

## Resilience among Students from the Majority and Minority Group: The Israeli Case

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### Abstract

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The current study examined levels of individual, community and national resilience as well as resilience protective and suppressing factors among Israeli Jewish (majority group) and Israeli Arab (minority group) students. Results indicated that Israeli Jewish students reported higher levels of individual, community and national resilience scale scores compared with Israeli Arab students. However, when resilience was measured as strength to vulnerability ratio, only individual resilience was significant. Results indicated a similar pattern of association between resilience protective and suppressive factors and measures of resilience. In addition, and as expected, Israeli Jewish students reported higher levels of sense of coherence, and reported higher quality of life. Israeli Arab students reported higher levels of distress symptoms and a higher level of exposure to terror. However, Israeli Jews reported a higher sense of danger compared with Israeli Arabs.

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**Keywords:** Israeli Jewish and Arab students, Individual resilience, community resilience, national resilience, sense of coherence, sense of danger, distress symptoms, exposure.

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### Introduction

Are minority ethnic groups characterized by lower levels of individual, community and national perceived resilience? Do majority and minority ethnic groups differ regarding the associations between protective and suppressing resilience factors and individual, community and national resilience? Do results differ when using the resilience scale score or the resilience SVR index (strength vs. vulnerability)? The current study examines these questions comparing Israeli Arab students and Israeli Jewish students. To the best of our knowledge, these issues have hardly been studied. A minority group in a country is defined as a group of people who do not belong to the majority group that controls a given society. However, ethnicity is a complex multidimensional construct containing cultural norms and values, ethnic identity and the experiences and attitudes associated with minority status (Phinney, 1996). Minority ethnic groups in various countries have been found to experience many more difficulties regarding different aspects of life, compared with the majority group: a lower level of social economy, a lower level of coping sources, a higher level of distress symptoms and higher exposure to racism, to mention just a few (Baum, Garofalo, & Yali, 1999; Braun-Lewensohn, 2014; Dawson, 2009; Gevondena et al., 2016; Williams, Yu, Jackson & Anderson, 1997).

The Israeli Arab ethnic group is a unique minority in some salient respects: Israel and the Palestinians have been involved in an intractable conflict for the last hundred years; Israeli Arabs are part of the Palestinian people and yet, they are Israeli citizens; Israeli Arabs are a large minority group (20% of the population) in Israel; Israeli Arabs suffer from discrimination in various areas, such as economic sources, education and employment (e.g., Braun-Lewensohn, Sagy & Roth, 2010; Gharrah, & Cohen, 2001; Vetlugin & Baron, 2006). However, only a limited number of studies have examined differences between minority and majority groups regarding resilience (e.g., Barbarin, 1993; Lahad, Leykin, & Aharnson-Daniel, 2015).

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## Psychological Resilience

In the past few years, resilience research has changed its focus "from looking at risk factors that led to psychosocial problems to the identification of strengths of an individual" (Richardson, 2002, p. 309). Accordingly, resilience has been defined as "protective factors which modify, ameliorate or alter a person's response to some environmental hazard that predisposes to a maladaptive outcome" (Rutter, 1987, p. 316; 2006). Similarly, other researchers have defined resilience as people's ability to withstand stress and adversity (Bonanno 2004; Egeland, Carlson, & Sroufe, 1993; Hobfoll et al., 2009; Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000; Sudfeld, 2015). The different definitions have been accompanied by different approaches to measuring resilience (e.g., Kimhi, 2016).

In an attempt to bring the various approaches to some common denominator, researchers have suggested differentiating between predictors and indicators of resilience (e.g., Bonanno, Galea, Bucciarelli, & Vlahov, 2007): (a) Resilience indicators (or outcomes) assess the return of the individual, the community or the whole nation, to normal life (as before the traumatic event) *after* a potentially traumatic event has taken place. Resilience indicators can be based on self-report tools as well as on measuring various actual behaviors at different times after the PTE has taken place (Bonanno, 2004; Bonanno, Romero & Klein, 2015). (b) Resilience predictors are based on measures taken *before* a potential traumatic event has taken place and are mostly based on self-report tools (e.g., Kimhi & Eshel, 2015). Such measures can serve as baselines for repeated measures after a PTE has taken place in order to predict future resilience. In the current study we are measuring individual, community and national resilience predictors at a relatively peacefully time in Israel in order to compare majority and minority groups.

