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# DEPRESSIVE AND STRESS-PRONE PERSONALITY PATTERNS: A CRITICAL REVIEW AND QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION IN A PAKISTANI CONTEXT

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## ABSTRACT

Personality is regarded as a dynamic system that is influenced by cognitive processes and interactions with the environment as opposed to a set of characteristics. This exploratory study examines the pattern of depressive and stressful personality according to the Social Cognitive Theory of personality, which is focused on a triadic reciprocal relation among personal factors, behavior, and environment. The research design is employed to investigate her lived experiences of stress and low mood is a qualitative single-case study design that involves a semi-structured written interview with a 42-year-old female participant in Pakistan. A six-step thematic analysis was used to analyze the data and showed that the emotional patterns of the participant are highly contextual, and that it is a complex system of cognitive optimism and environmental hyper-vigilance. The main results have shown that the participant copes adaptively by seeking help and social support, but the existence of constant external stressors, such as relational trauma and perceived environmental threats, negatively affect self-efficacy and lead to depressive affect. The paper has identified the discrepancy in self-reported optimism and observed clinical distress and indicates that impression management can be involved in the process of writing qualitative responses. These findings confirm the need to interpret personality patterns in their respective socio-cultural and situational contexts to shed light on mental health in ways that cannot only be captured by conventional quantitative measures.

**KEYWORDS:** Social Cognitive Theory, Depressive Personality, Stress-Prone Personality, Thematic Analysis, Mental Health.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Personality is a key factor in understanding the way people encounter and experience life experiences. Depressive and stress-prone temperaments are only some of the multiple personality patterns that have been subject to a growing body of scholarly research because of their role in regulating emotions, cognitive appraisal, interpersonal functioning, and overall well-being. Depressive personality individuals tend to portray consistent negative self-assessment, negative perspectives, and emotional sensitivity whereas those prone to stress are classified as being characterized by increased reactivity to environmental pressures, inability to cope with stress, and long-term stress reactions [1].

Psychologically, the following personality patterns are not just personal dispositions but they are influenced by the sustained interactions between the cognitive process, behavioral reactions and social surroundings. Social Cognitive Psychology, especially the Social Cognitive Theory by Bandura, focuses on this interaction where personal beliefs, emotional reactions and contexts of the environment are formed as a result leading to personality formation and behavioral outcomes. According to this system, stress and depressive disposition are perceived as acquired and sustained ways of thinking and self-management as opposed to predisposed or pathological characteristics.

The current body of literature has been broad in investigating depression and stress in the data form of standardized quantitative scale methods; nevertheless, there are fewer studies that investigate these patterns of personality through qualitative investigation that establishes the subjective meaning, beliefs, and lived experiences of people. In addition to this, a large part of the literature is devoted to clinical diagnostics, but not non-clinical personality tendencies that influence daily functioning. This gap is the reason behind the necessity of exploratory research methods where participants can explain the experience, interpretation, and management of stress and low mood in everyday situations.

To address this gap, the current research will take a qualitative exploratory design in discussing the patterns of depressive and stressful personalities by reviewing literature critically and interviewing one participant in detail. With the foundation of the research in Social Cognitive Psychology, the research will seek to comprehend the connection between cognitive appraisal, emotional experience, and coping behaviors in the development of stress and depressive inclinations. The research aims to add to

the fine-tuning of perceiving personality patterns in non-diagnostic terms, providing information applicable to psychological research, education, and personal growth. The aim of this study is to explore depressive and stressful personality patterns through a social cognitive lens by integrating a critical review of existing literature with qualitative data obtained through an exploratory interview.

### 1.2. Research Objective

1. To critically review scholarly literature on depressive and stress-prone personality traits.
2. To examine depressive and stressful personality patterns using concepts from Social Cognitive Psychology.
3. To explore how cognitive appraisals, emotional responses, and coping behaviors interact in shaping stress and depressive tendencies.
4. To interpret the participant's experiences in relation to existing theoretical and empirical literature.

### 1.3. Research Questions

1. How are depressive and stressful personality patterns conceptualized in existing psychological literature?
2. How does the participant describe their emotional and cognitive experiences related to stress and low mood?
3. What coping strategies and self-regulatory behaviors does the participant report in response to stress?
4. How do the participant's experiences reflect key concepts of Social Cognitive Psychology?

