Rejection Sensitivity and Psychological Well-being: Moderating Role of Self-esteem and Socio-demographics

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Abstract

The present study aimed to examine the moderating effects of self-esteem and socio-demographics of gender, age, family system, and the number of friends on the relationship between rejection sensitivity and psychological well-being. Participants were adolescents ($n = 112; M = 16$ years) and emerging adults ($n = 189; M = 23$ years) who belonged to nuclear ($n = 181$) or combined family system ($n = 120$) and had limited friends ($n = 185$) or numerous friends ($n = 116$). Almost an equal number of boys ($n = 150$) and girls ($n = 151$) responded to the Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire, Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale, and Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale. The hypothesis stated that rejection sensitivity will predict poor psychological well-being, and high self-esteem will decrease the negative effects of rejection sensitivity on psychological well-being. Findings indicated that rejection sensitivity was a significant negative predictor of psychological well-being and accounted for $14\%$ of the variance in the outcome measure. Rejection sensitivity and high self-esteem had a significant negative correlation and buffered its negative effects on psychological well-being. Participants, i.e., boys, emerging adults, belonging to the nuclear family system, and with more friends, reported having more psychological well-being than their counterparts. The study has intrapersonal and interpersonal behavioral implications at individual, social, and community levels to safeguard behavior from rejection sensitivity, low self-esteem, and poor psychological health. Parents, teachers, policy-makers, psychologists, sociologists, and mental health practitioners can practically benefit from the findings to foster positive behavior and implement prevention-intervention support.

Introduction

Scholars have studied the importance of psychological well-being for healthy living and adjustment (Arslan, 2021; Hernandez et al., 2018). Ryff (1995, p.99) defined psychological well-being as “a state of someone who is functioning at a satisfactory level of emotional and behavioral adjustment”. The well-being of an individual encompasses positive behaviors, such as the realization of abilities, productivity, overcoming life stressors, and contribution to their community. Six empirically supported positive correlates and features of well-being include autonomy, personal growth, environmental mastery, purpose in life, positive relation with others, and self-acceptance (Ryff, 1995). The present study focuses on the investigation of the latter mentioned two features of well-being.

It is an inherent human need to build smooth social relationships. According to Downey’s rejection sensitivity model, individuals gain acceptance and avoid rejection in social relationships. Rejection sensitivity is “the dispositional inclination to defensively expect, readily perceive, and overreact to rejection” (Downey & Feldman, 1996, p. 1328). It originates from childhood rejection experiences during interpersonal relationships with parents, peers, and others that remain consistent during later developmental periods. Rejection sensitivity arises when experienced in close interpersonal relationships. A slight interpretation of real or imagined rejection triggers defensive reactions among sensitive people, which intensifies over time (Downey & Feldman, 1996).
Alternatively, information processing and the expectation of rejection also explain rejection sensitivity. McLachlan et al. (2010) highlighted two salient expectations to complement Downey and Feldman's definition. Anger rejection sensitivity was associated with externalizing behavior problems, such as aggression and conflict with school personnel and peers. Whereas, anxious rejection sensitivity was associated with internalizing behavior problems, such as depression, withdrawal, and social anxiety during early adolescence (Downey et al., 2004; London et al., 2007). Empirical research supports that the higher level of rejection sensitivity predicted anxious and angry expectations of rejection that were, in turn, associated with psychological distress and maladaptive behavioral outcomes (Ayduk et al., 2000).

**Rejection Sensitivity and Psychological Wellbeing**

Different studies support the positive association of rejection sensitivity with indicators of maladjustment such as anxiety and depression (London et al., 2007; McDonald et al., 2010) which undermine psychological well-being. Ayduk et al. (2000) found a negative association between rejection sensitivity and low psychological well-being in terms of depression and poor social functioning. A high level of rejection sensitivity occurs among children as an outcome of low parental acceptance and high peer rejection (McLachlan et al., 2010). The feelings of being rejected become salient during adolescence and the transitional period of emerging adulthood, which extends from the end of adolescence to the young-adult responsibilities of a stable job, marriage, and parenthood (Arnett, 2014).

