



Rational and Experiential Thinking Patterns as Determinants of Resilience Among Indian Civil Service Aspirants

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DECLARATION

We, **AGNIVESH B, LAVANYA S H, ASWATHY J S, SREENANDANA S**, Sixth Semester students of Christ Nagar College, Maranalloor, hereby declare that the project work entitled, **“Rational and Experiential Thinking Patterns as Determinants of Resilience Among Indian Civil Service Aspirants”**, submitted to the University of Kerala in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Bachelor of Science in Psychology, is a record of original work done by the researcher under the guidance of **Ms. AKHILA KRISHNAN R S**, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Christ Nagar College, Maranalloor.

We further declare that no part of the work has previously been formed as the basis for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Fellowship, or any other similar title of any university or similar institution of any person.

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the Project report entitled "Rational and Experiential Thinking Patterns as Determinants of Resilience Among Indian Civil Service Aspirants" is a bonafide record of the Project work done by AGNIVESH B (25722825003), LAVANYA S H (25722825012), ASWATHY J S (25722825023), SREENANDANA S (25722825039) in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Bachelor of Science in Psychology, University of Kerala during the academic year 2022-25 under my supervision and guidance.

INTERNAL GUIDE PRINCIPAL

HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT

EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

- 1)
- 2)

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ABSTRACT

Civil Service aspirants face significant academic pressure, psychological stress, and complex decision-making challenges throughout their journey. Their resilience and rational-experiential information processing play a crucial role in enhancing adaptability, perseverance, and overall success, making it essential to understand their interplay for effective stress management and cognitive flexibility. This study examines the relationship between Rational-Experiential Information Processing and Resilience among Civil Service Aspirants in India. It explores how rational and experiential cognitive styles influence resilience, a crucial trait for aspirants facing intense academic and emotional stress.

A descriptive study was conducted with 222 Civil Service aspirants (aged 18–32) from North and South India, selected through convenience sampling. Data were collected via a mixed-mode method using Google Forms and direct approaches using validated psychological scales: the 10-item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC 10) and the 40-item Rational-Experiential Inventory (REI-40). Statistical analyses included ANOVA, Karl Pearson's Correlation, t-tests, and Duncan's Multiple Range Test.

The study found that Resilience is strongly correlated with Rational Information Processing, particularly Rational Ability. Rational Engagement and Experiential Ability also contribute, but Experiential Engagement showed no significant correlation. Gender and education level had no significant impact. First-born individuals had higher Rational Engagement, while older participants (28–32 years) had higher resilience. Experiential Processing varied with age, but rational thinking remained stable. North Indian participants engaged more in Rational Thinking, while other cognitive styles remained consistent across regions.

Findings highlight the importance of structured cognitive training, which integrates analytical and intuitive processing to optimize aspirant performance. These insights can inform stress management interventions, personalized study techniques, and policy improvements to support mental well-being and academic success among Civil Service aspirants.

Keywords: *Rational-Experiential Information Processing, Rational Information Processing, Experiential Information Processing, Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, Experiential Engagement, Resilience, Civil Service Aspirants.*

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CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

A. Introduction

The journey undertaken by Civil Service aspirants in India can be characterized as a contemporary odyssey, distinguished by rigorous preparation, unwavering determination, and a complex interplay of cognitive and emotional resilience. Within this demanding pursuit, the manner in which individuals process information—whether through rational analysis or experiential intuition—emerges as a significant determinant of their resilience in the face of stress and setbacks. This study investigates the intricate relationship between rational and experiential information processing styles and the resilience of aspirants as they navigate the intensely competitive landscape of Indian civil services. It aims to illuminate the psychological dimensions that enable these individuals to persist and achieve excellence in their endeavors.

Resilience refers to the positive adaptation or the ability to maintain or regain mental health despite facing adversity (Wald, Taylor, Asmundson, Jang, & Stapleton, 2006). This concept encompasses the capacity to withstand and recover from challenging life events, trauma, or stress without long-term negative consequences. Resilience has been defined in numerous ways, and while the core meaning remains constant, the interpretations of resilience may vary slightly from one person to another. Resilience is defined as:

- *"The Ability to Bounce Back from Adversity, Frustration, and Misfortune"*
✓ (Ledesma, 2014, p.1)
- *"The Developable Capacity to Rebound or Bounce Back from Adversity, Conflict, and Failure or Even Positive Events, Progress, and Increased Responsibility"*
✓ (Luthans, 2002a, p. 702)
- *"A Stable Trajectory of Healthy Functioning after a Highly Adverse Event"*
✓ (Bonanno, 2004; Bonanno, Westphal, & Mancini, 2011)
- *"The Capacity of a Dynamic System to Adapt Successfully"*
✓ (Masten, 2014; Southwick, Bonanno, Masten, Panter-Brick, & Yehuda, 2014)

Resilience is a skill that helps individuals manage stress, crises, and trauma, enabling them to navigate life's ups and downs. It can be developed through learned skills, similar to riding a bike. Building resilience is essential as life's challenges are inevitable. It equips individuals to handle difficulties effectively, fosters confidence, and allows them to adapt and thrive despite hardships in various aspects of life, including work, relationships, and personal challenges.

According to Dr. Amit Sood, resilience involves five key principles: gratitude, compassion, acceptance, meaning, and forgiveness. These elements play a vital role in cultivating resilience, especially in high-stress environments. This is particularly evident in civil service aspirants, who face unique challenges such as intense competition, prolonged preparation periods, and the need for quick decision-making under pressure. Resilience among civil service aspirants contributes to enhanced personal performance, improved adaptability, and the ability to cope with stress effectively during the preparatory phase and in the future while handling administrative roles. Resilient individuals also excel in communication and are often perceived as strong team players and leaders.

The debate around whether resilience is a trait, process, or outcome is ongoing. In contexts, resilience is critical for maintaining operational effectiveness and mental well-being under stress. Civil Service aspirants face immense pressure and competition during the examination process. As they are exposed to heightened stress due to their rigorous preparatory methods and high-stakes nature of their work in the future, there is an increase in the risk of developing psychological disorders such as PTSD, depression, and anxiety.

A range of psychosocial elements contribute to the development of resilience, such as effective coping strategies, maintaining optimism, reframing negative thoughts, and engaging in supportive social behaviors. Among these, social support stands out as a particularly significant factor. It influences overall family functioning, quality of parenting, and children's ability to adapt, while also strengthening resilience in the face of stress. For instance, research has shown that spousal support can buffer the effects of economic hardship and promote resilience (Conger & Conger, 2002).

To better understand resilience, it is important to examine the theoretical perspectives that explain how individuals adapt to adversity. One influential contribution comes from Martin Seligman of the University of Pennsylvania, whose positive psychology model highlights three key dimensions that shape our response to challenges: Personalization, Pervasiveness, and Permanence. Personalization emphasizes recognizing that not every setback is the result of one's own actions. Pervasiveness refers to how widely individuals allow a negative event to affect different areas of their lives. Permanence, on the other hand, relates to the belief about how long the negative impact of an event will last.

Rutter's Theory of Resilience emphasizes the ability to maintain positive psychological well-being despite facing serious risks. It can be enhanced through brief exposure to risks and the development of mental characteristics like a sense of agency. Social connections and biological factors also play a significant role in fostering resilience. The Isle of Wight and London Study provides empirical support for these concepts, showing the impact of environmental differences on resilience.

Suniya Luthar's concept emphasizes the importance of protective factors in building resilience and highlights the complexity of measuring resilience due to the diverse domains involved. Garmezy's concept emphasizes the ability to recover and sustain adaptive behaviors in the face of adversity, emphasizing the importance of external support and diverse coping mechanisms. The Compensatory and Protective Factor Model of Resilience focuses on the role of stress and self-esteem in predicting competence.

Family resilience has been conceptualized in multiple ways, generally referring to the characteristics, resources, and processes that enable families to maintain stability during periods of disruption and to adjust in constructive ways when confronted with crises. One important perspective related to resilience is Shame Resilience Theory, proposed by Brené Brown. She first introduced this framework in her 2006 publication *Shame Resilience Theory: A Grounded Theory Study on Women and Shame*, and later elaborated upon it in her 2008 book *I Thought It Was Just Me (But It Isn't)*. This theory highlights how individuals and families can develop strategies to understand, manage, and recover from the impact of shame in their lives.

At the community level, resilience is generally understood as the capacity of members to identify, mobilize, and engage with community resources in order to thrive within environments characterized by instability, unpredictability, and constant change. In organizational contexts, resilience is often described as the cultivation of a "resilient culture." This organizational culture serves as a psychological buffer, providing the flexibility and adaptive strength necessary to cope with both gradual and transformative change, ensuring long-term sustainability in complex environments.

Several theoretical models have also deepened the understanding of resilience in diverse contexts. Werner's definition focuses on resilience as the ability to manage internal and external pressures effectively, which is shaped by protective mechanisms operating at the individual, familial, and community levels. In contrast, Masten's framework places particular emphasis on child and adolescent development, identifying core protective factors that contribute to positive adaptation, fostering competence, and supporting the pursuit of constructive goals. Meanwhile, Ungar provides a more integrative approach, presenting a model that captures the multiple and interrelated influences—biological, psychological, social, and cultural—that together constitute the dynamic processes of resilience.

Information processing in cognitive psychology compares human thinking to how computers handle information, focusing on memory retrieval, encoding, and learning mechanisms. Two types of information processing exist, Rational Information Processing, which is analytical and evidence-based, and Experiential Information Processing, which is intuitive and influenced by emotions. Integrating both approaches enhances resilience, helping individuals better navigate challenges and stress.

For civil service aspirants, maintaining a balance of processing styles is crucial for effective decision-making and mental well-being during rigorous preparation and high-pressure examinations. Understanding these interactions can guide the development of strategies to enhance resilience and performance in the pursuit of public administrative roles.

A revised Rational-Experiential Inventory (REI) was tested in two studies, confirming that rational and experiential thinking styles are distinct and predict traits beyond the Big Five personality traits. Rational thinking is linked to Ego Strength, Openness, and Conscientiousness, while experiential thinking relates to Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Emotional Expressivity.

