

**SCTMG 2020****International Scientific Conference «Social and Cultural Transformations in the  
Context of Modern Globalism»****PERSON-CENTERED BEHAVIORAL COPING STRATEGIES  
APPROACHED FROM A BASIC HUMAN NEED**

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***Abstract***

The relevance of the research is explained by the need to study strategies/skills for behavior of people bearing hardship and understanding the origin of individualization of particular coping strategies. A significant aspect of the investigated issues is the influence of unfulfilled basic human needs on the behavioral strategy as a whole, determining the ways of overcoming/coping behavior. The article dwells upon the subject of identifying coping strategies, basic human needs, as well as studying person-centered individual strategies. The main field in studying this issue deals with making connections between individual coping strategies and basic personal needs. It allows the authors to consider issues of integrated understanding the subject of behavior approached from complete satisfaction, partial and complete dissatisfaction with the basic personal needs. The sampling results of the surveyed are analyzed with regard to the usage frequency of certain coping strategies. The authors find out that no matter what needs are taken as dissatisfied, partially satisfied, the proper types of coping strategies often used by personality are distinguished. The study shows that the subjects who experience whole and partial satisfaction of basic needs mainly use relatively adaptive coping strategies and coping mechanisms based on personal and environmental coping resources that enhance the ability to cope with human stress. Nevertheless, the respondents who feel dissatisfaction with the individual basic needs use less adaptive coping strategies that do not contribute to personal growth of coping strategies.

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**Keywords:** Coping strategies, need, personality.



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## 1. Introduction

For the whole life, every person regularly comes across situations that are experienced individually as difficult, stressful, and critical. In this setting, an individual responds and conducts his individual behavior intended to overcome (resolve) or avoid uncomfortable stimuli of various forms of expression and content. Behaving in such a way to be able to overcome difficulty, develop a mechanism for managing it, named as copying strategies of the individual, determines the life strategy of a person in general.

The critical factor in choosing coping strategies in progress for coping with stressful and touchy situations is the basic and most often dissatisfied or partially unsatisfied need of the individual. Being of a current interest to a person, a basic need (Horney, 2013) accounts for his behavior in specific situations as well, i.e. an action strategy in changing circumstances. An unmet basic need causes tension in the psychic setup and gives rise to the effect of uncompleted tasks (Lewin, 1951).

Therefore, there is an opportunity to be supported by understanding significant basic needs in the prediction process of human behavior.

## 2. Problem Statement

Coping strategies can be regarded as the basic categories of applied psychology. The researchers dealing with the problem of coping strategies in psychology define them as a complex of conscious cognitive, affective, behavioral adaptive actions (Kryukova, 2007); relevant personal responses to a difficult situation, problem-based situation based on personal and environmental coping resources (Nartova-Bochaver, 2014); individual methods of the subject's interaction who faces a stressful situation; continually changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to overcome stress (Vodopyanova, 2009).

The subject research of personality coping strategies is determined by the variety of models and mechanisms of coping strategies by themselves (Ego-psychological model; Model of personality traits; Contextual (situational) model; Multi-integrative personality-situational model); classifications of coping strategies.

Copying strategies are regarded as conscious, dynamic, purposive and reality-targeted cognitive-behavioral efforts of a person included in active coping behavior and positive adaptation to change, overcome, control and stabilize psycho-physiological state in response to external and / or internal stressful (distressful) sources of concern, psychosocial crises that exhaust the resources of human being. Therefore, active coping behavior is performed by using coping strategies that develop (an) individual coping style/styles based on personal (physiological, psychological) and environmental (social) coping resources that increase a human tolerance for stress (Nabiullina & Tukhtarova, 2003). That is the entry point where coping strategies match the basic needs of the individual.

The basic human needs can contain safety, self-awareness, awareness of the point of life, group affiliation, competence, self-confidence/respect (Asmolov, 2007). Although most classifications of basic needs are contensively correlated to the needs described by Maslow (2014) as physiological needs, security needs, belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. Deficiency need or partial dissatisfaction of any kind of need actualize actions that are aimed at relieving stress automatically.

### **3. Research Questions**

Bogdanova and Gefel (2010) emphasize the main criteria for coping strategies: awareness; considering the future situation; focus on changing and transforming the relationship between environment and personality, the importance of the environment; as well as the modality of regulation by means of searching information.

