

Research Paper

## Self-Efficacy and Coping Strategies among Single and Married Indian Adults- A Quasi-Experimental Study

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### ABSTRACT

This research investigates the effect of marital status on general self-efficacy and coping strategies among Indian adults aged 25-35, utilizing the General Self Efficacy Scale and Brief COPE Inventory in a quasi-experimental approach. The study addresses a significant gap in the literature, exploring the relationship between marital status and psychological attributes in a context where limited research exists. Employing three null hypotheses, the study finds no significant differences in general self-efficacy, problem-focused coping, or emotion-focused coping based on marital status. The results suggest that individual coping abilities and psychological factors might play a more significant role than marital status in determining self-efficacy and coping strategies. Considering the study's demographics, this research provides foundational insights, paving the way for future investigations in this under-explored area.

**Keywords:** *Self Efficacy, Coping Strategies, Emotion Focused Coping Strategies, Problem Focused Coping Strategies, Marital Status*

In today's fast-paced and ever-changing world, self-efficacy is a vital psychological asset that empowers individuals to adapt, learn, and thrive in the face of uncertainty and challenges. Self-efficacy plays a crucial role in fostering resilience, motivation, and goal achievement, making it indispensable for success and well-being in modern society. With the increasing emphasis on self-directed learning, entrepreneurship, and personal growth, self-efficacy has become a linchpin for individuals striving to take control of their lives and pursue their aspirations in the contemporary landscape.

Numerous research studies have consistently highlighted the pivotal role of self-efficacy in shaping various aspects of human well-being, self-esteem, performance, and overall success. Self-efficacy partially mediated the link between meaning in life and mental health among young adults. (Sharma and Kour, 2021)

While self-efficacy can be influenced by various factors, coping strategies serve as defined mechanisms that not only impact an individual's self-efficacy but also profoundly shape how they navigate and respond to life's stressors and challenges. Coping strategies, particularly

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those centered around problem-solving, have emerged as highly promising approaches for individuals to confront problems, stressors, or challenges in a more effective and successful manner. Srivastava et al. (2023) discovered that during the pandemic the importance of coping mechanisms in the relationship between perceived stress and psychological well-being was highlighted, with both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies playing a role.

In the context of life's inevitable challenges and problems, an individual's psychological resources, support systems, and the nature of their specific challenges all come into play. Additionally, their marital status can significantly influence how they approach and navigate these challenges. Marital status can profoundly shape an individual's challenges, available resources, and support systems, influencing their coping strategies and overall well-being. Khorasani et al; 2017 in his research study with the help of multiple regression analysis indicated that self-efficacy was a significant predictor of marital satisfaction.

### ***Self-Efficacy***

In our constantly evolving world, self-efficacy becomes the essential key to unlocking personal growth and building resilience. Amidst challenges and uncertainties, self-efficacy empowers individuals to navigate and thrive in various aspects of life, it makes it possible for human beings to unleash their inner potential and live life to the fullest. Understanding and fostering self-efficacy can lead to improved well-being, resilience, and overall success in various areas of life.

It refers to a person's belief in their own ability to accomplish a task or achieve a goal.

This concept was first introduced by psychologist Albert Bandura in 1977.

### **Determinants of Self Efficacy**

Bandura defined self-efficacy as a personal judgment of "how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations." In other words, it is a person's particular set of beliefs that determine how well they can execute a plan of action in prospective situations.

Bandura identified four main sources of influence that shape a person's self-efficacy beliefs. The first source is mastery experiences, which refers to the experiences a person gains when they take on a new challenge and are successful at doing so. These experiences are the most influential source of efficacy information because they provide the most authentic evidence of whether one can succeed. Success builds a robust belief in one's personal efficacy, while failures can undermine it, especially if they occur before a sense of efficacy is firmly established.

The second source of influence is vicarious experiences, which involve observing other people successfully completing a task. Bandura posits that seeing people similar to oneself succeed by sustained effort raises observers' beliefs that they too possess the capabilities to master comparable activities and succeed. Positive role models, such as older siblings, friends, camp counselors, parents, aunts and uncles, grandparents, teachers, coaches, and employers, can be particularly influential in shaping a person's self-efficacy beliefs.

The third source of influence is social persuasion, which refers to receiving positive verbal feedback while undertaking a complex task. This feedback can persuade a person to believe

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that they have the skills and capabilities to succeed. Verbal persuasion works at any age, but the earlier it is administered, the more likely it is to encourage the building of self-efficacy. The fourth and final source of influence is emotional and physiological states. The emotional, physical, and psychological well-being of a person can influence how they feel about their personal abilities in a particular situation. By learning how to manage anxiety and enhance their mood when experiencing challenging situations, individuals can improve their sense of self-efficacy.

### **Coping Strategies**

According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), coping refers to the cognitive and behavioral strategies that people use to manage stress, which can be classified as either problem-focused or emotion-focused. They view coping as a process rather than an individual trait. Lazarus and Folkman developed the Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ) to measure responses to stress, using the problem-focused and emotion-focused distinction. In this research paper I have used Brief COPE inventory which is influenced by Lazarus and Folkman's work. Carver et al. (1989) proposed that the problem-focused and emotion-focused coping distinction was useful, but incomplete. They identified 14 coping strategies that he has mentioned in his COPE inventory. He also developed an abbreviated version called Brief COPE inventory, a 28-item scale in which these 14 strategies are divided into problem focused and emotion focused (Li,2020).

The interplay between self-efficacy, coping strategies, and marital satisfaction is pivotal for individual well-being. While existing research has explored the influence of self-efficacy and coping strategies on marital satisfaction, there is a noticeable gap in understanding how an individual's marital status can, in turn, affect their self-efficacy and coping strategies.

