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PGDT Trainees' Coping Styles, Locus of Control and Sex as Predictor of Psychological Wellbeing: Evidence from Dilla University Institute of Education and Behavioral Sciences PGDT Trainees

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Abstract

Educational settings are one of the areas of academic study where studying school teachers' psychological constructs is especially important. The purpose of this research was to examine the relationship between locus of control, coping styles, and sex with psychological well-being among PGDT (Post Graduate Diploma in Teaching) trainees at Dilla University. The study employed a correlational research design. The population of the current study includes all regular and summer program PGDT trainees in the Institute of Education and Behavioral Science at Dilla University. 209 trainees were chosen as the sample using the proportionate stratified random selection approach. The Ryff Psychological Wellbeing, Locus of Control Scale, and Coping Style Scale were utilized to collect data. The data was examined in descriptive ways, such as mean and standard deviation, as well as inferential statistics, such as Pearson correlation, independent sample t-test, and highrarchical multiple regression, using the SPSS-23 statistical program. The findings demonstrate that locus of control has a negative significant link with psychological well-being in all six domains, including self-acceptance, positive interpersonal relationships, autonomy, environmental mastery, life purpose, and personal progress (P.05). Furthermore, the problem-focused coping style and its six aspects have a considerable positive link with psychological well-being (P.01). On the other hand, avoidant coping styles have a negative relationship with psychological wellbeing and its dimensions (P.01). Nonetheless, the emotion-focused coping style had no significant link with psychological well-being and its four dimensions (P >.05) except for autonomy and environmental mastery (P.05). Coping techniques and locus of control orientation can contribute to psychological well-being among university students, according to the findings. Problem-oriented coping styles, in particular, are positive predictors of psychological well-being, whereas avoidant coping styles, as well as external orientation in the locus of control, are negative predictors. The findings have consequences for the psychological makeup of trainees as well as future teaching careers.

1 Introduction

This manuscript is organized into five sections: background of the problem, method, results, discussion, and conclusion and recommendations. The first section aims to set the theoretical and contextual background for the problem by summarizing and reviewing the relevant literature, both global as well as local, relating to the psychological wellbeing

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of the students. This section also states the problems (together with the key research questions and purpose) that motivated this research, describes the significance of the study, and provides conceptual definitions of important variables in the study.

The second section (method) describes the study design and setting, summarizes the sampling and sample characteristics of the study, the procedures used to collect data, and the data analysis method. The result section deals with the findings obtained from the instruments and their statistical analysis. The result part has been summarized under the following subheadings: result of descriptive statistics, t-test analysis, results of correlation, results of multiple regression analysis, and results of stepwise regression analysis.

The discussion part of this manuscript attempts to see whether the research questions raised are answered satisfactorily or not. The discussion section attempts to relate the results of the analysis with the research questions forwarded at the beginning and the existing body of theoretical and research literature. In the last section of the manuscript, the researcher presents conclusions drawn from the study findings above and suggestions forwarded by the researcher.

1.1 Background of the Problem

Psychological well-being has been the subject of wide-ranging empirical studies and theoretical discussions (Wissing & Van Eeden, 2002). However, there is still no universally agreed definition of the concept. In recent decades, research interest in well-being has expanded considerably (Huppert, 2009; Ryff & Singer, 1998). According to Huppert (2009), psychological well-being refers to how well life is going, characterized by both positive feelings and effective functioning. This suggests that individuals with sound psychological health are typically satisfied with life, able to handle challenges, experience happiness, and maintain supportive social connections.

In line with this, Edwards (2005) describes psychological well-being as a state of positive mental health, while Ryff (1989) conceptualizes it as a multidimensional construct shaped by personality traits, emotional regulation, identity, and lived experiences (Helson & Srivastava, 2001). It embodies living a purposeful, meaningful, and vital life (Ryff, 1989), realizing one's potential (Insel & Roth, 2006, cited in Kibret, 2015), and developing optimally through personal choices and lifestyle (Babao & Moscoso, 2008). People who exhibit these attributes are therefore considered to be in a good state of psychological well-being. Research has further shown that well-being tends to increase with age, education, conscientiousness, and extroversion, while it decreases with neurotic tendencies (Keyes, Schmotkin, & Ryff, 2002).

