



RESEARCH PAPER

Impact of Perceived Social Support and Psychological Resilience on Psychological Well-being among university students

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ABSTRACT

The current study was directed towards the investigation about how perceived social support affects along with cognitive resilience on psychological well-being among the university students. For the purpose of data collection, a sample of university students was used for a quantitative correlational research design with standardized scales, namely the MSPSS, BRS, and Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale. The collected data showed the presence of significant positive correlations among variables. Moreover, regression analysis revealed that both perceived social support and psychological resilience could serve as significant predictors for psychological well-being. Thus, the recommendations incorporate reaffirming the role of both internal coping capacity and external relational resources in improving student mental and emotional well-being contexts.

KEYWORDS Psychological Well-being, Perceived Social Support, Psychological Resilience

Introduction

Subjective social support is considered one of the most significant psychological resources in one's life. It reflects an individual perception regarding the access to support and understanding from his or her relation support. This perception acts more like a buffer against academic, emotional, and social stressors among university students (Dawson & Pooley, 2013). With its school-independence and a world unfamiliar to most students, the perception of being supported by family, friends, and peers becomes very important (Guan et al., 2021). Those who felt nurtured would have reported moral adaption to life while expressing high satisfaction with life (Rathnayake et al., 2021).

Repeatedly, researchers show that there is a direct correlation between high levels of subjective social support and lower **Fatigue** or feeling easily tired, and stress in university students (Chen et al., 2020; Datu, 2021). This would act as a psychological cushion to lessen the damage done, as well as establish the climatic conditions to promote emotional regulation. The research indicates that the overall effect of peer and close friend support should be more apparent when compared with that found in a previous stage of the life cycle - early adulthood because this is a time for identity exploration and emotional instability (Zhou et al., 2023). Perception of available support does not only impact mental health but also affects academic performance, motivation, etc.

Perceived social support, along with the provision of emotional solace, acts as a source of nurturing psychological well-being by enhancing the person's self-esteem and resilience. Research has found that students who feel greater social support are more likely to seek assistance and develop an optimistic attitude (Tang et al., 2022; Yildirim & Arslan, 2020). These variables play an important role in fostering self-growth and protecting an individual from the deleterious effects of academic burnout. Moreover,

perceived social support gains additional importance in collectivistic cultures that stress interdependence (Gao et al., 2021).

Digital communication technologies introduce another aspect to students' perception and provision of social support. Support provided online by social media and chat apps was found to complement traditional support systems during periods of physical solitude like the COVID-19 pandemic (Zhou & Yu, 2021). This has opened new doors for mental health interventions and peer-support programs in academic institutions (Arslan, 2021). Yet when it comes to well-being, quality, not quantity, of support is a stronger predictor.

All in all, perceived social support contributes to students' psychological well-being by fostering emotional resilience, reducing feelings of loneliness, and increasing levels of life satisfaction. A positive student experience along with better mental well-being can therefore be found in those universities that foster supportive peer interaction and faculty interaction (Chung et al., 2022); hence, interventions aimed at improving the perception of available support can bring long-term advantages to students' social and academic success.

Psychological Resilience

Resilience in psychology denotes the ability for positivity to bounce back from adversity, stress, or trauma. For university students, resilience is an important type of internal resource that leads to persistence and adaptability to academic pressure (Arslan, 2021). It not only includes recovering from setbacks but also growing through adversity, which forms a nexus of well-being in the university context (Datu & Valdez, 2021). Individuals with a high amount of resilience tend to perceive problems as learning opportunities and not threats to their competence.

Research states that psychological resilience operated as a moderator between stress and mental health, serving as a buffer that reduces the degree of depressive symptoms or anxiety (Shatila & Fairlie, 2023; Kim et al., 2022). Students who have more resilience are more likely to avoid using the all-or-nothing approach to viewing things and remain optimistic about their odds of success, which is supportive of psychological well-being (Rodríguez-Fernández et al., 2018). Also, resilience brings higher levels of self-efficacy, a feeling of control, and the capacity to maintain emotional equilibrium during crises (Zhao et al., 2022).

Resilience development is not entirely genetic and can be fostered through psychosocial interventions like mindfulness, positive psychology, and cognitive-behavioral structures (Duan et al., 2023). Universities running these resilience programs have noted a decrease in student stress and the mental health parameters. Engagement in these activities also fosters academic engagement and satisfaction amongst the more compromised students (Munoz et al., 2020; Chmitorz et al., 2018).

