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Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Psychological Resilience: A Review

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ABSTRACT: Psychological resilience, broadly defined as positive adaptation in the context of significant adversity, has become a prominent construct in developmental and clinical psychology. However, foundational theories and measures of resilience have largely been developed within Western, individualistic cultural contexts, raising concerns about their cross-cultural applicability. This review synthesizes evidence on how cultural contexts shape the conceptualization, expression, and measurement of psychological resilience. Eighteen peer-reviewed journal articles were reviewed and synthesized across four interconnected domains: theoretical and conceptual foundations of resilience, particularly the transition from trait-based perspectives to social-ecological models; methodological approaches to cross-cultural resilience research, including standardized scale validation and mixed-methods measure development; cultural variation in resilience processes among collectivist, Indigenous, and refugee populations; and developmental and lifespan considerations in cross-cultural resilience research. Four synthesis tables and a conceptual radial framework were used to integrate and map the major themes identified across the literature. The findings demonstrate that resilience is better understood as a culturally situated, socially embedded, and ecologically influenced process rather than as a culturally invariant individual trait. Culturally grounded measurement approaches, including the Child and Youth Resilience Measure, appear particularly useful for capturing contextually meaningful individual, relational, community, and cultural resources that may be overlooked by direct translations of measures developed in Western settings. These findings highlight the importance of culturally responsive conceptualization and assessment of resilience and provide implications for cross-cultural measurement, intervention development, and future research.

KEYWORDS: Psychological resilience; cross-cultural psychology; scoping review; social-ecological model; resilience measurement

1. Introduction

Psychological resilience refers to the capacity of individuals to achieve positive outcomes despite exposure to significant adversity, trauma, or chronic stress. Over the past four decades, resilience has evolved from a peripheral observation in developmental psychopathology into a central organizing construct across clinical psychology, psychiatry, public health, and humanitarian intervention research. A multidisciplinary panel convened to address persistent

definitional disagreement concluded that despite considerable variation in how resilience is operationalized across fields, most conceptions converge on a shared core of healthy, adaptive functioning following exposure to adversity [1]. Yet this apparent conceptual consensus obscures a deeper methodological problem: a critical review of resilience definitions, concepts, and theory found that the construct has been operationalized in markedly inconsistent ways across studies, with disagreement persisting over whether resilience constitutes a stable trait, a dynamic process, or an observable outcome [2].

This definitional ambiguity becomes particularly consequential when resilience research crosses cultural boundaries. Much of the foundational theory and nearly all widely used resilience measurement instruments were developed within Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic populations, and subsequently exported to non-Western contexts with limited empirical scrutiny of their cross-cultural validity. Influential critique of this pattern has argued that resilience is not a fixed individual attribute but a socially and culturally negotiated capacity, dependent on an individual's ability to navigate toward, and culturally meaningful systems' capacity to provide, psychological, social, and physical resources that sustain wellbeing [3]. This social-ecological reframing carries substantial implications: what counts as a resilience-promoting resource, a stoic emotional style in one cultural context, or open emotional expression and communal mourning in another, may differ substantially across cultural settings, such that culturally naïve application of Western-derived resilience frameworks risks both under- and over-estimating resilience in non-Western populations.

Complementing this theoretical critique, calls for a genuinely global resilience science have emphasized that international interest in resilience has surged in response to disasters, political violence, disease, and displacement affecting diverse populations worldwide, yet developmental resilience science has been slow to systematically incorporate cultural variation into its core theoretical and methodological frameworks [4]. Addressing this gap requires not only new theory but also a rigorous, transparent method for mapping the existing cross-cultural evidence base, identifying its methodological strengths and limitations, and clarifying priority areas for future research. Scoping review methodology, formalized through the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR), provides a systematic approach for mapping evidence on a topic and identifying main concepts, theories, sources, and knowledge gaps, particularly suited to a construct such as resilience where the underlying literature is theoretically heterogeneous and methodologically diverse [5].

This scoping review addresses three guiding questions. First, how have theoretical models of resilience evolved to accommodate cultural and contextual variation, and what conceptual tensions remain unresolved? Second, what methodological approaches, standardized versus culturally grounded, have been used to measure resilience across cultural groups, and how do they compare in validity and interpretability? Third, what substantive patterns of cultural variation in resilience processes have been documented across collectivist, Indigenous, refugee, and other non-Western populations, and across different developmental stages? To address these questions, this review synthesizes 18 peer-reviewed journal articles spanning developmental psychology, cross-cultural psychiatry, humanitarian psychology, and psychometrics, organized into four thematic sections following this introduction.

