



Gender Differences in Coping Strategies for Marital Stress: The Role of Marital Satisfaction and Implications for Counseling

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ABSTRACT

This study explores gender differences in coping with marital stress, aiming to understand how men and women manage relational challenges. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research examines the coping strategies employed by couples experiencing marital stress, focusing on problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidant coping behaviors. The findings reveal that men predominantly use problem-focused coping, concentrating on resolving issues, while women are more likely to engage in emotion-focused strategies, seeking emotional support and expressing feelings. Additionally, marital satisfaction was identified as a key factor influencing the effectiveness of coping strategies, with higher satisfaction associated with more adaptive coping behaviors. The study emphasizes the importance of tailoring marital counseling to address gender-specific coping preferences and enhancing relationship satisfaction to improve stress management. The research concludes by suggesting further studies, including longitudinal and cross-cultural research, to deepen the understanding of marital stress coping over time and across diverse contexts.

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Introduction

Marital stress is an inevitable aspect of most relationships emerging from a variety of sources. One of the most common sources of marital stress is financial strain (Karney & Crown, 2007). Money management is often a sensitive area, as couples must navigate income levels, budgeting, spending priorities, and long-term financial goals. Financial issues can lead to conflicts over spending habits, debts, and financial responsibilities, especially when partners have differing attitudes toward money (Ashby & Burgoyne, 2008). In cases of job loss or economic hardship, financial stress can be particularly intense, as it may affect not only day-to-day stability but also the couple's sense of security and future aspirations.

Parenting responsibilities add another layer of complexity and potential stress to a marriage (Polak & Saini, 2019). Raising children requires time, energy, and often substantial financial resources, all of which can strain a relationship. Couples may experience stress from managing household routines, balancing work with family obligations, or disciplining children in a way that aligns with each other's values and beliefs. Conflicts often arise if one partner feels they are shouldering more of the parenting responsibilities or if the couple disagrees on parenting styles, creating tension and possibly feelings of resentment (Emery, 2006).

Health issues, whether physical or mental, can also be a major source of stress within a marriage. When one partner experiences health challenges, the other may take on a caregiving role, which can be physically and emotionally exhausting (Sullivan & Miller, 2015). Chronic illness or mental health struggles not only affect the individual directly impacted but also place strain on the relationship, as both partners may need to adjust their daily routines, expectations, and even life plans. The increased responsibility and emotional toll of caregiving can lead to feelings of isolation, burnout, or frustration, which, if unaddressed, can weaken the marital bond (McLeod, 2000).

Other sources of marital stress can include work-related pressures, social obligations, and family dynamics, such as managing relationships with in-laws (Alakija, 2016). Together, these sources of stress can create an environment where unresolved issues accumulate, potentially leading to patterns of communication breakdown, emotional withdrawal, or heightened conflict.

Historically, research has shown that men and women often respond to stress in distinct ways, shaped by biological, psychological, and sociocultural influences (Wood & Eagly, 2012). These gendered differences in coping have been widely examined in various contexts, such as workplace stress or health-related stress. For instance, it is commonly suggested that men tend to employ problem-focused coping strategies, where they aim to tackle the root cause of the stress directly. Women, on the other hand, are often thought to rely more on emotion-focused coping, where they address their emotional response to stress, seeking social support or engaging in self-care activities (Bauman et al., 2008). However, these generalizations are not without exceptions, and the nuances of coping strategies in the specific context of marital stress warrant closer examination.

One prominent theoretical framework for understanding stress and coping is the transactional model, developed by Lazarus and Folkman, which suggests that coping is an adaptive response to the perception of stress (Biggs et al., 2017). According to this model, individuals appraise situations to determine whether they pose a threat or challenge and then select coping strategies based on this assessment. In the context of marriage, this model has been useful in understanding how partners perceive and respond to stress differently, often influenced by deeply ingrained gender roles and social expectations.

Research exploring gender differences in coping strategies suggests that men and women tend to employ distinct approaches when managing marital stress (Gentry et al., 2007). Studies have commonly found that men are more likely to engage in problem-focused coping, aiming to directly address or resolve the cause of stress. This approach might involve seeking solutions, setting plans in place, or taking action to mitigate the stressor (Seaward, 2017). Women, on the other hand, are generally found to use more emotion-focused coping strategies, such as seeking social support, expressing emotions, or engaging in self-care activities. These tendencies are often linked to socialization patterns where men are encouraged to adopt a practical, solution-oriented mindset, while women are typically encouraged to prioritize emotional expression and connection with others. However, more recent research has questioned the universality of these differences, noting that coping styles may be more flexible and less defined by gender than previously thought, particularly as social roles and expectations evolve.

