

# LEVEL OF STRESS AND COPING STYLES AMONG PEOPLE WITH TYPE A AND TYPE B PERSONALITY

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**Abstract:** American Psychological Association defined (APA) Personality refers to individual differences in characteristic patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving. Therefore it can be said that an individual can differ in the level of stress and the way he/she adopts different coping styles when confronted to stressful life situations. The objectives of the study included the assessment of the level of stress and coping strategies among Type A and Type B Personality. The data were collected from 80 adolescent respondents from Jaipur (Rajasthan). The data was divided into equal groups of two boys and girls, which was further divided into two equal groups of type of personality. The tools employed were Type A personality test, Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and COPE. Difference between the scores was found through t-ratio. The findings of the study showed that the level of stress was found higher in girls when compared to boys. The coping method adopted by the boys to tackle stressful life situation was problem-focused coping style. On the other hand girls use avoidance focused and emotion focused coping strategy to tackle stressful life situations. The findings of the research also indicate that the level of stress was found higher among respondents with Type A personality. The coping style adopted by Type A personality respondents was Avoidance focused coping style and by the Type B personality respondents was Emotion focused coping style. There is no found significant among respondents of Type A and Type B on Problem-focused coping method style.

**Keywords:** Stress, Coping styles, Type A and Type B Personality

## Introduction

Allport (1961) defined personality as a dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine characteristic behavior and thought.

In the year 1950's a pair of cardiologists Rosenman and Friedman gave another type of personality namely Type A and Type B. The classification was done on the basis of psychosocial risk factors that make them prone to stress which may lead to cardiovascular related ailments. The chief personality attributes exhibited by individuals of Type A include impulsiveness, competitiveness and the need to get things, lots of things, done quickly, always in a hurry, lives by timetables and deadlines, is a perfectionist and has difficulty delegating any tasks, and therefore ends up trying to do everything himself. The following characteristics make them overburdened which may lead them prone to stress and may experience heart related problems. In contrast, the individuals of Type B personality possess the personality traits opposite to that of Type A. The distinctive characteristics of individuals with Type B personality include relaxed nature, less driven, generally content with their lot and less likely to try to achieve unnecessary aims and objectives.

Anon (2017) Stress can be defined as a conscious or unconscious psychological feeling or physical situation which comes as a result of physical or/and mental 'positive or negative pressure' to overwhelm adaptive capacities

## Review of Literature

Caplan and Jones (1975) had investigated an association between Type A personality and work load on anxiety, depression, resentment, and heart rate. The findings of the research revealed that stress and Type A personality has a close association. The level of stress may also lead to psychological issues like anxiety and psychological strain. Role ambiguity was positively associated with some psychological problems like anxiety, depression, and resentment. It was also found that subjective work load was positively correlated only with anxiety which in turn had a positive association to the cardiovascular functioning. Furthermore, the findings of the study also indicated that the individual with Type A personality showed a strong association between work load and anxiety.

Rosenman and Friedman (1977) researched that individuals with Type A personality possess the following personality traits like impulsiveness, lack of patience, high motivation are more prone to stress which may lead to cardiovascular ailments. The findings of the study also indicated that the individuals with Type A personality showed a close association with cardiovascular issues irrespective of the causes such as improper diet, smoking, lack of exercise or obesity. The results of the research also showed that the persons with Type A personality should re-schedule the life style and attitude towards when confronted with uncontrollable life situations.

Billings & Moos (1981) had investigated the way of handling uncontrollable life events. On the basis of gender and the stressors, the findings of the study shows that there exists between them. The use of coping strategies depends on mood, symptom levels personal functioning and also on the social situations when confronted with stressful life situations.

Contrada (1989) studied that individuals with Type A behavioral pattern and hardiness has a close link with cardiovascular dysfunctioning. The results of the study showed that hardiness was associated with remarkably reduced diastolic blood pressure (DBP) responsiveness. In contrast a significant association has been seen with the individual with Type B-high hardiness behavioral pattern showed the least diastolic (DBP) responsiveness. Furthermore, the findings of the research indicates that people with Type A personality are likely prone to cardiovascular and its related issues.

