

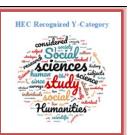
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# Impact of Negative Decisions on Mental Health among College and University Students

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ARTICLE INFO			ABSTRACT
Article History: Received: Revised: Accepted: Available Online:	December January January January	26, 2024 23, 2025 25, 2025 27, 2025	The purpose of the study is to explore the intricate relationship between negative decisions and the mental health of college and university students. The correlation research design will be used for this study. The sample of the study will comprise $N=300$ ,
Keywords:  Negative decisions, Emotions, Percepti Personality, Menta and Psychological	, Negative e. on, Behavio l health, Me well-being	xperiences, r, ntal illness	evenly distributed between men $(n=150)$ and women $(n=150)$ in
Corresponding Au Atif Rasool Email: atifrasool48@gma			items, General health questionnaire (GHQ) was developed by David Goldberg (1994), and consisted of items 12. The finding aims to uncover the impact of negative experiences affects same as males and females. It is hypothesized that there will be a significant relationship between negative decision-making and
OPEN CAC	CESS		mental health. Or there is a significant positive relationship between bad experiences or mental health among university or college students. The findings have significant implications for institutions to prioritize the students' decision-making strategies or create a supportive environment to enhance their well-being to test these hypotheses Pearson moment correlation or t-test

## Introduction

A negative decision refers to a choice or action having an unfavorable or undesirable effect on one's life. Negative decisions have permanent and negative effects on an individual's life. Negative thoughts are the base of bad mental health like anxiety, depression, and psychotic

will measure Data will analyzed using the SPSS 20.0 version.

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disorder. Negative decision-making mostly causes negative experiences. The negative experience or trauma changes your good mood to bad such as anger, rudeness, and fear. The mood changes emotions which are responsible for changing the perception of a person and changes of perception affect the behavior. Negative experiences can cause poor psychological health, such as low self-esteem, cognitive distortion, and emotional dysregulation. So, these individuals have a bad impact on mental health, which leads to mental disorders like anxiety, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder. Schwartz, (2004) stated that trait of the personality is changed by negative experiences and negative emotions also studied in social contexts. Rozin et al. (1999) found that the feelings of hate, and anger and their influence on the group of ethical codes in America and Japan. Wagoner et al., (2020) study showed that feelings of worries, financial problems, and mental health issues disturbed the occupational places which are the result of bad decision-making in lives. Davidson K. R et al (2003) studied "the role of affect in decision making." New emotions are generated and developed as the result of decision-making they are either expected emotions- in which individuals predict the future and they are less effective on the human brain or unexpected emotions- in which individuals do not predict the future and they are harm individuals emotionally. Smith et al., (2020) work and examine how making bad choices can affect our mental health.

## **Theoretical Framework**

Self-determination theory (SDT) states that three basic psychological needs of humans influence human behaviors which are relatedness, competence, and autonomy. These needs are necessary for individuals, and when these are satisfied, the individuals experience the internal motivation that leads to good mental as well as physical health. On the other hand, if we neglect the needs, the individuals suffer from bad mental health, such as feelings of helplessness, worthlessness, and powerlessness. Ryan & Deci (2017) stated that it can also deal with mental health issues like stress, anxiety, and despair. It presented competition, or relatedness, which is consistently identified as a crucial factor in mental health and beneficial in research. Ryan et al., (2009) found that university students who feel competent, connected, and autonomous have good mental well-being and have a low frequency of anxiety and stress. Reis et al., (2016) stated that when these needs are not fully satisfied it leads to stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues.

In Cognitive-Behavioral Theory (CBT), when a person has harmful and automatic negative thoughts as a result of making poor judgments it leads the other mental health issues. Individuals who make bad and negative decisions in their past are engaged in self-negative talking, negative thoughts, and dysregulation of emotions which leads the bad and negative changes in behavior and personality. Through the CBT technique, individuals learn how they direct and structure their thoughts from negative thoughts and also reframe the positive thoughts which enhances good behavior and leads to good mental health. The psychological well-being of the university student is enhanced by the psychological interventions that lead to making better and stronger decisions and destroying self-harming thoughts and activities. Clark & Beck (2010) said that CBT is very helpful for declining mental health issues which include stress, anxiety, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder. Ingram et al., (2011) study indicates that when students continuously negative thinking self-talk and catastrophizing it leads to bad mental health like anxiety and depression. All the studies indicate that with the help of psychological strategies one's behaviors are enhanced and eliminated. Harris et al., (2016) stated that interventions targeting and reframing negative thoughts and beliefs can effectively enhance mental health and overall wellbeing in college students.

