Stress Coping Attitudes Based on Perceived Religiousness and Received Religious Education*

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Abstract

This study was carried out to determine whether stress coping attitudes (SCA) change according to age, gender, education, income status, level of religious knowledge, perceived religiousness and the resources where the individuals rooted their religious educations. The study was conducted on 869 participants, aged 15 and over, living in Denizli province. As the data collection tool "Stress Coping Inventory" was used and for demographic information of the participants, "Personal Information form" was used. Stress coping attitudes: it has been found that stress coping attitudes do not vary according to their gender and where they received their religious education whether from Quran Course, in the family, from a Mousque Teacher, at the course of Teaching Religion Moral, Religious Vocational High School and/or from other sources of religious education but they vary according to Age, Education, Religious Knowledge, Perceived Level of Religiosity, Religious Education and Religious Education received from Religious Books.

Keywords

1. Introduction

Lazarus (1999) defines stress as a worrisome and threatening feeling that results from situations or interpretations that we think that we cannot deal with through our own pyschological resources. In other words, stress is a situation that occurs when the organisms' physical and mental limits are pushed and/or threatened (Batlaş, 2010).

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*This article was adapted from my Ph.D. dissertation "The relation between religious attitude and Coping with Stress" conducted in 2013, at the Institute of Social Sciences at S.D.U.

In the face of force and threats, the organism develops a kind of response chain to defend itself. When the organism encounters a danger, it tries to move away from the threat that the organism thinks that it cannot cope with. However, when the organism believes that it can cope with the threat, it struggles with it and adjusts to the new situation. In the course of stress, when the organism feels threatened, it experiences a set of both physiological and psychological changes (Baltaş & Baltaş, 2008).

Stress response occurs not based on the situation in the environment but based on how the individual responses to the situation. Our feelings are actually parallel with our thoughts. For this reason, stress occurs with the interaction of certain people with certain events. That is, event is not a determiner itself (Baltaş & Baltaş, 2008). For instance, while some of them may be stress factors for some people, they may be exciting and interesting for others. Encountering physical difficulties makes car racers and mountain climbers stronger. While some people find it exciting and enjoying to sail in a bad weather or participating in a rescue team, some others might like to work at high buildings, on roofs. In other words, something that is a cause of stress for someone might be a source of happiness for others (Wilkinson, 2005). The meanings that we attach to the events and reasons of stress are much more important (Tutar, 2000). That is, stress might be resulted from our personal inclinations. Whether we will face stress or not because of any event is related to how we perceive that situation. If we consider a negative situation not as a threat but an obstacle to overcome, we can achieve to have less stress (Braham, 2004).

Researchers have made a classification by observing whether the individual tries to cope with the problem itself or with their emotional reactions to the problem (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; cited in Burger, 2006). Folkman and Lazarus (1980) asked men and women at the ages of 45 and 65 years old about how they coped with some of the problems they faced in the last seven months and subjects chose the strategies they used from the list provided by the researchers. Over 1300 stressful events were analysed and the results showed that in the 98% of the events, participants were found to prefer using either emotion based strategies, problem focused strategies or both. This study shows that these two classifications (emotion focused and problem focused strategies) cover most of the methods that people use to cope with their concerns. In another study, it was found that women use emotion focused strategies more than men but the possibility of the solution through men's direct problem solving strategies is higher than women (Burger, 2006).

Studies in the field clearly put forward that there are clear differences between stress reactions of women and men, and that these differences are seen more clearly at the childhood (Baltaş & Baltaş 2008). Women experience more stressful events and have more depression, anxiety and psychosomatic problem symptoms than men.

This difference may result from the fact that women are more responsive and more sensitive to the emotional events and this is probably because men are often made used to smile and endure in the society (etc. boys don't cry) (Plotnik, 2009).

Stress may occur because of the traumatic events like earthquake, flood, war, fire, severe illness or death, major events like marriage, divorce, commit a crime, imprisonment, lost and debate, daily troubles like finishing a job on time, exams, and time constraints (Hökelekli, 2008). In general, sources of stress can be grouped into two; individual stressors and environmental stressors.

Today, stressors caused by person's environment are increasing as a result of the process of changes and developments around. It is possible to summarize environmental stressors as economic conditions, uncertainty in political life, technological change and uncertainty, physical environmental conditions, social environment conditions and socio-cultural changes (Aydın & Örnek, 2006).

Individual stressors can also be related to the person's physiological or biological features. There might be biological stressors that occur related to various different systematic disorders, physiological illnesses, glandular and hormonal balance disorders that the individuals have (Tutar, 2000). Individuals' reactions may change according to some variables as people's age, status in the society, education, and economic status. Personality traits such as optimism or pessimism, self-confidence, focus of control are also effective in this respect (Hökelekli, 2008).

In this study, the question of whether stress coping attitudes change according to gender, age, education level, income level, religious knowledge, perceived level of piety and where they receive religious education or not was investigated.

1.1. Coping with Stress and Religion

A person who thinks that his/her capacity is not sufficient enough to cope with challenges develops stress. That

is, if there is a difference between the situation that the person wants to handle and how s/he perceives the situation, stress occurs. However, we are responsible for our own perceptions. If we can't change the situation, then we need to change our perspective about the situation and the way of handling the problem. Anxiety's turning into a chronic state and as a result, stress, does not let person gain a new perspective to the problems he/she has; on the contrary, it stalemates the person. High anxiety level causes the person to focus on problems or hazards rather than the solutions. As a result, harmful stress occurs. Person's energy is misdirected and starts to finish and mental thoughts deteriorate.