Iwata,Suzuki ,Saito and Abe (1992) has found a close link between stress-strain and Type A/B Personality. The findings of the study showed that individuals who are overburden with work and conflicts were strongly associated with psychological distress, but role ambiguity showed a few significant correlations. Furthermore, the results of the study also revealed that the Type A/B personality on stress-strain relations were seen associated and found to vary between genders, across job positions, and/or across the types of stress at work and distress.

Sarafino (2012) defined stress arises when individuals perceive a discrepancy between the physical or psychological demands of a situation and the resources of his or her biological, psychological or social systems. In order to deal with those stressful life events, an individual adopt different methods or coping styles to resolve the problem and reduce the stress. According to a study conducted by American Psychological Association (APA) Women are more likely than men (28 percent vs. 20 percent) to report having a great deal of stress. Therefore, In order to reduce the level of stress following three coping styles are used which include emotion focused problem focused and avoidance focused. It has been also reported that women tend to use more emotion-focused strategies than men when confronted with stressful life situations.

Gongala (2017) had investigated that a survey conducted by the American Psychological Association (APA), revealed that teenagers are more stressed than adults which is quite alarming for parents. Following are the stressors which may lead to high level of stress are as academic pressure, familial pressure, peer pressure and social pressure etc.

### Objectives of Study

- 1) To study the Level of Stress among Boys and Girls.
- 2) To study the Coping styles adopted among Boys and Girls.
- 3) To study the Level of Stress among Type A and Type B Personality.
- 4) To study the Coping styles used among Type A and TYPE B Personality.

### Hypothesis

- H.1-** There will be asignificant difference between boys and girls on Level of Stress.
- H.2-** There will be asignificant difference between boys and girls on Coping Styles.
- H.3-** There will be a significant differencebetween Type A and Type B personality on Level of Stress.
- H.4-**There will be asignificant difference between Type A and Type B personality on Coping Style.

### Methodology

#### Method

The Non-Probability (Purposive sampling) method was used in this study. Purposive sampling method studies the difference between level of stress and Coping style by studying the sample chosen from gender and type of personality. Thesample consists of total 80 adolescent respondents of Jaipur. The sample was divided into two groups on the basis of the gender (Boys and Girls) and type of personality (Type A and Type B ). Each of the two group consisted of an equal number of boys and girls respondents. Each of these four group consisted of 20 respondents.

#### Sample

The sample consists of total 80 adolescent respondents of Jaipur city. The sample was divided into two groups on the basis of the gender (boys and girls)and the personality type (TYPE A and TYPE B).Each of the two group consisted of an equal number of boys and girls respondents. Results are 2x2 groups of respondents. Each of these four group consisted of 20 respondents.

## Tools of Measurement

In the present study following tools were employed, Type A personality test by Bortner & Rosenman (1967) and Powell (1992) reliability (.68). Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) by Sheldon Cohen (1983) the test-retest reliability ( $r = .66$  and  $r = .50$ ) and COPE Scale by Carver, Scheier & Weintraub (1989). ( $M = 20.84$ ,  $SD = 4.84$ ), Alpha coefficients for Study 1 ( $Mdn = .73$ )

## Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics and t-ratio were applied to the data obtained to its relevancy.

## Results & Discussions

**Table 1.1**-table showing difference on Level of Stress and Coping Styles among Genders (N=40)

Variables	Group	Mean	S.D	t	Sig.
Level of Stress	Boys	18.00	5.473	4.994*	.000
	Girls	26.02	8.565		
Problem-Focused	Boys	52.70	6.442	2.338**	.022
	Girls	48.90	8.012		
Emotion-Focused	Boys	40.98	9.164	3.338*	.001
	Girls	47.30	7.723		
Avoidance-Focused	Boys	36.62	8.227	5.113*	.000
	Girls	45.98	8.129		

\*\*0.05 level, \*0.01 level

Table 1.1 indicates that the mean Stress level was found higher among girls compared to Boys. There is a significant difference between boys and girls at 0.01 level, which reveals that Girls experience high level of stress due to following uncontrollable life events such as urgent demands or expectations from family and peer group, broken romantic relationship, physical stress and financial stress etc.

