

Study on Resilience as a Mediating Factor in Relation Between Personality Type and Coping Strategies: A Review

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ABSTRACT

Stress is a complicated psychological concept that is impacted by resilience, coping mechanisms, and personality type. While personality types, especially Type A and Type B, influence how people react to stress, coping strategies, which can be classified as problem-focused or emotion-focused, are essential for stress adaptation. Personality and coping strategies are mediated by resilience, which is the ability of an individual to bounce back from adversity. According to empirical research, those who are very resilient use adaptive coping strategies, which improves psychological outcome. While emotion-focused coping is frequently connected with lower resilience, task-oriented coping has been linked to increased resilience. Additionally, studies show that psychological hardiness and social support improve resilience, which in turn affects coping efficiency and general well-being. This review examines how personality, coping strategies, and resilience interact, highlighting the mediating function of resilience and its implications for mental health treatments.

Keywords: *Stress, Coping Mechanisms, Personality Type, Resilience, Psychological Adaptation*

Stress is a crucial yet ambiguous concept. It can be described as a stimulus (life experiences, for example), a reaction or result (autonomic arousal), or as a dynamic interaction between an individual and their surroundings, aided by cognitive processes like coping and appraisal. A person's personality may have an impact on the types of life events they encounter and how they react to stressful situations (Chukwuma et al., 2019). The problem of stress-coping behaviour is one of the most important subjects in psychology. An efficient psychological reaction is necessary for someone who lives in a stressful environment all the time. Examining the area and potential for a positive human existence is a defining component of contemporary psychology research. Numerous categorisations of stress reactions and behavioural characteristics in stressful situations have been proposed by researchers (Yarosh et al., 2021). A person's personality affects how they respond to stress and the coping mechanisms they use. The theory of Type A and Type B personalities offers a useful basis for comprehending various stress reactions. The extremes of hostility, competitiveness, hurry, impatience, restlessness, aggression (sometimes severely suppressed), explosiveness of speech, and a high level of alertness accompanied by tense muscles are characteristics of the Type A behaviour pattern. Individuals that exhibit strong

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Type A behaviour find it difficult to handle the demands of responsibility and time constraints (Jenkins Activity Survey, 1979). Conversely, Type B personalities are more laid-back, cooperative, constant in their pace of activity, and seem happier with their everyday life and the people in their immediate environment (Chukwuma et al., 2019). According to Psychodynamic theory, personality and coping were practically interchangeable, and defence mechanisms were viewed as fixed characteristics that shaped how people perceived situations and determined whether they were adaptive or maladaptive (Suls, David, & Harvey, 1996). The Choice of coping mechanism may be directly influenced by personality, by restricting or enabling the application of particular techniques, or indirectly, by affecting the type and intensity of stressors encountered or how well coping mechanisms work (Bolger & Zuckerman, 1995).

Individual differences in psychological resilience, or the capacity to handle distress and adjust to traumatic life experiences, are significant and rely on both personal and environmental factors (Southwick & Charney, 2012). The ability to preserve one's physical and emotional well-being while engaging in challenging settings is known as positive adaptation (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013). However, the absence of mental illness is not the only aspect of mental health (Keyes, 2009). According to some researchers (Beasley, Thompson, & Davidson, 2003; Cohan & Stein, 2006; Glennei, 2010; Stratta et al., 2015), not everyone who uses coping mechanisms can be characterised as resilient unless their reactions to stressful situations result in positive outcomes. According to Campbell-Sills, Cohan, and Stein's (2006) research, emotion-oriented coping was linked to lower resilience, while task-oriented coping was linked to higher resilience. They discovered that task-oriented coping and emotional coping were both important predictors of resilience for diligent people. Recent researches suggests that resilience may act as a mediator in the relationship between personality type and coping style among young adults, which could help to explain why some people are better at handling stress than others. This review aims to explore the role of resilience as a mediator between personality type and coping style, integrating findings from psychological literature and highlighting implications for mental health interventions.

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Coping Mechanism

According to Carpenter (1992), coping refers to behavioural and cognitive attempts to control stress. Coping is the intersection between a person's sense of the needs of their internal world and their perception of the demands of the outside world (Neil & Heubeck, 1998). Individuals and their stressful surroundings interact dynamically during coping (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004). A broad range of coping mechanisms facilitates constructive adjustment to many circumstances and settings (Frydenberg, 1999; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Neil & Heubeck, 1998).

