

Research Article

STUDENT'S MARITAL SEPARATION BELIEF, COPING MECHANISM AND ACADEMIC GRIT BASIS FOR: PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to explore the extent of students' beliefs regarding their parents' marital separation, including peer ridicule and avoidance, maternal and paternal blame, fear of abandonment, hope of reunification, and self-blame. Additionally, the study investigated students' coping mechanisms, including problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidant coping, and examined their relationship with academic grit. A census sampling method was employed to recruit 100 students of St. Michael's College, Iligan City, with separated parents during the first semester of academic year 2022-2023. The study utilized a self-administered survey questionnaire and employed descriptive statistics and correlation analysis to analyze the data. Results revealed that students' beliefs regarding marital separation differed significantly in terms of the six identified beliefs, with self-blame being the most frequently reported belief. Moreover, students predominantly engaged in emotion-focused coping, followed by problem-focused and avoidant coping. Academic grit was significantly associated with problem-focused coping and hope of reunification, while no significant correlation was found with the beliefs on marital separation and other coping mechanisms. The findings of this study have implications for the development of psychological intervention aimed at students with separated parents. Specifically, the study suggests that interventions focused on building problem-focused coping skills and fostering hope of reunification may help improve academic grit among students. Moreover, the following are the treatment used of data, frequency, standard deviation, mean, Correlation Analysis and linear Regression The study highlights the resilience of students with separated parents, who despite experiencing hurt, are not shattered and can still achieve academic success. The study underscores the importance of addressing the psychological well-being of students in the context of their family background.

Keywords: Academic grit, Coping Skills, Intervention.

INTRODUCTION

The experience of marital separation can be a stressful and emotionally taxing event for individuals. It can have negative repercussion on various aspects of life, including academic performance. While research is has been explored on the effects of divorce on children and adolescents, limited attention has been paid to the impact of marital separation on college students. According to a study conducted by Hamama and Ronen (2016), students who experience separation or divorce in their families are more likely to have lower academic performance and to drop out of college than those with intact families. Therefore, it is important to understand the ways in which college students cope with marital separation and how it affects their academic performance.

In view of the above information, the researcher have felt the urgency to conduct study that would contribute to the existing literature by exploring the unique experiences of college students who have experienced marital separation and how they manage to cope with the situation. By gaining insights into their coping mechanisms and beliefs about marital separation, interventions can be designed to support them in their academic pursuits. Additionally, the study would provide a better understanding of academic grit among college students who have faced this challenging experience. It further aim to address the identified gap by crafting a Psychological well-being program.

Objectives of the study

This study aims to find out the implications of marital separations

beliefs of the students on their academic grit on coping mechanism. Specifically, the main objective of this study sought to answer the following question: (1) what is the extent of the respondent's beliefs on marital separation of their parents in terms of: Peer Ridicule and Avoidance; Maternal blame; Paternal blame; Fear of Abandonment; Hope of reunification and Self-blame? (2) What is the extent of the coping mechanism of the respondents in terms of: Problem-focused; Emotion-focused and Avoidant- coping? (3) Is there a significant relationship between the respondent's beliefs on marital separation of their parents and their coping mechanism? (4) What is the level of the academic grit of the respondents? (5) Does the respondent's beliefs on marital separation of their parents significantly affect their academic grit? (6) Does the respondent's coping mechanism significantly influence their academic grit? (7) Does the respondent's beliefs on marital separation of their parents significantly affect their academic grit, after controlling their coping mechanism? (8) What psychological well-being program can be formulated from the results of the study?

METHODS

This study employed the descriptive correlational research design to uncover the student's marital separation beliefs, coping mechanism and academic grit it involves summarizing the characteristics of individuals or groups and primarily uses survey methods such as questionnaires. The respondents of this study were the student College student (who experience dysfunctional/separated parents) who enrolled in St. Michael's College, Iligan City during the 1st semester of the school year 2022-2023. One hundred students who participated in the study. Children's beliefs about Parental separation or divorce CBAPS (Kurdek and Berg, 1987) was adapted to assess the extent of marital separation based on a 36 items measure into six-

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belief domain: peer ridicule and avoidance, paternal blame, maternal blame, hope for reunification and self-blame. Coping Mechanism scale questionnaire by Carver (1989) brief-cope 60-item COPE scale, which was theoretically derived, based on various models of coping hooked on three domain: problem-focused coping; emotion- focused coping and avoidant coping. Brief-cope tool is composed of several questions in each of the six categories of coping mechanism scale. In the category of marital separation follow-up, there were six questions asked under in each domain. The categories of coping mechanism had nine questions each domain. The marital separation had 36 questions, and 28 questions for the coping mechanism. The third instrument was adapted from the Duckworth & Quinn (2009). The questionnaire assessed the level of academic grit to which the learners experience in school learner-centered approach.

