

MANUSCRIPT: ijerph- 1033357

FROM: Claudia López Madrigal – corresponding author of the manuscript

TO: Reviewer 2

SUBJECT: Cover letter addressing the reviewers' comments made in the manuscript

DATE: 26 december 2020

[Reviewer 2 - first observation] When discussion the five main domains, perhaps some clarification about what I'm assuming is the fourth stage "in-between." As it currently reads, it seems more tied to the third stage that is mentioned.

See Introduction section, Subsection 1.1, page 2, at the end of the first paragraph. Thank you for the observation. Indeed, the “feeling in between” stage was not entirely clear. It seemed to be an extension of the third stage. With this being stated, that paragraph was rewritten, specifying the “in-between” stage as the fourth characteristic of emerging adulthood. Also, a line was included to detail more about what this stage means.

[Reviewer 2 - second observation] While there is a focus on young adults transitioning to college and how this may impact their psychological and developmental outcomes, there should be some mention of individuals who choose to not go to college. For example, individuals who may enter military service, enter employment, or some other career/education combination that is not the traditional college or higher education.

Right. Other non-traditional pathways to adulthood need to be addressed when studying this population. The aim of this paper was to focus only on college students, therefore adding more literature of the individuals who choose not to go to college could be confusing. However, it did seem important to give more detailed information about this issue. For this purpose, the *limitations* and *future research* section was rewritten emphasizing the numerous pathways to adulthood that are now part of the young adults reality. **See Discussion section, page 16, Limitations subsection, first line.**

[Reviewer 2 - third observation] You state rather clearly how you're considering resilience as an outcome for the purposes of this paper, but I'm wondering if there's any utility in also looking at it as a process. This period of time for young adults is clearly a time of change and adaptation. I wonder how thinking about resilience as also a process rather than simply an outcome may also factor into this model.

I agree. As stated in this paper, resilience is considered to be a meta-skill meaning that it is a complex variable that has a process of its own. Resilience understood and measured as a positive outcome lets us know which individuals thrive in their transition to college. However, in order to evaluate resilience as a process we would need a different study design. Our cross sectional study does not allow us to make process inferences.

Nonetheless, resilience as a process could help us understand how some individuals thrive despite the adverse context they are immersed in. Both pathways are very interesting and that is one of the many goodness of studying meta-skills. For sure, we are taking this suggestion in consideration for our future research.

[Reviewer 2 - fourth observation] *Was there additional reasoning behind recruiting from the specific programs? These programs tend to have more females than males, so that may explain the differences in gender for the overall sample characteristics.*

No there wasn't. Our participants were recruited through convenience sampling. The professors that agreed to participate in our study were the ones that distributed the online survey to their students. However, the observation is relevant, so specifications were made in different sections of the manuscript:

- See **Method** section, **Procedure** subsection, page 8.
- See **Discussion** section, page 16, **Limitations** subsection, second line.

[Reviewer 2 - fifth observation] *As gender is a dichotomous variable and age coded as a categorical variable, using Pearson's correlation wouldn't be the accurate test to use. Did you consider using independent samples t-test or ANOVA to look at the relationship between these variables with emotional well-being?*

The Pearson correlation analysis was carried with age coded not as a categorical variable, but as a continuous variable. However, when we coded age as a categorical variable (group age) we did use ANOVA test to evaluate the relationship with the emotional well-being variables.

[Reviewer 2 - sixth observation] *Were other variables collected during the recruitment process that may relate to some of the negative or non-expected findings, specifically potential confounding variables related to coping or resilience? For these, I'm thinking adverse childhood events (ACEs) that may make an individual more susceptible to possible negative coping strategies or instead could result in posttraumatic growth and increased resilience.*

No, we did not assess other negative variables that could influence our findings. We will definitely take it in consideration for future research. This suggestion was indicated in the discussion of the manuscript. To see the changes made see **Discussion** section, page 16, **Limitations** subsection, end of the second -future research- paragraph.

Dear reviewer,

Thank you very much for your suggestions. They have contributed significantly to the improvement of the manuscript. I hope I was able to respond thoroughly to all of your observations.

Best regards,

Claudia López Madrigal