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1. Social Cognitive Perspective on Depressive and Stressful Personality Patterns

The research is primarily based on Social Cognitive Psychology and mostly relies on the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) by Bandura (Social Cognitive Theory) to explain depressive and stressful personality patterns as dynamic, taught and context-related phenomenon [2], [3]. The Social Cognitive Theory has offered an extensive approach to analyzing the interactions between cognitive processes, emotional experience, behavior and environmental conditions of the individuals to shape personality-related patterns throughout their lives.

### 2.2. Social Cognitive Theory and Reciprocal Determinism

Bandura states that the functioning of human beings is a product of reciprocal determinism, which is triadic interaction between personal factors (cognitions, emotions, beliefs), behavior and environment [2]. In this philosophy, personality is not discussed as a fixed internal characteristic, but as a changing system that is dependent on social experience, self-images and behavioral reactions. Patterns of depressive and stress prone personality can thus be construed, because of repeated interactions in which negative cognitive appraisal, maladaptive coping behavior and stressful environmental conditions mutually support each other.

In a case in point, when those who regularly perceive threats as insurmountable, they can establish a habit of responding to stress, which can be either avoidance or rumination, which reinforces the beliefs of powerlessness or lack self-efficacy. In the long run the trends can be reduced to personality habits of being more sensitive emotionally, pessimistic and prone to being stressed.

### ***2.3. Cognitive Appraisal and Emotional Experience***

One of the key ideas of social cognitive and other cognitive theories is the cognitive appraisal, or the way people perceive the events and attribute sense to them. The transactional model of stress adds to the social cognitive theory since it states that stress does not solely depend on external demands or requirements and that it is also dependent on how an individual perceives those demands and how they believe they can handle such demands [4].

Negative appraisals in the pattern of depressive personality can take the form of pessimistic interpretations, self-blame and failure expectations. These thinking patterns affect how one feels and this, coupled with ongoing low mood, emotional withdrawals, and low motivation, are the results of these thinking patterns. Considering social cognitive approach, such appraisals are acquired based on the previous experiences and social feedback and are preserved in the form of self-reinforcement.

### ***2.4. Self-Efficacy and Perceived Control***

Self-efficacy is another major construct in the social cognitive theory which is characterized as the beliefs held by the individuals that they are able to handle situations and carry out actions necessary to attain results that they desire [3]. Self-efficacy is instrumental in defining emotional stability and the response to stress. Low-perceived self-efficacy is more probable to make individuals experience stress

at its highest level and perform avoidance actions as well as feel overwhelmed by daily demands.

In stress-prone and depressive forms of personality, a low self-efficacy can act as a contributory factor towards a sense of helplessness, low agency and inability to engage in adaptive coping behavior. Such beliefs may also be self-reinforcing, because with more repeated stress, or perceived failure, confidence is further eroded and negative perceptions of self-reinforced.

### ***2.5. Self-Regulation and Coping Behaviors***

Social Cognitive Theory also focuses on self-regulation that people may observe, compare, and make changes in their thoughts, feelings, and actions. Self-regulation will help them deal with stress, heal after emotional experience, and adjust to new conditions. On the other hand, problems in self-control like rumination, emotional inhibition, maladaptive coping, are usually linked to depressive and stress-related personality styles [5].

Observation, reinforcement and experience influence the development of coping strategies which are either adaptive or maladaptive. With time, such habitual coping responses can be the standard elements of the personality, and it will affect how stress and emotional difficulties will be addressed in various settings.

### ***2.6. Relevance Of the Framework to the Present Study***

Through social cognitive perspective, the current research problematizes depressive and stressful personality patterns as correlated mental, emotional, and behavioural mechanisms, as opposed to clinical issues. Such a view would correspond to such an exploratory qualitative design of the study as it gives an opportunity to conduct the research thoroughly and investigate how the subject of the research perceives stress, emotions, and personal agency in their social world.

The theoretical framework is the direct source of development of the interview protocol, interpretation of the responses of the participants, and contribution to the findings to the available literature. The study will also answer the question by relating the lived experiences to the main constructs of cognitive appraisal, self-efficacy, and self-regulation in a social cognitive framework to offer a more intricate view of the prevalence of depressive and stress-prone personality patterns.