Stress sometimes might give excitement, stimulate the person and can provide new perspectives and new opportunities. This is positive stress and it helps the individual to find new solutions to the problems (Baltaş, 2010). We can use our mind not only to react to stress but we can also use it cope with the stress (Plotnik, 2009).

It is possible to list down the components of the stress as personal expectations and preferrences, pressure and demands brought by changes, and person's ability to cope with stress and his/her perception of that ability. Since the life is never free of stress, we have to learn to keep stress under control; that is, we have to learn to balance among the components of stress (Batlaş, 2010).

Religion is an area that people are very sensitive and interested (Certel, 2008). Religion may play an important role in coping with stress. Different responses are developed for different stress types in various fields in life and, thus, different approaches are adopted to cope with stress. As religion affects and directs people's other attitudes and behaviors, and as it makes the life meaningful, it is obvious that religion has also an important role in coping with stress.

Religious belief provides endurance and resistance to people while they are coping with stressed and stressful situations. This situation relieves the individual and creates a possibility to take the situation more reasonably. In fact, this positive impact of the religion was also seen among the victims of earthquake in 1999 (Kula, 2006).

Religious individuals are more resistant to everyday life troubles. There is a spiritual shelter for religious individuals to refuge when they come across with difficulties. Religious person thinks that life is full of trials and he/she needs to be patient to them (Bilgin, 1997).

In his study, Yapıcı (2007) found that religion decreases the possibility of committing suicide by giving people hope and trust and that it reduces the negative effects of intense stress and depression. In the research conducted on 200 disabled people by Kula (2005), it has been determined that religion has an important role in coping with the problems and disabled people use religion as a method of coping with stress.

If a person experiences religion honestly and genuinely, it adds the feeling of meaningfulness to his/her life. Person can deal with the challenges of life with this feeling. Religion plays an active role in different ways in coping with stress. If a person is waiting a solution to a problem from the God, it means that he has already chosen a passive stress coping strategy. If the religion is in a position that motivates the individual for a better life, it means that active stress coping method has been chosen. When a person heads God to seek for God's love and compassion, it means that personal security based coping strategy is preferred; interpersonal support based stress coping strategy is selected, when s/he searches for the support of religious association and people; if s/he is at the position of helping others, s/he has problem-solution based stress coping strategy and if a person heads God in order to provide a sensitive security, then it means the sense based coping strategy is chosen.

Patience is based on the belief that unwanted state is temporary and future will be better. Having such a belief results in the feeling of confidence and this confidence feeling prevents person from panic and stress (Öner, 2008).

Dr. Link remarks that he determined that 47% of the patients in the hospitals that he visited are suffering from nervous disorders. An American physician states that the only way of releasing from these increasingly spreading individual and social disorders lies in "returning to religion" (Pazarlı, 1987).

In the studies conducted in the field, it was found that as the religious level rises, depressive symptoms abates accordingly and that those with high religious level had less depressions and they get better quickly and they have less anxiety and they are in better psychological position than those with low religion level. In addition, it is also remarked that people with higher religious level find life more meaningful and purposeful, and their attempt to suicide is much less and therefore religion is an important factor while coping with stress. According to the studies in the literature review, religiousness has an anxiety-lowering role and there are positive meaningful relations between religious belief and person's feeling better and away from stress. The overall review of most of the studies conducted in the West suggest that religious coping methods are significantly effective in the treatment of stress, negative psychological experiences such as anxiety and depression (Kasapoğlu, 2010).

Koenig (1998) defines religious as the use of religious beliefs or behaviours that ease solving problems to diminish or prevent the negative emotional consequences of stressful living conditions. Pargament (1997) claims that there are two ways of religious coping; negative religious coping, positive religious coping (cited in Cirhinlioğlu, 2010).

Individuals that tend to have positive religious coping forms believe that there is a good reason of God's actions and there is a meaningful side of the pain and misery that befell on them. Although this kind of belief might indicate a positive effect on one's health and well being, some religious coping forms and thoughts may be harmful to health. Individuals that tend to have negative religious coping forms are most likely think that God has abandoned them or they might think the troubles and sufferings that befell on them is a kind of punishment for their sinful behaviours. Therefore, individuals who use negative religious coping forms may get angry with God and they question why they have been selected to experience those troubles (Cirhinlioğlu, 2010). And this might be a new source of stress for the individual. That is, it is possible to conclude that the reason of an inverse relationship between religiosity and anxiety depends upon using the positive religious coping strategies for stressful situations (Yapıcı, 2007). In this respect, it can also be concluded that the individuals with positive religious coping attitudes have higher possibility of developing and using positive religious coping strategies.

Çayır and Emhan (2010) found that religious values not only have stress reducing, anxiety relieving, and mental health protecting functions but they also have an important role in making life meaningful. According to research findings, owned religious beliefs and values have a significant impact on the interpretation of events in life. There is a significant difference between religious people and nonreligious ones in terms of falling into doubt about God's power and might when they come across stressful events or crisis. So there is a significant difference between individuals that put more emphasis on religious values and those who put less emphasis on religion.

1.2. Religious Stress

Piety is not an easy process to live. A person, who has to fulfil some requirements (worships, avoid from forbidden place, etc.) for preferring to be religious and despite this, heaven is still not guaranteed, may also get stressed. He is always somewhere between the fear and hope. He may have stress when he encounters something that religion prohibits, namely, sins. If this condition continues for a long time, religious person faces with greater problems or he applies some different stress-coping strategies to overcome the stress. Hallahmi and Argyle (1997) state that religious people mostly experience the sense of depravity and that there are conflicts between the perception of self and the ideal self (Şahin, 2006).

