



# RESILIENCE AND PERCEIVED SOCIAL SUPPORT AS PREDICTORS OF EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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**Abstract:** The current study aims to explore the association between resilience, perceived social support, and emotional well-being among college students. Emotional well-being is considered to be a significant factor in the psychological well-being of college students, as they often experience academic, social, and personal challenges during their college life. Resilience and perceived social support are psychological factors that may greatly contribute to the psychological well-being of college students. Resilience is defined as the ability to cope effectively with challenges and recover from stressful events, whereas perceived social support is defined as the psychological resources that support emotional and interpersonal stability. The current study aims to examine the predictive role of resilience and perceived social support on emotional well-being among college students. A total of 360 college students were selected from different academic disciplines. Standardized psychological scales were used to measure resilience, perceived social support, and emotional well-being. The findings of the current study are expected to contribute to the better understanding of psychological factors affecting emotional well-being among college students.

**Index Terms** - Resilience, Perceived Social Support, Emotional Well-Being, College Students

## 1. Introduction:

College life is considered an important stage of human development during which individuals face various academic, social, and emotional changes. At this stage of transition, individuals face various stressors related to academic performance, career goals, interpersonal relationships, and self-expectations. Such stressors may affect the emotional well-being of individuals. Emotional well-being is defined as an individual's ability to experience positive emotions, maintain psychological balance, and effectively cope with stress and adverse events (Diener, 2009; Seligman, 2011). Individuals with a higher level of emotional well-being may exhibit positive coping skills, academic success, and positive interpersonal relationships. Resilience is considered an important psychological factor that helps individuals cope with adverse events and stressful situations. It is defined as an ability to cope with challenging situations and maintain psychological balance even during adverse events (Masten, 2001). Individuals with a higher level of resilience may effectively cope with academic and other stressors. Perceived social support is considered an important factor that affects an individual's emotional and psychological well-being. It is defined as an individual's perception of receiving care and support from

family members, friends, and other important individuals (Cobb, 1976). Perceived social support is considered an important protective factor that helps individuals cope with stress and maintain psychological stability. Previous research has indicated that resilience and perceived social support play an essential role in improving emotional well-being. It is thus crucial to investigate the association of all these constructs among college students to comprehend the psychological aspects that impact well-being among students.

## **2. Related Theories:**

### **2.1 Resilience Theory – Ann S. Masten (2001):**

Resilience Theory was well described by Ann S. Masten (2001). According to Masten, resilience is the ability of individuals to adapt successfully in the face of adversity, stress, and hard life circumstances. Resilience assists individuals in coping with challenges in life and adapting well in their daily activities. In the context of college students, resilience assists in coping with academic pressures, social pressures, and individual problems. Resilient college students are capable of developing effective coping skills and emotional stability in the face of stressful situations. Resilience is vital in the maintenance of psychological health and emotional well-being. In the current study, resilience is considered an important psychological strength for college students.

### **2.2 Social Support Theory – Cobb (1976):**

The concept of Social Support Theory was first introduced by Cobb (1976). Social support, as per Cobb, is information received by individuals, which helps them believe that they are being loved and cared for and are part of a supportive social network. Social support may be emotional, informational, or instrumental in nature. Support received from family, friends, and loved ones is of prime importance in coping with psychological issues and handling stressful situations. Perceived support from the social environment helps individuals feel a sense of belonging and being emotionally supported. Perceived social support helps in reducing stress and being emotionally healthy among college students. College students who receive support from their family and friends tend to be more emotionally stable and happier.

### **2.3 Well-Being Theory – Martin Seligman (2011):**

The concept of well-being was also comprehensively defined by Martin Seligman (2011) through the PERMA Model of Well-Being, whereby well-being is composed of five major components: Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment. Emotional well-being is mainly the experience of positive emotions and satisfaction with life. A person with high emotional well-being experiences happiness, optimism, and emotional balance. A person with high emotional well-being is also able to deal effectively with the demands of life. Emotional well-being is of vital importance to college students, especially in terms of academic success, relationships, and development. Resilience and support from other people significantly contribute to the maintenance of emotional well-being among college students.

### **3. Review of Literature:**

#### **3.1 Studies Related to Emotional Well-Being:**

##### **3.1.1 Indian Study:**

R. K. Verma and S. Kumar (2019) conducted research to investigate emotional well-being in Indian college students. The results showed that students who are exposed to a supportive social environment and positive coping strategies are likely to experience higher levels of emotional well-being. The results showed that emotional well-being is an important factor in students' psychological and academic well-being.

##### **3.1.2 International Study:**

Ed Diener (2009) investigated the construct of emotional well-being and its significance in relation to overall psychological well-being of individuals. The study found that emotional well-being is associated with positive emotional experiences, life satisfaction, and effective coping with stress. Individuals with high emotional well-being are found to have good mental health and life satisfaction.

