

IDENTIFIED COPING STRATEGIES OF PROFESSIONAL AND NON-PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

***Dr. Aabha Gupta, **Ms. Chetna Rawat**

*Associate Professor, **Research Scholar

Govt. Meera Girls College, Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur

ABSTRACT

When children come to college from school life they choose their profession. In college life student makes a choice between professional and nonprofessional courses. College life is the most scintillating and memorable experiences in an adolescent's life. Due to fast physical changes and mental development at this stage, students may sometimes experience incompatibility of their mental development with their physical changes or with the social environment and thus suffer from problems arising from inadequate adaptations. The purpose of this research was to find out the Level of Coping Strategy among professional and non-professionals and to examine the gender differences in Coping Strategy. The sample of this study consisted of 360 Students (180 Professional and 180 Nonprofessional) from Udaipur city. The samples were categorized into 6 subgroups of Two Major categories of student's wise. Professional courses students' pursuing (L.L.B./M.B.B.S./ B.E.). And non-professional courses students pursuing (B.A./B.com /B.Sc.) Both professional and non professional students were divided into equal numbers (60) for each group both male and female students were selected for this research and their age range was between 18-25 years. The tool for the study was constructed using standardized tools /tests. The findings indicated that significant difference exists among the level of Professional and Non Professional Students for Behavioural- Approach and Cognitive - Approach coping strategies, whereas they are almost same on Cognitive-Behavioural Approach, Behavioural-Avoidance and Cognitive Avoidance Coping Strategies. It was observed that professional and nonprofessional students no significant difference were found in the level of Coping Strategies of these students in respect their Gender. The Conclusion of this study type of course seems to make an impact on the coping strategy pattern of students but gender has not shown any major impact on the selected aspects.

Keywords: Coping Strategy, Professional and Non Professional course students

1.INTRODUCTION:

As adolescence approaches legal maturity; they are anxious to shed the stereotype of teenagers and to create the impression that they are near-adults. They discover that dressing and acting like adults are not always enough. So, they begin to concentrate on behaviour that is associated with the adult status – smoking, drinking engaging in sex, and using drugs. For example, they believe that their behaviour will create the image they desire.

Hence, it is the primary responsibility of both parents and teachers to know well about nature and change that take place in the transition period from childhood to adulthood.

The in-depth study of Adolescence is most important because the ultimate condition of development of a country depends on sound mental health. Adequate adjustment in society for adolescents needs to be provided which is possible only with the help of proper educational guidance for understanding the needs of Adolescence because he /she has a desire obviously to know something about herself/himself and such passion, undoubtedly, not only justifiable but also understandable.

Each student has his/her traits and personality. Students generally come from different cultural backgrounds, different socioeconomic status, and families and have different characters. When the students enter the college life by crossing the school Life, they choose their profession according to her /his interest, parent's requirement, etc. they decided professional and non-professional courses.

Professional Students: A professional student is a student majoring in what is considered professional degrees. These include Doctor of philosophy, Doctor of education, the law of Veterinary Medicine, Dentistry, Medicine, and Doctor of physiotherapy, Engineering, Business Administration, Infirmary, Pharmacy, Architecture, and more. Professional students face tough competition as they are expected to succeed in their careers. Furthermore, society, in general, has high expectations for professional students. The expectations of parents or family, on the one hand, and their desire to succeed in the chosen course generate a lot of pressure on professional students, which produces a high level of stress.

Non-Professional Students: Non-professional students are those who study their careers in liberal courses such as Art, Commerce, Basic science, Humanities, Social work, Fine arts, Music, Theatre, Creative writing, etc. There is less competition in liberal courses. The expectations of parents in general and society, in particular, are not very high for non-professional students. The chances of high stress, anxiety, depression, psychosomatic disorders are also lower among non-professional students since they are not exposed to the same degree of competence and social pressure.

Adolescent stresses : Young people face a multitude of ongoing stressful problems, including relationship difficulties, illness or death of family and friends, family pressures, and the expectations placed on them for academic success. These life stressors have been shown to contribute to an increased risk of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral difficulties in adolescents such as depressions, behavioral problems in and outside school, various anxiety disorder and academic failure. The adolescent years represent a period of rapid physical, social-emotional, and cognitive development. Similarly, there are changes in coping from Early to Late Adolescence.

Following decades of research in many fields of biology and psychology have shown that there is an evolving consensus regarding the criteria used to describe whether a particular coping strategy is effective at reducing distress. These include ;whether the stressor is removed ,whether the psychological stress reaction on subjective experience of distress is reduced or dominated ,whether the Individual is able to function normally (based in part on social norms of behaviour ,thoughts and emotions),whether activities that are interrupted by the stressor are resumed ,whether physical and subjective wellbeing improve ,whether self-esteem is maintained and whether coping is deemed sufficient by the Individual (Zeidner and Saklofske, 1996) . While scientists generally agree on what active coping looks like, there is less agreement about how best to define and describe the particular strategies people use, and whether specific strategies are more effective than others.

