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COPING RESILIENCE AND FLOURISHING AMONG PASSIONATE STUDENTS WITH DIFFERENT LEVELS OF WELL-BEING – THE MODERATING ROLE OF ASSERTIVENESS*

Introduction: The study examined passionate students' coping mechanisms within the framework of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), considering their level of well-being. Specifically, it focused on the role of assertiveness as a moderator in the relationship between resilience and flourishing. Fulfilling basic psychological needs, such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness, influences the effectiveness of coping with challenges and achieving psychological well-being.

Research Aim: The aim of the study was to determine the relationships between resilience, assertiveness, and flourishing, as well as to explore how assertiveness moderates the relationship between resilience and flourishing among passionate students with different levels of well-being.

Research Method: The study investigated the moderating role of assertiveness in the relationship between resilience and flourishing in groups of passionate students with lower and higher levels of well-being. Tools included Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Questionnaire (PWB), the Brief Resilient Coping Scale (BRCS), and the Self-Other Questionnaire.

Results: The moderation analysis revealed that assertiveness strengthens the positive effect of resilience on flourishing among students with low levels of well-being. The model accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in flourishing in this group, underscoring the critical role of assertiveness in psychological well-being.

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Conclusions: The findings indicate that psychological interventions should focus on developing assertiveness to support students' psychological well-being.

Keywords: coping resilience, assertiveness, mental well-being, flourishing, passionate students, personal development

INTRODUCTION

Passionate students pursue their interests with exceptional commitment, treating them as an integral part of their identity. Passion, as a lasting and deep commitment to a chosen activity, influences these students' everyday choices, motivations, and strategies for coping with challenges. Understanding how passion affects students' lives, psychological well-being, and coping strategies can provide important insights for researchers and practitioners supporting young adults' development.

The conceptual model of the presented research assumes the analysis of the relationship between coping resilience and flourishing, understood as an indicator of optimal psychological and social functioning, which differs from general well-being, which is a broad measure of psychological and social functioning in a group of passionate students. Assertiveness plays a key role in the model as a moderator that influences the strength of this relationship, especially in the context of differences in the level of well-being (lower vs. higher level). In this study, flourishing was operationalized as a dependent variable measuring the respondents' level of optimal functioning in the psychological and social dimensions, considering positive relationships, life satisfaction, and personal development – the analysis aimed to determine the impact of coping resilience and assertiveness on respondents' functioning. Respondents were divided into two groups with different levels of well-being (lower vs. higher) based on results on a separate scale measuring mental and social well-being. The results of this division served as an interpretive context in the analysis of the role of coping resilience and assertiveness in explaining differences in flourishing. Assertiveness was operationalized independently of coping resilience as a separate psychological variable. The adopted conceptualization allowed us to study its role as a moderating factor that may influence the strength of the relationship between resilience and flourishing in groups of students with different levels of well-being.

The study is based on the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which emphasizes the importance of meeting basic psychological needs for intrinsic motivation, adaptation, and mental health (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Coping resilience and flourishing are closely related to fulfilling these needs. However, flourishing refers to specific aspects of an individual's active development, such as social relationships, competencies, and optimism, while well-being describes the general mental and



social health level. In the context of passionate students, understanding how assertiveness modifies the relationship between resilience and flourishing allows us to identify mechanisms that support well-being in the face of differences in adaptive psychological resources.

Self-Determination Theory assumes that the fulfillment of basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and belonging is the foundation of an individual's internal motivation and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Frustration of these needs leads to reduced well-being, especially in the educational context, where supporting autonomy, developing competencies, and building social bonds contribute to student engagement and better emotional functioning (Glück et al., 2005; Saxon et al., 2018). Meeting psychological needs promotes healthy behaviours, such as responsible gambling, and positively affects students' motivation and academic achievement. Students who fulfill their needs demonstrate higher levels of motivation and performance, lower levels of stress, and a stronger sense of belonging (Eckley et al., 2023; Tong et al., 2022). In this context, SDT provides a theoretical basis for analyzing the relationship between passion, motivation, and mental health.

