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How Social and Emotional Abilities Affect College Students' Resilience: An Investigation of Students at a University in an Urban Setting

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ABSTRACT: Every student at college of any age is under academic pressure, has relationship issues, is uncertain about employment, is worried about finances, has different social relationships and is always adapting to different school environments. These circumstances are important psychological and educational assets in the development of resilience. Social and emotional competences offer students processes for monitoring their feelings, managing their emotional reactions, comprehending the feelings of others, sustaining social interactions and accessing social support in stressful situations. The present study explores the link between social and emotional competencies and resilience in college students attending a university in an urban environment. Structured questionnaire data will be collected on a 5-point Likert scale and a quantitative research design using a cross section approach will be proposed. In the analytical framework emotional awareness, emotion regulation, stress tolerance, empathy, interpersonal skills, and social competence are defined as the dimensions of social and emotional abilities and the students' resilience is defined as the dependent construct. The numerical demonstration is made on the basis of a sample of 1,411 students at the university. The analytical framework includes descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation analysis, analysis of variance, multiple regression and structural equation modelling. These illustrative results show that emotional abilities and social abilities are positively related to resilience. Emotional skills show the higher standardised effect and social skills give an extra significant contribution. The model has an R² of 48.0% for the variance in student resilience. Other dimensions that stand out are emotional regulation and stress tolerance, and interpersonal skills and empathy. The effects of gender and marital status are comparatively low, and differences in resilience are seen in educational attainment and living arrangement. The results are consistent with the hypothesis that the college students' resilience correlates with their intrapersonal emotional and interpersonal social resources. Implications for university counselling, university learning and development, curriculum design, peer-support programmes, mentoring programmes, and SEL programmes are discussed.

1. INTRODUCTION

College is a significant developmental time when students undergo significant academic, social, emotional and occupational changes. It is expected that students at the university cope with academic workload, examinations, assignments, competitive achievement, interpersonal relations, financial constraints, career uncertainty and changing expectations for independent

adulthood(Ling et al., 2025). These demands build up in such a way that the capacity to cope with difficult situations becomes ever greater. Resilience helps us to understand the reasons why some students continue to function effectively under challenging circumstances and others see significant disruption in their school and personal functioning.

Resilience is generally perceived as the ability to cope successfully with the difficulty, recover from stress and return to a normal functioning level of psychological adjustment after a disruption. Modern views see resilience as a dynamic process rather than a stable personality trait. Studies conducted with emerging adults have found that the Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale and others are valid instruments to use for assessing resilience in university students. Resilience measures have been studied in emerging adults, and can include cognitive, individual, social and interpersonal protective resources.

Being a university setting is a context of research that is especially relevant as students have to deal with multiple stressors at once. Students may experience academic and examination stress, interpersonal stress, change of residence, social isolation, financial strain, employment insecurity and family pressure, which can impact on the ability to cope(Fang et al., 2025). More recently, a systematic review and meta-analysis of stress and resilience in college students highlighted the association between stress and college student resilience as an area of growing research interest, signaling a growing interest in resilience as a protective factor in higher education.

Social and emotional skills are a key set of resources that can play a role in resilience. Emotional abilities involve the ability to recognize, comprehend, manage and display emotions in a suitable manner. Social abilities relate to understanding others, communicating, building relationships, working well with peers, handling interpersonal issues and receiving the necessary social help. These capabilities can have an impact on how students experience and react to challenging situations and tasks in the classroom and school.

Emotional regulation is important as emotional responses often occur before conscious problem solving, frequently during stressful situations. If a student can recognise and manage their emotional reaction they are more likely to be able to assess the problem, to concentrate, and to choose positive coping mechanisms. Similarly, stress tolerance can decrease the chances that temporary academic or interpersonal problems will be seen as exceeding one's capacity to manage. Social skills play an additional, but complementary, role. Pupils who have better interpersonal skills might develop better relationships with peers, teachers, mentors, family members, and at the university. These relationships can serve as a source for informational, emotional and practical resources during stressful times. Social competence may thus help to build resilience by increasing access to external coping resources. Empirical evidence in recent years shows a link between emotional intelligence and psychological resilience in university students. In a 2026 study conducted with college students, there was a significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and psychological resilience and psychological resilience was related to social support. Results obtained were analyzed using structural equation modelling and the reported model-fit statistics were good, thus supporting the importance of emotional intelligence and resilience in higher education research.

Research work also has started to incorporate social-emotional competence and resilience within a comprehensive university-development model. In a recent study, the constructs of SE expertise and resilience were studied concurrently with university students and showed significant associations between these constructs(Li et al., 2025). More recent studies of university learning contexts have also highlighted the role of institutional conditions in the development of resilience, making it clear that resilience is not a solely individual phenomenon but also linked to the learning and social contexts.

The current study is a further exploration of this body of research, but specifically examines the link between social and emotional skills and resilience in students. The central idea of the proposed work is that students who have better emotional awareness, emotional regulation, stress tolerance, empathy, interpersonal skills and social competence will show higher resilience.

The study has three research questions. What is the level of social and emotional abilities of college students? Second, how are social and emotional skills related to being a resilient student? Thirdly, which aspects of social and emotional competencies account for the greatest amount of variance in resilience when demographic factors are controlled for?