Types of coping strategies

Hundreds of coping strategies have been identified. Classification of these strategies into a broader architecture has not yet been agreed upon. Common distinctions are often made between various contrasting approaches, for example, problem-focused versus emotion-focused; engagement versus disengagement; cognitive versus behavioral. The psychology textbook by Weiten identifies three broad types of coping strategies. (Weiten, W. & Lloyd, M.A. (2008))

Appraisal-focused: Directed towards challenging one's assumptions, adaptive cognitive

Problem-focused: Directed towards reducing or eliminating a stressor, adaptive behavioral

Emotion-focused: Directed towards changing one's emotional reaction

The word 'stress' is used by all very frequently .sometime items like tension, pressure, anxiety, frustration, and distress are used as synonyms for stress. Its symptoms and manifestations well understand the term. Unlike 'stress,' 'coping' is a term, which is more practiced in day to day life than used in language expression. Coping behavior is one that is used by an individual every day in a stressful situation that is temporary and also that have a long-run impact. Some of the common expressions connoting coping are -, 'I handled it', 'I could manage well', 'I reconciled', and many more .we cope with the situation to bring down the stress and sometimes even to avert an impending stress, so that the stressor is handled even before it cast its impacts . Thus, coping also helps us in avoiding stress.

Gender differences

Gender differences in coping strategies are how men and women differ in managing psychological stress. There is evidence that males often develop stress due to their careers, whereas females often encounter stress due to issues in interpersonal relationships. Early studies indicated that "there were gender differences in the sources of stressors, but gender differences in coping were relatively small after controlling for the source of stressors"; and more recent work has similarly revealed "small differences between women's and men's coping strategies when studying individuals in similar situations.

In general, such differences as exist indicate that women tend to employ emotion-focused coping and the "tend-and-befriend" response to stress, whereas men tend to use problem-focused coping and the "fight-or-flight" response, perhaps because societal standards encourage men to be more individualistic, while women are often expected to be interpersonal. An alternative explanation for the differences mentioned above involves genetic factors. The degree to which genetic factors and social conditioning influence behavior, is the subject of ongoing debate. **Tomer S. et al., (2014)** observed that there was a significant relationship among stress disorder in children of both the school and academic factors related to their relationship with family and friends. Government school children were better acclimatized to use coping strategies as compared to private school children. Stress becomes unmanageable when students are not able to cope with undesirable situations. **Ickes M.J. et al., (2015)** examined differences among graduate and undergraduate college students in stress levels and coping strategies. Social support as a coping strategy was the most essential variable explaining differences among graduate and undergraduate students. Results also show graduate and Undergraduate College students cope with stress in a similar manner. However, social support was more likely among graduate students and may be an essential strategy for future college health programming. **Kumari C et al., (2014)** examined the coping strategy and level of stress among adolescents. The result shows that the majority of students were on the average and low level of stress, and only a few respondents had a high level of academic stress. Coping strategies used by the majority of the adolescents was used Behavioural-Approach. Few adolescents have used the Cognitive-Approach strategy. The study found that there was a high prevalence of stress in the academic area among secondary school students. Contributing factors to stress would be related to school training, students, and parents. Training students on positive coping strategies, reducing stressor-related school training, and improving parent and teacher support to the students would help to improve this condition.

Keeping these in mind, following objectives were framed:

1. To study the level of Coping strategy of Professional and Non-professional students.
2. To study the influence of Gender on Coping strategy of Professional and Non-professional students.

2.METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Udaipur city (Rajasthan). The present study has been conducted on the students of professional and non-professional courses offered by various College of Udaipur city. Six professional and nonprofessional colleges were selected from Udaipur as they fulfilled the criteria of the objectives. A random sampling technique was used for the present study. Standardized tools were used for accessing coping strategies. Coping strategies scale developed by Prof. A. K. Srivastava (2001) it contains 50 items, to be rated on a five-point scale, describing varieties of coping behaviour underlying following five significant categories of coping strategies based on the combinations of 'orientation' of the coping behaviour. The Test Re-test Reliability was 0.92(N=76).

3.RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As per the mean score analysis, professional students are using coping strategies in a better manner as compare to non-professional students but to measure the difference in the level of Coping Strategy of the Professional and Non-Professional Students t-test is applied as presented in table 3.1

Table 3.1: t-results to measure the difference in the level of Coping Strategy of the Professional and Non-Professional Students

Type of Coping Strategy	Type of Students	Mean	S.D.	t-values	P-value	Result
Behavioural -Approach	Professional	33.09	5.447	4.81	0.000	*Significant
	Non-Professional	30.34	5.423			
Cognitive -Approach	Professional	14.71	3.428	2.435	0.015	*Significant
	Non-Professional	13.76	3.914			
Cognitive-Behavioural Approach	Professional	21.2	4.499	0.68	0.497	Not Significant
	Non-Professional	20.87	4.792			
Behavioural-Avoidance	Professional	19.64	6.599	0.422	0.673	Not Significant
	Non-Professional	19.94	6.892			
Cognitive Avoidance	Professional	12.58	3.614	0.586	0.558	Not Significant
	Non-Professional	12.33	4.272			

Level of Significance=5%

From the results presented in table 3.1, it can be inferred that a significant difference exists among the level of Professional and Non-Professional Students for Behavioural Approach coping strategies and Cognitive –Approach coping strategies. On the counter side, it can be concluded that Professional and Non-Professional Students possess a similar level of Cognitive-Behavioural Approach coping strategies, Behavioural-Avoidance coping strategies, and Cognitive Avoidance coping strategies.