Passion, understood as a deep and lasting form of involvement in a specific activity, plays an important role in achieving internal balance. In the context of STD, there are two main types of passion: harmonious passion (HP) and obsessive passion (OP). The first is being intrinsically motivated and integrated with other aspects of an individual's life, which leads to positive outcomes such as higher levels of mental health, lower levels of stress, and better quality of life. In turn, obsessive passion, more externally controlled and accompanied by internal compulsion, may lead to internal conflicts and reduced well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

Analysis of the importance of harmonious passion in the context of SDT shows that it supports internal motivation, the development of competencies, and autonomy, which in turn promotes commitment, positive emotions, and better interpersonal relationships (Ryan & Deci, 2020; Vallerand, 2010). Harmonious passion also supports coping with challenges, increasing mental resilience, and flourishing (Thomas et al., 2022; Vallerand & Houlfort, 2003). In contrast, obsessive passion, due to its external nature, contributes to poor mental health and difficulties in personal integration.

Coping resilience plays a similarly important role in psychological adaptation. According to SDT, it is particularly effective in environments that support key psychological needs. Coping resilience, understood as the ability to cope with difficulties actively, allows an individual to quickly return to mental balance (Sinclair & Wallston, 2004).

Self-Determination Theory states that fulfilling basic psychological needs promotes internal motivation, well-being, and adaptation in difficult situations (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The constructs of coping resilience and flourishing can be integrat-



ed within SDT because they both address adaptive processes and support mental health by fulfilling these basic needs.

Assertiveness is an important aspect of coping resilience. It supports individuals' ability to express their needs and cope with conflict situations. As a key factor supporting healthy interpersonal communication, assertiveness positively impacts coping resilience, enabling individuals to manage stress more effectively and develop interpersonal relationships (Ames, 2008; Peneva & Mavrodieva, 2013). As a result, students who demonstrate high levels of assertiveness cope more effectively with academic challenges and achieve higher levels of engagement and life satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The relationship between coping resilience, assertiveness, and flourishing is evident in the context of students. Flourishing, as psychological and social well-being, includes positive relationships, a sense of competence, meaning in life, and optimism (Diener et al., 2010). Pursuing a harmonious passion in an environment that supports basic psychological needs promotes flourishing, which translates into greater mental resilience, better academic results, and general well-being (Diržytė et al., 2023; Hsu et al., 2024).

RESEARCH AIM AND QUESTION

The presented theories and the results of previous research indicate the important role of coping resilience and assertiveness in shaping students' mental well-being. Meeting basic psychological needs such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness is crucial to achieving flourishing, especially in the context of SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Although there are numerous studies on the relationship between coping resilience and well-being, little attention has been paid to the role of assertiveness as a factor moderating these relationships, especially among students pursuing their passions. Assertiveness, defined as an individual's ability to express their needs, opinions, and emotions openly and respect other people's boundaries, plays an important role in adaptive processes and mental health (Ames, 2008; Peneva & Mavrodieva, 2013). Research shows that assertiveness makes it easier to deal with difficult situations and positively impacts interpersonal relationships, which may strengthen the effects of coping resilience in achieving flourishing. However, the role of assertiveness as a moderating factor in the relationship between resilience and flourishing has been poorly researched, especially in the context of students pursuing their passions. The moderation principle suggests that assertiveness may differentiate the strength of the impact of resilience on flourishing, especially depending on the level of well-being (lower vs. higher). For example, assertiveness may enhance coping resilience in people with lower levels of well-being, helping them use their adaptive resources more



effectively. Addressing this issue fills the research gap and provides new conclusions about the mechanisms supporting student well-being (Ames, 2008; Peneva & Mavrodiëva, 2013). The study focuses on harmonious passion, understood as an internally motivated form of commitment integrated with other aspects of an individual's life (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Unlike obsessive passion, which is more externally controlled and often leads to internal conflicts and reduced well-being, harmonious passion supports internal motivation and the development of competencies and autonomy.

We chose harmonious passion because of its positive impact on mental health, coping with challenges, and achieving flourishing (Thomas et al., 2022; Vallerand, 2010). Students with harmonious passion show greater mental resilience, higher levels of commitment, and better interpersonal relationships, which is consistent with the assumptions of SDT (Vallerand & Houlfort, 2003).