In this research study, the null hypotheses are as follows:

- Marital Status will not have a significant effect on the self-efficacy levels of adults.
- Marital Status will not have a significant effect on the problem-focused coping strategy of adults.
- Marital Status will not have a significant effect on the emotion-focused coping strategy of adults.

The research sample comprises 100 participants, evenly divided into two groups of 50 each: one group consists of single individuals, while the other consists of married individuals. The participants' ages fall within the range of 25 to 35 years. This age range was selected because it corresponds to the period in Indian society when marriages typically occur, marking a significant transition into young adulthood. During this life stage, individuals often face heightened life challenges, making self-efficacy and coping strategies particularly relevant. Moreover, marital status introduces various challenges, sources of support, and psychological resources that can significantly impact individuals' experiences during this phase of life.

The rationale underpinning this study is to delve into the intricate interplay between marital status and key psychological constructs, notably general self-efficacy and distinct coping strategies, including emotion-focused and problem-focused coping mechanisms. This investigation is centered around adults within the age bracket of 25 to 35, a life stage marked by significant transitions and challenges.

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By scrutinizing these variables within this demographic, the study endeavors to unravel the nuanced impact of marital status on individuals' self-efficacy and coping strategies for navigating life's complexities.

This research endeavors to discern the impact of marital status on self-efficacy and coping strategies, addressing a conspicuous gap in existing literature. Its findings are poised to not only bridge this knowledge void but also serve as a compass for future in-depth investigations, elucidating the underlying intricacies of any observed disparities. These insights may, in turn, steer future research towards more intervention-oriented studies, should the need arise, thus fostering a holistic comprehension of this dynamic aspect of human psychology.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### *Self-Efficacy*

A study by Recksiedler and Landberg examines the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs, coping strategies, and pandemic-related stress among emerging adults during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. The data was collected through an online survey of 434 emerging adults aged 18-29 years old in Germany, recruited through social media and snowball sampling. The survey included measures of self-efficacy beliefs, coping strategies, and pandemic-related stress, and was available in both German and English. Using a correlational analysis, the study found that individuals with higher levels of self-efficacy experienced less pandemic-related stress, and that coping strategies mediated this relationship. Specifically, individuals with higher levels of self-efficacy were more likely to engage in active coping strategies, which were associated with lower levels of pandemic-related stress. (Recksiedler & Landberg, 2021).

A study by Sharma and Kour investigates the mediating role of self-efficacy beliefs in the relationship between meaning in life and mental health among young adults. The data was collected through an online survey of 212 young adults aged 18-25 years old in India, recruited through social media and convenience sampling. The survey included measures of self-efficacy beliefs, meaning in life, and mental health, and was available in both English and Hindi. Using correlational analysis and structural equation modeling, the study found that self-efficacy partially mediated the relationship between meaning in life and mental health, suggesting that individuals with higher levels of self-efficacy were more likely to experience better mental health outcomes through their sense of meaning in life. The study highlights the importance of self-efficacy beliefs in promoting mental health and well-being among young adults, and the potential for interventions targeting self-efficacy to enhance the benefits of meaning in life. However, the study has some limitations, such as the use of a cross-sectional design and the potential for response bias in the self-reported data (Sharma & Kour, 2021).

Another study by Shefali SK examines the relationship between life satisfaction and self-efficacy beliefs among young adults in India. The data was collected through an online survey of 324 young adults aged 18-25 years old, recruited through social media and convenience sampling. The survey included measures of life satisfaction, self-efficacy beliefs, and demographic information. Using a correlational analysis, the study found a significant positive relationship between life satisfaction and self-efficacy beliefs, suggesting that individuals with higher levels of self-efficacy were more likely to report higher levels of life satisfaction. The study highlights the importance of self-efficacy beliefs in promoting

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positive outcomes such as life satisfaction among young adults, and the potential for interventions targeting self-efficacy to enhance the well-being of this population. However, the study has some limitations, such as the potential for self-selection bias in the sample and the use of a cross-sectional design (SK,2021).

Another study by Aishwarya Singla studied gender differences in self-efficacy. The study by Singla investigates the effects of self-efficacy beliefs and personality traits on procrastination behavior among college students, with a focus on gender differences. The data was collected through an online survey of 200 undergraduate students (100 male and 100 female) aged 18-25 years old, recruited through convenience sampling from different colleges in India. The survey included measures of self-efficacy, personality traits (i.e., neuroticism and conscientiousness), and procrastination behavior. Using a correlational analysis and t-test, the study found that self-efficacy and personality traits were significant predictors of procrastination behavior, with gender moderating the relationship between self-efficacy and procrastination. Specifically, the study found that females with higher levels of self-efficacy reported lower levels of procrastination, while males with higher levels of self-efficacy reported higher levels of procrastination. The study highlights the importance of considering gender differences in the relationships between self-efficacy, personality traits, and procrastination, and the potential for interventions targeting self-efficacy and personality to reduce procrastination behavior among college students. However, the study has some limitations, such as the use of self-reported data and the potential for self-selection bias in the sample (Singla,2021).

Self-efficacy plays a crucial role in how individuals navigate life stressors and develop adaptive coping strategies, ultimately influencing their overall well-being and mental health. It serves as a potential enhancer of meaning in one's life and has been positively correlated with life satisfaction. Moreover, self-efficacy has proven to be a significant predictor of procrastination behavior, shedding light on its influence across various aspects of an individual's experiences.