## **Negative experience**

The harmful, unpleasant, and unwanted situation is known as the negative experience. Mostly, negative experiences are the outcome of negative decision-making. Vohs et al., (2019) results outcomes show that individual thoughts evaluate the impact of their experiences and then combine all their past experiences into a complete story, which enhances the individual identity and changes the personality of the person due to the unpleasant and unwanted life experiences.

#### **Emotions**

Intense feelings are often focused on a single thing and frequently come with behavioral and physiological changes in a person's body. Some common emotions are anger, fear, sadness, love and joy. Gabriel & Griffiths (2002) study conducted in the discipline of workplace rise in interest in emotions and learning. Notwithstanding, a few decades ago, people believed that workplaces were essentially rational spaces where employers and employees were expected to operate in an emotionally neutral manner. This paradigm was predicated on the idea that human behavior in organizational contexts adheres to rational principles and is primarily determined by plans and calculations based on cognitive processes.

## **Perception**

Perception is the capacity to comprehend things based on one's senses, which is influenced by one's personal experiences. McDonald et al., (2008) stated that the capacity to identify and realize the effective information communicated by the expression, body posture, accent, and contextual in order is known as emotion perception. It is a part of a social gathering to react less and show less emotion to society due to social fact.

## **Behavior**

Behavior is the action of your feelings and how a person perceives the nurture. Campbell et al., (2015) study shows that behavior is a psychological phenomenon in which individuals have different reactions according to inside or outside scenarios. Uher (2016) indicates the connection among individuals or their outside environment, namely interpersonal or ecosystem events or tasks, poses a threat to their behavior. Traditional models of behavior. Shiota, M. N. et al., (2023) stated that a change can be undertaken through information, ideals, or social norms. Feelings have a strong effect on an individual's behavior. This study also shows evidence that feelings are not only concerned with behavioral interventions; they can also have a strong influence on behavior.

## **Personality**

Personality is the unique combination of traits that makes an individual different from others. Bleidorn et al., (2016); and Bühler et al., (2024) research suggested that, apart from initial curiosity, individual life experiences have a great influence on the development of their personalities, but they are generally not mentioned or inconsistent in the study. So, these cues give hints of concern. To provide a strong or correct image of the research evidence that supports the personality change, the preregistered meta-analysis aimed to methodically compile the existing data on the effects of different life experiences on personality change. We conceptualize this study as giving us a new perspective or turning point in personality change research, moving towards the next studies, which aim to focus on simple life events to more complex ones for a

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better understanding of the process of personality. The current study aggregates the results of generations of studies on the role of major life events in personality change.

#### **Problem Statement**

"Identifying the impact of negative decisions on mental health among college and university students".

## Significance of the study

Identifying the pattern of negative impacts of negative decisions on the mental health of students who are in the middle of their career-starting journey is so important to highlight. The relationship between decision-making and mental health is very important for the student's personal, career-oriented, social, and emotional growth and aspects. Moreover, by evaluating the relation between these two variables, researchers can dig out effective strategies to enhance positive decision-making processes and strategies in students. Much research can be done in educational institutions by keeping an eye on the variables for enhancing personal growth, resilience, and correct decision-making strategies in students.

## **Objectives of the study**

The following were the objectives of the study:

- Analyzed and examined the correlation between decision-making and general health among college and university students.
- Develop a theoretical framework based on experiential evidence to understand the impact of trauma on students' lives.
- Analyze how negative decision-making influences perception, behavior, and personality.

## **Research questions**

- What is the relationship between negative decisions and mental health?
- How do negative decisions affect mental health among college and university students?
- What are the factors behind negative decision-making among students?