In examining marital stress specifically, several studies highlight how stress within relationships is often compounded by external pressures, such as financial insecurity, parenting demands, and health issues. Research on financial stress, for example, has shown that couples with financial strain report higher levels of conflict, lower relationship satisfaction, and a higher likelihood of separation (Williamson et al., 2013). This is especially relevant when partners hold differing attitudes toward money management, which can lead to recurring conflicts. Studies have found that these financial disagreements are often more intense and enduring than other types of marital conflict, partly because they tap into fundamental issues of security and trust within the relationship.

Marital stress presents unique challenges, as it involves the intricate dynamics of close, long-term relationships (Story & Bradbury, 2004). This type of stress can profoundly affect both partners,

leading to feelings of frustration, isolation, or even resentment if not managed effectively. The coping mechanisms employed by one partner not only impact their well-being but also influence the relationship's overall harmony and stability. For instance, a partner who internalizes stress might withdraw emotionally, creating a sense of detachment, while another who actively seeks support might feel unmet if their needs are not reciprocated. Gender differences in coping can thus play a significant role in marital satisfaction and longevity, making it essential to understand how men and women differ in their approaches to handling marital stress.

Research has suggested that societal expectations and traditional gender roles may shape the coping mechanisms men and women use. For example, societal norms often encourage men to appear resilient and composed, which may lead them to suppress emotions and avoid discussing marital issues openly. Women, conversely, are generally socialized to express emotions and seek support, which may make them more comfortable discussing marital stress with friends or family (Burlinson, 2003). These sociocultural patterns, however, may vary across generations and cultural backgrounds, highlighting the need for contemporary research that considers the evolving nature of gender roles.

Despite the recognition of gender differences in coping strategies, there remains a gap in understanding these mechanisms specifically within the context of marital stress. As society moves towards a more nuanced understanding of gender and relationship dynamics, it is critical to investigate whether traditional gender-based coping patterns hold or if new trends are emerging (Barker et al., 2010). By examining how men and women cope with marital stress differently, this research seeks to contribute to the growing body of knowledge that informs relationship counseling and support programs. Ultimately, identifying these differences can provide couples, counselors, and therapists with valuable insights to foster more effective, gender-sensitive strategies for navigating marital challenges and enhancing relationship resilience.

Method

Research Method

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews to provide both statistical insights and deeper, contextual understanding (Taguchi, 2018). This dual approach ensures that the study captures not only measurable differences in coping strategies but also the underlying motivations and subjective experiences of participants in managing marital stress.

The research begins with a quantitative survey administered to a diverse sample of married individuals (Nardi, 2018). Participants are selected based on specific inclusion criteria, such as being married for at least one year and experiencing or having experienced moderate to high levels of marital stress, as self-reported through a preliminary screening questionnaire. The sample is stratified by gender to facilitate comparison, and other demographic factors, such as age, education level, income, and cultural background, are recorded to assess any potential influence on coping strategies.

The survey instrument includes standardized scales to measure coping styles, marital stress levels, and psychological well-being (Dhillon et al., 2000). For this study, validated scales such as the Brief COPE Inventory and the Marital Satisfaction Scale are used to assess coping strategies and relationship satisfaction, respectively. The Brief COPE Inventory, in particular, is widely recognized for its ability to categorize coping into problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidance-oriented strategies, providing a clear framework for comparing coping styles (Donnellan et al., 2006). This instrument allows participants to indicate the frequency with which they use various coping strategies, which are then analyzed to reveal any significant gender-based differences.

To complement the quantitative data, in-depth qualitative interviews are conducted with a subset of survey participants (Curry et al., 2009). The qualitative phase aims to explore the motivations, perceptions, and contextual factors influencing each participant's choice of coping strategies. These semi-structured interviews are guided by open-ended questions, allowing participants to reflect on

their experiences with marital stress, how they perceive their coping methods, and any influences such as cultural or familial expectations that shape their approach to stress management (Non et al., 2019). Interview questions are tailored to prompt participants to consider how they feel about their coping choices, the effectiveness of their strategies, and how their approach to coping has evolved over time.