Based on theoretical assumptions of coping resilience, assertiveness, and flourishing within SDT, we formulated the following research hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Coping resilience is positively related to flourishing in students pursuing their passion, and this relationship is stronger in the group with a lower level of well-being.

Coping resilience is the ability of an individual to cope with stress and adversity adaptively, leading to a quick return to psychological balance (Sinclair & Wallston, 2004). Self-Determination Theory assumes that satisfying basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness is crucial for an individual's well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Coping resilience helps meet these needs, supporting mental health and flourishing (Piórowska et al., 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2000). People with higher coping resilience cope better with challenges, which increases their well-being. Coping resilience may play a protective role, particularly in students with lower levels of well-being, enabling more effective coping with difficulties and improved mental functioning.

Hypothesis 2: Assertiveness moderates the relationship between coping resilience and flourishing, strengthening the positive effect of resilience on flourishing in passionate students with lower levels of well-being.

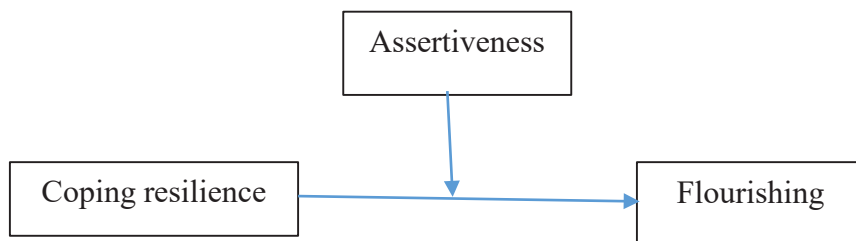
Assertiveness, understood as the ability to express one's needs and beliefs in a confident and non-aggressive manner, is an important factor supporting healthy communication and effective coping with conflict situations (Peneva & Mavrodiëva, 2013). In the context of SDT, assertiveness can enhance the positive impact of resilience on well-being by supporting an individual's autonomy and promoting intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). More assertive people use their resiliency resources better, which supports their psychological development and enables them to cope more effectively with interpersonal challenges – this is especially true among students with lower levels of well-being (Alberti & Emmons, 2008). In the educational context, assertiveness increases the effectiveness of cop-

ing resilience, promoting better coping with difficulties and achieving a higher level of flourishing.

Hypothesis 3: The moderating effect of assertiveness is stronger among students pursuing their passion with a lower level of well-being than among students with a higher level of well-being.

Assertiveness may play a compensatory role, strengthening the effectiveness of coping resilience in coping with difficulties, especially in people with lower levels of well-being. For students with a higher level of well-being, who fulfill their basic needs to a greater extent, the role of assertiveness may be less pronounced because they have access to other resources supporting their well-being, such as social support or adaptive skills (Ryan & Deci, 2000). However, in the group of students with a lower level of well-being, assertiveness may be crucial for the effective use of coping resilience to cope with challenges, which leads to a higher level of flourishing (Figure 1).

Figure 1.
Relationships between the analyzed variables



Source: Authors' own study.

RESEARCH METHOD AND SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

The presented research is part of the Passion Research Group project at the Institute of Pedagogy of Maria Curie-Skłodowska University. The project aims to explore the phenomenon of passion and its functional properties in various age groups, including high school students and adults. The research aims to determine the mechanisms influencing the development and strengthening of passion and identify factors that support or inhibit this process. Additionally, the project examines passion's multidimensional consequences in the psychosocial and educational spheres.

The study was conducted according to applicable ethical standards in psychology and pedagogy. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, and participants could withdraw from the study at any stage. Ethics committee approval was not

required because the study did not involve any medical interventions, invasion of participants' privacy, or potentially harmful actions toward the participants.

The Passion Scale (PS) (Marsh et al., 2013; Polish adaptation: Mudło-Głagolska et al., 2019) consists of 12 items measuring harmonious passion (HP) and obsessive passion (OP) as well as passion criteria (PC). Responses are rated on a 7-point Likert scale. The reliability index is $\alpha = 0.81$. This scale was used to select a group of students with passion.

The Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWB) (Ryff, Polish adaptation: Karaś & Cieciuch, 2017) measures eudaimonic well-being using 18 statements rated on a scale of 1–6. The reliability index for the overall score is $\alpha = 0.81$. Participants were divided into groups with higher and lower well-being based on median scores.

The Brief Resilient Coping Scale (BRCS) (Sinclair & Wallston, 2004; Polish adaptation: Piórowska et al., 2017) consists of 4 statements rated on a scale of 1–5. The higher the score, the higher the coping resilience. The reliability index is $\alpha = 0.67$.

The Flourishing Scale (FS) (Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2009; Polish translation: Kaczmarek, 2016) consists of 8 statements rated on a scale of 1–7. The reliability index is $\alpha = 0.91$.

The Self-Other Questionnaire (Majewicz, 1998) measures assertiveness. It includes 17 statements rated on a scale of 1 to 5. The sum of the results indicates the intensity of assertive behaviour. The reliability index $\alpha = 0.87$.

The sample consisted of 800 students. Most of the research group were women – 693 (86.6%) and 98 men, which constituted 12.3%, 9 declared a different gender. The average age in the group was 23.5 years ($SD = 5.24$). Most respondents indicated the city as their place of residence: 500 (62.5%). The respondents' declarations about their relationship status were as follows: 361 students (45.1%) declared being single, 77 (9.6%) were in an informal relationship, and 362 (45.3%) were in a formal relationship. Moreover, 743 respondents (92.9%) did not have children, and 445 (55.6%) indicated they were not professionally active. The respondents assessed the economic situation using a scale of 1–5, where 1 means *slightly satisfactory* and 5 means *very satisfactory*, and rated it as average ($M = 3.24$; $SD = 0.98$). The respondents were primarily students of social sciences: 585 (73.1%) and humanities: 95 (11.9%), primarily full-time students: 705 (88%), studying at the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, University of Silesia, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and the State Academy of Applied Sciences in Chełm.

Out of 861 students, 800 met the passion criteria measured by the PS (Marsh et al., 2013; Polish adaptation: Mudło-Głagolska et al., 2019) and were qualified to participate in the study of the relationships described in this article. The cut-off score for the passion criteria was 4 on the Likert scale.

The respondents met the following conditions: they (1) liked (loved) a given activity, i.e. their interest had to be authentic and resulted from internal motivation, and not only from external pressure or coercion; (2) devoted time to this activity

(a regular practice that was an important part of the person's life); (3) considered the activity important (meaningful, giving meaning to life); (4) defined the activity as their passion as opposed to other interests; (5) treated the passion as a part of themselves (passion became an integral element of the respondents' identity, influencing the perception of themselves and their place in the world). The students in the sample were divided into two groups with a lower (383 respondents) and a higher (417 respondents) level of well-being based on the median of the results.

The research was conducted online in direct contact with the researcher. Researchers met with groups of students and shared a link to the research. Students completed the tools online in the presence of the researcher.

STATISTICAL DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

In the first part of the study, variables selected for the study were described statistically in the two groups. The minimum sample size was estimated using G*Power for the two main analyses used in the study. For the moderation regression analysis, assuming a medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.15$), a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$, and a statistical power of $1 - \beta = 0.80$, the required sample size was 431 participants. For the correlation analysis, assuming a medium effect size ($r = 0.3$), a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$, and a statistical power of $1 - \beta = 0.80$, the required sample size was 174 participants. Similarly, for comparing correlation coefficients between groups under the same assumptions, the required sample size was 351 participants (approximately 175 people per group).

The sample size in the presented study met these requirements, providing adequate power to detect the hypothesized effects. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 29.0. In the first study, we calculated correlation coefficients between coping resilience, flourishing, and assertiveness in a group of passionate students with higher and lower psychological well-being. Correlation coefficients were compared in the Z-test using the Psychometrica calculator (www.psychometrica.com). To verify the hypotheses, we conducted Model 1 moderation analysis using Preacher and Hayes' (2004) model to assess interactions between variables. The bootstrapping technique with 5,000 replications used for the analysis ensured adequate accuracy in estimating the results. We adopted the significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ to assess statistical significance (results in Table 2).

