

Study of Coping Strategies to Manage Stress among Students

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Abstract-

Everybody experiences stress, and how much a person experiences depends on the day. Having effective coping mechanisms in place can assist you in managing your stress. However, if you're having trouble controlling your stress, get help from a professional. You may manage your stress in a healthy way with the aid of a mental health professional. Students' health and academic performance may be impacted by stress. Coping mechanisms are particular methods that people use to deal with stress. The purpose of this study was to evaluate how students perceived stress and their coping mechanisms.

Keywords: coping skills, coping strategies, stress, students etc.

I. Introduction

An individual's sense that they lack the resources to deal with a perceived issue from the past, present, or future leads to stress. An individual experiences stress when they are faced with a circumstance they feel unprepared for and unable to handle. Chronic or excessive stress can harm one's physical and mental health and raise the possibility of dying young. Stressors and each person's perception of and response to them interact to cause negative impacts of stress. Students' declining health may have an impact on their ability to study, academic performance, and goal achievement. Stress also has an impact on social interactions both inside and outside of the university. Compared to stress at employment, student stress has not received much attention. The perceptions of stress and coping mechanisms among students have only been examined in a small number of research.

II. Background and previous studies:

Some significant academic and non-academic pressures among students have been documented in prior studies. Excessive homework, unclear assignments, poor time management, uncomfortable classrooms, weekly tests and assignments, the pressure to achieve good results, and earning a lower grade than anticipated are some of the academic stressors. Social troubles and financial difficulties are examples of non-academic pressures. High parental expectations, exam frequency, the breadth of the academic programme, trouble sleeping, success on periodic exams, and concerns about the future were the main sources of stress for students. Previous research demonstrated that coping is crucial to adjusting to stressful life experiences. Coping mechanisms are the particular behavioural and psychological actions people take to control, tolerate, lessen, or minimise stressful situations. Ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic factors have an impact on coping mechanisms for stress.

Theory- Active and avoidant coping mechanisms are the two categories of coping mechanisms. Avoidant coping strategies "lead people into activities (such as alcohol use) or mental states (such as withdrawal) that keep them from directly addressing stressful events," whereas active coping strategies "are either either behavioural or psychological responses designed to change the nature of the stressor itself or how one thinks about it." Avoidant coping is seen to be a psychological risk factor for negative reactions to stressful life situations, whereas active coping is regarded a more effective strategy to manage stress. Carver, a psychologist, lists the following as active coping techniques: "active coping," which refers to taking action or making efforts to get rid of or avoid the stressor; "planning," which entails thinking through how to deal with the stressor and organising one's coping efforts; "acceptance," which entails accepting the fact that the stressful event has occurred and is real; and "positive reframing," which entails making the best of the situation by learning from it or viewing Denial, defined as an effort to deny the reality of the stressful event, behavioural disengagement, defined as giving up or withdrawing efforts from the effort to achieve the goal with which the stressor is interfering, venting, defined as an increased awareness of one's emotional distress and a concomitant tendency to ventilate or discharge those feelings, and humour, defined as making jokes about the stressor are all examples of avoidant strategies.

III. Results & Discussion

This study discovered that students employed active coping techniques more often than avoidant ones, including active coping, religious coping, positive reframing, planning, and acceptance (denial, self-blame, and alcohol or substance use). We cannot, however, overlook the fact that some students continue to engage in avoidant coping mechanisms, which are known to increase the likelihood of negative stress reactions. According to a recent study, active coping strategies are the most popular means of handling stressful situations; unhealthy coping mechanisms like consuming alcohol and smoking were not mentioned. This might occur as a result of the usage of focus groups, where students might be reluctant to discuss culturally offensive behaviour in front of their peers and focus group directors. It was gratifying to see from our study that alcohol or substance use was the least popular coping mechanism, in contrast to earlier studies that had found that medical students frequently used drugs, nicotine, and alcohol. Although underreporting cannot be ruled out, this may be connected to the students' religious convictions. In this study, male students consumed alcohol or other drugs more frequently than female students and employed active coping strategies less frequently. According to a previous study more male students than female students employed active coping strategies as well as alcohol or other drugs. Compared to younger students, older students in this study employed active coping, reframing, and planning more frequently. Older students may have a better sense of how to fit in at college and may have had more time to interact with mentors than younger students did. This study's key conclusion was the link between smoking and both coping mechanisms and perceived stress. Smokers engaged active coping mechanisms less frequently than non-smokers, which suggests that smoking may impair a student's capacity for effective stress management. Smokers also used alcohol and other drugs more frequently than non-smokers. Although a prior prospective study among students found a link between smoking and a higher chance of becoming a heavy drinker eight years later, the current cross-sectional study is unable to demonstrate a causal relationship between consuming alcohol and smoking. This study also demonstrated that smokers among students experienced more stress than non-smokers. Previous research revealed that smokers experience more stress than non-smokers. In this survey, the most frequent sources of stress for medical students were worries about the future, money problems, and academic pressures. This result was consistent with findings from earlier research .

IV. Conclusion & Summary

A significant portion of students report feeling extremely anxious, and stressed individuals employ different coping mechanisms than less stressed students do. During their studies, students were subjected to a range of pressures. Instead of using avoidant methods, they mostly used active coping mechanisms. Less active coping methods were adopted by males, smokers, and younger students than by other students. Smokers typically used alcohol or other drugs more frequently than non-smokers and reported significant levels of stress. Professors, career-counselling centres, and university administrators can monitor and control these elements to lessen the stress experienced by students by being aware of the causes of stress among students and the strategies students use to deal with it.

The results of this study show that stress management programmes in schools are necessary. One strategy is to get rid of, or at least lessen, the causes of stress that medical students most frequently identify. Another strategy is to hold stress management workshops over the course of the academic years. Counselors on staff may be able to assist pupils in coping with difficult situations. Students primarily mentioned financial and academic concerns as stressors. Students used proactive coping techniques as opposed to avoidance. Consultations on stress management and coping mechanisms should be given to students. To increase learning, it is critical to establish a healthy academic atmosphere. The detrimental consequences of stress on health and academic performance can be avoided by concentrating on the needs and issues of students.

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