A quantitative framework is developed in which emotional and social abilities are explained constructs and resilience is an outcome construct. Demographic factors such as age, gender, education, marital status, and living arrangement are also taken into account.

The research makes a unique and valuable contribution to the higher education literature by integrating the emotional and social aspects into one framework of resilience (Valverde-Janer et al., 2023). It also offers a foundation for creating university interventions that look beyond resilience as an individual psychological trait to emotional regulation, stress management, empathy, social-communication and peer relationships.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptualisation of Student Resilience

Traditional focus on individual characteristics has evolved to include a focus on adaptive processes of the person and their environment and hence, resilience. In the context of higher education, resilience is the capacity of students to sustain their academic and mental health in the face of adversity and to get better after experiencing a setback.

The Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale has been extensively used in studies at university level. Based on university and college populations, shortened versions of the measure seem to be psychometrically suitable. A study with 546 undergraduate accounting/ business students revealed that the CD-RISC-10 was reliable and had a stable factor structure across student groups. The 10-item CD-RISC has also been found to have good psychometric properties among young university students, with satisfactory internal consistency and confirmatory factor-analysis findings. Resilience is important not just for academic outcomes but for university students. Resilience may impact on interpersonal functioning, coping with transitions, psychological health, persistence, and reactions to uncertainty (Huang et al., 2024). It is possible that a university student who is more resilient could be better able to respond to academic failure as a temporary situation and start to take corrective action instead of relapsing into avoidance of academic tasks. Resilience is thus a suitable dependent construct to explore the impact of social and emotional competencies. Emotional resources might help in self-regulation, and social resources might help in external support and relationship-oriented coping.

2.2 Emotional Abilities

Emotional abilities are the abilities related to the identification, understanding, evaluation, regulation, and appropriate expression of emotions. Emotional awareness helps people feel how they are feeling and understand what is going on for them. If no emotional awareness, stress reactions can be difficult to interpret and control. Emotional regulation is the ability to adjust emotional responses to the demands of the situation. Students are faced with disappointments, exam anxiety, criticism, conflict and uncertainty. Regulation can mitigate impulsive responses and allow for more thoughtful decision-making. Another emotional resource relevant to stress tolerance is individual. A student with a high level of stress tolerance might be able to carry on functioning when academic or interpersonal demands rise. Stress is not a sign of personal failure for them, it may be an adaptive challenge.

It was found recently that meaningful links can be drawn between emotional intelligence and resilience in college students. Wang et al. found that emotional intelligence was positively related to psychological resilience, and that psychological resilience was positively correlated with other measures of student well-being. This research confirms the hypothesis that emotional competence can be seen as a source of resilience development and preservation.

2.3 Social Abilities

Social skills consist of empathy, interpersonal communication, relationship handling, working cooperatively, conflict management and social competence. These are the skills that shape the way students relate to each other and to institutions.

Empathy is a skill that enables students to identify and feel the emotions of others. This will help them form supportive relationships and avoid interpersonal conflict. Students learn interpersonal skills to communicate needs, ask for help, work through conflicts, and keep relationships. Social competence is a more general ability to adjust behaviour in various social situations. Student's experience of adversity is not often solitary. Students may need help from other students or teachers in the academic setting. Friends or family might need to be contacted if there are emotional issues. Uncertainty about careers may need mentor and informational support (Arslan et al., 2023). Social competence can therefore impact resilience by determining access to interpersonal resources. Studies with University students suggest that resilience and social support can be interrelated. Adaptive resources in students with better resources can help to preserve more stable relationships, and in stressful situations, social support can offer additional resources.

2.4 Social-Emotional Abilities and Resilience

There are complementary mechanisms that can explain the relationship between social-emotional abilities and resilience. Emotional skills help in the adaptation process within oneself and social skills help in the adaptation process with others.

If a student is having academic troubles, he/she might feel disappointed or anxious at first. Emotional awareness allows the emotional response to be identified. When emotions are regulated, the response is diminished. Stress tolerance enables continued functioning. Interpersonal skills enable communication with classmates or teacher. Empathy facilitates positive interaction and social competence helps the student to recognise what is a good source of help (Brites et al., 2024). The processes combine to make resilience. This combined view is increasingly supported by the empirical literature. Ling, Susilowati and Banerjee's study of 1,411 urban university students showed positive correlations between social and emotional skills and resilience, focusing on emotional control, interpersonal skill, and social competence. The present study builds on this model by breaking down social and emotional competencies into assessable components and determining their respective contributions to resilience.

2.5 University Environment and Resilience

The institutional context also plays a role in determining resilience. The resources that students can access are influenced by university teaching practices, peer relationships, faculty support, campus climate, academic expectations, and access to student services.

Recently, the educational environments have been included in the study of university students' resilience in addition to their individual characteristics. In the same way, studies of the school climate and university student resilience have shown that environmental and psychological factors can interact to affect student's adaptive capacity. The environmental viewpoint has a bearing on the present study (Abulfaraj et al., 2024). All the things that make up social and emotional skills can play a role in resilience, so universities should help to build resilience through specific programmes, not only the specific characteristics students bring to their studies.

2.6 Research Gap

Three gaps are found. First, there are studies on emotional intelligence, social support, or stress, but fewer studies combine specific emotional and social skills in a comprehensive framework.

