

ANALYSIS OF COPING STRATEGIES AGAINST STRESSES OF FUTURE PROFESSIONALS OF SOCIONOMY OCCUPATIONS

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Abstract

The article discusses the issue of tolerance to stress of future specialists with sociometry occupations. The results of the performed empirical study of behavioural coping strategies against stresses, levels of psychic tension and stress tolerance of modern Ukrainian students from universities and vocational schools are described.

Keywords: *professional training, sociometry occupations, students, stress, stress tolerance, levels of psychic tension, coping strategies.*

Introduction

Although, in general, stress and stress tolerance have been examined in many publications, but this problem is extremely important for the present state of our society. Moreover, intense production development, environmental degradation, sharp rise of political and social conflicts, psycho-emotional stresses make this issue important not only in theory but also in practice.

A particular aspect of personal stress tolerance is personal resources for stress overcoming. The concept of coping was firstly introduced in psychology by Murphy (1960); Lazarus (1966) became its main researcher, he developed the cognitive theory of stress and coping. In broad terms, coping (from to cope – to overcome, cope with something) means a personal way to interact with a problem/a situation that is critical or stressful for the person (Nartova-Bochaver, 1997).

Further studies of coping behaviour in stressful situations were performed by Heszen-Niejodek, 1996; Borkowski, 2001; Rongińska & Gaida, 2001; Vodopianova, 2001; Bodrov, 2006; Kriukova & Kuftiak, 2007). In the Soviet psychology, stress became the subject of many publications, but understanding of stress coping behaviour in Ukraine is only being formed. According to Rodina (2011) study of coping strategies is made mostly in a form of empirical researches of some of their features based on selected samples or discussions are proposed how these features relate to specific individual psychological or socio-demographic characteristics. However, attempts to examine and summarize characteristics of coping behaviour of sociometry students are nearly absent.

Object of the research: peculiarities of stress tolerance and coping behaviour of students from universities and vocational schools.

Aim of the research: to determine the characteristics of behavioural coping strategies and their relationship to psychic tension and stress tolerance of future sociology professionals.

Participants of the research:

The empirical study involved 198 students of vocational schools and universities of Chernivtsi (Ukraine), including 113 university students, 85 students of vocational schools, which is respectively 57% and 43%.

The age of the investigated students is from 16 to 38 years ($M=19.21$; $SD=4.36$). The average age of university students ($20.60+5.23$) is significantly higher than that of vocational schools ($17.23+0.87$) ($p<0.001$). 96 men and 102 women were among the surveyed, which is respectively 48.5% and 51.5%.

The distribution of the studied as for their specialties, gender and types of educational organizations is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of the studied students as for their specialties, types of educational organizations and gender

Indexes		Vocational school students			University students			
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
N		27	26	32	30	28	30	25
%		14	13	16	15	14	15	13
Men	N	12	12	15	16	13	14	14
	%	44	46	47	53	46	47	56
Women	N	15	14	17	14	15	16	11
	%	28	17	26	24	27	26	22

Notes: Students: 1 – paramedics, nurses; 2 – resellers; 3 – waiters, bartenders; 4 – history teachers; 5 – lawyers; 6 – social pedagogues; 7 – psychologists.

We tried to cover the students of all academic years from the first to the fifth academic year in our study. The distribution by gender and academic years is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution by gender and academic years

Indexes	Academic year					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Men	45	12	17	9	13	96
Women	32	15	22	12	21	102
Total	77	27	39	21	34	198

Chi-square test confirmed homogeneity of student groups by gender, specialty and types of educational organization ($p\geq 0,05$; ni).

Methods of the research

The following techniques were used in the study: the Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ; Folkman and Lazarus, 1988) adapted by Kriukova in collaboration (Kriukova & Kuftiak, 2007), the Boston Stress Test and the Psychological Stress Measure PSM-25 (adapted by Vodopyanova (2009).

The Ways of Coping Questionnaire was used by us to determine students' coping strategies, i.e., their ways to overcome difficulties of different mental activities, which they use in everyday life. The Boston Stress Test is aimed at lifestyle studying and identification of personal stress tolerance (15, pp. 202-205). The Psychological Stress Measure PSM-25 is designed to detect levels of psychic tension.

Checking of psychometric properties of the used techniques indicates their high reliability, specificity, sensitivity and validity.