### **Self-Efficacy and Other Related Factors**

Many variables and factors like experience, family structure, achievement motivation, locus of control, emotional regulation, optimism, self-compassion, family health, attachment styles, technology, goal orientation and burnout have significant direct and cyclical effects on self-efficacy and several researchers have done their contribution to understand and explore it. All these studies suggest that all these variables are important factors to consider when developing interventions to enhance self-efficacy among adults. Effects of self-efficacy is just not limited to well-being and mental health, marital satisfaction is also affected and impacted by self-efficacy and has been proven to be detrimental for married adults.

A study by Shah and Bhattarai explores the factors that contribute to teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in the context of Nepal. The data was collected through a survey of 350 teachers from 50 different schools, using a self-administered questionnaire that included measures of self-efficacy beliefs, sources of information and support, and demographic information. Using multiple regression analysis, the study found that sources of information and support, such as training and mentoring, significantly predicted teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. In addition, the study found that teachers' years of experience and gender were also significant predictors of self-efficacy beliefs, with female teachers and those with more years of

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experience reporting higher levels of self-efficacy. The study highlights the importance of providing training and support to teachers to enhance their self-efficacy beliefs, which may have implications for improving teacher performance and student outcomes. However, the study has some limitations, such as the use of self-reported data and the potential for self-selection bias in the sample (Shah & Bhattarai,2020).

A study by Bhatt and Bahadur investigates the relationship between family structure, self-efficacy, and achievement motivation among young adults. The study included 400 participants, aged between 18 and 25 years, and used a self-administered questionnaire to collect data on family structure, self-efficacy, and achievement motivation. The study found that participants from nuclear families reported higher levels of self-efficacy and achievement motivation than those from joint families. In addition, the study found a positive relationship between self-efficacy and achievement motivation, indicating that individuals with higher self-efficacy were more likely to be motivated to achieve their goals. The study also found that family structure was a significant predictor of self-efficacy and achievement motivation, even after controlling for demographic variables such as age and gender. The study suggests that family structure may play a crucial role in the development of self-efficacy and achievement motivation among young adults. However, the study has some limitations, such as the use of self-reported data and the cross-sectional design that limits the ability to draw causal conclusions (Bhatt & Bahadur, 2019).

A study by Madhani explores the relationship between career decision self-efficacy and locus of control among young adults. The study included 200 participants, aged between 18 and 25 years, and used a self-administered questionnaire to collect data on career decision self-efficacy and locus of control. The study found that participants with higher levels of career decision self-efficacy were more likely to have an internal locus of control, indicating that they believed their own actions and abilities had a greater impact on their career decisions than external factors. The study also found that there was a positive relationship between career decision self-efficacy and academic achievement. The study suggests that increasing career decision self-efficacy may be an effective way to enhance locus of control and academic achievement among young adults. However, the study has some limitations, such as the use of self-reported data and the limited sample size (Madhani, 2019).

A study by Maity and Sahai aims to investigate the predictive role of emotional regulation and optimism on self-efficacy among young adults in India. The study included 400 participants, aged between 18 and 25 years, and used self-report measures to collect data on emotional regulation, optimism, and self-efficacy. The study found that both emotional regulation and optimism were significant predictors of self-efficacy among young adults. The results showed that emotional regulation and optimism accounted for 36% of the variance in self-efficacy. The study suggests that emotional regulation and optimism may be important factors to consider when developing interventions to enhance self-efficacy among young adults. However, the study has some limitations, such as the use of self-reported data and the cross-sectional design (Maity & Sahai, 2020).

The research study "A Meta-Analysis of the Relation Between Self-Compassion and Self-Efficacy" provides a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between self-compassion and self-efficacy. The purpose of the study is to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between these two constructs. The research design used in this study is meta-analysis, which allows for the integration of findings from various studies. The data sources

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utilized in this study were electronic databases such as PsycINFO, Medline, and ProQuest, with the inclusion criteria being studies that examined the relationship between self-compassion and self-efficacy. The data collection method involved reviewing and coding relevant studies based on specific inclusion criteria. The analysis method used was a random-effects model, which takes into account the heterogeneity of effect sizes across studies. The findings suggest that there is a moderate positive relationship between self-compassion and self-efficacy. The limitations of the study include the potential for publication bias, as well as the lack of diversity in the sample of studies analyzed. Overall, this study provides important insights into the relationship between self-compassion and self-efficacy, which has important implications for understanding how individuals can enhance their personal strengths and resilience (Liao et al; 2018).

A study "Role of Family Health and Attachment Styles in Prediction of Students' Academic Self-Efficacy" explores the role of family health and attachment styles in predicting academic self-efficacy among students. The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between family health and attachment styles, and their impact on academic self-efficacy. The research design used in this study is correlational, which involves examining the relationship between variables without manipulating them. The data source utilized in this study was a sample of Iranian students from a university in Tehran. The data collection method involved administering questionnaires to the participants to measure their family health, attachment styles, and academic self-efficacy. The analysis method used was multiple regression analysis, which allows for the examination of the relationship between multiple predictor variables and a single outcome variable. The findings suggest that family health and attachment styles are significant predictors of academic self-efficacy. Specifically, secure attachment style and positive family health were found to have a positive impact on academic self-efficacy, while insecure attachment style and negative family health had a negative impact on academic self-efficacy. The limitations of the study include the use of self-report measures, potential for social desirability bias, and the limited generalizability of the findings to other cultural contexts. Overall, this study highlights the importance of family health and attachment styles in predicting academic self-efficacy, which has important implications for educational and counseling interventions for students (Etemad & Saadat, 2015).

