

Oral Defense Announcement

University of Missouri – St. Louis Graduate School

An oral examination in defense of the dissertation for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology with an emphasis in Clinical-Community Psychology

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M.A. in Clinical Psychology, August 2020, University of Missouri-St. Louis
B.S. in Psychology, August 2015, Saint Louis University

Pain Interference in Chronic Musculoskeletal Pain: Examining a Resilience Model of Dispositional Optimism, Coping Responses, and Mind-Body Practices

Date: May 15, 2024

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Place: Remote

Abstract

Chronic musculoskeletal pain is the leading cause of disability in the United States. Pain interference, or the ways chronic pain negatively interferes with everyday life, is the biggest problem impacting individuals with chronic musculoskeletal pain. Although previous research has targeted risk factors associated with poor health outcomes, the adaptive functioning of some patients with chronic pain highlights a need for research investigating resilience factors. The purpose of this study was to investigate the direct and indirect relationships between resilience factors of optimism, coping responses, and mind-body practices on pain interference for individuals with chronic musculoskeletal pain. Specifically, the resilience model of chronic pain was used to investigate a path leading from dispositional optimism to pain interference through problem-focused and emotion-focused coping responses and engagement in mind-body practices. A subsample of participants from the MIDUS-3 study with an arthritic condition and chronic pain was assessed for each of the resilience factors of interest, and the main outcome variable, pain interference. Results demonstrated that each resilience factor, excluding mind-body practice engagement, was significantly associated with pain interference. Path analysis revealed an indirect effect of optimism on pain interference through emotion-focused coping. Results from this study demonstrate the importance of optimism and its impact on other resilience factors. Future research is needed to determine ways optimism can be targeted through intervention to improve overall quality of life for patients with chronic musculoskeletal pain.

Defense of Dissertation Committee

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