

The Role of Students' Coping in Academic Achievement, Flourishing and Burnout

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Abstract

The role of students' stress coping strategies in their academic life has been of great interest to researchers, but there is a lack of studies regarding the academic flourishing of students. As proposed by positive psychology, success in study is not only reflected in academic achievement but also in students flourishing in the academic domain. Therefore, the aim of this paper was to investigate the role of several types of students' adaptive and maladaptive coping strategies with their academic success as assessed both by grade point average, and by academic flourishing, and with academic burnout. We hypothesized that academic flourishing will be positively related to adaptive coping strategies and negatively related to maladaptive strategies such as avoidance coping. In addition, it was hypothesized that avoidance coping will lead to academic burnout which will decrease academic flourishing. The sample comprised 221 university students from Croatia, mainly female (89%), with different majors and, an average age of 22 (ranging from 19 to 29). Proactive coping, strategic coping, emotional coping, and avoidance coping were assessed by the scales of the Proactive Coping Inventory. Academic achievement was evaluated by the grade point average. Academic flourishing was assessed by the Academic Flourishing Scale and academic burnout by the modified School Burnout Inventory. As expected, the results revealed that both academic achievement and academic flourishing were positively related to proactive, strategic, and emotional coping strategies. Academic flourishing was also negatively related to the maladaptive strategy of avoidance coping. In line with the hypothesis, the mediational analysis revealed that the relationship between avoidance coping, and decreased academic flourishing is completely mediated by students' academic burnout. The results indicate the role of coping strategies and burnout in students' academic flourishing.

Keywords: academic flourishing; burnout; emotional coping; proactive coping; strategic coping