Unlike many resilience studies, we have measured individual, community and national resilience using two methods: The first measures are based on common scale scores which have been used in other studies (Eshel & Kimhi, 2015; Kimhi & Eshel, 2009; Leykin, Lahad, Cohen, Goldberg, & Aharonson-Daniel, 2013). The second measures are based on the ratio of strength (protective factors) to vulnerability (suppressing factors), which we call resilience SVR. In earlier studies we have used this type of measure following an adversity or a potentially traumatic event, at the individual, community, or national levels (Eshel & Kimhi, 2015a; 2016b). Based on the many disadvantages faced by a minority group, compared with a majority group, we assumed that Israeli Arabs students would report lower levels of individual, community and national resilience compared with Jewish Israeli students as revealed by the two types of measurement.

**Individual resilience.** Bonanno (2005) has defined individual resilience as the individual's ability to maintain a stable level of functioning following traumatic events and as a "trajectory of healthy functioning across time" (p. 136). Bonanno and associates have argued further that most people display a high level of resilience after a PTE (Bonanno, Romero & Klein, 2015). Most studies on resilience have focused on individual resilience and have indicated that it is a key issue in buffering negative psychological consequences of major adversities (Suedfeld, 2015).

**Community resilience.** According to Cacioppo, Reis and Zautra (2011), social resilience is "the capacity to foster, engage in, and sustain positive relationships and to endure and recover from life stressors and social isolation" (p. 44). According to Norris et al. (2008), community resilience means more than the sum of resilient individuals and may be guaranteed only by a strong sense of community.

**National resilience.** The concept of national resilience is a broad one, addressing the issue of society's sustainability and strength in several diverse realms (Chemtob, 2005; Obrist et al., 2010). According to Ben-Dor et al., (2002), national resilience includes four main social components: patriotism, optimism, social integration, and trust in political and public institutions.

**Resilience protective and suppressing factors.** Earlier studies have identified resilience protective factors. These factors are various characteristics that are associated with higher likelihood of successful coping with adversities. Resilience suppressing factors are characteristics that are associated with poor ability to cope with adversities (e.g., Eshel & Kimhi, 2016a). In the current study we have examined two protective factors (SOC and quality of life) and three suppressing factors (distress symptoms, sense of danger and exposure).

**Sense of coherence.** Sense of coherence (SOC) is a major element of Antonovsky's (1993; 1987) salutogenic theory, which constitutes a health engendering orientation that functions as a psychologically based stress-resistance resource. Higher SOC indicates an ability to cope with adversities such as war (Braun-Lewensohn & Sagy, 2014).

Results have indicated that higher SOC has been associated positively with protective factors (Ebert, Tucker, & Roth, 2002), and negatively with risk factors (Delgado, 2007), as well as laboratory induced stress (Kimhi, 2015). We assumed that SOC would positively predict resilience among both Jews and Israeli Arabs.

**Quality of life.** Quality of life today refers to people's perception of their quality of life regarding the main aspects of life, such as family, social life, job and leisure time (Kimhi & Shamai, 2004; Kimhi & Eshel, 2009). We hypothesized that quality of life would be positively correlated with individual, community and national resilience among both Israeli Jews and Arabs.

**Distress symptoms.** War and terror attacks are highly painful events which shake people's basic sense of security and give rise to posttraumatic symptoms (e.g., Galea et al., 2004). Distress symptoms include delayed emotional and behavioral problems (Dyregrov, Gjestad, & Raundalen, 2002; Soffer-Dudek, 2015), posttraumatic stress disorders (PTSD), depression, anxiety and grief (Hadi, Llabre, & Spitzer, 2006). We hypothesized that distress symptoms would be negatively correlated with individual, community and national resilience among both Israeli Jewish and Arab students.