#### **3.2 Studies Related to Resilience:**

##### **3.2.1 Indian Study:**

S. R. Singh and A. Mishra (2020) designed a study with Indian college students to explore the relationship between resilience and psychological well-being. The study concluded that resilience plays a crucial role in maintaining emotional well-being and helps students cope with academic and personal pressures. It was observed that students with high levels of resilience were better at coping and emotional adjustment.

##### **3.2.2 International Study:**

Ann S. Masten (2014) studied the aspect of resilience among young adults and focused on the fact that resilience plays an important role in adapting positively to stressful life conditions. The study indicated that students with high levels of resilience are more capable of coping with academic stress and remain emotionally stable during critical situations. It has been suggested that resilience helps in the development of emotional well-being.

#### **3.3 Studies Related to Perceived Social Support:**

##### **3.3.1 Indian Study:**

R. Sharma and P. Gupta (2021) studied the concept of perceived social support among college students in India. The research showed that students who have high perceived social support tend to have high levels of emotional stability and psychological well-being. The importance of social support was emphasized as it helps students deal with difficulties and challenges.

##### **3.3.2 International Study:**

Gregory D. Zimet and his colleagues (1998) developed the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support and examined the role of perceived social support on psychological well-being. Their study found that individuals who perceive support from their families, friends, and other significant individuals have higher levels of emotional well-being and lower levels of psychological distress. It highlights the significance of social support as a protective factor for mental health.

#### 4. Research Gap:

Previous research works have explored resilience, social support, and emotional well-being as separate constructs among various groups of people. There have been various research works that have focused specifically on resilience as a psychological protective factor and social support in relation to mental well-being and emotional well-being. There is a scarcity of research works that have explored the combined effect of resilience and social support in relation to emotional well-being among college students. There is also a scarcity of research works that have explored how psychological factors contribute to emotional well-being in relation to higher education. Hence, the current study aims to fill in the gap by examining the predictive role of resilience and social support in relation to emotional well-being among college students.

#### 5. Need and Significance of the Study:

Emotional well-being among college students has been an important concern in recent years because of the rising academic, social, and personal demands on students. It is important to understand the psychological factors influencing emotional well-being, and such understanding would be crucial for promoting the mental health and development of students. Resilience and social support are considered important factors which might enable students to adapt effectively to stressful situations and maintain their emotional well-being. This study assumes importance because the current study aims to investigate the role of resilience and social support in predicting emotional well-being among college students. The results of the current study might be useful for the development of psychological knowledge because the results would offer insights into the factors influencing the emotional well-being of students. Thus, the researcher initiated the present investigation on “Resilience and Perceived Social Support as Predictors of Emotional Well-Being among College Students.”

#### 6. Objectives of the study:

1. To study the level of resilience among college students.
2. To study the level of perceived social support among college students.
3. To study the level of emotional well-being among college students.
4. To find out whether there is any significant difference among college students based on resilience, perceived social support, and emotional well-being with respect to their
  - Gender
  - Discipline of study
5. To examine the relationship between resilience, perceived social support, and emotional well-being among college students.

#### 7. Hypothesis of the study:

1. There will be a significant difference among college students based on resilience, perceived social support, and emotional well-being with respect to their
  - Gender
  - Discipline of study
2. There is a significant relationship between
  - Resilience and Emotional Well-Being
  - Perceived Social Support and Emotional Well-Being
  - Resilience and Perceived Social Support

## 8. Methodology:

### 8.1 Research Method:

The researcher has used a Normative survey method in the current study.

### 8.2 Sample:

The participants of the present study were from various academic disciplines of college students. For this study, a sample of 360 participants was selected from various streams of study. To collect data from the participants of this study, a stratified random sampling technique was employed by grouping participants based on their academic disciplines. Participants were made aware of the purpose of this study and were asked to participate voluntarily. Informed consent from all participants was obtained prior to initiating the data collection procedure.

### 8.3 Tools Used in the Study:

The instruments used in the present investigation are discussed below.

- **WHO-5 Well-Being Index** developed by the World Health Organization (1998).
- **Brief Resilience Scale (BRS)** developed by Bruce W. Smith, Jeanne Dalen, Kathryn Wiggins, Erin Tooley, Paulette Christopher and Jennifer Bernard (2008).
- **Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)** developed by Gregory D. Zimet, Nancy W. Dahlem, Sara G. Zimet and Gordon K. Farley (1988).

### 8.4 Scoring Procedure:

WHO-5 Well-Being Index is an instrument developed by the World Health Organization (1998) to measure emotional well-being and positive moods. It is a 5-item measure of positive feelings, relaxation, energy, and interest in doing things during the last two weeks. It is measured on a 6-point Likert scale from 0 "At no time" to 5 "All of the time." The total score was obtained by summing the responses to all five items. The maximum possible score was 25 and the minimum possible score was 0, with higher scores indicating better emotional well-being.

