

Coping, Stress and Well-Being in Lebanese Entering College Students

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BACKGROUND

- Challenges of newly admitted college students
- Inadequate response to coping leads to a range of psychological problems
- Difficulty with transition from high school to college
- In Lebanon: students exposed to additional stress given the socio-political context






PROBLEM STATEMENT



- Lebanon: history of wars and atrocities for a period of over 3 decades
- Lebanese studies: Focus on impact of war on Lebanese youth population
- Lack of studies on coping, daily stressful events, feeling of uncertainty, social support, general well-being and personality traits
- Mixed results on well-being + mental health in Lebanese population



PROBLEM STATEMENT-Cont'd

- Score of Lebanese college students:  than Egyptian & Kuwaiti on death anxiety and depression scales (Abdel Khalek, 2002)
- Score of Lebanese college students:  than Canadian students on the Beck anxiety inventory (Al-Issa, Baka, & Fung, 1999)
- Prevalence of fear and worry of Lebanese students: slightly  than among US students (Abdel Khalek, 2002)
- Lebanese college students (after political event): as satisfied with their lives as those during peaceful times (Ayyash-Abdo & Alamuddin, 2010)
- College youth: no experience of PTSD and no high risk for psychopathology and self-destructive behaviors (Ayyash-Abdo, 2007, 2010)



LITERATURE REVIEW: SYNTHESIS

- **Adolescent stressors:** political uncertainty, economic hardship and inability to meet basic needs
- **Internal coping resources:** Lebanese personality traits such as resilience and religiosity
- **External coping resources:** Lebanese cultural characteristics: strong social support network
- **Results of Lebanese youth's mental health:** not conclusive
- While limited, **findings across Lebanese youth studies showed that College students** are satisfied with their lives in spite of life-threatening circumstances



GAPS IN THE LEBANESE LITERATURE

Lack of research on:

- Stress and coping among youth in the Arab world
- How youth experience political violence and uncertain future

Review of Literature leads to:

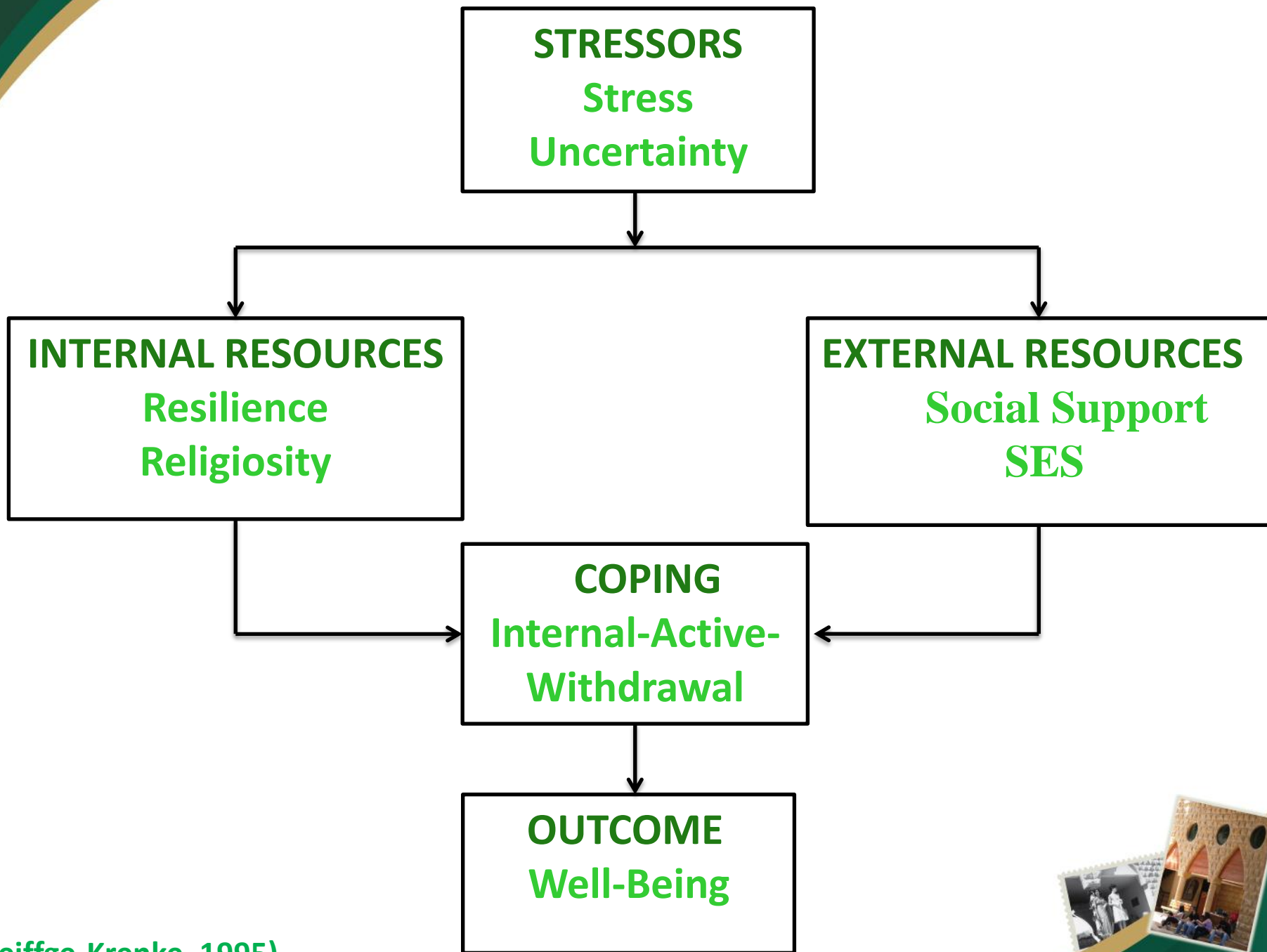
- Assumptions re coping strategies
- No conclusive evidence on well-being & mental health of Lebanese youth population