Despite numerous investigations, scholars continue to emphasize that psychological well-being is complex and multidimensional, with its components still debated (Keyes *et al*., 2002; Ryff, 1989b; Wissing & Van Eeden, 2002). A significant shift in the literature was introduced by Ryff (1989), who moved from subjective accounts toward an objective approach. Her framework provided one of the most widely accepted models of well-being (Ryff, 1989b; Ryff & Keyes, 1995). This model consists of six elements: autonomy, personal growth, environmental mastery, life purpose, positive relations with others, and self-acceptance.

From the perspective of eudaimonic well-being, psychological growth and fulfillment are viewed as the fullest realization of one's capabilities, assessed through these six components. Ryff (1989) conceptualized psychological well-being as the effort to actualize personal talents and capacities. The six elements are described as follows:

- **Autonomy**: independence and self-regulation in daily life.
- **Environmental mastery**: competence in managing surroundings and using available opportunities.
- **Personal growth**: a sense of continual development and openness to new experiences.
- **Positive relations with others**: close, meaningful, and satisfying social relationships.
- **Purpose in life**: a clear sense of direction and meaning in both past and present experiences.

- **Self-acceptance**: a positive view of oneself, including recognition of both strengths and weaknesses.

Research has consistently indicated that psychological well-being is linked to both personality traits and behavioral factors. Two such important predictors are locus of control (Uma & Manikandan, 2017; Mobarakeh *et al*., 2015; Nwankwo *et al*., 2017) and coping mechanisms (Rosario *et al*., 2011; Carnicer & Calderón, 2013; Ziba & Nahid, 2013). Demographic variables such as gender also play a role. Findings have been mixed; for instance, Mills *et al*. (1992), in a study on married couples, reported that husbands scored higher in well-being compared to wives (see Nwankwo *et al*., 2017).

Higher education settings are environments where individuals are often exposed to high levels of stress. For university students, locus of control, psychological well-being, and coping strategies significantly influence academic performance. Teachers in training programs, such as PGDT (Post Graduate Diploma in Teaching) trainees, are key players in the educational system, making their psychological well-being particularly critical. Possessing adaptive coping styles, a strong internal locus of control, and balanced psychological health contributes to their personal and social growth, effective teaching, and prevention of maladaptive behaviors. Thus, studying the interplay of psychological well-being, coping styles, and locus of control among PGDT trainees is essential not only for improving their own lives but also for strengthening the broader educational system.

Based on this rationale, the present research seeks to examine the relationships among locus of control, coping styles, and psychological well-being in PGDT trainees at Dilla University. Specifically, the study addresses the following

Based on the purpose of the study, attempts were made to answer the following questions: First things first: what do the locus of control, coping style, and psychological wellbeing profiles of the participants look like? Second, do locus of control orientation, sex, and coping styles have significant relationships with psychological wellbeing dimensions? Third: Do locus of control, sex, and coping styles have significant joint or unique predictive validity for psychological wellbeing?

1.2 Review of Related Literatures

Within psychological research, psychological well-being is regarded as one of the most influential variables because of its strong relationship with individuals' overall health and functioning. Ryan and Deci (2001) distinguished two complementary perspectives: the hedonic view, which emphasizes happiness through pleasure attainment and pain avoidance, and the eudaimonic perspective, which focuses on realizing one's potential and functioning fully. Ryff (1989) advanced a eudaimonic model of well-being, later refined with Keyes (Ryff & Keyes, 1995), which conceptualizes well-being as the pursuit of personal growth and self-actualization. This multidimensional approach has been widely adopted in research, with various scholars examining and validating its six central dimensions (Abbott *et al*., 2006; Kafka & Kozma, 2002; Meléndez *et al*., 2009). These are autonomy, self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, environmental mastery, and positive relationships with others.

The eudaimonic model suggests that psychological well-being is maximized when individuals achieve balance across these six domains (Ryff, 1989). Specifically:

- Autonomy reflects independence and self-determination.
- Environmental mastery indicates competence in managing daily life.
- Personal growth refers to openness to change and ongoing development.
- Purpose in life reflects having meaningful goals and direction.
- Self-acceptance entails a positive view of oneself and one's past.
- Positive relations with others involve establishing and maintaining high-quality, fulfilling social ties.

