



## Original Article

# University Students' Concerns about Terrorism, Resilience, and Coping Strategies

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## Abstract

**Background:** Current research inspects the concerns of students of the university about terrorism and their capacity to bounce back, and the coping strategies they are using to deal with it. A cross-sectional study research design is employed in the current study.

**Methodology:** The sample is comprised of 387 students collected from faculties of Karachi University (1) Faculties of Social Sciences, Islamic Studies, Education, Law, and Administrative Sciences and (2) Faculties of Science, Engineering, Pharmacy, and Medicine. A consent form, demographic sheet, Students' concerns about terrorism scale, Brief resilience scale, and COPE inventory were administered to students.

**Results:** Demonstrated significant positive relationship among Anti-Terrorism, Peace, and Female emancipation. Further linear regression analysis shows that peace scores explain a 21.8% variance and female Emancipation score explains an 18.4% variance in the Anti-terrorism score. Multivariate analysis of variance shows a significant difference between gender in scores of Anti-terrorism, peace, female emancipation, and coping strategies (self-destruction, substance use, and positive reframing).

**Conclusion:** Participants' resilience was found to be in the normal range. A significant positive relationship was found between Anti-Terrorism, Peace, and Female emancipation. Those who had anti-terrorist views were in favor of peace and Female emancipation.

## Keywords

University Student, Resilience, Coping Strategies, Concerns About Terrorism.



## Introduction

Terrorism is one of the main problems in Pakistan and has been distressing its residents for ages. Pakistan is playing a substantial part globally in the battle against terrorism.

Pakistan displays indications that point to a tremendous prospective for youth radicalization. The situation is evident by a poor education scheme stratified along socio-economic lines and unequal economic chances across sections of society. These cautionary signals raise the probability of young members of society being persuaded into extremist causes. Moreover, the existence of an extremist set-up, the flawless organizational discipline, the extensive social systems of Pakistan's Islamist political and militant outfits, the disappointment of the moderate forces to bring credible results, and myopic US strategies additionally enhance it<sup>1</sup>.

Terrorism' has no universal definition, the academicians and intellectuals have defined it in diverse ways. According to Webster's Dictionary<sup>2</sup>, "terrorism is the systematic use of violence, terror, and intimidation to achieve an end."

Terrorism has profound origins in the society of Pakistan because of numerous reasons that comprise poor governance, demotion of rural regions, delay, and the absence of justice and open access to arms<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, geographical locations make it susceptible to terrorist dangers. Socio-economic difficulties lead to radicalism as while these complications are mutual they make available ground for extremists<sup>4</sup>.

Contact with terrorism in both ways direct and indirect develops fear and anxiety amongst stayers<sup>5</sup>. Because of these incidents schools and universities remained closed for

some period of time in the country secondly it was followed by the news of expected future terrorist attacks on universities and schools. It additionally prevails the feelings of uncertainty among students and academic staff<sup>6</sup>.

In one study, when participants were asked whether Pakistan should convert into a secular state, most chose against the proposition. Most of the participants thought that all jihadi organizations need to be banned. The problem, consequently found, is a need for more intelligent thinking plus a substitute narrative dialogue in the society as a result it will allow the youth to ponder 'out of the box'<sup>7</sup>.

Bonanno et al. (2010) stated that people react differently to trauma. First of all, there are some people who show severe stress and anxiety, and it does not reduce with the passage of time. Secondly, some people display very few or no symptoms at all of the psychopathologies; nonetheless, later on, they produce some. Thirdly, a number of people initially show psychopathology, and afterward, they recover completely. Finally, some people are resilient and adjust well in times of stress and trauma<sup>8</sup>.

Taking footsteps to form resilience is the ability to adjust well to unforeseen ups and downs; in addition, events can aid people in managing distress and uncertainty. Numerous steps are vibrant parts of a healthy way of life, and accepting them can progress overall emotional and physical well-being.

"According Luthar & Cicchetti, (2000), resilience is a dynamic process wherein individuals display positive adaptation despite experiences of significant adversity or trauma"<sup>9</sup>.



Initially, resilience was frequently well-defined in simple terms of doing well in the phase of adversity or trauma. Early work concentrated on knowing naturally present resilience. Novel work has shifted struggles to encourage resilience in individuals<sup>10</sup>.

Resilience is perceived as a representative that allows individuals not only to overcome hardship but then also to succeed while facing difficult situation<sup>s11</sup>.