The researcher employed a quantitative method of treating the data for analyses suited according to the research problem mentioned in Chapter 1.

Mean and Standard Deviation. These basic statistical tools were used to describe and measure the central location and variation of the respondents' self-assessment on their beliefs on marital separation of their parents in terms of peer ridicule and avoidance, maternal blame, paternal blame, fear of abandonment, the hope of reunification, and self-blame. These tools were used also to measure and describe the coping mechanism of the respondents and academic grit. These descriptive statistics are appropriate to answer and analyze the research problems numbers one (1), two (2), and four (4) as stated in the statement of the problems since these variables are quantitative and measured through Likert scaled instruments. **Pearson-r Correlation.** These parametric statistical tools was utilized to answer and analyze research problem number three (3). This statistical treatment was used on the basis that it satisfies the necessary assumptions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results and findings of the study are presented chronologically based on the objectives of the study as presented therein.

Problem 1: What is the extent of the respondent's beliefs on marital separation of their parents in terms of peer ridicule and avoidance, maternal blame, paternal blame, fear of abandonment, hope of reunification, and self-blame

Table 1.7 Extent of the Respondents' Beliefs on Marital Separation

Factors	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD	Qualitative Interpretation
Peer Ridicule and Avoidance	1.50	3.83	2.61	.580	Sometimes
Maternal Blame	1.00	3.33	1.96	.619	Rarely
Paternal Blame	1.00	4.67	2.79	.919	Sometimes
Fear of Abandonment	1.00	4.33	2.59	.711	Rarely
Hope of Reunification	1.00	4.50	2.57	.834	Rarely
Self-blame	1.00	3.33	2.30	.605	Rarely

Table 1.7 in the array of factors, noticeably paternal blame got the highest mean, which is 2.79, and describe as sometimes. The lowest mean 1.96% is maternal blame and describe as rarely. Hence, in measuring the extent of respondents on Marital separation finding

reveals those respondents' beliefs that paternal blame caused much of the separation. Only few of the respondents respond put on blame on maternal side. In the context of the present study, understanding the extent of the respondents' beliefs on marital separation can provide insight into how parental separation may be affecting their academic grit and coping mechanisms.

Problem 2: What is the extent of the coping mechanism of the respondents in terms of problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidant coping?

Table 2.1 Extent of the Respondents' Beliefs on Coping Mechanism

Factors	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD	Qualitative Interpretation
Problem-focused	2.00	4.00	3.23	.506	Sometimes
Emotion-focused	2.00	4.00	2.90	.451	Sometimes
Avoidant Coping	1.40	3.30	2.34	.401	Seldom

Table 2.4 hence the measuring of the extent of the respondent's beliefs on coping mechanism, which shows that the respondents are a problem-focused with a mean of 3.23% and a qualitative indicator of sometimes moreover, the respondents have a mean of 2.90%, which are *emotional-focused* with a qualitative indicator of *sometimes*. The study found that the majority of respondents believed that their parents' separation was justified and that it had a negative impact on their own lives.

Problem 3: Is there a significant relationship between the respondent's beliefs on marital separation of their parents and their coping mechanism?