The Brief Resilience Scale (BRS), which was created by Smith et al. (2008), is a tool for assessing an individual's level of resilience in dealing with stressful and adverse situations. The BRS is a 6-item scale that measures an individual's capacity to bounce back from adverse situations. The items are measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The negative items (items 2, 4, and 6) were scored reversely. The maximum possible score was 30 and the minimum score was 6, with higher scores indicating greater resilience.

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) is a tool that measures perceived social support from various sources. It was developed by Zimet et al. (1988). It is a 12-item scale that is divided into three subscales: family support, friend support, and significant other support. Each of the 12 items is scored on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Very Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Very Strongly Agree). Scoring is done by adding up all the responses to all 12 items. The maximum possible score was 84 and the minimum possible score was 12, with higher scores indicating a greater level of perceived social support.

### 8.5 Analysis and Interpretation of Data:

The data collected was analysed using statistical methods. Descriptive statistics were also used to describe the data collected. Mean and standard deviation were used to describe the data. Independent sample t-test and ANOVA were used to determine the differences on various demographic factors.

Pearson correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between resilience, social support, and emotional well-being.

## 9. Testing of Objectives and Hypothesis:

**Objective 1:** To study the level of emotional well-being among college students.

**Table 1: Level of Emotional Well-being among College Students**

Variable	N	Maximum Score	Mean	Standard Deviation	Percentage
Emotional Well-Being	360	27	15.12	5.153	56%

The mean and standard deviation of emotional well-being among college students are presented in Table 1. The maximum possible score in emotional well-being is 27. The mean score for emotional well-being among college students is 15.12, and the percentage is 56%. Hence, from the mean score and its percentage, it is clear that the college students have a moderate level of emotional well-being.

**Objective 2:** To study the level of resilience among college students.

**Table 2: Level of Resilience among College Students**

Variable	N	Maximum Score	Mean	Standard Deviation	Percentage
Resilience	360	30	18.45	4.985	61.5%

The mean and standard deviation of resilience among college students are presented in Table 2. The maximum possible score in resilience is 30. The mean score for resilience among college students is 18.45, and the percentage is 61.5%. Hence, from the mean score and its percentage, it is clear that the college students have a moderate level of resilience.

**Objective 3:** To study the level of emotional well-being among college students.

**Table 3: Level of Perceived Social Support among College Students**

Variable	N	Maximum Score	Mean	Standard deviation	Percentage
Perceived Social Support	360	84	49.93	11.469	59.44%

The mean and standard deviation of perceived social support among college students are presented in Table 3. The maximum possible score in perceived social support is 84. The mean score for perceived social support among college students is 49.93, and the percentage is 59.44%. Hence, from the mean score and its percentage, it is clear that the college students perceive a moderate level of social support.

**Hypothesis 1(a):** There is a significant difference in emotional well-being, resilience, and perceived social support with respect to their gender

**Table 4: Showing the significant difference in emotional well-being, resilience, and perceived social support with respect to gender**

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	SD	't' Value	Significance
Emotional Well-being	Male	181	15.75	4.970	2.344	0.05 Significance
	Female	179	14.48	5.270		

Resilience	Male	181	17.64	5.049	3.157	<b>0.01 Significance</b>
	Female	179	19.27	4.794		
Perceived Social Support	Male	181	48.83	10.736	1.830	<b>Not Significant</b>
	Female	179	51.03	12.096		

From the table 4, it is inferred that the calculated 't' value for emotional well-being of college students is 2.344 which is greater than the table value 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, there is a significant difference between male and female college students based on emotional well-being. From the mean value, it is clear that male college students have high emotional well-being than female college students. Hence the framed hypothesis is accepted.

From the table 4, it is inferred that the calculated 't' value for resilience of college students is 3.157 which is greater than the table value 2.58 at 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, there is a significant difference between male and female college students based on resilience. From the mean value, it is clear that female college students have high resilience than male college students. Hence the framed hypothesis is accepted.

From the table 4, it is inferred that the calculated 't' value for perceived social support of college students is 1.830 which is lesser than the table value 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, there is no significant difference between male and female college students based on perceived social support. Hence the framed hypothesis is not accepted.