2. Theoretical and Conceptual Foundations of Resilience

2.1. Defining Resilience: From Trait to Process.

Early resilience research, emerging from developmental psychopathology in the 1970s and 1980s, tended to conceptualize resilience as a relatively stable individual characteristic that distinguished children who thrived despite adversity from those who did not. A foundational reconceptualization challenged this perspective by arguing that resilience is not a rare or extraordinary trait but rather a common outcome arising from ordinary, normative adaptive systems, such as attachment relationships, cognitive problem-solving abilities, and self-regulation, functioning under conditions of adversity. From this perspective, the greatest developmental risks arise when these ordinary protective systems are themselves compromised [6]. This process-oriented reframing was reinforced by a widely cited critical evaluation of the resilience construct, which identified persistent methodological inconsistencies in how researchers operationalized both exposure to adversity and positive adaptation. The authors called for greater precision in specifying the domains of functioning being assessed and the thresholds used to classify individuals as resilient [7]. A parallel body of research on trauma and loss further challenged trait-based models by demonstrating that many individuals exposed to highly adverse events maintain stable and healthy psychological and physiological functioning without experiencing a period of clinically significant disturbance. These findings challenged the assumption that resilience necessarily emerges only after a period of visible psychological struggle [8].

2.2. Ecological and Social-Ecological Models of Resilience.

Building on these process-oriented perspectives, social-ecological models locate resilience not solely within the individual but within dynamic interactions between individuals and the multiple systems surrounding them, including family, community, culture, and institutions. An influential articulation of this perspective defined resilience as both an individual's capacity to navigate toward psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain well-being and the capacity of families, communities, and cultures to provide these resources in culturally meaningful ways [9]. This dual emphasis on navigation and negotiation shifts the locus of resilience away from an internal individual trait toward a transactional process embedded within specific ecological and cultural contexts. Extending this framework to trauma-exposed populations, subsequent theoretical work argued that culture and context are not merely moderating variables that alter the strength of resilience processes but are constitutive of what resilience means and how it is expressed within a particular setting. Consequently, a purely individual-level and decontextualized model of resilience remains conceptually incomplete regardless of the population being studied [10].

2.3. Culture as a Constitutive Element of Resilience.

The social-ecological turn in resilience theory is particularly important when applied to populations whose cultural worldviews differ substantially from the individualistic assumptions embedded in mainstream Western psychology. Cross-cultural analyses of resilience have demonstrated that culturally specific practices, including collective identity, spiritual and religious frameworks, and communal coping practices, can function as important

resilience-promoting resources. Western-derived models may overlook or inadequately represent these resources when they do not conform to individualistic norms emphasizing autonomy and self-reliance [3]. This argument has been particularly prominent in Indigenous mental health scholarship. Collaborative research involving Inuit, Métis, Mi'kmaq, and Mohawk communities has shown that Indigenous conceptions of resilience are closely connected to historical relationships with ancestral lands, collective identity, and intergenerational narratives. Consequently, individually focused measures of resilience may fail to capture, or potentially misrepresent, important sources of strength identified by community members themselves [11].

Similarly, research developing culturally grounded resilience measures for Syrian refugee and Jordanian host-community adolescents identified resilience-promoting resources through locally informed qualitative research. These resources included specific forms of family obligation, religious practice, and community solidarity that differed meaningfully from the content of standard Western resilience instruments [12]. Such findings further support the view that culture constitutes an integral component of resilience rather than functioning merely as an external contextual variable**.** Table 1 summarizes the major theoretical frameworks underlying this conceptual development, illustrating the progression from individual and trait-oriented perspectives toward process-based and social-ecological approaches that increasingly recognize culture and context as central to the meaning, expression, and measurement of psychological resilience.

Table 1. Theoretical Frameworks Explaining Psychological Resilience Across Cultural Contexts.