A study "The influence of technology acceptance, academic self-efficacy, and gender on academic achievement through online tutoring" examines the relationship between technology acceptance, academic self-efficacy, gender, and academic achievement through online tutoring. The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of technology acceptance, academic self-efficacy, and gender on academic achievement. The study used a quantitative research design, and the data were collected using an online survey. The participants were 196 undergraduate students from a university in Singapore. The analysis method used in this study was structural equation modeling (SEM). The findings suggest that technology acceptance and academic self-efficacy have a positive impact on academic achievement through online tutoring, while gender does not have a significant impact. The study has some limitations, including a small sample size and the use of self-reported data (Hanham et al;2017).

Another study investigated the role of goal orientation, ability, need for achievement, and locus of control in the self-efficacy and goal-setting process. The purpose of the study was to determine how these factors influenced the development of self-efficacy and the goal-setting

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process. The research design employed was a correlational study, using self-report measures to collect data from a sample of 231 undergraduate business students. The data sources were questionnaires and surveys that were completed by participants. Analysis methods included regression analysis to examine the relationships between the variables. The findings indicated that ability and need for achievement had direct effects on self-efficacy, while goal orientation had indirect effects. Furthermore, locus of control was found to have a significant moderating effect on the relationship between goal orientation and self-efficacy. One limitation of the study was the use of a sample of undergraduate business students, which may limit the generalizability of the findings (Phillips & Gully, 1997).

Another researcher conducted a longitudinal study to examine the relationship between burnout, work engagement, and self-efficacy in a sample of employees from various sectors in Spain. The purpose of the study was to investigate whether burnout and engagement follow a loss and gain cycle over time and the role of self-efficacy as a moderator of this cycle. The design of the study was longitudinal with a one-year time lag between the data collection points. Data were collected using self-report questionnaires from a total of 259 participants at two time points. The analysis included descriptive statistics, correlations, and structural equation modeling. The findings showed that burnout and engagement followed a loss and gain cycle over time. The study found that high levels of burnout predicted decreases in self-efficacy and engagement over time, while high levels of engagement predicted increases in self-efficacy and decreases in burnout over time. Additionally, the study found that self-efficacy was a key factor in this cycle, as it acted as a buffer against burnout and a promoter of engagement. This suggests that individuals with high levels of self-efficacy are more resilient to burnout and are more likely to maintain high levels of engagement. However, the study also found that this cycle can become self-reinforcing, with individuals who experience high levels of burnout becoming trapped in a cycle of low self-efficacy and disengagement. The limitations of the study included the use of self-report measures, the sample size, and the lack of generalizability to other cultures and work contexts (Gumbau & Soria, 2014).

Another group of researchers conducted a study to investigate the relationship between self-efficacy and marital satisfaction of couples who visited the community health centers of Babol, Iran in 2015. The study utilized a cross-sectional design and a sample of 200 couples who were selected through convenience sampling. Data were collected using three standardized questionnaires, including the General Self-Efficacy Scale, the Enrich Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire, and a demographic questionnaire. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation coefficient, and multiple regression analysis. The findings of the study revealed a positive and significant correlation between self-efficacy and marital satisfaction. Moreover, the results of multiple regression analysis indicated that self-efficacy was a significant predictor of marital satisfaction. However, the study had some limitations, including the small sample size and the use of self-reported measures. Overall, the study suggests that enhancing self-efficacy in couples may lead to increased marital satisfaction (Khorasani et al; 2017).

Several studies have revealed significant findings, factors and variables related to self-efficacy. These findings include the prediction of teachers' self-efficacy beliefs by sources of information and support, higher levels of self-efficacy and achievement motivation among individuals from nuclear families compared to joint families, the association between higher career decision self-efficacy and an internal locus of control among young adults, the



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prediction of self-efficacy by emotional regulation and optimism among young adults, and a moderate positive relationship between self-compassion and self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy and coping strategies are two very researched variables, effective coping mechanisms have proven to be immensely impactful in facing life stressors and maintaining well-being of a person and self-efficacy has acted as the mediator for developing and maintaining adaptive coping strategies. Coping strategies and self-efficacy have a cyclical impact on each other and many researchers have given their contribution to study and explore this relationship to deepen the knowledge pool and get some interventional approach towards upliftment and enrichment of well-being and life satisfaction.

### **Coping Strategies and Self-Efficacy**

One study investigated the personal and contextual determinants of coping strategies among adults. The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between personality traits and coping strategies, as well as the influence of situational factors on coping. The study employed a cross-sectional design and utilized a self-report questionnaire to collect data from a sample of 399 adults. Participants were asked to rate the extent to which they utilized various coping strategies in response to stressful life events. The data was analyzed using multiple regression analysis. The findings of the study indicated that personality traits such as neuroticism and extraversion were associated with specific coping strategies. Individuals high in neuroticism tended to use more emotion-focused coping strategies, such as expressing emotions and seeking support, while those high in extraversion tended to use more problem-focused coping strategies, such as taking action to solve the problem. In addition, situational factors such as the type and severity of the stressor were found to influence coping strategies. The study suggested that coping strategies are not solely determined by individual characteristics, but are also shaped by situational factors. One limitation of the study is that the use of self-report measures may be subject to biases and limitations (Holahan & Moos, 1987).

One study titled "Relationship between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy among college students: the mediating role of coping styles," published in the journal BMC Psychology in 2020. The study aimed to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, coping styles, and academic achievement among college students in China. The research design was quantitative and cross-sectional. The data was collected from 601 Chinese college students through self-report questionnaires. The measures used were the Emotional Intelligence Scale, General Self-Efficacy Scale, Coping Styles Scale, and Academic Achievement Scale. The authors used correlation and regression analysis to analyze the data. The findings showed a positive relationship between emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and academic achievement, and a negative relationship between maladaptive coping styles and academic achievement. The study also found that coping styles mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy. The limitations of the study include a lack of generalizability to other cultures and a focus on self-reported data. Overall, the study highlights the importance of emotional intelligence and coping strategies in the development of self-efficacy and academic achievement among college students (Sun & Lyu, 2020).

