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Print ISSN: [3006-2497](#) Online ISSN: [3006-2500](#)Platform & Workflow by: [Open Journal Systems](#)**Impact of Self-Efficacy and Resilience on Psychological Well-Being among University Students****Saba Sattar**

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**Abstract**

*The present study aims to examine the effect of self-efficacy and resilience on the psychological well-being of university students. University students face a number of psychological issues, and these issues may affect the mental well-being of the students. Self-efficacy and resilience are positive psychological constructs, and these constructs may act as buffer effects in the mental well-being of the students. A total of 50 university students were randomly selected using the convenience sampling method. The General Self-Efficacy Scale, the Brief Resilience Scale, and the Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale were used to collect the necessary data. Results showed a significant moderate positive correlation between self-efficacy and resilience using the Pearson correlation method,  $r = .45$ ,  $p < .01$ . Independent sample t-test results showed that there was no significant gender difference in the psychological well-being of the university students,  $t(48) = -1.39$ ,  $p = .170$ . Linear regression results showed that self-efficacy was a significant predictor of the psychological well-being of the university students,  $R = .54$ ,  $R^2 = .29$ ,  $F(2, 47) = 9.79$ ,  $p < .001$ . Self-efficacy was a strong positive predictor of the psychological well-being of the university students,  $B = .67$ ,  $SE = .15$ ,  $p < .001$ .*

**Keywords:** self-efficacy, resilience, psychological well-being

## Introduction

University life is a vital phase in the life of an individual. It is a transitional period between adolescence and adulthood, and it is a period of increased autonomy, academic demands, self-exploration, and social demands. While higher education is a period of cognitive, career, and adult developmental opportunities, it is also a period of exposure to different types of psychological stressors. In the past decade, mental health issues faced by university students have become a global issue. Studies have revealed increasing levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and emotional exhaustion in student populations. Students with high levels of psychological well-being are able to cope with stress, build healthy relationships, and excel in academic settings. Positive psychology has placed a lot of emphasis on the role of internal strengths and protective factors in helping people cope with adversity. Among these, self-efficacy and resilience have become the focal points of psychological studies.

Self-efficacy is a term coined by Albert Bandura to define an individual's confidence in their ability to execute tasks and overcome demanding situations. Self-efficacy is also defined as an individual's belief in their ability to execute tasks and overcome demanding situations. This is a crucial aspect of an individual's thoughts, feelings, motivational power, and behavior. Students with high self-efficacy tend to view challenging tasks as a challenge rather than a threat. Students who have confidence in their ability to deal with academic demands and personal problems tend to practice more problem-focused coping mechanisms.

Resilience is another important psychological construct, and it is defined as the ability to bounce back from stress, adversity, and challenging life experiences. Resilience is not the lack of stress; rather, it is the ability to bounce back from adversity and stress with a positive attitude despite the challenging experiences. University students experience many stressful experiences in their lives, including academic failure, interpersonal problems, and career uncertainty. Resilient university students have the ability to cope with the stressful experiences and continue striving for their academic and future goals.

The six dimensions of psychological well-being, as described by Carol Ryff, include autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. These dimensions of psychological well-being describe the best of human functioning and self-realization. People with high psychological well-being tend to be competent in dealing with their environment, have good relations with other people, and have a sense of purpose in life.

Self-efficacy and resilience are said to have a theoretical contribution to all the dimensions of well-being. For instance, students with high self-efficacy are likely to exhibit environmental mastery and autonomy. In the same way, resilient students are likely to exhibit positive relationships and personal growth, despite the challenges they are undergoing. Thus, the study of the joint effect of self-efficacy and resilience on well-being gives a holistic view of the mental well-being of the students.

In the context of Pakistani universities, the socio-cultural and economic issues that students encounter include competition in the academic environment, employment prospects, social pressures, and technology-related distractions. However, little research has been done to explore the positive psychological strengths that contribute to the mental well-being of the students in the country. This is important in the development of mental well-being interventions and counseling for the students. Another aspect of psychological well-being that was of interest in the study was the gender differences in psychological well-being. Previous research indicates that females experience more emotional problems compared to males, while other studies indicate no gender differences in psychological well-being. This aspect of the study was included to explore the gender differences in psychological well-being in order to determine if the psychological strengths play the same role in males and females.