Core Conceptual Contribution	Disciplinary Origin	Cross-Cultural Relevance	Ref.
Interdisciplinary synthesis of competing definitions of resilience	Psychiatry / Psychology	Highlights the multidimensional nature of resilience and the importance of contextual variation in its definition and assessment	[1]
Critical evaluation of trait- versus process-based conceptions of resilience	Sport & Performance Psychology	Supports a process-oriented understanding that allows resilience mechanisms to vary across social and cultural settings	[2]
Resilience as the navigation and negotiation of culturally meaningful resources	Social Work	Establishes culture as central to determining which resources are available, accessible, and meaningful for resilience	[3]
Resilience as an outcome of ordinary, normative adaptive systems	Developmental Psychology	Provides a foundation for examining how ordinary protective systems may operate differently across cultural and developmental contexts	[6]
Critical evaluation of construct operationalization and measurement	Developmental Psychopathology	Emphasizes the need to define adversity and positive adaptation according to relevant populations and contextual conditions	[7]
Identification of stable trajectories of healthy functioning following trauma	Clinical Psychology	Demonstrates heterogeneity in responses to adversity and cautions against assuming a universal pathway to resilient adaptation	[8]
Social ecology of resilience involving navigation and negotiation across systems	Social Work	Positions resilience within interactions among individuals, families, communities, institutions, and cultural systems	[9]
Culture and context as constitutive elements of resilience meaning and expression	Cross-Cultural Psychiatry	Explicitly challenges universalist interpretations by proposing that resilience is shaped by culturally and contextually specific processes	[10]

3. Methodological Approaches to Cross-Cultural Resilience Research

3.1. Scoping Review Methodology.

This review followed a scoping review approach, which was considered appropriate because the literature on cross-cultural resilience spans multiple disciplines, theoretical traditions, and methodological designs. The primary aim was to map the breadth and characteristics of the available evidence and identify knowledge gaps rather than to pool effect sizes across homogeneous studies. The PRISMA-ScR checklist, developed by a 24-member expert panel following guidance from the EQUATOR Network, specifies 20 essential and two optional reporting items designed to improve the methodological transparency and reproducibility of scoping reviews. These items include explicit reporting of the review questions, eligibility criteria, information sources, study selection procedures, and approaches used to chart and synthesize findings from the included studies [5]. Following this framework, the present review prioritized peer-reviewed journal articles reporting original theoretical, empirical, or measurement-development research that explicitly addressed resilience in relation to culture, ethnicity, or cross-national differences. Book chapters, unpublished theses, and sources without a digital object identifier were excluded to maintain a clearly defined and verifiable evidence base.

3.2. Standardized Measurement Scales and Their Cross-Cultural Limits.

A substantial methodological literature has examined the psychometric properties of resilience measurement scales, many of which were originally developed and validated in Western adult or clinical populations before being translated and applied in other cultural contexts. A systematic methodological review evaluated the psychometric rigor of resilience instruments developed for general and clinical populations using established quality criteria, including content validity, internal consistency, and construct validity. The review concluded that no single instrument met the criteria for a psychometric gold standard and that many widely used measures had incomplete or inadequately reported validation evidence [13]. The absence of a universally accepted gold-standard instrument becomes particularly problematic in cross-cultural applications. A subsequent systematic review of cross-cultural resilience measures found that, although numerous instruments had been translated or adapted for use outside their original cultural contexts, direct linguistic translation without accompanying qualitative investigation of conceptual and item-level equivalence frequently failed to capture locally salient protective and promotive factors [14]. Consequently, an instrument may demonstrate acceptable statistical reliability while still providing an incomplete representation of resilience as understood and experienced within the target cultural context. These findings highlight the importance of distinguishing linguistic equivalence from conceptual and cultural equivalence when resilience measures are transferred across populations.

3.3. Mixed-Methods and Culturally Grounded Measurement Development.

In response to the limitations of direct translation, an alternative methodological approach has emerged in which resilience measures are developed through mixed-methods designs that begin with qualitative exploration of locally meaningful resources before proceeding to quantitative scale construction and validation. The Child and Youth Resilience Measure

(CYRM) was developed through collaboration among researchers across 11 countries, including Canada, China, Russia, and Tanzania. Qualitative fieldwork was initially conducted to identify individual, relational, community, and cultural dimensions of resilience, after which these findings were incorporated into a psychometrically evaluated 28-item instrument designed to capture both shared and culturally specific aspects of resilience [15]. A similar mixed-methods strategy was subsequently used to develop an Arabic-language, culturally grounded resilience measure for Syrian refugee and Jordanian host-community adolescents. In this process, qualitative research involving young people directly informed the development of item content before psychometric validation. The resulting measure demonstrated measurement equivalence across refugee and host-community groups despite differences in their life circumstances [12]. Together, these studies suggest that culturally grounded scale development can provide stronger content and construct validity than approaches based primarily on direct translation, although such approaches generally require greater methodological resources and closer engagement with the populations being studied.