Another group of researchers conducted a study to examine the relationship between mental health and general self-efficacy beliefs, coping strategies, and locus of control in male drug abusers. The study utilized a cross-sectional design, with a sample size of 181 drug abusers

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who were recruited from outpatient clinics in Iran. Data was collected using the General Health Questionnaire, General Self-Efficacy Scale, Coping Strategies Questionnaire, and Locus of Control Scale. Multiple regression analysis was used to analyze the data. The findings revealed that mental health was positively related to general self-efficacy beliefs, problem-focused coping, and internal locus of control, and negatively related to emotion-focused coping and external locus of control. The study concludes that mental health is an important predictor of self-efficacy and coping strategies among male drug abusers. Limitations of the study include its cross-sectional design and the use of self-report measures for data collection (Bavojdan et al; 2015).

Another did a research study to understand perceived sources and levels of stress, general self-efficacy and coping strategies in preclinical dental students. This study aimed to explore the perceived sources and levels of stress among preclinical dental students and how these factors relate to their general self-efficacy and coping strategies. The research design used in this study was cross-sectional. Data was collected from 319 preclinical dental students through self-report measures. The instruments used in this study included the Perceived Stress Scale, General Self-Efficacy Scale, and the Brief COPE Inventory. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation analysis, and hierarchical regression analysis. The findings of this study showed that preclinical dental students experienced high levels of stress, with academic-related stress being the most significant source of stress. The study also found that students with higher levels of general self-efficacy reported less perceived stress and utilized more adaptive coping strategies. However, the study found no significant relationship between locus of control and perceived stress or coping strategies. The limitations of this study include its cross-sectional design and self-reported measures, which may have introduced response bias (Ersan et al; 2017).

Another group of researchers did a study to explore the relationship between self-efficacy and coping strategies among university students. The purpose of this study was to identify different coping profiles and their relation to self-efficacy in university students using a person-centered approach. The study had a cross-sectional design, with data collected from a sample of 858 university students from Spain. The data source was self-reported questionnaires, including the Coping Strategies Inventory and the General Self-Efficacy Scale. The study used cluster analysis to identify different coping profiles and analyzed the relationship between coping strategies and self-efficacy using ANOVA and correlation analysis. The findings revealed four different coping profiles: problem-focused coping, social support seeking, avoidance coping, and emotion-focused coping. The results also showed that students with problem-focused coping had higher levels of self-efficacy, while those with avoidance coping had lower levels of self-efficacy. Limitations of the study included the use of self-reported measures and the lack of a longitudinal design (Carlos et al; 2020).

One conducted a study to examine the relationship between coping strategies, social support, self-efficacy, and psychological well-being in adolescence. The purpose of this study was to investigate the ways in which adolescents cope with minor stressors and to identify the factors that influence the choice of coping strategies. The study was designed as a quantitative cross-sectional survey, with a sample of 646 Italian high school students. The data were collected using self-reported questionnaires. The analysis method used was structural equation modeling (SEM). The findings of the study indicated that social support and self-efficacy were positively related to problem-focused coping strategies and

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psychological well-being. On the other hand, avoidant coping strategies were negatively associated with social support, self-efficacy, and psychological well-being. Furthermore, the results showed that social support and self-efficacy were positively related to emotional coping strategies, while avoidant coping strategies were negatively associated with emotional coping strategies. In terms of gender differences, the study found that girls were more likely to use emotional coping strategies than boys, while boys were more likely to use problem-focused coping strategies than girls. The study also found that the level of stress experienced by adolescents was related to the use of coping strategies. Adolescents who reported higher levels of stress were more likely to use avoidant coping strategies than those who reported lower levels of stress. One limitation of the study was the self-reported nature of the data, which may have resulted in response bias. Additionally, the study focused on minor stressors, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to more severe stressors. Despite these limitations, the study provided insight into the relationship between coping strategies, social support, self-efficacy, and psychological well-being in adolescence (Cicognani, 2011).

A study by Srivastava, Upadhyaya, and Jain examined coping strategies among Indians during the COVID-19 pandemic. They surveyed 501 participants who experienced India's lockdown. The research confirmed the presence of stress and highlighted the dynamic nature of coping, distinguishing between emotion-focused and problem-focused strategies. The study found that participants initially turned to emotion-focused coping to manage stress and uncertainty. This emotional coping served as a buffer, allowing them to later transition to problem-focused strategies, such as planning and seeking support, preserving their psychological well-being. The findings underscored the importance of context-specific coping and the effectiveness of combining both emotion-focused and problem-focused strategies. Despite limitations like sample size and self-reported data, the study's insights have implications for mental health support during crises, aiding vulnerable populations and enhancing overall well-being (Srivastava et al, 2023).

In a study conducted by Radhika and Manju from the Department of Applied Psychology at Guru Jambheshwar University of Science and Technology, the relationship between life satisfaction and self-efficacy among married individuals was investigated using Pearson correlation analysis. The study revealed a highly significant positive relationship (Pearson correlation value of .225\*) between life satisfaction and self-efficacy among married males and females. This means that married individuals with higher levels of life satisfaction tend to exhibit greater self-efficacy, while those with lower life satisfaction tend to have lower self-efficacy.