**Sense of danger.** Sense of danger may decrease individual resilience and plays a major role in post-war adaptation (e.g., Scott, Poulin, & Cohen Silver, 2012). Lazarus and Folkman (1984) claim that perceived post-adversity distress and assessment of stress resistant resources reflect negative cognitive appraisals. An earlier study revealed that sense of danger mediated the effects of gender and exposure to war adversities on distress symptoms and recovery of Israeli adolescents following the 2006 war with Lebanon (Kimhi, Eshel, Zysberg, & Hantman, 2010). We hypothesized that sense of danger would be negatively correlated with individual, community and national resilience among both Israeli Jewish and Arab students.

**Exposure to terror/war experiences.** Studies have indicated that exposure to terror attacks detrimentally affects resilience (e.g., Kimhi & Shamai, 2004). A higher level of exposure has been associated with a higher level of distress symptoms (e.g., Besser et al., 2015; Scott et al., 2012). We hypothesized that exposure to terror/war experiences would be negatively correlated with individual, community and national resilience among both Israeli Jewish and Arab students.

## Hypotheses

1. Israeli Jewish students will report higher levels of individual, community and national resilience as measured by the two types of measurement, compared with Israeli Arab students.
2. Resilience protective factors will be associated significantly positively while resilience suppressing factors will be significantly negatively correlated with the two measures of resilience among Israeli Jews and Arabs.

## Method

### Sample

The current study included Israeli Jewish and Arab students. We used a snowball sampling technique (Handcock & Gile, 2011) as follows: Each student taking the Introduction to Psychology class (at Tel Hai College) was required, as a class assignment, to send internet addresses of four Israeli students studying in any Israeli official higher education institution. The questionnaire was posted on the internet using Qualtrics software (Qualtrics, 2013) for three weeks (to choose between Hebrew and Arabic versions). All participants signed informed consent prior to filling out the questionnaire. Twenty-five questionnaires were excluded (16 of them filled out by Israeli Arab students) as incomplete and another ten were excluded due to their not responding to the item "In which higher education institute and department are you studying?" This item was meant to make sure that only active students were participating in the study. The final sample included 551 respondents (450 Jews and 101 Arabs). Participants' characteristics (see Table 1) indicated that the average age was 25-26 in the two groups; most participants were single. There were three significant differences between the two groups: Israeli Arab students reported a significantly higher level of religiosity, a higher level of exposure to terror/war experiences and a lower level of family income ( $p < .000$ ).

**Table 1: Demographic characteristics of Israeli Jewish students ( $n=450$ ) and Arab students ( $n=101$ )**

Variable/scale			<i>n</i>	%	<i>M/SD</i>
Gender	Israeli Jewish	Male	175	39	
		Female	275	61	
	Israeli Arabs	Male	45	45	
		Female	56	55	
Age	Israeli Jewish				<i>M</i> = 25.6 <i>SD</i> =5.74
	Israeli Arabs				<i>M</i> = 26.0 <i>SD</i> =8.11
Family status %	Israeli Jewish	Single	327	73	
		Married/Partner	119	26	
		Divorce/Widow	4	.9	
	Israeli Arabs	Single	66	65	
		Married/Partner	33	33	
		Divorce/Widow	2	2	
Level of Religiosity % (1-4)	Israeli Jewish	Secular	332	74	
		Traditional	78	17	<i>M</i> =1.36 <i>SD</i> =.67
		Religious	36	8	
	Israeli Arabs	Orthodox	4	.9	
		Secular	21	21	
		Traditional	48	48	<i>M</i> =2.16 <i>SD</i> =.81
Family economic situation (1-5)	Israeli Jewish	Religious	27	27	
		Orthodox	5	5	
		Below average	125	28	<i>M</i> =3.13 <i>SD</i> =1.10
	Israeli Arabs	Average	132	29	
		Above average	193	43	
		Below average	60	59	<i>M</i> =2.14 <i>SD</i> =1.15
Level of exposure (sum)	Israeli Jewish	Average	29	29	
		Above average	12	13	
		Low (5-10)	364	81	<i>M</i> =7.85 <i>SD</i> =2.94
	Israeli Arabs	Medium (11 - 15)	79	17	
		High (16 - 25)	7	2	
		Low (5-10)	63	65	<i>M</i> =9.66 <i>SD</i> =4.86
	Medium (11 - 15)	25	22		
	High (16 - 25)	13	13		