Coping mechanisms are important for helping people get through or lessen the stress they face (Y et al., 2018). According to Adler and Park (2003), a person's physical and mental health may be less negatively impacted by stressful situations if they are able to cope appropriately and effectively. To deal with their stress, people employ a variety of coping mechanisms. For instance, Shaikh and colleagues (2004) evaluated how some people deal with stress by using un healthy coping mechanisms like drugs, alcohol, overeating, and smoking, while others use proven stress-reduction techniques like exercise, meditation, and music-listening.

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Coping challenges while undertaking academic study is influenced by numerous aspects. The capacity to focus and pick up new knowledge can be hampered by managing stress, worry, and challenging emotions while attending university (Afek et al., 2021). Towbes and Cohen (1996) assert that because university students must adjust to social, academic, and personal problems, stress may be a significant problem for them. Being conscious about own strengths help in managing the mental and emotional strain of college life. Establishing boundaries, prioritising tasks, refraining from comparison, engaging in leisure pursuits including sports, reading, movies, and social gatherings, being assertive, creating a sense of community, cognitive restructuring, and social networking are some examples of coping mechanisms (Afek et al., 2021).

Lazarus (1984) defined two types of cognitive appraisals: primary and secondary. People in primary evaluation consider their interests in a given dangerous circumstances. The nature and the intensity of their feelings are influenced by their response to the query. The answers to these questions influence the kinds of coping mechanisms people will employ to deal with the demands. In secondary assessment, people ask themselves what they can do in reaction to the perceived threat, or what their coping alternatives are of the circumstances. Their response to this question influences the kinds of coping mechanisms they will employ to deal with the demands of the circumstance. Personal characteristics and surroundings are example of coping resources, but emotionally or problem-focused coping responses impact an individual's short- and long –term results (Margaret et al., 2018b).

Personality type

A type is often defined as a group or category of items that are identified by the shared traits of its constituents. Accordingly, a personality type is a group of individuals who display a specific set of psychological traits, with the underlying premise being that this combination is original and sets the type apart from others. The cardiologist Dr. Friedman and Dr. Rosenman first conceptualised and named the Type A/B behavioural continuum in 1959 (Friedman & Roseman, 1974). The extremes of hostility, competitiveness, hurry, impatience, restlessness, aggressiveness (sometimes severely suppressed), explosiveness of speech, and a high level of alertness accompanied by tense muscles are characteristics of the Type A behaviour pattern. Individuals that exhibit strong Type A behaviour find it difficult to handle the demands of responsibility and time constraints (Jenkins et al., 1979). Mosby's Dental Dictionary (2008) defines Type B personality as a “ego state characterised by a form of behaviour by Friedman and Rosenman associated with people who appear free of hostility and aggression and who lack a compulsion to meet deadlines, are not highly competitive at work and play, and have a lower risk of heart attack.”

Resilience

The ability of individuals to deal with stress and hardship is known as resilience. The person may “bounce back” to their prior level of normalcy as a result of this coping mechanism, or they may use the hardship as a “steeling effect” to do better than they had anticipated (Henning et al., 2010). Other components of resilience include the ability to plan realistically, build communication skills, have a positive self-image and self-confidence, and control powerful emotions and impulses (Linzer et al., 2001). Resilience can be used to describe the state of well-being attained by an individual who is at risk (for example, “he or she is resilient”) or the traits and processes that lead to that well-being (for-example, “he or she exhibits resilience to a particular risk”) (Somaiya et al., 2015).

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Self-resilience, also known as ego-resiliency, is a personality trait that provides protection against life's challenges and prevents mental illnesses due to psycho-traumatization. It shows up as adaptability to different external circumstances, flexibility, agility, creativity, and character grit (Block & Block, 1980).

V. Rice and B. Liu (2016) distinguish between resilience and coping, stating that resilience is the positive outcome of positive coping, whereas coping is an activity intended to overcome a stressful impact (which can be positive, neutral, or negative). Accordingly, they advise against using the term “coping” and “resilience” interchangeably. Research indicates that the distinction between “resilience” and “resiliency” is that former refers to personality attributes, while the latter is a process. Resilience is a more or less successful process, and a person may be more or less resilient at one stage of life than another (Haustova and Assonov, 2019).