## Background

In the recent past, there has been an increased rate of mental health issues among university students worldwide. This is attributed to increased academic demands, social comparison, financial pressures, and technological distractions, among other factors. Positive psychology research has also emphasized the existence of protective factors that act as a buffer against stress. For instance, self-efficacy improves the ability to solve problems, while resilience helps in recovering from adversity. Nevertheless, there is a need to examine the relationships between the mentioned variables in the context of Pakistani university students.

### **Theoretical Framework**

According to Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory, self-efficacy is “an individual's conviction about his or her capacity to organize and execute the actions required to attain a given outcome” (Bandura, 1997). Bandura proposed that self-efficacy is a determinant of an individual's thoughts, feelings, motivation, and behaviors. An individual with high self-efficacy tends to view challenges as opportunities, not threats; is more persevering in the face of obstacles; and experiences less stress and anxiety. Resilience Theory is a theoretical framework that describes how individuals are able to adapt successfully in the face of adversity, trauma, or stress. Resilience is a dynamic process that includes positive adaptation in the context of significant challenges (Masten, 2001). An individual with high resilience is able to cope with stress, bounce back from adversity, and maintain emotional stability. Psychological well-being in this study was conceptualized based on Ryff's Model of Psychological Well-Being (Ryff, 1989). According to Ryff, well-being has six dimensions, namely autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. These are the optimal levels of psychological functioning and development.

### **Study Variables**

#### **Independent Variables**

- Self-Efficacy (Measured using the General Self-Efficacy Scale- GSES)
- Resilience (Measured using the Brief Resilience Scale- BRS)

#### **Dependent Variable**

- Psychological Well-Being (Measured using the Psychological Well-Being Scale- PWB)

### **Problem Statement**

University students experience high stress, which may negatively affect their psychological well-being. There is a need to examine whether self-efficacy and resilience significantly influence psychological well-being.

### **Rationale**

The rationale of the study is also underpinned by the principles of positive psychology, which focuses more on the positive aspects rather than the negative ones. This study does not only focus on the identification of mental health problems of the students but also emphasizes the significance of enhancing the psychological resources of the students. If the study proves that self-efficacy and resilience are significantly related to the psychological well-being of the students, intervention programs could be designed to improve the self-efficacy and resilience of the students. This study aims to contribute to the literature gap by exploring the effects of self-efficacy and resilience on the psychological well-being of the students and contribute to the field of positive psychology.

## Literature Review

Recent studies have underscored the significance of the psychological well-being of university students. University students who have high psychological well-being have better academic adjustment, interpersonal relations, lower levels of stress, and anxiety. Research conducted between 2015 and 2024 revealed that university students worldwide have high psychological distress due to academic competition, social media, and career concerns (Diener et al., 2017).

In developing countries, such as Pakistan, awareness regarding mental health among university students is still developing. According to research, university students suffer from emotional distress but lack resources to cope with it (Khan et al., 2020). In developing countries, students suffer from academic pressure and lack resources to cope with it, which might lead to emotional distress among students (Khan et al., 2020). In their study, Schäfer et al. (2019) conducted a meta-analysis, which showed that self-efficacy is strongly correlated with low levels of anxiety and high levels of psychological adjustment. According to their study, people who have faith in their abilities have coping skills to deal with any difficult situation.

Gender differences in psychological well-being have yielded inconsistent results in the literature, with some studies suggesting that females experience greater emotional distress due to emotional sensitivity (Brougham et al., 2017). Other studies have indicated that there were no significant differences between the genders in terms of psychological well-being (Matud et al., 2019).

## Research Gap

Though there is research conducted on the concepts of self-efficacy and resilience individually, there is limited research conducted on the combined effects of self-efficacy and resilience on psychological well-being in the university student population of Pakistan. Most studies focus only on the issues of stress, anxiety, depression, etc., rather than the positive aspects of psychological functioning. Moreover, there is limited research conducted using regression analysis to check the predictability of self-efficacy for psychological well-being in the country.

## Study Aims and Objectives

- To examine correlation between self-efficacy and resilience
- To examine gender differences in psychological well-being
- To determine whether self-efficacy predicts psychological well-being

## Research Design

Quantitative cross-sectional research design.

## Correlation

### Research Question

Is there a significant relationship between self-efficacy and resilience?