Table 3.2: t-results to measure the difference in the level of Coping Strategy of the male & female Students

Type of Coping Strategy	Gender	Mean	S.D.	t-values	P-value	Result
Behavioural Approach	Male	31.24	6.031	1.336	0.182	Not Significant
	Female	32.04	5.276			
Cognitive –Approach	Male	13.88	3.481	1.482	0.139	Not Significant
	Female	14.47	3.839			
Cognitive –Behavioural Approach	Male	21.65	4.218	0.009	0.037	Not Significant
	Female	20.61	4.879			
Behavioural –Avoidance	Male	19.73	7.496	0.159	0.874	Not Significant
	Female	19.84	6.188			
Cognitive Avoidance	Male	12.2	4.493	1.019	0.309	Not Significant
	Female	12.63	3.538			

Level of Significance=5%

- Under the professional courses, three professional courses have been taken, such as M.B.B.S., L. L.B., B.E. the coping strategies have been analyses base of five parameters, the first part is Behavioural-Approach Coping Strategies, second Cognitive-Approach Coping Strategies, Third Cognitive -Behavioural Approach Coping Strategies, fourth Behavioural-Avoidance Coping Strategies, five Cognitive -Avoidance Coping Strategies.

Table 3.3

Coping Strategies		Professional Students		
		M.B.B.S.	L.L.B	B.E.
1.	(Problem Focused Coping) Behavioural-Approach Coping Strategies	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
2.	Cognitive-Approach Coping Strategies.	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
3.	Cognitive-Behavioural Approach Coping Strategies	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
4.	(Emotional Focused Coping) Behavioural-Avoidance Coping Strategies	Low	Low	Low
5.	Cognitive-Avoidance Coping Strategies	Low	Low	Low

- As table 3.3 show to the level of coping strategies, which is divided into five parts. For out of which thefor first three parameters, namely Behavioural - Approach Coping, Cognitive-Approach Coping and Cognitive-Behavioural Approach Coping Strategies. Moderate level of coping strategies was found professional college students for these three parameters.
- For Behavioural-Avoidance Coping and Cognitive- Avoidance Coping Strategies, Low level was found.
- The person using problem-focused strategies try to deal with the source of their problem. They do this by finding out information on the issue and learning new skills to control the problem. Problem-focused coping is aimed at changing or remove the source of stress. The three issue-focused coping strategies identified by Folkman and Lazarus are taking control, information seeking, and evaluating the pros and cons.
- The five emotion-focused coping strategies recognize by Folkman and Lazarus are escape-avoidance disclaiming, accepting responsibility or blame, exercising self-control, and positive reappraisal.
- These strategies can be applied through a variation of ways, such as seeking social support, reappraising the stressor in a positive light, obtain responsibility, using delay, exercising self-control, and distancing. The focus of these coping strategies is to change the meaning of the stressor or transfer attention away from it.
- Mostly, people use a mixture of all three types of coping strategies, and coping skills will usually change a lifetime. All these methods can prove useful, but some claim that those using problem-focused coping strategies will adjust better to life. Problem-focused coping may allow an individual greater perceived control over their problem, whereas emotion-focused coping may sometimes lead to a reduction in perceived control (maladaptive coping).
- Emotion-focused strategies involve releasing pent-up emotions, distracting.
- While dealing with stress, it is essential to deal with your physical, mental, and social and cognitive well being. Everyone should maintain one's health and learn to relax if one finds oneself under stress. Mentally it is essential to think positive thinking, value over self, proper time management, plan and think ahead, and express emotions. Socially one should communicate with people and seek new activities. By following these simple strategies, one will have an easier time responding to stresses in one's life.
- When Professional and Non-professional courses, students were differentiated on measures of coping strategies, it was found that the professional courses students showed relatively moderate Level of Behavioural – Approach Coping, Cognitive – Approach coping, cognitive Behavioural Approach Coping Strategies, and Low Level of Behavioural – Avoidance Coping Strategies, and Cognitive – Avoidance Coping Strategies. In contrast to the Non-professional courses, students showed moderate Level of Behavioural – Approach Coping Strategies, Cognitive – Approach Coping Strategies, cognitive -Behavioural Approach coping strategies, and Low Level of Behavioural -Avoidance Coping Strategies, Cognitive - Avoidance Coping Strategies. So as far as their coping strategy was concerned, they did not differ significantly, but on other measures means score both the groups were found to vary significantly. **Devata. D. Gasti, Shivacharan P.R.(2015)**this study showed that “female students have adopted Active Coping as coping strategies when compared to male students.”

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