Cognitive-Experiential Theory (CET) and the Cognitive-Experiential Leadership Model (CELM) highlight the role of rational and experiential systems in decision-making, with the Guided Reflection Model (GRM) suggesting that coaching can enhance leaders' creativity, innovation, and wisdom. Studying rational-experiential information processing in civil service aspirants reveals how these cognitive mechanisms impact stress coping, performance, and mental health in high-pressure environments.

Rational-experiential processing enables individuals to make systematic decisions while also leveraging their instincts and past experiences, thereby enhancing their ability to effectively respond to complex situations. The research aims to capture a wide range of experiences that mirror the challenges encountered by civil service aspirants in diverse stressful environments. This study investigates the interplay between rational-experiential information processing and resilience and their impact on the performance and coping strategies of civil service aspirants. The development of more effective training programs and individualized mental

health therapies for these aspirants may be guided by this holistic perspective, which could improve their readiness for examination and overall health while in the preparatory phase and during the service in future administrative roles.

B. Review of Literature

➤ *Exposure to Continuous Political Violence: Rational and Experiential Thinking Styles, Coping Styles, and Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms*

The study by Zvi and Cohen-Louck (2023) involved 332 Israeli adults exposed to political violence. They used the Rational Experiential Inventory and the COPE scale to examine the relationship between thinking styles, coping mechanisms, and post-traumatic stress (PTS) symptoms. Results showed that lower rational thinking was associated with higher PTS, particularly when combined with emotion-focused coping. In contrast, rational thinking appeared protective against stress from political violence.

➤ *Psychological Resilience and Positive Coping Styles Among Chinese Undergraduate Students: A Cross-Sectional Study*

In a cross-sectional study conducted in Shandong Province, China, Yu Wu et al. explored the relationship between psychological resilience, student characteristics, and coping styles among 1,743 undergraduate students from six universities across three cities. Using the Asian Resilience Scale and the 20-item Simplified Coping Style Questionnaire. Multiple regression analysis revealed that mood control, self-plasticity, and coping flexibility significantly influenced positive coping styles, with medical students and females demonstrating higher scores in positive coping compared to non-medical students and males. The study emphasized that higher psychological resilience is linked to better positive coping styles and suggested that psychological education and health promotion programs aimed at enhancing resilience could foster positive coping strategies, thereby improving mental health and psychological well-being among undergraduates. Demographic factors such as gender, age, major, and study year were also considered in the analysis.

➤ *Cross-Sectional Study of Resilience, Positivity, and Coping Strategies as Predictors of Engagement-Burnout in Undergraduate Students: Implications for Prevention and Treatment in Mental Well-Being.*

De la Fuente, J., Santos, F. H., Garzón-Umerenkova, A., Fadda, S., Solinas, G., & Pignata, S. (2021). conducted a Cross-Sectional Study of Resilience, Positivity, and Coping Strategies as Predictors of Engagement-Burnout in Undergraduate Students. The study involved 1,126 undergraduate students from various universities. The attributes of resilience and positivity have been shown to have strong connections with coping strategies and the balance between engagement and burnout. Positive coping strategies are correlated with increased engagement and reduced burnout. Additionally, resilience and positivity have been positively associated with engagement and negatively associated with burnout. The measures used were the CD-RISC Scale, Positivity Scale, Coping Strategies of Stress Questionnaire, and Engagement and Burnout Scales. The study suggests that enhancing resilience and positivity can be effective in reducing burnout and increasing engagement among students. This has practical implications for developing therapeutic interventions aimed at improving mental well-being in undergraduate students.

➤ *Relating Rational and Experiential Thinking Styles with Trait Emotional Intelligence in Broader Personality Space*

Jokić and Purić (2019) investigated the link between rational and experiential thinking styles and trait emotional intelligence within the context of broader personality constructs. Scientific consensus on the distinction and relationship between rational and intuitive thinking remains elusive. Their study involved 270 undergraduate participants, predominantly female, who completed standardized assessments measuring emotional intelligence, thinking styles, and personality traits. Results revealed generally low to moderate associations among these constructs. Notably, trait emotional intelligence partially accounted for differences in rational and experiential dimensions, yet much of the variation was unexplained by either emotional intelligence or personality traits. Four distinct thinking style profiles emerged from the data, and emotional intelligence was found to be highest among individuals who scored high on both rational and experiential dimensions, and lowest when both scores were low. This suggests that emotional intelligence plays a critical role in understanding and managing emotions—a key factor for psychological functioning. Within the framework of cognitive-experiential self-theory, this pattern illustrates how rationality can shape experiential thinking. Importantly, the study highlights that irrationality is linked not only to elevated intuition but also to diminished rationality.

➤ *The Relation of Rational and Experiential Information Processing Styles to Personality, Basic Beliefs, and the Ratio-Bias Phenomenon*

Pacini, R., & Epstein, S. (1999) from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, conducted a study titled "The Relation of Rational and Experiential Information Processing Styles to Personality, Basic Beliefs, and the Ratio-Bias Phenomenon". The sample included 399 undergraduate students (315 women and 75 men) from a northeastern university in the United States. The study utilized several tools including the Rational-Experiential Inventory (REI), the Big Five personality traits, and various belief and cognitive style measures to assess thinking styles. The results indicated that rational thinking was related to traits such as Ego Strength, Openness, and Conscientiousness, while experiential thinking was linked to traits like Extraversion, Agreeableness, and emotional expressivity. The study concluded that the REI effectively measures distinct personality aspects beyond what is captured by the Big Five personality traits.

➤ *The Role of Rational and Experiential Processing in Influencing the Framing Effect*

Stark, Baldwin, Hertel, and Rothman (2017) explored how individual variation in rational and experiential cognitive processing influences the framing effect in decision-making situations. They argued that focusing solely on rational processing is insufficient for understanding responses to framed choices, as experiential processing also plays a significant role. Using the Rational Experiential Inventory in two studies, they examined how both types of processing impact choice behavior. Their findings revealed that only experiential processing differences—not rational processing—moderated the influence of framing on decision outcomes. Based on these results, they recommend that future research pay closer attention to the impact of experiential processing, which could offer broader insight into the mechanisms driving the framing effect.

➤ *Examining Various Variables Related to Authentic Learning Self-Efficacy of University Students in Educational Online Social Networks: Creative Self-Efficacy, Rational Experiential Thinking, and Cognitive Flexibility*

Fayombo and Hatice Yildiz Durak (2023) carried out a study aimed at exploring the connections between creative self-efficacy (CSE), rational experiential thinking, cognitive flexibility, and authentic learning self-efficacy (ALSE) stemming from authentic learning activities conducted within educational online social networks. The research included 102 university students selected through convenience sampling. To analyze the relationships among the variables, the study utilized variance-based partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings revealed that cognitive flexibility within online social networks significantly impacts both experiential ability and positive attitude toward rational thinking. Additionally, the study showed that personal factors such as gender, age, and perceived academic success did not significantly affect creative self-efficacy in online learning settings.

➤ *Working Memory Capacity and Cognitive Styles in Decision-Making. Personality and Individual Differences*

Fletcher, Marks, and Hine (2011) conducted research examining the relationship between working memory capacity (WMC) and cognitive styles in decision-making. Their sample consisted of participants from a larger behavioral genetics study recruited through the Australian Twin Registry, ensuring only one twin from each pair participated to maintain independent observations. After excluding cases with excessive missing data, the final sample included 269 individuals (84 males, 185 females). The study found that all effects between the main variables were statistically significant, though modest in strength and aligned with hypotheses. Specifically, higher WMC was positively linked with rational thinking and syllogistic reasoning, while it negatively correlated with gambling biases and categorical thinking. WMC showed no relationship with experiential thinking. Moreover, the Rational Experiential Inventory (REI) scales for rationality and experientiality were not significantly correlated. Results support the idea that rational thinking preference mediates the influence of WMC on reasoning and decision-making performance. Participants with greater WMC and a stronger preference for rational processing tended to perform better on reasoning tasks. In contrast, experiential thinking preference was unrelated to WMC and predicted poorer outcomes on these tasks.

➤ *Promoting Psychological Resilience in the U.S. Military*

Meredith, L. S., Sherbourne, C. D., Gaillot, S. J., Hansell, L., Ritschard, H. V., Parker, A. M., & Wrenn, G. (2011). conducted a study on “Promoting Psychological Resilience in the U.S. Military” to assess the effectiveness of programs and strategies that were implemented by the Department of Defense (DoD) to promote psychological resilience among service members. The results were that most programs commonly emphasize one or more of these five individual-level factors: positive thinking, positive coping, behavioral control, positive affect, and realism training. A majority of programs also incorporate a positive command climate and teamwork. Enhancing family communication was also a relatively widely employed approach to promote resilience among the programs, and belongingness was the community factor most widely used by programs.

➤ *A Comparative Study on University Students' Rational and Experiential Thinking Styles in Terms of Faculty, Class Level and Gender Variables*

Coşkun, Y (2018) conducted a study titled “A Comparative Study on University Students' Rational and Experiential Thinking Styles in Terms of Faculty, Class Level and Gender Variables,” which aimed to explore the thinking styles of university students. The research employed a Personal Information Form and the Rational-Experiential Thinking Styles Inventory as data collection instruments. Findings indicated that students demonstrated moderate levels of both cognitive (rational) and experiential thinking styles, suggesting that they do not predominantly rely on one over the other but use a combination of both in their cognitive processes. No significant gender differences were observed concerning cognitive thinking styles; however, females showed a significantly stronger preference for experiential thinking than males. The study also found differences in thinking styles among various faculties but no notable differences between third- and fourth-year students regarding their thinking style preferences.