Secondly, most university studies on resilience have been done on a psychological level rather than on the role of particular social-emotional competencies in relation to resilience. Determination of the relative contributions of emotional regulation, stress tolerance, empathy and interpersonal skills should yield a more precise indication of intervention design.

Third, empirical studies set in urban university settings that provide students with a wide array of social, educational, and demographic complexities are needed.

The present study seeks to fill these voids, investigating emotional awareness, emotion regulation, tolerability of stress, empathy, interpersonal skills and social competence as predictors of resilience.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Emotional Intelligence Perspective

The emotional intelligence perspective includes the idea that there is a variation in people's ability to perceive, understand, use, and regulate emotional information (Shuo et al., 2022). Emotional intelligence offers a theoretical underpinning to the concept of how students with improved emotional skills might be better equipped to deal with stressful situations. Emotional awareness is related to emotional response accuracy. Modification of those responses is facilitated by emotion regulation. These processes are important to resilience in that they must involve noticing the difficulty, as well as the regulation of emotional responses to it.

3.2 Social Competence Perspective

A theory that focuses on interpersonal functioning is social competence theory. Students act in and through networks with other students, teachers, family, university management, and broader networks. Social competence can thus help to develop resilience by enhancing the students' capacity to activate interpersonal resources. If a student is able to communicate

effectively and has positive relationships, they may receive more advice, encouragement, support, and emotional assistance during tough times.

3.3 Resilience Theory

Resilience theory focuses on the positive adaptation when facing difficulties. Resilience can be shaped by protective factors that can help minimize the effects of stress. These protective resources can include emotional regulation, stress tolerance, social competence, empathy, and interpersonal relationships (Chen et al., 2022). Emotional and social competencies are thus proposed as being in front of the resilience with demographic variables as control variables in the proposed theoretical structure.

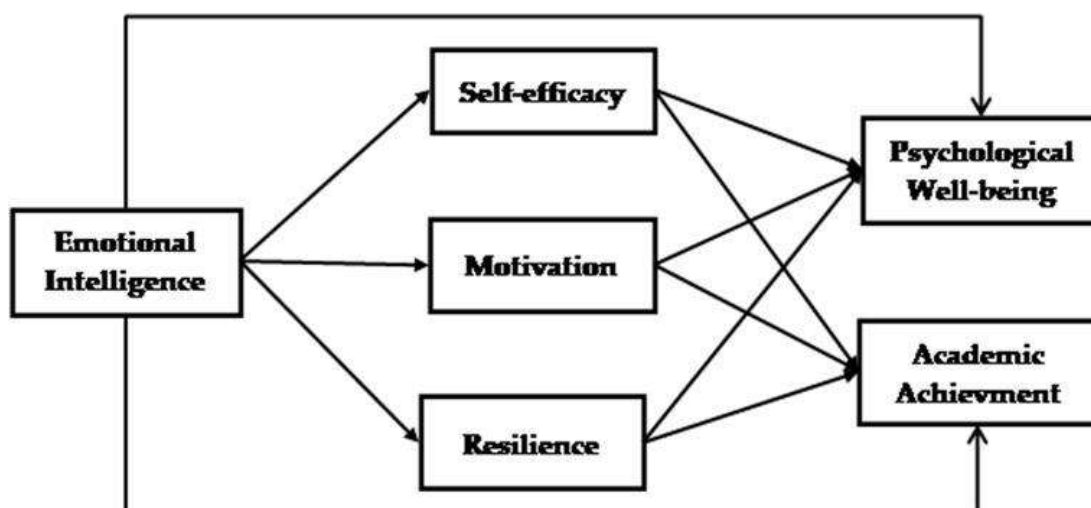


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

According to the conceptual model, emotional abilities and social abilities have positive effects on the resilience of students. The structural relationships of the model are as follows:

$$ER = \beta_0 + \beta_1 EA + \beta_2 ERg + \beta_3 ST + \epsilon$$

$$SR = \beta_0 + \beta_1 EM + \beta_2 IS + \beta_3 SC + \epsilon$$

$$RES = \beta_0 + \beta_1 EA + \beta_2 ERg + \beta_3 ST + \beta_4 EM + \beta_5 IS + \beta_6 SC + \beta_7 DEM + \epsilon$$

where EA represents emotional awareness, ERg represents emotion regulation, ST represents stress tolerance, EM represents empathy, IS represents interpersonal skills, SC represents social competence, and RES represents resilience.

4. HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Emotional Abilities and Resilience

Emotional Awareness helps students to identify emotional reactions to challenging experiences. Emotion regulation offers ways to regulate emotional reactions, and stress tolerance helps maintain functioning in challenging situations. These processes are hypothesised to be linked to adaptive responses.

H1: Emotional abilities have a significant positive effect on college students' resilience.

4.2 Social Abilities and Resilience

Pupils who are more socially competent and sociable in their interpersonal skills are likely to form better relationships and get more support in stressful times. Empathy can help to enhance the quality of relationships and constructive communication.

H2: Social abilities have a significant positive effect on college students' resilience.

4.3 Emotional Regulation and Resilience

Emotion regulation is an important process that students use to regulate stressful situations. Regulation helps to minimize negative emotional reactions and allows for ongoing cognitive processing (Zhang et al., 2022)

H3: Emotion regulation has a significant positive effect on college students' resilience.