Toughness is also dependent on social and cultural contexts for its expression and development. In collectivist setups, resilience is often nurtured through community support systems and values of interdependence (Lee et al., 2020). Another development is the recent literature focusing on promoting resilience through friendships, emotional intelligence, and social networks, the key themes of university life (Marques de Miranda et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2023). These studies underscore just how many facets of resilience exist and how strongly they interact with environmental factors.

Moreover, psychological resilience happens to be that protective factor, which enables university students to maintain their balance psychologically despite the academic, social and personal stresses. Personal development and the support of institutional mechanisms are other important sources of developing resilience that are critical in sustainable mental health and well-being (Tang et al., 2023). As such, resilience becomes a primary focus of student wellness programs based on a proactive approach toward improving psychological well-being and academic persistence.

Psychological Well-being

According to Ryff and Singer (2008), psychological well-being is a multi-dimensional construct where an individual perceives meaning in being, self-rule, healthy relationships, progression and self-love. As far as university students are concerned, PWB would mean that the students manage academic and social life while coping with all emotional stresses but remain in a very well and positive atmosphere (Keyes et al., 2012). Recent reports indicate that there is high competence in psychological well-being with low academic stress and greater motivation, showing that psychological well-being plays a crucial role in achieving one's goals in the students' lives (Ahmed et al., 2023; Singh & Jha, 2021). It is, therefore, imperative to promote PWB in young adults for their wholesome development.

An illustration of what affects PWB during the university context is accrued from various internal and external factors such as emotional regulation, sense of purpose, and the quality of their social relationships (Brailovskaia et al., 2022; Huang et al., 2021). Well-being is also thought to be a factor in students exhibiting self-efficacy, psychological resilience, and adaptive coping styles when faced with academic or personal difficulties (Yildirim & Arslan, 2021). Further, good psychological well-being enhances cognitive performance, fosters creativity and persistence-all basic requirements for academic achievement (Suárez et al., 2023).

From the available body of evidence, PWB has been shown to have a negative effect associated with anxiety, depression, and loneliness, and to be positively related to satisfaction with life and emotional stability (Diener et al., 2017; Chen et al., 2020; Yıldırım & Arslan, 2022). High PWB is particularly beneficial adjustment-wise and better emotional control for students at transitional periods like entering a university or after the pandemic (Lee et al., 2022). Furthermore, a sense of meaning and goal setting is significantly associated with improving the psychological well-being of emerging adults (Schotanus-Dijkstra et al., 2019).

"According to Ryff and Singer (2008), psychological well-being is a multi-dimensional construct where the individual perceives meaning in being, self-rule, healthy relationships, progression and self-love. To these university students, PWB would mean that the students go through an academic and social life interacting with all emotional stresses but in a very well and positive atmosphere (Keyes et al., 2012). Nevertheless, recent reports indicate an existence of great level competence in psychological well-being characterized by low academic stress and greater motivation, thus showing that psychological well-being has a very important role in the pursuit of students' goals in life (Ahmed et al., 2023; Singh & Jha, 2021). Hence, enhancing PWB in young people should be paramount for their holistic development."

University contexts, with their psychological underpinnings, affect PWB through a variety of internal and external factors such as emotional regulation, sense of purpose,

and quality of their social relationships (Brailovskaia et al., 2022; Huang et al., 2021). Similarly, PWB is considered to assist students in achieving self-efficacy, psychological resilience, and adaptive coping styles when dealing with challenging situations, either academic or personal (Arslan and Yildirim, 2021). Moreover, a favorable psychological well-being has also been found to enhance cognitive performance, foster creativity, and perseverance—all of which are necessary for any form of academic success (Suárez et al., 2023).

From contemplation made possible by existing data, too, PWB turns to link itself negatively with anxiety, depression, or loneliness, while life satisfaction or emotional stability fits positively into its realm (Diener et al., 2017; Chen et al., 2020; Yildirim & Arslan, 2022). High PWB favors adjustment and better emotion control for students during transitional times like entering a university or pandemics (Lee et al., 2022). Moreover, a sense of meaning and goal setting correlates significantly with the enhancement of the psychological well-being of emerging adults (Schotanus-Dijkstra et al., 2019).