Research data was processed applying methods of mathematic statistics: descriptive statistics (mean, std. deviation, frequencies), independent samples T-test, one-way ANOVA tests for independent groups.

Results and Discussion

Normality of data distribution was checked based on Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The distribution of all scales is normal ($p > 0.05$).

Comparative analysis of students' coping behaviour. The study results, presented in Table 3, indicate that modern students use different styles of overcoming behaviour. The Student t-test shows that differences in coping behavioural styles of students from the studied sample are statistically significant ($p < 0.001$).

The most distinct styles of students' coping behaviour are: escape/avoidance ($M=13.30$; $\sigma=3.57$), positive reappraisal ($M=13.09$; $\sigma=3.31$) and self-controlling ($M=12.96$; $\sigma=2.87$), and the least used style is responsibility acceptance ($M=7.85$; $\sigma=1.95$).

Table 3. Analysis of students' coping behaviour ($p < 0.001$)

Style	M	σ
Confrontive coping	10.41	2.74
Distancing	10.61	2.55
Escape-Avoidance	13.30	3.57
Accepting responsibility	7.85	1.95
Positive reappraisal	13.09	3.31
Seeking social support	11.24	2.74
Planful problem-solving	11.59	2.71
Self-controlling	12.96	2.87

The dominant students' behavioural strategy – *escape/avoidance* – involves attempts to overcome person's negative feelings because of existing difficulties with help of denial or complete ignoring of a problem, with fantasy, evading of responsibility and action to address the problem, passivity, impatience, outbursts of irritation, overeating, alcohol drinking, etc., to reduce painful emotional stress.

The strategy of *positive reappraisal* involves positive reevaluation of a problem with help of its positive rethinking, considering it as motivation for personal growth.

The strategy of *self-controlling* is aimed at minimization of an impact of negative emotions, associated with a problem, with assessing of the situation and choosing of behavioural strategies, it means high control over behaviour, commitment to self-command. Such students can have a desire to hide from others their experiences in connection with the problematic situation.

The least used style of students' overcoming behaviour in our study is *accepting responsibility*. It means recognition by a student of his/her role in causing of a problem and responsibility for its resolution, in some cases with a clear component of self-criticism and self-blame. However, strong manifestation of this behavioural strategy can lead to undue self-criticism, feelings of guilt and dissatisfaction with him/herself. These features are known to be a risk factor for depression.

According to the technique authors, all coping mechanisms can be divided into three groups basing of the degree of their constructivism: constructive ones (planful problem-solving, self-control, seeking social support), relatively constructive (accepting responsibility, positive reappraisal) and unconstructive (confrontive coping, distancing, escape/avoidance).

The dominant styles of students' coping behaviour revealed in our study belong to all three coping groups that indicate heterogeneity of the student community: along with students who, faced with the daily difficulties and problems, solve them constructively or relatively constructively, there are students with not high enough adaptive abilities and destructive manifestations of behaviour. It should be noted that students with high levels of destructive coping strategies may need psychological help.

The next step of our analysis is to compare empirical data as for coping mechanisms of the studied student groups by gender (see Table 4).

Table 4. Analysis of students' coping behaviour by gender

	Men		Women		t	p
	M	σ	M	σ		
Confrontive coping	10.41	2.717	10.41	2.791	0.01	0.98
Distancing	10.49	2.252	10.72	2.814	0.64	0.51
Escape-Avoidance	12.84	3.229	13.73	3.834	1.75	0.08
Positive reappraisal	12.49	3.162	13.65	3.373	2.49	0.01
Accepting responsibility	7.48	1.897	8.20	1.960	2.61	0.01
Self-controlling	12.83	3.053	13.09	2.704	0.62	0.53
Planful problem-solving	11.92	2.383	11.28	2.976	-1.64	0.10
Seeking social support	11.07	2.910	11.40	2.577	0.84	0.40

The above data show that escape/avoidance, self-controlling and a positive reappraisal are the predominant types of coping behaviour both for boys and girls; the least used style is accepting responsibility.

The Student t-test for independent groups shows significant differences in the two coping styles of boys and girls: accepting responsibility: $N=196$, $t=2.61$, $p<0.01$ and positive reappraisal: $N=196$, $t=2.49$, $p<0.01$. Thus, the results indicate that these styles of coping behaviour, which are referred to rather constructive ones, are manifested more often by girls than that by boys. As for other coping styles, differences are not statistically significant ($p>0.05$).