As summarized in Table 2, the methodological literature reflects a progression from standardized reporting and psychometric evaluation toward culturally grounded, mixed-methods approaches that emphasize conceptual equivalence and local relevance. Collectively, these approaches demonstrate that rigorous cross-cultural resilience research requires attention not only to statistical reliability but also to whether the constructs and resources represented by an instrument are meaningful within the cultural context in which it is applied.

Table 2. Methodological Approaches to Measuring Psychological Resilience Across Cultures.

Methodological Approach	Key Finding on Cross-Cultural Validity	Methodological Implication	Ref.
PRISMA-ScR reporting guideline for scoping reviews	Provides standardized reporting criteria to improve the transparency and reproducibility of evidence-mapping reviews	Supports systematic reporting of eligibility criteria, information sources, study selection, data charting, and synthesis procedures	[5]
Methodological review of 15 resilience measurement scales	No instrument met all gold-standard psychometric criteria, and many measures had incomplete validation evidence	Cross-cultural studies should not assume that commonly used resilience scales are universally valid solely because they have established reliability	[13]
Systematic review of cross-cultural resilience measures	Direct translation without sufficient cultural grounding may fail to capture locally relevant resilience resources	Scale adaptation should assess conceptual and cultural equivalence in addition to linguistic equivalence and conventional psychometric properties	[14]
Mixed-methods development of the Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM-28)	An 11-country collaborative approach captured both shared and culturally specific dimensions of resilience	Qualitative exploration followed by quantitative validation provides a stronger basis for developing culturally responsive resilience measures	[15]

4. Cultural Variation in Resilience Processes and Outcomes

4.1. Resilience in Collectivist and East Asian Contexts.

Empirical studies adapting the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), one of the most widely used resilience instruments internationally, to Chinese populations have repeatedly shown that the original factor structure derived from Western samples does not replicate consistently. A psychometric evaluation of the CD-RISC among Chinese military personnel found that confirmatory factor analysis supported neither the original five-factor structure nor

a previously developed Chinese community adaptation. Instead, the analysis identified a distinct three-factor structure comprising competency, toughness, and adaptability [16]. This finding suggests that the dimensional organization of resilience within a collectivist and hierarchically structured institutional context may differ from that represented in the original instrument. Similarly, a validation study of the Chinese version of the CD-RISC among adolescents in Chengdu identified a factor structure that differed from that of the original instrument while demonstrating adequate reliability and validity after appropriate restructuring [17]. Together, these findings indicate that cultural differences may extend beyond variations in mean resilience scores to differences in the latent dimensions through which resilience is conceptualized and measured.

These variations may reflect broader cultural differences in how adaptive functioning is understood and expressed. In collectivist societies, resilience may be closely connected to maintaining interpersonal harmony, fulfilling family and social responsibilities, adapting to group expectations, and drawing support from interconnected social networks. Such resources may receive less emphasis in instruments originally developed around individual autonomy, personal mastery, and self-directed coping. Moreover, differences between military personnel and adolescents demonstrate that cultural influences may interact with institutional and developmental contexts, further shaping the expression of resilience. Cross-cultural assessment therefore requires attention to both cultural meaning and population-specific characteristics rather than assuming measurement invariance across groups.Consequently, applying an instrument developed in one cultural setting to another population without examining its factor structure may obscure culturally meaningful dimensions of resilience.

4.2. Resilience Among Indigenous and Refugee Populations.

Beyond East Asian contexts, research involving Indigenous and refugee populations has documented substantial departures from conventional individual-centered models of resilience. Collaborative research with Inuit, Métis, Mi'kmaq, and Mohawk communities in Canada demonstrated that resilience was closely connected to historical relationships with ancestral territories, collective identity, and community responses to the disruptions associated with colonization, political oppression, and bureaucratic control [11]. Within these contexts, individually focused assessments may overlook community-level and historically embedded sources of strength that are not adequately represented in conventional resilience instruments.Parallel research involving Syrian refugee and Jordanian host-community adolescents identified resilience-promoting resources through culturally grounded qualitative fieldwork, including family relationships, religious practices, and community-based support [12]. Incorporating these locally identified resources into measurement development resulted in an instrument demonstrating measurement equivalence across refugee and host-community groups. This finding illustrates that resilience among displaced populations can be assessed more appropriately when instrument development reflects the specific adversities, social relationships, and cultural resources relevant to the population rather than relying exclusively on measures transferred from unrelated cultural contexts.

