

THE RELATIONSHIP OF COPING STRATEGIES TO PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH AMONG SEXUALLY VICTIMIZED DEAF WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

This study examined coping strategies used by a sample of deaf women who self-reported an unwanted sexual experience at any point in their life and assessed the relationship between coping strategies used and their overall psychological health and life satisfaction. The current study modified and extended the Frazier et al. (2005) study by including two additional coping strategies: problem-solving (PS) and social support (SS). It was hypothesized that the coping strategies problem avoidance (PA), social withdrawal (SW), problem-solving (PS), cognitive-restructuring (CR), expressing emotions (EE), and social support (SS) would predict significant variance in psychological distress at the time of the unwanted sexual experience(s). Specifically, PA and SW would positively relate to past psychological distress and PS, CR, EE and SS would negatively relate to past psychological distress. Also, it was hypothesized that PA and SW would positively relate to current psychological distress, while PS, CR, EE and SS would negatively relate to current psychological distress. Finally, it was hypothesized that PA and SW would negatively relate to life satisfaction and PS, CR, EE and SS would positively relate to life satisfaction.

Findings supported all three hypotheses regarding the prediction of the coping strategies on current or past psychological distress and satisfaction with life. Additional findings are discussed.