RESULTS

The study aimed to determine the relationship between coping resilience, assertiveness, and flourishing to examine how assertiveness moderates the relationship

between coping resilience and flourishing in groups of passionate students with different levels of well-being. We used correlation analysis to identify specific patterns of interdependence between these variables in two groups of students: one with lower levels of well-being and the other with higher levels of well-being.

Table 1 presents the results of the correlation analysis between coping resilience, assertiveness, and flourishing in two groups of students with lower and higher levels of well-being. Additionally, it contains mean values (*M*) and standard deviations (*SD*) for each variable in both groups. The results suggest different relationships between variables depending on the level of students' well-being.

Table 1.

Descriptive statistics, a summary of correlations in passionate students with lower and higher levels of mental well-being

| | Lower well-being | Higher well-being | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| coping resilience | $M = 13.41$ $SD = 3.12$ | $M = 15.41$ $SD = 2.74$ | | |
| flourishing | $M = 35.87$ $SD = 8.55$ | $M = 44.92$ $SD = 8.20$ | | |
| assertiveness | $M = 59.11$ $SD = 10.64$ | $M = 68.61$ $SD = 8.66$ | | |
| Correlation analysis | | | | |
| | flourishing | assertiveness | flourishing | assertiveness |
| coping resilience | 0.41** | 0.33** | 0.18** | 0.21** |
| flourishing | - | 0.37** | - | 0.20** |
| Z-test | | | | |
| coping resilience/flourishing | 3.64** ($p < 0.010$) | | | |
| coping resilience/assertiveness | 1.87 ($p > 0.050$) | | | |
| assertiveness/flourishing | 2.69** ($p < 0.010$) | | | |

** correlation significant at the 0.010 level (two-tailed)

Source: Authors' own study.

The results in Table 1, confirmed by the statistical analyses, indicate that the relationships between the studied variables differ in both groups. We observed significant differences in coping resilience, flourishing, and assertiveness between the groups with lower and higher levels of well-being: higher scores in the group with higher levels of well-being. The correlation matrix reveals significant relationships between variables in both groups, with the strength of the correlation varying depending on the level of well-being. The tests also allowed us to compare the correlation strength between variables in both groups. The results indicate significant differences in the relationships between coping resilience and flourishing

and between assertiveness and flourishing. In turn, the differences between the correlations of coping resilience and assertiveness did not reach the level of statistical significance.

Table 2 presents the results of the moderation analysis, which examined the impact of coping resilience on flourishing in two groups of students with lower and higher levels of psychological well-being, including assertiveness as a moderator. The analysis showed differences in the strength of the effects between the groups and a different role of assertiveness in shaping the relationship between resilience and flourishing.

Table 2.
Coping resilience and thriving in passionate students and lower and higher levels of mental well-being – assertiveness as a moderator

| Variables | | B | SE | t | p | LLCI | ULCI |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|-------|---------|--------|
| lower 75% | Constant | -3.133 | 7.222 | -0.434 | 0.665 | -17.332 | 11.066 |
| | Coping resilience | 2.008 | 0.543 | 3.698 | 0.000 | 0.940 | 3.076 |
| | Assertiveness | 0.472 | 0.128 | 3.683 | 0.000 | 0.220 | 0.725 |
| | Coping resilience x assertiveness | -0.020 | 0.009 | -2.116 | 0.035 | -0.038 | -0.001 |
| Model 1: R ² = 0.24; F(3.379) = 40.498; p < 0.001 | | | | | | | |
| hi- gher 25% | Constant | 3.713 | 18.563 | 0.200 | 0.842 | -32.775 | 40.202 |
| | Coping resilience | 1.981 | 1.201 | 1.649 | 0.010 | -0.381 | 4.342 |
| | Assertiveness | 0.501 | 0.268 | 1.870 | 0.062 | -0.026 | 1.027 |
| | Coping resilience x assertiveness | -0.022 | 0.017 | -1.298 | 0.195 | -0.056 | 0.012 |
| Model 1: R ² = 0.06; F(3.413) = 9.255; p < 0.0.001 | | | | | | | |

Source: Authors’ own study.