Vodopyanova's (2009) research presents R. Lazarus and S. Cohen's general list of the main challenges to be solved with coping strategies:

- 1) Minimizing the negative impacts of circumstances and increasing the possibilities of rehabilitation (recovery), the human basic need is safety;
- 2) Patience, adaptation or regulation, reality situation changes, the basic need is social belonging;
- 3) Supporting a positive, well-meaning self-image, self-confidence, the basic need is self-esteem;
- 4) Maintaining emotional balance, the basic need is keeping personal boundaries and love;
- 5) Maintaining, keeping relevance with other people; the basic need is security and implying a feeling of attachment.

A man's choice of coping strategies depends on his personal, individual psychological peculiarities and features, on psychosocial and socio-cultural environment, on the type of stressful (stress inducing) situation (its genesis etiology, action and exposure time).

Copying strategies and human needs for research discourse are presented in various aspects: in terms of personal autonomy (Cullen et al., 2015); in personality mechanisms triggered in conflict situations (Ayoko & Härtel, 2003); in the area of overcoming communication difficulty related to the personal need field (Triandis, 2003); coordination of personality behavior in the environment and internal state approached from social intelligence (Kaiser & Fuhrer, 2003).

The study of coping strategies is diverse and multidirectional: Vodopyanova (2009) describes studies of ways to overcome, for situations of threat of self-actualization (WOCQ methodology version) in the context of gender identity; the study of Isaeva (2009) revealed significant specific differences in coping behavior of men and women due to accepted and rigidly fixed in society gender roles, dichotomous gender-role characteristics, gender stereotypes and attitudes; the study found that men and women use different coping strategies; the empirical study by Suntsova (2014) showed that most coping strategies used by subjects are of medium severity, however, the priorities are problem solving planning, responsibility acceptance and confrontive coping.

The stimulating personality needs are closely connected to motivation. They are important for patterning activities and relationships (Derkach & Saiko, 2008). Understanding man as a multi-level being who is hierarchically organized, the authors assume that the integrity of man's existence is reflected in combination of the need system and his relations with the world.

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study performed is to do research on content-related properties of person-centered coping strategies, as an individual basic needs in theory and empirically.

## 5. Research Methods

The study sample involves 180 students from Sholom-Aleichem Priamursky State University (the city of Birobidzhan). The representativeness of the study sample is supplied by the age range of 2-3 years of the subjects.

The subject of the study is coping strategies of an individual.

For experimental research, the authors use the following techniques: the method of Strategies for coping behavior by R. Lazarus and R. von Volkmann, targeted at specifying coping strategies and ways to overcome difficulty in various fields of mentality. The psychological defence mechanism of a subject stands for an independent variable, and copying strategies of personality act as a dependent variable. As follows from the data analysis, person-centered coping strategies can be identified: confrontive coping, distancing, self-control, seeking social support, taking responsibility, escape behavior, planning a problem solution, positive reappraisal (as cited in Vodopyanova, 2009).

The method of Diagnostic assessment of satisfaction with basic needs by Skvortsov is meant to identify basic needs: material needs, security needs, social needs, needs for esteem and self-actualization (as cited in Vodopyanova, 2009). The methodological procedure of the technique development is a Theory of Human Motivation and Hierarchy of needs proposed by A. Maslow to describe the pattern through which human motivations generally move.

## 6. Findings

The findings obtained during the diagnostic study of the leading coping strategy and basic needs are summarized through satisfaction / dissatisfaction with the basic human needs. As the study shows, if the individual is dissatisfied with the needs, a specific set of person-centered copying strategies arises (Table 1).

The authors would like to note that material needs, safety needs, and social needs are presented as the satisfied ones. According to the average values of coping strategies extent, it can be seen that adaptive coping strategies such as self-control, accepting responsibility, planning problem solving and a positive reappraisal prevail in this group. A variety of coping strategies stimulates their multiple uses when coping with hardship (Table 2).