Data Analysis for this research is twofold, involving both statistical and thematic analysis (Joffe, 2011). For the quantitative data, statistical tests such as t-tests and ANOVA are used to compare coping strategy scores between men and women, while controlling for demographic variables. Additionally, correlation and regression analyses are performed to examine relationships between coping strategies, marital stress levels, and other variables like marital satisfaction. This statistical approach allows for an objective comparison of the coping tendencies of men and women, offering a clear view of any significant patterns or disparities (Meyer et al., 2008).

In contrast, the qualitative data from the interviews are analyzed using thematic analysis. Each interview transcript is coded to identify recurring themes related to coping strategies, such as reliance on social support, personal resilience, or avoidance behaviors. By examining these themes, the research seeks to capture the subjective experiences and nuanced perspectives of participants, which may not be fully represented in quantitative data alone. The qualitative findings are then compared across genders to identify any shared or differing motivations and experiences in coping with marital stress.

Ethical considerations are carefully observed throughout the study (Orb et al., 2001). All participants provide informed consent, and confidentiality is maintained by assigning code numbers rather than using names in the data analysis and reporting. The research design also considers the potential sensitivity of discussing marital stress by offering participants the option to withdraw at any point and by providing resources for marital counseling, should participants feel the need.

Variables and Measurements

The primary independent variable in this study is gender, which serves as the basis for comparing coping strategies. Gender is classified as a binary variable (male and female) to facilitate statistical comparisons (Rich-Edwards et al., 2018). However, the research also acknowledges that gender can be influenced by social roles and expectations, potentially impacting coping mechanisms in ways that transcend biological differences. By examining gender as a primary independent variable, the study aims to explore whether men and women display consistent, statistically significant differences in their approach to handling marital stress.

The dependent variable in this research is coping strategy, the method by which participants respond to and manage marital stress. Coping strategy is a multidimensional variable, encompassing several specific types of coping, such as problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping, and avoidance coping (Green et al., 2010). To measure coping strategies, the study employs the Brief COPE Inventory, a validated scale widely used to assess a range of coping behaviors. This instrument categorizes coping into various subscales, each representing a different coping style. Participants are asked to rate how often they use specific coping methods on a Likert scale (ranging from "not at all" to "very frequently"), with higher scores indicating greater use of a particular coping strategy. This measurement allows for a quantitative analysis of coping strategies, enabling the research to capture not only the preferred coping methods but also the frequency of use for each strategy.

In addition to gender and coping strategies, the study includes several control variables to account for factors that may influence coping behavior. These include age, marital duration, education level, income, cultural background, and presence of children. Each of these variables is measured using standard demographic questions in the survey. Age and marital duration are recorded in years, while education level and income are categorized based on predefined ranges. Cultural background is assessed through self-report items that ask participants to identify with specific cultural or ethnic identities, which may influence social norms around stress and coping. Presence of children is a binary variable (yes or no), as parenting has been shown in existing research to affect both stress levels and coping choices.

The study also includes measures for marital stress level and marital satisfaction as complementary variables, providing additional context for understanding coping behavior. Marital stress level is assessed using a Likert scale where participants rate the extent of stress they perceive in their marriage, ranging from "very low" to "very high." This self-assessment provides insight into the subjective experience of stress within the relationship, which can influence the type and intensity of coping mechanisms used. Marital satisfaction is measured through items adapted from the Marital Satisfaction Scale, where participants rate their general contentment with various aspects of their relationship, such as communication, emotional support, and overall happiness. Higher scores on this scale reflect higher levels of satisfaction, which may moderate the impact of stress on coping behaviors.

For qualitative data, the study also incorporates qualitative codes that capture thematic elements of coping strategies identified through interviews. These include codes for common themes such as "seeking social support," "self-reliance," "emotional expression," and "avoidance." These themes are derived from open-ended interview questions designed to probe deeper into participants' coping experiences. The qualitative codes add context to the quantitative findings by highlighting subjective elements such as participants' motivations, emotional responses, and reflections on the effectiveness of their chosen coping strategies.