## Tools

**Individual resilience.** Individual resilience was measured in this study by the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC, Connor & Davidson, 2003), short version (Green et al., 2014). The short version includes 14 statements about which the subjects indicate the extent to which they agree/disagree, on a 1-7 scale, regarding the last month. For example, "I like being challenged". The scale's reliability was  $\alpha = .89$ . In order to compute individual resilience SVR (IND\_SVR) we calculated individual strength (CD-RISC) to vulnerability (distress symptoms scale) ratio.

**Community resilience.** We used the short version of the Conjoint Community Resiliency Assessment Measure (CCRAM) (Leykin, Lahad, Cohen, Goldberg, & Aharonson-Daniel, 2013). This version included ten items pertaining to identification with one's community ("I am proud to tell people where I live"), trust in municipal authorities ("I trust the decision makers in my community"), and confidence in the community's ability to withstand adversities ("People in my community know what they are supposed to do in cases of emergency"). The 5-point response scale ranged from 1=does not agree at all, to 5= totally agrees. The scale's reliability was  $\alpha = .89$ . In order to compute community resilience SVR (COM\_SVR) we calculated standardized community strength (CCRAM scale) to community vulnerability ratio (sense of danger).

**National resilience.** This scale is based on earlier studies (Eshel & Kimhi, 2015). The 6-point response scale ranged from 1= (very strongly disagree) to 6= (very strongly agree). For example, "The Prime Minister and the government show high leadership ability during this time of uncertainty", "I believe that in my country there is a good future for me and for my children". The scale's reliability was  $\alpha = .89$ . In order to compute national resilience SVR (NAT\_SVR) we calculated the standardized national strength (national resilience scale) to national vulnerability ratio (sense of danger scale).

**Sense of coherence (SOC).** SOC was measured by a scale devised by Antonovsky (1993). Responses to this 13-item instrument were rated on a 7-point scale. Thus, for instance, answers to the item "Doing the things you do

every day is", ranged from (1) "a source of pain and boredom" to (7) "a source of deep pleasure and satisfaction". The reliability of this scale was  $\alpha = .78$

**Quality of life** (my life today). This scale is based on the 'Recovery from War' Scale (Kimhi & Shamai, 2004; Kimhi & Eshel, 2009). The 9-item self-report scale describes present individual strengths in the domains of work, health, recreation, wider social contacts, achievements, family relations, daily functioning, relations with friends, and general assessment of one's quality of life. The 6-point response scale ranges from 1=not good at all to 6=very good. The scale's reliability was  $\alpha = .89$ .

**Sense of danger.** Sense of danger scale (Solomon & Prager, 1992) pertaining to post-war perceived personal, familial and national danger (e.g., "To what extent are you afraid that Israel will experience future acts of terror"). This six-item instrument was rated by a Likert-like scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). The reliability of this scale was  $\alpha = .81$

**Distress symptoms.** The Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI, Derogatis & Savitz, 2000), relating to anxiety, depression, and somatization symptoms was used. This 18-item inventory is scored on a Likert scale ranging from "1= not suffering at all", to "5= suffering to very much". The reliability of this scale was  $\alpha = .93$

**Exposure.** Exposure to war was based on an earlier version (Eshel et al., 2014). Examples of items: "To what extent did you experience adverse events during the *last war*?"; "Was your family injured during the war?". The 5-point response scale ranged from 1=not at all, to 5=very much. The sum of these ratings (range from 5 to 25) determined personal exposure score.