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Model of Stress, Coping and Outcomes
(Seiffge-Krenke, 1995)





(Seiffge-Krenke, 1995)



RESEARCH AIMS

- **Aim 1:** To determine the relationships between stress, uncertainty, resilience, social support, religiosity, and socioeconomic status (SES)
- **Aim 2:** To determine which factors best predict well-being



INSTRUMENTS

- Problem Questionnaire (Seiffge-Krenke, 1995)
- Parental monthly income level and Parents' level of education
- Resilience Scale (Wagnild & Young, 1993)
- Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, & Farley, 1988)
- Uncertainty Scale (Afifi & Afifi, 2011)
- Santa Clara Strength of Religious Faith Questionnaire (Plante & Boccacini, 1997)
- Coping Across Situations Questionnaire (Seiffge-Krenke, 1995)
- General Well-being for Adolescents Questionnaire (Columbo, 1984)



METHODOLOGY

- Cross-sectional descriptive correlational design
 - All data were collected at the same time
 - Literature demonstrated adequate information necessary to suspect the nature of the relationship between variables
 - Examine the variables as they exist, no attempt to manipulate or change variables
 - Data occurred in the participants natural environment

(Brink & Wood, 1988)



DESIGN

Descriptive Correlational Cross-Sectional Design

SAMPLE SIZE

Power analysis → 193 first-time students

SETTING

LAU-Beirut campus



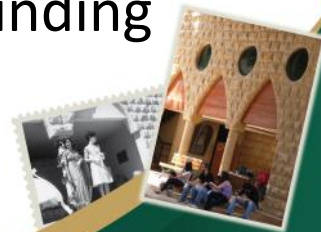
Inclusion Criteria

- **Newly admitted Lebanese college students**
- **Aged 17-20 years**
- **Students who lived in Lebanon for the last 6 years**
- **Enrolled in Fall 2011 term at LAU**
- **Taking English 009 or 101 class**



RESULTS-Research Aim 1

- ✓ Stress related to future, school, self and parents were the most challenging situations experienced.
- ✓ Increased stress was correlated with low social support, low resilience and withdrawal coping.
- ✓ Stress was not associated with religiosity nor with SES nor with U.
- ✓ Lebanese first-time college students scored lower on the well-being score than their counterparts in other studies.
- ✓ Withdrawal coping was significantly correlated with WB.
- ✓ When compared with other countries, Lebanese adolescents used more withdrawal strategies than German, Italian, Croatian, and Swiss adolescents and slightly less than American adolescents who live in neighborhoods having a higher level of crime than surrounding communities.
- ✓ Male and female students used similar coping strategies.



RESULTS-Research Aim 2

Stress related to self and to future, resilience, uncertainty, social support, withdrawal coping and gender accounted for 54% of the variance in well-being.



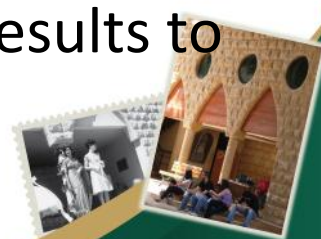
LIMITATIONS

Threats to Internal Validity

- Selection bias: due to convenience sampling
- Instrumentation: use of non-validated scales in a Lebanese setting

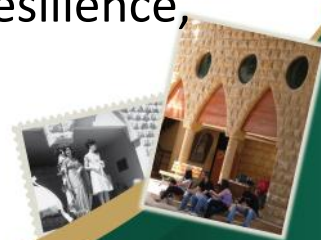
Threats to External Validity

- Setting for the data collection: recruitment from one Lebanese college in one region of Lebanon
- Survey conducted on students in a privileged population
- History: usual occurrences around the time of data collection could affect the ability to generalize the results to other periods in time



Implications for Nursing Knowledge and practice

- Better understanding of factors predictive of well-being (WB) in Lebanese first-time College students
- In Lebanon, preventive college-based and community wide programs should be established that target the individual, family and community.
- Intervention approaches should consider the developmental context and be tailored towards the specific needs of Lebanese youths.
- Based on the predictors of WB, targeted interventions in Lebanese colleges should begin with screening and assessment of adolescents for high perceived stress, low social support, high uncertainty, low resilience, low religiosity, high withdrawal coping and low internal coping



Future research

- **Longitudinal study** of variables throughout the four year undergraduate experience
- **Qualitative investigation** to gain information about the lived experience of college students struggling with daily hassles in a socio-political context
- **Studies to elucidate** the lack of association between gender and coping and between socio-economic status and all the other variables
- **Replication of this study** in other Lebanese universities that may allow a more diverse sample
- **Cross-cultural research:** coping and stress among Lebanese adolescents and their counterparts in other countries



THANK YOU