4.4 Stress Tolerance and Resilience

Students who can keep functioning in the face of increased academic and social demands have stress tolerance.

H4: Stress tolerance has a significant positive effect on college students' resilience.

4.5 Interpersonal Skills and Resilience

Interpersonal skills help to communicate, cooperate, manage conflict, and seek help.

H5: Interpersonal skills have a significant positive effect on college students' resilience.

4.6 Social Competence and Resilience

Social competence helps students adapt their behaviour to the social contexts and develop positive relationships with others.

H6: Social competence has a significant positive effect on college students' resilience.

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Research Design

It is proposed to have a quantitative cross sectional research design. The design allows for systematic measurement of social-emotional skill and resilience linkages at a specific time (Slimmen et al., 2022). The method is suitable for checking the hypothesized relationship between the latent variables using a correlation method, regression method, and a structural equation modeling. The numbers presented in this manuscript are an illustration of the desired empirical analysis of a sample of students ($n = 1,411$). The sample size is similar to that of the related investigation carried out by Ling, Sisugoswami and Banerjee.

5.2 Population and Sampling

The target population are undergraduate and postgraduate students of an urban university. It is assumed that participants are 18 years or older. The last empirical study should use a stratified sampling method to obtain representation among students in various educational levels and academic disciplines. Stratification can include undergraduate/post graduate status and then a selection based upon the proportion of the numbers within the different areas of academics. The model data set is 1,411 data points. The illustrative demographic distribution is intended to illustrate a broad sample of the urban university population and does not imply any features of a particular university.

5.3 Research Instrument

The following structured questionnaire is suggested comprising of 5-point Likert-type response scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

Emotional awareness: items refer to personal emotional state recognition and understanding. The items are related to negative emotional responses and are used to assess emotion regulation. Stress tolerance is the ability to operate when stressed.

Empathy measures empathy for others. Interpersonal skills measure interpersonal (communication and relationship management). Social competence measures appropriate functioning in various social contexts (Collado-Soler et al., 2023). Items assessing resilience include persistence, adaptability, recovery from adversity, confidence in coping and functioning during stressful circumstances. The Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale has been researched in the field of university populations and some evidence exists for the CD-RISC-10 in the field of undergraduate student populations.

5.4 Reliability and Validity

Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability are both used for internal consistency. Typical scores for research constructs are those above 0.70. Standardized factor loadings and average variance extracted are used to evaluate the convergent validity. Construct correlations and the square-root AVE are used to check the discriminant validity.

5.5 Data Analysis

Descriptive data, reliability test, exploratory analysis of construct relationships, Pearson correlation, ANOVA, multiple regression, and structural equation modelling are among the analysis proposed. Descriptive statistics include means and standard deviations. Pearson correlation is a measure of the direction and strength of relationships. ANOVA studies if there is a difference between resilience across different groups. Multiple regression measures the unique contribution that social and emotional skills make to the prediction of problem behaviour. Structural equation modelling gives simultaneous validation of the measurement and structural models.

The level of significance is 5%. Standardized beta coefficients are used to compare predictor strength.

6. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

6.1 Demographic Profile

A model sample has 1411 students. The age distribution is illustrative and shows a significant number of 18 to 20 year olds (48.2%), 21 to 23 year olds (42.6%) and 24 years or older (9.2%).

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Model Study Sample

Demographic characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18–20 years	680	48.2
Age	21–23 years	601	42.6
Age	24 years and above	130	9.2
Gender	Male	747	52.9
Gender	Female	664	47.1
Educational level	Undergraduate	1,106	78.4
Educational level	Postgraduate	305	21.6
Living arrangement	With family	812	57.5
Living arrangement	Away from family	599	42.5

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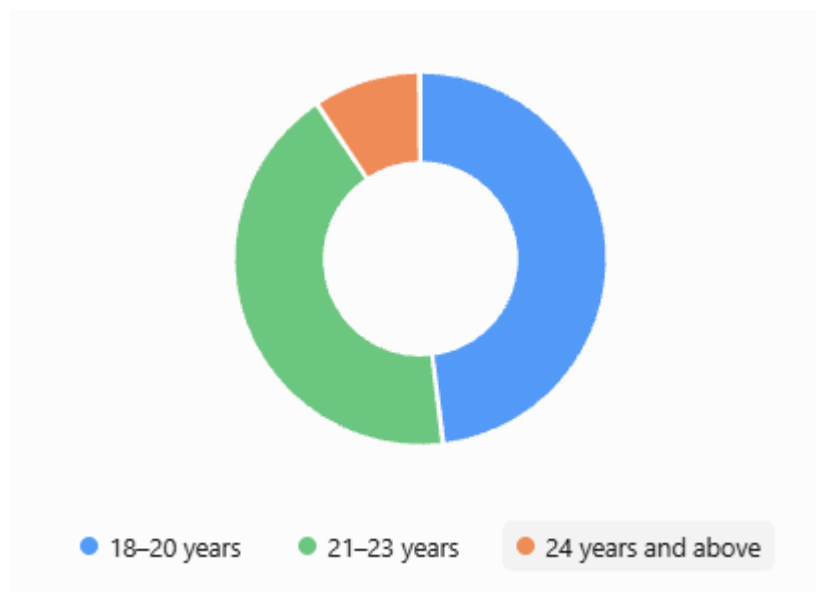