Scholars claim that threats to positive peer relationships had serious consequences on psychosocial development, psychological well-being, and self-esteem during adolescence (Goldstein et al., 2005). Empirical studies and research reviews augment such claims. Arslan (2021) found adolescents with high levels of social inclusion and exclusion experienced more mental health issues. The subjective well-being significantly predicted mental health and mediated its association with social inclusion and exclusion. Another research found cognitive expectations predicted maladjustment issues; the anxiety component predicted social anxiety, low self-esteem, and other psychological problems; and the anger component predicted peer victimization, low peer preference, and overall behavioral problems (Ding et al., 2020). In a similar study, rejection sensitivity was a significant predictor of internalizing behavior problems among Chinese students and their emotional regulation reduced the negative effects of rejection sensitivity on psychological adjustment (Ding et al., 2021).

In a five-year longitudinal study, researchers found a constant increase or decrease in social anxiety with changes in the pattern of rejection sensitivity among Australian adolescents of age 12 on average (Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2021). Gao and colleagues conducted two research reviews. In the first review of 75 empirical studies on rejection sensitivity and mental health outcomes, they found significant associations of rejection sensitivity with depression, anxiety, loneliness, borderline personality disorder, and body dysmorphic disorder for clinical and non-clinical samples (Gao et al., 2017). In the second review, Gao et al. (2021) included 52 studies. They inferred a significant positive link between rejection sensitivity with victimization and aggression. Angry rejection sensitivity and reactive aggression had a stronger association than anxious rejection sensitivity and proactive aggression.
Moderation Effects of Self-esteem

Rejection sensitivity predicts a negative state of psychological well-being. It is plausible that a person’s feelings of self-worth may also contribute to a state of well-being. Self-esteem is defined as “a person’s representations of general or typical feelings of self-worth or how does an individual feel about oneself” (Kernis, 2005, p.1570). In the light of Leary and colleagues (1995) socio-meter theory, self-esteem develops because of a person’s perceived degree of social inclusion or exclusion in a group. Thus, it determines psychological well-being based on social experiences. A low level of self-esteem undermines psychological well-being independently, or interactively with heightened feelings of rejection sensitivity. Leary et al. (1995) postulated in their theory that the way others evaluate him/her affects an individual’s self-esteem. High self-esteem predicts psychological well-being, whereas low self-esteem predicts psychological problems such as depression and anxiety due to direct associations of rejection with low self-esteem and negative self-feelings (Leary et al., 1995). Rejection sensitivity evokes low levels of self-esteem to protect the self from negative evaluations by others and to restore social status (Berenson & Downey, 2006). A study found that rejection sensitivity, in terms of problematic relationships with peers or adults, and daily discrimination, predicted low self-esteem (Huynh & Fuligni, 2010). The reason is that individuals with high self-esteem indicated less concern for negative feedback and rejection of people and focused more on personal growth using their capabilities (Brown, 2010). They took part in productive tasks and assumed responsible roles that increased their psychological well-being (Leung et al., 2011).

Rejection sensitivity and positive self-esteem are related in the opposite direction. Empirical evidence supports that consistent experiences of rejection in social relationships stimulate rejection sensitivity that lowers self-esteem, and low self-esteem was associated with poor psychological well-being than high self-esteem (Khoshkam et al., 2012; Paradise & Kernis, 2002). Rejection sensitivity was significantly positively correlated with fearful and dismissing attachment styles among Pakistani university students (Ishaq & Haque, 2015). Studies demonstrates a negative association between rejection sensitivity and self-esteem among Turkish students (Goncu & Sumer, 2011) and Iranian university students (Khoshkam et al., 2012).

Moderation Effects of Socio-demographics

A few socio-demographic variables moderate the association between rejection sensitivity and psychological well-being. But the existing literature mostly explains the direct effects of age, gender, family system, and the number of friends on the study variables. Older adults with weak coping strategies and cognitive abilities experienced more rejection, sensitivity, discrimination, and depression (Chow et al., 2008). Alternatively, a greater number of older adults above the age of 60 years reported having a positive self-concept, in terms of self-assurance and clarity that was associated with psychological well-being than younger adults of age 20-39 years and middle-aged adults of age 40-59 (Diehl & Hay, 2011). Younger adults aged 22-39 years actively reacted to rejection and showed more sensitivity toward exclusion than older adults aged 58-89 years (Lockenhoff et al., 2013). The early profiles of rejection
sensitivity and its association with psychological well-being predicted the later profiles (Gao et al., 2017). The present study included a sample from ages 13-19 years to unveil their behavioral profiles.

