



Exploring Adversity Quotient among Undergraduate Students of Nalbari College

Mridusmita Ray

Research Scholars, Department of Education

Prof. Alaka Das

Professor, Department of Education

Kumar Bhaskar Varma Sanskrit & Ancient Studies University, Nalbari

Abstract

Adversity Quotient refers to the ability of an individual to effectively manage challenges, overcome difficulties and cope with adverse circumstances. It plays a significant role in exploring resilience, academic persistence and psychological adjustment of students. Undergraduate students frequently face various academic, social and personal problems that require effective adjustment and perseverance. Therefore, examining their adversity quotient is highly important for understanding their capacity to cope with difficult situations. The study aims to assess the level of adversity quotient among undergraduate students of Nalbari College and to examine whether significant differences exist between male and female students as well as between students from Arts and Science streams. The study adopts a descriptive approach, with primary data collected from 100 undergraduate students of Nalbari College using an Adversity Quotient tool adapted on the basis of Paul G. Stoltz's theoretical framework. Findings reveal varying levels of adversity quotient among students and emphasize the need for institutional support, resilience-building programs, and targeted interventions to strengthen their ability to face academic and life challenges with courage and determination

Keywords: Adversity Quotient, Undergraduate Students

Introduction

In the present 21st century, humanity is facing severe difficulties and adversities at the societal, economic, and personal levels. There are different types of adversities that could be man-made or natural calamities faced by younger generation. Adversities, whether man-made or natural, deeply affect the younger generation, with studies showing high levels of stress, anxiety, and even suicidal tendencies among college students. Yet, inspiring figures like Ira Singhal, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, and Arunima Sinha demonstrate how resilience can turn challenges into achievements. There are many examples that remind us the success by overcoming the great obstacles. There is no end of list of such great achiever, who did not give up their effort during their adverse times. Earlier considered that Intelligence Quotient (I.Q) is the factor lying behind successful people, but responding to adverse situation is the main factor, which involves attitude, skill and creativity.

Geetha Satish Pisharody et.al (2026), examined that gender doesn't have a significant effect on AQ levels, as boys and girls have almost the same ability to deal with problems. And the students who study science have higher AQ scores than those who study business and the arts. In contrast, Diana VivantiSigit et.al(2019) reported that gender significantly influence on students' learning outcomes between male and female students. Similarly, Singh et.al (2022) found that more of boys who had high adversity quotient compared to girls. Savitri Suryandari et.al (2023), highlight that the majority of students have a high level of Adversity Quotient, indicating their strong traits of control, resilience, determination, adaptability, and perseverance. Literature highlights the vital role of Adversity Quotient (AQ) for students, teachers, and leaders across society. Prabu (2015) found that Arts students experience more stress than Science and Commerce students, with female students reporting higher stress than males. Saharia (2020) and Hema G. (2015) noted no significant influence of gender, stream, or family factors on AQ among students. Overall, AQ equips college students to manage stress, competition and challenges, fostering resilience and adaptability for success in education and life.

Adversity Quotient

Adversity Quotient (AQ) refers to the ability of an individual to handle adverse situations. Paul Stoltz had discovered the concept which is known as Adversity Quotient in his book 'Adversity Quotient: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities' in 1997. According to Stoltz, the adversity quotient, is the science of human resilience. People not only learn to cope with challenges but they also respond better and faster. According to Stoltz, AQ reflects a person's ability to overcome adversity. In fact, suggests that AQ is a more accurate predictor of success than IQ, formal education, or even social skills by Stoltz (1997). By understanding the concepts behind AQ, one can gain deeper insight into how people respond to challenges and adversity across all areas of life.

In actuality, Person who uses Adversity Quotient not only grow from these difficulties, but they also adapt more quickly and effectively to new ones. Human response to adversity is formed through the influence of parents, teachers, peers and other key people. Research shows that Adversity Quotient (AQ) significantly influences culture, personal development, leadership effectiveness, problem-solving abilities, morale, performance and overall productivity. Studies by Pellogo and Guhao (2024) highlight role of A Q in shaping school culture and leadership capability, while Baroa (2015) emphasizes its relevance in enhancing leadership skills among educational administrators. Adversity Quotient (AQ), developed by Paul G. Stoltz, mentioned key dimensions of AQ as-Control, Ownership, Reach and Endurance that shape resilience and adaptability. Stoltz's LEAD model (Listen, Explore, Analyze, Do) offers a framework to strengthen AQ (Stoltz, 1997).