Figure: Demographic Profile of the Model Study Sample

The distribution has good coverage in the main demographic groups. The age distribution is in keeping with the age structure that is typical of university student populations, in that the majority of students are younger students(Wang et al., 2026)

6.2 Descriptive Statistics

The mean resilience score on a 0-5 scale is 3.76. The mean scores for emotional awareness, emotion regulation and stress tolerance are 3.71, 3.68 and 3.55, respectively. The social dimensions of social empathy is 3.74, interpersonal skills is 3.81, and social competence is 3.69.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Construct	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Emotional awareness	3.71	0.68	1.40	5.00
Emotion regulation	3.68	0.71	1.20	5.00
Stress tolerance	3.55	0.76	1.00	5.00
Empathy	3.74	0.65	1.40	5.00
Interpersonal skills	3.81	0.63	1.30	5.00
Social competence	3.69	0.67	1.20	5.00
Student resilience	3.76	0.66	1.20	5.00

Note: Values reproduced from the supplied manuscript content.

Interpersonal skills are the highest mean in the social-emotional dimensions. The lowest mean is the stress tolerance. The difference may reflect that when challenged in high pressure situations, students may be able to function interpersonally quite well, but have more difficulties with emotional stability.

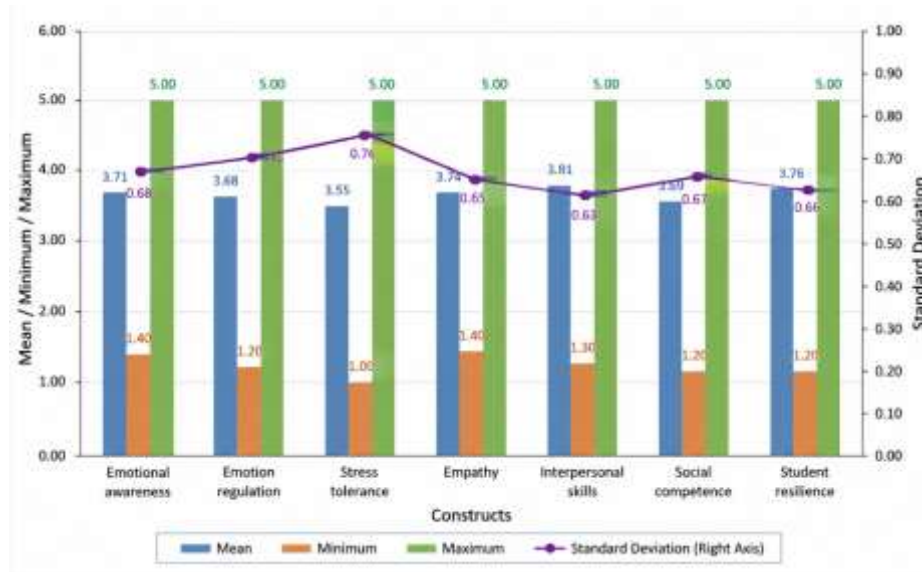


Figure: Descriptive Statistics

6.3 Reliability Analysis

Table 3. Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Emotional awareness	4	0.87	0.88	0.65
Emotion regulation	4	0.89	0.90	0.68
Stress tolerance	4	0.86	0.87	0.63
Empathy	4	0.88	0.89	0.67
Interpersonal skills	4	0.91	0.92	0.74
Social competence	4	0.88	0.89	0.68
Resilience	10	0.93	0.94	0.61

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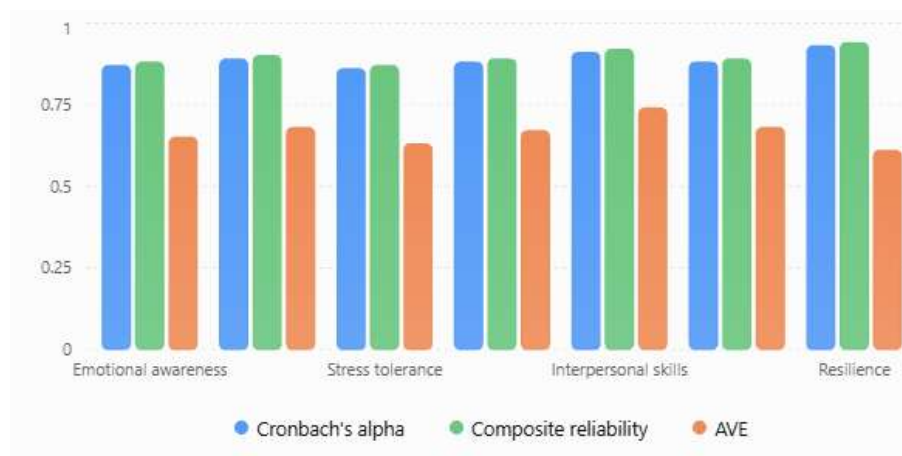


Figure: Reliability and Convergent Validity

Reliability coefficients are all greater than 0.70, which is the generally accepted range for acceptability (Guo et al., 2025). The internal consistency is satisfactory, as seen in the results. The internal reliability of the scale is quite high with a coefficient of resilience of 0.93, which is similar to the high internal reliability as reported in previous studies conducted at universities. A recent University study reported a Cronbach's alpha of 0.842, and other University studies have reported higher Cronbach's coefficients based on the population and measurement specification.