Resilience in expressing hardship is the capacity to move forward in adverse conditions, a human reaction that indicates good health, both psychologically and physically. People who are resilient were set up to enjoy enhanced physical in addition mental health and lesser levels of depression, apprehension, sleep disorders, and PTSD, related to people who have less level of resilience<sup>12,13,14</sup>.

In order to deal with stressors, individuals use different ways, which are known as coping. According to Celestin & Celestin-Westreich, (2006), Coping is the vibrant progression that inclines to function as a robust moderator amongst stressors and a Person's psychological health effects<sup>15</sup>.

Coping is also defined as "Constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the person's resources"<sup>16</sup>.

Lazarus (as cited)<sup>17</sup> mentioned coping as the capacity of a person to overcome perplexing and critical situations. Coping styles show a substantial part in dealing with the traumatic event; if Coping styles are productive, they will act as a buffer against the expected potential undesirable responses, and if Coping styles are nonproductive, they further enhance the

trauma and makes the process of accepting certainty and moving on slow<sup>18</sup>.

Tatar & Amram (2007) conducted research on 330 participants, which were Israeli adolescents; their coping strategies were investigated about terrorist attacks were investigated as they have witnessed substantial constant terrorist attacks in past years. Results showed that adolescents employ healthy coping approaches compared to non-healthy coping approaches when dealing with terrorist attacks<sup>19</sup>.

As stated by Glennie, "Although coping and resilience are related constructs, they are distinct in that coping refers to a wide set of skills and purposeful responses to stress, whereas resilience refers to positive adaptation in response to serious adversity"<sup>20</sup>.

It is essential to know about students' concerns regarding terrorism, as Pakistan is highly affected by terrorism. Students' capacity to bounce back and return to everyday life (resilience) and the coping strategies they employ make a significant change in their lives. The present research will explore students' capacity to cope despite setbacks, barriers, and limited resources.

The present research studied University Students' Concerns about Terrorism, Resilience, Resilience, and Coping Strategies.

- 1) There will be a difference in the resilience level among Karachi university students.
- 2) There will be a positive correlation between Anti-terrorism, peace, and female emancipation among students of Karachi University.
- 3) There will be a gender difference in Anti-terrorism, peace, female emancipation, resilience, and coping strategies scores.



- 4) There will be a difference in the scores of Anti-terrorism, peace, female emancipation, resilience, and coping strategies among faculties.

## Methodology

A quantitative, cross-sectional study research design is employed in the current study. The Ethics Committee of SDPI approves the research project. Self-administered questionnaires: Students' Concerns about Terrorism (SCT) Scale, Brief Resilience Scale, and Brief COPE Inventory were filled out by 387 students.

### Sample

The sample was drawn from different faculties of the University of Karachi. (1) Faculties of Social Sciences, Islamic Studies, Education, Law, and Administrative Sciences (2) Faculties of Science, Engineering, Pharmacy, and Medicine.

Selection of sample size: The ideal sample size was found to be 381 and collected.

### Instruments

**Informed Consent:** Participants were informed about the nature of the study and were assured about their confidentiality and their right to withdraw at any point.

The students' Concerns about Terrorism (SCT) scale is developed by Shukat et al. in 2016<sup>21</sup>. It is comprised of three subscales Anti-terrorism, peace, and female emancipation. It includes a total of 15 items. Reliabilities of subscales of the Students' Concerns about Terrorism (SCT) scale were 0.82, 0.75, and 0.84. It is a five-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from strongly agree to disagree strongly.

The brief Resilience Scale is developed by Smith B. et al. in 2008<sup>22</sup>. In order to get a total score, add the answers varying from 1-5 for all six items. Divide the total sum by the total number of questions answered. Total score range from 6-30. Interpretation of Scores; 1.00-2.99 shows low resilience, 3.00-4.30 shows typical resilience, 4.31-5.00 shows high resilience.

The Brief Cope was developed as a short version of the original 60-item COPE scale (Carver et al., 1989)<sup>23</sup>, which was theoretically resultant based on various models of coping. It consists of only 28 statements. It has the following subscales; Self-distraction, Active Coping, Denial, Substance use, Use of emotional support, Use of instrumental support, Behavioral disengagement, Venting, Positive reframing, Planning, Humor, Acceptance, Religion, & Self-blame.