The Role of Resilience as a Mediator

Coping and resilience were assessed as related concepts. Coping is defined as an individual's behavioural and cognitive effort to deal with the demands of stressful situations (Martin & Brantley, 2004), while resilience is defined as an adaptive outcome following adversity. Coping was also described as a significant contributor to resilient outcomes (Sills et al., 2006). Yet, some researchers (Beasley, Thompson, & Davidson, 2003; Campbell-Sills, Cohn & Stein, 2006; Glennei, 2010; Stratta et al., 2015) also proposed that not all people who employ coping mechanisms can be characterised as resilient unless they do not results in favourable outcomes following stressful situations. According to Campbell-Sills et al (2006) research, task-oriented coping was linked to greater resilience, while emotion-oriented coping was linked to decreased resilience. They discovered that for conscientious people, task-oriented coping was a strong predictor of resilient outcomes and that both emotion and task-oriented coping styles significantly contributed to resilience. In one study including earthquake survivors, Stratta et al. (2015) discovered that teenagers' clinical and subclinical stress spectrum symptoms were linked to emotion-focused coping strategies. Individuals who shown greater resilience following trauma exhibited problem-focused coping techniques, which in turn led to a lower level of stress symptoms. This association between coping and stress symptoms was mediated by higher resilience scores.

The concept of resilience has been examined from a variety of angles (Bonanno et al., 2011; Salisu & Hashim, 2017; Southwick, Bonanno, Masten, Panter-Brick & Yehuda, 2014). One viewpoint emphasises resilience as a personality trait that emerges in relation to personal qualities and life events (Cloninger & Zohar, 2011; Cannon & Davidson, 2003; Oshio, Kaneko, Nagamine & Nakaya, 2003). High levels of conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness, extraversion, and low levels of neuroticism are characteristics of a resilient personality (Alessandri, Vecchione, Donnellan, Eisenberg, Caprara & Ciecuch, 2014). Neuroticism and resilience have generally been found to be negatively correlated, while resilience has been favourably correlated with the other qualities (Oshio, Taku, Hirano & Saeed, 2018).

Empirical Studies on Resilience as a Mediator

A study by Ariyansepehr et al. (2024) demonstrated that through psychological hardiness, schemas like rejection, alienation, and diminished autonomy have an indirect impact on emotion control techniques (reappraisal and suppression). People who are less psychologically resilient are more likely to experience stress and use unhealthy coping

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strategies. Effective emotional regulation and resilience are fostered by psychological hardiness. Nevertheless, no indirect influence was shown by the impaired limits schema. According to the study, treatment methods that focus on enhancing psychological hardiness can assist people with anxiety disorder become more emotionally resilient.

Another study conducted by Kelle and Irak (2018) investigated how resilience functions as a mediator in the connections among personality traits, coping mechanisms, social support, and life satisfaction. According to the findings resilience is greatly influenced by social support, good affect, and coping strategies that are positive and self-assured. Additionally, resilience also served as a mediator, bringing together the effect of social support, coping mechanisms, and positive affect on life satisfaction.

Relationship between Personality and Coping Style

Personality can have a direct impact on coping strategy choice by limiting or promoting the use of particular strategies, or it can have an indirect impact by affecting the type and intensity of stressors encountered or the efficacy of coping mechanisms (for a thorough discussion of models relating personality and coping, see Bolger & Zuckerman, 1995). Early childhood may see the onset of direct personality influences on coping, with the foundation for coping development being provided by biologically based appetitive, defensive, and attentional systems (Derryberry, Reed, & Pilkenton-Taylor, 2003).

Coping may also be indirectly impacted by Personality. The relationship between personality and coping may be partially explained by the personality on the frequency, severity, and type of stressors encountered, as coping is driven by stress-exposure, stress-reactivity, and situational demands. To control their own unpleasant arousal, those who are very reactive to stress or who encounter a lot of stressors may detach, although people that develop positive evaluation, have low stress reactivity, and encounter minimal stressors may be better suited to employ engagement coping (Connor-Smith et al., 2007).

CONCLUSION

This review examined how resilience functions as a mediator between coping style and personality type, highlighting implications for mental health therapies by combining data from psychological literature. Research indicates that a person's resilience level is determined by their choice of coping techniques, which is strongly influenced by their personality. While Type B personalities have more flexible coping mechanisms, Type A personalities are marked by hostility, impatience, and competition- frequently suffer with stress management. Resilience is directly impacted by coping mechanism effectiveness; task-oriented coping is associated with higher resilience, whereas emotion-oriented coping is associated with lower resilience (Campbell-Sills et al., 2006). Furthermore, resilience is a dynamic process influenced by personality qualities, social support, and cognitive flexibility rather than only being the results of coping (Kelle & Irak, 2018). Future researches should investigate the complex relationships that exist between resilience, coping mechanisms, and personality in various populations and phase of life. More insight into these connections can help guide focused therapies that support adaptive stress reduction and general health.

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Conflict of Interest

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