

## Resilience and Coping: Are Different?

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### ABSTRACT

The concepts of resilience and coping share an intertwined relationship with each other to the extent that questions arise whether the two are different constructs or one encompasses the other. The present study aimed at analysing the correlated and conjoint factorial nature of two popular measures of resilience and coping, namely the Connor-Davidson Resilience scale (CD-RISC); and the Coping Styles Questionnaire (CSQ) in the Indian population. The sample consisted of 184 participants within the age range of 18-30 years. Results depicted that adaptive coping styles correlated with resilience. The factor analysis of CD-RISC provided two factors, whereas CSQ provided four different factors. The joint factor analysis provided four factors with significant overlap between adaptive coping and resilience.

**Keywords:** Resilience; Coping; Indian population; Factor analysis

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Stress is generally defined as an active response of an individual toward the stressors responsible for causing an internal disequilibrium.<sup>1</sup> During stressful situations, a fight or flight response is triggered which can be beneficial for acute stressors or in the short-run but when the stressors are chronic or debilitating, it can have negative long-term psychological or physiological effects.<sup>2</sup> To cope with the situation, the person can either fight the distressing situation or escape the situation i.e., a flight response. Coping can take various forms such as employing different coping strategies, performing religious practices, and even utilising one's abilities (e.g., hardiness).<sup>3</sup>

Folkman and Lazarus<sup>4</sup> dichotomised coping styles into two different types that are problem-focused and emotion-focused coping. The former coping style focuses on working on the stressful situation or the problem that is directly influencing the individual in different ways. The latter majorly relies on formulating internal mechanisms or emotions directly targeting the stressor/s.<sup>4</sup> The model of stress appraisal developed by Lazarus and Folkman<sup>5</sup> explains stress as undergoing different levels of cognitive appraisal. In primary appraisal, the individual acts on perceived stressors (personal or environmental) that are later perceived by the individual as threatening or non-threatening. Later, the individual assesses the available resources needed to cope with the situation. If the available resources are adequate, the individual

further his analysis and finds the best coping strategy that fits the situation. The last component of the whole stressful experience is reappraisal of the situation which is a continuous process that enables the person to re-assess the whole stressful situation (Fig. 1).

Compas<sup>6</sup>, *et al.* studied the relationship between the choice of coping strategies and their psychological consequences. Results revealed that adaptive coping styles (e.g., emotion-focused and problem-focused) are related to optimal adaptation and coping strategies such as disengagement are associated with poor adjustment. Kochenderfer-Ladd and Skinner<sup>7</sup> found a relationship between coping strategies and bullying. It was found that active coping was beneficial in conditions when there is infrequent bullying, but it was ineffective when the bullying is constant. The results also reported that avoidant coping correlated positively when boys were being bullied, but the results were insignificant for girls.

A study was conducted to assess the coping style adopted by survivors of motor vehicle accidents, the result reported that emotion-focused coping was mostly used by people who suffered from PTSD and/or depression.<sup>8</sup>

George and Bance<sup>9</sup> studied the predictive impact of coping style on Post-Traumatic Growth (PTG) among female victims of childhood sexual abuse in Kerala, India. Results reported that victims who used adaptive coping strategies experienced higher levels of PTG and those who used maladaptive coping strategies experienced less post-traumatic growth.

Among others, the concept of resilience is closely related to coping; resilience is simply defined as an individual's potential to recover from unfavorable circumstances.<sup>10</sup>

It is considered a relational construct as it presumes ‘perceived stressors’, coping strategies, and related criteria (e.g., self-esteem, satisfaction with life).<sup>11,12</sup> Sometimes the concepts of coping and resilience act intertwined while sometimes one may lead the other. For example, Infurna and Luthar<sup>13</sup> suggested that coping necessitates the active role of an individual, and resilience refers to retaining well-being after facing adverse situations.

Contemporary approaches to resilience are somewhat constricted to the protective factors that serve as resources, assisting skills, or coping strategies available in different social, economic, psychological, or physical forms.<sup>14,15</sup> There are three distinct ways in which resilience can be described- : (a) Resilience is equitable to coping that is to achieve parity and a more favorable position, the individual has to act to the situation through the appropriate fitting coping mechanism<sup>16</sup>, (b) Resilience is recuperation from damage caused by any means, and finally (c) Resilience being influenced by the presence of various social, psychological protective factors that equate the association between the disturbing situation (stress) and the coping strategy.<sup>17</sup> Connor & Davidson’s<sup>18</sup> groundwork theory which was the basis of the Connor-Davidson resilience scale defined resilience as “to thrive in the face of adversity”.

