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Effectiveness of Coping Mechanisms in Stress Management: Perception from Shanker Dev Campus Students

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Abstract
This study explores the impact of stress on college students and the strategies to manage those stress. Stress is a universal element and persons from nearly every walk of life have to face it. Using a cross-sectional, descriptive quantitative research design, data were collected from 161 students from Shanker Dev Campus through structured questionnaire. All participants were enrolled in a business program. This study aims to evaluate the coping mechanism to manage stress used by students and also examine how stress effect different genders. The findings indicated no significant gender differences in coping mechanisms. However, coping mechanisms were found to be significant predictors of stress, with higher levels of constructive coping mechanisms associated with lower stress levels. These findings highlight the importance of effective coping strategies in managing stress and promoting mental well-being. This study fills a vital gap by focusing on the Shanker Dev Campus, bringing fresh insights into the specific consequences of stress on academic performance as well as well-being of students.
Keywords: Coping, Ideal, Unhealthy, Management, Stress

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Introduction

Stress is a growing public health concern, affecting many individuals both physically and psychologically. Stress can equally affect all college students; however, the effects of stress are of particular interest to students enrolled in health science programs. The inability of students to successfully cope with stress may lead to a cascade of negative consequences on both a personal and professional level. Stress can lead to academic decline, poor relationships with peers and family members, and overall dissatisfaction with life. It would therefore assist them in developing a foundation from which healthy behaviours can be created (Rizzolo, Zipp, Stiskal, & Simpkins, 2009).

The stress processes in the brain are very complex and interlinked by different feedback mechanisms. It is obvious that students meet different situations that provide stress, such as relationships with new students; personal factors that vary from person to person; e.g. movement from a small hometown or village to a big city; changes in sleeping habits. This means when students have large academic workloads, they often suffer from lack of sleep (Kassymova, Kosherbayeva, Sangilbayev, & Schachl, 2018).

College students face several sources of stress. Self-guided stress management interventions offer an excellent opportunity for scaling up evidence-based interventions for self-management of these stresses. However, little is known about the overall effects of these interventions. Increasing this understanding is essential because self-guided stress management interventions might be a cost-effective and acceptable way of providing help to this important segment of the population during a critical life course stage (Amanvermez, et al., 2022).

Life in general is full of strain and pressure for everyone the globe, especially for underprivileged groups and people that are involved in small business, medical health services and the education system. The most significantly affected group is the youth which is still in schools, colleges and or in the early phases of their career. The tech-savvy (IT specialist) generation who lives on and leans through social media has found the transition from chalk and states to screens really immersive to a level that real experiencing anxiety, stress as well as depression (Ruhela, 2023). Life is tough for many, especially the youth around the world. Tech-savvy students and young professionals feel anxious and stressed because the constant use of screens for learning and work can be overwhelming, isolating and exhausting, making it harder to focus and relax.

University life is a stressful environment. In the age we are in, many changes are experienced in every life due to the rapid developments in technology. Every day an innovation emerges, the existing ones become old, new and innovations emerge. People's wishes and needs are different, and the topics on the agenda are constantly changing. According to (Hatunoglu, 2020) University students' difficulties in the process: not feeling comfortable at school, not studying, academic problems etc. these sources of problems that cause stress on university students are not problems. When solutions are sought for the right methods and suitable solutions are found, the problems and the stress that they bring together will be minimized and the students will be able to increase the quality and efficiency he gained from university life.

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Stress is the insistent outcome caused by various stable and strain routine tasks of every part of our life. College students face fast physical, social and mental changes along with they may experience unsuitability and adaptableness. College students constantly have more inconvenience due to academic pressure, adaption to new environment, fear of failure, struggle to create uniqueness, inferiority, attaining social familiarity, etc (Yikealo, Yemane, & Karvinen, 2018). The strategies to tackle stressful crisis are referred to as coping mechanisms; which include the behavioural, physical, external factors, emotional, spiritual and cognitive strategies. Good coping skills are likely to lower the stress levels whereas negative coping increases stress. Different coping methods such as finding help, solving problem, leisure, exercise, cognitive-restructuring, and a security were found to be beneficial (Pariat, Rynjah, Joplin, & Kharjana, 2014).

