low self-esteem. There is also a middle spectrum which can affect how an individual cope with failure, losses or any other problems that they may be facing (Mruk 2006, p. 2). Individuals who have higher self-esteem are more likely to believe that they can overcome any obstacle they face. They are more compassionate towards themselves and others which will in return make them capable of being resilient. Those individuals will be able to deal with stressful stressors and have the ability to problem solve and persevere through adversities.

Hypotheses

1. If individuals scale high on their hopelessness levels then that will lead to a decrease in resiliency.
2. If individuals scale high on resiliency then they would indicate better coping skills for managing stress.
3. High levels of positive emotions increases the chance for one to maintain and have resilience during stressful times.

Method

For our research we picked two set of questionnaires that would provide us with answers to our hypotheses and determine their validity. The first was the Beck Hopelessness Scale (BHS) which is a questionnaire of 20 true or false questions that was developed by Beck (1988). The questionnaire was developed for adults ages 17 and above, to measure aspects of hopelessness like having feelings about the future, loss of motivation, and expectations, to the extent of indicating suicidal attempts in depressed people (Beck 1988). Moving on to the second scale, in our research was used a 28 item questionnaire, which was developed to measure resilience in adults called "Adult Resilience Measure (RRC-ARM)" scale (The Resilience Research Centre 2016). The RRC-ARM questionnaire has different sections, each caters a certain data collection method, in our case we picked Section C option 2, that is a three-point response scale, which is an easier reading level, as the scale is administered to individuals whose primary language is Arabic. We have also used Section A from the RRC-ARM, which are some basic questions used to introduce the recipient to us, by providing a few key information about themselves, such as their nationality, gender, age and so on. This is very important, as those questions give us the advantage of knowing certain aspects about our sample, in order to be able to deduce further understanding of their behaviors.

As for the means of distributing our questionnaire, we decided to opt for a more efficient method that could reach a vast number of individuals and at a fast pace, which is by creating an electronic questionnaire using surveymonkey.com, and dispersing it electronically. A hyperlink was developed in order to easily send it out to people instead of using emails or handing out physical questionnaire papers. Once the hyperlink is clicked, participants would be directed to a landing page which displayed the survey. By following this method, we ensured that people can easily receive the hyperlink, and are able to answer the questionnaire wherever and whenever they decide to do so. In addition to this being flexible on when and where they can complete the survey, it can also be distributed by those who have already completed it and want to share it with others whom they think could complete the survey as well. One of the advantages of having an electronic survey is that once an individual has completed the survey on a specific device, they cannot attempt to take the survey again on the same device. This is due to the website being able to recognize their device's IP address, limiting individuals from answering the survey more than once.

Our survey was answered by 130 respondents, and all their data were collected by surveymonkey.com and were accessible for the research team to analyze. Utilizing some of the basic results analysis features available on the website, charts pertaining to our sample's demographics were created to support with our further understanding of the selected questionnaire results and relationship between hopelessness and resilience. The research team cross checked the automated charts created to ensure all answers received were accounted for and included in Tables 1-9.

Results

Table 1. *Age Group*

Categories	Responses (Percentage)
Under 18	2.00%
18-25	84.00%
Above 25	14.00%
Total	100%

Table 2. *Gender*

Categories	Results (Percentage)
Male	22%
Female	78%
Total	100%

Table 3. *Educational Level*

Categories	Results (Percentage)
High School Diploma	44.00%
College Degree	9.00%
Bachelor Degree	41.00%
Master Degree	6.00%
Doctorate Degree	0.00%
Total	100%

Table 4. *Household*

Categories	Results (Percentage)
Mother	17.17%
Father	8.08%
Grandparents	0.00%
Aunts/Uncles	1.01%
Cousins	0.00%
Friends	0.00%
Siblings	1.01%
Nuclear family (your parents and siblings)	68.69%
Alone	4.04%
Total	100%

Table 5. *Moving Houses*

Categories	Results (Percentage)
Once	16.16%
Twice	15.15%
Three times	6.06%
Four times	4.04%
None	58.59%
Total	100%

Table 6. *Nationality*

Categories	Results (Percentage)
Kuwaiti	76.00%
Specify if non Kuwaiti	24.00%
Total	100.00%