The next variable assessed in the study was the Problem coping style in which the mean score of the boys is found higher than girls. A significant difference is found at 0.05 level, which indicates that boys adopt practical ways to tackle problem that causes stress.

On the Emotion-focused strategy, the mean score of the girls came out to be higher than the boys and showed a significant difference at 0.01 level, which clearly reveals that the girls adopt following ways like maintaining hope and to control one's

emotions which can involve venting feelings of anger and frustration, or deciding that nothing can be done to change things to deal with stressful life events.

Another coping responses in which the mean score of girl respondents is found to be higher is the Avoidance Coping style and showed a significant difference at 0.01 level. The girl respondents who use avoidance coping methods like denying or minimizing the seriousness of the situation which can involve conscious suppression of stressful thoughts and their replacement by self-protective thoughts when faced to choose one's behavior based on trying to avoid or escape particular thoughts and feelings that causes stress.

**Table 2 : t-table showing difference on Level of Stress and Coping Style among Type A and Type B Personality (N=40)**

Variables	Group	Mean	S.D	t	Sign
Level of Stress	Boys	26.50	8.070	5.823*	.000
	Girls	17.52	5.468		
Problem-Focused	Boys	49.25	7.983	1.885	.063
	Girls	52.35	6.666		
Emotion-Focused	Boys	41.18	7.118	3.100*	.003
	Girls	47.10	9.771		
Avoidance-Focused	Boys	44.08	8.751	2.751*	.007
	Girls	38.52	9.285		

\*\*0.05 level,\*0.01 level

Table 2 indicates that the mean score of Stress is found higher among the respondents with Type A personality. There is a significant difference between respondents with Type A and Type B personality at 0.01 level which shows that the respondents with Type A personality exhibits following personality attribute which may include impulsiveness, competitiveness, impatient, aggressive behavior, need to get things, multi-tasking behavior nature, always in a hurry, lives by timetables and deadlines, which depicts their stressful lifestyle that make them prone to stress and its related illness.

As far as Problem-focused Coping style is concerned no significant difference is found between the respondents with Type A and Type B personality, which determined that both the type of personality adopt the practical way of handling the stressful life situations equally.

The next Coping style was the Emotion-focused in which the mean score of respondents with Type B personality scored higher. There is a significant difference between the two type of personalities at 0.01 level, which indicated individuals with Type B personality adopt methods like distraction, emotional disclosure, Praying for guidance and strength. Meditation, Eating more

and Drinking alcohol when confronted with stressful situations associated with stress such as embarrassment, fear, anxiety, depression, excitement and frustration.

It is also clear from the above table that the mean score of the respondents with Type A personality scored higher on Avoidance Focused coping style. A significant difference between the respondents with Type A personality and Type B is found significant at 0.01 level which clearly showed that the respondents with Type A exhibits the attributes similar to those of avoidant personality disorder, including drawing into oneself (avoiding relationships or social activities) and fearing commitment due to a fear of rejection. Such withdrawal behaviors manifest themselves in the personality as indecision and lack of confidence when confronted to stressful life events.

### Summary & Conclusions

On the grounds of the present study it may be concluded that there exists a significant difference between boys and girls on level of stress which indicates that the causes such as familial issues, academic stress, peer pressure and financial stress can be some of the stressors among girl respondents. Therefore, In order to confront such uncontrollable life events girls adopt emotion-focused and avoidance focused coping style to reduce stress.

The level of stress was also found more with the respondents of Type A personality because of the following personality traits like impulsiveness, high motivation, lack of patience, feeling short of time, always burden with work. The following personality makes them easily prone to stress which may lead to cardiovascular ailments. As far the coping style among respondents with Type A personality is concerned, it is found that they score high in avoidance coping style which indicates that they deny or minimize the seriousness of the situation that involves conscious suppression of stressful thoughts and their replacement by self-protective thoughts.

In the final conclusion, it can be said that people adopt different coping styles when confronted with stressful situations. There are no right or wrong coping methods and obviously different situations require different coping styles to resolve the stress.

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