Resilience and coping can be treated as similar and related concepts that deal with adaptation and overcoming stressful situations despite the present adversities in the environment<sup>19</sup> Bonanno<sup>20</sup> speculated that to travel the path of resilience, one must be able to successfully cope with a stressful situation. Agaibi and Wilson<sup>21</sup> defined the term ‘resilient coping’ as managing strenuous conditions which are difficult to control, with the assistance of internal factors held by the individual. Resilience and coping mechanisms used by individuals’ can help them to understand their strengths which can aid in redefining or setting goals, and performing regular tasks conveniently.<sup>22</sup> Utilisation of an adaptive coping strategy is related to high

resilience in individuals which holds that an individual will be able to adapt more effectively to the adverse environment accompanied with better results in the longrun.<sup>23,24,25</sup>

There is an underlying relationship between coping styles, resilience, and psychological well-being, and these concepts can directly influence an individual’s objective setting and adapting capacities of an individual.<sup>26</sup> An association between stress and resilience was assessed in women who have undergone an abortion. It was found that women who were high on resilience perceived the stressful situation as less threatening and were able to cope effectively. Higher resilience also predicted better coping.<sup>27</sup> The concepts of resilience and coping are well-established, but there is insufficient literature investigating their intertwined relationship, especially in the Indian context. Thus, the present study aims to assess the underlying factors structure of coping and resilience measures namely the Connor-Davidson resilience scale and the Coping Style Questionnaire.

**2. METHODOLOGY**

**2.1 Design**

A cross-sectional study was undertaken to assess the similarities and dissimilarities between the concepts of coping and resilience. A quantitative approach to data collection and analysis was adopted. Factor analysis was used as a measure of statistical analysis to assess the underlying latent factors of both the measures being used in the study that is resilience and coping.

**2.2 Participants**

The participants were selected using a convenience-based random sampling technique combined with a snowball approach. The sample of the study consisted of 184 participants. The age range comprised 18-30 years of males and females. The data was collected

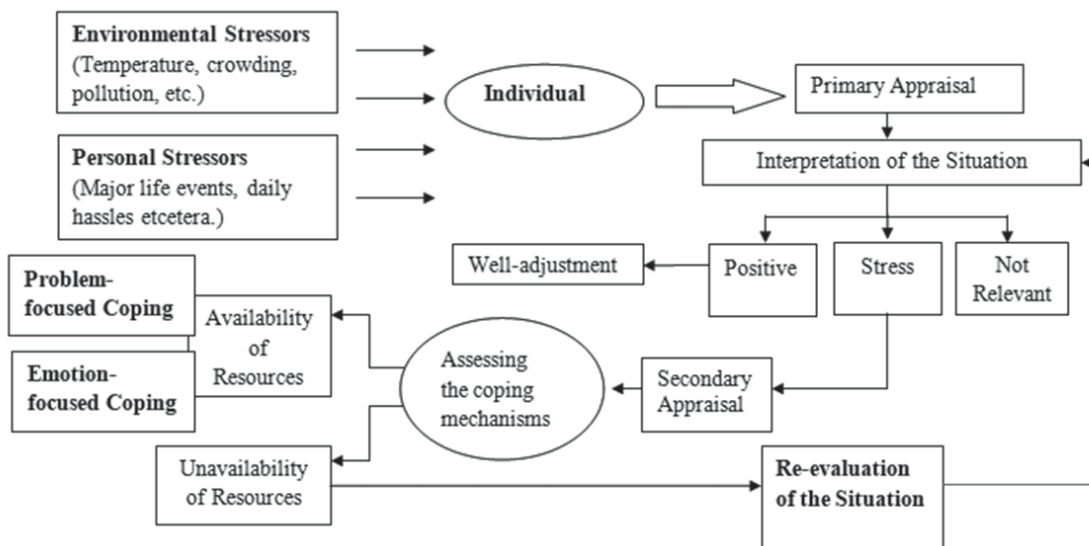


Figure 1. Model of stress appraisal.<sup>5</sup>

from different states of India. The socio-economic status of the participants ranged from middle-class to upper-middle class. The educational qualification varied from higher secondary to post-graduation. Before collecting the sample, it was made sure that all the participants were able to read and write in the English language.