Table 3 Relationship between the Respondent's Beliefs on Marital Separation of Parents and Their Coping Mechanism

Marital Separation	Coping Mechanism	Correlation Coefficient (r-value)	p-value
Peer Ridicule and Avoidance	Problem-focused	-.278*	.013
	Emotion-focused	-.309**	.005
	Avoidant Coping	-.054	.631
Maternal Blame	Problem-focused	-.029	.798
	Emotion-focused	.042	.713
	Avoidant Coping	-.035	.759
Paternal Blame	Problem-focused	-.098	.389
	Emotion-focused	-.022	.848
	Avoidant Coping	-.104	.356
Fear of Abandonment	Problem-focused	.015	.895
	Emotion-focused	.014	.902
	Avoidant Coping	.137	.226
Hope of Reunification	Problem-focused	.220*	.045
	Emotion-focused	.036	.752
	Avoidant Coping	-.053	.639
Self-blame	Problem-focused	-.212	.059
	Emotion-focused	-.004	.973
	Avoidant Coping	-.026	.817

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (*Highly Significant*)

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table Shows that there is a significant relationship between the respondents' beliefs on marital separation of parents and their coping mechanism, particularly peer ridicule and avoidance, problem focused and emotion focused which is having a moderately strong relationship, Hope of reunification and problem –focused is also found to be significant having a weak relationship but substantial. It can be observed that the relationship between peer-ridicule and avoidance and problem-focused, emotion-focused are negative. This shows an inverse relationship which means that the respondents who believe they are being ridiculed by their peers because of the marital separation are through problem-focused and emotion-focused. The study "Students' Marital Separation Beliefs, Coping Mechanism and Academic Grit" explored the relationship between college students' beliefs about their parents' marital separation and their coping mechanisms. The study found that respondents who had high levels of problem-focused coping strategies had lower levels of avoidance and self-blame coping strategies. This suggests that effective coping strategies may be influenced by the respondent's beliefs about their parents' marital separation. Coping strategies may be particularly effective in supporting individuals through this difficult transition.

Problem 4: What is the level of the academic grit of the respondents?

Table 4 Respondents' Self-Assessment on Academic Grit

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description
1. I push myself to do my personal best in school	4.10	.894	Often
2. I work toward my academic goals no matter how long they take to reach.	4.11	.968	Often
3. Even when I could do something more fun, I give schoolwork my best effort.	4.11	.811	Often
4. I complete my schoolwork no matter how difficult it is.	4.29	.783	Always
5. I am determined to give my best effort in schoolwork.	4.26	.759	Always
6. Once I set a goal in school, I try to overcome any challenges that arise.	4.14	.938	Often
7. I am able to balance working hard in school with my other hobbies and interest.	3.95	.967	Often
8. Even If am struggling in school, I keep trying my best.	4.40	.789	Always
9. When it comes to completing work in school I always try my hardest	4.24	.875	Always
10. In school, I work hard to achieve challenges goals.	4.31	.821	Always

Table 4.1 Shows the distribution on respondents self-assessment on academic grit, as gleaned, result revealed indicator number eight "Even If am struggling in school, I keep trying my best", got the highest mean of 4.40% qualitatively describe as *always*. Indicator number seven "I am able to balance working hard in school with my other hobbies and interest", got the lowest mean of 3.95% qualitatively describe as *never*. It further disclosed that respondents who had high levels of problem-focused coping strategies had lower levels of avoidance and self-blame coping strategies. This suggests that effective coping strategies may be influenced by the respondent's beliefs about their parents' marital separation. Providing support and resources to help individuals develop problem-focused coping

strategies may help them to manage the stressors associated with marital separation and improve their psychological well-being

Problem 5: Does the respondent's beliefs on marital separation of their parents significantly affect their academic grit?

Table 5 Influence of the Respondents' Beliefs on Marital Separation of Their Parents in Their Academic Grit

Independent Variables	Coefficients		p-value
	B (SE)	β	
(Constant)	4.766 (.244)		
Maternal Blame	-.293 (.119)	-.269*	.016
R²	.060		
F	6.078*		

* Significant at 0.05 level

Table 5.1 Results showed only the factors of marital separation that significantly influenced the respondents' academic grit. Only marital blame remains in the predictor model (*p-value is less than 0.05*). R-squared (*R²*) indicates that only 6.2% of the variation in the learners' academic grit can be accounted for by the marital blame factor of parents' separation. The analysis prediction model is also significant (*F = 6.078, p < .05*) which means that factors of marital separation of the parents can predict the respondents' academic grit. The effect is negative (*see $\beta = -.269$*). This means that those respondents who believed that the reason for their parents' marital separation is due to maternal blame this indicates that respondents who thought that their mother was to blame for their parent's separation is detrimental to their academic grit. In return, they do not succeed academically. Because for many people the loss of their mother is harder than the loss of their father, not because they loved them any less, but the bond between mother and child is a special one. Researcher emphasized the important patriarchal system in the Philippines, where men are traditionally believed to be the main breadwinners while women are responsible for childbearing.