Further research shows that several factors are positively associated with these dimensions and with adaptive coping strategies in academic contexts. Such variables include self-esteem (Cabanach *et al*., 2014), perceived control (Doron *et al*., 2009),

social support quality (Fernández-González *et al*., 2015), self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2000), life purpose (Freire *et al*., 2015), and pursuit of self-realization (Miquelon & Vallerand, 2008), as reviewed by Freire, Ferradás, Valle, Núñez, and Vallejo (2016).

Academic stress is a critical issue for higher education students. More than the stress itself, how students cope with it strongly influences their well-being. Coping styles are generally categorized into problem-focused coping (PFCS) and emotion-focused coping (EFCS) (Wonderlich-Tierney & Vander, 2010). PFCS involves active strategies to address the source of stress, such as problem solving, while EFCS relies on emotional responses like rumination or self-blame (Kelly, Tyrka, Price, & Carpenter, 2008). PFCS is typically more effective in resolving stressors compared to EFCS. In general terms, coping represents the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral efforts made to manage stressors or reduce their negative effects (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985). The relevance of coping to both health (Kraag *et al*., 2006) and subjective well-being (Parsons *et al*., 1996; Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2006; Viñas *et al*., 2015) has been well documented.

Folkman (1984) argued that problem-focused coping is most beneficial when the stressor is modifiable, whereas emotion-focused coping tends to be used in situations that cannot be changed. Although coping effectiveness depends on context (Endler *et al*., 1994), research generally supports that approach-oriented coping is more adaptive than avoidance-oriented coping (Gustems-Carnicer & Calderón, 2013; Syed & Seiffge-Krenke, 2015).

Psychological well-being, being concerned with positive functioning, is influenced by multiple individual, demographic, and social factors, such as self-esteem, optimism, gender, education, age, health, and social connections (Binder & Coad, 2010). Empirical evidence also highlights how different coping styles relate to psychological well-being. Loukzadeh and Bafrooi (2013), for instance, observed that EFCS was used more often than PFCS, but EFCS correlated negatively with purpose in life and personal growth, whereas PFCS showed a positive association with purpose in life. More recent findings continue to emphasize that problem-focused coping is linked to higher well-being, while reliance on emotion-focused strategies is associated with lower levels of well-being in both men and women (Williams & McGillicuddy-De Lisi, 2000). Supporting this, Fierro and Jiménez (2002, cited in Freire *et al*., 2016) found that passive or emotion-oriented coping correlated negatively with well-being among young university students. Similarly, González *et al*. (2002) reported that well-being was positively correlated with problem-focused coping and social support seeking, but negatively correlated with emotion-focused coping strategies.

Another key factor in understanding psychological well-being is locus of control. This concept describes whether individuals perceive life outcomes as the result of their own actions (internal locus) or as controlled by external forces like luck, chance, or powerful others (external locus) (Rotter, 1966; Keenan & McBain, 1979, cited in Reknes, Visockaite, Liefooghe, Lovakov, & Einarsen, 2019). Internals tend to actively influence their environment, while externals are more likely to feel powerless and passive (Keenan & McBain, 1979). Research has linked locus of control to positive psychological functioning (Pannells & Claxton, 2008).

Empirical studies further show that an internal locus of control is associated with better academic performance (Gifford, Briceño-Perriott, & Mianzo, 2006), greater self-motivation and social maturity (Nelson & Mathias, 1995), lower stress and depression (Garber & Seligman, 1980), and even longer lifespan (Chipperfield, 1993). Moreover, perceived control has been shown to moderate both psychological and physical well-being (Brandstadter & Renner, 1990). Conversely, external locus of control is negatively correlated with well-being (Kulshrestha & Sen, 2006). Individuals with an external orientation often feel powerless and unable to alter dissatisfying circumstances (Nielsen, 1987), which reduces their overall well-being (Kulshrestha & Sen, 2006).

The present research focuses specifically on PGDT trainees, a group that has been relatively understudied. Its goals are: (a) to describe the profiles of psychological well-being across its six dimensions; (b) to investigate how coping strategies (problem-

focused, emotion-focused, and avoidance) and locus of control orientations (internal versus external), along with gender, predict these profiles; and (c) to test whether students with higher well-being use more adaptive coping strategies and maintain an internal locus of control compared to those with lower well-being across dimensions.

