

THE DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF A PROACTIVE COPING INVENTORY

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ABSTRACT

Since most of the research has focused on how people cope with events that occurred in the past (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004), the current study intends to expand our understanding of coping by examining how people deal with potential stressful situations that may happen in the future; that is, proactive coping. Specifically, using multiple methods including individual interviews, a research team, and literature review, this study reports the development of a Proactive Coping Inventory (PCI) and the examination of its reliabilities and validities. Following recent claims of the importance of taking cultural context into consideration when examining coping process, this study focused on Chinese college students' proactive coping and integrated Chinese cultural values into the development of the inventory as well as the explanation of the results. Data consisted of two samples of Chinese college students living in China (N = 459). The results suggested the viability and stability of an 18-item four-factor model: Active Preparation for Potential Stressors, Acquiring Knowledge for Potential Stressors, Consideration of Proactive Actions, and Avoiding Proactive Actions. The PCI evidenced strong psychometric properties. Several concurrent, construct, and incremental validity estimates suggested the PCI is positively related to: (a) reactive coping, (b) life satisfaction, negatively related to: (c) trait anxiety, (d) procrastination, and has no correlations with temporary psychological adjustment. The implications and limitations of the findings are also discussed.