Philosophical & Psychological Context of Adversity Quotient

The philosophical context of Adversity Quotient (AQ) deals with how human beings perceive, interpret and respond to adversity through various schools of thought, particularly those school that emphasize human resilience, inner strength and search meaning in adversity. Indian philosophy especially the Bhagavad Gita, Upanishads provide a spiritual and ethical framework for confronting adversity. These align with AQ's components of endurance and perception of adversity. Buddhism also gave the Four Noble Truths for Dukkha (suffering). Indian philosophical goal is not to avoid adverse situation but to understand it, accept it, and go beyond it through mindfulness, ethical living and mental discipline. Psychological roots of Adversity Quotient are closely tied to the fields of personality, resilience studies, coping mechanisms and motivational theories. Many Studies has been found that individuals with a high AQ tend to demonstrate better academic performance, job satisfaction and psychological well-being, predictor of success and emotional regulation and indicating that AQ is not just a theoretical measure but

a practical tool with significant outcomes.

Keeping in view of the importance of adversity quotient of the students particularly at the stage of graduation, the problem of the study has been stated as- **Exploring Adversity Quotient among Undergraduate Students of Nalbari College.**

Objectives of the study

1. To assess the level of Adversity Quotient among undergraduate students of Nalbari College, Nalbari.
2. To study the significance of difference in adversity quotient between boys' and girls' students.
3. To study the significance of difference in adversity quotient between students from Arts and Science background.

Hypotheses

Based on the objectives of the study, the researcher formulated the following null hypotheses.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of adversity quotient of boys' and girls' students.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of adversity quotient of arts and science students.

Significance of the study

The study of adversity quotient among undergraduate students is essential because present-day undergraduate students frequently face increasing academic pressure, academic rivalry, career uncertainty and social challenges that can impact in their psychological well-being and academic performance. Adversity quotient depicts an individual's ability to resist difficulties, manage challenges and remain persistent despite difficult situations. Therefore, assessing the level of adversity quotient among undergraduate students is important because helps understanding how well students adapt to academic and personal problems in college life. Thus, the study will contribute to improving students overall development such as personal and academic achievement.

Methodology

The study followed a descriptive research design, collecting primary data from 100 undergraduate students of the 6th semester at Nalbari College, selected from a population of 300 honours students. An Adversity Quotient (AQ) inventory, adapted from Paul G. Stoltz's theoretical framework, was employed to measure students' resilience. The AQ scale was structured on a 5-point Likert format, with responses ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). The inventory was developed around the four core components of AQ—control, ownership, reach, and endurance—providing insights into how students perceive and respond to challenges.

Review of Related Literature

Numbers of studies on Adversity Quotient (AQ) highlight its role in resilience, learning, and performance across different groups. Research by Geetha Satish Pisharody et al. (2026) found no significant gender differences in AQ among higher secondary learners in Gujarat, though science students scored higher than those in business or arts. Archana V. Katgeri (2024) reported that most B.Ed. student teachers had moderate AQ, while Kavita Kumari (2024) showed AQ strongly influenced work-life balance in police personnel. Anju Jolly (2024) observed no gender differences but significant urban-rural variations among senior secondary students in Assam. Savitri Suryandari et al. (2023) linked high AQ with better science problem-solving, while Jolly Anju et al. (2023) emphasized AQ's relevance for students, teachers, and leaders. Anshikha Singh et al. (2022) found most adolescents had low AQ, with

boys slightly higher than girls. Diana Vivanti Sigit et al. (2019) confirmed AQ's effect on learning outcomes, alongside gender differences, and Hema G. (2019) showed interventions could enhance AQ. Other studies, such as those by Kaur and Billing (2022), Aung and San (2020), Suryadi and Santoso (2017), Hastuti and Riyadi (2017), and Kumar (2016), further demonstrated AQ's influence on academic stress, mathematics achievement, positive traits, and professional resilience, though some found no link with job satisfaction. Overall, the literature consistently underscores AQ as a critical factor shaping adaptability, problem solving, and performance across educational and professional contexts. Research on Adversity Quotient (AQ) has rarely been conducted at the regional level, making localized studies particularly valuable. Examining AQ among undergraduate students in a specific context provides important insights into how young adults in that region perceive and respond to challenges. Such investigations not only help in understanding the current status of AQ but also highlight the influence of local social, cultural, and academic environments on resilience and problem-solving abilities.