## Organization of the study

- Introduction.
- Theoretical Framework.
- Literature.
- Methodology.
- Results.
- Discussion.

#### **Literature Review**

Hussain et al., (2019) researched "Mental health issues among Pakistani University students". Meta-analysis examines the recent studies on mental issues mental health issues among Pakistani University students the matter Malaysian shows that high levels of sadness and she's Ness and depress face by Pakistani students this problem can lead to bad academic performance and social

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separation thoughts indicated in this analysis of 25 studies the measurements investigate that inadequacy of social or mental support at Pakistani Universities organize different awareness programs on mental health awareness.

Khan et al., (2020) conducted a study titled "The Impact of Negative Decision-Making on Mental Health among University Students. "The current study aims to investigate the relationship among decision-making styles or mental well-being among Pakistani university students." a research survey of 500 student's data collection shows that anxiousness, and sadness, were more prevalent among those students who chose bad decisions. The author of this study opposes university students who are specifically unprotected with their mental well-being concerns due to the stress of social or educational expectations, and their bad choices increase their problems the study outcomes suggested that universities must need to be given training on healthy decisions making skills to support their better or rich mental wellbeing.

Smith et al., (2020) explore how having poor experiences can have to bad impact on our mental well-being. They use various techniques such as surveys, and interviews to understand this, study different events where individuals made decisions, whether interpersonal or work-related, investigate adults from different backgrounds, also focus on various kinds of groups that might be more, such as those who already face a mental crisis, the outcomes of this research continually exposed that when individuals make bad choices in decisions, it often leads to more anxious, feel low .but, they found different coping strategies to support their friends and family, and being resilience can hopeless on bad choices effects on mental health. This research emphasizes overall how crucial it is to understand the link between negative decisions and mental well-being presenting use full ideas for mental health experts, councilors, and public health efforts.

The study by Johnson (2020) revealed the impact of making poor choices on our mental well-being. Smith's study reveals both information together from different research to give a fully significant image of how bad choices affect our mental health. On the other side, Johnson's study followed people over time to examine the relationship between poor experiences and mental well-being fluctuation. Both researches give a diverse group of individuals to make sure that their outcomes of research apply on various kinds of individuals. Overall, there research reveals that making negative decisions can lead to anxiety or feeling low, presenting the significance of understanding or link to our mental well-being.

Copy poor choices or less harm to mental well-being physical health and overall life activities. The studies by Smith et al., (2021), Harris et al., (2020), and Lee and Kim et al., (2020) weal that making bad choices can badly impact different aspects of our life. Also included sensations of feelings always sad or facing financial crises having bad help and experiencing long-term difficulties in school or work. With the use of different research, such as assessment tests and return analysis the author of this study confirms that these all effects are natural and white spreader it is important to understand that these effects make strategies.

## **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses have been constructed:

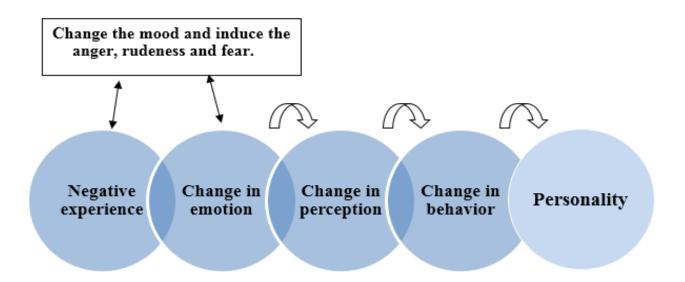
• There was an association between negative experiences and the personality of college and university students.

• There was a significant association between negative experiences and the personality of college and university students.

## Research Gap

- Individual differences in terms of socio-cultural variations.
- Socio-economic status differences.
- Decision-making context with age.

Figure 1: The theoretical model demonstrates the function of Negative decision making a union relationship of negative experience with change in emotion, perception, behavior, and personality



#### Method

The current descriptive study was conducted among college and university students. The sample size was N=300, with n=150 males and n=150 females. A decision-making questionnaire and a general health questionnaire were used to conduct the sample. Correlation, T-test, and Linear regression were used to analyze the data. All individuals aged 18 to 22 must the students of university.