Güvenç (1991) determined in his study that among the fears, which make young people anxious and disquiet, there are also fears and anxieties about the religion and morals; these fears are resulted from lack of religious knowledge and/or wrong religious education they received. Having any kind of spiritual belief might make individuals happier but this does not necessarily suggest that each religion means worship. There are also some researchers claiming that religious beliefs might also be a source of stress in that some religious teachings might be sources of fear and desperateness and thus it may not cause happiness. Sometimes it is inevitable that individuals, who are religious but do not fulfil the obligations and the requirements of the religion, feel uncomfortable when they are reminded or remembered those obligations. These individuals are those who couldn't develop from the level of believing into the level of real faith (Öner, 2008).

The reason why people are defeated by stress is because of weakened religious beliefs and lacked moral support rather than the impact of technological and cultural conditions. Individual can acquire the necessary moral support by believing in God, serving only to him and by understanding the meaning of actual goal of life and living accordingly. A believer sees his gains and losses as a matter of instrument and never put them into his heart. People, whose realm of heart is not occupied by worldly pleasures, do not have any kind of problem of stress (Peker, 1993).

In his presentation at the internatıonal neuropsychiatry congress (May 7, 1970), depending upon his several observations and medical notions, Dr. Özcan from Bakırköy Mental Hospital, stated that mental disorders is not seen among believers who lives in the direction of religion and who can continue their path steadily. He also adds that mental disorders and any kind of spiritual related neurotic complaints, psychosomatic and behavioral disorders occur only when the individual is moves away from religious direction (Özcan, 1985).

Şahin (2006) remarks in his study that when the density of religion related stress increases, individuals be-

come more motivated in the direction of piety. In other words, it can be concluded that religion related stress has some positive effects like motivating the individuals in the direction of piety. It can also be said that religious beliefs are one of the most important stress coping methods that can be used in order to meet the needs of individuals, who have stress as a result of inhibitions, obligations, problems and several other reasons.

2. Method

2.1. Purpose and Importance of Research

In this study it was investigated that whether there is a meaningful difference among the participants' stress coping attitudes according to their gender, age, education level, economic income, religious knowledge, perceived level of piety, and their religious level and religious education they received.

This current study is also important because this is the first study that has ever been done in the field of stress coping strategies considering the religious developmental stages of those over the age of fifteen.

2.2. Method of the Study

The research is a descriptive study designed to determine the effects of religious attitudes to cope with stress. Therefore, the theoretical part of the study was carried out by using documentation methods and techniques, while the model of practical research of the study was carried out by using survey model (Karasar, 2010) and questionnaires in order to describe a condition that there used to be in the past or that still exists.

2.3. Workgroup-Population and Sample

The population of the study is consisted of individuals living in Denizli city center, at the age of 15 and over. The study sample is constituted by 869 randomly selected individuals from 381.000 people

2.4. Data Collection Tools

In this study, in order to measure the stress coping attitudes, "Stress Coping Attitude Inventory" which was adapted to Turkish by Özbay and Şahin (1997) was used. Original form of the inventory is "stress coping attitudes scale" which was developed by Özbay (1993) for foreign subjects studying at universities in USA. The Turkish version of the Inventory was designed by Özbay and Şahin (1997). The purpose of this inventory is investigate the individuals' stress coping attitudes in various stressful situations.

At the process of adapting to Turkish, as a result of factor analysis, 43 expressions from 56 items of the original coping inventory were grouped into six factors. Inventory was developed by using with 5-point Likert-type scale and participants were asked to read all the items and mark one of the options: "never", "occasionally", "sometimes", "often", "always". Subjects were also asked to choose and mark the most appropriate choice for themselves for each item.

Six factors that were identified by factor analysis technique are: active planning, search for external aid, seek refuge in religion, escape-abstraction (emotional-operative) escape isolation (biochemical) and acceptance-cognitive restructuring. In addition to the structure factor analysis, with the help of similar scales, some findings about the validity of the test were able to be obtained. Stress Coping Methods Scale (SCMS), which was adapted to Turkish by Şahin and Durak (1995), was considered as the basic measurement tool. It was found that correlation level between SCMS and SCAI was found to be 0.54 ($p < 0.001$) in general. Reliability calculations of the test were performed by using Cronbach's alpha internal consistency method. Overall reliability coefficiency of the test was found 0.81. Considering the time period since the scale was developed, reapplication was conducted for this study and the overall reliability coefficiency of the test was found to be 0.82.

2.5. Analysis of Data and Used Statistical Techniques

"Stress Coping Attitude Inventory" data are analysed through "Analysis of variance (Anova-Tukey)", "T-Test" by using software program "SPSS 17.0 for windows". Analysis of variance (Anova) shows whether various different groups are different from each other or not in terms of score meanings.

Tukey-test is necessary as well as variance analysis in order to gather necessary information about the differences among groups. Tukey compares each group one another in pairs and shows which groups have differences.

At times, although there are differences between groups, significant difference might occur between the groups. T-test is used to test the hypothesis whether the means of two samples are equal or not (Tonta, 2012).

Generally accepted significance level in academic studies (maximum margin of error) is 0.05. If the result of the analysis is higher level of materiality, they are indicated as $p < 0.01$ or $p < 0.001$. If it is $p < 0.05$ in the Anova, mean averages of groups are not equal and there is a significant difference between them. If it is $p > 0.05$, the mean averages of groups are statistically equal and the difference between the groups is not significant.

The responses that the participants provided for each item ranges from 0.00 to 4.00 in 5-point Likert-type scales. Intervals in the scale are designed by equally spaced 5 coloums and 4 rows and in order to determine the values of the rows in the scale K-1/K ($5 − 1 = 4$ $4/5 = 0.80$) equation was used. The limit values of rows according to this equation are given in **Table 1**.