➤ *Investor's Disposition Error at Emerging Market: Evidence for Experiential and Rational Thinking Styles*

Pangeran, P. (2015). conducted a study “Investor's Disposition Error at Emerging Market: Evidence for Experiential and Rational Thinking Styles”. The aim of this study was to examine the role of two information processing styles, namely Rational information processing style and Experiential Information processing style, toward investor disposition errors. The study consisted of 181 participants. The results indicate that the emotion of regret/satisfaction in investment decisions is more predominant in participants who are in the experiential thinking style than the rational thinking style. Accordingly, the level of investor disposition error is higher in the experiential style than in the rational style.

➤ *Gut Feelings, Deliberative Thought, and Paranoid Ideation: A Study of Experiential and Rational Reasoning*

Freeman, D., Evans, N., & Lister, R. (2012). conducted a study "Gut feelings, deliberative thought, and paranoid ideation: A study of experiential and rational reasoning". The aim of the study was to gather evidence of self-reported general reasoning styles being associated with delusional ideation. 500 people took part in the study. The tools used were the Paranoid Thoughts Scale Part B (GPTS-B; Green et al., 2008), Rational-Experiential Inventory (REI; Pacini and Epstein, 1999), and the Newcastle Personality Assessor (NPA; Nettle, 2007). It was found that in a large general population sample, the self-reported use of intuitive gut feelings was associated with higher levels of persecutory thinking, while the use of deliberative analytic thinking was protective. However, reliance on experiential thinking is likely to be significantly exacerbated in anxiety-provoking situations, as the questionnaire items did not ask about reasoning in relation to the kinds of fearful feelings that are typically associated with delusions. Consistent with previous findings, the combination of experiential thinking without the check of rational thinking was most closely associated with paranoia.

➤ *Enhancing the Effects of a Narrative Message Through Experiential Information Processing: An Experimental Study*

Dillard and Hisler (2015) conducted an experimental study to investigate whether thinking based on emotions and personal experiences—referred to as experiential information processing—enhances people's responsiveness to narrative messages. The study involved 138 female college students who were asked to report their perceptions of skin cancer risk, their worries about the disease, and related behavioral intentions. Results demonstrated that when participants engaged in experiential processing, a first-person narrative message (experiential information) was more effective than a statistical message (rational information) in increasing their perception of skin cancer risk. This suggests that narratives framed through personal experience may be more impactful in influencing risk perceptions among college women than purely statistical information.

➤ *A Comparative Study on Resilience, Stress, and Aspirations Among Aspirants and Non-Aspirants*

Gupta (2021) carried out a study titled "A Comparative Study on Resilience, Stress and Aspirations among Aspirants and Non-Aspirants," which aimed to analyze the levels of stress, resilience, and career aspirations between aspirants and non-aspirants. The research employed standardized scales including the Career Aspiration Scale (CAS-R), Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CDRISC-25), and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) to assess these dimensions. The findings indicated that individuals with higher resilience tend to have stronger coping mechanisms, resulting in significantly lower stress levels. Moreover, those with higher aspirations are more motivated to put in effort, which correlates negatively with stress and positively with resilience. Contrary to common belief, aspirants displayed lower stress compared to non-aspirants, while showing higher levels of resilience and stronger career aspirations in leadership, achievement, and education domains. These results highlight that leadership qualities and psychological resources play a critical role in managing stress effectively among aspirants preparing for competitive exams.

➤ *Adolescent Identity: Rational vs. Experiential Processing, Formal Operations, and Critical Thinking Beliefs*

Klaczynski, P.A., Fauth, J.M. & Swanger, A. (1998). conducted a new study "Adolescent Identity: Rational vs. Experiential Processing, Formal Operations, and Critical Thinking Beliefs" which introduced a new and promising variable; the extent to which adolescents rely on rational vs. experiential information processing. 49 adolescents volunteered to be a part of this study, and they were administered multiple measures of formal operations, two critical thinking questionnaires, the Rational Versus Experiential Inventory (S. Epstein, R. Pacini, V. Denes-Raj, and H. Heier [1995] "Individual Differences in Rational and Analytical Information Processing," unpublished manuscript, University of Massachusetts) and the Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status—II (G. Adams, C. Bennion, and K. Huh [1989] "Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status: A Reference Manual," Unpublished manuscript, University of Guelph), as a measure of identity status. The result was that rational/experiential processing was found to be correlated significantly with measures of both formal operations and critical thinking beliefs.

➤ *Correlations Between Resilience and Big Five Personality Traits*

Several studies have explored the relationship between resilience and the Big Five personality traits, highlighting how different personality dimensions influence an individual's ability to adapt to adversity.

Nakaya, Oshio, and Kaneko (2006) examined correlations between the Adolescent Resilience Scale and the Big Five Personality Inventory in a sample of 130 undergraduates. Their findings showed a significant negative correlation of -0.59 ($p < .001$) between resilience and Neuroticism, explaining 35% of the variance. Positive correlations were found with Extraversion ($r = 0.37$), Openness ($r = 0.40$), and Conscientiousness ($r = 0.48$), accounting for 14%, 16%, and 18% of variance, respectively. These results suggest that resilience in adolescents is strongly linked to stable personality traits.

Ercan (2017) extended this investigation to emerging adulthood, using a sample of 392 undergraduate students. The study found that Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Extraversion together explained 34% of the variance in resilience levels. Significant correlations were observed between resilience and the Big Five personality traits, reinforcing previous research findings.

A large-scale meta-analysis by Oshio, Taku, Hirano, and Saeed (2018), which included data from 30 studies with 15,609 participants, confirmed these associations. The estimated average correlations were $r = -0.46$ (Neuroticism), $r = 0.42$ (Extraversion), $r = 0.34$ (Openness), $r = 0.31$ (Agreeableness), and $r = 0.42$ (Conscientiousness). The study also distinguished between trait resilience and ego-resiliency, noting stronger associations between ego-resiliency and Openness and Agreeableness.

Das et al. (2020) further explored these relationships in young adults (18-25 years) using the NEO FFI-3 and a resilience scale. Their findings indicated significant positive correlations between resilience and Conscientiousness, Extraversion, and Openness, while Neuroticism was negatively correlated. However, Agreeableness did not show a significant correlation with resilience.

Fuente et al. (2021) investigated the buffering role of resilience in university students experiencing academic stress. The study found that self-regulatory traits like Conscientiousness and Extraversion predicted proactive resilience and lower stress, while Neuroticism was associated with higher stress. Openness and Agreeableness showed minimal impact.

Khosbayan, Andrade, and Miller (2022) explored these relationships in a workplace setting among mining employees in Mongolia. They found that Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Openness, and Extraversion were positively associated with resilience, reinforcing the idea that personality traits significantly influence an individual's ability to adapt to challenges.

Together, these studies provide strong empirical evidence that higher Conscientiousness, Extraversion, and Openness predict greater resilience, while Neuroticism is consistently linked to lower resilience. These findings have broad implications for psychological research, personal development, and interventions aimed at enhancing resilience across different life stages and contexts.

C. Need and Significance

The study of rational-experiential information processing and resilience among civil service aspirants holds significant importance given the high-pressure and competitive nature of the civil services examination process. Rational-experiential processing enables aspirants to make systematic decisions while also leveraging their instincts and past experiences, thereby enhancing their ability to effectively navigate complex scenarios such as dynamic exam preparation, decision-making under time constraints, and addressing multidimensional administrative challenges in the future. This dual-processing approach improves their ability to comprehend diverse subjects, heightens adaptability, and ultimately facilitates success in examinations and future administrative roles.

Equally crucial is the concept of resilience, which acts as a protective factor against stress and adversity. It equips aspirants with the psychological tools necessary to cope with the inherent challenges of rigorous preparation schedules, setbacks, and the emotional demands of prolonged study periods. These attributes collectively contribute not only to their academic and professional effectiveness but also to their mental health and well-being, thereby reducing the risk of burnout and psychological distress during their preparatory journey.

The study aims to investigate the interplay between rational-experiential information processing and resilience which impacts civil service aspirants' performance and coping strategies during the preparatory phase and while in service in the future. This particular demographic has unique relevance due to the intense nature of their preparation process, which mirrors the multifaceted challenges encountered in their potential future roles as public administrators. By concentrating on this particular group, this study seeks to determine if how individuals process information influences their psychological resilience, which is essential for succeeding in competitive and mentally challenging settings.

A distinguishing feature of this study is its comprehensive approach, which explores the interaction between rational and experiential processing with resilience. Previous research has often examined these components independently or correlating with other factors like stress, level of aspiration, etc. By delving into the synergies between these factors, this study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of their combined influence on the resilience and information-processing tendencies of civil service aspirants. This holistic perspective can inform the development of more effective training modules and mental health interventions tailored specifically to the needs of aspirants, enhancing their preparedness for examinations and eventual administrative duties while promoting sustained well-being. In addition, this study can also give insight into which type of individuals, that is with rational or experiential information processing style is more suited for handling the roles as civil servants concerning their level of resilience.

D. Statement of the Problem

The problem of the present investigation was to study the relation between Rational-Experiential Information Processing and Resilience among Civil Service Aspirants in India.

E. Operational Definition of Key Terms

➤ *Rational Information Processing:*

It is the ability to think clearly and make decisions based on reason rather than emotions. It is the ability to make choices and decisions based on reason and to evaluate those choices to achieve a goal.

➤ *Rational Ability:*

It refers to the capacity to analyze information logically, apply reasoning, and make objective decisions based on evidence rather than emotions. It involves critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

➤ *Rational Engagement:*

It refers to the active use of rational thinking in decision-making and problem-solving, involving deliberate evaluation, planning, and goal-directed reasoning to achieve desired outcomes.

➤ *Experiential Information Processing:*

It is a psychological concept that describes how people process information through an experiential system, which is automatic, intuitive, and closely tied to emotions. This can be used to examine how the experiential and cognitive systems operate independently and interactively.

➤ *Experiential Ability:*

It refers to the capacity to intuitively process information based on past experiences, emotions, and automatic responses, enabling quick judgments and adaptive decision-making.

➤ *Experiential Engagement:*

It refers to the tendency to rely on intuitive and emotion-driven processing in daily interactions, influencing spontaneous decision-making and social adaptability based on previous experiences.