Result & Discussion

The level of adversity quotient among undergraduate students of Nalbari college

Table1: The level of adversity quotient among undergraduate students of Nalbari college(N=100)

Adversity Quotient	Level	Range	No.of students	Percentage
	Extremely high	205 & above	9	0.9 %
	High	189-204	23	23%
	Average	173-188	42	42%
	Low	158-173	19	19%
	Extremely low	142-157	7	0.7%
Total			100	100%

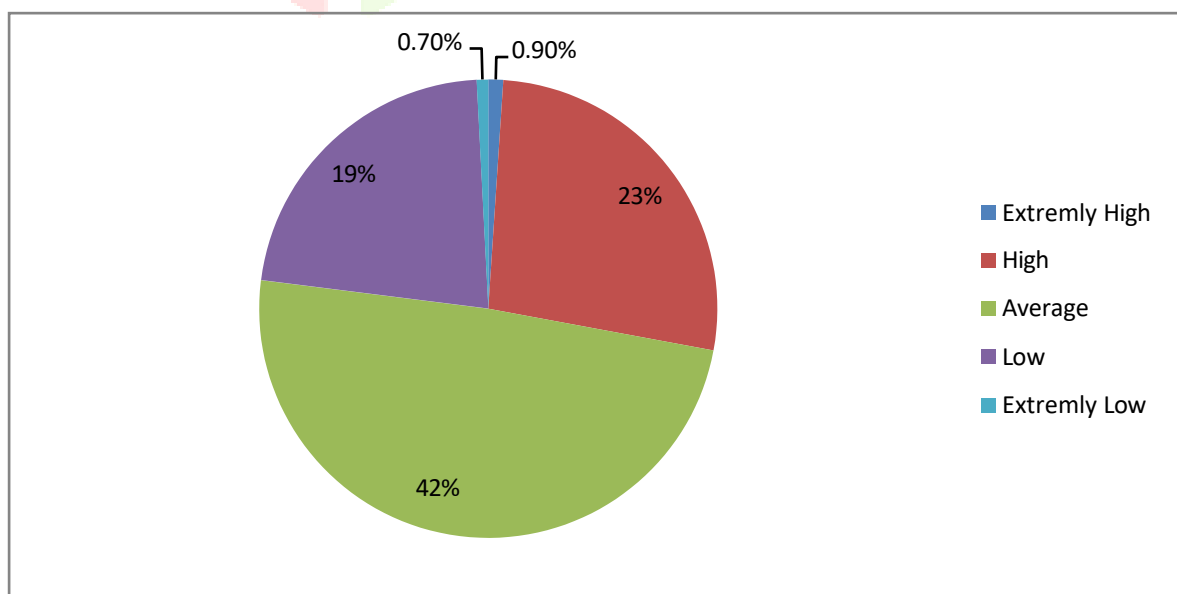


Fig1: Pie diagram showing adversity quotient level of undergraduate students

A study of table 1 and figure 1 depict the level of adversity quotient among undergraduate students. The above table and figure indicate that, out of 100 students, 9(0.9%) students are found to be extremely high level of adversity quotient, 23(23%) students have high level of adversity quotient, 42(42%) have average level of adversity quotient, 19(19%) students have low level of adversity quotient and 7(7%) students are found to be extremely low. Therefore, it can be stated that majority of the undergraduate students have average level of adversity quotient.