2.6. General Demographic Information about the Participants

The table below shows some information about the participants of the study, particularly those whose surveys were found to be valid (**Table 2**).

When the gender variance of the subjects is considered, it is seen that 49% of the participants is male and 51% is female.

When the age range of the subjects, which were determined according to the time period of religious development, is considered, those at the age between 22 - 40 were ranked first by 35.3% in the answers provided. They are followed by other age groups 41 - 60 by 25.7%, 18 - 21 by 17.5%, 61 and above by 8.5% and 15 - 17 age group by 13% respectively. Considering the age of participants, it is seen that 65.8% of them are under 41 years old (**Table 3**).

When the subjects' educational status is considered, it is seen that 27% of the participants have associate degree and bachelor's degree, 25.5% of them are high school graduates, 22.8% secondary school, 19.7% elementary school, 2.8% postgraduate and 2.2% of them are those who never took school education (**Table 4**).

When we look at perceptions of income level of the respondents, it is seen that 57.3% of them are of the opinion that they have average income, 30% of them think that they have high income, 9.3% of the participants think that they have low level income, and 2% of the respondents think that they have very low level income, and only 1.4% of the respondents think that they have very high level income (**Table 5**).

Considering the distribution of the subjects according to their religious knowledge, it is seen that 50.2% of them think that their religious knowledge is at good level, while 37.5% of them thinks that their religious knowledge is at medium level, 7.2% thinks that their religious knowledge is low-insufficient and 5.1% thinks that their religious knowledge is very good (**Table 6**).

Table 1. Range value limits about agreement on the items of stress coping attitude inventory (SCAI).

Level	SCAI Level of Agreement	Point	Point limit
Very high	Always	4	3.21 - 4.00
High	Often	3	2.41 - 3.20
Medium	Sometimes	2	1.61 - 2.40
Low	Seldom	1	0.81 - 1.60
Very low	Never	0	0.00 - 0.80

Table 2. Gender distribution of the participants.

	Number	%
Female	443	51
Male	426	49
Total	869	100

Table 3. Age distribution of the participants.

	Number	%
15 - 17	113	13.0
18 - 21	152	17.5
22 - 40	307	35.3
41 - 60	223	25.7
61 and over	74	8.5
Total	869	100

Table 4. Distribution of the participants according to their education level.

	Number	%
Never Attended Any School	19	2.2
Primary School	171	19.7
Secondary School	198	22.8
High School	222	25.5
Bachealor	235	27.0
Post-graduate (Master and Doctorate)	24	2.8
Total	869	100

Table 5. Distribution of income status of the participants.

	Number	%
Very low	17	2.0
Low	81	9.3
Medium	498	57.3
Good	261	30.0
Very good	12	1.4
Total	869	100

Table 6. Distribution of the participants according to their religious knowledge level.

	Number	%
Poor-Insufficient Insufficient	63	7.2
Medium	326	37.5
Good	436	50.2
Very good	44	5.1
Total	869	100

Considering the distribution of the responses to the question about their piety perception level, it was found that the majority of them (73.9%), describe themselves as religious, 19.8% of them see themselves less religious, 4.4% thinks that they are devoutly religious, 2% of them see themselves irrelevant to religion (**Table 7**).

When analysing the table about where subjects received their religious education, it is seen that the ratio of those who never received religious education is 1.8%. The ratio of those who received religious education in their families is 67%; and those who received religious education in Quran course is 38.1%, while the ratio of

those who received religious education from imam is 43%; those who received religious education from religious culture and ethics course is 39.9%; 51.4% received religious education from religious books; 17.5% of them received religious education from Imam Hatip High Schools and those who received religious education from other sources is 9.7% (**Table 8**).

2.7. Findings and Analysis

Findings and comments about whether there is significant difference between subjects' demographics such as gender, age, education, economic income, religious knowledge, perceived level of piety, and where they receive religious education and stress coping attitudes or not are given below.

Table 9 indicates that stress coping attitudes don't differ according to gender. $t(847) = 0.88$, $p > 0.05$.

The mean average of stress coping attitude scale of women participated in the study is $\bar{X} = 2.09$, while it is $\bar{X} = 2.07$ among men. Even if there isn't statistically a significant difference between the two, it can be seen that women have a higher average of stress coping attitude than men.

Table 10 shows that stress coping attitudes show difference according to the ages $(F_{(4;864)}) = 4.27$, $p < 0.05$.

Table 7. Distribution of participants perceived religious levels.

	Number	%
Irrelevant to Religion	17	2.0
Less Religious	172	19.8
Religious	642	73.9
Very Religious	38	4.4
Total	869	100

Table 8. Distribution of the education sources according to where the participants received their religious education.

		Yes	No	Total
Never Had a Religious Education	Number	16	853	869
	Percentage	1.8	98.2	100
Family	Number	582	287	869
	Percentage	67.0	33.0	100
Quran Course	Number	331	538	869
	Percentage	38.1	61.9	100
Imam	Number	374	495	869
	Percentage	43.0	57.0	100
Religious Culture and Ethics Course	Number	347	522	869
	Percentage	39.9	60.1	100
From Religious Books	Number	447	422	869
	Percentage	51.4	48.6	100
Imam Hatip High School	Number	152	717	869
	Percentage	17.5	82.5	100
Other	Number	84	785	869
	Percentage	9.7	90.3	100

Table 9. T-test results of SCA means according to the genders of the participants.

	Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	S	SD	t	Sd	p
SCA (Overall)	Female	443	2.09	0.37	0.02	0.880	847.59	0.379
	Male	426	2.07	0.41	0.02			

Table 10. Variance analysis of SCA results (Anova-Tukey) according to the ages of the participants.