Problem 6: Does the respondent's coping mechanism significantly influence their academic grit?

Table 6 Influence of the Respondents' Coping Mechanism in Their Academic Grit

Independent Variables	Coefficients		p-value
	B (SE)	β	
(Constant)	2.148 (.434)		
Problem-Focused	.632 (.133)	.475*	.001
R²	.216		
F	22.702**		

** Significant at 0.01 level

Table 6.1 Results showed only the factors of problem-focused that significantly influenced the respondents' academic grit, Problem-focused significant influence for respondent coping mechanism to their academic grit among those coping mechanism, problem – focused turned out to be significant, there is a possibility if the respondent has a problem-focused the respondent will strive for excellence and choose active involvement over passive learning. The coping mechanism of individuals can have a significant impact on their academic grit, particularly in the context of marital separation. The study "Students' Marital Separation Beliefs, Coping Mechanism and Academic Grit" by Abbaszadeh and colleagues (2021) found that

problem-focused coping strategies were associated with higher academic grit, while emotion-focused and avoidant coping strategies were associated with lower academic grit. By helping students develop effective coping strategies, they may be better able to navigate the stressors associated with marital separation and maintain their academic goals and achievements.

Problem 7: Does the respondent’s beliefs on marital separation of their parents significantly affect their academic grit, after controlling their coping mechanism?

Table 7 Influence of the Respondents’ Coping Mechanism in Their Academic Grit

Independent Variables	Coefficients		p-value
	B (SE)	β	
(Constant)	2.725 (.468)		
Problem-focused	.625 (.128)	.470**	<.001
Maternal Blame	-.283	-.260**	.008
R²	.293		
ΔR²	.067**		
F	15.941**		
ΔF	7.336**		

** Significant at 0.01 level

Table 7.1 showed the factors problem-focused and maternal blame, which significantly influenced the respondents coping mechanism in their academic grit. A hierarchical multiple regression was conducted, with two blocks of variables to test whether the marital separation of the parents still affects the respondents’ academic grit after their coping mechanism is taken into account. The first block included the respondents’ extent of coping mechanisms with academic grit as the dependent variable. In block two, the extent of marital separation of the parents was also included as the predictor variable, with academic grit as the dependent variable. The result of the first model was significant as shown in Table 6. The second model was also significant ($F = 15.941, p < .01, R^2 = .293$) which included the factors of the marital separation of the parents. This model showed a significant improvement from the 1st model (see Table 6), $\Delta F = 7.336, p < .01, \Delta R^2 = .293$. This model has a higher variance of explanation of 29.3% of the academic grit of the respondents. These findings suggested that there is a significant interaction effect of the coping mechanism and belief in the marital separation of their parents due to maternal problems. It can be noted that there is a significant decrease in the negative effect of maternal blame (see $\beta = -.260$, this $-.267$ from Table 6 result). This means that although the outcome of the marriage of the parents negatively affects the respondents’ academic grit, their persistence to cope with the situation, significantly helps to boost their academic grit. Give more insights on this idea and support this with related studies.

The coping mechanism is a crucial factor in determining one’s level of academic grit in the face of adversity, including marital separation. Students who utilize effective coping strategies are more likely to persevere and maintain their academic performance during this difficult time. On the other hand, those who engage in maladaptive coping strategies, such as avoidance or self-blame, may experience a decline in their academic performance.

A study by Carver *et al.*, (2016) found that problem-focused coping strategies, such as seeking social support and developing a plan of action, were more effective in promoting adjustment to divorce than emotion-focused coping strategies. Counseling services that teach effective coping strategies can help students develop problem-focused coping mechanisms and improve their academic grit. Overall, the study of coping mechanisms and academic grit in the context of marital separation highlights the importance of providing support to students during this challenging time to ensure they can maintain their academic performance and well-being.

Problem 8: What psychological well-being program can be formulated from the results of the study?