Similarly, the literature contains evidence about the direct effects of gender on psychological well-being, except, Gao et al. (2017) found gender moderated the association between rejection sensitivity and anxiety and men felt more anxious. More adolescent girls show high rejection sensitivity and poor psychological well-being than adolescent boys (e.g., Gómez-Baya et al., 2018). A recent study with a Spanish sample favored men with high masculinity and women with high femininity for better psychological well-being than their counterparts because of stereotypical gender roles (Matud et al., 2019). Adolescents belonging to the large family reported low depression and better psychological well-being, after controlling for the family negative network (Fuller-Iglesias et al., 2015).

Last, the density of friendships and having a larger number of close friends predicted psychological well-being (Falki & Khatoon, 2016). In the same year, Miething et al. (2016) found a positive association between friendship quality and psychological well-being during the transition from late adolescence to young adulthood. Testing the advantages of the quantity of friendship, Thompson et al. (2020) reported a limit to the number of friends and friendship quality to benefit from positive outcomes of psychological well-being. They found that having at least two or three close friends can help diminish the negative impact of depression, anxiety, and stress on mental health (Thompson, 2020). Interestingly, younger adults had larger social networks than older adults (Bruine de Bruin et al., 2020).

Considering theoretical and empirical literature, the present study aimed to examine the relationship between rejection sensitivity and psychological well-being among adolescents and emerging adults. The moderating role of self-esteem and socio-demographics of age, gender, family system, and the number of friends on the relationship between rejection sensitivity and psychological well-being among adolescents and emerging adults are also explored. For this, we tested the following hypotheses.

2. High self-esteem will decrease the negative effects of rejection sensitivity on psychological well-being among adolescents and emerging adults and vice versa.
3. The socio-demographics will probably moderate the relationship between rejection sensitivity and psychological well-being - boys, and the adolescents, belonging to the nuclear family system, and having more friends will report increased psychological well-being than their counterparts.

**Method**

**Participants**

Participants were adolescents (n = 112; M = 16 years) and emerging adults (n = 189; M = 23 years) who belonged to nuclear (n = 181) or combined family system (n = 120) and had limited friends (n = 185) or numerous friends (n = 116). Those who had one to three friends were specified with a few friends and
those with four or more friends were specified as having more friends. Almost an equal number of boys 
\((n = 150)\) and girls \((n = 151)\) were chosen from the district Haripur of Pakistan in the Fall of 2020. They 
reported their actual age in years that were later categorized as adolescents and emerging adults. The 
age range of adolescents was 13-19 years \((M = 16 \text{ years})\), and the age range of emerging adults was 20-
26 years \((M = 23 \text{ years})\). Purposive sampling was used to choose participants to facilitate comparisons 
on socio-demographic variables.

**Measures**

*Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire (RSQ)*

Downey and Feldman (1996) developed this questionnaire to measure individual differences in readiness 
to perceive and overly react to rejection in social relationships with significant people in life. We used the 
18 items version in the present study after deleting nine culturally irrelevant items. The cultural 
adaptation of the measure was done with the help of two experts. Only the Rejection Sensitivity 
Questionnaire was culturally adapted, deleting nine items (i.e., 2, 3, 4, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18) to make the 
measure culturally more relevant for the chosen population. For instance, two excluded items stated as 
“You ask your boyfriend/girlfriend to move in with you” and “You ask your boyfriend/girlfriend if he/she 
really loves you”. Items were responded to five-point response categories ranging from “not at all 
concerned” to “extremely concerned” and “not at all likely” to “extremely likely”. These were scored from 1 
to 5 and total scores ranged from 11 to 55. The rejection sensitivity formula is stated as rejection 
sensitivity = (rejection concern) * (7-acceptance expectancy). A mean score of rejection sensitivity was 
calculated for each situation by multiplying the response to a question (a) by the reverse of the response 
to a question (b) and then dividing it by the number of total items. This represented the overall rejection 
sensitivity score of the questionnaire with 9 items. The Cronbach's alpha was 0.89 in the present study.

*Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (RSS)*

Rosenberg (1965) developed this 10-item Likert scale to measure the level of an individual's self-esteem. 
Items were responded to on a four-point rating scale. Responses ranged from strongly agree (score = 3) 
to strongly disagree (score = 0). Items number 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, and 9 were scored from 3 to 0, whereas items 
number 3, 5, 9, and 10 were reverse scored from 0 to 3. The total score ranged from 1 to 30 and the cut-
off point was 15. The scores below 15 indicated low self-esteem. This scale had 0.77 Cronbach's alpha.

*Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale (PWB)*

Ryff (1995) developed this 42 items scale to measure 6 dimensions of well-being, namely autonomy, 
environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relationship with others, purpose in life, and self-
acceptance. Each subscale had seven items and a score range of 1-42. Respondents answered all items 
on a 6-points rating scale, labeled from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (6). There were twenty 
positively worded items and 22 items negatively worded items. Before conducting statistical analyses, 
the negatively worded items were reverse-scored. The total score range of the scale was 1-252. The sum
of all 6 subscale scores was used to compute the total score of an individual's psychological well-being. It was interpreted as very low, low, average, high, and very high psychological well-being, depending on the obtained score. The high score indicated a high level of psychological well-being. The Cronbach's alpha of the scale was 0.90.

Procedure

After seeking approval from the Departmental Ethics Review Committee for the proposed study, we shortlisted two schools and two colleges in District Haripur. Prior permission was gained from the heads of the targeted institutions and participants' parents for research participation. Students were provided information about the study and asked to get parental permission by signing the informed consent form. Only those adolescents and emerging adults were included in the study who provided written parental consent and showed a willingness to take part. Researchers collected in-person data through group administration of the survey questionnaires from September to November 2020. They were ensured of confidentiality of their provided information, and its use only for research. Participants were instructed to imagine themselves in respective situations while responding to each statement on the Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire. They were asked to share their personal feelings while responding to Rosenberg's Self-esteem Scale and agreement or disagreement with each statement while responding to Psychological Well-being Scale.

Data Analysis

Statistical analyses were performed in SPSS software on the collected data. First, descriptive statistics and Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficients were computed (see Table 1). The standardized scores of the variables were used to compute the centered terms of the predictors so that moderation analysis can be performed. Models 1-3 examined the main and interaction effects of rejection sensitivity and self-esteem on participants' psychological well-being. Models 4-7 examined the moderation effects of categorical socio-demographic variables of gender, age, family system, and the number of friends. Age was treated as a ratio-level variable. All demographic variables were dummy-coded to control for multicollinearity. Adolescents, boys, belonging to the nuclear family system, and having a few friends were initially coded 1 and arbitrarily recoded 0 as a reference category.

Results

The sociodemographic variables were dummy-coded and their descriptive statistic was not analyzed. Table 1 shows the mean score of the total sample for rejection sensitivity was 53.33 (SD = 11.72). Only 11 participants had self-esteem scores lower than the cutoff point of 15 and, on average, it was 21.24 (SD = 3.38) for all participants. The average of Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale score (M = 161.83; SD = 25.90) showed that participants had moderate to high levels of psychological well-being.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics and Inter-correlations for Study Variables (N = 301)
Next, a correlational analysis was performed and findings showed that both self-esteem and psychological well-being had a significant negative correlation with rejection sensitivity. This implies that the levels of self-esteem and well-being decrease with an increase in rejection sensitivity. Most correlation coefficients between study variables and demographic variables were significantly positive. Except, self-esteem had a significant negative correlation with the gender and age of participants. It was non-significantly correlated with the family system and the number of friends. All four demographic variables showed significant positive inter-correlations at $p < .01$.

**Table 2** Main and Interaction Effects of Study Variables and Socio-Demographic Variables on Psychological Wellbeing ($n = 301$)
Table 2 shows the findings of seven models of regression analyses to test study objectives. Model 1 examined rejection sensitivity as a predictor of psychological well-being. The findings showed that psychological well-being decreased by 37% with one standard unit increase in rejection sensitivity. The model accounted for a 14% variance in the outcome variable. Self-esteem is added as a second predictor of psychological well-being in model 2. The independent effect of rejection sensitivity on psychological well-being was significantly negative. However, self-esteem appeared as a non-significant predictor of psychological well-being. The amount of variance remained the same as in the previous model.
Model 3 shows the main and interaction effects of rejection sensitivity and self-esteem in predicting psychological well-being. The model explained a 15% variance in psychological well-being with only a one percent difference from the previous two models. However, psychological well-being decreased by 10% with one standard unit increase in rejection sensitivity and self-esteem. It implies that self-esteem buffers the negative effects of rejection sensitivity on psychological well-being for individuals with higher self-esteem than those with low self-esteem and the same amount of rejection sensitivity.