Additionally, the research identified significant gender differences within the married population. Married females scored higher on both life satisfaction (mean score: 43.35) and self-efficacy (mean score: 34.40) compared to their male counterparts (life satisfaction mean score: 41.80; self-efficacy mean score: 31.42). These findings suggest that married females may be more effective in handling marital challenges and may experience higher life satisfaction and self-efficacy compared to married males. In summary, the study highlights the positive association between life satisfaction and self-efficacy among married individuals and underscores gender differences in these aspects within the context of marriage. These results provide valuable insights into the dynamics of marital relationships and psychological well-being (Radhika et al, 2017).

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In a study conducted by Rhonda M. Bonett, the impact of gender (male or female) and marital status (married or unmarried) on career self-efficacy, which is an individual's confidence in their career-related abilities, was examined using ANOVA statistical analysis. The research findings indicated that gender (male or female) had a significant influence on career self-efficacy. Specifically, men reported higher levels of career self-confidence compared to women, irrespective of their marital status—whether they were married or unmarried. Interestingly, for occupations traditionally associated with females, a unique pattern emerged. Among married participants, women reported higher career self-confidence than men in these traditionally female-dominated fields. This pattern was consistent for unmarried participants as well. However, the study revealed that marital status alone did not independently impact career self-efficacy for either men or women. To summarize, this study underscores the significant role of gender in shaping career self-confidence, with men generally exhibiting higher self-efficacy than women. Additionally, the type of job (traditionally male or female) influenced self-efficacy levels, while marital status by itself did not have a significant impact on career self-efficacy. These findings shed light on the complexities of career self-confidence within different demographic groups and occupational domains (Bonnet et al, 1994).

Various studies have found important associations between coping strategies and self-efficacy. These include the influence of personality traits and situational factors on coping, the mediating role of coping styles in the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy among college students, the predictive value of mental health on self-efficacy and coping in male drug abusers, the impact of academic-related stress on coping strategies and adaptive coping in students with higher self-efficacy, the identification of different coping profiles linked to self-efficacy levels, and the exploration of coping, social support, self-efficacy, and psychological well-being in adolescence.

### **METHODOLOGY**

*Aim:* To study the effect of marital status on the self-efficacy and coping strategies of adults.

#### *Objectives:*

- To measure self-efficacy and coping strategies among single and married adults.
- To determine the difference in self-efficacy among single and married adults.
- To determine the difference in problem focused coping strategy among single and married adults.
- To determine the difference in emotion focused coping strategy among single and married adults.

#### *Research Design:*

This study has been designed to be carried out in a quasi-experimental method.

#### *Conceptual Definition:*

- Self-efficacy is a personal judgment of "how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations." (Bandura,1977)
- Coping Strategies is our toolkit to conquer stress and thrive. Coping refers to the cognitive and behavioral strategies that people use to manage stress, which can be classified as either problem-focused or emotion-focused. (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984)

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- Adult is a person who has reached adulthood, APA defines adulthood as the period of human development in which full physical growth and maturity have been achieved and certain biological, cognitive, social, personality, and other changes associated with the aging process occurs. Beginning after adolescence, adulthood is sometimes divided into young adulthood (roughly 20 to 35 years of age); middle adulthood (about 36 to 64 years); and later adulthood (age 65 and beyond). The last is sometimes subdivided into young-old (65 to 74), old-old (75 to 84), and oldest old (85 and beyond).

### *Hypotheses:*

- Marital Status will have no effect on the self-efficacy levels of adults.
- Marital Status will have no effect on the problem focused coping strategy of adults.
- Marital Status will have no effect on the emotion focused coping strategy of adults.

### *Variables:*

- **Independent Variable:** The variable being manipulated by the experimenter is marital Status.
- **Dependent Variable:** The variable being studied is the self-efficacy and coping strategies of the participants.
- **Extraneous:** The extraneous variables include the Socioeconomic Status, Relationship Duration and Mental Health History. Controls were employed to resist the effect of these on the dependent variable.

### *Sample*

The sample comprised one hundred Indian adults aged between 25 and 35 years. There were two groups: single adults and married adults. Group I consisted of 50 single adults, while Group II consisted of 50 married adults, with Group II serving as the comparison group. Participants in both groups were selected using a non-probability convenience sampling method, supplemented by snowball sampling. The inclusion criteria were as follows: adults aged 25-35 years; single individuals who have never been married (not in a relationship, engaged, widowed, divorced, or in any other romantic relationship); married individuals who have been in a marital relationship for at least one year; individuals capable of reading and writing; and participants of Indian nationality or residing in India. The exclusion criteria were individuals undergoing marriage counselling or who have sought professional help in the last six months, individuals under any psychiatric medication, and married adults who have experienced domestic violence or any other physical or emotional trauma.

### *Instruments*

Two measures were used in this study,

1. **General Self Efficacy Scale:** The General Self-Efficacy Scale is a 10-item psychometric scale that is designed to assess optimistic self-beliefs to cope with a variety of difficult demands in life. The scale has been originally developed in German by Matthias Jerusalem and Ralf Schwarzer in 1981 and has been used in many studies with hundreds of thousands of participants.
2. **Brief COPE inventory:** The Brief COPE is a 28-item multidimensional measure of strategies used for coping or regulating cognition in response to stressors developed by Charles S. Carver, 1997. This abbreviated inventory (based on the complete 60-

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item COPE Inventory) is composed of items that assess the frequency with which a person uses different coping strategies.