2 Methods

2.1 Participants

This study aimed to explore the extent to which locus of control, coping styles, and gender predict school teacher (PGDT) trainees' psychological wellbeing. Hence, to carry out the study, the descriptive and correlational research designs were employed. The study population was drawn from Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching (PGDT) regular and summer program trainees who were enrolled in the 2018/19 academic year at Dilla University Institute of Education and Behavioral Science. In the study population, all the fields that are Amharic, English, Afaan Oroomo, athematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, History, Physical Education, Civics, and ICT were used. To reach the study goals among the population with a size of approximately 692 people (603 male and 89 female), according to Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination model table, 242 people were selected as the sample. Then, the target population was categorized by strata (i.e., stratified by field of study/department). 242 was selected with the consideration of a proportional stratified random sampling approach in terms of department and gender. The questionnaires were distributed by lottery method and finally collected from 209 PGDT trainers who properly filled them out.

2.2 Instruments

In this study, three different instruments (Ryff psychological wellbeing, adapted adolescent coping styles scale, and adult Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control scale) were used as questionnaires.

Psychological wellbeing scale

To measure the psychological well-being of the trainees, Ryff's (1989) 42-item Psychological Well-Being Scale was employed. In this framework, well-being is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct that integrates both psychological and psychosocial aspects of functioning. The scale captures six distinct dimensions: self-acceptance, autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, and purpose in life.

For the current study, the instrument included 42 items, equally divided into six subscales: self-acceptance (7 items), autonomy (7 items), environmental mastery (7 items), personal growth (7 items), positive relations with others (7 items), and purpose in life (7 items). Of the total items, 22 are positively worded while 20 are reverse-coded, allowing for a balanced assessment of attitudes. Respondents rate each statement on a six-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree. Sample items include statements such as, "In general, I feel in charge of the situation in which I live."

Scores on each subscale can vary depending on the individual's responses, with higher scores indicating greater psychological well-being in that, domain. The aggregated score across all six subscales provides a composite index of the respondent's overall psychological well-being.

Locus of control scale

The trainees' locus of control orientation was assessed using an adapted version of the Adult Nowicki–Strickland Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (ANS-IE) (Nowicki & Duke, 1973). This tool was originally developed on the basis of Rotter's theoretical framework and has been widely applied in studies of personality assessment.

The original ANS-IE contains 40 items, each requiring a "Yes" or "No" response. Scores are coded in the external direction, with higher values reflecting a stronger external orientation (Nowicki & Duke, 1993). Thus, an individual's total score on the scale can range from 0 to 40. A score above the median indicates an external locus of control, while scores below the median suggest an internal orientation.

The choice of this instrument was guided by its established reliability and its frequent use in psychological and educational research, making it suitable for identifying whether respondents perceive out-

comes as determined primarily by their own actions (internal) or by external forces such as luck, chance, or powerful others (external).

Coping scale

The study adopted the coping scale locally used by Shemsu (2010). The scale was developed on the basis of the general short form of self-reported The adolescent coping scale (ACS) was used as an instrument in this study. As described by Shemsu (2010), the original scale contains 19 items (18 structured and one open-ended item) which were developed by Frydenberg and Lewis (1993). The adolescent coping scale was chosen because the wording of the items in the original scale was not ambiguous and it retained the narrow band of coping distinctions. Moreover, the scale was developed for adolescents but is also used to assess young adults' coping behaviours (Frydenberg and Lewis 1998). The questionnaire items were designed to measure on a 4-point likert scale, ranging from "does not apply to me" to "applies to me always". The adopted scale has 31 items (13 items for the problem-focused coping subscale, 9 items for avoidance coping, and 9 items for emotion-focused coping subscale), which was developed by taking 18 items from the Adolescent Coping Scale (ACS).

2.3 Method of data analysis

Once all questionnaires were completed and verified for accuracy, the data were prepared for statistical analysis. The analyses were conducted using SPSS version 23.0. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were applied to address the research objectives.

At the descriptive level, statistical tools such as means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions were calculated to summarize participants' scores across the study variables. For inferential analyses, several techniques were employed:

- **Independent samples** $t-test$ was used to examine gender differences in locus of control, coping styles, and psychological well-being.
- **Pearson's product–moment correlation** assessed the relationships among the independent variables (locus of control, coping strategies, gender) and the dependent variable (psychological well-being and its subdimensions).
- **Multiple regression analysis** was conducted to evaluate the combined and unique predictive power of the independent variables on psychological well-being.
- **Step-wise regression analysis** was further applied to identify the strongest predictors of psychological well-being among the variables considered.

