

Effects of Age and Educational Stream on Coping Behavior of Girls

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ABSTRACT

In the present investigation, effort has been made to ascertain the effects of Age and Educational Stream on Coping Behaviour in girls. A 2X2 factorial design was employed. The two factors studied were: Age (Junior/Senior) and Educational Stream (Science/Arts). There were four cells with forty subjects in each cell (Total sample consisted of 160 subjects). Coping Behaviour was measured by Carver's COPE scale. Subjects were assessed on total test scores of COPE scale. Results of ANOVA show main effects of Age (Junior X=144.16: Senior X=152.65) were found significant on total coping test score i.e. Senior girls were found better on total coping test scores than junior girls. Educational Stream (Science X=149.65: Art X=147.17) was found significant. Science Subjects were found superior in coping than subjects from Art stream. Interaction between age and educational stream were also found significant.

Keywords: Coping Behaviour, Educational Stream, Stress, Problem – Focused and Emotional-Focused Coping.

The term stress refers to change in situations that pose demands constraints or opportunities perceived to be taxing to one resource. However stress arousing situation for one person might be a neutral event, for another and even enjoyable for someone else. Whether a certain situation is stressful for us or not depends on how we appraise a life event and how we rate our ability to deal with it (Werner, 1993).

Coping is the cognitive and affective responses used by individuals to manage stress (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004; Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). The effects to control, reduce or learn to tolerate the threats that lead to stress are known as coping. We habitually use certain coping responses to help ourselves deal with the minor stressors of life until they build up to sufficiently aversive levels (Snyder, 1999). A key element is how individuals appraise both the stressful situation and their resources to cope with the problem. Stressful appraisals include whether the situation involves threat, harm, and/or loss and are a function of both the person (beliefs, values,

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commitments and personal preferences) and the situation. Hobfall (1989) pointed out coping resources can include material good, psychological resources such as coping skills and social support.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) proposed two types of coping behaviour: problem-focused coping – finding the most effective way to solve the problem or to control the source of the stress and emotion-focused coping efforts to manage emotional responses to stress. Frydenberg and Lewis (2002) stated that these coping processes are not intrinsically good or bad .They can be considered as productive or non- productive depending on the context in which they occur.

In most stressful incidents, people employ both emotion –focused and problem focused strategies. However, they use emotion-focused strategies more frequently when they perceive circumstances as being unchangeable, and problem – focused approaches more often in situations they see as relatively modifiable (Lazarus, 1999; Stanton& Frantz, 1999; Folkman & Moskowitz, 2000).

Active coping is the process of taking active steps to try to remove circumvent the stressor or to ameliorate its effects. Active coping initialing direct action increasing one’s efforts, and trying to execute a coping attempt in stepwise fashion what they term active coping is very similar to cope of focused coping. Restraint coping is often overlooked as a potential coping strategy; it sometimes is a necessary and functional response to stress. Restraint coping is waiting until an active coping strategy in the sense that the person’s behavior is focused on dealing effectively with the stressor, but it is also a passive strategy in the sense that using restraint means not acting.

Denial coping is a responses that sometimes emerges in primary appraisal. Denial is somewhat controversial. It is often suggested that denial is useful, minimizing distress and thereby facilitating coping. Denial has several possible referents, we chose to operationalize denial here as reports of refusal to believe that the stressor exists or of trying to act as though the stress or is not real.

Previous studies found conflicting effects of age as significant factors in how adolescents cope with stressful situations. The “growth hypothesis” postulates that older adolescents are more likely to use problem-focused coping mechanisms (Krishnan,1999; Seiffge-Krenke & Shulman,1990; Stern& Zevon,1990).However, other studies did not support the “growth hypothesis” older adolescents used more emotional-focused coping as compared to younger adolescents (Frydenberg&lewis,1993;Spirito,stark,grace&stamoulis,1991).

Male adolescents were more likely to use problem-focused coping strategies as compared to the females who tended to rely on emotion-focused coping processes (Brems & Johnson, 1988;

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Lee,chan & Yik ,1992).However, other studies found no significant gender differences in coping behavior (Hanilton&Fogot,1988;Krishnan1999).

People have their own methods of stress management. In some people, stress-induced adverse feelings and anxieties tend to persist and intensify. Learning to understand and master stress management techniques can help prevent the counter effects.

Purpose of the study

This study aimed to examine the Effects of Age and Educational Stream on Coping Behaviour in Adolescence through coping scale by Dr. Carver et.al.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Researchers wish to know the impact of Age and Educational Streams .To study two independent variables (Age and Educational Stream). A 2x2 factorial designed is employed. In this study all the variables have 2-2 levels each, there are 4 conditions. Researchers randomly allotted 40 subjects for all 4 conditions. Age and Educational Stream.

Sample

The sample consisted of One hundred sixty female students of college enrolled in Sagar with age range 18 to 23 years old. Subjects were recruited through Stratified Random sampling.

Material

Coping scale developed by Carver, Scheir and Weitaub, is well known as **COPE** was found most suitable to meet the objectives of present work.

Procedure

One hundred sixty subjects are drawn from Government Girls PG College of Excellence in Sagar through stratified random sampling and they are assigned into 4 sub-groups. After that consent of the subjects have been be sought coping scale by Carver et.al., has been administered to all 160 subjects for data collection. The collection of data planned systematically.

RESULTS

Table:1 Showing Mean& SDs of Coping Scores

Age/Educational Stream	Science	Arts	Total
Junior	150.70 (20.23)	137.62 (20.91)	144.16
Senior	148.58 (49.63)	156.72 (20.49)	152.65
Total	149.64	147.17	

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Table:2 Showing 2×2 Analysis of Variance of Total Coping Test Scores

Source of variation	SS	df	Ms	F
Educational Stream (A)	240.10	1	240.10	4.89*
Age (B)	2890.00	1	2890.00	58.96**
AB (Gender X Age)	4215.73	1	4215.73	86.01**
Within group (Error)	7645.73	156	49.01	
		159		

* Significant at 0.05 level, ** Significant at 0.01 level

Analysis of variance of test scores indicate that the main effect of Age (Junior X=144.16/Senior, X= 152.65) was significant F (1,196) 8.55 P<.01.

The main effect of Birth Order (First X =146.95/Third X=148.50) was not significant F (1,196) 1.69.

DISCUSSION

The data is analyzed in the form of Mean, Combined Mean, Standard Deviation and ANOVA are computed separately for full and selected sub scales of coping. The present study is an exploratory one and it reveals several important facts which may be beneficial to individual and to the society.

Results of ANOVA show main effects of Age (Junior X=144.16: Senior X=152.65) were found significant on total coping test score i.e. Senior girls were found better on total coping test scores than junior girls. Educational Stream (Science X=149.65: Art X=147.17) was found significant. Science Subjects were found superior in coping than subjects from Art stream. Interaction between age and educational stream were also found significant. The present work was conducted under constraints beyond the control of the researchers. Hence the findings could not be generalized until verifying the results in same circumstances rigorously.

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Conflict of Interests: The author declared no conflict of interests.

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