Table 3 summarizes these empirical patterns across collectivist, Indigenous, refugee, and cross-national populations. The evidence demonstrates that cultural variation in resilience can occur at several levels, including differences in factor structure, the relative importance of protective resources, and the relationship between resilience and psychological outcomes.

Importantly, the table shows that cultural influences are not restricted to a single population type: similar concerns regarding contextual validity emerge across East Asian, Indigenous, refugee, and multinational research settings.

Table 3. Documented Cultural and Developmental Variation in Psychological Resilience Processes.

Cultural or Developmental Context	Key Finding on Resilience Variation	Implication for Cross-Cultural Resilience Research	Ref.
Chinese military service members	A three-factor structure comprising competency, toughness, and adaptability differed from the original CD-RISC structure	Factor structures derived from Western populations should be re-evaluated before instruments are applied in culturally and institutionally distinct populations	[16]
Chinese adolescents in Chengdu	The factor structure differed from the original CD-RISC, while adequate reliability and validity were maintained after restructuring	Cultural adaptation may require structural modification rather than direct translation of an existing instrument	[17]
Inuit, Métis, Mi'kmaq, and Mohawk communities in Canada	Resilience was closely connected to ancestral rootedness, collective identity, and responses to historical adversity	Individual-level instruments may overlook historically, culturally, and community-embedded resilience resources	[11]
Syrian refugee and Jordanian host-community adolescents	A culturally grounded measure demonstrated measurement equivalence across refugee and host-community groups	Locally informed measurement development can improve comparability while retaining culturally meaningful resilience resources	[12]
Meta-analytic evidence across national and cultural contexts	Associations between resilience and psychological well-being varied across cultural contexts	Relationships between resilience and psychological outcomes should not automatically be assumed to be culturally invariant	[18]

4.3. Developmental and Lifespan Perspectives Across Cultures.

Cross-cultural resilience processes may also vary across developmental stages, an issue that has received increasing theoretical attention as resilience research has expanded internationally. Foundational developmental research emphasized that resilience during childhood depends substantially on the functioning of ordinary adaptive systems, including caregiver relationships, self-regulatory capacities, and community-level protective structures [6]. This perspective implies that cross-cultural comparisons of childhood resilience should account for culturally variable caregiving arrangements, family structures, and community relationships rather than assuming a universal model of protective relationships.

Extending this developmental perspective to the global context, subsequent scholarship argued that increasing international interest in resilience science, particularly in response to disasters, political violence, displacement, and other forms of adversity affecting children and young people, requires developmental researchers to engage directly with culturally embedded contexts rather than simply transferring findings obtained from Western populations [4]. Quantitative synthesis further supports the importance of cultural context. A meta-analytic review found that the strength and pattern of associations between resilience and related constructs, including psychological well-being, varied across the national and cultural contexts represented in the literature [18]. These findings suggest that developmental and cultural influences should not be treated as independent sources of variation. Instead, resilience across the lifespan is shaped by interactions among developmental needs, social relationships, available resources, and culturally specific expectations regarding adaptation.

The empirical patterns identified across the reviewed literature can be integrated into a broader conceptual structure. As illustrated in Figure 1, cross-cultural psychological resilience lies at the intersection of five interconnected domains: theoretical foundations, measurement

and methodology, cultural variation, developmental and lifespan context, and practice and policy. Rather than representing a linear sequence, these domains operate interactively. Theoretical assumptions influence how resilience is measured, measurement approaches determine which culturally relevant resources become visible, cultural contexts shape the meaning and expression of adaptation, and developmental conditions influence which protective systems are most salient at different stages of life.