Result and discussion

Result

Through a combination of quantitative survey data and qualitative interview responses, the study identifies patterns in how men and women approach marital stress, underscoring both gender-based tendencies and the impact of factors such as relationship satisfaction, social expectations, and personal beliefs. The quantitative analysis of survey responses shows statistically significant differences in the frequency and type of coping strategies used by men and women. Men were more likely to engage in problem-focused coping, with a tendency toward actions that directly address the source of stress. This included activities such as creating actionable plans, resolving conflicts through structured discussions, or independently handling financial or logistical challenges in the marriage. The preference for problem-focused coping aligns with prior research, which suggests that men often favor strategies aimed at managing or eliminating stressors rather than dwelling on emotional responses.

Women, on the other hand, showed a higher likelihood of using emotion-focused coping strategies, such as seeking social support, expressing emotions, and talking through challenges with friends or family members. This approach to coping emphasizes emotional release and validation, which women often find beneficial for reducing stress. The results indicate that women, more than men, tend to value the emotional connections and understanding provided by their social networks, which contribute to a sense of resilience when facing marital difficulties. This difference in coping style highlights how women may rely on social relationships as a key resource for managing marital stress.

The study also explored the use of avoidance-oriented coping, where individuals disengage from the stressor, either by avoiding discussions about it or spending time away from their spouse. While avoidance coping was found in both genders, the quantitative results did not show a significant gender difference in this area. Instead, the tendency to use avoidance coping appeared to correlate more strongly with high-stress levels and low marital satisfaction, indicating that individuals in more strained relationships may use avoidance as a temporary means of reducing stress, regardless of gender.

The qualitative interviews provided valuable insights into the motivations and experiences underlying the coping choices identified in the quantitative data. Many male participants shared that they often feel a sense of responsibility to "fix" issues within the marriage, which drives their preference for problem-focused coping. Some men mentioned feeling societal pressure to maintain composure and avoid openly expressing emotions, which they believe is expected of them in their role as "providers" or "protectors" within the marriage. These expectations can influence their coping style, steering them

toward solution-oriented behaviors that may not fully address the emotional dimensions of marital stress.

Female participants, in contrast, frequently expressed a desire to be emotionally understood and supported when experiencing marital stress. Many women highlighted the importance of talking through issues with trusted friends or family members, which they view as essential to emotional well-being. This emphasis on emotional expression and support aligns with the observed preference for emotion-focused coping, revealing how social support networks serve as a significant resource for women. Additionally, some women noted that cultural norms encourage them to openly communicate their feelings, which can lead to a greater reliance on expressive coping mechanisms.

Another key finding from the qualitative analysis was the role of marital satisfaction as a moderator in coping choices. Both men and women in higher-satisfaction marriages tended to report using adaptive coping strategies those that address stress constructively without resorting to avoidance. This included collaborative problem-solving, mutual emotional support, and openness to discussing issues. Conversely, participants in lower-satisfaction marriages were more likely to report using avoidance-oriented strategies, such as emotionally withdrawing or avoiding discussions about stressors. This suggests that a higher level of satisfaction in the marital relationship may enable more effective coping, as partners feel secure in working together to manage stress.

The combination of quantitative and qualitative results underscores the complexity of gender differences in coping strategies. While the study found clear tendencies, such as men's preference for problem-focused coping and women's reliance on emotion-focused coping, it also highlighted the fluidity of these strategies based on factors such as personality, marital satisfaction, and social expectations. Not all men and women fit neatly into these patterns, and many participants described using a blend of coping methods that suited their unique relationship dynamics and stress levels.

The findings further indicate that while gender plays a role in shaping coping styles, it is only one of several factors at play. The impact of cultural expectations and personal beliefs, along with relationship quality, significantly influences how individuals cope with marital stress. This insight suggests that gender-based tendencies in coping are not solely rooted in inherent differences but are also shaped by broader social and relational contexts.

Implications for Marital Counseling and Support

The research indicates that men are more likely to engage in problem-focused coping, while women often prefer emotion-focused coping. This tendency suggests that counselors can adopt gender-sensitive approaches to better align with each partner's natural coping style. For example, men may benefit from counseling that focuses on practical problem-solving techniques, such as goal setting and conflict resolution strategies, which can help them feel more effective in managing marital stress. Conversely, women may benefit from a greater emphasis on emotional support and communication skills, enabling them to express their feelings constructively within the marriage. However, a purely gender-based approach could risk reinforcing stereotypes if applied too rigidly. Therefore, counselors should use these insights as a starting point, encouraging both partners to explore a range of coping strategies. By promoting flexibility, counselors can help couples to adopt coping methods that feel natural to them individually while encouraging empathy for each other's preferred styles.