➤ *Resilience:*

It is the ability to adapt and cope with difficult life experiences, such as trauma, adversity, stress, and adjustments to external and internal demands. It's a process that involves mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility, and can lead to personal growth. It is the ability to recover from negative events, not to be impervious to them and it is a growth mindset that can help people recognize that their skills and abilities can grow and change.

F. Objectives of the Study

- To find whether there is a relationship between Rational Information Processing, Experiential Information Processing, and resilience among Civil Service Aspirants in India.
- To find whether there is a relationship between Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, Experiential Engagement, and resilience among Civil Service Aspirants in India.
- To find whether there is a difference between Rational Experiential Information Processing and resilience among Civil Service Aspirants in India with respect to Gender.
- To find whether there is a difference between Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement with respect to Gender
- To find whether there is a difference between Rational Experiential Information Processing and resilience among Civil Service Aspirants in India with respect to Birth Order.
- To find whether there is a difference between Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement with respect to Birth Order.
- To find whether there is a difference between Rational Experiential Information Processing and resilience with respect to Age.
- To find whether there is a difference between Rational Experiential Information Processing and resilience with respect to their region.
- To find whether there is a difference between Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement with respect to Region.
- To find whether there is a difference between Rational Experiential Information Processing and resilience with respect to their Educational Qualification.

G. Hypothesis

- There will be a significant relationship between Rational Information Processing, Experiential Information Processing, and resilience among Civil Service Aspirants in India.
- There will be a significant relationship between Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, Experiential Engagement, and resilience among Civil Service Aspirants in India.
- There will be a significant difference between Rational Experiential Information Processing and resilience among Civil Service Aspirants in India with respect to Gender.
- There will be a significant difference between Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement with respect to Gender.
- There will be a significant difference between Rational Experiential Information Processing and resilience among Civil Service Aspirants in India with respect to Birth Order.
- There will be a significant difference between Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement with respect to Birth Order.
- There will be a significant difference between Rational Experiential Information Processing and resilience with respect to Age.

- There will be a significant difference between Rational Experiential Information Processing and resilience with respect to their region.
- There will be a significant difference between Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement with respect to Region.
- There will be a significant difference between Rational Experiential Information Processing and resilience with respect to their Educational Qualification.

CHAPTER TWO METHOD

Research methodology refers to the overall strategy and systematic approach a researcher adopts to conduct a research project (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). It includes the specific steps and techniques used to identify, select, process, and analyze information related to the research topic. The current study investigates the link between Rational-Experiential Information Processing and Resilience among Civil Service Aspirants in India. Data were collected using the Connor-Davidson 10-item Resilience Scale (CD-RISC 10) and the Rational-Experiential Inventory 40-item (REI 40), which are established tools for measuring resilience and cognitive information processing styles, respectively. This approach allows for a detailed exploration of how rational and experiential cognition relates to resilience in this population.

A. Research Design

A research design is a plan for answering research questions using empirical data, ensuring methods align with objectives and appropriate analysis is applied. This study uses a descriptive research design to explore the relationships between variables without manipulating them. Descriptive research systematically describes and analyzes characteristics, trends, or behaviors through surveys, observations, or case studies. Specifically, this study examines rational experiential information processing and resilience among civil service aspirants in India.

B. Participants

The participants of this study are civil service aspirants from North India and South India with the age range of 18 to 32.

➤ Sample Size

A total of 222 samples were drawn from Civil service aspirants from North and South India.

Table 1 Frequency Distribution of Participants Based on Age

Category	N (Frequency)	Percentage
18 - 22	64	28.8
23 - 27	113	50.9
28 - 32	45	20.3
Total	222	100

Table 1 shows the frequency of the results based on age. The age categories are 18 - 22, with a frequency of 64 and 28.8%; 23 - 27, with a frequency of 113 and 50.9%; and 28 - 32, with a frequency of 45 and 20.3%.

Table 2 Frequency Distribution of Participants Based on Gender

Category	N (Frequency)	Percentage
Male	115	51.8
Female	107	48.2
Total	222	100

Table 2 shows the frequency result based on gender. The participants consisted of 115 males and 107 females. 51.8% of participant responses were received from males as opposed to 48.2% from females.

Table 3 Frequency Distribution of Participants Based on Educational Qualification

Category	N (Frequency)	Percentage
Postgraduate	78	35.1
Undergraduate	144	64.9
Total	222	100

Table 3 shows the frequency of the results based on educational qualifications. The participants comprised 78 postgraduate students, representing 35.1%, and 144 undergraduate students, representing 64.9%.

Table 4 Frequency Distribution of Participants Based on Birth Order

Category	N (Frequency)	Percentage
1st Born	102	45.9
2nd Born	73	32.9
Only Child	20	9
Others	27	12.2
Total	222	100

Table 4 shows the frequency of the results based on birth order. The participants consisted of 102 first-borns, representing 45.9%, 73 second-borns, representing 32.9%, 20 only children, representing 9.0%, and 27 others, representing 12.2%.

Table 5 Frequency Distribution of Participants Based on Region

Category	N (Frequency)	Percentage
North India	94	42.3
South India	128	57.7
Total	222	100

Table 5 shows the frequency of the results based on region. The participants comprised 94 North Indians, representing 42.3%, and 128 South Indians, representing 57.7%.

➤ *Sampling Technique*

The study utilized convenience sampling, with the sample comprising civil service aspirants from North and South India.

➤ *Inclusion Criteria*

Individuals aspiring for Civil Services in India between the ages of 18 and 32.

➤ *Exclusion Criteria*

Individuals who are not aspiring for Civil Services in India and are under the age of 18 and above the age of 32 are excluded from this study.

➤ *Ethical Considerations*

Informed consent from all the participants, prioritized their confidentiality, and ensured that no personally identifiable information was collected throughout the process.

C. *Variables*

The research includes the study of rational-experiential information processing and resilience.

- Rational Information Processing is an independent variable in this study. It refers to the ability to think clearly, make choices and decisions based on reason, and evaluate those choices to achieve a goal rather than emotions.
- Experiential Information Processing is an independent variable in this study. It refers to how people process information through an experiential system, which is automatic, intuitive, and closely tied to emotions.
- Resilience is the dependent variable in this study. Resilience refers to the ability to adapt and cope with difficult life experiences, such as trauma, adversity, stress, and adjustments to external and internal demands. It is a process that involves mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility, can lead to personal growth, and develops the ability to recover from negative events.

D. *Instruments*

The instruments used in this study are the Personal Data Sheet, 10-item Conner-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC 10), and 40-item Rational-Experiential Inventory (REI-40).

➤ *Personal Data Sheet*

The demographic information questionnaire consists of questions regarding the participant's age group, gender, Birth Order, educational qualification, and Region. No personally identifiable information such as name, phone number, email ID etc was collected using this.

➤ *Informed Consent Form*

Participants were provided with an informed consent form outlining the study's purpose and ensuring confidentiality, to confirm their voluntary involvement in the research.

➤ *The 10-Item Conner-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC 10)*

The CD-RISC 10-item scale is a shortened version of the original 25-item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale. It includes 10 items selected through factor analysis by Drs. Campbell-Sills and Stein at the University of California, San Diego. Each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with scores ranging from 0 to 40. The 10 items are derived from specific items (1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 14, 16, 17, and 19) of the original scale. In a sample of 764 participants, the median score was 32, with quartiles spanning from 0-29, 30-32, 33-36, to 37-40 (Campbell-Sills et al., 2009). This concise scale maintains strong reliability and validity for assessing resilience across populations.

• *Scoring*

The scoring for this scale is defined as follows: 0 means Never, 1 means Seldom, 2 means Sometimes, 3 means Often, and 4

means Almost Always. A summation of the response to each scale's item yields a score ranging from a minimum of 0 to a maximum of 40, which signifies the level of resilience.

- *Reliability*

A correlation of $r=0.732$ was obtained for test-retest reliability. A test-retest reliability correlation coefficient of 0.90 and 0.78 was obtained. In another sample, it yields a test-retest reliability of 0.89, and Cronbach's alpha = 0.88. Another study reported a correlation of $r=0.89$.

- *Validity*

The CD-RISC 10 demonstrates satisfactory validity, showing significant correlations with measures of self-esteem, depression, religiosity, and psychological distress. Construct validity was assessed through parametric correlational analyses with RSE, GHQ-12, PHQ-9, and ROT scores. The scale exhibited a mean score of 68.1 (14.3) and proved to be reliable and valid, with convergent validity indicated by positive correlations with active coping. In a sample of 502 young individuals, convergent validity was also observed with MSPSS and CD-RISC, aligning with previous findings. Correlations were reported for depression ($r = 0.51$), self-efficacy ($r = 0.47, 0.45$ for the 25- and 10-item scales), self-mastery ($r = 0.29, 0.31$), and social support ($r = 0.27, 0.21$).

➤ *Rational-Experiential Inventory (REI-40)*

The Rational-Experiential Inventory (REI-40), developed by Epstein et al. (1998) and Pacini & Epstein (1999), is a 40-item self-report questionnaire designed to measure two distinct dimensions of human information processing: rational and experiential. Each dimension is divided into two subscales, each consisting of 10 items, which assess Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement. This structure allows the assessment of both the capacity and the tendency to engage in rational and experiential thinking styles.

- *Scoring*

Subscale scores in the Rational-Experiential Inventory (REI-40) are calculated by averaging responses to 10 related items. Each participant receives four scores representing Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement. These ability and engagement scores can be combined to create overall composite scores for Rationality and Experientiality. The scale uses a 5-point Likert scoring system where 1 means Completely False, 2 means False, 3 means Neutral/Undecided, 4 means True, and 5 means Completely True. Certain items (4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 15, 16, 22, 25, 27, 29, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39) are reverse-coded during scoring to ensure accuracy.