### *Procedure*

The study involved the administration of two key instruments: the General Self-Efficacy Scale questionnaire and the Brief COPE inventory. Participants were provided with information regarding the purpose of the study, consent requirements, and assurance of confidentiality before accessing the questionnaire. Prior to participation, informed consent was diligently obtained, with participants providing their consent through signed forms. The scores obtained on both the questionnaires depict the general self-efficacy level and coping strategies of the participant. Scores obtained through both the psychometric tools were calculated according to the norms of the tools and were analyzed using IBM SPSS Version 21 and XLSTAT.

Two samples z-test was used to analyze the mean scores of the data and examine the effect of marital status on general self- efficacy and coping strategies of adults.

### *Ethical Considerations*

During the research, informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring they were fully aware of the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits, and that their participation was voluntary. Confidentiality of participants' personal information and data was ensured through secure storage and encryption methods, with data accessible only to authorized researchers. Additionally, appropriate support was offered to individuals who may have experienced distress or emotional discomfort during the study to ensure their well-being and provide necessary assistance.

## **RESULTS**

*Table No. 1 Gender, Employment Status and Religion Statistics of the Participants.*

	Single	Married	Total(N=100)
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	25(50%)	13(26%)	38
Female	25(50%)	37(74%)	62
<b>Employment Status</b>			
Homemaker	1(2%)	10(20%)	11
Student	16(32%)	3(6%)	19
Unemployed	5(10%)	0(0%)	5
Employed	28(56%)	37(74%)	65
<b>Religion</b>			
Hindu	47(94%)	36(72%)	83
Muslim	1(2%)	9(18%)	10
Jain	0(0%)	2(4%)	2
Christian	0(0%)	1(2%)	1
Not Religious	1(2%)	2(4%)	3
Mixed	1(2%)	0(0%)	1

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**Table 2: Age Statistics of the Participants.**

Central Tendency	Age
Mean	28.63
Median	28
Mode	25

The research incorporates essential demographic information, as outlined in Tables 1 and 2. These demographic details encompass Gender, Employment Status, Religion, and Age, collectively providing a comprehensive understanding of the study's participant characteristics. The inclusion of these demographic factors is pivotal as they offer valuable insights into the background and diversity of the participants, enhancing the depth and relevance of our research findings.

Table 1 shows how gender distribution in the study is fairly balanced, with 38 males and 62 females participating. This balance is crucial as it ensures a diverse perspective in the research findings. The study's inclusivity across genders allows for a comprehensive analysis of self-efficacy and coping strategies in both single and married individuals.

Table 1 succinctly outlines participants' employment status: 65 are employed, 19 are students, 11 are homemakers, and 5 are unemployed. Notably, employment is predominant in both single and married participants. Among singles, students form the second largest group, while in married individuals, homemakers are the second most prevalent.

Table 1 illustrates the religious affiliations of participants: 83 Hindus, 10 Muslims, 2 Jains, and 1 Christian. Additionally, 3 participants identify as non-religious, and 1 follows a mixed religious background.

Table 2 illuminates the age demographics of our study, emphasizing a mean age of 28.63, with participants falling within the specified range of 25-35 years. This adherence to a specific age criterion ensures a focused and relevant study group, providing a nuanced understanding of self-efficacy and coping strategies within the context of young adulthood.

**Table 3: Shows the tests of normality for the data set of general self-efficacy scores.**

### Shapiro-Wilk

Variables	Statistics	df	Sig.
Single	.965	50	.147
Married	.956	50	.062

$H_0 =$  Single and Married participants score on general self-efficacy are normally distributed

Table 3 shows the tests of normality for Single and Married using Shapiro Wilk's test. The results were found to be  $W (df = 50) = .965, p = 0.147$  for Single, and  $W (df = 50) = .956, p = 0.062$  for Married. The results confirm that the population is normally distributed for Single and Married. Thus, the null hypothesis is retained.

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**Table 4: Showing the results of the z-test carried out on the effect of Marital status on General SelfEfficacy of the participants.**

*z-test for equality of means*

Variables	Statistics	df	Sig.
General Self Efficacy	-.353	98	.724

*H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference in the general self-efficacy scores of single and married participants.*

In order to test the effect of marital status on general self-efficacy, a two samples z test was done. The z-test was found to be statistically not significant,  $z(98) = -.353$  and  $p > .05$ . Thus, the null hypothesis is retained.

**Table 5: Shows the tests of normality for the data set of problem focused coping strategies scores.**

**Shapiro-Wilk**

Variables	Statistics	df	Sig.
Single	.980	50	.542
Married	.957	50	.066

*H<sub>0</sub> = Single and Married participants score on problem focused coping strategies are normally distributed*

Table 5 shows the tests of normality for Single and Married using Shapiro – Wilk’s test. The results were found to be  $W(df = 50) = .980$ ,  $p = 0.542$  for Single, and  $W(df = 50) = .957$ ,  $p = 0.066$  for Married. The results confirm that the population is normally distributed for Single and Married. Thus, the null hypothesis is retained.

**Table 6: Showing the results of the z-test carried out on the effect of Marital status on Problem FocusedCoping Strategies of the participants**

*z-test for equality of means*

Variables	Statistics	df	Sig.
Problem Focused Coping Strategies Scores	-.814	98	.416

*H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference in the problem focused coping strategies’ scores of single and married participants.*

In order to test the effect of marital status on problem focused coping strategies, a two samples z-test was done. The z-test was found to be statistically not significant,  $z(98) = -.814$  and  $p > .05$ . Thus, the null hypothesis is retained.