### 2.3 Measures

The study used two constructs of resilience and coping namely 'Connor-Davidson resilience scale' and 'Coping Style Questionnaire' (CSQ) respectively.

#### 2.3.1 Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC)

The Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) is a 25-item unidimensional measure.<sup>18,28</sup> Responses were recorded on a Likert scale ranging from 0 to 4. The maximum score an individual can score on this test is 100, reflecting high resilience and the minimum is 25 which is indicative of low resilience. Cronbach's alpha for the whole scale was +0.89.

#### 2.3.2 Coping Style Questionnaire (CSQ)

The coping style questionnaire was given by Roger<sup>29</sup>, *et al.* The scale consists of four components-Rational-coping factor (RATCOP), emotion-coping factor (EMCOP), avoidance-coping factor (AVCOP), and detachment-coping factor (DETCETRAOP).<sup>29</sup> The scale consists of 60 items with 16 items of rational coping, and 15-items of detachment coping and their combination represents adaptive coping. Maladaptive coping constitutes emotional coping with 16 items and avoidance coping with 13 items.

The internal consistency of the adaptive dimension was assessed to be 0.80. Inter-test reliability was 0.801, 0.794, 0.766, and 0.701 respective of four dimensions. The internal consistency of the RATCOP, DETCETRAOP, EMCOP, and AVCOP was 0.853, 0.897, 0.735, and 0.690 respectively. The present study has employed 9 items of each factor and has used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (Always) to 1 (Never). The basis of taking nine items per dimension relied upon the items having the highest factor loadings. The reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha of the 36-item questionnaire which was +0.758, and the reliability of rational, detachment, emotional, and avoidance coping were +0.690, +0.738, +0.826, and +0.633 respectively.

### 2.4 Procedure

The questionnaire consisted of 61 items as a whole which was distributed to the targeted population. The data was collected using hard copies as well as soft copies assisted by google forms. The participants were assured that the collected information will remain confidential and will only be used for research purposes. Correlation and Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was used to analyze the data. A parallel analysis was carried out to determine the number of explainable factors.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to study the relationship between resilience and coping styles (Rational, detached, emotional, and avoidance) and to assess the separate and joint factorial structure of CD-RISC and CSQ. There has been a dearth of literature citing both the respective measures especially in the Indian context so the grounded objective along with primary objectives was to bridge the gap between the existing and the required literature.

Referring to Table 1 of descriptive statistics, the significance of emotional coping is calculated as +3.66 (positively skewed) which is more than twice the value of standard error which denotes that most of the participants do not use emotional coping. The explanation directs toward social desirability as participants might not want to be subjected to other's judgment. There has been adequate research concluding the importance of adaptive emotional coping. For instance, a study on volleyball players revealed that athletes who used emotion-focused coping strategies (positive emotions) were able to face pressure appropriately and effectively.<sup>30</sup> Similar studies found adaptive coping styles (e.g., emotion-focused and problem-focused) are related to optimal adaptation and coping strategies<sup>6,7,9,31</sup>.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics**

	Mean	Std Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Resilience	97.4837	9.66373	-.075	-.341
Rational coping	34.3696	4.05082	-.160	.328
Detached coping	30.0109	4.77698	-.271	-.257
Emotional coping	25.3533	6.03724	.656	.231
Avoidance coping	31.5598	4.76287	-.199	-.214
Adaptive coping	64.3804	7.88696	-.191	-.165
Maladaptive coping	56.9130	9.06944	.154	-.437

Table 2 indicates that resilience correlated positively with adaptive coping which includes the items of rational and detached coping and shows a low correlation with maladaptive coping which includes the items of emotional and avoidance coping as predicted by existing research. Research assessing the relationship between coping style and resilience found a significant positive relationship between positive coping style (i.e., adaptive coping) and higher psychological resilience.<sup>32</sup> Numerous other studies also show such a relationship<sup>6,7,30,31</sup>.

**Table 2. Correlations**

	<b>Rational</b>	<b>Detached</b>	<b>Emotional</b>	<b>Avoidance</b>	<b>Adaptive</b>	<b>Maladaptive</b>
	.501	.527	-.290	.132	.576	-.123
Resilience	.000	.000	.000	.073	.000	.095
	184	184	184	184	184	184
	1	.594	-.312	.139	.873	-.134
Rational		.000	.000	.059	.000	.069
		184	184	184	184	184
		1	-.249	.250	.911	-.035
Detached			.001	.001	.000	.639
			184	184	184	184
			1	.402	-.311	.877
Emotional				.000	.000	.000
				184	184	184
				1	.223	.793
Avoidance					.002	.000
					184	184
					1	-.090
Adaptive						.224
						184

According to Table 3, there are two explainable factors with factor loadings meeting the criteria. The resulting factors are somewhat different as explained by Connor-Davidson resilience scale, as according to the scale there is only one explainable factor i.e., resilience but according to the present results, there are two factors that can be named as flexibility and perseverance/fortitude coherent with the item explanations. The first factor is perseverance includes items such as “I can deal with whatever comes”, and “I think of myself as a strong person”.

