



PERSONALITY TRAITS, COPING STRATEGIES, AND SELF-EFFICACY AMONG TOURISM MANAGEMENT STUDENTS

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Abstract

This study delved into the complex relationship between self-efficacy, coping skills, and personality traits among Tourism college students, all of whom experienced the disruptive effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Through the administration of three key questionnaires—the New General Self-Efficacy Scale, the Brief COPE Inventory, and the Big Five Inventory—the participants' self-perceptions and coping mechanisms were assessed. The findings revealed that individual personality traits played a significant role in determining the effectiveness of coping strategies employed by students. A strong correlation was identified among self-efficacy, coping skills, and various personality dimensions. These results suggest that institutions facing similar challenges could benefit from tailoring their support systems and educational approaches to align with the unique needs and characteristics of their students, as highlighted by this study. By implementing strategies informed by these insights, educational institutions can better equip students with the tools and support necessary to thrive in challenging circumstances, ultimately fostering a more conducive learning environment.

Keywords: *personality traits, coping skills, self-efficacy*

Introduction

In light of the challenges associated with implementing online learning during the pandemic, it is crucial to acknowledge the significance of psychological factors. A study by Liu et al. (2020, as cited in Talsma et al., 2020) suggests that academic environments undergo substantial modifications in cognition, behavior, and emotions in response to the ongoing pandemic, which is perceived as a stressor. De Guzman (2021) documented instances wherein certain students complained of fatigue during their engagement in distance learning. On the other hand, Joaquin et al. (2020) referenced a petition that both students and parents endorsed, requesting that the Commission discontinue online programs on Higher Education (CHED). However, as reported by Rotas and Cahapay (2021), some students managed to surmount the challenges of remote learning through the maintenance of familial connections, participation in extracurricular activities to relieve stress, and self-motivation. Students' academic achievement differences may be attributed to their coping strategies; scholarly investigations have distinguished students who employ problem-focused coping strategies from those who employ dysfunctional or emotion-focused coping strategies. Furthermore, Talsma et al. (2021) posited that during the pandemic, pupils may have been vulnerable to detrimental impacts on their self-efficacy. The findings of De Guzman (2021) indicate that 66 percent of students believe online learning hurts their knowledge.

Students' responses to the pandemic are diverse, notwithstanding the challenges they have confronted. The underlying cause postulated to be consistent personality traits has been proposed. McCrae and Costa delineate the five personality characteristics: conscientiousness, openness, extraversion, neuroticism, and agreeableness. These characteristics possess the capacity to predict other qualities, and every individual exhibits unique patterns of these characteristics. An analysis of personality traits may yield significant insights regarding supplementary attributes of learners, including but not limited to their self-efficacy and coping strategies. Because of this, focusing simply on incorporating online learning as a method to maintain education in the epidemic would be a one-dimensional approach. Furthermore, psychological characteristics such as self-efficacy, personality traits, and coping mechanisms must be considered. These factors are critical in guaranteeing that students have a productive learning experience, especially during periods of crisis, despite being frequently disregarded.

The study examined the correlation between personality characteristics and the coping abilities and self-efficacy of students. The students were assessed in light of various challenges that were identified and the responses of their peers. Further investigation was required as a result of the substantial alterations in the educational system and the scarcity of literature pertaining to the topic brought about by the abrupt commencement of the COVID-19 pandemic. The investigation was instrumental in laying the groundwork for the

strategic course of action, which aimed to bolster the institution's ability to provide a transformative learning environment during the pandemic.

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to analyze the association between personality traits, self-efficacy, and the ability to cope with stress among 128 college students. Pearson correlation analysis was employed for this evaluation. Bhandari (2022) defines correlational research as a quantitative method that explores relationships between variables using regression and correlation analysis without controlling or altering the independent variable. This design surpassed the minimum requirement for examining variable relationships. The study used three surveys to assess determinants. The preliminary survey employed the Big Five Inventory (BFI) by Oliver P. John, which uses a five-point Likert scale to evaluate five personality dimensions across 44 items. The BFI showed a corrected convergent validity of 0.95 and maintained a reliability of 0.83. The second survey used the Brief COPE, developed by Charles S. Carver, Ph.D., consisting of 28 items across 14 questions to assess coping mechanisms. The findings highlighted the intricate relationships between personality traits, self-efficacy, and stress-coping capacities among the participants.

Result and Discussion

Significant Relationship between Self-Efficacy, Coping Skills, and Personality

The study unveiled a noteworthy correlation between students' personality traits and their coping skills and self-efficacy. This finding underscores the importance of understanding how individual traits influence one's ability to manage stress and belief in their capabilities. Students with certain personality characteristics may be more adept at handling stressful situations and have higher levels of self-efficacy, which can positively impact their academic and personal lives. Recognizing these connections can inform interventions and support strategies aimed at enhancing students' coping mechanisms and self-beliefs, ultimately contributing to their overall well-being and success.

Table 1. *Relationship between the variables*

Variable		Personality Traits
Self-Efficacy	Pearson Correlation	.790
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.042**
	N	128
Coping Skills	Pearson Correlation	.690
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.038**
	N	128

Conclusion

The study's findings have significant implications for the personality traits, self-efficacy, and coping abilities of college students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Students' willingness to engage in new educational opportunities amidst the pandemic demonstrates their adaptability, contrasting with their usual preference for traditional activities. Additionally, students demonstrate conscientiousness through their academic performance and engagement in relevant activities, which helps them cope with distractions. Extraversion is evident in their enthusiastic demeanor and influence over peers, especially during the crisis, reducing tendencies towards timidity. Agreeableness is reflected in their concern for others' feelings, despite occasional empathy lapses, while neuroticism may lead to anxiety and difficulty maintaining calm. Problem-focused coping involves utilizing available resources and seeking guidance, while emotion-focused coping includes accepting the past and finding humor in negative experiences. Some students engage in counterproductive behaviors as maladaptive coping mechanisms. Personality traits like openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism are associated with adopting dysfunctional coping mechanisms. While conscientiousness is not a strong predictor of emotional coping, agreeableness negatively impacts the adoption of ineffective coping methods. Students exhibit high self-efficacy, especially evident in their positive problem-solving approach and confidence in academic achievements compared to peers. Openness, extraversion, and conscientiousness influence self-efficacy levels, while agreeableness and neuroticism are less reliable indicators. A strategic plan is recommended to support students' academic goals during crises, incorporating strategies to enhance calmness, stress management, and time management skills, which can be integrated into academic protocols and physical education curricula for broader benefits.

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