This analysis can be completed with comparison of the studied groups of students by type of educational institutions. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Analysis of students' coping behaviour by educational institutions

	Vocational school students		University students		t	p
	M	σ	M	σ		
Confrontive coping	10.56	2.830	10.29	2.692	0.476	0.491
Distancing	10.76	2.519	10.49	2.584	0.537	0.464
Escape-Avoidance	13.31	3.488	13.29	3.649	0.001	0.979
Positive reappraisal	12.69	3.288	13.38	3.320	2.09	0.150
Accepting responsibility	7.58	2.032	8.05	1.884	2.900	0.09
Planful problem-solving	10.86	2.669	12.14	2.632	1.386	0.001
Self-controlling	12.58	2.753	13.26	2.939	2.742	0.099
Seeking social support	10.45	2.639	11.84	2.675	3.323	0.001

The presented tables suggest that modern Ukrainian students from universities as well as from vocational schools have mainly the same styles of coping behaviour that we have determined through the analysis of the entire data set: escape/avoidance, positive reappraisal, self-control, and the least used one is accepting responsibility.

The Student t-test for independent groups shows significant differences as for two coping styles for students from universities and from vocational schools: seeking social support: $N=196$, $t=2.61$, $p<0.01$ $t(196)=3.323$, $p<0.001$ and planful problem-solving: $N=196$, $t=3.323$, $p<0.01$. This suggests that university students in comparison with vocational school students, faced with the daily difficulties and problems, use these constructive coping styles more often. As for other coping styles, differences are not statistically significant ($p>0.05$).

Interesting results are shown by the analysis of coping styles on the base of students' specialities (see Table 6).

Let us at first compare the study results as for types of dominant coping behaviour of students from universities and from vocational schools.

Destructive coping strategies. The analysis of empirical data shows that confrontive coping is manifested mainly in behaviour of law students, the same picture but a bit weaker is for waiters-bartenders and history teachers. If students manifest expressed preference of this strategy, they can show impulsive behaviour (sometimes with elements of hostility and conflicts), can have difficulties in planning, result forecasting, in correcting of behavioural strategies. In this case coping actions lose their focus and are mainly a result of emotional tension discharge.

The strategies of *distancing and escape/avoidance* are dominant in behaviour of the students from all studied groups, except future psychologists. Distancing is characterised by use of intellectual rationalization, attention switching, pulling away, humour, depreciation, etc. To some extent, this coping strategy reduces subjective significance of difficult for resolving situations and prevents intense emotional reactions to frustration, but there is probability to devaluate own experiences, underestimate importance and opportunities for effective overcoming of problematic situations.

Table 6. Analysis of students' coping behaviour by specialities

Styles / Faculties		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	F	p
Confrontive coping	M	10.93	9.62	11.03	9.60	11.71	10.10	9.76	2.7	.015
	σ	3.35	2.41	2.54	2.54	2.22	3.19	2.18		
Distancing	M	10.81	10.34	11.06	10.46	11.14	10.73	9.52	1.2	.287
	σ	2.77	2.09	2.63	2.76	2.22	2.27	2.93		
Escape-Avoidance	M	13.48	12.65	13.69	13.33	14.25	13.73	11.64	1.54	.165
	σ	4.01	3.21	3.25	3.92	3.85	3.35	3.01		
Accepting responsibility	M	7.37	7.96	7.44	8.07	8.07	8.30	7.72	0.9	.480
	σ	1.96	2.10	2.04	1.99	2.08	1.98	1.37		
Positive reappraisal	M	11.04	13.31	13.59	13.33	11.82	14.50	13.84	4.0	.001
	σ	3.80	3.06	2.44	3.19	3.63	3.46	2.26		
Planful problem-solving	M	11.44	10.19	10.91	11.53	11.79	12.83	12.44	3.1	.005
	σ	2.77	2.81	2.40	2.76	2.31	2.29	3.07		
Self-controlling	M	11.52	12.81	13.28	12.47	12.39	13.80	14.52	3.4	.003
	σ	2.90	2.41	2.69	2.95	3.25	2.52	2.53		
Seeking social support	M	9.67	9.69	11.72	11.63	12.21	12.21	12.76	5.8	.001
	σ	2.96	2.31	2.12	2.35	2.44	2.44	3.00		

Note: see professions in Table 1.