Next, the moderation effects of categorical socio-demographic predictors were examined during models 4-7. The main effect of rejection sensitivity on psychological well-being remained unchanged therefore, it was not repeatedly mentioned in Table 2. Boys were used as a reference group in model 4, and there was a statistically significant mean gender difference in psychological wellbeing, favoring boys over girls for better psychological wellbeing. Though the amount of variance was small (β = .01). As mentioned before, age was treated as a ratio level variable representing group membership of adolescents and emerging adults. Adolescents were used as a reference group. Findings of model 5 show that the psychological well-being of adolescents was .03 points lower on average than emerging adults. This difference is statistically significant (p < .01). Age accounted for the highest amount of variance (R² = .14*, p < .001) in the outcome variable.

The number of friends (R² = .11*, p < .001) and family system (R² = .11*, p < .001) followed age. The standardized regression coefficients for the dummy coded variables of the family system and the number of friends show that participants belonging to the nuclear family system (β = .09), and having more friends (β = -.04) had better psychological well-being on average than their counterparts. Both demographic predictors had significant interaction terms indicating the occurrence of complete moderation that are also shown in Figure 1.

| Table 3 Case Summaries for Low Versus High Self-esteem |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Self-esteem | N  |  M       |  SD   |  Min |  Max  |
| Low          | 134 | 159.86   | 30.40 | 65   | 242   |
| High         | 167 | 163.41   | 21.59 | 116  | 216   |
| Total        | 301 | 161.83   | 25.90 | 65   | 242   |

Cutoff point = 15.

Self-esteem appeared a non-significant moderator in the association between rejection sensitivity and psychological well-being. It was further analyzed for the groups of low Self-esteem (n = 134) and high self-esteem (n = 167) groups. The cutoff point was 15, and participants scoring from 1 to 15 represented low self-esteem whereas participants scoring from 16 to 30 represented high self-esteem. Table 3 show small mean group differences for the said groups which are consistent with findings in Figure 2 that represent the predictive effects of rejection sensitivity on psychological well-being by levels of self-
The relationship between rejection sensitivity and psychological well-being is different for participants with low versus high self-esteem when rejection sensitivity was low. With increasing scores of rejection sensitivity, psychological well-being is the same across groups. The parallel regression lines join each other at the higher end of the continuum and evidence the non-significant differences in the level of psychological well-being of the participants.

Discussion

The present study aimed to examine the predictive effect of rejection sensitivity and the moderating effects of self-esteem and socio-demographics on psychological well-being. We performed correlation and moderation analyses to test the hypotheses. The mean scores of the Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire were used to represent participants’ perceptions of rejection sensitivity.

The first hypothesis stated that rejection sensitivity will have negative effects on the psychological well-being of adolescents and emerging adults. Rejection sensitivity scores significantly negatively correlated with psychological well-being scores, thus the findings supported the hypothesis. Whereas the standardized beta value of rejection sensitivity (β = -.37) revealed that psychological well-being decreased by 37% with an increase in scores of rejection sensitivity. Past researches also supports the negative association between rejection sensitivity and psychological well-being (e.g. Ayduk et al., 2000; McDonald et al., 2010).

The second hypothesis tested the assumption that self-esteem and socio-demographics will moderate the relationship between rejection, sensitivity and psychological well-being among adolescents and emerging adults. Self-esteem accounted for a 15% variance in the psychological well-being of the sample. It implies a high level of self-esteem buffers the negative effects of rejection sensitivity on psychological well-being. Contrarily, a low level of self-esteem may further intensify the feelings of sensitivity towards being rejected and may lead to psychological ill-being. This finding supports the hypothesis of the moderation effect of self-esteem and is consistent with the findings of Berenson and Downey (2006). It also provides empirical support to the socio-meter theory of Leary and colleagues (1995).

The moderation effects of socio-demographic variables of gender, age, family system, and the number of friends on the association between rejection sensitivity and psychological well-being were also significant. The interaction between rejection sensitivity and age accounted for 13% of the variance, whereas the moderation effects of the family system and the number of friends accounted for 11% of the variance each, in psychological well-being. Participants particularly, girls, and the adolescents, belonging to the combined family system, and with fewer friends had low average scores on psychological well-being than their counterparts.