## **3. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Personality has long been understood as the

enduring configuration of thoughts, emotions, and behaviors that make individuals distinctive, yet contemporary research increasingly conceptualizes personality not as a fixed trait but as a dynamic system shaped by cognitive processes and environmental interactions. Trait-based models, particularly those grounded in the Five-Factor Model, consistently identify neuroticism as a primary predictor of emotional instability and vulnerability to stress and negative affective states [6], [7]. Empirical work among adults indicates that individuals higher in neuroticism exhibit greater stress reactivity and heightened symptoms of depression and anxiety, supporting the idea that dispositional emotional instability acts as a vulnerability factor across diverse populations and life stages [8], [7]. Within Pakistani samples, research also affirms the link between personality predispositions and depressive symptoms: for instance, neuroticism and introversion significantly predicted depression among university students in Punjab, suggesting that those with higher emotional instability are more prone to depressive tendencies even outside clinical populations [9].

Beyond trait dispositions, literature increasingly highlights the role of cognitive vulnerabilities in shaping depressive and stress-prone patterns. Cognitive models of depression emphasize that dysfunctional beliefs and negative schemas contribute to persistent negative self-appraisal and maladaptive emotional responses [10]. These cognitive distortions are associated with patterns such as catastrophizing and self-blame, which empirically correlate with sustained low mood and reduced motivation in non-clinical groups. In Pakistan, although qualitative studies are limited, quantitative surveys among doctors indicate that neuroticism correlates positively with depression, anxiety, and stress, while adaptive dimensions such as conscientiousness and emotional intelligence are protective, reinforcing the importance of cognitive-emotional processes in everyday functioning [11]. Similarly, personality traits have been shown to mediate resilience and depressive outcomes among adult commuters in urban Pakistani settings, highlighting that coping resources and psychological resilience can buffer against the detrimental effects of vulnerability traits on mental well-being [12].

Stress-prone personality research further confirms that individuals with certain dispositional profiles experience stress with greater intensity and duration, and this is often reflected in cognitive appraisals that emphasize threat or uncontrollability over challenge or mastery. Studies in community

samples demonstrate that higher neuroticism is associated with stronger stress responses and elevated psychological distress, lending support to transactional models of stress where appraisal, coping, and personality are intertwined determinants of stress outcomes [13]. Research also suggests that coping strategies mediate the relationship between personality traits and life satisfaction under stress, with maladaptive coping linked to lower well-being, reinforcing the notion that stress-proneness is not merely a trait, but a process shaped by cognitive appraisal and habitual.

Despite the robust evidence linking trait and cognitive vulnerabilities to depressive and stress-related outcomes, much of this work remains quantitative and reliant on standardized measures that may overlook the subjective meanings individuals attach to their experiences. In Pakistan, while the association between neuroticism and depression has been documented across different populations, including students, mothers experiencing postpartum depression, and professionals, there is a distinct lack of research that qualitatively explores how individuals interpret, appraise, and cope with stress and depressive tendencies within their socio-cultural contexts [14]. Moreover, although research on coping and personality highlights mediating factors such as resilience and emotional intelligence, these studies do not delve into the lived, interpretive experiences of individuals with stress-prone or depressive personality patterns, especially outside clinical settings. Previous research has examined various socio-linguistic and psychological phenomena in the Pakistani context, including the analysis of legal discourse and victim stigmatization [15], pragmatic competence among ESL learners [16], and the manipulative effects of advertising discourse on Pakistani women and youth [17], [18]. Recent research on personality in non-Western educational contexts, such as a study examining the Big Five traits among academics in Sudanese public universities, found that while Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness significantly influenced creativity, Extraversion and Neuroticism did not [19].

This body of literature points toward a critical gap: exploratory qualitative investigations that integrate social cognitive theory with participants' subjective narratives are scarce both globally and within Pakistan. Most existing studies rely on cross-sectional designs and psychometric assessments that capture associations but do not unpack the meaning-making processes through which cognitive appraisals, self-efficacy beliefs, and habitual coping

behaviors consolidate into stable patterns of stress vulnerability and depressive tendencies. By adopting a qualitative semi-structured interview design rooted in social cognitive perspective, the present study addresses this gap by foregrounding how individuals themselves articulate their cognitive interpretations of stress, emotional experiences, and coping resources, thereby contributing nuanced insights into depressive and stress-prone personality patterns that extend beyond statistical correlations to lived psychological processes.

## **4. METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1. Research Design**

The current research was based on exploratory, qualitative research design to discuss depressive and stressful personality patterns through social cognitive lens [20]. The qualitative approach was thought to fit the purpose of the study as the implementation of subjective experiences, cognitive appraisals, and emotional reactions instead of quantitative measurements of variables. Exploratory designs are especially applicable in cases where one wants to develop a detailed insight into complex psychological phenomena in real life situations.

