Impact of Perceived Emotional Support and Perceived Academic Stress on the Life Satisfaction of University Students

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Abstract

The study aimed to explore the impact of Perceived emotional Support and Perceived Academic Stress on the Life Satisfaction of university students. Simple random sampling technique was used to collect data from university students with selected sample size of 107 participants from Multan city. The data was collected through survey method. Three scales were used Perceived emotional Support Scale (Schwarzer & Schulz 2000), Perceived Academic Stress scale (Bedewy & Gabriel)and Satisfaction with Life (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) Scale to find the impact of Perceived emotional Support and Perceived Academic Stress on the Life Satisfaction. Statistical analysis was conducted through SPSS and the results indicated that perceived emotional support has positive correlation with perceived academic stress and life satisfaction. Area of this study was restricted to Multan. There was a time limitation. Future researches can include a large number of participants and also cover large research area. This study is significant in determining the predictors of life satisfaction of university students in the social framework of Pakistani society.

Key Words: Perceived emotional support, Perceived academic stress, Life satisfaction

1   Introduction

Academic related stress coupled with poor interpersonal relationships with friends and family is a crucial factor in relation to the psychological wellbeing of adolescents (Glozah, 2013). Emotional support refers to the perceived availability of loving, trustworthy people with whom one may share one's life experiences. It entails the supply of love, trust, empathy, and care, and is the most commonly considered kind of protection from the negative impacts of stressful situations (Cobb, 1976; Cohen & Wills, 1985; House, 1981). The researchers discovered that perceived support is a stronger predictor of mental health than real received assistance (McDowell & Serovich, 2007). Emotional support is frequently offered by a confidant or close friend, and it is linked to understanding, esteem, and decision-making assistance. In epidemiological research, perceived emotional support (beliefs that others can provide love and care, compassion and understanding, and/or respect and value) has been proven to be a strong predictor of health (Thoits, 1995).

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Several studies have asserted that the mere fact of being in a supportive social network of family and friends could directly improve general health and wellbeing (Uchino, 2004, Finch & Vega, 2003; as cited in Glozah, 2013). Emotional assistance also comprises active listening, empathy, legitimacy and active research into the experiences of troubled individuals (Burleson, 1984). In addition, because stress and emotional damage are often caused through the invalidation of the self, expressions of encouragement, appreciation, reassurance and respect commonly regarded as assessment, ego or assist for esteem can be perceived as forms of emotional support, at all directly (e.g., the refusal of a significant other) or indirectly (Rook & Underwood, 2000). As a result, emotional support tackles issues that are at the base of our being: our sense of ourselves, our aspirations, our dreams, anxieties, and our innermost feelings. Several theorists have viewed emotional support as a basic mechanism in intimate relationships as a result of this, among other things. Indeed, emotional support has long been considered a fundamental component of intimate personal relationships as well as a key factor of relationship happiness (Acitelli, 1996; Samter, 1994; Cunningham & Barbee, 2000; Weiss, 1974). According to various studies, emotional assistance is the most desired form of aid provided by intimate relationships (Cutrona & Russell, 1987; Xu & Burleson, 2001). Deficits in the amount and quality of spousal assistance are particularly indicative of relation unpleasure according to other research (Baxter, 1986).

Stress is a frequent health concern in today's culture (DazMartn, 2010 & Martn, 2007) and is described as a psycho-physiological process characterized by a negative emotional state (Gopal, Mondal, Gandhi, Arora, & Bhattacharjee, 2011). It's a frequent reaction to a physical threat or psychological discomfort that sets off a sequence of chemical and hormonal responses in the body (McEwen, & Stellar, 1993). Excessive stress may cause mental and physical issues, as well as influence a person's (in this situation, a student's) feeling of self-worth and academic performance (Niemi, & Vainiomäki, 1999; Silver, & Glicken, 1990). University students routinely express academic stress. Stressors include the perception of students of the quantity of information needed to perform a job and the belief that students do not have enough time to learn it. Life pleasure improves an individual's resilience and protects against negative lives affecting student health and well-being (Lane, 2016; Suldo & Huebner, 2004). In studying with college students in 17 nations in Diener (2000), pleasure and contentment of life were more essential for the majority of students than money. Civitci (2015), which is one of the most significant markers for psychological health and very beneficial for college students, also emphasized the importance of satisfied living.