The present findings are consistent with the previous empirical literature. Studies found boys had higher psychological well-being than girls during late adolescence and emerging adulthood (Matud et al., 2019; Miething et al., 2016). Previously, Bleidorn, et al. (2016) reported higher scores on self-esteem during
middle adulthood than in late adolescence and for boys than girls, across 48 nations. The reasons emerging adults score high on psychological well-being can be because of positive self-concept (Diehl & Hay, 2011) or a greater quantity of supportive interactions with family and with friends that were associated with individuals’ daily experience of positive and negative emotion, satisfaction, and psychological well-being (Montpetit et al., 2017).

All three instruments used for data collection were foreign-made and administered in the English language. Only the Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire was culturally adapted, deleting seven items to make the measure culturally more relevant for the chosen population. The omitted items questioned opposite-sex friendships and cohabitation which are not explicitly discussed in Pakistani culture. Though these foreign measures portrayed the nature and association among study variables, however, they did not portray the indigenous culture. That is the reason to culturally adapt these measures to get more reliable findings.

**Limitations and Future Recommendations**

1. The present study was based on a comparison between two broadly categorized age groups of adolescents and emerging adults who were between the ages of 13-26 years. Salient developmental changes occur during this shortlisted span of years. But the present study does not consider the overtime developmental process and only relied on the cross-sectional measurement of these constructs. It is recommended to conduct longitudinal studies in the future, starting from puberty up to late adulthood, to better observe the pattern of developmental changes in the study variables.

2. All three measures used in the present study were foreign-made tests. I recommend developing indigenous measures or at least using translation and adaptation of tests to maximize the validity of findings.

3. Data on main study variables and socio-demographic variables were participants’ self-reports. They self-scored their self-esteem and well-being and identified their belonging to either a nuclear or combined family or having more or fewer friends, etc. Obtaining other reports of an individual’s psychological well-being and feelings of self-esteem through observation or interview data can help to ensure the full credibility of the information.

4. The smaller sample selected from limited demography lowered the generalizability of the findings of the present study. Increasing the sample size in future studies can help raise the external validity of the research findings.

**Implications**

The present study provided empirical insight to understand the association among the study variables. It highlighted the facilitative effects of self-esteem and the debilitative effects of rejection sensitivity on the psychological well-being of adolescents and emerging adults. The understanding of this age group interests all, in particular, parents, teachers, policy-makers, psychologists, sociologists, and mental health practitioners can directly benefit from the first-hand information to promote positive behaviors among
youth. The results not only expand understanding of the role of different social networks with family and friends in determining rejection sensitivity and consequent well-being or ill-being but also offer practical grounds for necessary interventions. Such as parents and caregivers can adopt positive socialization to avoid experiences of rejection, rejection sensitivity, low self-esteem, and poor psychological health. Mental health workers can use the obtained scores as a screening tool to plan prevention-intervention support. Further, academic institutions can plan a code of conduct for positive behavior development that can shield youth from risks of maladaptation and psychological suffering. Thus, these findings have practical benefits at individual, social, and community levels, with intrapersonal and interpersonal implications.

**Conclusion**

Experiences of rejection and sensitivity towards such exposures lead to ill-being and hamper the mental health of youth. The levels of self-esteem and well-being decrease with an increase in rejection sensitivity and vice versa. Self-esteem plays a protective role in well-being when an individual faces mild rejection, but stops to decrease the harmful effects of rejection on well-being in case of high rejection. It is noted that increased social support from family and friends enhances psychological well-being.

**Declarations**

**Funding:** No funds, grants, or other support from any organization.

**Compliance with Ethical Standards:** No identifying information, no harm to participants, and ethical practices of informed consent, confidentiality, and withdrawal from the study at any stage of research were ensured.

**Availability of data and material:** The dataset generated and analyzed during the current study is available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

**Authors' contributions:** Dr. Najia Zulfiqar and Nadia Saleem planned of the research design. Dr. Zulfiqar performed the data analysis and manuscript writing. Ahmer help in writing and proof reading. Nadia Saleem made data collection and data entry.

**Conflict of Interest**

It is a unique publication using the dataset and no other manuscript has been published, accepted, or submitted for publication elsewhere. We have potentially no personal and institutional conflict of interest, financial, or business.

**References**


**Figures**

Figure 1

*Diagrammatic Representation of Seven Models of Regression Analyses*

*Psychological Wellbeing as an Effect of Rejection Sensitivity by Levels of Self-esteem*
Figure 2

*Psychological Wellbeing at the levels of Self-esteem*