	Resource of the Variance	Sum of Squares	sd	Saquare Mean	F	p	Meaningful Difference Among Groups
SCA (Overall)	Intergroup	2.57	4.00	0.64	4.27	0.002	1 - 5* 2 - 5* 3 - 5*
	In-group	129.84	864.00	0.15			
	Total	132.41	868.00				

*1. 15 - 17, 2. 18 - 21, 3. 22 - 40, 4. 41 - 60, 5. 61 and over.

The highest stress coping attitudes average according to age groups seems to belong to the age group of 61 over. Group at the age of 41 to 60 has the average ($\bar{X}$ = 2.12), the group at the ages of 22 to 40 has ($\bar{X}$ = 2.06), the group consisted of the ages 18 to 21 has the average ($\bar{X}$ = 2.04) and participants at the ages of 15 to 17 has the lowest average ($\bar{X}$ = 2.01). The groups that have significant meaningful differences are those at the age of 1 to 5, 2 to 5 and 3 to 5 (**Table 11**).

It was found that the lowest average of stress coping attitude according to age groups belongs to the age group of 15 to 17. The last period of adolescence starts at the ages around 15 - 17 and goes on until the end of 21, the onset of the adulthood. The physical and mental developments continue during this period (Peker, 2008). This turbulent period of the teenager also affects its ability to cope with stress. The subjects at the age of 61 and over have the highest average. In terms of developmental characteristics, this age group is considered to have completed their physical and mental development. It is seen that this age group has more life experience than other age groups. This age group is more conscious and determined and more resistant to stressful factors in their actions. Considering the overall results of the data, it can safely be concluded that stress coping skills increases in accordance with their developmental period.

When the data in **Table 12** is analysed, it is seen that stress coping attitudes vary according to the education level. ($F_{(5;863)}$) = 4.50, $p < 0.01$

As can be seen in **Table 13**, the highest average ($\bar{X}$ = 2.33) in stress coping attitude according to education level seems to belong to the group who never received school education. Group of those who received primary school education (1 - 5 years) was found to have an average ($\bar{X}$ = 2.15); those who had postgraduate degree have average by $\bar{X}$ = 2.10; the group that was consisted of the graduates of high school have an average ($\bar{X}$ = 2.09); the mean value of those who are the graduates of associate degree - bachelor's degree is ($\bar{X}$ = 2.05), and those who are graduates of secondary-primary school were found to have the lowest average ($\bar{X}$ = 2.01). Groups that have significant differences between each other are the groups are those with the education level of 1 - 3, 1 - 5, and 2 - 3.

As the highest average of stress coping attitude averages according to education level belongs to those who never took school education, considering the compulsory primary school education in our country, it can be concluded that those who stated that they never took school education might be at older ages and they might have completed their personality development. The reason of this high average of this group's stress coping attitude should not be related to education level, but the age factor.

Table 14 reveals that stress coping attitudes don't change according to people's income status. ($F_{(4;864)}$) = 0.97, $p > 0.05$.

In **Table 15**, it is seen that there is no significant meaningful relationship between income status and stress coping attitudes and the highest average of stress coping attitudes ($\bar{X}$ = 2.18) belongs to the group of those who has very high-level income. Group of those with very low income has average ($\bar{X}$ = 2.15); and those with low level income has an average ($\bar{X}$ = 2.13); those with high level income has an average ($\bar{X}$ = 2.08), and the group with middle income has the lowest average level ($\bar{X}$ = 2.06).

Table 11. Distribution of SCA means according to the ages of the participants.

	Age	N	$\bar{X}$	S	St. Deviation	The lowest	The Highest
	15 - 17	113	2.01	0.33	0.03	1.19	2.60
	18 - 21	152	2.04	0.37	0.03	1.14	3.70
	22 - 40	307	2.06	0.39	0.02	1.02	3.35
SCA (Overall)	41 - 60	223	2.12	0.39	0.03	1.12	3.21
	61 and over	74	2.21	0.49	0.06	1.02	3.53
	Total	869	2.08	0.39	0.01	1.02	3.70

Table 12. Variance analysis of SCA results (Anova-Tukey) based on the participants' educational status.

	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	sd	Mean Square	F	p	Integroup Difference
	Intergroup	3.36	5.00	0.67	4.50	0.000	
SCA (Overall)	In-Group	129.05	863.00	0.15			1 - 3*
							1 - 5*
	Total	132.41	868.00				2 - 3*

*1. Never attended school, 2. Primary School 1 - 5, 3. Ortaokul-ilköğretim, 4. Secondary-High School, 5. associate-university, 6. Postgraduate.

Table 13. Distribution of SCA means according to the participants' educational background.

	Education Status	N	$\bar{X}$	S	St. Deviation	The Lowest	The Highest
	Never Attended Any Schools	19	2.33	0.37	0.08	1.88	2.95
	Primary School 1 - 5	171	2.15	0.44	0.03	1.02	3.53
	Secondary-Primary Education	198	2.01	0.36	0.03	1.07	2.81
SCA (Overall)	secondary Education (High School)	222	2.09	0.41	0.03	1.02	3.70
	Associate-Degree/Bachelor's Degree	235	2.05	0.35	0.02	1.05	3.14
	Post Graduate	24	2.10	0.35	0.07	1.49	2.77
	Total	869	2.08	0.39	0.01	1.02	3.70

Table 14. Variance analysis (Anova-Tukey) results of SCA means of the participants according to their in-come status.