2   Literature Review

These stresses may have an impact on his or her capacity to learn, academic achievement, and health (Al-Dabal, Koura, Rasheed, Al-Sowielem, & Makki, 2010). Group competition, job overload, an excess of responsibility, a lack of incentive, and difficulties with instructors and/or classmates are some of the stresses in the academic environment (Barraza, 2003). Exams, oral presentations, academic overload, a lack of time to complete academic activities, mandatory assignments, and group work have all been connected in the creation of academic stress in previous research (Polo, López, & Muoz, 1996). Finally, while social and economic stressors (Al-Dabal, Koura, Rasheed, Al-Sowielem, & Makki, 2010) are external to the academic environment, they have been shown to impact the levels of stress experienced by students. When students are exposed to excessive or negative stress, they have physical and psychological reactions (Thoits, 1995).

"An individual's subjective assessment of the degree to which his or her most essential needs, objectives, and wishes have been met" is how life satisfaction is described

(Frisch et al., 1992). Life satisfaction may be influenced by a variety of elements including education, family life, personality, heredity, economic situation, and social interactions. People who are satisfied with their lives feel better about them and show more positive emotions. According to Pavot and Diener (2004), the cognitive element of well-being is life satisfaction. The connections between emotional understanding and pleasure in life are found to be somewhat moderated by self-estimation and social support (Runcan & Iovu, 2013; Matheny, Curlette, & Roque-Tovar, 2008).

Just a few research studies focused on life happiness and medical students' management, despite growing emphasis on good psychological health and wellbeing in recent decades (Diener, 2000). One study has revealed that issue and emotional coping strategies in first year health students were connected to physical health, while another study has shown that engagement-based coping strategies predict that depression is less symptomatic than decomposition-based coping strategies (Park, & Adler, 2003; Mosley, Perrin, Neral, Dubbert, Grothues, & Pinto, 1994).

Jaime, Sidani, Lin, Bowman, and Brian in Primack published Perceived Emotional Support among US Adults in 2016. According to their results, less emotional support is associated to poor health results. One approach to increase emotional support is to engage with face-to-face social networks. However, it is unknown if participation in the rapidly expanding electronic social networks is also linked to higher emotional support. The objective of the study was for a broad nationally representative population to find out whether there was a connection between social media and emotions support. We gathered data from 1796 people in the United States between the ages of 19 and 32 in October 2014. We looked at the total time spent on social media and how often each of the 11 most popular social media platforms had been visited. In order to evaluate felt emotional support, the brief Patient Reported Outcome Message Information System (PROMIS) was employed. In the highest percentile of social media use (spending two or more hours each day), the risk of higher emotional support was considerably reduced, according to a multivariable model that included all socio demographic variables and accounted for survey weights (AOR 0.62, 95 percent CI 0.40, 0.94). However, it wasn't connected to emotional support in the greatest percentage for social media use as compared to those in the lowest quartile (AOR 0.70, 95 percent CI 0.45, 1.09).

Elsevier Ltd published a study in 2015 on perceived academic stress and personal happiness among university students. He noted that this research has two objectives. The first of them was to examine the way perceived stress and happiness with life varied due to the participation in college, major affiliation and extracurricular activity. The second aim was to examine whether college, major, and extracurricular activities have a moderating impact on the relationship between feeling stress and contentment in life. The study involved a total of 477 students from a public Turkish university. For the collection of data the perceived stress scale, lifecycle satisfaction, and a personal information form were utilized. MANCOVA's findings show that students with a high degree and significant qualifications had low perception of stress and a high degree of contentment. Moreover, it had minimal impact on their reported stresses and living satisfaction whether or not students engaged in extracurricular activities. On the other hand, students involved in out-of-school activities at a high level of college had less stress and greater happiness. According to results of the hierarchical regression analysis only college affiliations were able to moderate the link between felt stress and living satisfaction.