Using a qualitative framework, the study attempted to utilize narrative and rich data that portrays the experience and interpretation of depressive and stress-prone personality tendencies by the participant. This design can be explained by the Social Cognitive Theory that focuses on the interplay of cognitive processes, emotional experience, and behavioural responses.

### **4.2. Participant Selection**

The research was conducted in relation to one participant which was chosen using convenience sampling within the personal circle of the researcher [21]. The participant was selected because of the suitability of the subject to the study topic of depressive and stress-prone personality patterns. In order to preserve confidentiality and ethical integrity, no identifying information was gathered, and the participant was given a pseudonym (Participant A). Participant A is a 42 years old single woman who has a Master Degree in English Literature. She lives in a Pakistani city. Her history is marked with a high level of academic performance, but she is subjected to persistent social stress factors typical of her demographic and cultural background, especially of late-age singleness and previous relational betrayals. A single participant was selected to enable an intensive, in-depth qualitative exploration of depressive and stress-prone

personality patterns, allowing for rich contextual understanding within the Pakistani socio-cultural setting. These are external factors that offer the environmental aspect of the triadic reciprocal determinism that has been the main focus of the Social Cognitive Theory.

The fact that only one participant was used is in line with the exploratory nature of the study and will facilitate a thorough study of individual experiences as opposed to generalization to the larger population.

### **4.3. Research Instrument**

A semi-structured interview questionnaire that was developed by the researcher was used to gather data. The explanations as to why a new tool was decided to be developed and not adopting or modifying a standardized measure were based on the exploratory and qualitative nature of the investigation. The majority of the commonly used tools of measuring depression and stress are quantitative and aimed at screening clinical or the magnitude of symptoms, which was not the goal of the current study [22], [23].

The interview guide was based on Social Cognitive Psychology with the main constructs of cognitive appraisal, self-efficacy, perceived control, and self-regulation. The questions were framed in such a way that they would help to draw the subjective meanings of stress, emotional reactions, coping mechanisms, and thoughts by the participants. The semi-structured format provided uniformity on the type of questions asked but provided a means of elaboration and hence increased depth and credibility of data.

### **4.4. Authenticity And Trustworthiness of the Instrument**

The credibility and validity of the interview tool was achieved with the help of several qualitative rigor approaches. To start with, the tool was theoretically based, and all questions were consistent with the existing concepts based on Social Cognitive Theory and cognitive frameworks of stress and depression. Second, the content validity was met by making sure that the questions provided were a direct reflection of the research objectives and key constructs determined during the literature review [24].

Also, the presence of open-ended questions supported the thick description, where the participant was able to give detailed and nuanced answers. The research questions, theoretical framework and data collection method were well-balanced, which further contributed to the credibility

of the instrument because the interview protocol was enlightened with transparency.

#### **4.5. Data Collection Procedure**

A semi-structured interview questionnaire, which was conducted in written format, was used to collect data. The interview questions were given to the participant and allowed ample time to respond in a conscious manner. Before the study, the participant was told the intended use of the study, that the participation would be voluntary, and that he/she could withdraw his/her participation at any point. Data collection was in the presence of informed consent.

The responses were noted verbatim to avoid distorting the authenticity and reduce researcher biasness. Transcription and analysis did not involve making any changes to the responses of the participant.

#### **4.6. Ethical Considerations**

The study had acute observation of ethical principles. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured by the participant through the use of a pseudonym and omission of identifying information. The involvement was voluntary and informed consent had been received before the data collection. The research did not utilize clinical diagnosis or labelling, emphasizing personality patterns and subjective experiences. The study did not serve any commercial aims, and the information was utilized in an ethical and accountable way.