	Resource of Variance	Sum of Squares	sd	Mean Squares	F	p	Intergroup Meaningful Difference
	Intergroup	0.59	4.00	0.15	0.97	0.425	
SCA (Overall)	In-Group	131.82	864.00	0.15			_
	Total	132.41	868.00				

Table 15. Distribution of SCA means according to the income status of the participants.

	Income Status	N	$\bar{X}$	S	St. Mistake	The Lowest	The Highest
	Very Low	17	2.15	0.36	0.09	1.51	2.67
	Low	81	2.13	0.46	0.05	1.42	3.70
	Of Medium	498	2.06	0.40	0.02	1.02	3.53
SCA (Overall)	Good	261	2.08	0.36	0.02	1.05	3.05
	Very Good	12	2.18	0.33	0.09	1.53	2.63
	Total	869	2.08	0.39	0.01	1.02	3.70

According to findings of the research, though it was found that stress coping attitudes do not change according to the income status, it can be concluded that the group of very high-level income, with sufficient financial resources, has a higher attitude than other groups. It can also be suggested that the reason why the group with middle income has the lowest average attitude might be because individuals who can meet their financial needs may want to reach economically upper status and they may even have ambition for it and this situation might have been effecting the stress coping attitudes negatively.

Table 16 shows that stress coping attitudes show varience according to religious knowledge of the respondents. $(F_{(3;865)}) = 5.05$, $p < 0.05$.

It is seen that the highest average ($\bar{X}$ = 2.22) in stress coping attitudes according to the religious knowledge belongs to the group of those whose religious knowledge is very well. The group, whose religious knowledge is at good level has an average ($\bar{X}$ = 2.10); the group, whose religious knowledge is at middle level has an average ($\bar{X}$ = 2.05); the group with low-insufficient religious knowledge has an average ($\bar{X}$ = 1.96). Groups that have significant differences between each others are the groups that are at the religious knowledge level of 1 - 3, 1 - 5, and 2 - 4 (**Table 17**).

It is remarkable that the highest average in the stress coping attitudes belongs to the group of those whose religious knowledge is very well, and the lowest average belongs to the group with low-insufficient religious knowledge.

Considering the data in **Table 18**, it is seen that stress coping attitudes vary according to the perceived religiousness level of the participants. $(F_{(3;865)}) = 14.86$, $p < 0.01$.

It is seen in **Table 19** that the highest average ($\bar{X}$ = 2.25) in stress coping attitudes according to the perceived religiousness level belongs to the group of those who are devoutly religious. The group of those who defined themselves religious has average attitude level ($\bar{X}$ = 2.11); the group of those who are irrelevant to religious has average ($\bar{X}$ = 1.93); and the group of those who are less religious has the lowest average ($\bar{X}$ = 1.92). Groups that have significant differences between each other are the groups that are at the 1 - 4, 2 - 3, and 2 - 4 perceived religiousness level.

It was found that the highest average of stress coping attitudes belongs to the group of those who are devoutly religious and religious, and the groups of those who are irrelevant to religion and less religious ones has the lowest attitude level shows that religiousness is one of the most effective ways in coping with stress.

Table 16. Variance analysis (Anova-Tukey) results of SCA means of the participants according to their religious knowledge levels.

	Resource of Variance	Sum of Squares	sd	Mean Squares	F	p	Intergroup Meaningful Difference
SCA (Overall)	Intergroups	2.28	3.00	0.76	5.05	0.002	1 - 3[*]
	In-groups	130.13	865.00	0.15			1 - 4[*]
	Total	132.41	868.00				2 - 4[*]

[*]1. Poor-insufficient, 2. Medium, 3. Good, 4. Very good.

Table 17. Distribution of SCA means according to religious knowledge level of the participants.

	Religious Knowledge Level	N	$\bar{X}$	S	SD	The Lowest	The Highest
SCA (Overall)	Poor-Insufficient	63	1.96	0.46	0.06	1.02	3.53
	Medium	326	2.05	0.38	0.02	1.07	3.35
	Good	436	2.10	0.38	0.02	1.02	3.70
	Very Good	44	2.22	0.37	0.06	1.53	3.09
	Total	869	2.08	0.39	0.01	1.02	3.70

Table 18. Variance analysis (Anova-Tukey) results of SCA means of the participants according to their level of perceived religiousness.

	Variance Resource	Sum of Squares	sd	Mean Squares	F	p	Intergroup Meaningful Difference
	Inter-Group	6.49	3.00	2.16	14.86	0.000	
SCA(Overall)	In-Group	125.92	865.00	0.15			1 - 4[*] 2 - 3[*] 2 - 4[*]
	Total	132.41	868.00				

[*]1. Irrelevant to religion, 2. Less religious, 3. Religious, 4. Very religious.

Table 19. Distribution of SCA means according to perceived religiousness levels of the participants.

	Perceived Religiousness Level	N	$\bar{X}$	S	SD	The Lowest	The Highest
	Irrelevant to Religion	17	1.93	0.53	0.13	1.02	3.53
	Less Religious	172	1.92	0.38	0.03	1.05	3.35
SCA (Overall)	Religious	642	2.11	0.38	0.01	1.02	3.70
	Very Religious	38	2.25	0.33	0.05	1.42	3.09
	Total	869	2.08	0.39	0.01	1.02	3.70

Topuz (2003) in his study states that while the people taking place in the dimension of positive direction of religious developmental process are more eager to attempt to solve the problem, to seek for support from their environment, take the situation from a positive perspective and they can express themselves easily, the people experiencing negative religious developmental process often avoid expressing their feelings and ignore the situation or they try to forget it and they often use drug or alcohol to do so. This is compatible with the findings of our study.