All statistical tests were evaluated at a 0.05 alpha level, with significance levels reported accordingly.

3 Results

In order to examine how locus of control, coping styles, and gender contribute to predicting students' psychological well-being, a series of statistical analyses were carried out. Specifically, descriptive statistics, independent-samples t-tests, Pearson product–moment correlations, and regression analyses were employed. The findings from these analyses are summarized and presented in the following tables.

3.1 The status of Locus of control orientations, Coping styles and Psychological well-being of the respondents

In order to see the profiles of locus of control orientations, coping styles, and psychological wellbeing of the respondents, the following descriptive statistics, that is, mean and standard deviation, were used.

Table 1 below shows the descriptive statistical analysis of the variable. As it was illustrated in the above table 1, the respondents' locus of control beliefs were externally oriented (M = 20.20, SD = 4.882) rather than internally oriented. It is noted that the total score on the LOC scale between 8 and 19 is considered an internal LOC, whereas the score between 20 and 38 is considered an external LOC. As it is mentioned in the methodology section, the higher the score (i.e., above the median point) in the locus of control of orientation scale, the more external it means.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Participant Profile of Locus of control, Coping styles and Psychological wellbeing (N=209)

Variables		Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Locus of control (IV)	LOC	8	38	20.20	4.882
Coping style (IV)					
Subscales	Problem Focused coping	17	52	37.80	6.936
	Avoidance Coping	10	35	19.64	5.177
	Emotion Focused Coping	11	34	23.71	4.632
	Total	40.00	115.00	81.1531	12.58722
Psychological wellbeing (DV)					
Subscales	Autonomy	13	41	26.63	4.757
	Environmental mastery	15	40	27.00	4.602
	Personal growth	17	42	28.24	5.153
	Positive relationship with other	11	41	27.39	4.905
	Purpose in life	16	89	29.13	6.652
	Self acceptance	18	40	28.13	4.696
	Total	124.00	217.00	166.517	21.92910

With regard to the coping styles, problem-focused coping (M = 37.80, SD = 6.936) was the major coping style which was mostly used by the participants. Followed by emotion-focused and avoidance coping were (M = 23.71, SD = 4.632) and (M = 19.64, SD = 5.177) respectively.

Concerning psychological wellbeing, purpose in life (M = 29.13, SD = 6.652), Personal Growth (M = 28.24, SD = 5.153), Self-Acceptance (M = 28.13, SD = 4.696), Positive Relationship With Others (M = 27.39, SD = 4.905), Environmental Mastery (M = 27.00, SD = 4.602), and Autonomy (M = 26.63, SD = 4.757) respectively. Note that in all the sub-domains of psychological wellbeing, the observed mean (i.e., mean of each subscale) ratings are higher than the expected mean (i.e., 21), and hence the mean ratings for the total psychological wellbeing scale (166.52) are higher than the expected mean (126.52).

Table 2: T-Test Results for gender differences on LOC, Coping style, and Psychological wellbeing (N=209)

Sub-scales	Sex					
	Female (N=61)		Male (N=148)			
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	T	Sig. (two tailed)
Psychological wellbeing total (DV)	164.245	19.342	167.452	22.907	-.961	.338

As can be seen from table 2 above, an independent-samples t-test was conducted and there was no significant difference between males (M = 167.45, SD = 22.91) and females (M = 164.25, SD = 19.34) in their total psychological wellbeing scores. df (207) =-.961, p =.338 (two-tailed).

3.2 Relationship between the Variables Under the Study

In an attempt to explore the relationship between the independent variables (sex, locus of control, coping styles) and dependent variables (psychological wellbeing and its sub dimensions) in the study, a Pearson product moment correlation coefficient test was computed.

Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. As can be seen from table 3, locus of control was negatively and significantly related to all sub dimensions of psychological wellbeing (p 0.05). Concerning coping styles with psychological wellbeing totals and sub dimensions, table 3 is displayed as follows. Problem-focused coping style was positively and significantly related to all the sub dimensions of psychological wellbeing and its total scale (p 0.01). More importantly, a problem-focused coping style was positively and significantly related to total psychological wellbeing (r =.421, p 0.01). In contrast, the avoidance coping style was negatively and significantly related to all sub dimensions of psychological wellbeing and its total scale (p 0.01). In addition, the emotion-focused coping style was negatively and significantly related to only autonomy (r =.156, p 0.05) and environmental mastery (r =.143, p 0.05). However, coping style as a total scale was significantly and positively related to only the autonomy sub dimension of psychological wellbeing (r =.155, p 0.05).