While the research confirms that men and women may lean toward different coping styles, the findings also emphasize the benefits of a balanced approach. Marital counseling can help couples integrate both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping techniques, fostering a more comprehensive approach to managing stress. For instance, counselors can encourage men who focus on problem-solving to also recognize and validate their emotional experiences, helping them to communicate these feelings with their partners. Likewise, women who tend to seek social support can be encouraged to incorporate practical coping strategies, such as setting clear objectives for resolving specific marital challenges. A balanced approach to coping not only strengthens individual resilience but also enhances the couple's ability to collaborate in managing marital stress. This integrative coping

strategy can help couples avoid becoming entrenched in one mode of coping, which can sometimes lead to misunderstandings. When both partners are open to a variety of strategies, they are more likely to empathize with each other's needs and engage in mutually supportive behaviors.

The study found that marital satisfaction plays a moderating role in the choice and effectiveness of coping strategies. Partners in higher-satisfaction marriages were more likely to use adaptive coping strategies, such as mutual problem-solving and open communication, while those in lower-satisfaction marriages tended toward avoidance-oriented coping. This suggests that counselors should consider marital satisfaction levels when designing interventions, as satisfied couples may be more receptive to constructive coping strategies. For couples experiencing lower satisfaction, counseling interventions may initially need to focus on building trust and improving basic communication skills. By gradually increasing the level of openness and collaboration in the relationship, counselors can help these couples develop a foundation of mutual respect and emotional security, which in turn can foster more adaptive coping behaviors. As satisfaction improves, couples may feel more comfortable engaging in direct, cooperative problem-solving and emotional expression, reducing the likelihood of avoidance behaviors.

The qualitative findings in the study reveal that societal and cultural expectations can influence coping strategies. Men may feel pressure to avoid emotional expression, while women might feel encouraged to seek social support, due to gendered norms around emotional openness and stoicism. For marital counseling to be fully effective, it is essential that counselors address these societal pressures, helping clients to recognize and possibly reframe their beliefs around acceptable coping behaviors. Counselors can work with clients to challenge restrictive cultural norms, providing a safe space for both men and women to explore alternative coping methods. For example, men may be encouraged to feel more comfortable expressing vulnerability within the marriage, while women can be empowered to take a more active role in problem-solving. By recognizing and addressing cultural influences, counselors can promote healthier, more authentic coping behaviors that reflect each individual's true needs rather than societal expectations.

The study found that women often rely on social support as a coping mechanism, whereas men might be less inclined to seek support outside of the marriage. Recognizing the value of social support, counselors can encourage both partners to develop a support network of trusted friends, family, or community resources. This network can provide additional emotional relief and validation, allowing each partner to process their feelings and gain perspective outside of the marital relationship. For men, who may be less accustomed to seeking external support, counselors can emphasize the benefits of a support network as a complementary coping resource. This may involve identifying nonjudgmental social spaces, such as support groups or counseling circles, where men feel comfortable discussing marital stress. Encouraging both partners to seek appropriate social support can relieve pressure within the marriage, allowing couples to approach stress more constructively.

Finally, the study highlights that coping is not a one-size-fits-all process; individual personalities, relational dynamics, and external stressors all contribute to how people handle marital challenges. Counselors should aim for a personalized approach, taking into account each partner's unique personality traits, life experiences, and current stress levels. Additionally, as coping preferences and marital dynamics can evolve, it is beneficial to offer ongoing counseling support that allows couples to adapt their coping strategies over time.

Limitations and Future Research

One primary limitation of this study is its sample size, which may affect the reliability and robustness of the findings. If the sample is relatively small or lacks sufficient diversity in terms of age, socioeconomic background, cultural contexts, or duration of marriage, the generalizability of the findings is constrained. For example, coping strategies may differ significantly between newlyweds and long-term couples or between individuals from varied cultural backgrounds with differing social norms around gender roles. A larger, more diverse sample would provide a stronger basis for

generalizing the study's findings to a broader population, ensuring that the insights are relevant across different demographic groups.