The strategy of escape/avoidance enables rapid decrease of emotional stress in stress situations, however, it makes impossible to resolve the problem and increases likelihood of accumulating of difficulties.

Relatively constructive strategies of coping behaviour. The data in Table 6 shows that the positive reappraisal strategy is predominant in behaviour of psychologists and social workers, and accepting responsibility is mainly used by future social teachers. Overall, this last strategy is the least used by all groups of surveyed students.

Constructive strategies of coping behaviour. The *planful problem-solving* and *self-controlling* strategies are most characteristic for students-psychologists and social workers; seeking social support is dominant only in behaviour of psychologists. The planful problem-solving strategy involves attempts to solve a problem through targeted analysis of the situation and possible ways of behaviour, to develop mechanisms for problem resolving, to plan actions on the basis of objective conditions, past experience and available resources. The seeking social support strategy involves attempts to resolve a problem by attracting external (social) resources, search for information, emotional and effective support.

It is interesting to draw a psychological portrait of modern students enrolled in different fields by defining the most characteristic coping strategies for different groups.

So, the dominant style of coping behaviour of *students-paramedics and nurses* is escape/avoidance. Future *resellers* in stressful situations often use escape/avoidance, positive reappraisal and self-controlling strategies. These styles are also dominant for *students-waiters and bartenders*. Behaviour of future history teachers includes equally the strategies of escape/avoidance and positive reappraisal. Analysis of coping mechanisms used by law students shows an unexpected result: the escape/avoidance strategy is clearly manifested, and all other strategies are much less significant. Dominant strategies of future *social workers* in stressful situations are positive reappraisal, self-controlling and escape/avoidance. Only *students-psychologists* show only constructive coping strategies: self-controlling and positive reappraisal.

The results of one-way analysis of variance for independent groups shows that there are statistically significant differences in strategies of coping behaviour of students enrolled in different specialties:

- Seeking social support: $F(6.191)=5.80$; $p<0.001$;
- Self-controlling: $F(6.191)=3.43$; $p<0.01$;
- Planful problem-solving: $F(6.191)=3.17$; $p<0.01$;
- Positive reappraisal: $F(6.191)=4.03$; $p<0.001$;
- Confrontive coping: $F(6.191)=2.71$; $p<0.05$.

Comparative analysis of students' psychic tension. An important stage of our research was to study manifestations of psychic tension in modern students' lives. According to the technique, a higher level of psychic tension means a higher level of psychological stress.

The data in Table 7 indicate that students today are characterized by low and average levels of psychic tension.

Table 7. Levels of students' psychic tension

Level	N	%	M	σ	p
Low	149	75.3	75.40	15.28	0.001
Average	48	24.2	117.38	11.83	
High	1	5	157.00	0	

The next step of our analysis is to compare empirical data for the studied groups of students by gender (see Table 8). The frequency analysis shows that about 91% of boys have low levels of psychic tension, while only 61% of girls have such levels. In addition, psychic tension of almost 38% of girls is average, while only 9% boys show such tension.

Table 8. Students' psychic tension by gender

Level	Men				Women				t	p
	N	%	M	σ	N	%	M	σ		
Low	87	90.6	71.95	15.72	62	60.8	80.23	13.33	3.25	0.005
Average	9	9.4	108.56	8.27	39	38.2	119.36	11.57	3.36	0.001
High	0	0	0	0	1	1	157	0	0	0

In general, these differences are statistically significant for all levels of psychic tension: $N=196$, $t=6.78$, $p<0.01$. This means that psychic tension of girls is statistically higher ($M=95.94$, $\sigma 23.62$) than that of boys ($M=75.39$, $\sigma=18.56$).

The analysis is complemented by comparison of the studied students' groups by type of institution. The results are shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Psychic tension of students from universities and vocational schools

	Vocational school students				University students				p
	N	%	M	σ	N	%	M	σ	
Low	59	69.4	75.12	17.08	90	79.6	75.58	14.07	0.70
Average	25	29.4	120.28	12.42	23	20.4	114.13	10.30	0.86
High	1	1.2	157.0	0	0	0	0	0	-

The frequency analysis presented in the table shows that low and average levels of psychic tension are common for modern students at universities and vocational schools. Student t-test for independent groups does not reveal significant differences between university students and students from vocational schools.