Table 7. *Beck Hopelessness Scale Questionnaire*

Categories	True	False
I look forward to the future with hope and enthusiasm.	84.85%	15.15%
I might as well give up because there is nothing I can do about making things better for myself.	16.00%	84.00%
When things are going badly, I am helped by knowing that they cannot stay that way forever.	84.00%	16.00%
I can't imagine what my life would be like in ten years.	68.00%	32.00%
I have enough time to accomplish the things I want to do.	70.71%	29.29%
In the future, I expect to succeed in what concerns me most.	87.88%	12.12%
My future seems dark to me.	22.22%	77.78%
I happen to be particularly lucky, and I expect to get more of the good things in life like than the average person.	63.00%	37%
I just can't get the breaks, and there is no reason I will in the future.	25.25%	74.75%
My past experiences have prepared me well for the future.	80.81%	19.19%
All I can see ahead of me is unpleasantness rather than pleasantness.	14.29%	85.71%
I don't expect to get what I really want.	48.48%	51.52%
When I look ahead to the future, I expect that I will be happier than I am now.	82.83%	17.17%
Things just won't work out the way I want them to.	41.41%	58.59%
I have great faith in the future.	76.77%	23.23%
I never get what I want, so it's foolish to want anything.	13.13%	86.87%
It's very unlikely that I will get any real satisfaction in the future.	20.20%	79.80%
The future seems vague and uncertain to me.	52.53%	47.47%
I can look forward to more good times than bad times.	88.89%	11.11%
There's no use in really trying to get anything I want because I probably won't get it.	14.29%	85.71%

Table 7 shows that the majority of respondents scored low on the hopelessness scale.

Table 8. *RRC-ARM Questionnaire*

	No	Sometimes	Yes
I have people in my life who I can respect.	1.00%	11.00%	88.00%
I share/cooperate with people around me.	2.00%	43.00%	55.00%
Getting and improving qualifications and skills is important to me.	3.00%	17.00%	80.00%
I know how to behave in different social situations (such as at work, home, or other public places).	6.00%	18.00%	76.00%
My family is supportive towards me.	8.00%	35.00%	57.00%
My family Knows a lot about me (for example, who my friends are, what I like to do).	17.00%	39.00%	44.00%
If I am hungry, I can usually get enough food to eat.	5.00%	15.00%	80.00%
I try to finish activities that I start.	2.00%	38.00%	60.00%
Spiritual beliefs are a source of strength for me (for example, believing in God or Allah).	5.00%	20.00%	75.00%
I am proud of my ethnic background (for example, I am proud of where my family comes from or know a lot about my family's history).	4.00%	17.00%	79.00%
People think that I am fun to be with.	9.00%	34.00%	57.00%
I talk to my family/partner about how I feel (for example, when I am sad or concerned).	27.00%	48.00%	25.00%
When things don't go my way, I usually fix it without hurting myself or other people (e.g., without using drugs or being violent).	7.00%	19.00%	74.00%
I feel supported by my friends.	7.00%	39.00%	54.00%
I know where to go if I need help.	14.00%	36.00%	50.00%
I feel that I belong in my community.	30.00%	35.00%	35.00%
My family cares about me when times are hard (for example, when I am ill or in trouble).	3.00%	22.00%	75.00%
My Friends cares about me when times are hard (for example, when I am ill or in trouble).	10.00%	28.00%	62.00%
I am treated fairly.	9.00%	48.00%	43.00%
I have opportunities to show others that I can act responsibly.	6.00%	28.00%	66.00%
I know what I am good at.	2.00%	35.00%	63.00%
I participate in religious activities (like going to church or mosque).	33.00%	42.00%	25.00%
I think it is important to help out in my community.	5.00%	21.00%	74.00%
I feel secure when I am with my family.	11.00%	31.00%	58.00%
I have opportunities to apply my abilities in life (like using skills, working at a job, or caring for others).	7.00%	33.00%	60.00%
I like my family's culture and the way my family celebrates things (e.g., holidays).	8.00%	35.00%	57.00%
I like my community's culture and the way my community celebrates things (e.g., holidays or festivals).	9.00%	43.00%	48.00%

Table 8 shows that the majority of respondents have access or able to tap into a support system.