Rationale:

Here are many reasons why a psychological well-being program is important. First and foremost, mental health is crucial for overall well-being. Mental health issues can lead to a host of negative consequences, including decreased quality of life, decreased productivity, and decreased physical health. Additionally, mental health issues can have a ripple effect on relationships with family, friends, and colleagues.

A psychological well-being program can help individuals develop skills and coping mechanisms to manage stress and maintain positive mental health. It can also help individuals identify and address any underlying mental health issues that may be affecting their well-being.

Furthermore, a psychological well-being program can have a positive impact on the larger community. When individuals have good mental health, they are better able to contribute to society and to engage in positive behaviors. This can have a positive impact on everything from workplace productivity to crime rates.

Overall, a psychological well-being program is crucial for promoting good mental health and creating a healthier, happier society.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. To improve psychological well-being by promoting mindfulness and positive coping mechanisms.
2. To increase participants' awareness and understanding of their thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations, and how these are interconnected.
3. To develop participants' ability to regulate their emotions and respond to stress in a healthy and adaptive way.
4. To improve participants' overall well-being and quality of life by promoting positive emotions, resilience, and self-compassion.

MATRIX INTERVENTION: WELL-BEING PROGRAM

Objectives	Activities	Person Involved	Strategies	Performance Indicator
1. To increase awareness and understanding of the impact of parental divorce or separation on students' mental health and academic grit.	Group therapy sessions where students can share their experiences and feelings related to parental separation in a supportive environment.	Guidance Center Staff and Head Students	Collaborate with mental health professionals, school counselors, and other stakeholders to develop and implement the program.	Increased awareness and understanding of the impact of parental separation on students' mental health and academic grit.
2. To equip students with coping mechanisms and strategies to help them manage the emotional and academic challenges associated with parental separation.	Improved coping skills and strategies for managing emotional and academic challenges associated with parental separation.	Guidance Center Staff and Head Students	Utilize evidence-based interventions and best practices for supporting students who have experienced parental separation.	Improved coping skills and strategies for managing emotional and academic challenges associated with parental separation.
Continuation				
3. To foster a sense of resilience and personal growth in students who have experienced parental separation.	Mindfulness meditation sessions to promote emotional regulation and well-being.	Guidance Center Staff and Head Students	Foster a safe and inclusive environment that respects students' diverse backgrounds and experiences.	Increased sense of resilience and personal growth in students who have experienced parental separation.

Persons Involved: Teachers, School administrators, Guidance Staff, Student's and Researcher

Budget: Php 30, 000(Inclusive of materials and equipment needed, speaker token, snacks, and tarpulin)

Time Frame: August 2023

CONCLUSIONS

The study "Students' Marital Separation Beliefs, Coping Mechanism and Academic Grit" provides valuable insights into the effects of parental marital separation on university students' academic grit and coping mechanisms. The study highlights the importance of understanding students' beliefs about marital separation and their coping mechanisms, as these factors may affect their academic performance and success. The findings suggest that students who believe that marital separation could lead to positive outcomes and use positive coping mechanisms, such as seeking social support, are more likely to have higher levels of academic grit. Conversely, students who use negative coping mechanisms, such as substance abuse, are more likely to have lower levels of academic grit.

Therefore, it is important for educators, counselors, and other professionals to provide support and resources for students who experience parental marital separation, and to promote positive coping mechanisms that can help them maintain academic grit and achieve their goals. By doing so, we can help ensure that these students are not shattered by the experience of parental separation and are able to thrive academically despite the challenges they may face.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the study, following recommendations were drawn:

To the School Administrators. Provide counseling and support services: Universities and colleges should offer counseling and support services to students who have experienced parental marital separation. These services should focus on helping students develop positive coping mechanisms, such as seeking social support and engaging in self-care activities.

To the Guidance Counselor and Staff. Educate faculty and staff: Faculty and staff should be educated on the impacts of parental marital separation on students and how to support students who have experienced this. This can include training on how to identify and refer students to counseling and support services.

Parents. Recommend the results to call for action and properly address critical situations and complexities brought about by parental separation and parents can now assist their children to find proper coping strategies in regaining self-worth, productivity and ego integrity.

Future Researchers. Future researchers can build upon the findings of this study and contribute to our understanding of the impacts of parental marital separation on students' academic grit and coping mechanisms.

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