## Results

To examine our first hypothesis, regarding differences between Israeli Arabs and Jews on the two measures of resilience, we launched a one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) comparing the two groups (Table 2). Looking at Table 1 indicates the following: (a) According to our hypothesis, Israeli Jews reported a higher level of individual, community and national resilience scale scores and individual resilience SVR, compared with Israeli Arabs. Unlike our hypothesis, there were no significant differences between Israeli Jewish and Israeli Arab students on community and national resilience SVR. These results mainly support our first hypothesis.

**Table 2: ANOVA comparing Jewish and Arab students on individual, community and national resilience and promoting and distressing resilience factors**

Variable	Group	M	SD	F
IND-SVR	Jewish	1.152	.365	83.635***
	Arabs	.774	.421	
COM-SVR	Jewish	1.066	.375	1.469
	Arabs	1.123	.614	
NAT-SVR	Jewish	1.083	.410	.360
	Arabs	1.114	.692	
Individual resilience scale score	Jewish	3.733	.593	61.066***
	Arabs	3.150	.969	
Community resilience scale score	Jewish	3.387	.687	3.885*
	Arabs	3.213	1.200	
National resilience scale score	Jewish	3.446	.698	13.171***
	Arabs	3.114	1.200	
SOC	Jewish	4.590	.889	8.130**
	Arabs	4.313	.845	
Quality of life today	Jewish	4.897	.677	56.520***
	Arabs	4.227	1.243	
Sense of danger	Jewish	2.692	.738	4.104*
	Arabs	2.519	1.243	
Distress symptoms	Jewish	1.716	.574	95.430***
	Arabs	2.380	.781	
Level of exposure	Jewish	1.570	.589	23.682***
	Arabs	1.932	.971	

\*\*\* $p < .001$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

To further explore our first hypothesis and to compare the two types of resilience measurement, we performed a two path analysis (Arbuckle, 2009), first on the three resilience SVR as dependent and five resilience protective and suppression factor measurements (controlling for each other) as predictors and second, on the three scale scores as dependent variables (controlling for each other, see Table 3 and Figure 1) for Jewish and Arab samples. Results indicated the following: (a) SOC significantly and positively predicts individual, community and national resilience scale scores as well as individual and community SVR among Israeli Jewish students but only national resilience SVR for Arab students: The higher the SOC, the higher resilience reported. SOC predicted individual resilience better than predicting community and national resilience. (b) Quality of life today significantly and positively predicted the three measures of the resilience scale scores and resilience SVR (except NAT\_SVR for Jews) for Israeli Jewish and Arab students: The higher the quality of life, the higher the individual, community and national resilience reported. (c) Sense of danger significantly and negatively predicted COMM\_SVR, NAT\_SVR and national scale score for Jewish and Arab students: The higher the sense of danger, the lower the resilience reported. In addition, sense of danger predicted significantly and *positively* for Arab students. (d) Distress symptoms significantly and negatively predicted IND\_SVR for Jewish and Arab students and individual scale score for Jewish students: the higher the distress symptoms, the lower the resilience reported. However, distress symptoms significantly and *positively* predicted community scale score for Jewish students. (e) The level of exposure significantly and negatively predicted COMM\_SVR, NAT\_SVR and community and national scale score for Arabs students (but not Jewish): The higher the level of exposure, the lower the resilience reported.

**Table 3: Path analyses with standardized estimates of resilience protecting and suppressing factors on two measures of individual, community and national resilience for Jewish Israeli and Arab Israeli students.**