#### **Assessment Measures**

In this study the following assessment tools are used:

- Demographic Sheet
- Decision-Making Questionnaire (DMQ).
- General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12).

## **Demographic Sheet**

The demographic sheet contained personal information such as gender, age, educational level, and family system.

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (N=300)** 

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage	
Gender			
Female	184	61.3%	
Male	116	39.7%	
Age			
18-20	156	52%	
21-22	144	48%	
<b>Educational Level</b>			
Intermediate	151	50.3%	
Undergraduate	149	49.7%	
Family System			
Joint	159	53%	
Nuclear	141	47%	

The demographic data for the respondents (N=300) reveals the following characteristics. The majority of respondents were female 61.3% (n=184) with males making up 39.7% (n=116). Respondents were almost evenly split between two age groups, with 52% (n = 156) aged 18- 20 and 48% (n = 144) aged 21-22. The distribution of educational levels was nearly equal, with 50.3% (n = 151) having completed intermediate education and 49.7% (n = 149) being undergraduates. Most respondents came from a nuclear family system 53% (n = 159) compared to a joint family system 47% (n = 141).

## **Decision-Making Questionnaire**

The Decision-Making Questionnaire (DMQ) scale was developed to investigate the element of influence of decision-making on life. The items have 7 distinct and internally coherent dimensions. There are 21 items on the scale of which 6 items have reversed scoring. The other 15 items showed that the responses comprised six distinct driving style dimensions. They were named as deviation, attention, calmness, speed, and social resistance. The 15 items start with never and go to always. The distinct 6 items have reverse scoring going from always to never. The scale is not associated with any variable like age, sex, or annual mileage.

#### **General Health Ouestionnaires**

Goldberg and others (1988) are the founders of the general health questionnaire. It contains 12 items. The scale has 12 items and it looks like a Likert scale. All the 12 items have 4 options which range from 0 to 3. It has 6 positive items and 6 negative items. For positive items, 0 is never and 3 are always. On the other hand, 3 are never and 0 is always. It is used to investigate the harshness of psychological health issues experienced over the past few weeks. On the base of responses, its entire count ranges from 0 to 36.

## Procedure

The research topic was selected under the guidance of a research supervisor and approved by the study board. Permission for the data-gathering process was obtained from the supervisor and institutional authorities. A quantitative sample technique was used to draw a sample of 300 students from Superior University Lahore. The researcher first asked for the age of the participants and then obtained their consent for data gathering. Study instrumentals were then

shared with the respondents. The required information was gathered through a demographic sheet that included age, gender, area, educational level, and family system. Participants were then given the study scales and instructed on how to complete the questionnaire. At the end of the data collection process, participants were thanked warmly. The collected data was analyzed using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. The topic was selected under the supervision of the research supervisor and approved by the board of the study. Furthermore, this topic was approved by the researcher who chose the study instruments, and permission was obtained from the supervisor and institutional authority for the data collection procedure. In this study, a quantitative sampling technique was used to draw the sample. The data was collected from 300 students. The data was collected from the Superior University of Lahore. First of all, the researcher asked for the age of the person, then we got consent from the person to peruse the data collection, and we shared the study instruments with the respondents. The required information was taken through the demographic sheet enclosed: age, gender, area, educational level, and family system. After that, the scales of the study were given, and the procedure to solve the questionnaire was explained. At the tip of the knowledge assortment, participants were affectionately thanked. The obtained data was then analyzed with the Wilcoxon test.

#### **Ethical Consideration**

Below are some ethical considerations for the current study:

- In the current study, ethics are important in maintaining the privacy of individuals. Getting concerns and information about the individual's life for research purposes and then making sure that all the information is kept secret is one of the big ethical rules.
- Dealing with ethics looks like tough stuff such as sharing out resources, end of life, and using technology but for maintenance of ethics, we are pushed to this stuff.
- With the help of ethics, individuals come to understand how social scientists work for people and make the rules that are un-harmful of individuals' psychological as well as physical health.

## **Results**

The Negative experience of negative decisions hurts the mental health of a person. It affects the mood and introduces anger, grief, and fear which are responsible for the change of emotions. Changes in emotion are responsible for the changes in the perception and behavior which leads to the variation of personality of human nature and modify the unseen personality of the human.