Among international students studying in the United States, Asian international students remain the largest international student body, which accounts for 61% of total international enrolments in the U.S. From the leading places of origin, India ranked first place with 94,563 students, China ranked second place (81,127), South Korea ranked third (69,124), Japan ranked fourth (33,974), Canada ranked fifth (29,051) and Taiwan ranked sixth with 29,001 students. Attending graduate schools can be stressful as students undergo the process of adapting to new social and educational environments (Yang, 2010). As a result, there is a greater probability of adjustment problems, physical complaints, and psychological distress in students from foreign countries.

In Nepal, there is no uncertainty that learning and teaching principles have changed over the years according to psychological development, which may have motivated students in terms of education systems, and their interests, as well as global necessities, have changed the psychology of students over time and vary from person to person. The student's negative psychological prospects with the inappropriate education system at college and university according to their interests may lead to mental health issues and threaten the disturbs sleep and appetite. According to (Sharma & Shakya, 2022) the mental health issue is still largely ignored and has not been given priority. To our knowledge, no study reported the prevalence and factors associated with depression, anxiety and stress among undergraduate management students in the Kathmandu district. There is also limited information regarding risk factors associated with the causation of depression, anxiety and stress in Nepal.

Time constraints, financial strain, academic workload, and interpersonal difficulties with faculty, peers and significant others contribute to stress for college students (Parajuli, Mahat, & Kandel, 2023; Aryal, Karki, Mahat, & Neupane, 2024). College students clearly experience stress and could benefit from strategies to reduce it. If university personnel are to effectively promote the adjustment of students to an academic environment, they need to be aware of the types of stressors that are most common to college students and the effect of those stressors on outcomes such as academic performance and health. More importantly, university personnel should be in a positon to recommend simple strategies that students could use to cope with stress (Nonis, Hudson, Lagon, & Ford, 1998).

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Stress can impair cognitive functions like concentration and memory, which are essential for academic success. By learning effective stress management techniques, students can improve their academic performance, maintain better mental and physical health, and acquire valuable life skills that will beneficial them in personal and professional contexts. Researchers are particularly interested in this field because of the significant prevalence and impact of stress among college students. Understanding effective stress management strategies can lead to the development of evidence-based interventions that educational institutions can implement to support students well-being. This research can inform policies and programs designed to create healthier educational environments, ultimately leading to improved student outcomes and long-term benefits.

Statement of the Problem

Stress causes natural response that our body or brain have during certain situation. For students it's important to manage stress because it makes harder to focus towards their career and bright future. Throughout their academic careers, many students encounter varied degrees of stress, which can have a substantial negative effect on their overall performance. The purpose of this study is to look into the connection between students in certain educational setting or demographic and their academic achievement in relation to stress levels (Shrestha, Karki, Mahat, & Neupane, 2024). This study looks at stress-causing variables and how they affect students' focus, memory, and academic performance in an effort to clarify on practical stress-reduction techniques that can improve learning outcomes. Stress's effect on academic performance is one of the biggest issues facing education today. It has been signified that stress has an impact on students' emotional health, cognitive abilities, and general academic success. The purpose of this study is to investigate the accurate mechanisms by which stress affects students' academic performance. This research aims to provide a thorough understanding of the relationship between stress and academic success by identifying the main stressors faced by students and analysing their effects on factors like concentration, memory retention, test performance, and overall grades. The results will aid in the creation of focused interventions and support networks to assist students in effectively managing their stress and maximizing their academic performance.