This study aims in finding the Impact of Perceived Emotional Support and Perceived

Academic Stress on the Life Satisfaction of University Students. The literature suggests that the perceived emotional support and perceived academic stress has a correlation with life satisfaction however the impact of Emotional Support and Perceived Academic Stress on the Life Satisfaction among university students will add to the existing literature and provide an insight in understanding this phenomenon among indigenous population of students. It will be beneficial in considering the emotional health and stressful factors among students as a determinant of life satisfaction.

3 Research Methodology and Data

3.1 Data Sources

Objectives of the Study

I. To find out the impact of Perceived Emotional Support on Life Satisfaction among university students.
II. To find out the impact of Perceived Academic Stress on Life Satisfaction among university students.
III. To find out demographic differences (gender, birth order) in terms of Perceived Emotional Support, Perceived Academic Stress and Life Satisfaction among university students.

3.2 Research Methodology

The current research design is based on survey research design.

Sampling Strategy

Participants were added through simple random sampling technique. Sample size was determined through G-power software a sample N= 107 were selected.

Measurement Scale

Perceived Emotional Support Scale There are four items in perceived emotional support (Schwarzer & Schulz 2000). The scale was created with theoretical concerns. For all subscales, the format for replying is the same: On a four-point scale, patients rate their agreement with the statements. Strongly disagree (1), somewhat disagree (2), somewhat agree (3), and strongly agree (4) are examples of possible endorsements (4). Negative objects must be changed around. Scale scores are calculated by combining item responses together (sum scores) or by calculating the scale mean score.

Perceived Academic Stress (PAS) Scale There are 18 items on the perceived academic stress scale (Bedewy & Gabriel). The creation and psychometric testing of a scale to evaluate the perceived sources of academic stress among undergraduate university students was part of the scale design. To describe sources of academic stress among university students, we created a list of specifications with three main components: (1) the academic expectations subscale (four questions), (2) workload and exams subscale (eight items), and (3) students' academic self-perceptions subscale (six items). The PAS was created by converting the components linked to these academic stresses into an 18-item, 5-point Liker type questionnaire. On a five-point Liker type scale, experts were asked to assess each item officially for its usefulness in evaluating academic stresses (1 = extremely irrelevant, 2 = irrelevant, 3 = slightly relevant, 4 = relevant, and 5 = strongly relevant).

Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) The Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons,

Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) is a 5-item scale designed to measure global cognitive judgments of one's life satisfaction (not a measure of either positive or negative affect). Participants used a 7-point scale ranging from 7 strongly agree to 1 strongly disagree to indicate how much they agree or disagree with each of the 5 items.

The present study aimed to collect data about perceived emotional support, perceived academic stress and life satisfaction among university students. After all the ethical consideration, the participants were surveyed and asked to fill the questionnaire. Students were told about the purpose of the research and all other ethical guidelines. The collected data was used for quantitative analysis through SPSS 20. Correlation, Regression, independent sample t-test, and one way ANOVA were used for evaluating the results

4   Results and Discussion

The main objective of study was to speculate the impact of perceived emotional support and perceived academic stress on the life satisfaction among university students. Initially descriptive analysis of demographic variables was carried out along on current sample. Correlation analysis, Regression analysis, t-test analysis and one way ANOVA was to run test study main hypothesis.

Table 1
Correlation analysis of Perceived Emotional Support and Perceived Academic Stress on Life Satisfaction of sample (N=107)

Scales	Perceived emotional support	Life satisfaction	Perceived Academic stress
Perceived emotional support	1	.486**	.297*
Life satisfaction		1	.336**
Perceived Academic stress			1

Note: N = 107 *p< = 0.05, **p< = 0.01

Table 1 illustrated that there is a significant positive correlation between perceived emotional support and perceived academic stress on life satisfaction.

Table 2
Regression analysis showing impact of Perceived Emotional Support on Life Satisfaction.

Predictors	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	P
(Constant)	10.255	2.181		4.701	.000***
Perceived emotional support	1.031	.181	.486	5.703	.000***

Note: R^2 = .236, Adjusted R^2 = .229, (F = 32.522, p<_ 0.001***)

Table 2 show the significant impact of perceived emotional support on life satisfaction

Table 3
Regression analysis showing impact of Perceived Academic Stress on Life Satisfaction.

