

Research Column

(Multi-disciplinary)

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Coping with Distressing Experiences: A Gender Based Study

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Abstract

In everyday life individuals often face various situations in which the body often responds by physical mental or emotional changes. The present study aimed to determine and compare the use of avoidant and approach coping styles based on gender. It further aimed to explore awareness regarding the counseling process within the sample. Males and females in terms of engagement in coping strategies. Specifically, males exhibited greater ability to detach themselves from the emotions of a situation and were more inclined to demonstrate emotional inhibition or 'bottling up' of emotions.

Keywords: *Psychological distress, coping, stress and coping styles.*

Stress is one such reaction of the body to any external stimulus that causes a state of arousal in an individual's body. Hence, stress can be defined as the reaction of the body to any change that requires an individual's adjustment or response. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) proposed that stress occurs when people perceived that the demands from external situations were beyond their coping capacity. Furthermore, it is seen that stress is caused in accordance to the way in which an individual appraises it. In the primary appraisal process, an individual try to understand what the event is and what it means. In this process, the individual often appraises the situation as harmful, threat or as a challenge. Harm is the assessment of the damage that has already been done, a threat is the assessment of possible future damage and a challenge is the assessment of the possibility to overcome or even profit from the