Research Objectives

1. To assess the coping mechanisms in managing stress among students at Shanker Dev Campus.
2. To examine the gender differences in coping mechanisms on stress management at Shanker Dev Campus.
3. To analyse impact of coping mechanisms on stress and well-being among students at Shanker Dev Campus.

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Literature Review

The Causes of Stress among College Students

Academic Performance Pressure: The pressure to perform academically is one of the primary causes of stress, particularly for university students. Coursework can be very demanding and the competition for earning top marks can be very fierce. Students who want to do their best and who are planning to apply for admission to graduate school can be under a great deal of pressure as they struggle to excel in school. The same is true for those who are seeking scholarship funding or who must keep their grades up in order to keep existing scholarship awards (Eweniyi, 2009)

Peer pressure: Peer pressure is when "friends" persuade you to doing something that you do not want to do. But maybe you want to do it, and you just don't have the courage to do it and your friends talk you into it. Peer Pressure can be broken down into two areas; good peer pressure and bad peer pressure (Blake & Vandiver, 2008). Bad peer pressure is being coerced into doing something that you didn't want to do because your friends said that you should. Friends have a tendency to think that they know what is best for you, and if your friends are like some of ours, they always offer their opinion whether it is wanted or not (Feld, 2011).

Facing the Future: While some students have a clear vision of the lives they want to enjoy as adults, many feel overwhelmed by the idea of trying to figure out what they want to do with their lives. University students feel pressure to make educational and career decisions that can impact the rest of their live. Choosing a major can be stressful, as can making choices about where to live, which relationships to continue to pursue, and more (Blumberg & Flaherty, 2005).

Parental Pressure: students at either level experience stress from parental pressures. Parents want their children to succeed in school. They want to see good grades, but they also want to see success in life's other areas. In their attempts to guide their children, parents can become one of the major causes of stress on students (Eweniyi, 2009).

Time Management: A lack of time management also causes stress on students, whether secondary or tertiary. Balancing academics, dating, peer activities, and home life can be difficult. Toss in a part-time job, and the challenge increases (Greenberg, 2006).

The Effect of Stress

Student life is a changeover period. They do a course supposing it will empower them to do or have something that they need, for example, expanded openings for work or upgraded delight in life. Concentrating on is a piece of a procedure of progress and, here and there, change can bring about a considerable measure of nervousness (Feld, 2011). Students in school especially universities experience an intense stage taking care of anxiety and misery. Firstly, their hormones are in overdrive, which causes stress. Furthermore, the weight to do well adds to their anxiety levels. Homework, issues at home, connection at school and associate weight all add to stress and depression. The stress students experience may test their ability to cope and adapt to the environment they find themselves in. The impact of stress on students can be looked at from various angles (Womble, 2003).

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According to (Schafer, 2006), Stress cause students to be confused and also suffer from amnesia. All people when stressed upturn to be sixes and sevens with the little- complicated issues. In the Academic life of students, they easily have misunderstandings with what is been taught in school and don't know what to do (Karki, D'Mello, Neupane, Shrestha, & Mahat, 2024). On the other hand, many ofthem also forget easily what they have Known or have been taught because their mindshare burdened with the issues that are stressing them up (Mishra, Mahat, & Khanal, 2021). All these points impact of stress on students, in the long run, cause them to perform poorly in school.

Furthermore, stress affects the productivity or the output students make. When students are stressed up they turn not to give their maximum best when doing schoolwork and as a result, it 12 manifests in the outputs which are clearly seen in the grades. Stress makes students spend fewer hours trying to get some schoolwork done and they also do it in a shabby manner not following the instructions giving the assignments in question. They also don't make adequate preparation for examinations. In the long term, it can even affect their plans for the future (Ragheb & McKinney, 2013).

Research Gap

While numerous studies have investigated the stress management strategies for college students, but there is apparent lack of research exploring the stress management strategies for college students of Shanker Dev Campus. Addressing this gap would involve conducting research to better understand the stress management strategies for college students of Shanker Dev Campus.