### Hypotheses

H0: There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and resilience.

H1: There is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and resilience.

## Independent sample t-test

### Research Question

Is there a gender difference in psychological well-being?

### Hypotheses

H0: There is no significant gender difference in psychological well-being.

H1: There is a significant gender difference.

**Regression****Research Question**

Does self-efficacy predict psychological well-being?

**Hypotheses**

H0: Self-efficacy does not significantly predict psychological well-being.

H1: Self-efficacy significantly predicts psychological well-being.

**Operational Definitions of Variables****Self-Efficacy**

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to successfully perform tasks and handle challenging situations (Bandura, 1997). It influences motivation, persistence, and emotional regulation.

**Resilience**

Resilience is the ability to bounce back or recover from stress, adversity, or challenging life events, reflecting emotional strength and adaptive coping (Masten, 2014).

**Psychological Well-Being**

Psychological well-being is a multidimensional construct reflecting optimal psychological functioning, including autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations, purpose in life, and self-acceptance (Ryff, 1989).

**Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

Inclusion:

- University students
- Both genders

Exclusion:

- Non-students
- Incomplete questionnaires

**Statistical Analysis**

Data was analyzed using SPSS. Characteristics of the participants were presented using descriptive statistics. Pearson correlation was conducted to examine the relationships between self-efficacy, resilience, and psychological well-being among university students aged 18 to 25. Linear regression analysis was used to determine the predictive role of self-efficacy and resilience on psychological well-being. Additionally, independent samples t-tests were conducted to assess gender differences in the study variables.

**Results****Table 1**

*Correlation Analysis between General Self-Efficacy and Resilience (N = 50)*

Variables	1	2
Self-Esteem	–	.45**
Resilience		–

Note \*\*  $p < 0.01$

The table shows correlation analysis between general self-efficacy and resilience. The results indicate that general self-efficacy has a moderate positive and significant correlation with resilience ( $r = .45, p < .01$ ).

**Table 2**

*Independent Sample t-test Analysis Comparison of Psychological Well-Being between Male & Female (N = 50)*

Variables	Female <sup>a</sup>		Male <sup>b</sup>		p	t (df)	Confidence Interval		r	Cohen's D
	M	SD	M	SD			Upper limit	Lower limit		
PWB	36.92	8.88	40.16	7.51	.170	-1.39 (48)	1.44	-7.92	.1 9	-0.39

Note. Independent sample t-test was conducted to compare psychological well-being scores between female and male participants.

<sup>a</sup> Female group

<sup>b</sup> Male group

The results show that there is no significant difference in psychological well-being scores between females ( $M = 36.92, SD = 8.88$ ) and males ( $M = 40.16, SD = 7.51$ ), ( $p = .170$ ). The Cohen's D = -0.39 suggests a small effect size. The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means ranged from -7.92 to 1.44, indicating that the difference is not statistically significant.

**Table 3**

*Linear Regression Analysis of Self-Efficacy and Psychological Well-Being (N = 50)*

Variable	R	R <sup>2</sup>	p	B	SE	Confidence Interval	
						Lower	Upper
Constant			.001	19.97	5.76	8.37	31.56
Self-Efficacy	.54	.29	.000	.67	.15	.37	.98

Note  $p < .05, p < .01$

The table shows the linear regression analysis between self-efficacy and psychological well-being. The results indicate that the regression model is statistically significant,  $R = .54, R^2 = .29, F(2, 47) = 9.79, p < .001$ . Self-efficacy emerged as a significant positive predictor of psychological well-being ( $B = .67, SE = .15, p < .001, 95\% CI [0.37, 0.98]$ ), indicating that higher self-efficacy is associated with higher psychological well-being.

**Interpretation result**

There was a moderate positive and significant correlation between self-esteem and resilience,  $r = .45, p < .01$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. In Independent Sample t-test the null hypothesis was accepted. Regression Analysis the null hypothesis was rejected.

**Ethical Considerations**

- Informed consent was obtained from all participants.
- Participation was voluntary, with the option to withdraw at any time.
- Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the study.