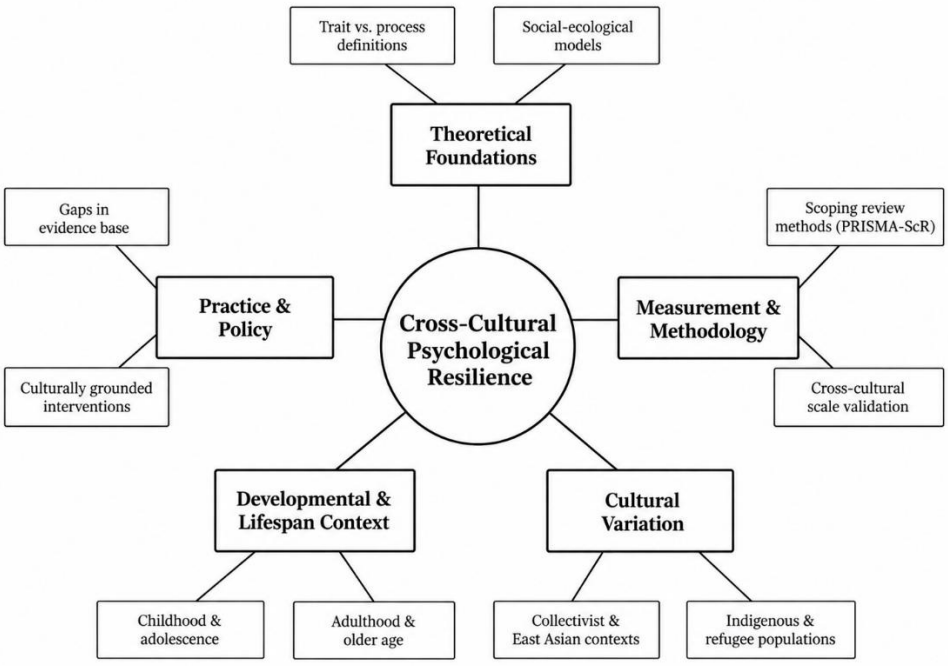


Figure 1. Map of the Interconnected Domains of Cross-Cultural Psychological Resilience.

The conceptual structure shown in Figure 1 provides an integrative interpretation of the evidence synthesized in this review**.** The central position of cross-cultural psychological resilience emphasizes that no single theoretical, methodological, cultural, or developmental domain can adequately explain resilience in isolation. The five surrounding domains represent mutually connected dimensions of resilience research rather than independent or sequential stages. Their interconnections indicate, for example, that culturally grounded measurement depends on appropriate theoretical conceptualization, while the interpretation of resilience resources must account for both developmental stage and sociocultural context. The practice and policy domain further translates these interconnected insights into culturally responsive assessment, intervention, and support strategies.

5. Implications, Gaps, and Future Directions

5.1. Implications for Cross-Cultural Practice and Measurement.

The evidence synthesized in this review has important implications for clinical, community, and humanitarian practice involving culturally diverse populations. Because resilience-promoting resources are culturally situated rather than universally fixed, practitioners working with refugee, Indigenous, and non-Western populations should exercise caution when applying standardized resilience measures developed in Western contexts without appropriate cultural validation. Evidence indicates that direct linguistic translation alone may fail to represent

locally salient protective resources and culturally meaningful expressions of resilience [3,14]. Culturally grounded, mixed-methods approaches, such as those used in the development of the Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM), demonstrate the value of incorporating local qualitative evidence before quantitative instrument development or adaptation [12, 15]. Although this process requires additional resources, it can strengthen the content and contextual validity of resilience assessments used in cross-cultural clinical and programmatic settings. Similarly, the altered factor structures observed when Western-derived instruments such as the CD-RISC were applied to Chinese populations demonstrate that translation and back-translation alone may be insufficient [16, 17]. Psychometric re-validation should therefore include assessment of factor structure, reliability, construct validity, and, where appropriate, measurement invariance. Such procedures can help determine whether an instrument measures comparable dimensions of resilience across cultural groups rather than assuming equivalence based solely on linguistic adaptation.

5.2. Gaps in the Current Evidence Base.

Several gaps limit the conclusions that can currently be drawn from the cross-cultural resilience literature. First, the evidence base remains geographically uneven. Culturally grounded measurement research has been concentrated in selected East Asian and Middle Eastern refugee contexts, while populations in Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, South Asia, and other regions remain comparatively underrepresented. This imbalance limits the ability to determine which observed patterns represent broadly shared resilience processes and which are specific to particular cultural or sociopolitical contexts. Second, much of the methodological literature evaluating resilience scales, including research identifying the absence of a psychometric gold standard, has been based predominantly on general and clinical populations in high-income settings [13]. Consequently, commonly applied criteria for evaluating psychometric quality may themselves require further examination when used across substantially different cultural settings. Third, longitudinal research remains comparatively limited. Much of the available evidence is based on cross-sectional studies, which provide valuable information about associations and between-group differences but offer limited insight into how resilience develops and changes over time. This methodological limitation makes it difficult to distinguish enduring cultural influences from responses associated with particular historical periods, developmental stages, or situational adversities.