In the group of students with a lower level of well-being, the model explained a significant part of the variance of the flourishing variable, indicating a significant impact of both coping resilience and assertiveness, as well as their interaction. In this group, the effect of coping resilience on flourishing was stronger at lower moderator values and gradually weakened as the level of assertiveness increased.

In the group of students with a higher level of well-being, the model explained a smaller part of the variance in flourishing, and the interaction of coping resilience with assertiveness was not statistically significant. The main effect of coping resilience on flourishing in this group also showed lower significance, which suggests that in the group of students with higher well-being, other factors may play a greater role in shaping their optimal functioning.

Cooperative resilience significantly impacted flourishing, especially in the group of students with a lower level of well-being, with the value of the regression coefficient $B = 2.008$ and $p < 0.001$. In the group with a higher level of well-being, its impact was less pronounced ($B = 1.981$, $p = 0.010$), presumably because the model explained only $R^2 = 0.06$ of the variance compared to $R^2 = 0.24$ in the group with a lower level of well-being. However, assertiveness moderated the relationship between resilience and flourishing, especially in the group with a lower level of well-being. Higher assertiveness may, therefore, increase the effectiveness of using resilience to improve well-being. This effect is weaker in the group with a higher level of well-being, and the model is not statistically significant.

DISCUSSION

The study results provide valuable information about the relationship between coping resilience, assertiveness, and flourishing in passionate students and are consistent with previous research. The verification of the hypotheses and their interpretation in the context of SDT and passion theory are discussed below.

Hypothesis 1: Coping resilience is positively related to flourishing in students pursuing their passion, and this relationship is stronger in the group with a lower level of well-being.

The study results confirmed this hypothesis, indicating that a higher level of coping resilience is correlated with a higher level of flourishing, especially in the group of students with a lower level of well-being compared to the group with a higher level of well-being. Coping resilience, defined as an individual's ability to cope with difficulties and effectively manage stress adaptively, plays a key role in supporting mental health and well-being. Self-Determination Theory emphasizes that meeting the basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness is essential to achieving well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Coping resilience supports fulfilling these needs, enabling better mental and emotional functioning, which increases flourishing (Masten, 2001; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Masten (2001) emphasizes that resilience is the ability of an individual to effectively cope with adversity, which enables a quick return to mental balance and adaptation to new, challenging situations. This is especially important for students who often experience challenges related to their education and personal lives. Resilience as a protective mechanism allows them to effectively cope with stress and function better in the face of difficulties. Ogińska-Bulik and Zadworna (2015) also confirm that people with higher coping resilience display greater mental resilience, which helps them manage stress more effectively and adapt to challenges. These studies show that resilience promotes greater flourishing by supporting autonomy, competence, and social relationships. The obtained results are also consistent with previous research that indicates the important



role of resilience in the psychological development of young adults and its positive impact on mental health (Masten, 2001; Ogińska-Bulik & Zadworna, 2015).

Hypothesis 2: Assertiveness moderates the relationship between coping resilience and flourishing, strengthening the positive effect of resilience on flourishing in passionate students with lower levels of well-being.

The study results also confirmed that assertiveness moderates the relationship between coping resilience and flourishing, especially in students with lower levels of well-being. More assertive people can better use their resiliency resources to cope more effectively with difficulties and achieve a higher level of well-being (Alberti & Emmons, 2008; Peneva & Mavrodieva, 2013). In the context of SDT, assertiveness supports an individual's autonomy by enabling them to express their needs and beliefs, which is crucial for promoting intrinsic motivation and meeting the need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In the group of students with higher levels of well-being, the moderating effect of assertiveness was not significant, suggesting that these students have access to other resources supporting their well-being, such as social support (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Hypothesis 3: The moderating effect of assertiveness is stronger among students pursuing their passion with a lower level of well-being than among students with a higher level of well-being.