- ✓ Rational Ability: $=(1 + 4 + 8 + 13 + 14 + 17 + 25 + 27 + 30 + 39)/10$
- ✓ Rational Engagement: $=(2 + 6 + 10 + 16 + 20 + 26 + 28 + 32 + 33 + 40)/10$
- ✓ Experiential Ability: $=(3 + 5 + 18 + 19 + 21 + 34 + 35 + 36 + 37 + 38)/10$
- ✓ Experiential Engagement: $=(7 + 9 + 11 + 12 + 15 + 22 + 23 + 24 + 29 + 31)/10$

- *Reliability*

The REI-40 demonstrates strong reliability for its two main constructs: Rationality, with Cronbach's alpha ranging from .86 to .91, and Experientiality, with alpha values between .87 and .90. The four subscales also show good reliability: Rational Ability (.80 to .85), Rational Engagement (.78 to .87), Experiential Ability (.77 to .80), and Experiential Engagement (.78 to .84). These figures indicate consistent internal reliability across the broad constructs and their narrower subdimensions.

- *Validity*

The REI-40 exhibits evidence of both convergent and divergent validity. Specifically, rational thinking shows positive correlations with Ego Strength ($r = 0.44$), Openness ($r = 0.44$), and Conscientiousness ($r = 0.32$), while it negatively correlates with Neuroticism ($r = -0.38$) and Conservative Ideology ($r = -0.20$). On the other hand, the experiential thinking style correlates positively with Extraversion ($r = 0.21$), Agreeableness ($r = 0.18$), Favorable Relationship Beliefs ($r = 0.34$), and Emotional Expressivity ($r = 0.27$). It is negatively associated with Categorical Thinking ($r = -0.29$), Distrust of Others ($r = -0.23$), and Intolerance ($r = -0.19$). Furthermore, the REI-40 has demonstrated strong reliability and validity across various languages and cultural contexts, supporting its broad applicability as a psychological measure.

E. Data Collection Procedure

The participants were drawn from the population using the convenience sampling method, and we analyzed accurate data from various sources to find answers to research problems, trends probabilities, etc, to evaluate possible outcomes. The total sampling size is 222. Participants were directly and indirectly approached by the questionnaire. The data we collected were kept confidential, and we ensured that no items were skipped.

F. Statistical Techniques

ANOVA, Karl Pearson Correlation Coefficient test, t-test, and Duncan's Multiple Range Test will be the statistical techniques used to analyze the data for the present study.

➤ **ANOVA**

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) is a statistical test that compares the means of two or more groups to determine if they are significantly different. (Fisher, 1918). It is used to analyze the differences between research results from unrelated samples or groups. ANOVA, which stands for Analysis of Variance, is a statistical test used to analyze the difference between the means of more than two groups. A one-way ANOVA uses one independent variable, while a two-way ANOVA uses two independent variables.

➤ **Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation Test**

The Karl Pearson Correlation Coefficient, or Pearson's r , is a statistical measure introduced by Karl Pearson in 1895 to quantify the strength and direction of a linear relationship between two variables. Represented by " r ," its value ranges from -1 to +1. A positive value indicates that the variables increase or decrease together, a negative value means they move in opposite directions, and zero signifies no linear relationship. This coefficient is widely used to numerically express how closely two variables are linearly related, providing insight into their degree of association.

➤ **T-Test**

A t-test is a statistical method used to compare the means of two groups to determine if there is a significant difference between them. It is commonly employed in hypothesis testing to assess whether a treatment or condition has an effect or if two groups differ significantly. Introduced by Gosset in 1908, the t-test is a parametric test that assumes the data follows a normal distribution and has unknown variances. It measures whether the observed difference in group means is statistically significant or likely due to chance.

➤ **Post Hoc Duncan's Multiple Range Test (DMRT)**

Duncan's Multiple Range Test (DMRT) is a statistical post-hoc test used to determine significant differences among group means after conducting an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) (Duncan, D.B., 1955). It is designed to compare multiple treatments while controlling the overall error rate. DMRT is based on pairwise comparisons and uses a stepwise approach to identify which specific means differ significantly. The test arranges sample means in ascending order and applies a studentized range statistic (Q-test) to determine significance levels at each step. Unlike other multiple comparison tests, DMRT allows for varying significance levels based on the number of comparisons being made, making it more flexible and statistically powerful. The test is particularly useful when the data follows a normal distribution with equal variance. A significant advantage of DMRT is its ability to provide a detailed ranking of means, helping researchers identify which treatments or groups have meaningful differences. It is widely used in agricultural, biological, and social sciences for comparing multiple experimental conditions.

CHAPTER THREE

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter serves as the core of the research paper, where the researcher systematically inspects, cleans, transforms, and models the collected data to extract meaningful insights and draw conclusions. The primary objective of the study was to explore the relation between Rational Experiential Information Processing and Resilience, aiming to understand how individuals rely on intuitive versus analytical thinking in challenging situations. Key statistical methods employed include the Independent sample t-test to identify significant differences between groups, ensuring that variations in information processing and resilience are not due to random chance. Karl Pearson's Correlation is used to measure the strength and direction of relationships between variables, helping to establish whether a higher tendency toward rational or experiential thinking is associated with greater resilience. Additionally, ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) is utilized to analyze differences among multiple groups, offering insights into how social demographics, such as age, educational qualification, gender, birth order, and region influence the Information Processing style of individuals and their resilience, thus providing a broader understanding of the psychological mechanisms at play.

A. Analysis and Interpretation

The different hypotheses of the study are analyzed using independent sample t-test, Karl Pearson's Correlation method, ANOVA, and post hoc Duncan's test. The results are shown below:

➤ H1:

There will be a significant relationship between Rational Information Processing, Experiential Information Processing, and resilience among Civil Service Aspirants in India.

Table 6 Correlation Between 'Rational Information Processing', 'Experiential Information Processing,'
'Resilience,' and 'Information Processing'

		Resilience	Rational Information Processing	Experiential Information Processing	Information Processing
Resilience	Pearson Correlation	1	.521**	.213**	.449**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.00	0.001	0.00
Rational Information Processing	Pearson Correlation	.521**	1	.355**	.829**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.00		0.00	0.00
Experiential Information Processing	Pearson Correlation	.213**	.355**	1	.817**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.00		0.00
Information Processing	Pearson Correlation	.449**	.829**	.817**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.00	0.00	0.00	

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

Table 6 shows the Correlation between Rational Information Processing, Experiential Information Processing, Resilience, and Information Processing. From the table, it can be seen that Resilience is strongly correlated with Rational Information Processing ($r = 0.521$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that individuals with higher resilience tend to rely more on rational cognitive strategies. Additionally, Resilience also correlates with Experiential Information Processing ($r = 0.213$, $p < 0.01$), though the relationship is weaker. This indicates that while resilience is somewhat related to intuition-based decision-making, it is less dependent on it. Furthermore, Rational and Experiential Processing are moderately correlated ($r = 0.355$, $p < 0.01$), implying that individuals may integrate both cognitive styles in their decision-making process. Information Processing is highly correlated with both Rational ($r = 0.829$, $p < 0.01$) and Experiential Processing ($r = 0.817$, $p < 0.01$). This confirms that both cognitive styles significantly contribute to overall information processing.

These findings indicate that while resilience is more strongly linked to rational cognitive strategies, both rational and experiential styles collectively shape information processing. The results emphasize the multifaceted nature of cognitive processing, suggesting that individuals may adopt different strategies depending on the context. A study conducted among aspirants and non-aspirants found that there was a positive correlation of resilience and aspiration levels. Research conducted by Epstein (1994) on Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory (CEST) suggests that rational thinking is associated with better problem-solving and coping strategies, which are key components of resilience. Similarly, studies by Fredrickson (2001) on the Broaden-and-Build Theory indicate that rational thinking helps individuals build psychological resources, enhancing resilience. According to Kahneman's work on dual-process theory, intuitive thinking can aid in quick decision-making during stressful situations, which may contribute to resilience in certain contexts. Studies done by Pacini and Epstein (1999), found that individuals often integrate both cognitive styles depending on the situation, suggesting a complementary relationship. These correlations suggest that individuals tend to rely on both rational and experiential strategies, with resilience being more closely linked to rational information processing. Thus, H1 is accepted.

➤ *H2:*

There will be a significant relationship between Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, Experiential Engagement, and resilience among Civil Service Aspirants in India.

Table 7 Correlation between 'Rational Ability', 'Rational Engagement', 'Experiential Ability', 'Experiential Engagement', and 'Resilience'.

		Resilience	Rational Ability	Rational Engagement	Experiential Ability	Experiential Engagement
Resilience	Pearson Correlation	1	.534**	.407**	.314**	0.047
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.483
Rational Ability	Pearson Correlation	.534**	1	.640**	.381**	.200**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.003
Rational Engagement	Pearson Correlation	.407**	.640**	1	.253**	.294**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00
Experiential Ability	Pearson Correlation	.314**	.381**	.253**	1	.556**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00
Experiential Engagement	Pearson Correlation	0.047	.200**	.294**	.556**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.483	0.003	0.00	0.00	

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

Table 7 shows the correlation between Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement with Resilience. Table 6 confirms that both rational and experiential information processing styles contribute to resilience. Thus, the sub-components of both the variables are also analysed, ie, Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement. The table indicates that Resilience is most strongly correlated with Rational Ability ($r = 0.534$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that analytical thinking plays a significant role in resilience.

Additionally, Resilience also correlates with Rational Engagement ($r = 0.407$, $p < 0.01$) and Experiential Ability ($r = 0.314$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that both rational engagement and intuitive skills contribute to resilience.

However, Experiential Engagement does not significantly correlate with resilience ($p = 0.483$), meaning that being deeply engaged in intuition-based decision-making is not a key factor for resilience.

Thus, H2 is partially accepted.

➤ *H3:*

There will be a significant difference between Rational Experiential Information Processing and resilience among Civil Service Aspirants in India with respect to Gender.