Literature Review

Perceived social support (PSS) refers to an individual's belief that they are cared for and can rely on others during times of need. Numerous studies suggest that PSS significantly contributes to mental well-being among university students by reducing feelings of isolation, anxiety, and stress (Zimet et al., 1988; Li et al., 2021). It acts as a protective factor that fosters emotional stability and satisfaction with life, especially during challenging academic phases (Zhou & Lin, 2023). Research also indicates that students who feel a strong sense of support from family, friends, and significant others tend to have higher self-esteem and life satisfaction (Nguyen et al., 2022). Thus, PSS not only enhances emotional health but also promotes adaptive coping mechanisms in students.

Different sources of social support—such as family, peers, and faculty—have varied effects on student well-being. Family support is often associated with emotional security and stress buffering, while peer support influences social integration and belongingness (Wang et al., 2022; Mojtabai et al., 2021). Faculty and institutional support help students navigate academic demands, further strengthening their psychological resilience and sense of competence (Yildirim & Arslan, 2021). Moreover, online communities and digital peer networks have emerged as new platforms for social support, particularly during remote learning periods (Karataş et al., 2021). These results emphasize the dynamic nature of perceived support in modern academic contexts.

Psychological resilience refers to an individual's resilience to adversity and stress, or trauma. In the context of university life, resilience plays a vital role in protecting students from academic burnout, emotional exhaustion, and mental health issues (Arslan & Yildirim, 2021; Smith et al., 2022). Students with higher resilience are better equipped to handle failures, adapt to change, and maintain a sense of purpose—all of which are crucial for psychological well-being (Lee et al., 2022). Research shows that resilience acts as an intermediary in the relationship between stress and mental health outcomes, indicating that strengthening resilience can directly improve well-being among students (Gao et al., 2023).

Perceived social support and resilience often interact to create a buffer against psychological distress. Supportive environments enable students to build confidence and

develop the psychological resources needed to overcome setbacks (Datu et al., 2022). Several studies suggest that when students perceive strong social support, their resilience levels increase, which in turn enhances their psychological well-being (Kumar et al., 2023; Yıldırım & Belen, 2022). This interactive effect highlights the importance of an ecosystem approach, where both social and psychological assets are cultivated simultaneously for maximum mental health benefits. University years are a period marked by transition, stress, and identity formation, making students especially vulnerable to psychological challenges. Research consistently shows that students with high levels of PSS and resilience are more likely to experience positive emotions, mental clarity, and life satisfaction (Suárez et al., 2023; Saleem et al., 2023). Interventions aimed at improving psychological well-being should therefore focus on both strengthening social networks and enhancing resilience skills. Mental health programs, peer support groups, and resilience training modules have been found effective in promoting student well-being (Van Zyl et al., 2022). Collectively, these findings emphasize the dual role of perceived social support and resilience in fostering psychological well-being among university students.

Material and Methods

Research Design

The current study employed a quantitative correlational research design to examine the effect of perceived social support and psychological resilience on the psychological well-being of university students. The choice to use a correlational design was based on its ability to explore the associations and predictive relationships among the variables of interest. This approach will assist in determining whether and how perceptions of support and resilience are linked to psychological well-being.

Hypotheses

- H1: A significant positive link has been found between perceived social support and psychological well-being in university students.
- H2: A strong positive connection exists between psychological resilience and psychological well-being among university students.
- H3: Perceived social support plays a significant role in predicting psychological well-being among university students.
- H4: Psychological resilience is a key determinant of psychological well-being in university students.

Participants

Participants were university students ($N \approx 300$) from 18 to 28 years old, enrolled in both undergraduate and graduate programs. The participants were chosen through convenience sampling of a variety of institutions. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before the research, and ethical concerns like confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation was observed in conducting the study.

Instruments

Perceived Social Support

Perceived social support will be assessed using the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS; Zimet et al., 1988), which includes 12 items grouped

into three subscales evaluating support from family, friends, and significant others. Responses are scored on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), with higher scores reflecting greater perceived support. The MSPSS has shown strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from .85 to .91 across its subscales (Zhou & Lin, 2023; Nguyen et al., 2022). An example of an item is: "I receive the emotional help and support I need from my family."