#### **4.7. Data Analysis**

The analysis of data was performed in a thematic approach towards interpretation, which was guided by the theoretical framework of the study. The data analysis was based on the six-phase thematic analysis framework. First, the researcher gained profound immersion and familiarisation through the reading and re-reading of the written transcript of the participant about 10 times and made the first observations. The second step was systematic manual coding as certain portions of the text (description of emotional heaviness or seeking professional help) were used to designate labels applicable to the objectives of the study. These original codes were then gathered in the third and fourth phases into possible sub-themes and were again checked against the whole data set to determine its correctness in reflecting the voice of the participant. In the fifth step, these themes were developed and labeled as per the constructs of Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) i.e. how the cognitive

appraisals and self-efficacy beliefs were expressed in the story of the participant. This was done in a very strict way such that the themes that were finally obtained were not just based on the raw data but also theoretically based on the reciprocal determinism of the social cognitive perspective. The responses of the participant were analyzed meticulously to create a pattern, themes, and meaning in reference to depressive and stressful personality dispositions (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The theme was then explained regarding major constructs of Social Cognitive Psychology such as cognitive appraisal, self-efficacy, coping behavior, and self-regulation.

Instead of having statistical generalization, the aim of the analysis was to have an insight with respect to theory and context to build up on the research of understanding patterns of depressive and stress prone personalities.

### **5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **1. Emotional Patterns and Depressive Experiences**

The subject expressed sadness and emotional heaviness on daily basis and especially about her current life conditions and at the same time identified herself as generally positive and optimistic. This situationally linked but not dispositional nature of the depressive experiences indicates that there is coexistence of optimism and persistent low mood in this case. Cognitive models of depression have suggested that negative emotional conditions tend to arise when people are exposed to sustained stress factors that outweigh their perceived coping resources despite them having generally positive views [25]. Studies also show that depression related to chronic adversity was not always a symptom of a constant depressive personality but a situational affective reaction [28].

#### **2. Cognitive Appraisal, Optimism, And Realism**

The participant characterized her way of thinking as optimistic and realistic and stated that she would focus on both the possible solutions and the possible negative outcomes. This trend follows the transactional model of stress by Lazarus and Folkman, that highlights the fact that stress responses are contingent on the cognitive appraisal of the threat and coping capacity by individuals [4]. The balanced appraisal style of the participant can be viewed as a sign of struggling to have psychological control, but the fact that stress persists, can be viewed as the indication that when the threat of the environment is acute or continuous, cognitive optimism may not suffice.

### **3. Stress Reactivity and Trauma-Related Responses**

The relationship troubles, bullying, and perceived physical violence were closely linked to stress that resulted in increased emotional reactivity, indecisiveness, and social withdrawal. The unpredictable, threatening, and uncontrollable stressors have always been associated with the increase in emotional distress and depressive symptoms [26]. The responses of the participant seem to be similar to trauma-related stress reactions, as opposed to personality pathology. Social cognitive theory allows emotional regulation and behaviour patterns to be reformed upon exposure to threatening situations through repeated exposure to the environment with ongoing interaction between the environmental requirements and mental activities [2].

### **4. Self-Criticism, Confidence, And Self-Efficacy**

The participant admitted that she indulged in self-criticism, and this had a negative impact on her confidence and motivation. Self-criticism is a highly identified cognitive vulnerability factor in depression, which usually leads to low self-efficacy and emotional resilience [27]. The idea of self-efficacy developed by Bandura states that the ability of individuals to cope with difficulties in terms of beliefs is central to motivation and affective control [3]. Here, long-term stress seems to have undermined the confidence of the participant in spite of her otherwise adaptive coping orientation.

### **5. Coping Strategies and Help-Seeking Behavior**

The participant sought professional counseling and social support actively and named these strategies as the effective coping mechanisms. Reliance on social support as well as the process of help-seeking has been viewed as adaptive coping mechanisms to counter the psychological impact of stress [28]. According to the social cognitive perspective, the tendencies toward such behaviors are an embedded agency and self-control, despite the occurrence of emotional distress [29]. This observation dispels stereotypical beliefs that people who have depressive patterns are inactive or detached.

### **6. Stability And Change in Personality Patterns**

The respondent felt that her emotional stability remained intact in the usual state of affairs with specific personality shifts during times of trauma and danger. Modern psychology of personality has

placed a strong focus on the idea that personality manifestations are not fixed or static but will vary depending on the situation [28]. This interactionist view is justified by the fact that the reflections of the participant suggest that stressful situations have the temporary ability to change the patterns of emotions and behavior without changing the structure of personality in a fundamental way.

In general, the results indicate that depressive and stressful personality patterns in this instance can be better conceptualized as a result of adaptation to prolonged stresses in the external environment, which is mediated by cognitive appraisal, self-efficacy beliefs and environmental threat. Such findings are in line with social cognitive theories which perceive emotional functioning as a result of mutual interactions of personal beliefs, behavior and situational demands [2].

