

Cultural Contexts and Coping: A Cross-National Study on Well-Being and Sense of Coherence among Jordanian University Students

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Abstract

This study explores the relationship between Sense of Coherence (SOC), well-being, and life satisfaction among Jordanian university students studying in Jordan domestically (D) and abroad in Hungary (A). A total of 307 students participated (195 D and 112 A), completing an online survey between September 2022 and December 2024. Instruments included Antonovsky's SOC-13 and the Optimal Living Profile-Modified (OLP-M), which measures well-being across five dimensions: intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, and physical well-being. Confirmatory factor analysis supported the construct validity of SOC-13 (CFI = 0.930, RMSEA = 0.077), and internal consistency was strong across all dimensions (α range = 0.748–0.843). Regression results indicated that age and employment status significantly predicted SOC scores ($p < 0.05$). Students abroad (A) scored significantly higher in the meaningfulness subscale ($p = 0.001$), while domestic students (D) reported greater emotional ($p < 0.05$), social ($p < 0.001$), and physical well-being ($p = 0.003$). Life satisfaction was most strongly associated with emotional ($\beta = 0.366, p < 0.001$) and social well-being ($\beta = 0.306, p < 0.001$). Path analysis showed that SOC influenced life satisfaction indirectly through emotional health, with meaningfulness having both direct and mediated effects. This research highlights the role of cultural context in shaping student well-being and provides evidence for targeted psychological and educational interventions. It underscores the need for culturally sensitive support systems in higher education, particularly for students abroad navigating cross-cultural challenges.

Keywords: cultural context; life satisfaction; sense of coherence; university students; well-being