

## **Stress Coping Strategies Adopted by Male and Female Adolescents**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The present study was designed to know the coping strategies adopted by adolescents when they feel stressed. So for the purpose a complete sample of three hundred adolescents from 6 schools of Lucknow district were arbitrarily chosen, whereby one hundred fifty boys and one hundred fifty girls were further selected for this study. Hundred fifty boys & equal number of girls were further divided into fifty respondents belonging to lower, middle and higher Socio-economic status. For the study self developed questionnaire and Socio-economic scale by Kuppu swami was used. The result indicated that most of the male and female adolescents from the entire socio-economic group were frequently suffering from the stress and they adopt like to de-stress themselves by spending more time with their family members.

**Key Words :** Adolescents, Stress, Socio-economic status, Coping strategies, Male, Female

### **INTRODUCTION**

Adolescence is the most common time of life for psychiatric illness to emerge (Kessler *et al.*, 2005), with reported anxiety reaching its lifetime peak (Abe & Suzuki, 1986). The effect of daily stressors can be particularly harmful to the psychological and physiological wellbeing of young people (Yahav and Cohen, 2008). Spirito *et al.* (1991) found four main stressful domains in their research on young people that was school, siblings, parents and friends. Increasing academic pressure, siblings and parental conflicts, peer pressure and romantic relationship problems were the main issues children encountered daily (Spirito *et al.*, 1991).

Most teens experience more stress when they perceive a situation as dangerous, difficult, or painful and they do not have the resources to cope. Some sources of stress for teens include: School demands and frustrations. Negative thoughts or feelings about themselves.

Stress happens in response to things that are perceived as being troublesome to handle or threatening. It may result from external factors (e.g., events, situations, and environment) or internal factors (e.g., expectations, attitudes, feelings). Common causes for stress (called

stressors) embody physical causes, like ill health or injury, and mental (psychological) causes, like anxiety or worry. Adolescents who did not develop healthy coping strategies are more likely to experience a higher risk of health problems and anti-social behaviors such as student's depression, frustration, anxiety, stress overload, and social conflicts.

### **Objective of the study:**

To study the stress coping strategies adopted by male and female adolescents from different socio-economic status.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The present study was conducted in Lucknow city, drawing sample from the six schools of the city. The sample for the study was collected adopting stratified random sampling technique. The sample for the study consisted of 300 adolescents of class 7 to 12 between the age group of 12-18 years, studying in co-educational Senior Secondary schools belonging to lower, middle and upper socio-economic groups. A total sample of 300 adolescents was selected, wherein 150 boys and 150 girls

were selected for the present study. Hundred fifty boys & equal number of girls were further divided into 50 respondents each belonging to lower, middle and upper Socio-economic Status.

#### Tools Used:

Self Developed Questionnaire and Socio-economic status scale by Kuppu Swami were administered for data collection.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 reveals the rank wise distribution of respondents in reference to their adopted coping strategies to handle stress. It was observed that at the first five ranks most of the adolescents (Rank I, mean 3.34) like to spend more of their time with family to de-stress themselves followed by those (Rank II mean 3.31) who maintained healthy diet, (Rank III mean 3.28) they take time to relax breath and unwind on (Rank IV and V mean

3.22 each) adolescents spent time with friends and use humor to take the edge off and adolescents take up a hobby or interests that help them to enjoy so that they can relieve stress. The last five rank was given to (Rank XXV mean 2.42) dance to relieve stress, followed by (Rank XXVI mean 2.45) sleep more than usual, (Rank XXVII mean 2.42), take medicine to help them relax or sleep better, (Rank XXVIII mean 2.25) smoke cigarette or drink caffeinated beverages to release stress and at the last rank (Rank XXIX mean 2.15) adolescents drink alcohol to minimize the level of stress. It is interesting that family is on the first rank to de-stress their adolescents while when causes of the stress were studied the result shown that most of the adolescents from all the socio-economic status were in the favour that stress is caused by family. Melodie Wenz and Gross *et al.* (1997), has examined in his study that middle school stress, social supports, and adjustment of 482 sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade adolescents. Results showed that higher

**Table 1 : Rank wise distribution of coping strategies adopted by male and female adolescents**

Sr. No.	Statements	Mean	Rank
1.	I like to spend more time with my family to de-stress myself.	3.34	I
2.	I maintain a healthy diet.	3.32	II
3.	I take the time to relax breath and unwind.	3.28	III
4.	I spend time with my friends and use humor to take the edge off.	3.22	IV
5.	I take up a hobby or interests that help me unwind and enjoy myself.	3.22	V
6.	I change my outlook on the problem and put it in a better perspective.	3.19	VI
7.	I just ignore the problem and hope it will go away.	3.18	VII
8.	I ignore my own needs and just work harder and faster.	3.18	VIII
9.	I watch TV to relieve stress.	3.11	IX
10.	I go out for shopping and buy something to make myself feel good.	3.10	X
11.	I confront my source of stress and work to change it.	3.08	XI
12.	I like to withdraw myself with everybody and spend time with myself when to de-stress myself.	2.93	XII
13.	I try to focus on things I can control and accept the things I can't.	2.92	XIII
14.	I seek out friends for conversation and support.	2.90	XIV
15.	I pray, meditate and enhance my spiritual life to de-stress myself.	2.87	XV
16.	I listen to music when I am in stress.	2.79	XVI
17.	I use internet to relax.	2.74	XVII
18.	I like to seek professional help to de-stress myself.	2.69	XVIII
19.	I engage in some type of physical exercise.	2.69	XIX
20.	I like to indulge me in sports activity to de-stress myself.	2.63	XX
21.	I play computer games to relax from stress.	2.59	XXI
22.	I use social media to combat stress.	2.52	XXII
23.	I eat more than usual.	2.50	XXIII
24.	I get irritable and take it out on those around me.	2.48	XXIV
25.	I dance to relieve stress	2.47	XXV
26.	I sleep more than I really need to.	2.45	XXVI
27.	I take medicine to help me relax or sleep better.	2.42	XXVII
28.	I smoke a cigarette or drink caffeinated beverages to release the stress.	2.25	XXVIII
29.	I drink alcohol to minimize the level of stress.	2.15	XXIX

academic stress and less emotional support from the family were related to lower academic self-concept, and higher peer stress and less companionship support from peers were associated with lower social self-concept. Emotional support from the family moderated the influence of peer stress on feelings of depression. Problem-solving support from adults outside the family moderated the effects of teacher/rules stress on adolescents' liking of school.

Thomas (1987) in a study on 'Stress and Schooling' found that at home adolescents employed the main stress management strategies like listening to music, reading and exercise whereas at school they employed self-control, self-sufficiency and sharing problems with peers.

### Conclusion:

This study used data from 300 male and female adolescents from different socio-economic status groups to determine the stress coping strategies adopted by adolescents. The result showed that most of the adolescents given first rank to the statement that adolescents like to spend more of their time with family to de-stress themselves.

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