### Procedure

Students were approached personally at the university. They were briefed entirely about the purpose and nature of the research, and it was assured that the information obtained would only be used for research purposes. A consent form, demographic sheet, Students' concerns about terrorism scale, Brief resilience scale, and COPE inventory were administered to students. The students were thanked for participating in the research, and a token of appreciation folder was given to every participant, and the results will be analyzed. Incomplete forms were discarded before data entry.



## Results

**Table 1: Summary of demographic variables.**

Variables	N(%)	
Gender	Men	99(25.6)
	Women	287(74.2)
Age	18	107(27.6)
	19-20	209(54.0)
	23-25	69(17.8)
	25+	2(0.5)
Faculties	Social Sciences, Islamic Studies, Education, Law, and Administrative Sciences	215 (53.3)
	Science, Engineering, Pharmacy, and Medicine	172 (42.8)

Table 1 shows the number and percentage of Men and Women with their ages and faculties. While , Table 2 shows the resilience level in which 93.8% of participants are showing resilience in the normal range.

**Table 2: Showing Rate of Resilience.**

Variables	Cut off	Interpretation	N(%)
Resilience	1.00-2.99	Low Resilience	12(3.1)
	3.00-4.30	Normal resilience	363(93.8)
	4.31-5.00	High Resilience	12(3.1)
<b>Total</b>			387(100)

A significant positive correlation was found among Scores of Anti-Terrorism, Peace, and Female emancipation (Table 3).

**Table 3: showing Correlation among Scores of Anti-Terrorism, Peace, Female emancipation**  
Correlation matrix of the three Subscales (N=387).

	Peace	Female emancipation	Anti-terrorism
Peace	----	0.398**	0.466**
Female emancipation	0.398**	---	0.429**
Antiterrorism	0.466**	0.429**	---

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

Table 4 shows the impact of the Peace Score on the Anti-terrorism score. The R2 value of .218 reveals that the predictor explains a 21.8% variance in the outcome variable with  $F(1, 386) = 107$ ,  $p > .05$ .

**Table 4: Linear Regression Coefficients of Peace Score on Anti-terrorism score.**

Variables	B	$\beta$	SE
Constant	3.021		.370
Peace	.545	.466	.053

\*R2 .218

\*\*Note. N = 387

Table 5 shows the impact of the Peace Score on the Anti-terrorism score. The R2 value of .218 reveals that the predictor explains an 18.4% variance in the outcome variable with  $F(1, 386) = 86.66, p > .05$ .

**Table 5: Linear Regression Coefficients of Female Emancipation Score on Anti-terrorism score.**

Variables	B	$\beta$	SE
Constant	3.677		.341
Peace	.336	.429	.036

\*R2 .184

\*\*Note. N = 387

Table 6 shows Multivariate Tests. There is a statistically significant difference between gender in scores of Anti-terrorism, peace, female emancipation, and coping strategies (Active Coping, Substance Use, and Humor)

**Table 6: Table showing descriptive of Subscales of Concern about terrorism (Anti-terrorism, Peace, Female Emancipation), resilience, and Coping strategies between Genders.**

Variable	Gender	
	Male mean $\pm$ SD	Female mean $\pm$ SD
Anti-terrorism	7.13 $\pm$ 3.17	6.46 $\pm$ 2.49
Peace	7.63 $\pm$ 2.67	6.29 $\pm$ 2.06
Female Emancipation	10.26 $\pm$ 8.28	4.36 $\pm$ 2.88
Resilience	3.39 $\pm$ .65	3.43 $\pm$ .59
Self-Destruction	5.25 $\pm$ 1.60	5.68 $\pm$ 1.69
Active Coping	5.84 $\pm$ 1.67	6.04 $\pm$ 1.56
Denial	4.59 $\pm$ 1.70	4.41 $\pm$ 1.84
Substance Use	3.13 $\pm$ 1.69	2.34 $\pm$ 1.03
Emotional Support	4.86 $\pm$ 1.49	4.97 $\pm$ 1.79
Instrumental Support	5.38 $\pm$ 1.91	5.25 $\pm$ 1.87
Behavioral Disengagement	4.34 $\pm$ 1.59	4.15 $\pm$ 1.61
Venting	4.58 $\pm$ 1.74	4.56 $\pm$ 1.58
Positive Reframing	5.54 $\pm$ 1.66	5.92 $\pm$ 1.65
Planning	5.80 $\pm$ 1.69	5.86 $\pm$ 2.03
Humor	4.32 $\pm$ 2.00	3.97 $\pm$ 1.85
Acceptance	5.85 $\pm$ 1.73	5.81 $\pm$ 1.74
Religion	6.11 $\pm$ 1.81	6.45 $\pm$ 1.67
Self-Blame	4.65 $\pm$ 1.85	4.61 $\pm$ 1.86