Table 9. *Social Support Circle (Responses were Categorized Together based on Similarities)*

Categories	Results (in Numbers)
Family (including both parents, siblings, and cousins)	21
Mother	13
Father	3
Friends	18
Family and Friends	25
No one	11
Partners	2
Myself	2

Table 9 shows that the majority of respondents considered 'Family and Friends' as their primary support circle.

Discussion

The research on resilience is an ongoing discussion and has been more actively researched in the west with the outbreak of COVID-19. Studies such the ones conducted by Chen and Bonanno (2020), indicate that individuals are resilient, and this stems from several factors including previous exposure to adversary, different individual coping mechanism and access to family and community support. In discussing this study, it is important to note that similar factors were observed in studying individuals living in Kuwait. This research studied if individuals in Kuwait are capable of building up resilience to negative situations and what type of coping skills they employ to manage stress, in response to the RRC-ARM questionnaire and the Beck Hopelessness Scale (BHS) questionnaire. The results proposed a high level of resilience, leading to the creation of a framework to understand the individual's resilience through Internal and External Resilience modules, which are being presenting in this paper. For the purpose of this analysis, Internal Resilience is used to refer to how individuals are resilient, while External Resilience refers to how they think they are resilient. Both terms will form the basis to understand the results of our sample and how their responses to the RRC-ARM and BHS questionnaires correlate with resilience.

When looking at the sample at large, 76% of whom are Kuwaitis, the majority of the respondents live with their nuclear family, consisting of their parents and siblings, and since Kuwait is a collectivist society, it is expected that family members stay together until they get married, and in some cases, the males in the family remain to live with their parents and start their own family at their parent's house. Additionally, 58.59% of the sample have been living in the same house and haven't moved, which denotes a form of family stability as well and aids in raising a resilient personality, which will continue to seek social stability.

Therefore, and in response to our hypothesis (H1), individuals scored low on their hopelessness levels leading to high levels of resiliency. Whether this resiliency is truly an internal form of resilience or not, could only be dependent on the individual's experience during times of crises. About 80.81% of the sample

believe that their past experiences have prepared them well for the future. Certain stressful situations are redundant in one's life, in which previous experiences aid in how one copes with new stressful situations they are faced with. This enforces the Psychological Immune System (PIS) module, which creates 'an integrated system of cognitive, motivational and behavioral personality dimensions that should provide immunity against stress, promote healthy development and serve as stress resistance resources or psychological antibodies' (Dubey and Shahi 2011, p. 37). Thus increasing their resiliency level and belief that they are and capable of being resilient.

Based on our results (see Table 8), we can deduce that our respondents have a high resiliency and as speculated in our hypothesis (H2), this indicates that they have better coping skills for managing stress. Receiving social support from family members and understanding one's actions and consequences, capabilities and role in the community, supports the individual in being resilient in the face of advertise and increases their internal resilience. A solid support system with an open and trusted relationship with family and friends, whom individuals can count on in times of need, does create a higher sense of internal resilience.

Our sample is raised by a generation that is most likely to have had experienced the Gulf war in 1990, thus their parents must have instilled the notion of resiliency in them in order to prepare them to face stressful situations that they might encounter. Another stress-coping skill deduced from the results is intertwined with strong religious beliefs and receiving spiritual support, as agreed by 75% of our sample, leading them to cope with stressful times and overcome them with the belief of attaining a better outcome and future, thus increasing their external resilience. It is only during a stressful encounter that we could test their resilience and understand if it is also an internal form of resilience that is exhibited by individuals or not.

Additionally, violence is not considered as a first resort during stressful times, according to 74% of our respondents. This correlates with the fact that 78% of our respondents are females, and they are more likely be more considerate of their actions. The reason being is that given the collectivist nature of the Kuwaiti society, and how their actions are influenced by their social standing and family name, the females would try to maintain their families' reputation thus limit any violent acts. Other coping skills as indicated by our sample are linked to measures taken by individuals who often break on a personal and social level, and resort to measures such as crying, anger or denial to try and cope with the stressful situations they are presented with. Those individuals are more likely to present internal resilience, as they would be a better predictor of how resilient they truly are.