5.3. Future Research Directions.

Building on these limitations, several priorities emerge for future research. First, culturally grounded, mixed-methods measurement development should be extended to populations and geographical regions that remain underrepresented in the current literature. Approaches informed by the CYRM provide a useful model because they combine locally derived qualitative evidence with systematic psychometric evaluation [15]. Expanding such research would provide a broader empirical basis for identifying both shared and culturally specific dimensions of resilience. Second, longitudinal cross-cultural studies are needed to examine how resilience trajectories change over time within and across cultural groups. Such designs could clarify whether observed cultural differences reflect relatively stable characteristics of resilience processes or context-dependent responses to particular developmental, historical, or sociopolitical conditions [4,10]. Third, stronger methodological integration between

quantitative psychometric approaches and qualitative, community-engaged research could help address the tension between achieving measurement comparability and preserving culturally specific meanings and resources [9,11]. Future studies should also examine measurement invariance more systematically before making direct comparisons of resilience scores across cultural populations.

Table 4 summarizes the principal implications, evidence gaps, and future research priorities identified in this review. Three broader methodological issues are evident across these domains. First, cultural adaptation should extend beyond linguistic translation to include conceptual and psychometric validation. Second, the geographical concentration of existing evidence limits the extent to which current findings can be generalized across cultural settings. Third, greater use of longitudinal, mixed-methods, and community-engaged designs is needed to capture resilience as a dynamic process that develops through interactions among individuals, social relationships, communities, and broader cultural environments. These priorities provide a framework for strengthening both the methodological rigor and cultural relevance of future resilience research.

Table 4. Practice Implications, Evidence Gaps, and Future Research Priorities in Cross-Cultural Resilience Science.

Domain	Current State of Evidence	Priority for Practice or Future Research	Ref.
Measurement translation and cultural grounding	Direct translation may inadequately represent locally salient resilience resources and culturally specific meanings	Incorporate qualitative cultural grounding and local stakeholder perspectives into instrument adaptation and development	[3,14]
Psychometric re-validation	Western-derived scales, including the CD-RISC, can exhibit different factor structures in non-Western populations	Conduct local psychometric validation, including assessment of factor structure, reliability, construct validity, and measurement invariance where appropriate	[16,17]
Geographic and population coverage	Evidence remains concentrated in selected East Asian and Middle Eastern refugee populations, with several world regions comparatively underrepresented	Expand culturally grounded research across diverse geographical, socioeconomic, and cultural populations	[13,15]
Longitudinal and integrative research designs	Cross-sectional designs remain common, with limited integration of qualitative, quantitative, and community-engaged approaches	Conduct longitudinal and mixed-methods studies that integrate psychometric analysis with culturally grounded and community-engaged research	[9,10]

6. Conclusion

This review demonstrates that psychological resilience is more appropriately understood as a socially, culturally, and ecologically embedded process than as a culturally invariant individual trait. The transition from trait-based perspectives toward process-oriented and social-ecological models has broadened understanding of how individuals adapt to adversity through interactions with families, communities, institutions, and culturally meaningful resources. Evidence from collectivist, Indigenous, and refugee populations further demonstrates that both the structure and expression of resilience can vary across cultural contexts. The findings also highlight important implications for measurement. Direct translation of instruments developed in Western populations may not adequately capture culturally specific resilience resources, while culturally grounded and mixed-methods approaches provide a stronger basis for establishing contextual and construct validity. Future research should therefore prioritize culturally informed instrument development, rigorous psychometric re-validation, broader geographical

representation, and longitudinal, community-engaged designs. Collectively, these approaches can support a more inclusive and empirically robust understanding of psychological resilience across diverse cultural and developmental contexts.

Competing Interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this review.

Author Contributions

Both authors contributed equally to this work, including conceptualization, literature search and synthesis, writing of the original draft, and review and editing of the final manuscript. Both authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Data Availability Statement

No new data were created or analyzed in this study, as this article is a scoping literature review. Data sharing is not applicable to this article. All sources synthesized in this review are publicly available peer-reviewed journal articles cited in the reference list.

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