The study results confirmed this hypothesis, indicating that assertiveness plays a more compensatory role in the group of students with a lower level of well-being. Assertiveness enables more effective use of resilience to cope with difficulties, which is consistent with the literature on its role in managing stress and improving interpersonal relationships (Alberti & Emmons, 2008; Ames, 2008; Carstensen & Klusmann, 2021). Students with a lower level of well-being and a high level of assertiveness coped better with academic and interpersonal challenges, which resulted in a higher level of flourishing (Ateş, 2016).

According to SDT, assertiveness supports individuals' autonomy, enabling them to express their needs and beliefs, which is crucial for achieving well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In the group of students with a higher level of well-being, assertiveness had a smaller impact because these people may have other resources supporting their well-being, such as social support or adaptive skills (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In a group of students with a harmonious passion, meeting the needs of autonomy, competence, and relationality, resilience and assertiveness are particularly important for achieving a high level of flourishing (Vallerand, 2010).

The results may indicate that coping resilience and assertiveness support students' well-being in the context of academic challenges. Assertiveness, playing a compensatory role, strengthens resilience's positive impact on flourishing, which is particularly visible in students with a lower level of well-being. Thanks to assertiveness, these students cope with stress and challenges more effectively, promoting their mental and emotional development (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Implications of the moderating effects for passionate students with different levels of well-being

The practical implications of the moderating effect for students with lower levels of well-being include better resource use, more effective stress management, and building healthy interpersonal relationships. Assertiveness can act as a compensatory mechanism, helping students with lower levels of well-being compensate for deficiencies in their ability to cope with stress and establish relationships. This helps them effectively manage challenges and improve their mental well-being.

The moderating effect of assertiveness in students with higher levels of well-being consists of stabilizing the level of flourishing, facilitating more effective conflict management, and pursuing passions. In this group, assertiveness plays a less significant compensatory role because students already have other resources supporting their well-being.

Implications for educational practice

Research results suggest that psychological support programs for students should focus on developing coping resilience and assertiveness, which may improve student flourishing. Assertiveness training can help students manage stress and interpersonal relationships more effectively, which will increase their ability to meet psychological needs and achieve well-being (Alberti & Emmons, 2008; Butt & Zahid, 2015). Introducing programs that develop interpersonal skills, such as assertiveness, in an academic environment may support the development of autonomy and relationality, promoting students' emotional functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Research has confirmed that coping resilience and assertiveness play important roles in shaping students' mental flourishing. Further research should focus on exploring the role of other psychological resources and their interactions with resilience and assertiveness to better understand the mechanisms supporting the development of well-being in students (Masten, 2001; Ogińska-Bulik & Zadworna, 2015).

The research results have important implications for psychological support programs, especially for students with lower levels of well-being. Assertiveness training and developing interpersonal skills can improve coping resilience and flourishing, supporting effective coping with stress and academic challenges. Interventions focused on developing assertiveness are especially recommended for students with low levels of flourishing, as they will benefit most from them.

CONCLUSIONS

Well-being, defined as positive psychological and social functioning, may differentiate the ability of passionate students to cope with difficulties. Literature suggests that students with a higher level of well-being demonstrate greater psychological



resilience and may have access to a broader range of adaptive resources (such as social support or more effective coping strategies), which may result in a lower significance of the moderating effect of assertiveness in this group.

In students with lower levels of well-being, coping resilience acts as a defence mechanism, mitigating the adverse effects of stress and life difficulties. In this group, coping resilience plays a more important protective role, and assertiveness strengthens its effectiveness, manifested by a higher level of flourishing.

The study showed how differences in well-being can affect the effectiveness of adaptive mechanisms such as resilience and assertiveness. Higher levels of well-being suggest that an individual effectively meets their basic psychological needs, while lower levels indicate potential deficiencies in meeting these needs. The study confirmed the key role of coping resilience and assertiveness in shaping passionate students' flourishing. It showed that:

1. Coping resilience is a key predictor of flourishing in passionate students with lower levels of well-being. In this group, it plays a protective role, supporting the ability to cope with challenges. A higher level of resilience promotes better coping with difficulties and supports psychological and emotional development.
2. Assertiveness moderates the relationship between resilience and flourishing in students with passion and lower levels of well-being. It enables more effective stress management and better use of psychological resources.
3. Students with a higher level of well-being may benefit less from the effect of assertiveness as a moderator because they have other developed psychological resources supporting their well-being.
4. Self-Determination Theory and passion theory provide a coherent explanation for the influence of resilience and assertiveness on the flourishing of passionate students, suggesting that interventions focused on developing these resources may contribute to improved mental health in young adults.