Research Methodology

In this research, descriptive and casual comparative research design was used to analyse various factors relating to stress and its coping mechanism, utilizing a cross-sectional time horizon (Mahat, Neupane, & Shrestha, 2024). This paper is based on primary data source (Mahat & Mathema, 2018). Data is collected to understand the stress faced by students and how those stress can be managed. For this purpose, questionnaire survey was administered to collect information. A set of questionnaires were prepared to survey the responses of the students. Also, there was some responses from online survey as well. The study was conducted in Shanker Dev Campus of Tribhuvan University, of BBA and BBA-F faculty, ranging from first year to last. The target population is undergraduate students enrolled in bachelor level of Shanker Dev Campus. All together about 150 questionnaires were distributed to the bachelor level students and around 20 questionnaires were distributed online (Shrestha, Mahat, Neupane, & Karki, 2024). Total 161 sample were collected. A questionnaire that can be administered independently was created to collect information about demographics, academic performance, stress levels, coping mechanisms, and academic satisfaction. The questionnaire was administered online and in paper format to the students. Participants were provided with clear instructions and assured of confidentiality. For data analysis, the SPSS software was used (Mahat & Aithal, 2022). The analysis included both descriptive and inferential statistics tools.

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Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the study. Participation was entirely voluntary, ensuring that no coercion was involved. Confidentiality was strictly maintained, with participants' identities and responses kept anonymous to protect their privacy. Additionally, appropriate authority was obtained from the concerned colleges before the research commenced, and informed consent was secured from all participants, ensuring they were fully aware of the study's purpose and procedures.

Results

The results section explains the four findings of the study: first, demographic information; second, stress coping mechanisms; third, differences between male and female coping mechanisms; and fourth, the impact of coping mechanisms on well-being.

Demographic Information

Gender

Table 1 Gender respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	female	89	55.3	55.3	55.3
	male	72	44.7	44.7	100.0
	Total	161	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2024

In, table 1, the study finding revealed that the sample constituted of 161 respondents of which 55.3%were females and the 44.7%remaining were the males. This implies that majority of the students of shanker dev campus are females due to the fact that women tend to have more interest and competence in academics than man.

Faculty of respondents

The study went shows different faculty of the respondents and the finding as presented in table 2. The researcher was interested in finding out the faculty status of respondents.

Table 2: Faculty of respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	BBA	138	85.7	85.7	85.7
	BBA-F	23	14.3	14.3	100.0
	Total	161	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2024

The study showed that the majority of the respondents from different department of shanker dev campus were in the range of BBA faculty 138 number of student and these were estimated

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to an 85.7%. The study also revealed that 14.3%were the 23 number of student faculty of BBA-F.

Semester of respondent

The study further went on to establish the semester status of the respondents and finding were as respondent in table 3. The researcher was also interested in finding out the semester status of respondents.

Table 3: Semester of respondent

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Second	53	32.9	32.9	32.9
	Fourth	39	24.2	24.2	57.1
	Fifth	69	42.9	42.9	100.0
	Total	161	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field survey, 2024

The study show that the majority of the respondents was 53 number of students of second semester with a percentage rate of 32.9%, followed by another group of respondents who were fourth semester at rate of 24.2%. The findings also reveal that majority of respondents were fifth semester at rate of 42.9%. This implies that shanker dev campus is mostly dominated by students who are fifth semester should be capable of performing well regardless conditions.