### **7. Perceived Environmental Threat**

Although the interview responses of the participant focused on the issues of optimism and realism, longitudinal observations made by the researcher indicated a more elaborate interaction between cognitive appraisal and perceived environment. Particularly, the subject displays symptoms of hyper-vigilance to the environment, such as the assumption that physical danger is being taken by external actors against her. In terms of Social Cognitive, it indicates a loss of self-efficacy and a very extreme judgment of the environment as something that cannot be controlled and hostile. The severity of these stress-prone patterns is probable to be informed by her clinical history and past diagnoses, as well as pharmacological treatment.

### **6. LIMITATION**

The major weakness of this study is that there is a possibility of impression management or social desirability bias that might be involved with the written interview format. Although the self-reported data of the participant were more focused on the optimism and adaptive coping, the researcher observation and the clinical history of the participant indicates that there is a more complicated reality with consistent environmental hyper-vigilance and the perception of being threatened (e.g., beliefs about external surveillance and physical harm). Such discrepancy involves the possibility that the participant might have used the interview process as a means to establish a more rational/stable self-image, thus not manifesting more painful psychological symptoms. More so, being a one case study of a 42-year-old bachelorette in a particular

cultural setting (Pakistan), the results on the convergence of social pressure and personality patterns are highly subjective and cannot be applied to a wider population. Lack of psychometric instruments to corroborate the self-reported optimism of the participant against her clinical distress also affects the capacity to objectively determine the extent of her depressive and stressful personality pattern.

## 7. CONCLUSION

It is an exploratory study that investigated depressive and stressful patterns of personality by critically analyzing the available literature and conducting a semi-structured interview comprehensively. The results show that depressive and stressful personality manifestations are not necessarily fixed or dispositional but, in most cases, triggered contextually in reaction to the longer and threatening life situations. The experiences of the participant demonstrated that there was a complex interplay of emotional vulnerability, cognitive appraisal, environmental stressors and adaptive coping mechanisms which confirmed major assumptions of social cognitive psychology.

In line with the depressive processes, as suggested by cognitive theories, daily feelings of sadness and emotional heaviness among the participant seemed to be closely associated with the daily situational stress and not a depressed perspective of the world [25]. The participant still had a sense of optimism and hope behind the emotional distress, which indicates the coexisting presence of cognitive protective factors and depressive affect. This result is consistent with the studies that focus on the importance of cognitive appraisal in determining the outcome of emotions during periods of stress [4].

Furthermore, stress reactivity, which occurs in the form of emotional sensitivity, indecision and withdrawal were highly related to exposure to relational conflict and perceived physical threat by the participant. These reactions are characteristic of stress patterns that are characteristic of trauma, and not dysfunctional personality per se, which reinforces modern views that emotional reactions can be described as adaptive responses to environmental needs [26]. Socially, such trends depict the concept of

reciprocal determinism, in which environmental stressors dictate the thinking ideology and emotional control, which subsequently affect behavior [2].

Notably, the fact that the participant proactively participated in counseling sessions related to her profession and used social support implies that her agency and self-regulation were maintained, even during the stresses of the psychological process. These coping mechanisms are known to be viewed as important buffers to stressors and symptoms of depression [29]. Self-consciousness that the participant perceived about the situational nature of her emotional shifts also confirms interactionist models of personality that theorize personality as dynamic and context dependent instead of constant [30].

In general, this paper highlights the significance of explaining patterns of depression and stressful personality in a wider social, cognitive, and environmental context. It warns of the danger of simplistic trait-oriented categorization and brings out the necessity of complex and humanized interpretations of psychological distress. Although this research has some useful information, it has a number of limitations associated with the single participant design and exploration nature. The findings could be extended to the future by involving more and more diverse samples to increase the generalizability. Further comparison of people who have been exposed to different rates of chronic stress may further explain situations when depressive personality tendencies develop or diminish.

Also, it can be suggested that in the future, qualitative interviews should be paired with standardized psychometric measures, like validated depression or stress scale, to triangulate the results and enhance the quality of the research methodology [24]. Longitudinal research designs might also provide a more in-depth understanding of the way personality patterns change over time due to changing life circumstances.

Lastly, the investigations of protective thinking variables like optimism, self-efficacy and social support could be further developed in order to come up with more useful intervention strategies to help build resilience among individuals who endure stress or trauma over long periods [3].

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