The second factor is self-reliance incorporating items such as “I put best effort no matter what” and “I work to attain my goals”. The multi-factorial result rejects the uni-factor structure indicated by the Connor-Davidson scale.<sup>29</sup> The discrepancy in factor analysis could be due to the indigeneity of the data or the population characteristics that are different from the original population based on which the scale was developed. Figure 2 shows the scree plot of the Connor-Davidson scale. Only two of the three explainable factors have been retained in the present study representing resilience.

According to Table 4, there are three explainable factors. It shows that the items clubbed in factor one represent emotional coping with a single element of avoidance coping, the second-factor items represent detachment coping with an item of rational coping which can also be defined with a detachment coping perspective, likewise, the third factor shows a combination of items with two items representing detachment coping and

other two items with negative loadings of emotional and avoidance coping. The factorial structure of the present study has given three factors and the original CSQ contained four factors the point of difference is that the present factors are different and are unexplained in terms of the standard coping style questionnaire. The first factor includes all the items of emotional coping which

**Table 3. Factor analysis of the Connor-Davidson resilience scale**

<b>RISC-CD items</b>	<b>Factor Loadings</b>	
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
Factor 1		
When things look hopeless, I don't give up	.684	
Not easily discouraged by failure	.680	
Can deal with whatever comes	.614	
Think of self as strong person	.536	
Factor 2		
Best effort no matter what		.761
Know where to turn for help		.689
You work to attain your goals		.598
In control of your life		.591

**Table 4. Factor analysis of coping style questionnaire**

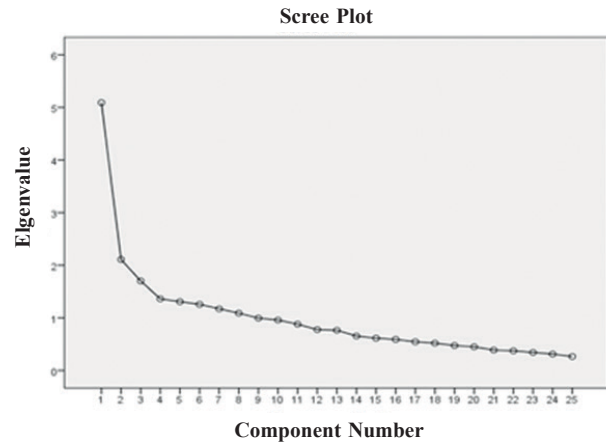
CSQ items	Factor loadings		
	1	2	3
<b>Factor 1</b>			
Become miserable or depressed	.757		
Become lonely or isolated	.747		
Try to find out more information to help make a decision about things	.704		
See the thing as a challenge that must be met	.670		
Feel that no-one understands	.666		
Feel helpless-there's nothing you can do about it	.571		
Feel that time will sort things out	.470		
<b>Factor 2</b>			
See the problem as something separate from myself so I can deal with it		.675	
Decide it's useless to get upset and just get on with things		.639	
Try to forget the whole thing		.467	
<b>Factor 3</b>			
Prepare myself for the worst possible outcome			.640
Feel completely clear-headed about the whole thing			.614
Feel that time will sort things out			-.511
Trust in fate-that things have a way of working out for the best			-.462

makes it an emotional coping factor as a whole. The second factor incorporates all the items of detachment coping except for one item which is of rational coping.