**Table 01.** Average values of students' coping strategy selection with complete need satisfaction

Types of basic human needs	Non-adaptive coping strategies			Adaptive coping strategies				
	Confrontive coping (%)	Distancing (%)	Escape (%)	Exercising self-control (%)	Seeking social support (%)	Accepting responsibility (%)	Planning problem solving (%)	Positive reappraisal (%)
Material Needs	5.55	5.55	12.5	38.1	11.1	25	28.9	14.3
Safety Needs	11.1	12.2	29.2	47.6	16.6	16.7	22.2	28.6
Social Needs	16.7	11.1	19.2	39.0	26.7	21.7	17.8	28.6

**Table 02.** Average values of students' coping strategy selection with partial need satisfaction

Types of basic human needs	Non-adaptive coping strategies			Adaptive coping strategies				
	Confrontive coping (%)	Distancing (%)	Escape (%)	Exercising self-control (%)	Seeking social support (%)	Accepting responsibility (%)	Planning problem solving (%)	Positive reappraisal (%)
Material Needs	5.55	5.55	42.5	18.1	11.1	25	28.9	14.3
Safety Needs	11.1	32.2	29.2	47.6	16.6	16.7	22.2	28.6
Social Needs	16.7	11.1	19.2	39.0	26.7	21.7	17.8	28.6
Social recognition and self-expression Needs	13.3	22.2	12.0	33.3	18.9	16.7	22.2	9.5

The indicators of special interest are with partial satisfaction of basic needs. They are accompanied by formulated average values of such coping strategies as self-control, planning and positive re-evaluation. Choosing the self-control strategy is revealed through advanced control over actions, statements, behavior; quench and repression of emotions; conscious efforts to keep self-control. Planning and a positive reappraisal feature an opportunity to make discretionary, problem-focused efforts to change the situation. They include an analytical approach to problem solving, promote personal growth and provide basis for need gratification (Table 3).

**Table 03.** Average values of students' coping strategy selection with complete need dissatisfaction

Types of basic human needs	Non-adaptive coping strategies			Adaptive coping strategies				
	Confrontive coping (%)	Distancing (%)	Escape (%)	Exercising self-control (%)	Seeking social support (%)	Accepting responsibility (%)	Planning problem solving (%)	Positive reappraisal (%)
Material Needs	15.55	15.55	22.5	8.1	11.1	5.7	28.9	14.3
Safety Needs	21.1	22.2	29.2	47.6	16.6	16.7	12.2	28.6
Social Needs	16.7	11.1	29.2	29.0	16.7	16.7	17.8	28.6
Social recognition and self-expression Needs	3.3	12.8	25.3	33.3	38.9	16.7	10.2	9.5

When summarizing the outcomes according to the tables shown, it is clear that no matter which need is defined as unsatisfied, the most revealed coping strategies are escape-avoidance, and seeking social support.

These strategies are conscious mechanisms to reduce inner stress, and are developed, as a rule, based on unconscious defense mechanisms such as disbelief, sour grapes mechanism and substitution. These strategies form and consolidate the dependent position on society, the intentional responsibility-passing, and the intentional distortion of a stressful situation and avoiding it. The refusal to ratiocinate and analyze the reasons of what had happened, seeking possible solutions is replaced by the individual by intentionally dreaming that someone should solve this problem, dreaming about favorable scenarios contributes to anxiety and heavy scene. Seeking social support is characterized by a dependent position

on the environment, expected help and support, attempts to solve problems by means of external (social) resources.

## 7. Conclusion

A tendency of dominated person-centered personality coping strategies in terms of complete satisfaction / partial / complete dissatisfaction with the basic human needs becomes visible as a result of the obtained empirical research data.

The character of dissatisfaction and partial dissatisfaction with the basic needs of an individual is reflected in selecting coping strategies and the style of coping with difficult, stressful and distressful situations. Although there is a harmonizing use of coping strategies among the fellow students, whether the need is satisfied, unsatisfied, or partially satisfied. The level of satisfaction of a particular need is important for selecting a coping strategy.

So, self-control, planning and positive reappraisal are revealed in the sample if there is a partial satisfaction with the basic needs. These coping strategies respond to internal tension arising if there is dissatisfaction with needs, respectively, focus on personal promotion and development.

In case of unsatisfied basic needs, escape behavior and seeking social support are observed in the research sample. On the one hand, the choice of these coping strategies means the lack of internal strength of personal development and search for support outside, in the social environment. On the other hand, it tends to avoid disadvantaged situations.

It should be noted that the subjects with whole and partial satisfaction with basic needs mainly use relatively adaptive coping strategies and coping mechanisms based on personal (physiological, psychological) and environmental (social) coping resources that promote mastering personal coping skills. The respondents who show a complete dissatisfaction with basic needs use less adaptive coping strategies that are not in favor of personal growth of coping strategy.

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