The results emphasize the importance of developing coping resilience and assertiveness to support students' psychological well-being. The study provides practical guidelines for designing psychological interventions, especially those aimed at people with lower levels of well-being. The conclusions also have theoretical value, contributing to a better understanding of the adaptive mechanisms in young adults pursuing their passions.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

The study mainly included students in the social sciences, which limits the generalizability of the results to other academic groups. Future studies should include students from different fields to obtain a more complete picture of the relation-

ships between variables. The predominance of women in the sample may influence the results in terms of gender differences in resilience and assertiveness. Future studies should consider a more gender-balanced sample.

Another limitation was the use of self-report questionnaires, which may lead to subjective distortion of the results. Future studies should consider mixed methods, such as interviews, observations, or experiments, to increase methodological validity and reduce potential errors due to participant bias.

The cross-sectional design used in the presented study only indicates associations between variables but does not allow us to determine their direction or cause-and-effect mechanisms. Future analyses should include path models or experimental studies to understand causal mechanisms better. The study was conducted in a Polish cultural context, which limits the generalizability of the results to other cultures. Comparative studies across countries would allow us to test whether the relationships are universal. The study was conducted at one point in time, which does not allow for capturing the dynamics of change. Longitudinal studies could better show how resilience and assertiveness change over time in response to various events.

Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable information on the role of coping resilience and assertiveness in shaping student well-being.

In summary, future research should be multifaceted and include a diverse sample, advanced analysis methods, and different cultural contexts to better understand the complex relationships between coping resilience, assertiveness, and student well-being.

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PRĘŻNOŚĆ ZARADCZA A FLOURISHING WŚRÓD STUDENTÓW Z PASJĄ I Z RÓŻNYM POZIOMEM DOBROSTANU – MODERACYJNA ROLA ASERTYWNOŚCI

Wprowadzenie: W badaniu przeanalizowano mechanizmy radzenia sobie studentów z pasją, w kontekście Teorii Samostanowienia (SDT), uwzględniając ich poziom dobrostanu. W szczególności, skupiono się na roli asertywności jako moderatora relacji między prężnością zaradczą a *flourishing*. Spełnianie podstawowych potrzeb psychologicznych, takich jak autonomia, kompetencje i przynależność, oddziałuje na efektywność radzenia sobie z wyzwaniami i osiąganie dobrostanu psychicznego.

Cel badań: Celem badania było określenie zależności między prężnością zaradczą, asertywnością a *flourishing* oraz zbadanie, w jaki sposób asertywność moderuje relację między prężnością zaradczą a *flourishing* w grupach studentów z pasją i z różnym poziomem dobrostanu.

Metoda badań: W badaniu wzięła udział grupa studentów w celu zbadania moderacyjnej roli asertywności w relacji między prężnością zaradczą a *flourishing* w grupach o niższym i wyższym dobrostanie. Wykorzystano narzędzia takie jak Kwestionariusz Dobrostanu Psychologicznego (KDP) Ryff, Krótka Skala Prężności Zaradczej (KSZP) oraz Kwestionariusz JA-INNI.

Wyniki: Wyniki analizy moderacji wykazały, że asertywność wzmacnia pozytywne oddziaływanie prężności na *flourishing* u studentów charakteryzujących się niższym poziomem dobro-

tanu. Model wyjaśniał znaczną część wariancji wyników we *flourishing* w tej grupie, co podkreśla istotną rolę asertywności w kontekście dobrostanu psychicznego.

Wnioski: Wyniki sugerują, że interwencje psychologiczne powinny uwzględniać rozwijanie asertywności w celu wspierania dobrostanu psychicznego studentów.

Słowa kluczowe: prężność zaradcza, asertywność, dobrostan psychiczny, *flourishing*, studenci z pasją, rozwój osobisty