Table 3 below shows that locus of control was negatively and significantly related to psychological wellbeing total with (t (207) =-3.679, p 0.01). Sex, on the other hand, was not significantly related to total psychological well-being (t(207) =.887, p > 0.05).According to this table, the locus of control was a significant negative predictor of psychological well-being.The regression model summary reveals that locus of control contributed 6.6% of the explained variance in psychological wellbeing. This regression finding implies that since the participants identified with an external locus of control, the external locus of control impacts poor psychological wellbeing among respondents.

Table 3: Results of Pearson correlation test for examining the relationship between the study variables under the study

Variables												PWB
	Sex	LOC	PFCS	AVCS	EFCS	A	EM	PG	PRS	PIL	SA	Total
Sex**	1.00											
Locus of control	-.028	1.00										
Problem Focused Coping	-.039	-.176*	1.00									
Avoidance Coping	-.018	.233**	.049	1.00								
Emotion Focused Coping	.000	-.028	.599**	.419**	1.00							
Autonomy	.001	-.164*	.350**	-.142*	.156*	1.00						
Environmental mastery	.039	-.171*	.411**	-.280**	.143*	.413**	1.00					
Personal growth	.114	-.166*	.289**	-.315**	-.101	.381**	.387**	1.00				
Positive relationship with other	.137*	-.185**	.311**	-.269**	.069	.360**	.485**	.467**	1.00			
Purpose in life	.021	-.163*	.230**	-.315**	-.064	.319**	.282**	.428**	.408**	1.00		
Self acceptance	-.025	-.224**	.243**	-.311**	.008	.363**	.476**	.495**	.513**	.398**	1.00	
Psychological wellbeing total	.067	-.249**	.421**	-.386**	.038	.648**	.687**	.739**	.747**	.709**	.745**	1.00

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Note: Control point PFCS stands for Problem Focused Coping, AVCS stands for Avoidance Coping, and EFCS stands for Emotion Focused Coping. A: Independence, EM stands for environmental mastery.PG: Personal development, PRS: Positive interpersonal relationships PIL: Life's Purpose, Self-acceptance and PWB total: Psychological wellbeing total

3.3 Predicting Psychological wellbeing from Coping styles (PFCS, EFCS &AVCS)

Other independent variables examined to predict the psychological wellbeing of the respondents were coping styles. In order to know the contribution of coping styles in predicting psychological wellbeing, multiple regression was also done.

From table 4, it can be seen that problem-focused coping and avoidance coping were the significant predictors of psychological wellbeing. According to the table, problem-focused coping style was significantly and positively predicted psychological wellbeing (t = 6.933, p 0.01), whereas avoidance coping style was significantly and negatively predicted psychological wellbeing (t =-5.626, p 0.01).However, emotional-focused coping style was not significantly predicted by psychological wellbeing (t =-1.416.887, p > 0.05). The regression model summary reveals that 35% of the total variation in the dependent variable (psychological wellbeing) can be explained by the combined problem-focused coping and avoidance coping styles. The findings imply that problem-focused coping styles had a positive effect, whereas avoidance coping styles had a poor effect on respondents' psychological wellbeing. With respect to Standardized Coefficients Beta, find which beta value is the largest (ignoring any negative signs out front). In this case, the largest beta coefficient is b =.51, which is for problem-focused coping. This means that this variable makes the strongest unique contribution to explaining the dependent variable (psychological wellbeing) when the variance explained by all other variables in the model is controlled for.

Table 4: Results of multiple regression analysis for Predicting Psychological wellbeing from three Coping styles (N=209)

Variables	Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
Problem Focused Coping	1.604	.231	.507	6.933	.000
Avoidance Coping	-1.538	.273	-.363	-5.626	.000
Emotion Focused Coping	-.540	.381	-.114	-1.416	.158

**p< .01

A stepwise regression method has been employed to evaluate the relative contributions of each predictor variable in predicting the criterion variable and to identify the strongest predictor.