Table 20 shows that stress coping attitudes vary according to religious education that the participants received in the family. $t(867) = 2.201$, $p < 0.05$.

The average stress coping attitude level of the participants who received religious education in their families was found to be $\bar{X} = 2.11$ and of those who do not get it in their families is $\bar{X} = 2.05$. There is a statistically meaningful difference between the two groups. Those who get religious education in their families have a higher average in stress coping attitudes compared to those who do not get religious education in their families.

It can be concluded that having religious education in family is more beneficial and useful in coping with stress than not receiving it in at home. It should also be considered that another factor or factors other than getting religious education in family can be effective in the stress that the people have. For example, it can be thought that some behaviours as parents' democratic attitudes or whether they are having religious life that they tell and want to have or not might have either positive or negative contribution to the individuals' stress. Şahin (2006) stated in his study that parents' religiousness as well as their personality can have influence on their children's religion-related stress and its frequency; if parents are oppressive and rigid religious, this oppression can result in stress that children have. Şahin (2006) suggests in his study that the lowest frequency level of religion-related stress belongs to the individuals who see the religiosity level of their families high and those who see the religiosity level of their families as oppositely low. This partially supports our findings of the research.

When Table 21 is analysed, it is seen that stress coping attitudes do not vary according to the religious education received in a Quran course: $t(867) = 0.817$, $p > 0.05$.

The average stress coping level of the respondents, who get religious education in Quran course was found $\bar{X} = 2.08$ and of those who did not receive it in a Quran course was found $\bar{X} = 2.06$. Although there is not statistically meaningful difference between the two groups, it can be concluded that the respondents who had their religious education at a Quran course have a higher average in stress coping attitudes compared to those who did not receive religious education in Quran course.

These results suggest that religious instructions in Quran courses are not effective in coping with the stress; providing educational personal and course curriculum should be reinforced about some topics such as "religious coping" and "stress coping".

Table 22 indicates that stress coping attitudes do not vary according to religious education that received from Imam. t(867) = 0.727, $p > 0.05$.

The average stress coping level of the respondents who received religious education from Imam, was found $\bar{X} = 2.09$ nd of those who do not get it from Imam was found $\bar{X} = 2.07$. Although there is not statistically meaningful difference between the two groups, it can be stated that the respondents who received religious education from Imam, have a higher average in stress coping attitudes compared to those, who did no get religious education from Imam.

According to the results of the study, there is no significant difference between those who get religious education from Imam and those who do not get it from Imam in terms of dealing with stressful situations. To sum up, it can be concluded that Imams have very little positive effect on the community's stress coping ability.

Table 23 shows that stress coping attitudes do not vary according to religious education received in the course of Religion and Ethics at school. t(867) = 0.7, $p > 0.05$.

The average stress coping level of the respondents who had religious education in the course of Religion and Ethics at school is $\bar{X} = 2.09$ and those who do not get it at school is $\bar{X} = 2.07$. Although there is not statistically meaningful difference between the two groups, it is seen that those who get religious education at Religion and Ethics course have a higher average in stress coping attitudes compared to those who did not get it at the course of Religion and Ethics.

Table 20. T-Test results of SCA means according to whether the participants received religious education from their families.

	Family	N	$\bar{X}$	S	SD	t	Sd	*p*
SCA (Overall)	Yes	331	2.11	0.36	0.02	2.201	867	0.028
	No	538	2.05	0.41	0.02			

Table 21. T-Test results of SCA means according to whether the participants received their religious education at a Quran course.

	Quran Course	N	$\bar{X}$	S	SD	t	Sd	*p*
SCA (Overall)	Yes	582	2.08	0.39	0.02	0.817	867	0.414
	No	287	2.06	0.40	0.02			

Table 22. T-Test results of SCA means according to whether they received their religious education from Imam.

	Imam	N	$\bar{X}$	S	SD	t	Sd	*p*
SCA (Overall)	Yes	374	2.09	0.39	0.02	0.727	867	0.468
	No	495	2.07	0.39	0.02			

Table 23. T-Test results of SCA means according to whether they received their religious education at the course of religious culture and ethics.

	Religious Culture and Ethics Couse	N	$\bar{X}$	S	SD	t	Sd	*p*
SCA (Overall)	Yes	347	2.09	0.38	0.02	0.700	867	0.484
	No	522	2.07	0.40	0.02			

The results suggest that Religion and Ethics course has very little contribution to stress coping attitudes and that the course should be reinforced about some topics such as "religious coping", "stress-coping".

In **Table 24**, it is seen that stress coping attitudes vary according to religious education received from religious books. t(867) = 4.981, $p < 0.01$.

The average stress coping level of the respondents who got their religious education from religious books is $\bar{X}$ = 2.14 and those who did not get it from religious books is $\bar{X}$ = 2.01. There is a statistically meaningful difference between the two groups. It suggests that people who had religious education from religious books have a higher average stress coping attitudes when compared to those who did not get it from religious books.

It can be concluded that getting religious education from religious books contributes to stress coping and religious publications have an important influence on the individuals in stress coping.

In **Table 25**, it can be seen that stress coping attitudes do not vary according to getting religious education at Imam Hatip High School. t(867) = 1.712, $p > 0.05$.

The average stress coping level of the respondents who had a religious education from Imam Hatip High School is $\bar{X}$ = 2.13 and of those who did not get it from Imam Hatip High School is $\bar{X}$ = 2.07. Although there is not statistically meaningful difference between the two groups, it is seen that the subjects, who has a religious education at Imam Hatip High School have a higher average in stress coping attitudes compared to those who did not get it at Imam Hatip High School.

It can be concluded that the reason why there is little or no significant difference between the two groups might suggest that the education of those schools might not help students gain enough problem-solving and coping with challenges skills to students.