Variables	Group	IND SVR	COMM SVR	NAT SVR	Individual scale score	Community scale score	National scale score
SOC	Jewish	.222***	.078*	.037	.286***	.180**	.140*
	Arab	.105	.063	.141*	.012	-.104	.028
Quality of life today	Jewish	.165***	.197***	.043	.297***	.280***	.041
	Arab	.411***	.290**	.281***	.750***	.550***	.459***
Sense of danger	Jewish	-.024	-.757***	-.798***	.006	-.065	-.209***
	Arab	.134*	-.496***	-.548***	.107	.015	-.159*
Distress symptoms	Jewish	-.585***	.095*	-.011	-.125*	.167**	-.001
	Arab	-.449***	.136	.112	.031	.096	.007
Exposure	Jewish	-.011	-.008	.068	-.045	-.038	.107*
	Arab	-.072	-.252**	-.210**	-.117	-.253*	-.254**
% of explained variance	Jewish	71	60	62	35	12	07
	Arab	74	58	68	61	41	54

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$

Table 3 also indicates that resilience SVR has advantages over scale score: The explained variances of the three SVR measures are higher compared with scale scores and similar for Israeli Jewish and Arab students. The explained variance of the three resilience scale scores differ for Israeli Arabs (high and similar to their SVR resilience) compared with Israel Jews (only individual scale scores significant). These results support our first hypothesis and further support the validity of resilience SVR.

To examine our second hypothesis, according to which resilience protective factors will be associated significantly positively while resilience suppressing factors will be significantly negatively associated with the two measures of resilience among both groups, we calculated Pearson correlations (Table 4). Looking further at Table 4 indicates the following: First, the two protective factors significantly positively correlate with the measures of individual, community and national scale scores as well as resilience SVR across the two groups. Second, most correlations between individual, community and national scale scores and resilience SVR and the five protective and suppressing factors are similar for Israeli Jewish and Arab students. Third, there are differences between Israeli Arabs and Jews regarding three suppressing factors and the community resilience scale score (but not community SVR): significant negative correlations among Arab Israeli students (a higher sense of danger, distress symptoms and level of exposure, lower community resilience) and non-significant correlations among Israeli Jewish students. Fourth, there is a significant negative correlation between level of exposure and national resilience scale score among Israeli Arabs (but non-significant correlations among Israeli Jews): the higher the exposure, the lower the national resilience score reported.

**Table 4: Pearson correlations among two measures of individual, community and national resilience and protective and suppressing factors for Israeli Jewish ( $n=450$ ) and Arab ( $n=101$ ) students**

Variables	Ethnic group	IND SVR	COM SVR	NAT SVR	Individual scale score	Community scale score	National scale score
1. SOC	Jewish	.643***	.283***	.233***	.500***	.232***	.195***
	Arabs	.488***	.322***	.413***	.281***	.121***	.321***
2. Quality of life today	Jewish	.527***	.194***	.059	.490***	.295***	.095*
	Arabs	.771***	.555***	.582***	.774***	.607***	.689***
3. Sense of danger	Jewish	-.261***	1 --	--	-.117***	-.070	-.196***
	Arabs	-.205***	--	--	-.179***	-.191***	-.403***
4. Distress symptoms	Jewish	1--	-.274***	-.278***	-.433	-.092	-.132**
	Arabs	--	-.427***	-.477***	-.546***	-.395***	-.549***
5. Level of exposure	Jewish	-.246***	-.331***	-.282***	-.148***	-.066	-.002
	Arabs	-.626***	-.537***	-.543***	-.567***	-.524***	-.616***

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $P < .001$ , --Cells are empty due to the fact that variable appear in the calculation of SVR

### Additional analysis

In order to better understand differences between the two examined groups, we performed a one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) comparing the two groups on resilience protective and suppressing factors (Table 2). Results indicated that Israeli Jewish students reported significantly higher levels of quality of life today, lower levels of distress symptoms, and lower levels of exposure to a terror experience, compared with Israeli Arabs. However, Israeli Jews reported a *higher* level of sense of danger compared with Israeli Arabs. To better understand the difference regarding sense of danger, we performed a one way analysis of variance on the six items of this scale. Results indicated significant differences on three items; in each of them Israeli Arabs reported a lower sense of danger, compared with Israeli Jews: "To what extent do you feel that your country is in danger of destruction ( $p=.02$ )?", "To what extent are you afraid of the growing negative feelings in the world against your country ( $p=.00$ )?", "To what extent are you concerned that your country will be hit by a wave of terror ( $p=.00$ )?" There were no significant differences between the two groups on the other three sense of danger items.