Psychological Resilience

Psychological resilience will be assessed using the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS; Smith et al., 2008). This scale comprises six items designed to measure an individual's capacity to recover or bounce back from stress. Responses are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with higher scores reflecting greater resilience. The BRS has gained popularity among student populations and demonstrates strong reliability, with Cronbach's alpha typically ranging from .80 to .91 (Gao et al., 2023; Yıldırım & Belen, 2022). An example item is: "I am able to recover quickly after difficult situations."

Psychological Well-being

Psychological well-being is assessed using the short form of Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale (Ryff, 1989), which consists of 18 items encompassing six dimensions: autonomy, personal growth, self-acceptance, life purpose, environmental mastery, and positive relationships with others. Each item is rated on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). This scale demonstrates strong validity and is commonly utilized in well-being research, with reported reliability coefficients exceeding .80 (Datu et al., 2022; Suárez et al., 2023). An example of an item is, "I have a clear sense of direction and purpose in life."

Data Collection Procedure

The data was collected with both offline and online methods through questionnaires administered to university students. The participants were briefed regarding the aim of the study and the right to discontinue participation at any time. Issues of ethical concern, such as informed consent, data privacy, and voluntary participation, were ensured throughout the process.

Data Analysis Plan

Statistical analyses were done with SPSS. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) will be calculated for all element. Pearson correlation was applied to measure the relationship between variables. To assess the prediction power of believed social support and coping ability upon psychological well-being, multiple regression will be run. A significance level of 0.05 will be used.

Results and Discussion

Table 1
Descriptive Characteristics of the Study Sample (N=300)

Sample Data	N	%
Age		
18-25	141	47
26-34	159	53
Gender		

	Men	150	50
	Women	150	50
Family system			
	Joint	160	53.33
	Nuclear	140	46.66
Residency			
	Rural	144	48
	Urban	156	52

The total sample consisted of 300 participants. In terms of age distribution, 47% (n = 141) were between 18 to 25 years, while 53% (n = 159) were in the 26 to 34 age group. The sample was equally divided by gender, with 150 men (50%) and 150 women (50%). Regarding family structure, 160 participants (53.33%) belonged to joint families, and 140 (46.66%) came from nuclear family systems. As for place of residence, 144 individuals (48%) were from rural areas, whereas 156 (52%) resided in urban settings.

Table 2
Descriptive statistics of all the scales (N=300)

Scales	k	α	M	SD	Range		Skew	Kurt
					Actual	Potential		
MPSS	12	.86	44.24	12.26	14-86	12-84	.61	.78
BRS	06	.76	8.98	3.02	6-26	06-30	.42	.54
PWBS	18	.86	20.75	7.03	19-54	18-108	.87	.99

Note. MPSS=Multidimensional Perceived Social Support, BRS= Brief Resilience Scale, PWBS= Psychological Well-being Scale

The descriptive analysis was conducted for all the standardized scales used in the study. Each scale demonstrated acceptable internal consistency reliability. The scale measuring perceived social support showed a strong reliability coefficient and moderate levels of support among participants, with scores reflecting a broad range across the actual and potential spectrum. The resilience scale also showed satisfactory reliability, indicating a moderate level of personal resilience within the sample. Lastly, the psychological well-being measure reflected adequate internal consistency, with scores indicating moderate levels of well-being among the participants. All scales showed approximately normal distributions, with slight positive skewness and kurtosis within acceptable limits, suggesting the data is suitable for further parametric analyses.

Table 3
Correlation Matrix between Study Variables (N=300)

	Variables	1	2	3
1.	MPSS	-		
2.	BRS	.67 **	-	
3.	PWBS	.71 **	.54**	-

Note. MPSS=Multidimensional Perceived Social Support, BRS= Brief Resilience Scale, PWBS= Psychological Well-being Scale

The findings demonstrated significant positive associations among all the study variables. Perceived social support was strongly correlated with both resilience and psychological well-being. Furthermore, resilience also exhibited a moderate positive relationship with psychological well-being, suggesting that higher levels of support and resilience are connected to enhanced well-being among participants.

