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Original Article (Quantitative)

Comparison of Defense Styles and Coping Strategies among Elementary School Students with Different Levels of Test Anxiety in District 1 of Tehran

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Abstract

The present study was conducted with the aim of comparing defense styles and coping strategies among elementary school students with different levels of test anxiety in District 1 of Tehran. The research method was causal-comparative (ex post facto). The statistical population consisted of all elementary school students in District 1 of Tehran. The research sample was selected using random sampling based on sample size estimation through G*Power software, considering a significance level of 0.05 and an effect size of 0.08. After assessing the level of test anxiety, participants were assigned to two groups: students with high test anxiety and students with low test anxiety. Each group consisted of 20 students. The two groups were matched based on demographic variables including age, parents' educational level, and number of children in the family. Data were collected using the Sarason Test Anxiety Questionnaire (1977), the Ayers and Sandler Coping Strategies Questionnaire (1999), and the Andrews et al. Defense Style Questionnaire (1993). The research hypotheses were analyzed using the independent samples t-test and analysis of variance through SPSS version 26. The findings indicated that there were significant differences in defense styles and coping strategies between students with different levels of test anxiety. Specifically, students with higher levels of test anxiety used immature defense styles and emotion-focused coping strategies more frequently, whereas students with lower levels of test anxiety relied more on mature defense styles and problem-focused coping strategies. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that defense styles and coping strategies play an important role in students' experience of test anxiety. Therefore, strengthening adaptive coping strategies and promoting healthy defense styles may contribute to reducing test anxiety and improving students' academic adjustment.

Keywords:
Test Anxiety, Defense Styles, Coping Strategies, Elementary School Students, District 1 of Tehran.

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