### Discussion

This study had two main goals: first, to compare majority (Israeli Jews) and minority (Israeli Arabs) ethnic groups of students regarding individual, community and national resilience predictors, using two types of resilience measures (scale scores and SVR); second, to examine whether resilience protective factors (SOC and quality of life today) would be associated significantly positively with measures of resilience, and whether resilience suppressing factors (sense of danger, distress symptoms and level of exposure) would be associated significantly negatively with resilience measures, in each of the two groups. In addition, we examined differences between the two groups, regarding the above protective and suppressive factors.

Our results indicated that Israeli Jewish students reported significantly higher individual, community and national resilience (scale scores) and IND\_SVR (but not COM\_SVR and NAT\_SVR), compared with Israeli Arabs. These results are in accord with other studies indicating that minority ethnic groups experience greater difficulties in different aspects of life, compared with the majority group (Baum, Garofalo & Yali, 1999; Braun-Lewensohn, 2014; Dawson, 2009; Gevondena et al., 2016; Williams, Yu, Jackson & Anderson, 1997). The current study expanded these results to the issue of resilience and mainly supported our hypotheses: the minority group reported lower levels of resilience which predict that they will be less able to cope with future adversities. However, due to the limited number of studies examining this issue, more research is needed to support our results. Unlike our hypotheses, community and national SVR indicated no significant differences between the two examined groups. We suggest that the main reason for this is the sense of danger which serves as a denominator for calculating community and national resilience SVR: Israeli Arabs reported a lower level of sense of danger compared with Israeli Jews.

This indicated that the type of resilience measure is important and leads to somewhat different results: scale scores measured only strength while SVR measured strength vs. vulnerability. Additionally, analyzing sense of danger differences revealed that the three items showing significant differences were those items regarding danger to Israel (danger of destruction, international feelings against your country and danger of a future wave of terror).

In other words, Israeli Arabs reported less sense of danger regarding the state of Israel (but not regarding major catastrophic events, personal life and family in danger), compared with Israeli Jews. One way to explain the result that Israeli Arabs reported lower level of sense of danger is based on the following: According to Bar-Tal, Magal and Halperin (2009) "consistent and widespread survey data reveal a paradoxical picture.... Israeli Jews continuously and strongly experience insecurity and fear (p. 223)." According to these authors, security beliefs as well as intergroup conflict characterize nations, and these feeling are affected by the level of the perceived threats and the perceived ability to handle such threats. According to this explanation, Israeli Jews perceived a higher level of threats and as a result, felt more insecure compared with Israeli Arabs.

Results also indicated that protective and suppressing factors associations with individual, community and national resilience similarly characterize the two groups. These results support earlier studies regarding the role of resilience protective and suppressive factors (e.g., Eshel & Kimhi, 2016a; 2016) and support the validation of the examined factors regarding minority groups as well: SOC and quality of life significantly and positively correlated with the two types of measuring individual, community and national resilience among both groups. In addition, our results indicated that Israeli Arabs reported higher levels of exposure, higher levels of distress symptoms and lower levels of quality of life. Again, these results are in accord with studies reporting that minority groups experience much greater various difficulties (e.g., Gevondena et al., 2016).

**Limitations of the study.** Among the limitations of this study we may mention the following: First, the student sample is based on snowball sampling, using the internet and not a random sample. This may potentially bias the representativeness of our sample. Second, this study is based solely on self-report tools which may affect our result. Third, the number of participants from the two groups was unequal due to difficulties in reaching Israeli Arab students whose participation in official Israeli higher education institutes is much lower than that of Jewish students. However, our sample represents almost all Israeli higher education institutes and areas of study. More studies are needed to support our results.

**Suggested running head:** Ethnic majority and minority resilience, Israeli Jewish and Arabs students, sense of coherence, sense of danger, distress symptoms, exposure.

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**Figure 1: Path analysis: General model of research variables**