Table 2: Correlation between the Decision-Making Questionnaire and General Health Questionnaire

Variable	M	SD	DMQ	GHQ	
Decision Making	77.42	9.48	1	.150**	
General Health	16.70	5.65		1	

The above table shows the Correlation between the Decision-making Questionnaire (DMQ) and the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ). Results outcomes claimed that the mean score of the

decision-making questionnaire was 77.42 with an SD of 9.48, and the mean score of the general health questionnaire was 16.70 with an SD standard deviation of 5.65. The analyses show a significant positive correlation between decision-making and general health which is r= 150\*. Decision-making and general health are associated with each other good decision-making indicates good health on the other hand bad decision-making indicates bad mental health. (Note: If "150" is a type of graphical error and meant to represent a correlation coefficient like 0.150, the summary should reflect that accordingly.)

Table 3: Independent Samples t-test for Comparing Gender differences in decision-making and general health among university students

	Male	Female	95% (	95% CI				
variables	M(SD)	M(SD)	Df	T	P	LL	UL	
Decision Making	78.66 (10.22)	76.64 (8.93)	298	-1.805	.05	-4.22	.18	0.210 699
General Health	16.61 (5.78)	16.61 (5.59)	298	-3.43	.10	-1.55	1.09	0.040 56

The above analyses of an independent sample of T-Test were conducted by the comparison of gender differences in decision-making and general health among university students. The outcomes of the results showed that Decision-making had a mean score of males 78.66 (SD = 10.22) and the mean score of females was 76.64 (SD = 8.93). The t-test indicates a t-value of 1.805 with 298 degrees of freedom, and the outcomes were not statistically significant (p = 0.05). The 95% confidence interval for the mean differences ranged from -4.22 to 1.09. The effect size (Cohen's d) was 0.210699, showing a small effect size. On the other hand General Health, the mean score of males was 16.61 (SD = 5.78) and the mean score of females was 16.61 (SD = 5.59). The t-test indicates a value of 3.43 with 298 degrees of freedom, and the outcome was statistically significant (p = 0.04056). The 95% confidence interval for the mean difference ranged from -1.55 to 10. The effect size (Cohen's d) was 0.04056, indicating a very small effect size. On the whole, there was no significant gender difference in decision-making, but there was a statistically significant but small gender difference in general health scores among university and college students. The association between decision-making and general health is regardless of the gender biases with the small differences in external factors.

Table 4: Linear regression test between the decision making and general health of college and university student

Variables	В	В	T	р	95 % CI	
Decision Making	0.89	.150	2.618	.000	<b>LL</b> 4.53	UL 15.0 2
General Health	9.779		3.670	.009	.022	.157

A current study is conducted to examine the relationship between decision-making and general health among college and university students by linear regression analysis. The results are summarized below for decision-making; the unstandardized coefficient (B) was 0.89. The t-value was 2.618, and the result was extremely remarkable (p = 0.000). A range from 4.53 to 15.02 showed the unstandardized coefficient for the 95% confidence interval. For general health, the unstandardized coefficient (B) was 9.779. The standardized coefficient ( $\beta$ ) was 3.670. The t-value was 3.670, and the result was extremely remarkable (p = 0.009). A range from 0.22 to 1.57 showed the unstandardized coefficient for the 95% confidence interval. A relationship between decision-making and general health among college and university students showed a positive relation by the linear regression analysis. Higher decision-making abilities are associated with better general health outcomes.

The Analyses of the collected data proved that there is a significant link between negative experiences and personality traits among college and university students. A moderate value of correlation which is 0.150 (p < 0.01) shows a significant association between two variables. A t-test results showed significant differences in personality scores among both males and females, with mean scores of 78.66 (SD = 10.22) and 76.64 (SD = 8.93), respectively. Further confirmation of the significance of the relationship between the 2 variables is done by the linear regression analysis with a p-value < 0.001 and a moderate effect size (R-squared = 0.009). The outcome of the current study shows that negative experiences have a prominent impact on personality development in students.