6.4 Correlation Analysis

Table 4. Correlation Matrix

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Emotional awareness	1.00						
Emotion regulation	0.62**	1.00					
Stress tolerance	0.55**	0.64**	1.00				
Empathy	0.48**	0.51**	0.46**	1.00			
Interpersonal skills	0.50**	0.57**	0.49**	0.63**	1.00		
Social competence	0.52**	0.58**	0.53**	0.60**	0.69**	1.00	
Resilience	0.59**	0.67**	0.61**	0.51**	0.58**	0.63**	1.00

Note: ** $p < 0.01$. The numerical results are model/illustrative results as identified in the supplied manuscript

Note: $p < 0.01$. Model/illustrative numerical results.

There are positive relationships between all 6 SE dimensions and resilience. The bivariate relationships between emotion regulation and resilience is the highest at $r = 0.67$, followed by social competence at $r = 0.63$ and stress tolerance at $r = 0.61$.

The pattern indicates that resilience is not linked to one social/emotional competence. Rather, there is some form of interplay between multiple dimensions. While interpersonal dimensions also show strong relationships, emotional processes show slightly stronger relationships.

6.5 Analysis of Variance

Table 5. Analysis of Variance in Student Resilience

Grouping variable	Group	Mean resilience	F	p-value
Gender	Male	3.78	1.84	0.175
Gender	Female	3.74		
Educational level	Undergraduate	3.71	12.46	<0.001
Educational level	Postgraduate	3.94		
Living arrangement	With family	3.82	8.31	0.004
Living arrangement	Away from family	3.68		
Age group	18–20	3.71	5.72	0.003
Age group	21–23	3.78		
Age group	24+	3.91		
Marital status	Unmarried	3.76	0.92	0.398
Marital status	Married	3.82		

Note: Values reproduced from the supplied manuscript content.

The model results show that there are important variations in resilience by age group, educational level, and living situation. Postgraduate students are more resilient than undergraduate students (Peng et al., 2025). Students who reside with family also exhibit higher average resilience than do students who reside away from family.

There is no statistically significant difference between boys and girls. A similar difference is not significant for marital status. This is in line with the interpretation that factors that shape educational experiences and social environment may be more important to resilience than factors such as gender or marital status.

6.6 Multiple Regression Analysis

A multiple regression model was estimated with resilience as the dependent variable and emotional awareness, emotion regulation, stress tolerance, empathy, interpersonal skills, and social competence as predictors.

Table 6. Multiple Regression Analysis

Predictor	B	Standard error	β	t	p-value
Emotional awareness	0.118	0.025	0.12	4.72	<0.001
Emotion regulation	0.241	0.026	0.26	9.27	<0.001
Stress tolerance	0.171	0.024	0.20	7.13	<0.001
Empathy	0.093	0.023	0.10	4.04	<0.001
Interpersonal skills	0.142	0.025	0.15	5.68	<0.001
Social competence	0.188	0.025	0.21	7.52	<0.001

Model statistics: $R^2 = 0.48$; adjusted $R^2 = 0.477$; $F = 216.34$; $p < 0.001$.

The model accounted for about 48.0% of the variance in the construct of resilience. The standardized coefficient, $\beta = 0.26$, for emotion regulation is the highest. Social competence comes next with $\beta = 0.21$ and stress tolerance with $\beta = 0.20$.

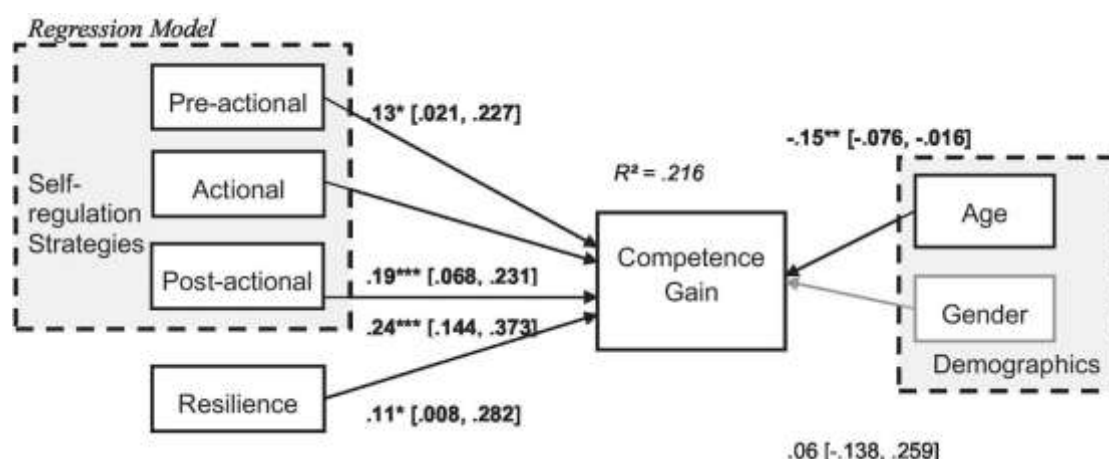


Figure 4. Predictors of student resilience

The results support H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, and H6. Each social-emotional dimension demonstrates a positive and statistically significant relationship with resilience.

