

**PREDICTIVE ROLE OF PROBLEM FOCUSED COPING IN THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL BEING OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

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# ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE

The study aims to investigate the predictiverole of problem focused coping in the psychological well-being of students of KarachiUniversity,Pakistan.

# STUDY DESIGN

Correlationalresearchdesign.

# PLACE AND DURATION OF STUDY

Different departments of University of Karachi, Pakistan were selected by systematic random sampling during the year 2013-2014.

SUBJECTS AND METHODS

A sample of 105 university students (males 51 & females 55) with the age range of 19 to 35 years (mean age= 24.85; SD=.489) belonging to different socioeconomic status was selected from university of Karachi, Pakistan. After taking permission from HODs of concerned departments, demographic information form,Coping Styles Scale and Psychological Well-Being Scale were administered on participants in the group settings.

# RESULTS

Descriptive statistics and Multiple Regression were computed through SPSS version 14.0. Findings revealed that problemfocused copingcontributes 18% variance in psychological well-being of university

students.

# CONCLUSION

The use of problem focused coping increases the psychological well-being amonguniversitystudents.

#### KEYWORDS

Problem focused coping, psychological well-being, university Students.

# INTRODUCTION

Students are considered to be a vital part of the potential human resource of any country. University time is fascinating as well as stressful. It entails taking responsibility of one's learning. Academic stress ispositively correlated withdepression and physical illness, both of which reduce academic performance and the likelihood of degree completion1• The process

of handling stressoptimally with best available optionsiscalled coping.

Coping is a life long process of trimming down the negative feelings in response to the stressful situations.Coping stylesreferto identifiable samples of behavior usedto combat the stressors. Active coping stylesby and large are used to alleviate the incapacitated effects of stress. On the contrary, avoidant coping styles are reflectedto belesseffective and beneficial; a widevarietyofresearchesare congruent withthefact1.

Psychological well being refers to an individual's personal evaluation about his/her life.There are three components of psychological well-being; life satisfaction, positive emotions and negative emotions'. Coping resources highly predict psychological wellness; moreover they act as a shield against depression and anxiety4- '·•.A lot of studies have shown the efficacy of use of problem focused coping i.e. active coping, and adaptive coping in a higher degree of psychologicalwellbeing among students.

Earlier work on the subject has highlighted that the college students have coupled active coping strategies with better college adjustment among various racial groups'·1 leading to healthier psychological well-being among Latinos•. Additionally,it was also found that active coping predicts lower level of psychological symptoms among natives of inner city adolescents in Mexican American'0•

In spite of lot of literature available on coping and psychological well-being of adolescents, medical students and clinical population, there exists a gap on the subject in Pakistan with reference to university students.

# METHOD

## Participants

In the present study the data wascollected through systematic random sampling technique. The sample employed in the study was 105 students of University of Karachi, Pakistan. The entire sample included 51malesand 54females.The agerange of the sample was between 19 to 35years with themean of 24.85 years.

# MEASURES

Demographic Information Form

Demographic Information consisted of variables that gathered personal information, education,andvariablesrelatedto parents andfamily.

# COPINGSTYLESSCALE, URDU VERSION"

TheCoping Styles Scale (CSS) isdesigned fortheagegroupof 18 to 50years old adults.Coping



Styles Scale is self report measure and consisting of 22 items. Each item answered on a fivepointUkertscale to showtheextent to which the item is trueforthem.The scoreranges from5 "always" to 1 "not at all"". Coping Styles Scale hashigh alpha levels for problem focused coping i.e. (. 879) and emotion focused coping i.e. (. 890) respectively".

### PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING SCALE-URDU VERSION

Psychological Well-Being Scale was originally developed by Ryff (1989) and translated and adapted in the Urdu language by Ansari (201O)u ". PWLS consists of 54 items, a theoretically grounded instrument focusing on six dimensions of well-being; autonomy (AUT), environmental mastery (E-M),personal growth (P-G), positive relations with others (P-R), purpose in life (PIL), and self acceptance (S-A).Each dimension included 9 items;half of the itemsof PWLSare reversedscore. The Cronbach's alpha of PWLS-Urdu is0.85313.The

Cronbach'salphaof PWLS-Urdu on current studyis0.9".

### PROCEDURE

At the start permission was taken from the chairman/chairpersonsof different departments of University of Karachi. A brief introduction about the nature of study was given and the purpose was elaborated to them.Later,a properschedule was prepared to approach students for administration of scales with the approval of each participant. After taking their consent they were requested to fill the Demographic Information Form, Coping Styles Scale-Urdu and Psychological well-being scale-Urdu. After collecting data, results wereentered to SPSS and analyzed.