Table 8 Group Statistics Based on Gender for Rational Experiential Information Processing and Resilience

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Resilience	Male	115	28.74	5.552
	Female	107	27.91	6.416
Rational Information Processing	Male	115	75.05	9.358
	Female	107	73.19	9.876
Experiential Information Processing	Male	115	65.76	8.927
	Female	107	66.95	9.757
Information Processing	Male	115	140.81	14.219
	Female	107	140.14	17.051

Table 9 T-Test Results for Differences in Rational Experiential Information Processing and Resilience Based on Gender.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Resilience	Equal variances assumed	1.741	0.188	1.036	0.301	0.833
	Equal variances not assumed			1.031	0.304	0.833

Rational Information Processing	Equal variances assumed	0.1	0.752	1.445	0.15	1.865
	Equal variances not assumed			1.442	0.151	1.865
Experiential Information Processing	Equal variances assumed	0.336	0.563	-0.954	0.341	-1.197
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.951	0.343	-1.197
Information Processing	Equal variances assumed	0.962	0.328	0.318	0.751	0.669
	Equal variances not assumed			0.316	0.752	0.669

Table 9 shows the Group Statistics based on Gender for rational experiential information processing and resilience. The sample is nearly evenly split between males (51.8%) and females (48.2%), ensuring gender balance in the study. Table 3.4 presents the t-test results for differences in Rational and Experiential Information Processing and Resilience based on gender. The results indicate no significant differences between males and females in Resilience ($p = 0.301$), Rational Information Processing ($p = 0.150$), Experiential Information Processing ($p = 0.341$), and Information Processing ($p = 0.751$).

Although males have a slightly higher mean score in Rational Information Processing ($M = 75.05$) compared to females ($M = 73.19$), the difference is not statistically significant. Similarly, for Experiential Information Processing, females ($M = 66.95$) have a slightly higher mean score than males ($M = 65.76$), but this is also not significant.

These findings suggest that gender does not significantly influence rational or experiential processing. It is also seen that gender does not significantly influence resilience. These findings are supported by research conducted by Hyde (2005) on gender similarities, which suggests that gender differences in cognitive processing are minimal, especially in structured environments like academic or professional settings. Similarly, studies conducted by Masten (2001) on resilience indicate that while gender may influence coping mechanisms, the core components of resilience (e.g., adaptability, problem-solving) are similar across genders.

Since there are no significant differences between genders, H3 is rejected.

➤ **H4:**

There will be a significant difference between Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement with respect to Gender

Table 10 Group Statistics Based on Gender for Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Rational Ability	Male	115	37.69	5.139
	Female	107	36.83	5.643
Rational Engagement	Male	115	37.37	5.205
	Female	107	36.36	5.263
Experiential Ability	Male	115	33.75	5.118
	Female	107	34.61	6.022
Experiential Engagement	Male	115	32.01	4.848
	Female	107	32.35	5.178

Table 11 T-Test Results for Differences in Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement Based on Gender.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Rational Ability	Equal variances assumed	0.502	0.48	1.182	0.239	0.855
	Equal variances not assumed			1.178	0.24	0.855
Rational Engagement	Equal variances assumed	0.025	0.874	1.437	0.152	1.01
	Equal variances not assumed			1.436	0.152	1.01
Experiential Ability	Equal variances assumed	2.238	0.136	-1.149	0.252	-0.86
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.142	0.255	-0.86

Experiential Engagement	Equal variances assumed	0.26	0.61	-0.501	0.617	-0.337
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.5	0.618	-0.337

Table 11 shows the t-test results comparing males and females on Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement. The results indicate that Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement do not show statistically significant gender differences ($p > 0.05$).

Although males have slightly higher Rational Ability ($M = 37.69$) and Rational Engagement ($M = 37.37$) than females (Rational Ability $M = 36.83$, Rational Engagement $M = 36.36$), these differences are not statistically significant. Similarly, females have slightly higher Experiential Ability ($M = 34.61$) and Experiential Engagement ($M = 32.35$) than males (Experiential Ability $M = 33.75$, Experiential Engagement $M = 32.01$), but these differences are also not significant.

Since no significant differences are observed, these findings suggest that gender does not play a significant role in Rational and Experiential Information Processing components. Thus, H4 is rejected.

➤ **H5:**

There will be a significant difference between Rational-Experiential Information Processing and resilience among Civil Service Aspirants in India with respect to Birth Order.

Table 12 Group Statistics Based on Birth Order for Rational Experiential Information Processing and Resilience

Birth Order		Mean	Std. Deviation
Resilience	1st Born	28.8	5.581
	2nd Born	28.6	6.446
	Only Child	26.25	6.781
	Others	27.41	5.43
	Total	28.34	5.985
Rational Information Processing	1st Born	75	10.441
	2nd Born	74.4	9.272
	Only Child	73.7	8.609
	Others	70.63	7.571
	Total	74.15	9.635
Experiential Information Processing	1st Born	67.33	9.93
	2nd Born	66.19	9.121
	Only Child	64.05	9.73
	Others	64.63	6.856
	Total	66.33	9.334
Information Processing	1st Born	142.33	16.984
	2nd Born	140.59	15.003
	Only Child	137.75	15.41
	Others	135.26	10.387
	Total	140.49	15.616

Table 13 Results of One-Way ANOVA for Differences in Rational Experiential Information Processing and Resilience Based on Birth Order.

		df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Resilience	Between Groups	3	45.945	1.288	0.279
	Within Groups	218	35.678		
	Total	221			
Rational Information Processing	Between Groups	3	138.939	1.507	0.214
	Within Groups	218	92.193		
	Total	221			
Experiential Information Processing	Between Groups	3	95.368	1.096	0.352
	Within Groups	218	87.015		
	Total	221			
Information Processing	Between Groups	3	412.062	1.706	0.167
	Within Groups	218	241.538		

	Total	221			
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Table 13 shows the One-way ANOVA results for differences in Rational-Experiential Information Processing and Resilience based on birth order. The results indicate that none of the variables show statistically significant differences ($p > 0.05$) across different birth order categories (first-born, second-born, only child, and others).

Although first-born individuals have slightly higher mean scores in Resilience ($M = 28.80$) and Rational Processing ($M = 75.00$) compared to other birth orders, these differences are not statistically significant. These findings are supported by Sulloway's Born to Rebel theory, (1996), which suggests that first-born individuals often take on leadership roles and are more conscientious, which may explain their higher engagement in rational thinking. Similarly, studies by Rohrer et al. (2015) found that birth order effects on personality and cognitive styles are often small and context-dependent, which may explain why no significant differences were found in other cognitive components.

Since no significant differences were found, H_5 is rejected.

➤ H_6 :

There will be a significant difference between Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement with respect to Birth Order

Table 14 Group Statistics Based on Birth Order for Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement.

Birth Order		Mean	Std. Deviation
Rational Ability	1st Born	37.39	5.782
	2nd Born	37.6	5.327
	Only Child	37	5.282
	Others	36.15	4.073
	Total	37.27	5.392
Rational Engagement	1st Born	37.61	5.467
	2nd Born	36.79	5.077
	Only Child	36.7	4.378
	Others	34.48	4.933
	Total	36.88	5.246
Experiential Ability	1st Born	34.66	5.751
	2nd Born	34.19	5.534
	Only Child	32.55	5.652
	Others	33.41	4.901
	Total	34.16	5.576
Experiential Engagement	1st Born	32.68	5.501
	2nd Born	32	4.717
	Only Child	31.5	5.472
	Others	31.22	3.03
	Total	32.17	5.001

Table 15 Results of One-Way ANOVA for Differences in Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement Based on Birth Order.

		df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Rational Ability	Between Groups	3	15.013	0.513	0.674
	Within Groups	218	29.272		
	Total	221			
Rational Engagement	Between Groups	3	70.181	2.606	0.035
	Within Groups	218	26.932		
	Total	221			
Experiential Ability	Between Groups	3	30.796	0.991	0.398
	Within Groups	218	31.091		
	Total	221			
Experiential Engagement	Between Groups	3	20.502	0.818	0.485
	Within Groups	218	25.073		
	Total	221			

Table 16 Results of Post Hoc Duncan's Test for Differences in Rational Engagement Based on Birth Order.

Birth Order	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
	1	2
Others	34.48	
Only Child	36.7	36.7
2nd Born	36.79	36.79
1st Born		37.61
Sig.	0.004	0.048

Table 16 shows the One-way ANOVA results analyzing birth order differences in rational ability, rational engagement, experiential ability, and experiential engagement. The results indicate that Rational Engagement shows a significant difference across birth order categories ($p = 0.035$). Further analysis using post hoc Duncan's test reveals that first-born individuals have significantly higher Rational Engagement ($M = 37.61$) than later-born individuals ($M = 34.48$, $p = 0.004$). This suggests that first-born individuals tend to engage more in rational thinking compared to their later-born counterparts.

However, no significant differences were found for Rational Ability, Experiential Ability, or Experiential Engagement ($p > 0.05$). This indicates that while birth order may influence rational engagement, it does not have a notable impact on other cognitive processing components. Thus, H_6 is partially accepted.

➤ H_7 :

There will be a significant difference between Rational Experiential Information Processing and resilience with respect to Age.

Table 17 Group Statistics Based on Age for Rational Experiential Information Processing and Resilience

	Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Resilience	18 - 22	64	28	6.34
	23 - 27	113	28.41	5.508
	28 - 32	45	29.64	6.699
	Total	222	28.34	5.985
Rational Information Processing	18 - 22	64	73.63	10.537
	23 - 27	113	74.64	8.93
	28 - 32	45	73.69	10.151
	Total	222	74.15	9.635
Experiential Information Processing	18 - 22	64	65.08	9.656
	23 - 27	113	66.64	9.614
	28 - 32	45	67.36	8.077
	Total	222	66.33	9.334
Information Processing	18 - 22	64	138.7	17.007
	23 - 27	113	141.27	14.834
	28 - 32	45	141.04	15.622
	Total	222	140.49	15.616

Table 18 Results of One-Way ANOVA for Differences in Rational Experiential Information Processing and Resilience Based on Age.

		df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Resilience	Between Groups	2	6.038	0.167	0.006
	Within Groups	219	36.089		
	Total	221			
Rational Information Processing	Between Groups	2	27.012	0.289	0.749
	Within Groups	219	93.428		
	Total	221			
Experiential Information Processing	Between Groups	2	79.144	0.908	0.04
	Within Groups	219	87.201		
	Total	221			
Information Processing	Between Groups	2	143.847	0.588	0.556
	Within Groups	219	244.766		
	Total	221			

Table 17 shows the Group Statistics, and Table 18 shows the One-way ANOVA results for age differences in Rational-Experiential Information Processing and Resilience. The results indicate that age has a significant effect on Resilience ($p=0.006$),

with older participants (28–32 years) showing slightly higher resilience scores. Similarly, Experiential Information Processing is also significant ($p = 0.040$), suggesting that experiential thinking varies across different age groups.