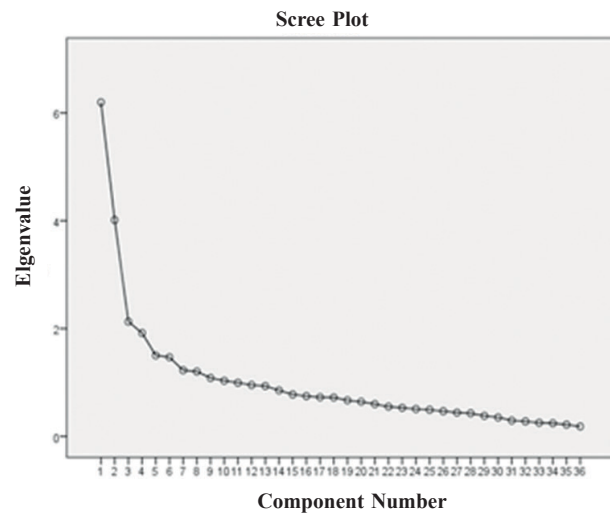
The third factor includes two items of detachment coping and two items negatively loaded on emotional and avoidance coping, which more or less can be explained in terms of detachment coping as per the item characteristics and the particular factor is named as hardiness. Hardiness can be defined as the strength of the person to sustain or pass through difficult situations. The term is generally defined in terms of resilience but here the explanation of the term being used as a coping type is defined by the author in such a manner that the items in the particular dimension explain more of a resilience type rather than a coping strategy.

Figure 3 shows the scree plot of the Coping Style Questionnaire (CSQ) exhibiting three explainable factors as extracted with the help of eigen values.

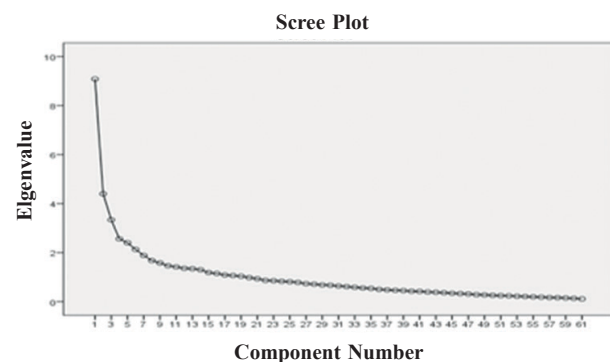
In the joint factorial structure as shown in Table 5 and Figure 4, it can be observed that four factors emerged by applying the method of factor analysis. The first factor represented all the items of emotional coping. The second factor clubbed the items of adaptive coping styles and resilience. In the third factor extracted, there was majority of the rational coping items and the fourth factor included items of resilience, emotional and rational coping. Evidence supports the clubbing of coping and resilience factors. For instance, a study assessed the relationship between resilience and coping,



**Figure 2. Scree plot of Connor-Davidson resilience scale.**



**Figure 3. Scree plot of coping style questionnaire.**



**Figure 4. Scree plot of joint factor analysis.**

Table 5. Joint factor analysis of RISC-CD and CSQ

RISC-CD and CSQ items	Factor Loadings			
	1	2	3	4
<b>Factor 1</b>				
Just take nothing personally	.779			
Become miserable or depressed	.762			
Become lonely or isolated	.730			
Try to find out more information to help make a decision about things	.723			
See the thing as a challenge that must be met	.706			
Feel that no-one understands	.607			
Feel helpless-there's nothing you can do about it	.530			
Feel that time will sort things out	.473			
<b>Factor 2</b>				
Best effort no matter what		.793		
You work to attain your goals		.583		
In control of your life		.579		
Know where to turn for help		.533		
<b>Factor 3</b>				
Use my past experience to try deal with the situation			.696	
Keep things to myself and not let others know how bad things are for me			.607	
Try to forget the whole thing			.569	
Criticise or blame myself			.546	
<b>Factor 4</b>				
Become irritable or angry				.783
Sometimes fate or God can help				.774
Things happen for a reason				.622
Be realistic in my approach to the situation				.455

results indicated that coping and resilience are distinct constructs but influence each other, as the use of various strategies such as active coping, interpersonal support, goal attainment, and planning bridges the gap between coping and resilience.<sup>33</sup>

#### 4. CONCLUSION

There is an abundance of research studying resilience and coping as separate constructs but there is inadequate research investigating the conjoint structure of both constructs especially in the Indian context. Some of the available literature citing both resilience and coping have been included in the present study but there is a need to investigate the extent of communalities shared by both constructs.

The results of the present study are different from what was predicted by the original measures used in the study. The disagreement in the results can be accounted for majorly by the data being used in the study. Thus, there's a need for revision to the existing measures to apply them to the indigenous population. The present study endeavored to test two available measures with the results describing modifications subscribing to the current population. Generally, the testing of measures should be an unceasing subject of research to help the ecological validity and appropriateness of the results.

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She is responsible study conception and design, data collection, analysis and interpretation of results, and manuscript preparation.