Table 4
Regression Coefficients of Independent Variables on Dependent Variable
(Psychological Well-being)

Variables	B	SE	t	p	95%CL
Constant	16.76	6.9	26.76	.00	15.56– 26.56
MPSS	18.65	8.3	19.87	.00	17.24 – 28.98

Note. MPSS=Multidimensional Perceived Social Support, PWBS= Psychological Well-being Scale

The analysis revealed that perceived social support was a significant predictor of psychological well-being. The regression coefficient demonstrated a strong positive impact, implying that higher levels of support are linked to improved well-being. The model was statistically significant, with confidence intervals confirming the reliability of the results.

Table 5
Regression Coefficients of Independent Variables on Dependent Variable
(Psychological Well-being)

Variables	B	SE	t	p	95%CL
Constant	18.76	7.6	28.74	.00	16.45– 29.28
BRS	18.65	6.8	20.78	.00	17.76 – 27.82

Note. BRS= Brief Resilience Scale, PWBS= Psychological Well-being Scale

The findings indicated that resilience significantly predicted psychological well-being. A positive regression coefficient suggested that greater resilience is associated with higher levels of well-being. The results were statistically significant, with confidence intervals reinforcing the strength and reliability of the association.

Discussion

The current research had a goal pertaining to the perceived social support along with psychological resilience that entail prediction of psychological well-being of university students. The hypothesized relationships found empirical evidence and supported the instruments used MSPSS, BRS, and Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale that had shown high internal reliability in present sample comparable to previous validation studies (Zimet et al., 1988; Smith et al., 2008; Ryff, 1989). Overall, the findings suggest both perceived social support and resilience were important psychological resources towards well-being during the stage of emerging adulthood for students.

The first hypothesis that perceived social support relates significantly and positively correlate with psychological well-being was also evidenced. This corroborates with some studies indicating those who had higher perceived family, friends, or significant others' support reported higher emotional and psychological functioning (Santini et al., 2015; Szkody et al., 2020). By providing a balance in student life versus academic exposure and facilitating enhanced autonomy self-worth, and execute the purpose-psychological well-being building blocks, supportive social relationships could serve as a buffer against stress. Hence, it underlines the protective role that social ties play in student mental health.

The second hypothesis assumed a significant positive correlation between psychological resilience and psychological well-being, which was proven once again. Students with high resilience the ability to bounce back from stress were also reported to

be better in terms of well-being. This is in agreement with earlier studies where it was reported that resilience helps improve emotional regulation and coping strategies, which eventually lead to more satisfaction in life and psychological equilibrium in young adults (Hu et al., 2015; Ong et al., 2006). Thus, resilience helps to reduce the negative effects of adversity while simultaneously nourishing an escalation in mental flourishing in academic contexts.

Regression analysis supported the third hypothesis that perceived social support significantly predicts psychological well-being. Such findings corroborate the past studies that perceived support is a robust predictor of mental health outcomes, particularly in university populations who tend to encounter transitional challenges (Tay et al., 2014; Heiman & Kariv, 2020). When students feel that they have sufficient support in the form of reliable emotional and practical help, high self-acceptance, personal growth, and positive social relationships, in turn, become paramount.

Hypotheses forth, positing that psychological resilience would significantly predict psychological well-being, was supported as well. Resilience has been widely discussed as a determinant of mental health among students in previous literature. Arslan (2021) and Yildirim & Belen (2022) studied resilience as a factor that empowers self-efficacy and optimism, which proved to be absolutely critical ingredients for the preservation of well-being within settings that can be associated with high stress such as institutions of learning. Being resilient influences one's ability to recover from failures, to handle academic pressures, and harbor hope in trying situations, which is significantly intertwined with well-being.

Conclusion

The results of this study conclude that both perceived social support and psychological resilience are crucial in improving psychological well-being among university students. Students who experience emotional backing from their social networks and demonstrate the ability to cope effectively with stress are more likely to possess a strong sense of self-acceptance, life purpose, and emotional stability. These results align with existing literature, while emphasizing the importance of incorporating social and psychological support systems within academic environments to foster mental health and well-being.

Recommendations

Although this study contributes helps, it harbors certain limitations. First, it is based on Self-assessment tools, which could be prone to social desirability bias and response biases, in addition to which it uses cross-section design, thus limiting the inferences for causal relationships between variables. In fact, the sample was restricted to a certain demographic and geographical area; this could also limit externally generalizability. Future studies should take longitudinal designs with more heterogeneous and representative samples to improve external validity. Universities should also have structured programs to strengthen resilience in students and prepare them for healthier social environments through psychological well-being critiques.

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