### Multivariate Test for Intercept and Gender

Multivariate Tests							
Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.986	1462.388 <sup>b</sup>	18.000	368.000	0.000	.986
	Wilks' Lambda	.014	1462.388 <sup>b</sup>	18.000	368.000	0.000	.986
	Hotelling's Trace	71.530	1462.388 <sup>b</sup>	18.000	368.000	0.000	.986
	Roy's Largest Root	71.530	1462.388 <sup>b</sup>	18.000	368.000	0.000	.986
Gender	Pillai's Trace	.178	4.424 <sup>b</sup>	18.000	368.000	.000	.178
	Wilks' Lambda	.822	4.424 <sup>b</sup>	18.000	368.000	.000	.178
	Hotelling's Trace	.216	4.424 <sup>b</sup>	18.000	368.000	.000	.178
	Roy's Largest Root	.216	4.424 <sup>b</sup>	18.000	368.000	.000	.178

a. Design: Intercept + Gender

b. Exact statistic

**Table 7: Table showing descriptive of Subscales of Concern about terrorism (Anti-terrorism, Peace, Female Emancipation), resilience, and Coping strategies between Faculties.**

Variable	Faculties	
	Social Sciences, Islamic Studies, Education, Law, and Administrative Sciences	Science, Engineering, Pharmacy, and Medicine
	mean±SD	mean±SD
Anti-terrorism	6.76±2.61	6.47±2.78
Peace	6.95±2.27	6.23±2.29
Female Emancipation	8.86±3.37	8.69±3.50
Resilience	3.43±.61	3.40±.59
Self-Destruction	5.48±1.60	5.68±1.76
Active Coping	5.92±1.60	6.08±1.58
Denial	4.33±1.86	4.62±1.73
Substance Use	2.48±1.24	2.62±1.32
Emotional Support	4.99±1.68	4.89±1.77
Instrumental Support	5.28±1.96	5.29±1.77
Behavioral Disengagement	4.19±1.6	4.21±1.59
Venting	4.68±1.53	4.43±1.72
Positive Reframing	5.78±1.69	5.87±1.63
Planning	5.93±2.12	5.73±1.70
Humor	4.00±1.87	4.13±1.93
Acceptance	5.86±1.77	5.77±1.70
Religion	6.35±1.66	6.38±1.78
Self-Blame	4.67±1.83	4.55±1.88



Multivariate Tests							
Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
<b>Intercept</b>	Pillai's Trace	.989	1841.241 <sup>b</sup>	18.000	368.000	0.000	.989
	Wilks' Lambda	.011	1841.241 <sup>b</sup>	18.000	368.000	0.000	.989
	Hotelling's Trace	90.061	1841.241 <sup>b</sup>	18.000	368.000	0.000	.989
	Roy's Largest Root	90.061	1841.241 <sup>b</sup>	18.000	368.000	0.000	.989
<b>Faculties</b>	Pillai's Trace	.059	1.274 <sup>b</sup>	18.000	368.000	.201	.059
	Wilks' lambda	.941	1.274 <sup>b</sup>	18.000	368.000	.201	.059
	Hotelling's Trace	.062	1.274 <sup>b</sup>	18.000	368.000	.201	.059
	Roy's Largest Root	.062	1.274 <sup>b</sup>	18.000	368.000	.201	.059

## Discussion

The present study was carried out to investigate University Students' Concerns about Terrorism, Resilience, Resilience, and Coping Strategies. Our country Pakistan has undergone many problems due to terrorism in each walk of life, comprising the dissection of society, political uncertainty, foodstuff crises, and economic decline<sup>24</sup>.

The first variable investigated in our study is Concerns about Terrorism; it has three subscales Anti-terrorism, peace, and social context (Attitudes to modern female emancipation).