Our sample believes that they have acquired certain social skills and qualifications and are able to compete, grow, evolve and control their behaviors at different social situations. Being respected by family and the community, and maintaining a certain social status and stability do correlate positively with being able to stay resilient, thus proves our hypothesis (H3) to be true. It is also worth noting that positive emotions about the future self, and especially to our Kuwaiti sample, could be linked to receiving support from the government, thus feeling

safe and more hopeful, as indicated by 84.85% our respondents in Table 7. The cultural instinct is to protect its people against stressors, therefore people may see this protection as a form of self-resilience. Being certain of having a set of privileges and the rightful access to a number of essential resources including healthcare, education, finance and social support, provides a sense of a better future and creates a positive outlook, thus leading individuals to build resilience within.

Due to the nature of the privilege system in Kuwait, individuals think that they are prepared for the future. However, one could argue that they are poor predictors of their feelings as they have not experienced true resilience, therefore they think that they are resilient or able to become resilient, which is the form of external resilience. Kuwait, when compared globally, where individuals are subjected to stressors such as losing one's job, finding adequate housing, poor healthcare or unclear future endeavors and instability is experienced, individuals true self resilience is exhibited. Only then that individuals would be a more accurate predictors of their resilient self, because they have lived through a stressful situation and would be able to deduce their preparedness and ability to cope with it or not.

The contradictions in some of the results we received could be due to the responses received from the expatriates, around 24% of our sample, who do not necessarily have access to the same privilege system as Kuwaitis, but could also be based on feedback from the Kuwaitis who do not feel safe in their own home and don't trust the system in general. This hopelessness and low self-resilience is possibly experienced by those individuals who lack a strong social support system with dysfunctional family, thus losing the hope and the need to be resilient.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Most of our sample exhibited external resilience throughout the results, and this could be due to the fact that this study was conducted during the beginning of a pandemic crisis, where Kuwait was not closely touched by its repercussions. Whereas, we would expect to see more of internal resilience exhibited and a true measure of resilience as the pandemic unfolds and individuals are impacted.

There have been findings into the human Psychological Immune System which indicate the individual's ability to deal with high level of stress and trauma, as it allows the individual to focus on other positive evets which can help to facilitate the return of positive emptions (Drevitch 2020). The pandemic presented an opportunity to research this topic in a collectivist society, such as Kuwait.

As individuals are impacted by the effects of the pandemic, below are some coping mechanisms that could be effective for societies with a collectivities culture as they deal with the uncertainties of the pandemic and other high intensity adversaries.

1) **Cognitive wellness:** Individual directing their mind into getting virtual support from experts, such as teletherapy or coaching, to alter their personal

experience of the crisis and how this reflects on their self-processing of the events around them.

2) **Interconnection to self:** Individual engaging in personal hobbies and interests as a mechanism to cope with their growing anxiety levels and the challenging situation the pandemic presents them with.

3) **Media consumption:** Individual filtering the news and content related to the pandemic and what sentiments they are left with. Individual verifying and seeking positive news from official sources, and avoiding participation in the spread of rumors to support in limiting the negativity associated with its circulation.

4) **Social support:** Individual accessing their social support system, both direct and virtually, to be able to overcome the hardship through social interactions.

Limitations

The Language Used for the Questionnaire

When looking at some of the discrepancies in the results, they could be due to a number of limitations our study encountered in hindsight which are also dependent on the sample that answered our questionnaire. Language barrier could be one of the main limitations we had faced, as the questionnaires were circulated in the English language and most of the respondents' first language is Arabic. It could be that some participants may have not understood the questions correctly, thus not providing us with the correct representation of their feelings and understanding of resilience.

Fear of Confidentially Breach

A second limitation could be due to the sensitivity of the subject, and the type of the questions posed, although it was highlighted that the participation is confidential, respondents maybe have felt vulnerable to share true accounts of past experiences or to reflect on their true selves, thus not sharing accurate representations in their answers and trying to show they are better than they truly are.

The Time of Conducting the Study Outside the Spike of a Crisis

The time in which the study was conducted was during the early stages of the pandemic of COVID-19, where most respondents could have shared their hopeful perception of their resilient self, whereas as the pandemic expanded, their responses would have been actually different. If the study were conducted during the spike of the pandemic, and the respondents were actually subjected to repercussions of the situations and the radical changes which later came into effect while answering the questionnaires, we would expect the results to reflect a better measure of internal resilience as opposed to external resilience, which we believe is mainly exhibited by the respondents.