Table 5: Result of stepwise regression analysis for predicting Psychological wellbeing from coping styles (PFCS and AVCS)

Model	Variables	Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients					
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	R2	Δ R2	F
1	Problem focused Coping	1.332	.199	.421	6.684	.000	.178	.178	44.672
2	Avoidance Coping	-1.727	.239	-.408	-7.212	.000	.343	.166	52.011

**P<0.01

As it can be seen from the stepwise regression analysis table above, the predictor variables considered in this analysis are problem-focused coping style and avoidance coping style. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity. Problem-focused coping style (PFCS) was entered at Step 1, explaining 17.8% of the variance in psychological wellbeing. Following the addition of the PFCS and AVCS subscales at Step 2, the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 34.3%, F (4, 421) = 53.846, p.001.The second predictor variable, AVSC, explained an additional 16.6% of the variance in psychological wellbeing after controlling for PVCS, R squared change =.343, F change (2, 421) = 52.001, p .001. In the final model, only the two coping styles were statistically significant, with the problem-focused coping scale recording a higher beta value (beta =.421, p .001) than the avoidance coping scale (beta = –.408, p .001). As a result, among the respondents, a problem-focused coping style is a relatively stronger predictor of psychological well-being.

4 Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that participants generally exhibited an external locus of control orientation, as indicated by their mean scores (M = 20.20, SD = 4.882), which exceeded the median cutoff point for internal orientation. This suggests that many PGDT trainees tend to attribute outcomes in their lives to external factors such as fate, chance, or the influence of others, rather than perceiving themselves as agents of control.

Regarding coping profiles, problem-focused coping emerged as the most frequently practiced strategy (M = 37.80, SD = . . .). This indicates that most trainees attempt to deal with stressful situations by actively addressing problems, for example by seeking solutions, drawing on social support, working harder, or engaging in constructive activities.

When considering psychological well-being, the study found that trainees scored above the expected mean across all six sub-dimensions, with a total mean (166.52) exceeding the theoretical average (126). This suggests that, overall, participants reported relatively high levels of psychological well-being.

The correlation results indicated a significant negative relationship between external locus of control and psychological well-being, both at the global and sub-dimension levels (r = –.249, p < .01). Regression analysis further confirmed that external locus of control was a significant negative predictor of well-being (t (207) = –3.679, p < .01). This aligns with earlier findings showing that external orientations are associated with reduced psychological functioning (Uma & Manikandan, 2017; Mobarakeh *et al*., 2015). Thus, trainees who view life outcomes as beyond their control are more likely to experience diminished well-being.

The study also examined the role of coping strategies. Results demonstrated that problem-focused coping positively predicted psychological well-being, while avoidance coping negatively predicted it. In contrast, avoidance coping strategies are associated with a greater negative effect on components of psychological wellbeing. In support of these findings, Farzana, Shahina, and Shah (2016) found that coping style influences the psychological well-being of the individual. Emotion-focused coping, however, showed no significant association with overall well-being, except in relation to autonomy and environmental mastery. This outcome is consistent with prior research suggesting that active problem-solving strategies enhance well-being (Parsons, Frydenberg, & Poole, 1996), whereas avoidance strategies are often linked to poorer outcomes, including higher stress and psychological distress (Murray-Harvey *et al*., 2002).

Overall, the findings imply that trainees who adopt active, solution-oriented coping approaches experience higher psychological well-being, whereas reliance on avoidance strategies undermines their functioning. The results reinforce the idea that coping styles play a central role in shaping students' mental health and adaptive capacity. Furthermore, the dominance of external locus of control among trainees points to the need for interventions that foster internal control beliefs, which may help improve their resilience and well-being.

5 Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the study findings, it is concluded that locus of control, especially externally oriented LOC, has a negative effect on PGDT trainees' overall psychological well-being. Similarly, the avoidance coping style has a negative effect on students' overall psychological well-being. In contrast, a problem-focused coping style has a beneficial effect on having better psychological wellbeing among university students. .

Suggestions for Further Researches

With regards to the numerous limitations of this study, the following suggestions are put forward by the researcher for further research: embarking on a similar study with more participants from various institutions/universities and conducting related studies using variables such as age, locality, economic status, self-concept, and a slew of others as variables that may impact university students' psychological well-being.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Ethical approval

Consent was sought form the research participants. Confidentiality was maintained in reporting information.

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