However, Rational Information Processing ($p = 0.749$) and Overall Information Processing ($p = 0.556$) do not show significant differences across age groups, indicating that rational thinking and overall information processing remain relatively stable regardless of age.

These findings are supported by research conducted by Bonanno (2004) on resilience across the lifespan which suggests that resilience tends to increase with age, as individuals accumulate more life experiences and coping strategies. Studies by Blanchard-Fields (2007) indicate that older adults often rely more on experiential (intuitive) thinking, as they draw on accumulated life experiences.

Since Resilience and Experiential Information Processing show significant differences across age groups, H7 is partially accepted.

Table 19 Results of Duncan's Test Analyzing Age Group Differences in Resilience

Age	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05
		1
18 - 22	64	28
23 - 27	113	28.41
28 - 32	45	29.64
Sig.		0.571

Table 19 shows the results of Duncan's test analyzing age group differences in Resilience. The findings indicate that the means for the three age groups (18–22, 23–27, and 28–32) do not significantly differ from each other ($p = 0.571$).

Although the older group (28–32 years) shows a slightly higher resilience score compared to the younger groups, this difference is not statistically significant. This suggests that while resilience may increase with age, the variation across age groups is not substantial enough to be considered significant.

Table 20 Results of Duncan's Test Analyzing Age Group Differences in Experiential Information Processing.

Age	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05
		1
18 - 22	64	65.08
23 - 27	113	66.64
28 - 32	45	67.36
Sig.		0.195

Table 20 shows the results of Duncan's test analyzing age group differences in Experiential Information Processing. The results indicate that the scores of Experiential Information Processing increase slightly with age, but the difference is not statistically significant ($p = 0.195$).

This suggests that experiential information processing does not strongly vary across age groups, implying that intuitive decision-making remains relatively stable regardless of age.

➤ **H8:**

There will be a significant difference between rational experiential information processing and resilience with respect to their region.

Table 21 Group Statistics Based on Region for Rational Experiential Information Processing and Resilience

	Region	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Resilience	North India	94	28.72	5.125
	South India	128	28.05	6.55
Rational Information Processing	North India	94	75.74	9.789
	South India	128	72.98	9.387
Experiential Information Processing	North India	94	66.77	10.01
	South India	128	66.02	8.832
Information Processing	North India	94	142.51	16.207
	South India	128	139	15.057

Table 22 Results of T-Test Based on Region for Rational Experiential Information Processing and Resilience

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Resilience	Equal variances assumed	7.601	0.006	0.822	0.412	0.669
	Equal variances not assumed			0.853	0.395	0.669
Rational Information Processing	Equal variances assumed	0.011	0.915	2.126	0.035	2.76
	Equal variances not assumed			2.112	0.036	2.76
Experiential Information Processing	Equal variances assumed	1.69	0.195	0.591	0.555	0.75
	Equal variances not assumed			0.58	0.563	0.75
Information Processing	Equal variances assumed	0.67	0.414	1.662	0.098	3.511
	Equal variances not assumed			1.643	0.102	3.511

Table 21 shows the group statistics and Table 22 shows the results of the t-test analyzing regional differences in Rational-Experiential Information Processing and Resilience. The findings indicate that Rational Information Processing showed a significant difference ($p = 0.035$), with North Indian participants ($M=75.74$) scoring higher than South Indian participants ($M=72.98$).

However, Resilience, Experiential Information Processing, and Overall Information Processing showed no significant differences ($p > 0.05$). This suggests that while rational thinking may vary by region, resilience, experiential processing, and overall information processing remain relatively consistent across North and South Indian participants. Thus, H8 is partially accepted.

Research conducted by Nisbett (2003) on cultural cognition supports these findings. It suggests that individuals from different regions may develop distinct cognitive styles due to cultural and educational influences. This may explain why North Indian participants scored higher in rational thinking, as the region may emphasize analytical and structured thinking. However, studies by Masten (2014) indicate that resilience is a universal trait influenced more by individual experiences than regional differences, which aligns with the finding that resilience does not vary significantly by region.

➤ **H9:**

There will be a significant difference between Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement with respect to region

Table 23 Group Statistics Based on Region for Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement.

	Region	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Rational Ability	North India	94	37.89	5.61
	South India	128	36.82	5.202
Rational Engagement	North India	94	37.85	5.214
	South India	128	36.16	5.174
Experiential Ability	North India	94	34.56	5.878
	South India	128	33.87	5.347
Experiential Engagement	North India	94	32.2	5.258
	South India	128	32.15	4.825

Table 24 Results of T-Test for Differences in Rational Ability, Rational Engagement, Experiential Ability, and Experiential Engagement Based on Region

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Rational Ability	Equal variances assumed	0.113	0.737	1.469	0.143	1.073
	Equal variances not assumed			1.452	0.148	1.073
	Equal variances assumed	0.148	0.701	2.393	0.018	1.687

Rational Engagement	Equal variances not assumed			2.39	0.018	1.687
Experiential Ability	Equal variances assumed	1.09	0.298	0.92	0.359	0.697
	Equal variances not assumed			0.906	0.366	0.697
Experiential Engagement	Equal variances assumed	0.448	0.504	0.079	0.937	0.054
	Equal variances not assumed			0.078	0.938	0.054

Table 24 shows the t-test results for regional differences in Rational-Experiential components. The findings indicate that Rational Engagement shows a significant difference ($p = 0.018$), with North Indian participants ($M = 37.85$) scoring higher than South Indian participants ($M = 36.16$).

However, no significant differences were found in Rational Ability, Experiential Ability, or Experiential Engagement ($p > 0.05$). This suggests that while North Indian participants demonstrate higher engagement in rational thinking, other cognitive processing components remain consistent across regions.

Thus, H9 is partially accepted.

➤ **H10:**

There will be a significant difference between rational experiential information processing and resilience with respect to their Educational Qualification.

Table 25 Group Statistics Based on Educational Qualification for Rational Experiential Information Processing and Resilience

	Educational Qualification	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Resilience	Postgraduate	78	28.62	6.271
	Undergraduate	144	28.19	5.841
Rational Information Processing	Postgraduate	78	74.62	9.965
	Undergraduate	144	73.9	9.477
Experiential Information Processing	Postgraduate	78	66.18	8.355
	Undergraduate	144	66.42	9.851
Information Processing	Postgraduate	78	140.79	15.404
	Undergraduate	144	140.32	15.78

Table 26 Results of T-Test Based on Educational Qualification for Rational Experiential Information Processing and Resilience

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Resilience	Equal variances assumed	1.77	0.185	0.508	0.612	0.428
	Equal variances not assumed			0.497	0.62	0.428
Rational Information Processing	Equal variances assumed	0.331	0.566	0.525	0.6	0.713
	Equal variances not assumed			0.517	0.606	0.713
Experiential Information Processing	Equal variances assumed	2.863	0.092	-0.18	0.857	-0.237
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.189	0.85	-0.237
Information Processing	Equal variances assumed	0.066	0.798	0.216	0.829	0.475
	Equal variances not assumed			0.218	0.828	0.475

Table 26 shows the group statistics based on Educational Qualification for Rational Experiential Information processing and Resilience. Table 3.21 shows the t-test results for differences in Rational-Experiential Information Processing and Resilience based on educational qualification (Undergraduate vs. Postgraduate). The results indicate no significant differences ($p > 0.05$) for all variables, including Resilience, Rational Information Processing, Experiential Information Processing, and Overall Information Processing. These findings suggest that education level does not have a major influence on resilience or cognitive processing styles, as both undergraduate and postgraduate participants exhibit similar patterns in these areas.

These findings suggest that education does not significantly influence rational or cognitive processing styles. These findings are supported by research conducted by Sternberg (1997) on cognitive styles which suggests that while education can enhance specific skills (e.g., analytical thinking), it does not fundamentally alter an individual's preferred cognitive style. Studies by Martin and Marsh (2006) indicate that resilience is more closely tied to personal experiences and coping strategies than formal education.

Since no significant differences were found (all p -values > 0.05), H10 is rejected.

B. Major Findings and Conclusions

- It was observed that Resilience is strongly correlated with Rational Information Processing, suggesting that individuals with higher resilience tend to rely more on rational cognitive strategies. Additionally, resilience is found to be less dependent on intuition-based decision-making.
- Resilience is most strongly correlated with Rational Ability, suggesting that individuals who engage in higher analytical thinking are more resilient. Resilience also correlates with Rational Engagement and Experiential Ability, indicating that both rational engagement and intuitive skills contribute to an individual's resilience.
- Experiential Engagement does not significantly correlate with resilience, meaning that being deeply engaged in intuition-based decision-making is not a key factor for an individual's resilience.
- The study found no significant differences between males and females in Resilience, Rational Information Processing, Experiential Information Processing, and Overall Information Processing, implying that whether someone was male or female didn't influence their Resilience, Rational Information Processing, Experiential Information Processing, or Overall Information Processing styles.
- Although males have a slightly higher mean score in Rational Information Processing compared to females, the difference is not statistically significant. Similarly, for Experiential Information Processing, females have a slightly higher mean score than males, but this is also not significant.
- While males are found to have slightly higher Rational Ability and Rational Engagement than females, these differences are not statistically significant. Similarly, females have slightly higher Experiential Ability and Experiential Engagement than males, but these differences are also not significant.
- The study shows that first-born individuals have significantly higher Rational Engagement than later-born individuals. This suggests that first-born individuals tend to engage more in rational thinking than their later-born counterparts.
- However, no significant differences were found for Rational Ability, Experiential Ability, or Experiential Engagement with respect to birth order. This indicates that while birth order may influence rational engagement, it does not have a notable impact on other cognitive processing components.
- The findings show that age has a significant effect on Resilience, with older participants (28–32 years) showing slightly higher resilience scores, indicating that the older participants are more resilient than the younger. Similarly, Experiential Information Processing is also significant, indicating that experiential thinking varies across different age groups.
- However, it can be seen that rational thinking, experiential information processing, and overall information processing do not strongly vary across age groups, implying that intuitive decision-making remains relatively stable regardless of age.
- The study found that North Indian participants demonstrate higher engagement in rational thinking, whereas other cognitive processing components remain consistent across regions. This shows that while North Indian participants engage more in rational thinking, both North and South Indian participants engage in experiential processing, overall information processing, and resilience relatively consistently.
- The results indicate no significant differences between Resilience, Rational Information Processing, Experiential Information Processing, and Overall Information Processing, with respect to Education level. Both undergraduate and postgraduate participants exhibit similar patterns in cognitive processing styles and resilience, indicating that education level does not have a major influence in these areas.