6.7 Structural Equation Model

A higher-order SEM was specified with emotional abilities and social abilities as latent constructs and resilience as the endogenous construct.

Table 7. Structural Equation Model Fit Indices

Fit index	Model value	Recommended interpretation
χ^2/df	2.94	Acceptable
GFI	0.952	Good
NFI	0.961	Good
CFI	0.972	Good
TLI	0.965	Good
RMSEA	0.039	Good
SRMR	0.041	Good

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The model shows an acceptable to good fit for the main indices. The values agree with what is generally reported as acceptable for SEM applications (Shengyao et al., 2024). Empirical studies that employed the SEM to investigate emotional intelligence, resilience, and social support of college students also yielded high fit indices (CFI = 0.991; TLI = 0.984; RMSEA = 0.053).

6.8 Structural Path Results

Table 8. Structural Path Results

Hypothesized relationship	Standardized β	S.E.	C.R.	p-value	Decision
Emotional abilities → Resilience	0.43	0.05	8.61	<0.001	Supported
Social abilities → Resilience	0.31	0.05	6.23	<0.001	Supported
Emotional regulation → Resilience	0.26	0.04	6.50	<0.001	Supported
Stress tolerance → Resilience	0.20	0.04	5.00	<0.001	Supported
Empathy → Resilience	0.10	0.03	3.33	0.001	Supported
Interpersonal skills → Resilience	0.15	0.04	3.75	<0.001	Supported
Social competence → Resilience	0.21	0.04	5.25	<0.001	Supported

Note: Values reproduced from the supplied manuscript content.

As shown in the structural model, overall, emotional abilities are more closely related to resilience than social abilities. The social pathway is, however, statistically significant and has a substantial effect.

7. DISCUSSION

Results offer the evidence of positive relationships between social and emotional skills with college student resilience. The results suggest that inner emotional processes as well as outer interpersonal skills are related to resilience. The finding adds to a holistic view that suggests student adaptation is related to the interaction of emotional regulation and social functioning.

Emotion regulation is the best dimension in the regression model. The outcome suggests that the capacity to regulate emotional responses is especially related to resilience. Pupils are faced with circumstances which lead to frustration, anxiety,

disappointment and uncertainty(Liu et al., 2024). If it's not regulated, emotions can disrupt focus, judgment, communication and perseverance. Good regulation allows pupils to keep their behaviour under control and still be able to problem solve when things get tough.

The second significant predictor of emotions is stress tolerance. The fact that it is positively associated with resilience, suggests that students who can function under stress are more likely to bounce back from negative academic and personal setbacks. Stress tolerance does not imply the absence of stress. Rather, it's the capacity to maintain adaptive functioning during stress.

Emotional awareness also had a strong correlation with resilience. Acknowledgment of emotional states sets a stage for further regulation. If a student can detect anxiety or frustration, he or she might be able to sense the need for rest, support, communication, or a change in coping mechanism. Awareness of the emotions hence is an important precondition for adaptive management of emotions. Social competence reflects the highest level of social contribution for resilience. The finding suggests that students' awareness of social situations and the ability to appropriately adjust their behaviour could lead to increased interpersonal resources. University settings involve students with a different group of people and different expectations for interactions. Social competence can then be a factor in adaptive functioning in several contexts.

There is also a strong correlation between interpersonal skills and resilience. By dealing with others in an effective manner, students might be better able to secure academic advice, foster peer relationships, resolve conflicts, and solicit help in difficult times. Interpersonal functioning is not purely a social outcome, but can be a means of coping with challenges. Empathy is associated with resilience, albeit less strongly(Garagiola et al., 2022). Empathy can help create quality in relationships by providing insight into others' viewpoints. While empathy itself might not be a defining trait of resilience, it can help foster social connections and positive relationships. The overall coefficient of emotional ability is stronger, and recent research has found that emotional intelligence is correlated with the resilience of college students. Wang et al. found a strong positive path between emotional intelligence and psychological resilience, as well as positive paths between psychological resilience and social support and psychological well-being. The current findings also align with studies that have found that university-wide factors are associated with resilience. The focus of recent research on higher education is on the role of teaching and learning environment in student's resilience. Therefore, any single social-emotional skill cannot and should not replace supportive institutional environments. Rather, individual competencies and institutional resources are to be used in conjunction.

A big distinction is also relevant between undergraduate students and post-graduates. Some more advanced students may have more experience with academic expectations, independent decision making, research activities, and expectations for the workplace. These experiences can be a chance for coping skills to be developed. The cross sectional design, however, cannot prove development causality.

Students who live with family display more resilience than do students who live away from family. One potential explanation is that family environments could offer emotional, practical and informational support. This interpretation must be supported by longitudinal studies, however, as this may also relate to other unmeasured factors such as financial status, cultural expectations, geographic mobility, etc.

The lack of difference in gender might suggest that social-emotional skills may offer a more explanatory account of resilience than gender alone. The finding also aligns with studies that have shown that resilience gaps among demographic groups may differ based on student population and educational setting. For instance, in a study with business students, demographic differences in resilience were identified, while there was measurement stability across groups in the study on the CD-RISC-10.

