



THE EFFECTS OF GENDER AND CULTURE ON COPING STRATEGIES: AN EXTENSION STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Previous research suggests that gender differences exist in coping strategies of undergraduate students with significant effects on various affective and instrumental outcomes including self-esteem. For example, Lawrence (2006) reveals that there is a significant difference between males and females in terms of engagement in coping strategies and academic attainment. These results show that compared to females, males tend to detach themselves from the emotions of a situation and select different coping strategies. This study is an extension of the existing research as it investigates differences in coping strategies adopted by students in a collectivist society. The aim of this paper is to explore differences of the various coping strategies within gender in Kuwait. We also compare our results to those previously reported in the United States, and individualist society.

We use survey methodology to collect data from young students attending various schools in Kuwait. A well-established Coping Strategies survey was administered to test a set of hypotheses related to the various types of coping mechanisms including the use of religion, social support, and denial. We hope to shed more light on the role of gender in employing a given coping strategy. We discuss our results, their implications for theory and practice, and propose directions for further research in this important area.