## **Summary of Findings**

- The current research study on the impact of negative decisions on mental health among university students offers comprehensive insights into real-world contexts.
- The impact of the negative decision is regardless of the gender bias but having little influence of external factors makes little difference.
- The current study shows both positive personality traits such as high self-efficacy, confidence, and goal-oriented, and negative personality traits, such as stubbornness, sadness, panic attacks, isolation, gender bias, and loneliness.
- The study also underscores that when individuals undergo trauma then how negative experiences affect emotions, altering a person's perception and behavior and leading to changes in the personality.
- Moreover, research shows the complexities of decision-making processes and how these experiences influence personal satisfaction and psychological well-being.
- The findings provide a piece of evidence for enhancing psychological well-being.

## **Discussion**

The outcomes of this current study show that poor experiences come from bad decision that has a direct influential effect on individual mental health. In a specific way, they have a major effect on individual mode and that can provoke sensations such as sadness fear, and emotional state variation. These sensations fluctuate and battery affects human behaviors and thoughts. This may lead to changes in human personality traits and alter the basic personality of humans. The sensations undergo the significance of decision-making events in determining mental will-be outcomes and lead to the loss of the power of the decision-making.

The findings of the study wealth how bad choices effect origin University student's mental health this research also investigates the crucial relationship between negative decisions, emotions, and personality changes, opposite to the preexisting studies that focus on individual variables and also the implications of bad decisions on mental health the present study full fill an important gap in previous literature by presenting the profound impact of poor jeans on body motion, perception, behaviors, and personality. The conclusion of the study has a remarkable application to mental welding interventions and support services it also highlights the white range strategies that affect the mental well-being and sensations effects of bad decisions on students' mental health educational experts and mental health experts can collaborate to look aid supporting and helpful atmosphere to promote encourage students to make healthy recipes by understanding the effect of bad decisions on mental wellbeing.

In the current study, analyses show that bad experiences affect the same as affect men's lives. A very small difference in the analyses of the T-test shows a significant gender difference. It is possible that one's life external factors like lifestyle, socioeconomic status, and family environment affect him or her effectively but males and females have the same emotions. When emotions hurt it changes the entire person and it is independent of gender biases. Moreover, this study's outcomes help to promote the strategies and psycho-education to both genders equally. This study is used in clinical and counseling setups to promote good mental health and enhance the required behavior and personality traits of the individuals.

## **Limitations and Suggestions**

The current study has some constrictions in university, such as private space, data security, hesitation in friends gathering, evolving regulations, limitations from the teacher and unequal access to students, and lecture timing pose challenges to the application. These obstacles put a dot on the implementation of these core principles within the university. This study is only revealing the impact of negative decisions on mental health among college and university students. It's recommended to target more hospitals, offices, and health care centers, and we should educate our society about the significance of psychological well-being. So, we learn from the best company of teachers and elevate the capital of our nation by maintaining good health.

## **Strengths**

The current study highlights the importance of decision-making in determining mental health outcomes, emphasizing the need for appropriate coping mechanisms and support networks. The study also identifies a correlation between poor decision-making and changes in emotions, perceptions, behaviors, and personality. Research focuses on the significance of mental health and decision-making skills training along with mental health support services in higher education. It has important implications for policy and practice that could improve student academic performance and mental health. This study also aims to identify the cause of the person's personality shifts and the moment that motivates them to get rid of past painful experiences and move forward in life.

## **Implications**

The implementation of this study is to explore the individual's problem with thoughts and negative experiences. The current study highlights the challenges in maintaining a healthy lifestyle of a person by tackling issues such as limited resources, privacy worries, reasons for perception and behavior changes, regulatory complexities, and health inequalities.

## **Conclusion**

The current study indicates that most people have the projection of negative decisions in their lives. Which, some people fight with the situations and become stronger and persist in their journey toward their goal. But some people do not cope with the situations and are stuck in trauma and do not struggle and scramble for their life goals. One trauma also changes the perception and behavior of the person towards society. The changes may be positive or negative. All these negative thoughts and decisions nullify the progress of the brain at the time of trauma. Gradually, with time, people either cope with the conditions by themselves or they need mental health professionals.

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