

ABSTRACT

Adolescent Coping: The Predictive Effect of Emotional-Intelligence, Ego-Resiliency, Effortful-Control, and Parenting Practices

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This study examined adolescent students' coping behaviours to ascertain what positively influenced their interactions when confronted with challenges in the secondary school environment in Barbados. It described the extent of positive coping, compared the coping behaviours of males and females; explored the relationships among positive coping behaviours and emotional-intelligence, ego-resiliency, effortful-control, and parenting practices; investigated the predictive effect of these variables to positive coping behaviours; and used a purposive sample to examine the perceptions of adolescents who identified as coping positively within their school setting. The sample comprised 340 students; 149 males and 191 females, 15 to 18 years. A concurrent embedded/nested mixed-method design was employed. Data was collected using five instruments: Proactive Coping Scale, Wong's Emotional Intelligence Scale, Resilience Scale, Revised Early Adolescent Temperament Questionnaire, and the Adolescent Attachment Questionnaire. A semi-structured interview schedule was also utilised. The results revealed that generally adolescents were intentional in their use of positive coping behaviours. There was a statistically significant difference in the positive coping behaviours of females as compared to the males. A positive correlation existed between the variables and positive coping behaviours. Narrative data from the adolescents' produced concepts, themes and a progression of personal resources which concluded that adolescents were able to cope positively because of their effectiveness in managing hardships, identifiable healthy characteristics, demonstrated altruistic behaviours, compulsion to practice appropriate behaviours, connection with and knowledge of a cognitive-behavioural process of coping, respect among peers, and the tips they provided to their peers which helped to establish their individuality and indicated that there were recognizable similarities in the way they managed the challenges they encountered within their school environments. It is recommended that adolescents who model positive coping behaviours be intentionally incorporated into preventive and intervention programmes to promote healthy interactions and relationships within the school environment.

Keywords: adolescents; adolescent coping; effortful-control; ego-resiliency; emotional-intelligence; parenting practices; positive coping behaviours