The performed analysis of behavioural types of students by specialities show interesting results (see Tables 10-11). The data in Table 10 shows that today's students enrolled in different sociology professions have mainly low and average levels of psychic tension and virtually no students have high psychic tension.

Table 10. Analysis of students' psychic tension by specialities (%)

	Vocational school students			University students			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Low	70.4	80.8	59.4	83.3	89.3	63.3	84
Average	25.9	19.2	40.6	16.7	10.7	36.7	16
High	3.7	0	0	0	0	0	0

Note: see professions in Table 1.

The largest number of students with low psychic tension is among future lawyers, and the least number is among waiters-bartenders. The average level of psychic tension is mostly manifested by future waiters-bartenders and social workers; it is manifested the least by lawyers. Statistically significant differences are revealed ($p < 0.01$).

Table 11. Indexes of students' psychic tension by specialities

Indexes		Vocational school students			University students				F	p
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Low	M	82.63	77.57	64.89	75.08	74.24	80.32	73.48	2.89	0.01
	σ	12.13	20.09	12.93	16.12	14.84	13.16	10.99		
Average	M	110.00	118.20	126.62	108.00	116.33	116.73	113.00	3.08	0.01
	σ	9.25	7.53	11.83	7.38	13.65	11.08	8.83		
High	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	σ	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		

Note: see professions in Table 1.

Comparative analysis of students' stress tolerance. The next step of our study is to analyze stress tolerance with the Boston Stress Test (see Table 12). It should be noted that it is necessary during stress tolerance interpretation to consider the inverse relationship: the higher stress level in life of students is, the lower their stress tolerance.

Table 12. Students' stress tolerance

Level	N	%	M	σ
Low	37	19	56.49	6.09
Average	145	73	36.39	8.34
High	16	8	15.56	4.48

The data presented in Table 12 indicate that most students today are characterized by an average level of stress tolerance, low levels are shown by about 19% of students, and a high

one is shown by only 8%. It should be noted that students with low levels of stress tolerance may need psychological help.

The next step of our analysis was to compare the studied groups of students by gender (see Table 13). The frequency analysis shows that most boys and girls have average stress tolerance; although there are more students with high and low levels of stress tolerance among girls, but these differences are not statistically significant ($p>0.05$).

Table 13. Students' stress tolerance by gender

Level	Men				Women				t	p
	N	%	M	σ	N	%	M	σ		
Low	16	17	54.44	3.52	21	20.5	58.05	7.08	0.106	0.91
Average	75	78	36.45	7.99	70	68.5	36.33	8.75		
High	5	5	15.60	4.27	11	11	15.55	4.78		

Note: see professions in Table 1.

The analysis is complemented by comparison of the studied students' groups by type of institution. The results are shown in Table 14-15.

Table 14. Stress tolerance of students from universities and vocational schools

Level	Vocational school students				University students				t	p
	N	%	M	σ	N	%	M	σ		
Low	30	35	56.93	6.36	7	6	54.57	4.15	-9.934	0.001
Average	55	65	41.64	6.56	90	80	33.19	7.68		
High	0	0	0	0	16	14	15.56	4.48		

The above data show that the average level of stress tolerance is common to modern students of higher and secondary educational institutions, but its percentage is much higher among university students than that of vocational schools (respectively 65% and 80%). There are more people with low stress tolerance among students of vocational secondary schools than among university students (respectively 35% and 6%).

Table 15. Indexes of stress tolerance of students from universities and vocational schools

Indexes	Vocational school students			University students			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
M	40.81	49.38	50.38	25.07	44.82	29.60	28.92
σ	8.56	6.31	10.76	8.05	8.23	7.59	8.76

Alarming is absence of people with high levels of stress tolerance among students from vocational schools, there is about 14% of such people among university students. Student t-test shows statistically significant differences: stress tolerance of university students is significantly higher ($M=32.02$, $\sigma=9.78$) than that of vocational secondary schools ($M=47.04$, $\sigma=11.05$).

Comparative analysis of coping behaviour styles of students with different psychic tension and stress tolerance. In our opinion, a comparative analysis of psychic tension and stress tolerance of students with different styles of coping behaviour is really interesting. Results of correlation analysis for the studied indexes are presented in Table 16.