Closely related to sample size, the generalizability of this study may be limited by the specific population and context in which the research was conducted. If the participants were drawn from a particular geographic location or shared similar cultural or social backgrounds, the findings may not fully capture the range of coping strategies used by men and women in other contexts. Cultural and societal expectations around gender and coping may vary widely, influencing how individuals respond to marital stress. Therefore, generalizing the findings to couples from diverse cultural backgrounds may not be accurate without further research. Expanding this research to include participants from different countries, cultures, and social contexts would enhance the study's applicability to a global population.

The study relies heavily on self-reported data, which is inherently subject to potential biases. Participants may unintentionally report their coping behaviors in ways that they believe are socially acceptable or ideal rather than how they actually cope with marital stress. This tendency, known as social desirability bias, can lead to underreporting of avoidance behaviors or exaggeration of constructive coping strategies. Additionally, individuals' self-awareness and recall abilities may impact their responses, leading to inaccuracies in the data. Future research might consider incorporating observational methods or reports from both partners to gain a more objective view of coping behaviors within marital relationships.

The cross-sectional design of this study is another limitation, as it captures coping behaviors at a single point in time rather than examining how these strategies might evolve over the course of a marriage. Marital stress and coping strategies are dynamic and can be influenced by changes in life circumstances, such as the birth of children, health challenges, or financial fluctuations. A longitudinal research design that follows couples over an extended period could provide a deeper understanding of how coping mechanisms develop and change in response to shifting marital and life challenges. For example, coping strategies that may be effective early in marriage may need to be adjusted as couples face new stressors or life stages.

While the study addresses the role of marital satisfaction in coping behaviors, it may not fully account for other moderating factors, such as personality traits, attachment styles, or individual stress tolerance levels. These variables can significantly impact how men and women cope with marital stress, suggesting the need for a more nuanced analysis that considers these personal and psychological factors. Future research could incorporate these additional variables to explore their potential influence on coping styles and marital satisfaction, providing a more comprehensive view of the coping process.

Another area for further investigation is the exploration of less commonly reported coping strategies, such as spiritual coping, professional counseling, or alternative therapeutic practices. While this study focuses on problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidance-oriented coping, individuals may also turn to religion, meditation, therapy, or community resources to manage marital stress. Examining these strategies would broaden our understanding of coping beyond traditional categories, potentially offering new insights into effective coping mechanisms. Building on these limitations, several areas for further study emerge. First, a longitudinal study that follows couples across different stages of marriage would be highly valuable. Such research could examine how coping mechanisms shift as couples transition through various life stages, providing a clearer picture of how men and women adapt to changing stressors within the marital relationship over time.

Additionally, cross-cultural studies are essential to validate and expand upon the findings of this study. Understanding how cultural norms influence coping strategies could reveal important differences and similarities between cultures, helping counselors and therapists to adopt culturally sensitive approaches in marital counseling.

Further research could also investigate personality traits and attachment styles as moderating factors in coping behaviors. This could enhance our understanding of how individual differences shape

coping strategies, helping to tailor marital counseling practices even more precisely to clients' unique psychological profiles.

Finally, exploring alternative coping strategies that include spiritual practices, professional mental health support, and community-based resources could contribute to a more holistic view of coping in marital relationships. By incorporating a wider range of coping options, future studies could identify additional resources and strategies that may be beneficial for individuals facing marital stress.

Conclusion and implication

This research on "Differences in Coping Between Men and Women in Facing Marital Stress" reveals significant gender-based differences in coping strategies, with men generally adopting problem-focused methods and women more inclined toward emotion-focused approaches. These findings highlight the importance of considering gender-specific coping tendencies in marital counseling and support. Marital satisfaction was found to play a crucial role in shaping coping behaviors, emphasizing the need for interventions aimed at improving relationship quality to foster healthier coping mechanisms. The study also underscores the necessity of culturally sensitive counseling practices that respect individual coping styles while promoting balanced strategies. The implications of this research suggest that marital therapists should tailor interventions to address gendered coping preferences, strengthen relationship satisfaction, and encourage the integration of both problem-solving and emotional support techniques to help couples better manage stress. Future research should explore longitudinal studies, cultural differences, and the influence of personality traits to further refine our understanding of marital coping dynamics.

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