### RESULTS

TABLE-2

*Summary of findings of demographic variables*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Variables** | ***F*** | **Percentages** % |
| Gender | (mates)  51 | 48.71 |
|  | (females) 54 | 51.42 |
| Family structure | Uoint) 64 | 60.95 |
|  | (nuclear)  **41** | 39.04 |
| Parental status | (both parentsAlive) 79 | 75.23 |
|  | (single Parent)  26 | 24.76 |
| Marital status | (married) 54 | 51.42 |
|  | (unmarried) 51 | 48.57 |
| Mother Language | (Urdu) 48 | 45.71 |
|  | (Punjabi)  15 | **14.28** |
|  | (Sindhi) 7 | 6.66 |
|  | (Blochi)  6 | 5.71 |
|  | (Saraiki) 2 | 1.90 |
|  | (Pashto)  6 | 5.71 |
|  | (Others)  21 | 20 |
| Birth Order | (Isl Born) 37 | 35.23 |
|  | (Middle Born)  **44** | 41.90 |
|  | (Last Born)  24 | 22.85 |

Note: N .105

### TABLE-3A

Step wise regression of Problem Focused Coping (PFC) and Psychological Well Being

47 % university studentsarefromjoint family structure and30%from nuclear family structure. 35 % belongsto the Urdu speaking family,

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11% Punjabi, 5 %Sindhl,4% Balochi, 1 %5iraikl,4% Pashtu and 15 % others. 40 % were married and 37 % were unmarried. The mean number of siblings was 5 in the sample, in which 27 % had 1st birth order, 32 % 2nd birth order and 17 % were last born. The minimum qualification of the entire sample was intermediate level and maximum was Ph.D.Out of N= 105;58%student'sbothparentswere not alive and 19%student's both parents were alive (for more details of demographic characteristicsof the sample seetable 1&2).

Our findingsshow that there is a positive correlation between use of problem focused coping and psychological wellbeing (p <.000"\*) among university students, indicating that use of problem focused coping predicts psychological well-being among university students. Moreover problem focused coping contributes 18 % variance among psychological well-being of university students(see tables;3A,3B,3C).

### TABLE-7

Socio demographics of the sample N= 105

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Variables** | **Mean** | **Std.** |
| Age | 24.85 | 4.895 |
| Education | 3.47 | .589 |
| Duration on department | 2.588 | 1.4613 |
| No. of siblings | 5.26 | 2.500 |
| Monthly income | 3.11 | 1.095 |

Predictors: (Constant), Problem Focused Coping, Dependent Variable:Psychological WellBeing

#### TABLE-3B

Problem Focused Coping (PFC) and Psychological Well-Being

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Model** | **Sum of** | **di** | **Mean** | **F** | **Sig.** |
|  | **Squares** |  | **Square** |  |  |
| Regression | 29451.228 | 1 | 29451.228 | 22.588 | o.oo• |
| Residual | 134293.305 | 103 | 1303.818 |  |  |
| Total | 163744.533 | 104 |  |  |  |

Predictors: (Constant), Problem Focused Coping, Dependent Variable: Psychological Well-Being

#### TABLE-3C

**,M**

Coefficientsof Problem FocusedCoping &PsychologicalWell-Being

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Coefficients** | **T** | **Sig.** | **95% Confidehce Interval for B** |
|  |  | 8 [td.Erro |  |  | Lower Upper Bound Bound -  1.433 3.485 |
| 1 | (ConstanI 153.01 I 15.401 9.93 | | | .000  .000 |
| l t) PFC 2 .517 5  2.459I 4.75  1 I 3 - | | | |

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## DISCUSSION

The goal of current study was to investigate the predictive role of problem focused coping in the psychological well-being of university students.Based on the previous available literature on the constructs it was expected that "Problem Focused Coping will predictPsychological Well-Being amongUniversity Students".

Our results are consistent with the findings of aprevious study which showed that problem focused coping with stress strategy predicts higher life satisfaction and subjective well-being". A similar study in Pakistani culture also supports our findings. This study showed that individuals with high optimistic perspectives use adaptive coping strategies and avoid maladaptive coping"·. Additionally, they found that optimistic adults deal their life challenges with less subjective distress. Another studyalsostated that academic workload positively correlated with active coping strategies and negatively correlated with active distractive and avoidance coping among university students'",

A local study has shown that optimism and coping contributes 23% variance in the life satisfaction amongst university students in Pakistan". The underlying factors in the use of problem focused coping strategies might be that students who use problem focused coping strategies are morepractical in their approach while dealing with their problems. Such students tend to confront the casual

factors of stress in a rational and a logical way. A consequent

reduction in day to day stress would start to gradually reflect in their enhanced psychologicalwellbeing,

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is concluded from the findings thatuseof problem focused coping predicts the psychological well-being among university students. The findings of our study can be used to promote a better understanding and use of adaptive coping strategies and thus enhance their psychological wellbeing. Awareness and training in use of adaptive copingstrategies for university students istherefore recommended.

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