The strongest correlation is found for the scales of the coping questionnaire, indicating a high psychometric performance of this technique.

There is positive correlation of psychic tension with coping behaviour aimed at planful problem solving and with gender, and there is negative one with self-controlling. This means the planful problem solving coping behaviour becomes more maladjusted with increasing of psychic tension and self-control is reduced.

There is positive correlation of gender with coping behaviour directed at positive reappraisal, seeking for social support, which was confirmed by the above analysis.

Table 16. Correlations of the studied indexes

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	1	.331**	.129	.326**	.176*	.383**	.271**	.340**	.001	.079
2	.331**	1	.181*	.145*	.266**	.593**	.162*	.248**	.046	.000
3	.129	.181*	1	.246**	.307**	.328**	.244**	.396**	.044	.090
4	.326**	.145*	.246**	1	.287**	.156*	.399**	.384**	.060	-.049
5	.176*	.266**	.307**	.287**	1	.309**	.232**	.423**	.183**	-.008
6	.383**	.593**	.328**	.156*	.309**	1	.148*	.241**	.124	.175*
7	.271**	.162*	.244**	.399**	.232**	.148*	1	.387**	-.117	-.144*
8	.340**	.248**	.396**	.384**	.423**	.241**	.387**	1	.175*	.073
9	.001	.046	.044	.060	.183**	.124	-.117	.175*	1	.436**
10	.079	.000	.090	-.049	-.008	.175*	-.144*	.073	.436**	1
11	.061	-.003	-.044	-.142*	-.059	.028	-.330**	-.168*	0.008	-.125

Note: Coping strategies: 1 – Confrontive coping; 2 – Distancing; 3 – Escape-Avoidance; 4 – Accepting responsibility; 5 – Positive reappraisal; 6 – Planful problem-solving; 7 – Self-controlling; 8 – Seeking social support; 9 – gender; 10 – psychic tension; 11 – stress tolerance.

** Correlation is significant at the level of 0.01 (2-sides); * Correlation is significant at the level of 0.05 (2-sides).

Stress tolerance negatively correlates with the following strategies: accepting responsibility, seeking social support, self-controlling, which means that reduction of stress tolerance increases maladjustment of these behavioural coping strategies.

We also compared the styles of coping behaviour with students' psychic tension levels and stress tolerance. The performed analysis is presented in Tables 17 and 18.

Table 17. Comparative analysis of coping behaviour with psychic tension levels

Types of coping behaviour in stressful situations	Psychic tension levels			
	Average		Low	
	M	σ	M	σ
Confrontive coping	10.60	2.94	10.35	2.69
Distancing	10.66	3.02	10.58	2.39
Escape-Avoidance	13.52	2.56	12.81	2.94
Positive reappraisal	7.79	2.04	7.87	1.94
Accepting responsibility	11.08	2.44	11.29	2.84
Planful problem-solving	14.65	3.61	12.91	3.43
Self-controlling	11.46	2.87	11.65	2.67
Seeking social support	13.50	3.91	12.93	3.09

Note: Indexes for high psychic tension are not taken into account because they are constant at such situation.

According to the performed analysis, students with low psychic tension have the lowest indexes of coping behaviours in comparison with students having average psychic tension. This means that in a stressful situation, their behaviour is more adaptive in comparison with students having average psychic tension.

According to the performed analysis, students with low stress tolerance have the lowest indexes of coping behaviours in comparison with other students; it means that in a stressful situation, their behaviour is characterized by pronounced signs of maladjustment compared with students with high stress tolerance.

Table 18. Comparative analysis of the styles of coping behaviour with students' stress tolerance

Indexes		Low		Average		High	
		Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Confrontive coping	M	10.50	10.55	10.48	10.39	9.00	10.43
	σ	3.08	2.62	2.81	2.79	2.12	2.99
Distancing	M	10.50	10.09	10.49	11.10	10.40	9.81
	σ	3.36	3.98	2.22	2.73	2.16	2.15
Escape-Avoidance	M	14.20	13.18	12.63	13.41	13.38	11.95
	σ	2.49	2.63	3.20	2.85	2.33	1.88
Positive reappraisal	M	12.40	11.45	11.17	11.61	10.19	10.67
	σ	2.51	1.96	2.99	2.69	2.50	2.41
Accepting responsibility	M	8.80	8.43	7.47	8.10	7.13	8.36
	σ	2.04	1.62	1.49	2.22	2.24	1.98
Planful problem-solving	M	13.60	12.91	12.59	14.24	13.81	12.43
	σ	3.28	2.50	3.06	3.66	3.90	3.65
Self-controlling	M	14.00	12.55	11.91	11.74	11.31	9.10
	σ	1.70	2.42	2.33	2.80	2.65	2.82
Seeking social support	M	15.00	16.18	12.29	13.60	12.63	12.48
	σ	2.00	2.27	3.31	3.40	2.41	3.14