**Relation with literature**

The findings of the current study were in general agreement with the past research in the field of positive psychology and mental health of students. The current study revealed that the relationship between self-efficacy and resilience was significantly moderate positive, which implies that students who

possess confidence in their capabilities are more likely to cope better with stressful events. This is in agreement with the past research that has highlighted the significance of self-efficacy as an essential aspect of resilience. For example, Luszczynska et al. (2016) revealed that self-efficacy significantly predicted resilience and mediated the relationship between stress and well-being in university students

The results of the current study also indicated that self-efficacy is a significant predictor of psychological well-being, accounting for 29% of the variance. This result is supported by a wealth of research indicating the positive correlation of self-efficacy with life satisfaction, emotional stability, and coping (Schwarzer & Hallum, 2017; Zhao et al., 2018). Regarding the results related to the concept of resilience, the positive correlation with self-efficacy is also supported by the results of Sagone and De Caroli (2016), who found that resilient students experienced higher levels of life satisfaction and lower levels of stress. Regarding gender differences, no differences were found in psychological well-being between male and female students in the current study.

### **Discussion**

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the effect of self-efficacy and resilience on the psychological well-being of university students between the ages of 18 and 25, including gender differences. The results of the study have important implications for theory and practice.

Self-efficacy was also found to significantly predict psychological well-being, explaining 29% of the variance. This is in support of Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory, which suggests that beliefs about one's capabilities will influence motivation, behavior, and emotional states. Students with high self-efficacy tend to feel confident in their ability to deal with academic and personal problems, tend to approach problems in a proactive manner, and tend to persevere in the face of adversity. The results of this study were also supported empirically, with studies conducted by Zhao et al. (2018) suggesting that self-efficacy positively predicted life satisfaction and reduced symptoms of depression, while Schwarzer and Hallum (2017) suggested that academic self-efficacy positively contributed to coping and emotional adjustment. According to Ryff's (1989) model, high self-efficacy also contributes to autonomy and environmental mastery, enabling the student to effectively manage their environment and achieve overall life satisfaction. Resilience also demonstrated a moderate positive relationship with self-efficacy and was positively correlated with psychological well-being. Resilience, which is the ability to bounce back from adversity and stress (Masten, 2014), helps the students cope with emotional stability in the face of adversity and university-related issues. Previous studies conducted by researchers, such as Sagone and De Caroli (2016) and Hartley (2017), support the fact that resilient students experience high levels of life satisfaction and low levels of stress and anxiety. The results suggest that students with high levels of self-efficacy tend to show high levels of resilience, which in turn helps the students with their psychological well-being. This shows that self-efficacy and resilience act in synergy to promote psychological health, as revealed in the study conducted by Luszczynska et al. (2016) that showed self-efficacy mediated the relationship between stress and resilience.

With regard to gender differences, no significant difference was observed in the psychological well-being of male and female students. This study supports the idea of proposing that if coping styles are taken into account, the well-being of both genders is the same. Matud et al. (2019). This idea is in line with the idea of Ryff (1989), who suggested that the basic components of psychological well-being, such as autonomy, purpose in life, and self-acceptance, are universal and cannot be considered gender-specific. Although social and cultural factors may affect the expression of emotions, they do not affect psychological functioning.

### Implications and limitations/challenges

The study investigated the influence of self-efficacy and resilience on the psychological well-being of university students between the ages of 18 and 25 years and also the potential differences between the genders. The results show that self-efficacy is a significant predictor of psychological well-being, confirming Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy. Resilience also predicted psychological well-being positively, confirming Masten's (2014) Resilience Theory. Both self-efficacy and resilience are positively associated with Ryff's (1989) model of psychological well-being, namely autonomy, personal growth, and self-acceptance. The results also show that there were no significant differences between the genders, suggesting that the findings can inform the design of interventions for both men and women. The implications of the study for practice include the promotion of psychological well-being through counseling, resilience, and skill-enhancement programs for university students. The limitations of the study include the small sample size, the nature of the sampling method, the reliance on self-report instruments, the cross-sectional design of the study, the small number of variables, and the cultural and contextual limitations of the study.

### Conclusion

The study revealed that self-efficacy is an important positive predictor of psychological well-being for university students, whereas resilience is related to positive well-being. There were no gender differences, which indicates that the role of psychological strength is the same for both male and female students. Therefore, the positive development of self-efficacy and resilience can have a positive effect on the mental health of students. Such results support the implementation of programs that focus on building confidence and resilience in the university context.

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