Predictors	*B*	*Std. Error*	*Beta*	*T*	*P*
(Constant)	7.232	4.187		1.727	.087
Perceived academic stress	.263	.072	.336	3.651	.000***

Note: R^2 = .113 Adjusted R^2 = .104, (F = 13.332, p>_ 0.05*)

Table 3 show the significant impact of perceived academic stress on life satisfaction.

Table 4
Mean, standard deviation and t-value of (gender) on perceived emotional support and perceived academic stress on the life satisfaction of sample (N=107).

Scales	Gender	N	M	SD	T	P	Cohen's d
Perceived Emotional Support	Male	61	12.43	2.506	3.032	.003**	0.593
	Female	46	10.96	2.449			
Life Satisfaction	Male	61	23.23	5.527	1.804	.074	
	Female	46	21.33	5.233			
Perceived Academic stress	Male	61	58.56	6.757	1.423	.158	
	Female	46	56.63	7.169			

N=107, df =105, *p<0.05, p>0.05

The results illustrated that there is a significant difference in terms of Perceived Emotional Support between Males and Females and there is no significant difference in term of Perceived Academic stress and life satisfaction between Males and Females.

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Table 5
One Way Analysis of Variance of scores of (birth order) on perceived emotional support and perceived academic stress on the life satisfaction of sample (N=107).

Scales	Sum of variance	SS	df	MS	F	P
Perceived Emotional Support	Between Groups	15.594	2	7.797	1.179	.312
	Within Groups	687.883	104	6.614		
	Total	703.477	106			
Life Satisfaction	Between Groups	5.032	2	2.516	.083	.920
	Within Groups	3154.875	104	30.335		
	Total	3159.907	106			
Perceived academic stress	Between Groups	60.555	2	30.278	.619	.541
	Within Groups	5088.585	104	48.929		
	Total	5149.140	106			

Note: p>0.05

Table 5 shows that there is no significant difference in terms of Perceived Emotional Support and Perceived Academic stress on Life Satisfaction of university students.

The first hypothesis of this study was there would be a positive correlation between perceived emotional support and perceived academic stress on life satisfaction of university students. The results accept this hypothesis and reveal that there is a significant positive relationship between perceived emotional support and perceived academic stress on life satisfaction of university students (table 1).The second hypothesis of this study was that there would be a positive impact of perceived emotional support on life satisfaction of university students. The results accept this hypothesis and reveal that there is a significant impact of perceived emotional support on life satisfaction (table 2).

The third hypothesis of this study was that there would be a positive impact of perceived academic stress on life satisfaction of university students. The results accept this hypothesis and reveal that there is a significant impact of perceived academic stress on life satisfaction (table 3).The fourth hypothesis of this study was that there would be difference among perceived emotional support and perceived academic stress on life satisfaction in term of demographic variable (gender). The results accept this hypothesis and showed a significant difference in terms of perceived emotional support between male and female. Males have level of perceived emotional support as compared to females. The results reject this hypothesis and revealed that there is insignificant difference in terms of perceived academic stress and life satisfaction between males and females (table 4).

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The fifth hypothesis of this study was that there would be difference among perceived emotional support and perceived academic stress on life satisfaction in term of demographic variable (birth order). The results reject this hypothesis and revealed that there is insignificant difference in terms of perceived emotional support and perceived academic stress on life satisfaction (table 5).

5   Conclusion

The research examines the influence on the life happiness of university students of the perceived psychological support and perceived academic stress. The results all led to the conclusion that the emotional support felt and academic stress on the satisfaction of university students are significantly beneficial. The perceived emotional support and academic stress have a substantial influence on life happiness. But perceived emotional support affects life happiness more than the university students' reported academic stress.The results show that there is no distinction between perceived academic stress and gender satisfaction. While in case of perceived emotional support males show high level of perceived emotional support than females. The results highlight that there is no difference between perceived emotional support and perceived academic stress on life satisfaction in term of (birth order)**.**

The area of the study was just restricted to a city. There was limited time duration to reach for extensive population and adding more universities for targeting population. Future researches can explore the phenomenon at a more advanced level by studying the mediators and moderators. The area of the study may be extended on a cross cultural level.

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