Students' ability to use positive behaviour strategies suffers especially in: planful problem-solving, seeking social support and self-controlling; and behaviour aimed at problem avoiding and escape becomes stronger.

Conclusions

The results of empirical studies have shown that modern Ukrainian students from universities and vocational schools are characterized by average stress tolerance, and university students have significantly higher stress tolerance than vocational school students. The level of girl's psychic tension is statistically higher than that of boys.

In stressful situations, modern students use different mechanisms of coping behaviour, but the most used coping styles are escape/avoidance, self-controlling and positive reappraisal, and the least used one is accepting responsibility. University students in comparison with students of vocational schools use more constructive coping styles: seeking social support and plan-full problem-solving. The girls more likely than boys use mechanisms of accepting responsibility and positive reappraisal, which referred to the relatively constructive coping mechanisms.

Students with low levels of psychic tension have the lowest indexes of coping behaviour: in a stressful situation, their behaviour is more adaptive than that of students with

average psychic tension. Students with low stress tolerance have the highest indexes of coping behaviour: in a stressful situation, their behaviour is characterized by pronounced signs of maladjustment compared with students with high stress tolerance. Students' ability to use positive behaviour strategies suffers especially in: planful problem-solving, seeking social support and self-controlling; and behaviour aimed at problem avoiding and escape becomes stronger.

Thus, on the basis of the performed analysis we can say that destructive coping mechanisms are revealed as dominant strategies in all studied groups, indicating a need for purposeful work on stress tolerance formation for future sociology professionals, and it will be the prospect of our further research in this field.

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ANALYSIS OF COPING STRATEGIES AGAINST STRESSES OF FUTURE PROFESSIONALS OF SOCIONOMY OCCUPATIONS

Summary

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An important aspect of personal stress tolerance studies is searching for personal resources for stress overcoming. In order to identify features of behavioural coping strategies and their connection to the level of mental stress and resistance to stress of future professionals of various socio-economic occupations, the empirical study was carried out and covered 198 students in Chernivtsi (Ukraine). 113 students were from universities, and 85 persons were from vocational school; 96 men and 102 women participated in the study. The following techniques were used in the study: the Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ; Folkman and Lazarus, 1988) adapted by Kriukova in collaboration (Kriukova & Kuftiak, 2007), the Boston Stress Test and the Psychological Stress Measure PSM-25 (adapted by Vodopyanova, 2009).

The results of empirical studies have shown that modern Ukrainian students from universities and vocational schools are characterized by average stress tolerance, and university students have significantly higher stress tolerance than vocational school students. The level of girl's psychic tension is statistically higher than that of boys.

In stressful situations, modern students use different mechanisms of coping behaviour, but the most used coping styles are escape/avoidance, self-controlling and positive reappraisal, and the least used one is accepting responsibility. University students in comparison with students of vocational schools use more constructive coping styles: seeking social support and planful problem-solving. The girls more likely than boys use mechanisms of accepting responsibility and positive reappraisal, which referred to the relatively constructive coping mechanisms.

Students with low levels of psychic tension have the lowest indexes of coping behaviour: in a stressful situation, their behaviour is more adaptive than that of students with average psychic tension. Students with low stress tolerance have the highest indexes of coping behaviour: in a stressful situation, their behaviour is characterized by pronounced signs of maladjustment compared with students with high stress tolerance. Students' ability to use positive behaviour strategies suffers especially in: plan-full problem-solving, seeking social support and self-controlling; and behaviour aimed at problem avoiding and escape becomes stronger.

Thus, on the basis of the performed analysis we can say that destructive coping mechanisms are revealed as dominant strategies in all studied groups, indicating a need for purposeful work on stress tolerance formation for future socio-economic professionals, and it will be the prospect of our further research in this field.