A significant positive correlation was found among Scores of Anti-Terrorism, Peace, and Female emancipation (table 3). The result shows a Positive relationship between peace and female emancipation, a Positive relationship between peace and anti-terrorism, and a positive relationship between female emancipation and anti-terrorism. Regression analysis shows that the predictor (peace score) explains a 21.8% variance in the outcome variable (Anti-terrorism score). The predictor (Female Emancipation score) explains an 18.4% variance in the outcome variable (Anti-terrorism score).

Medical College (RMC) regarding terrorist attacks on educational institutions and their impact 34 percent of the students, mentioned that their education had been affected by the wave of terrorism, while 58 percent of students mentioned terrorist attacks had affected their mental health status and about two-thirds perceived that their extra-curricular activities and social activities had been affected due to terrorism. About 43 percent of students had accepted terrorism as a part of their lives; however, 80 percent of students were hopeful that terrorism would end soon. In 2015 a study examined the incidence of psychological problems and their predictors in 1048 Chinese college students from Shanghai. 47 percent of students had anxiety complications<sup>25</sup>.

Education can play a vital role in developing patience amongst students or forthcoming citizens<sup>26</sup>; in a culture with diverse religious viewpoints, it is challenging to get coherence in opinions about peace, terrorism, and female emancipation<sup>27</sup>.

The minds of younger individuals are more responsive to cognitive and affective modification<sup>28</sup>. So when the links between peace, terrorism, and female emancipation





have been established, there is a framework for future policy changes.

Research studies have demonstrated that the sociopolitical effect of women is a robust forecaster of less violence in the nation<sup>29,30,31</sup>. An investigation conducted by Robinson displays a negative relationship between women's emancipation and terrorism, suggesting that civilizations which permit women to work without restrictions are less susceptible to terrorist events. Based on the evidence obtained, it can be specified that societies are more peaceful, which favors female empowerment<sup>32</sup>.

Our Second significant variable of the study is resilience. "Resilience is a process of adapting well in the face of adversity"<sup>33</sup>.

Our study shows the average level of resilience among students of Karachi University (table 2). One study concluded that college scholars with good levels of resilience exhibited enhanced adjustment to university<sup>34</sup>.

According to the study on undergraduates of Rawalpindi, It is apparent that deliberate actions of violence/terror are more potent as compared to the natural adversities<sup>35</sup>.

A study was conducted in 2011 on students of four universities in Karachi. 291 undergraduate students completed self-administered forms. Most of the students had mild stress levels as a result of the continuous hazard of terrorism; however, a lesser no of students had severe stress levels. Potential reasons for resilience and mild stress levels can be the past of Karachi's internal clashes and its lengthy period of exposure to terrorism<sup>36</sup>.

Multivariate analysis findings show a statistically significant difference between gender in scores of Anti-terrorism, peace,

female emancipation, and coping strategies (Active Coping, Substance Use, and Humor). Male participants scored high on all three subscales of concerns about terrorism, Anti-Terrorism, Peace, and Female emancipation. In coping strategies, females scored high on Active Coping; males scored high on Substance Use and Humor.

Another Multivariate analysis between faculties in the scores of Anti-terrorism, peace, female emancipation, and coping strategies conducted shows no significant difference in variables concerning faculties.

Women are more likely to practice active Coping plus social support and problem-focused coping<sup>37</sup>.

It was revealed that males respond to unpleasant situations by picking either vibrant adapting methodology or otherwise avoidant actions, such as alcohol or medication use<sup>38,39</sup>.

The positive effects of humor may be described by the role of humor in the cognitive appraisal of threatening, hence stressful, situations. The study outcomes show that a healthier sense of humor assists additional positive cognitive appraisals<sup>40</sup>.

Some investigators have also investigated gender differences in using humor as a coping mechanism and concluded that men use humor more often than women<sup>41</sup>.

It is proposed that the causes and impact of terrorism be shared with young students because these views impact equality between genders and inculcate peace in society. The capacity to bounce back from trauma must be enhanced, so we do not collapse in hard times.



## Conclusion

The finding shows that most of the participant's resilience is in the normal range, which is a good sign. A significant positive relationship was found between Anti-Terrorism, Peace, and Female emancipation, and those who had anti-terrorist views favored peace and Female emancipation. Further analysis revealed that male participants scored high on all three subscales of concerns about terrorism (Anti-Terrorism, Peace, and Female emancipation) as compared to female participants. No difference was found in the level of resilience between male and female participants. In coping strategies, females scored high on Active Coping, and males scored high on Substance Use and Humor; no difference was found in the frequency of remaining coping strategies.

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