**Hypothesis 1(b):** There is a significant difference in emotional well-being, resilience, and perceived social support with respect to their discipline of study

**Table 5: Showing the significant difference in emotional well-being, resilience, and perceived social support with respect to discipline of study**

Variables	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Significance
Emotional Well-being	Between Groups	1158.517	2	579.258	24.693	<b>0.01 Significance</b>
	Within Groups	8374.583	357	23.458		
	Total	9533.100	359			
Resilience	Between Groups	1265.450	2	632.725	29.505	<b>0.01 Significance</b>
	Within Groups	7655.650	357	21.444		
	Total	8921.100	359			
Perceived Social Support	Between Groups	8082.350	2	4041.175	36.858	<b>0.01 Significance</b>
	Within Groups	39142.625	357	109.643		
	Total	47224.975	359			

From the table 5, it is inferred that the calculated 'F' value for emotional well-being of college students is 24.693 which is greater than the table value 6.664 at 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, there is a significant difference based on emotional well-being among college students. From the mean value, it is clear that engineering (M = 17.44) college students have high emotional well-being than arts & science (M = 14.83) college students and followed by medicine (M = 13.08) college students. Hence the framed hypothesis is accepted.

From the table 5, it is inferred that the calculated 'F' value for resilience of college students is 29.505 which is greater than the table value 6.664 at 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, there is a

significant difference based on resilience among college students. From the mean value, it is clear that medicine ( $M = 21.06$ ) college students have high resilience than arts & science ( $M = 17.56$ ) college students and followed by engineering ( $M = 16.73$ ) college students. Hence the framed hypothesis is accepted.

From the table 5, it is inferred that the calculated 'F' value for perceived social support of college students is 36.858 which is greater than the table value 6.664 at 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, there is a significant difference based on perceived social support among college students. From the mean value, it is clear that medicine ( $M = 55.29$ ) college students have high perceived social support than arts & science ( $M = 50.72$ ) college students and followed by engineering ( $M = 43.77$ ) college students. Hence the framed hypothesis is accepted.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is a significant relationship between Resilience and Emotional Well-Being, Perceived Social Support and Emotional Well-Being, Resilience and Perceived Social Support.

**Table 6: Table Showing the Significant Relationship among the Independent and Dependent Variables**

S.No	Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Significance
1	Resilience and Emotional well-being	0.515	<b>0.01 Significance</b>
2	Perceived Social Support and Emotional well-being	0.398	<b>0.01 Significance</b>
3	Resilience and Perceived Social Support	0.461	<b>0.01 Significance</b>

From the above Table 6, it is inferred that the value of correlation between Resilience and Emotional Well-Being (0.515), Perceived Social Support and Emotional Well-Being (0.398), and Resilience and Perceived Social Support (0.461) are higher than the table value 0.115, to be significant at 0.01 level of significance. The correlation between these variables is positive and significant. Therefore, it is found that there is a significant and positive relationship between Resilience and Emotional Well-Being, Perceived Social Support and Emotional Well-Being, Resilience and Perceived Social Support. Hence, the formulated hypothesis is accepted.

## 10. Education Implication:

- The findings of the present study are beneficial for understanding the importance of emotional well-being among college students.
- The study also highlights that students' resilience is one aspect that plays a significant role in dealing with academic and personal pressure.
- The findings also highlight the importance of social support for maintaining students' psychological stability.
- The study's findings are beneficial for understanding students' emotional well-being.
- Teachers and counsellors may also understand students' emotional well-being and provide the students with the requisite psychological support.
- The study also highlights the importance of developing a positive atmosphere for students' well-being.

## 11. Recommendation:

- Colleges should have a mental health support structure, including counselling centers and student well-being programs.
- They can also hold awareness programs and workshops to build resilience and coping skills among students.
- Colleges should promote peer support groups to foster social connections among students.
- Faculty members should be trained to recognize and address students showing signs of mental health difficulties.
- Mindfulness, stress management, and emotion regulation activities can be incorporated.
- Educational institutions should foster a non-judgmental and supportive environment where students feel comfortable seeking support.

## 12. Suggestion:

- Future research may also employ a larger sample size with diversity to enhance the generalization of the study's findings.
- Future research may also focus on the inclusion of additional psychological constructs such as self-esteem, stress, anxiety, and coping mechanisms to have a better understanding of students' emotional well-being.
- Future research may also employ a comparative study among different age groups, education level, and culture.
- Future research may also employ a longitudinal study to understand the dynamics of change in students' resilience, social support, and emotional well-being.
- Future research may also employ a mixed approach to have a better understanding of students' psychological experiences.
- Future research may also focus on understanding the influence of family environment, peer pressure, and academic pressure on students' emotional well-being.

## 13. Conclusion:

The purpose of the present study was to examine the role of resilience and perceived social support in emotional well-being among college students. The results showed that college students have a moderate level of emotional well-being, resilience, and perceived social support. The differences were significant based on gender and discipline of study. The correlation analysis showed a significant relationship among all variables. The results of this study showed that resilience and perceived social support play an important role in emotional well-being among college students. Therefore, it is important to promote resilience and perceived social support for better mental health and development of college students.

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