Coping mechanisms

Result from table 4 show that stress management strategic for student affect the performance of Shanker Dev campus.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics result

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
CCMC	161	1.00	5.00	3.1284	.79325
UCMC	161	1.00	5.00	2.3944	.77088
ICMC	161	1.00	5.00	3.9242	.72730
Valid N (list wise)	161				

Source: Field survey, 2024

The descriptive statistics in Table 4 provide insights into the stress management strategies used by students at Shanker Dev Campus, focusing on three types of coping mechanisms: Current Coping Mechanisms (CCMC), Unhealthy Coping Mechanisms (UCMC), and Ideal Coping Mechanisms (ICMC). The analysis is based on responses from 161 students. For Current Coping Mechanisms (CCMC), the mean score is 3.1284, indicating that students, on average, utilize these mechanisms at a moderate level of effectiveness. The minimum and maximum

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scores of 1.00 and 5.00, respectively, suggest a wide range of responses, while the standard deviation of 0.79325 shows some variability in how students adopt these strategies.

For Unhealthy Coping Mechanisms (UCMC), the mean score is lower at 2.3944, with a standard deviation of 0.77088. This indicates that students generally use unhealthy mechanisms less frequently, but some variability exists. In contrast, Ideal Coping Mechanisms (ICMC) have the highest mean score of 3.9242, reflecting that students more frequently adopt effective strategies for managing stress. The standard deviation of 0.72730 indicates relatively consistent use of these ideal mechanisms among respondents. Overall, the results highlight that while students employ a mix of coping strategies, ideal mechanisms are preferred, whereas unhealthy methods are less commonly used.

Differences in coping mechanisms on stress management

Result from table 5 shows that stress affect different gender of Shanker Dev campus.

Table 5: Group Statistics/independent t test

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Coping	female	89	3.2210	.42624	.04518
	male	72	3.1694	.49447	.05827

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Coping	Equal variances assumed	.772	.381	.710	159	.479	.05153	.07259	-.09184	.19490
	Equal variances not assumed			.699	140.929	.486	.05153	.07374	-.09424	.19730

Source: Field survey, 2024

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The results from Tables 5 provide an analysis of the effect of stress on coping mechanisms among male and female students at Shanker Dev Campus. Table 5, summarizing group statistics, shows that female students (N = 89) have a slightly higher mean coping score (3.2210) compared to male students (N = 72), who have a mean score of 3.1694. This suggests that female students, on average, may cope with stress slightly more effectively than their male counterparts. The standard deviation for females (0.42624) is lower than that for males (0.49447), indicating that the coping scores are more consistent among female students. Additionally, the standard error of the mean is smaller for females (0.04518) compared to males (0.05827), suggesting greater precision in the female sample's mean estimate.

Table 5 presents the results of an independent samples t-test conducted to determine whether the observed difference in mean coping scores between genders is statistically significant. Levene's Test for Equality of Variances shows a significance level (Sig.) of 0.381, indicating that the assumption of equal variances is valid. The t-test for equality of means reveals a t-value of 0.710 with 159 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.479 (Sig. 2-tailed). Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, the difference in mean coping scores between male and female students is not statistically significant. Thus, while there is a slight difference in the mean coping scores, it is not sufficient to conclude that stress affects the coping mechanisms of male and female students differently.

Impact of coping mechanisms on stress

Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.438[a]	.191	.176	.62009	.191	12.394	3	157	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), ICMC, UCMC, CCMC
Source: Field survey, 2024

Source: Field survey, 2024

The results in Table 6 provide a summary of the regression analysis conducted to evaluate the impact of coping mechanisms (ICMC, UCMC, and CCMC) on stress levels among students. The model demonstrates a moderate relationship between the coping mechanisms and stress, as indicated by the R value of 0.438. The R Square value of 0.191 suggests that 19.1% of the variation in stress levels can be explained by the coping mechanisms included in the model. After adjusting for the number of predictors, the Adjusted R Square is slightly lower at 0.176, reflecting the model's generalizability to other samples.

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The standard error of the estimate (0.62009) indicates the average deviation of observed stress levels from the predicted values, providing a measure of the model's predictive accuracy. The R Square Change of 0.191 signifies that the inclusion of the coping mechanisms contributed significantly to explaining stress levels. The F Change value of 12.394 with degrees of freedom (df1 = 3, df2 = 157) and a Significance (Sig. F Change) of 0.000 confirms that the overall model is statistically significant, meaning that the coping mechanisms collectively have a meaningful impact on stress levels among students. This highlights that strategies such as ICMC, UCMC, and CCMC play a critical role in influencing how students manage stress.