The Age of the Participants

Moreover, the current sample examined, not only that they may have not gone through stressors but they are a generation that is more stable financially and are yielding the hard work and efforts of their parents, thus they are less likely to understand what true resilience is. Our age group could have been expanded to include an older population who were more likely to have experienced stressors themselves and not only have heard of such situations from their parents or grandparents. Such stories from close social groups can influence the individual's behaviors and perceptions more likely compared to historical account of events that does not relate to the individual, however, they would not be contributing to a true resilience measure if they were not subjected to test their resilience.

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Appendix

<u>**Survey for a Research Paper**</u>

1. Age?
      a. Under 18
      b. 18-25
      c. Above 25

2. Gender?
      a. Female
      b. Male

3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
      a. High School Diploma
      b. College Diploma
      c. Bachelor Degree
      d. Master Degree
      e. Doctorate Degree

4. Who do you live with?
      a. Mother
      b. Father
      c. Grandparents
      d. Aunts/Uncles
      e. Cousins
      f. Friends
      g. Siblings
      h. Nuclear Family (your parents and siblings)
      i. Alone

5. How many times have you moved homes in the past 5 years?
      a. Once
      b. Twice
      c. Three times
      d. Four times
      e. None

6. Please indicate who you consider to be your social support? (Text box)

7. To which of the following groups do you belong?
      a. Kuwaiti
      b. Specify if not Kuwaiti

8. Please answer the following true or false questions.
    a. I look forward to the future with hope and enthusiasm.
    b. I might as well give up because there is nothing I can do about making things better for myself.
    c. When things are going badly, I am helped by knowing that they cannot stay that way forever.
    d. I can't imagine what my life would be like in ten years.
    e. I have enough time to accomplish the things I want to do.
    f. In the future, I expect to succeed in what concerns me most.
    g. My future seems dark to me.
    h. I happen to be particularly lucky, and I expect to get more of the good things in life like than the average person.
    i. I just can't get the breaks, and there is no reason I will in the future.
    j. My past experiences have prepared me well for the future.
    k. All I can see ahead of me is unpleasantness rather than pleasantness.
    l. I don't expect to get what I really want.
    m. When I look ahead to the future, I expect that I will be happier than I am now.
    n. Things just won't work out the way I want them to.
    o. I have great faith in the future.
    p. I never get what I want, so it is foolish to want anything.
    q. It is very unlikely that I will get any real satisfaction in the future.
    r. The future seems vague and uncertain to me.
    s. I can look forward to more good times than bad times.
    t. There's no use in really trying to get anything I want because I probably won't get it.

9. Please answer the following. (Options: No, Sometimes, Yes)
    a. I have people in my life who I can respect.
    b. I share/cooperate with people around me.
    c. Getting and improving qualifications and skills is important to me.
    d. I know how to behave in different social situations (such as at work, home, or other public places).
    e. My family is supportive towards me.
    f. My family knows a lot about me (for example, who my friends are, what I like to do).
    g. If I am hungry, I can usually get enough food to eat.
    h. I try to finish activities that I start.
    i. Spiritual beliefs are a source of strength for me (for example, believing in God or Allah).
    j. I am proud of my ethnic background (for example, I am proud of where my family comes from or know a lot about my family's history).
    k. People think that I am fun to be with.
    l. I talk to my family/partner about how I feel (for example, when I am sad or concerned).

    m. When things don't go my way, I usually fix it without hurting myself or other people (e.g., without using drugs or being violent).
    n. I feel supported by my friends.
    o. I know where to go if I need help.
    p. I feel that I belong in my community.
    q. My family cares about me when times are hard (for example, when I am ill or in trouble).
    r. My friends care about me when times are hard (for example, when I am ill or in trouble).
    s. I am treated fairly.
    t. I have opportunities to show others that I can act responsibly.
    u. I know what I am good at.
    v. I participate in religious activities (like going to church or mosque).
    w. I think it is important to help out in my community.
    x. I feel secure when I am with my family.
    y. I have opportunities to apply my abilities in life (like using skills, working at a job, or caring for others).
    z. I like my family's culture and the way my family celebrates things (e.g., holidays).
    aa. I like my community's culture and the way my community celebrates things (e.g., holidays or festivals).

10. Describe a time when someone else put pressure on you, and how you coped with it. (short answer question)