Table 2: Significance of difference in Mean adversity quotient Scores of boys and girls (N=100)

Variables		N	M	SD	df	t test	Level of significant
Gender	Boys	32	180.40	15.83	63	0.29	Not Significant at 0.05 level
	Girls	68	181.41	16.41			
Total		100	181.09	16.16			

Gender and adversity quotient

The analysis shows a slight difference in the average adversity quotient scores between boys ($M = 180.40$, $SD = 15.83$) and girls ($M = 181.41$, $SD = 16.41$). While this difference appears small, the t -test value of 0.29 is much lower than the critical value (1.96), which indicates that the observed difference is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there is no statistically significant difference, meaning gender does not play a role in influencing student adversity quotient. The null hypothesis, which stated that there is no significant difference in adversity quotient between boys and girls, therefore null hypothesis accepted. The analysis reveals that the mean AQ score of girls is slightly higher than that of boys, indicating a marginally better coping ability among female students. Hence, both male and female students demonstrate a relatively similar level of resilience.

Academic Stream and adversity quotient

Comparing arts and science stream students, science students reported a slightly higher average adversity quotient score ($M = 183.02$, $SD = 18.15$) than arts students ($M = 178.76$, $SD = 15.85$). The calculated t -value of 1.24 is less than the critical value (1.96), confirming that no statistical significant difference in adversity quotient between the arts and science. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted at the 5% significance level.

Table 3: Significance of difference in Mean adversity quotient Scores of Arts and Science Students (N=100)

Variables		N	M	SD	df	t test	Level of significant
Stream	Arts	50	178.76	15.85	98	1.24	Not Significant at 0.05 level
	Science	50	183.02	18.15			
Total		100	180.89	17.09			

The results show that Science students have a slightly higher mean of adversity quotient score than Arts students. Although there is a slight variation in mean scores, the difference is not strong enough to establish a real effect of academic stream on adversity quotient. Therefore, it can be concluded that academic stream does not significantly influence students' ability to handle adversity.

Findings

1. The findings demonstrate that a majority of undergraduate students fall within the moderate level of Adversity Quotient (AQ). This study showed that most of the students have an average capability to deal with problems, challenges and difficult situations. They are neither strongly resilient nor highly fragile but indicate a balanced ability to cope with difficulties in their academic and personal lives.
2. The study showed that there is no statistically significant difference in the Adversity Quotient between boys and girls. The result reflects that gender does not play a significant role in determining the level of AQ among undergraduate students. Both groups of students demonstrate a comparable level of resilience and capability to handle difficulties.
3. The findings further reveal that no significant difference exists in the Adversity Quotient between Arts and Science stream students. This suggests that academic background does not play a significant role in shaping students' capability to face and overcome difficulties. Students from both streams, arts & science, demonstrate similar levels of resilience.
4. The findings exhibit that undergraduate students have an average level of adversity quotient and reflecting moderate level of resilience. While minimal differences are observed across gender and academic streams and the t-test findings support the hypothesis that these differences are not significant. Therefore, adversity quotient appears to be largely independent of gender and academic background.

Educational Implication & Suggestion

- i. The college should organize structured workshops, seminars, and training programmes focused on developing resilience, emotional strength and problem-solving skills so that help students handle stress, anxiety, develop critical thinking skills and help to face academic pressure and personal challenges.
- ii. The lack of a significant difference between Arts and Science students suggests the academic background has no impact on their adversity quotient. Hence, similar developmental programmes and support systems can be implemented across all academic streams.
- iii. Incorporating life skills such as stress management, emotional control, decision making into curriculum play a crucial role in strengthening students' capacity to cope with adversities.
- iv. Appropriate guidance and counseling facilities should be provided in college to support students in managing academic pressure and personal problems effectively.
- v. Promoting students' involvement in sports, cultural events, and group activities contributes to the development of confidence, cooperative skills, teamwork and resilience.
- vi. Introducing teacher-student mentorship programmes can provide students with continuous guidance, motivation and emotional support.
- vii. Educational institutions should conduct awareness programmes to foster students to recognize the value of adversity quotient in their achieving academic and life success.

Conclusion

The study analysis the difference in adversity quotient between boys and girls as well as between Arts and Science students. The outcome help to analytical insight whether gender and academic background play a significant role in framing students' resilience and ability to overcome difficulties. Understanding the level of AQ among students is important because it has a direct impact on their academic adjustment, emotional stability and overall development.

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