Results are of policy relevance to the university. Student-support systems can be used to help build resilience by including emotional regulation training, stress-management education, peer mentoring, communication training, conflict-management activities, and structured S.E.L. (social-emotional learning).This idea is supported further by recent studies of the effectiveness of social-emotional learning interventions with college students. In 2026, an intervention study was conducted on the academic stress and SE skills of first-year university students in an eight-week programme of SEL. Resilience development can therefore be considered as a target of developmental education rather than a counselling service in Universities. Emotion awareness and stress management skills can be introduced through orientation programmes(Abulfaraj et al., 2024). Interpersonal communication and collaborative problem-solving can be incorporated in courses in academic departments.

Peer mentoring may provide opportunities for social support. Individual student counselling services may be able to offer a specific program for emotion regulation and adaptive coping.

8. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The results are supportive of a social-emotional concept of resilience. Emotional abilities are viewed as resources for self-regulation while social abilities are viewed as resources for interpersonal regulation. The composite model accounts for more variance in resilience than a one-dimensional model.

The findings are also relevant to the new theory of resilience and the importance of modifiable competencies (Chen et al., 2022). If the emotional regulation, stress tolerance, interpersonal skills and social competence are linked to resilience, then educational interventions can reinforce resilience.

The conceptual framework additionally extends a multi-level understanding of student adaptation. Individual competencies exist and function in social environments. Therefore, the concept of resilience needs to be understood in the context of the relationships between students and their learning environments.

9. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Systematic programmes of social-emotional competency can be set up by university administrators. These programs can measure students' emotional awareness, stress management, social skills, and resilience throughout their academic journey.

Experiential activities that demand students to work in groups to manage communication, conflict, problem-solving and collaborative decision-making can be integrated into academic departments. These activities can reinforce interpersonal competence without detracting from the academic relevance.

Specific workshops on emotion regulation and stress tolerance can be created at student support centres. Emotion regulation has the greatest statistical association with the model, and is a specific dimension that is a strong candidate for intervention.

Structured social resources for first year students can be offered through peer mentoring programmes. Relationships between peers can support the sharing of information, emotional support and adaptation to university life for students moving into a university environment.

Student stress can be addressed and adequate referral systems included in faculty development programmes (Slimmen et al., 2022). Academic staff members may be in a position to observe changes in student engagement early and can assist students in accessing support services early.

10. LIMITATIONS

The cross-sectional design restricts the ability to make causal inferences. A positive relationship between social-emotional capabilities and resilience does not imply that social-emotional capabilities lead to rises in resilience.

Common method and social desirability bias are potential problems with self-report questionnaires. Pupils performance in emotional and social competence might be higher than what they are observed to do.

The study is conducted on the students of an urban university environment. The findings may not necessarily be applicable to rural institutions, vocational colleges, distance learning students, or students from significantly different cultural backgrounds.

Not all potential determinants of resilience have been included in the model (Collado-Soler et al., 2023). Other factors that could play a role in resilience include personality traits, academic performance, economic status, family dynamics, social support, sleep, physical activity, psychological distress, and institutional environment.

The numerical results quoted in this manuscript are merely indicative and should not be reported as observed results without checking the data of the survey upon which they are based. The following are required for a final Scopus submission: Raw-data analysis, documented sampling procedures, ethical approval information, instrument details, missing data treatment, assumption testing, and reproducible statistical output.

11. CONCLUSION

This study provides a theoretical and empirical basis for social and emotional abilities to be examined in relation to college students' resilience. The model shows that the factors of emotional awareness, emotion regulation, stress tolerance, empathy, interpersonal skills, and social competence are positively related to resilience.

Emotion regulation has the greatest individual effect of the examined variables, and the emotional abilities have a stronger overall effect than the social abilities. Social competence and interpersonal skills do contribute considerably in explaining resilience, and it does not seem to be a purely intrapersonal process.

The findings suggested that emotional and social competencies are both essential areas for the university's resilience programmes. Emotional regulation and stress tolerance will enhance students' ability to respond and regulate emotional reactions to adversity, and interpersonal skills, empathy and social competence will enhance their access to interpersonal resources. Individual capabilities should be complemented by institutional support, in the form of mentoring, counselling, an environment for supportive teaching, peer networks and programmes for social-emotional learning.

The results also suggest that education level and living situation are factors that could account for the discrepancy in resilience, while gender and marital status have comparatively limited power to account for the discrepancy in resilience. The results confirm that the functional competencies and environmental resources of students can be used as a student-development strategy instead of using the major demographic classification as the primary one.

Longitudinal designs are suggested for future research to explore the changes in social-emotional skills and resilience throughout university years. Experimental research can assess whether there is a relationship between structured social-emotional learning programmes and resilience. Students' social-emotional competencies can be explored in academic and personal challenging contexts through mixed method research, and cultural and institutional differences can be examined from a multi-university perspective.

The main finding is that emotional regulation, stress tolerance, interpersonal competence, empathy, and social functioning are all related to students' resilience in college. Embedding social and emotional competency development into academic, counselling, mentoring and student-support systems can, therefore, be a way for higher education institutions to support resilience development.

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