Table 26 shows that stress coping attitudes do not vary according to getting religious education from other sources. t(867) = −0.333, $p > 0.05$.

The average stress coping level of the respondents who had religious education from other sources, is $\bar{X}$ = 2.06 and of those who did not get it from other sources is $\bar{X}$ = 2.08. Although there is not statistically meaningful difference between the two groups, it can safely be stated that those who received religious education from other sources have a lower average in stress coping attitudes compared to those who did not get it from other sources.

This might suggest that the reason why there is no significant difference between those who get religious education from other sources and those who did not in terms of stress coping attitudes might be because of they are various and there is no one standard.

Table 24. T-Test results of SCA means according to whether they received their religious education from religious books.

	Religious Books	N	$\bar{X}$	S	SD	t	Sd	p
SCA (Overall)	Yes	447	2.14	0.37	0.02	4.981	867	0.000
	No	422	2.01	0.40	0.02			

Table 25. T-Test results of SCA means according to whether they received their religious education at Imam Hatip High Schools.

	Imam Hatip High School	N	$\bar{X}$	S	SD	t	Sd	p
SCA (Overall)	Yes	152	2.13	0.39	0.03	1.712	867	0087
	No	717	2.07	0.39	0.01			

Table 26. T-Test results of SCA means according to whether they received their religious education from other sources.

	Other Sources	N	$\bar{X}$	S	SD	t	Sd	p
SCA (Overall)	Yes	84	2.06	0.35	0.04	−0.333	867	0.740
	No	785	2.08	0.39	0.01			

3. Conclusions and Suggestions

3.1. Conclusions

The results statistically showed that stress coping attitudes don't differ significantly according to the gender, and although there is statistically no significant difference between these genders, women have higher attitude average than men.

It was found that stress coping attitudes statistically differ significantly according to the age and the group of those at the age of 61 years and over group has the highest average in stress coping attitude, which was followed by the age group of 41 - 60, 22 - 40 and 18 - 21 respectively and the lowest average belongs to the age group of 15 - 17 years old.

The results also showed that there is a statistically meaningful difference in stress coping attitudes according to the education level and that the group of those who never took school education has the highest average in stress coping attitude averages, which is followed by the group of those graduated from elementary school, postgraduates, graduates of high school, and the group of those who had an associate degree - bachelor's degree and the lowest average attitude was found to belong to the graduates of secondary school.

The results indicated that there is no statistically meaningful difference in stress coping attitudes according to the income levels of the respondents. The group of very high level income has the highest average in stress coping attitude averages according to the income statue, which was followed respectively by the group of very low level income, group of low level income, and group of high level income and the group of middle income was found to have the lowest average stress coping attitudes.

It was also found that stress coping attitudes differ significantly according to the people's religious knowledge. The group of those whose religious knowledge is very well has the highest average in stress coping attitude, which is followed respectively by the group of those whose religious knowledge is at good level, and group of those whose religious knowledge is at middle level and the lowest average attitude level occurs among the members of the group with low-insufficient religious knowledge.

The results showed that stress coping attitudes differ significantly according to the perceived religiousness levels of the respondent. The group of those who are devoutly religious has the highest average in stress coping attitude averages according to the piety level, and is followed respectively by the group of religious, group of irrelevant to religious, and of all, the group of less religious had the lowest average stress coping attitudes.

The results showed that stress coping attitudes differ significantly according to whether they received religious education or not; the group of those who got religious education were found to have a higher average of stress coping attitudes compared to those who did not have any religious education.

It was found that stress coping attitudes differ significantly according to having religious education in family; those who got religious education in their families have a higher average in stress coping attitudes compared to those who did not get religious education in their families.

The results showed that although there is no meaningful difference between stress coping attitudes of those who had religious education at a Quran course and those who did not, those who received their education at a Quran course were found to have a higher average in stress coping attitudes when compared to those who did not get it at a Quran course.

It was also determined that stress coping attitudes did not differ according to getting religious education from Imam and although there is not a statistically meaningful difference between the two groups, those who received religious education from Imam have a higher average in stress coping attitudes compared to those who did not.

When the responses were anayzied, it was found that stress coping attitudes did not differ according to the religious education they received in Religion and Ethics course at schools. Although there is not statistically any meaningful difference between the two groups, those who had religious education in Religion and Ethics course were found to have a higher average in stress coping attitudes compared to those who did not get religious education in Religion and Ethics course.

It was found that stress coping attitudes differ according to religious education the respondents receive from religious books; those who had religious education from religious books were found to have a higher average in stress coping attitudes compared to those who did not get their religious education from religious books.

The results of the study demonstrated that stress coping attitudes do not differ according to getting religious education they received at Imam Hatip High Schools. Although there is not statistically meaningful difference between the two groups, those who had a religious education at Imam Hatip High Schools have a higher average

in stress coping attitudes compared to those who did not get religious education at Imam Hatip High Schools.

It was determined that stress coping attitudes do not differ according to the religious education that they received from other sources.

3.2. Suggestions

The suggestions developed by considering the findings and analysis of the study are given in the items below:

1) It is necessary that "Religious coping" and "stress coping" topics should be added to the curriculum of the course of "Religion and Ethics".

2) Topics about "religious coping" and "stress coping" should be added to the content of Psychology of Religion course, which is taught at Faculty of Theology that provides education to the students at associate degree and bachelor's degree level.

3) Religious personnel working in Quran courses and mosques should be trained in-service training about stress coping and effective communication skills.

4) Teachers of Religion and Ethics course and Imam Hatip High Schools should be trained in-service training about stress coping and effective communication skills.

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