**Table 7: Shows the tests of normality for the data set of emotion focused coping strategies scores.**

**Shapiro-Wilk**

Variables	Statistics	df	Sig.
Single	.960	50	.090
Married	.955	50	.057

*H<sub>0</sub> = Single and Married participants score on emotion focused coping strategies are normally distributed.*



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Table 7 shows the tests of normality for Single and Married using Shapiro Wilk's test. The results were found to be  $W (df = 50) = .960, p = 0.090$  for Single, and  $W (df = 50) = .955, p = 0.057$  for Married. The results confirm that the population is normally distributed for Single and Married. Thus, the null hypothesis is retained.

**Table 8: Showing the results of the t-test carried out on the effect of Marital status on Emotion Focused Coping Strategies of the participants**  
*z-test for equality of means*

Variables	Statistics	df	Sig.
Emotion Focused Coping Strategies Scores	-.762	98	.446

*H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference in the emotion focused coping strategies' scores of single and married participants.*

In order to test the effect of marital status on problem focused coping strategies, an independent samples t-test was done. The t-test was found to be statistically not significant,  $z (98) = 0.762$  and  $p > .05$ . Thus, the null hypothesis is retained.

### DISCUSSION

The focus of this research study was on the effect of marital status on general self-efficacy and coping strategies among Indian adults.

This study set out to investigate the impact of marital status on the general self-efficacy and coping strategies of adults. Based on the results obtained, it can be concluded that the null hypothesis is upheld. In other words, marital status does not exert a significant influence on general self-efficacy, problem-focused coping strategies, or emotion-focused coping strategies among adults. It's important to note that no alternative hypothesis was formulated due to the scarcity of existing research and the absence of empirical evidence supporting an alternative stance. Several studies explored the relationship between self-efficacy and various aspects of life satisfaction. In Babol, Iran, research on married couples revealed a positive correlation between self-efficacy and marital satisfaction, emphasizing the potential enhancement of marital well-being through increased self-efficacy (Khorasani et al., 2017).

Examining married individuals, another study noted a significant positive relationship between life satisfaction and self-efficacy, with married females demonstrating higher levels of both aspects compared to males. This suggested that women might handle marital challenges more effectively, leading to greater life satisfaction and self-efficacy within marriage (Radhika et al., 2017).

While previous studies have established a positive correlation between high self-efficacy, marital satisfaction, and adaptive coping strategies, there remains a limited body of research exploring the specific effect of marital status on self-efficacy and coping strategies. This research study addresses a significant gap in the field of psychological and social studies, aiming to fill the evident dearth of research on this topic.

Several potential explanations exist for the absence of an impact of marital status on the general self-efficacy and coping strategies of adults. Indian society often places a strong emphasis on familial and social support. Regardless of marital status, individuals might have robust support networks, diminishing the differential impact of marital status on self-

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efficacy and coping strategies. Individual differences in coping abilities and resilience could outweigh the influence of marital status. Some individuals might possess inherent traits that enable effective coping irrespective of their marital status. Individual psychological factors, such as self-esteem, personality traits, or mental health conditions, could overshadow the influence of marital status on self-efficacy and coping strategies. Each life stage presents its unique challenges and corresponding psychological resources. Single hood lacks the social and psychological support of a spouse, yet it also avoids the challenges associated with married life. This balance results in comparable self-efficacy levels and coping strategies among single and married adults.

This research study bridges a critical gap in the existing literature by delving into the impact of marital status on the self-efficacy and coping strategies of adults. Through rigorous analysis and exploration, it aims to provide valuable insights into this understudied area, contributing significantly to our understanding of how marital status influences individuals' psychological well-being and coping mechanisms.

The study's limitations are worth acknowledging. The physical data was restricted to residents of Bangalore, potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings to a broader population. Additionally, a notable portion of the sample comprised individuals from the Hindu religion, possibly affecting the diversity and applicability of the results. Despite efforts to control extraneous variables, the lack of detailed information on participants' occupation, job stress levels, family structure (joint or nuclear), and specific psychological and instrumental resources might have influenced their self-efficacy and coping strategies, adding a layer of complexity to the interpretation of the results.

This research plays a pivotal role in bridging a critical gap in our understanding of self-efficacy and coping strategies among single and married adults. By highlighting this area, it not only fills a crucial research void but also paves the way for future inquiries. Particularly, qualitative studies could delve deeper, offering intricate insights into how self-efficacy and coping strategies manifest within these distinct life stages. Despite the study's modest sample size, its contribution to the social psychological research landscape concerning marital status and its impact on self-efficacy and coping strategies should not be underestimated. This research provides a foundational platform, guiding future studies to explore the subtle nuances of single hood and married life, enriching our comprehension of these essential aspects of human experience. Empirical data of the present study very strongly poses that optimism is related with physical and mental health. Optimistic individuals have fewer physical and psychological complaints with their life. If there is any problem like illness of her child then also, mothers with optimistic outlook help themselves to cope with the situation.

### **CONCLUSION**

The result obtained depicted that no significant differences were found in the general self-efficacy level of the participants due to their marital status. Similarly, no significant difference was found in the problem focused coping strategies among single and married adults and no significant difference was found in the emotion focused coping strategies of the participants due to their marital status.

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### *Limitations*

- The study focused solely on Bangalore residents, potentially limiting the broader applicability of the findings.
- A significant portion of the sample comprised individuals from the Hindu religion, possibly affecting the diversity and generalizability of the results.
- Absence of specific details such as occupation, job stress levels, and family structure hindered a comprehensive analysis, adding complexity to result interpretation.

### *Recommendations:*

- Include participants from varied geographic locations and religious backgrounds for a comprehensive understanding.
- Gather specific data on occupation, job stress, and family structure to enable a more nuanced analysis.
- Encourage similar studies in different regions and religions for comparative insights, ensuring broader applicability.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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