

IMPACT OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND HOME ENVIRONMENT ON COPING STRATEGIES OF ADOLESCENTS

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ABSTRACT

Adolescents need to acquire a large repertoire of coping strategies in light of a rapidly changing environment. Present study aimed to study the coping strategies of adolescents in relation to their academic achievement and home environment. For this study a sample of 80 students was selected. Coping strategies were measured using standardized tool, ways of coping questionnaire by Folkman and Lazarus and a self constructed home environment scale was also used in the study. Descriptive statistics and t-test was used to analyse the data. Findings indicate that despite difference in the academic achievement, ways of coping were similar in both high achievers and low achievers. It has also been found that there is no significant difference between coping strategies of adolescents having favourable and non favourable home environment.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is often described as a phase of life that begins in biology and ends in society (Sharma 1996). Life for many adolescents is a painful tug of war filled with mixed messages and conflicting demands from parents, teachers, friends, family and oneself. The period of adolescence is filled with intellectual and emotional changes. Adolescence has rightly been called period of stress and storm. Stress amongst boys and girls are very common and natural. Be it about self, career, academics or any other issue, the youth undergo feelings of anxiety at some phase of lives. Youth today are living in an increasingly stress-ridden atmosphere. These students face social, emotional and physical and family problems which may affect their learning ability and academic performance (Fish & Nies, 1996).

Adolescents try to cope with all their problems and hence apply various coping strategies. Many respondents tried to cope with their stress by praying to god, this shows the importance of religion in our culture. Among boys, thinking of alternatives is the second major way of coping with stress. Among girls, consulting friends, relatives, doctors and counselors is the major coping strategy. Although most stressors elicit both types of coping, problem-focused coping tends to predominate when people feel that something constructive can be done,

whereas emotion focused coping tends to predominate when people feel that the stressor is something that must be endured. Reddy (1989) conducted a study to find out the adjustment and problem areas of adolescents in school. The result shows that most of the problems concentrated on academic stress followed by anxiety regarding their future. Thus adjustment of adolescent in his surrounding is very important. If he is well adjusted in home as well as in school he can cope with the academic stress. Home environment plays a major role in this context. An adjusted individual knows his own strengths and limitation, he respects himself and others, aspires reasonably, satisfies basic needs, shows flexibility in behaviour is capable of struggling with odd circumstances possesses a realistic perception of the world, feels lovely with surroundings etc.

Thus it is very important to study the coping strategies adopted by adolescents. How these students deal with the problematic situations and stressors is a major question today. The investigator thought to pinpoint different coping strategies adopted by adolescents in relation to academic achievement and home environment. Attempts must be made to help teenagers cope with the challenges in their life. Future studies should aim to identify the teenagers at risk and efforts must be combined to conduct programmes that can aid these young

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people. It provides valuable information for future study in such area as well as it will also help secondary school teachers and students to understand better about the problems of adolescence. So the investigator selected this problem to study coping strategies adopted by adolescents in different situations and circumstances of life.

Academic achievement	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value
High	40	72.5	17.467	1.065*
Low	40	68.2	18.639	

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To compare the coping strategies of adolescents having high and low academic achievement.
2. To compare the coping strategies of adolescents having favourable and non favourable home environment.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

In order to achieve the above mentioned objectives the following hypotheses have been formulated:

1. Adolescents having high and low academic achievement do not differ significantly on their coping strategies.
2. Adolescents having favorable and non favorable home environment do not differ significantly on their coping strategies.

SAMPLE

For the present study a sample of 80 students was randomly selected from four private senior secondary schools of Rohtak to compare the coping strategies of adolescents.

TOOLS USED

The tools used in the present study are:

1. Ways of coping questionnaire by Folkman and Lazarus (1988).
2. Home environment scale (Self Constructed).

STATISTICAL TREATMENT

Mean, S.D. and t-test was applied (at 0.05 level of significance) to test specific significant difference between the two groups of students categorized on the basis of academic achievement and home environment.

RESULTS

Table 1

Coping Strategies of adolescents having high and low Academic Achievement

*Not Significant

It could be observed from table 1 that obtained t-value of 1.065 is less than the table value, at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore null hypothesis is accepted. Thus it is concluded that there is no significant difference between coping strategies of adolescents having high and low academic achievement.

Table 2
Coping Strategies of adolescents having favourable and non favourable Home Environment

Home-environment	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value
Favourable	33	74.12	65.52	1.698
Non-favourable	21	65.52	17.710	

It could be observed from table 2 that obtained t-value of 1.698 is less than the table value, at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore null hypothesis is accepted. Thus it is concluded that there is no significant difference between coping strategies of adolescents having favourable and non favourable Home Environment.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

After proper analysis and interpretation of data, the major findings and conclusion of the study are as follows:

1. There is no significant difference between coping strategies of adolescents having high and low academic achievements. Therefore we may conclude that academic achievement does not play any significant role in coping strategies of adolescents.

2. There is no significant difference between coping strategies of adolescents having favourable and non favourable home environment. Therefore we may conclude that home environment do not play any significant role in coping strategies of adolescents.

CONCLUSIONS

So from the findings of the study, we may conclude that Academic Achievement and Home Environment do not play any significant role in Coping Strategies adopted by adolescents. The reason could be that the adolescents having low academic achievement are not poor in studies in actual sense but they just do not concentrate on their studies. Another reason could be that the overall pressure is same on adolescents having high and low academic achievement and do not play any role in reducing the pressure of adolescence. Adolescents, as we know, spend a lot of time with their peers at this stage and for them it is important to be centre of attraction in their age mates hence home environment do not play any significant role in their coping strategies.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

1. The increase in academic demands and the complexity of the school structure make the

task of academic success for adolescents even more difficult so during such a critical and demanding phase the two most important environments in child development, home and school, would increase their collaboration.

2. Adolescents are under a lot of pressure, through identification of their problems and needs better future could be given to them.

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