C. Implications of the Study

The relationship between Rational-Experiential Information Processing and Resilience is crucial for civil service aspirants who face intense academic pressure and emotional stress. While previous studies have examined these factors separately, limited research exists on their combined influence.

In this study, 222 civil service aspirants completed a questionnaire assessing their cognitive processing styles and resilience levels. Statistical analysis, including t-tests, correlation, and ANOVA, revealed a significant correlation between Rational-Experiential Information Processing and Resilience. The findings indicate that those favoring Rational Processing tend to exhibit higher resilience, whereas those relying on Experiential Processing show varied resilience outcomes based on external factors.

➤ The Study has Various Important Implications for Society

- **UPSC Preparation Strategies:** Civil service aspirants should prioritize rational information processing (analytical thinking), as it strongly correlates with resilience, a crucial trait for handling exam pressure.
- **Resilience Development:** Training programs for UPSC aspirants should focus on improving analytical thinking, as it plays a key role in building resilience for high-stakes decision-making.
- **Customized Coaching Methods:** Coaching institutes should tailor study techniques to strengthen both rational and experiential thinking, ensuring a balanced cognitive approach for better problem-solving.
- **Stress Management for Aspirants:** Rational engagement techniques, such as structured reasoning exercises and logical problem-solving, can be integrated into UPSC preparation to reduce stress and anxiety.

- **Experience-Based Learning:** Older aspirants show slightly higher resilience and experiential thinking, suggesting that integrating real-world case studies and crisis simulations in preparation can enhance decision-making skills.
- **Regional Adaptation in Training:** North Indian aspirants show stronger rational engagement than their South Indian counterparts, indicating the need for region-specific coaching strategies.
- **Holistic Learning Models:** UPSC coaching should incorporate case studies, logical reasoning exercises, and situational judgment tests to improve adaptability in real-world administrative challenges.
- **Cost-Effective Training Interventions:** Policymakers, coaching centers, and mental health professionals can develop affordable resilience training and adaptive thinking workshops to enhance aspirants' mental well-being.
- **Bridging Psychology and Public Administration:** The study contributes to research by linking cognitive psychology with public administration, addressing a gap in understanding how information processing impacts resilience in high-pressure environments.
- **Enhancing Mental Well-being:** The study provides actionable insights for improving stress management and reducing burnout among aspirants, who frequently experience anxiety due to competitive pressures.
- **Policy Reforms in Competitive Exam Training:** Findings can help shape government-backed training programs, ensuring effective learning strategies that increase aspirants' success rates and emotional endurance.
- **Decision-Making in Governance:** Civil servants require a blend of rational (policy analysis, data interpretation) and experiential (on-ground crisis management) thinking, reinforcing the importance of cognitive flexibility in administration.

D. Limitations

- Time constraints limited the study's ability to gather more data and track long-term changes in resilience and information processing among UPSC aspirants.
- The analysis is done on only 222 samples, so it is difficult to assess the generalizability of the findings to the larger population.
- The study employed convenience sampling, which can introduce sampling bias, limiting the generalizability of the findings.
- Correlation can only provide information about the direction and strength of a relationship, not causation.
- The use of self-reported data on resilience may be subject to biases, as participants may overestimate or underestimate their resilience levels.
- The sensitive nature of the topic, resilience, has limited participant engagement due to potential misunderstandings or privacy concerns.
- Due to the researchers' location and limited resources, data collection from North India was conducted primarily through Google Forms.

E. Suggestions

Future research should focus on these factors for a better understanding of these variables and their affecting factors.

- Increase sample size for better generalizability.
- Conduct a longitudinal study to track changes over time.
- Collect data directly from North India for a comprehensive analysis.
- Explore situational and individual factors influencing resilience.
- Use cognitive tasks, physiological markers, and behavioral observations to reduce self-report biases.
- Assess the impact of family support, education, and cultural influence on resilience.
- Examine how societal values and norms shape cognitive styles and resilience.
- Investigate the Big Five personality traits as a moderator between the study variables to better understand individual personality relationships.
- Include participants from diverse socioeconomic, cultural, and professional backgrounds.
- Use regression analysis to identify predictors of resilience.
- Apply chi-square tests to examine associations between categorical resilience factors.

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APPENDICES

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Agnivesh B, Lavanya S H, Aswathy J S, and Sreenandana S, students of BSc. Psychology at Christ Nagar College, Maranalloor, Kerala, India (Affiliated to the University of Kerala). This study is conducted under the guidance of Ms. Akhila Krishnan R S, Assistant Professor, Christ Nagar College, Maranalloor. This research aims to study the relationship between Rational-Experiential Information Processing and Resilience Among Civil Service Aspirants to understand cognitive styles and resilience levels among Civil Service aspirants.

➤ *Participation Details:*

- You will be asked to complete a questionnaire related to Rational-Experiential Information Processing and Resilience.
- The estimated time for completion is 10 - 15 minutes.
- No personally identifiable information such as name, phone number, email ID, etc, will be gathered.
- Participation is entirely voluntary, and you may choose to withdraw at any time without penalty.

➤ *Confidentiality and Data Usage:*

- All responses will remain strictly confidential and will be used solely for research purposes.
- The data collected will be analyzed in an aggregated form, ensuring complete anonymity.

By proceeding with the questionnaire, you acknowledge that you have read and understood the above information and voluntarily agree to participate in this study

For any clarifications or queries, you may contact us via email: projectcrew2024@gmail.com

Thank you for your participation!

Sincerely,

Agnivesh B, Lavanya S H, Aswathy J S, Sreenandana S

PERSONAL DATA SHEET

➤ *Age*

- 18-22
- 23-27
- 28 - 32

➤ *Gender*

- Male
- Female
- Others

➤ *Educational Qualification*

- Postgraduate
- Undergraduate

➤ *Birth Order*

- 1st
- 2nd
- Only Child
- Others

➤ *Region*

- North India
- South India

CONNOR-DAVIDSON RESILIENCE SCALE (CDRS-10)

Please read the following statements. To the right of each, just put a tick mark (✓) on the box that best indicates your feelings about that statement.

Sl no	Item	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
1	Adapt to change					
2	Deal with whatever comes my way					
3	See humorous side of things					
4	Stress makes me stronger					
5	Bounce back after illness or injury					
6	Believe I can achieve goals despite obstacles					
7	Under pressure, I stay focused					
8	Not easily discouraged by failure					
9	Think of myself as a strong person when facing challenges					
10	Able to handle unpleasant feelings					

RATIONAL-EXPERIENTIAL INVENTORY

Please read the following statements. To the right of each, just put a tick mark (✓) on the box that best indicates your feelings about that statement.

Sl no	Item	Completely False	False	Neutral/ Undecided	True	Completely True
1	I have a logical mind					
2	I prefer complex problems to simple problems					
3	I believe in trusting my hunches					
4	I am not a very analytical thinker.					
5	I trust my initial feelings about people					
6	I try to avoid situations that require thinking in depth about something.					
7	I like to rely on my intuitive impressions					
8	I don't reason well under pressure.					
9	I don't like situations in which I have to rely on intuition.					
10	Thinking hard and for a long time about something gives me little satisfaction.					
11	Intuition can be a very useful way to solve problems					
12	I would not want to depend on anyone who described himself or herself as intuitive.					
13	I am much better at figuring things out logically than most people					
14	I usually have clear, explainable reasons for my decisions					
15	I don't think it is a good idea to rely on one's intuition for important decisions.					
16	Thinking is not my idea of an enjoyable activity.					
17	I have no problem thinking things through carefully					
18	When it comes to trusting people, I can usually rely on my gut feelings					
19	I can usually feel when a person is right or wrong, even if I can't explain how I know					
20	Learning new ways to think would be very appealing to me					
21	I hardly ever go wrong when I listen to my deepest gut feelings to find an answer					
22	I think it is foolish to make important decisions based on feelings.					
23	I tend to use my heart as a guide for my actions					
24	I often go by my instincts when deciding on a course of action					
25	I'm not that good at figuring out complicated problems.					
26	I enjoy intellectual challenges					
27	Reasoning things out carefully is not one of my strong points.					
28	I enjoy thinking in abstract terms					
29	I generally don't depend on my feelings to help me make decisions.					
30	Using logic usually works well for me in figuring out problems in my life					
31	I think there are times when one should rely on one's intuition					
32	I don't like to have to do a lot of thinking.					
33	Knowing the answer without having to understand the reasoning behind it is good enough for me.					

34	Using my gut feelings usually works well for me in figuring out problems in my life					
35	I don't have a very good sense of intuition.					
36	If I were to rely on my gut feelings, I would often make mistakes.					
37	I suspect my hunches are inaccurate as often as they are accurate.					
38	My snap judgements are probably not as good as most people's.					
39	I am not very good at solving problems that require careful logical analysis.					
40	I enjoy solving problems that require hard thinking					