Table 7: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	14.297	3	4.766	12.394	.000[b]
	Residual	60.369	157	.385		
	Total	74.665	160			
a. Dependent Variable: SWC						
b. Predictors: (Constant), ICMC, UCMC, CCMC						

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 7 presents the ANOVA results evaluating the relationship between stress and well-being (SWC) and the predictors: Ideal Coping Mechanisms (ICMC), Unhealthy Coping Mechanisms (UCMC), and Current Coping Mechanisms (CCMC). The analysis confirms that the regression model is statistically significant, as indicated by the F-statistic of 12.394 ($p < 0.01$). This result demonstrates that the model explains a significant proportion of the variance in stress and well-being.

The Regression Sum of Squares (14.297) represents the variability in stress and well-being that can be attributed to the predictors (ICMC, UCMC, CCMC). In contrast, the Residual Sum of Squares (60.369) accounts for the variance not explained by the model. Together, these values give a Total Sum of Squares of 74.665, highlighting the overall variability in the dependent variable.

The highly significant F-value supports the conclusion that ICMC, UCMC, and CCMC collectively serve as strong predictors of stress and well-being. These findings align with the study's objective of understanding how different coping mechanisms impact stress and well-being among students.

Table 8: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Co-linearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.412	.353		6.824	.000		

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	CCMC	-.224	.065	-.260	-3.454	.001	.912	1.097
	UCMC	.238	.065	.268	3.644	.000	.951	1.051
	ICMC	.193	.069	.205	2.787	.006	.952	1.050
a. Dependent Variable: SWC								

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 8 presents the regression coefficients, revealing the impact of different coping mechanisms Current Coping Mechanisms (CCMC), Unhealthy Coping Mechanisms (UCMC), and Ideal Coping Mechanisms (ICMC) on stress and well-being (SWC). The constant has an unstandardized coefficient of 2.412, indicating that when all predictors are zero, the baseline level of stress and well-being is 2.412. This result is statistically significant ($t = 6.824$, $p < 0.001$).

For CCMC, the unstandardized coefficient is -0.224, suggesting that as CCMC scores increase by one unit, SWC decreases by 0.224 units, holding other variables constant. This negative relationship is statistically significant ($t = -3.454$, $p = 0.001$). In contrast, UCMC has a positive unstandardized coefficient of 0.238, indicating that an increase in UCMC scores by one unit leads to a 0.238-unit increase in SWC. This effect is also significant ($t = 3.644$, $p < 0.001$). Similarly, ICMC exhibits a positive unstandardized coefficient of 0.193, meaning that a one-unit increase in ICMC scores corresponds to a 0.193-unit increase in SWC, with the result being statistically significant ($t = 2.787$, $p = 0.006$).

The collinearity statistics, including tolerance values (all above 0.9) and Variance Inflation Factors (VIFs below 1.1), indicate minimal multicollinearity among the predictors, ensuring the reliability of the regression results. Overall, the findings suggest that while CCMC negatively impacts stress and well-being, both UCMC and ICMC positively influence it, emphasizing the complex role of different coping strategies in managing stress.

Conclusion

This study concludes that stress plays a significant role in student's life. Stress affects the academic performance as well as the mental health of the students. Effective stress management strategies, such as time management, mindfulness practices, physical activity, and seeking social support are important for effective stress management. This study also explores the relationship between gender and coping mechanisms, as well as the effect of coping mechanisms on stress. The results show that there is no significant difference in coping mechanisms between males and females. However, coping mechanisms were shown to be important predictors of stress, with higher levels of constructive coping mechanisms related to lower stress levels. These findings highlight the relevance of good coping mechanisms for stress management and mental well-being.

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