



Investigating the Relationship between Stress Coping Styles and Attitude toward Suicide in Adolescents

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Abstract

Healthy jokes are one of the best ways to cope with life's pressures. The humor is relieved or prevented by accepting the fleeting self-esteem of a hidden desire, which creates pleasure or happiness, while at the same time alleviating the anguish that often manifests the miracle of a wish. Sudden release of tension, pleasant surprise Bring it. However, the unconscious root of one's stress changes somehow in a joke, which is often not uncomfortable. The research method was descriptive-survey. The statistical population of this study included all teenage girls and boys of Zahedan in the academic year of 2019 and the sample was selected by random sampling method & using Cochran formula which was 270 people. The standardized questionnaires used for data collection included Andrews & Parker Stress Coping Strategies Questionnaire (1990) and Humorous Styles Questionnaire of Martin et al. (1988). Spss25 software was used for data analysis. In this study, the demographic status of the subjects was examined by age and gender. According to the descriptive statistics, among the dimensions of stress coping styles, the highest mean was related to problem-oriented style and among the dimensions of humor styles, the highest mean was related to self-destructive style. The results of the data analysis confirmed all the existing hypotheses and showed that there is a relationship between coping styles and humor styles in Teenagers.

Keywords:

Stress Coping Styles, Humorous Styles, Suicidal, Bonding, Aggressive

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Received 14 November 2020 / Accepted 02 February 2021

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24200/jsshr.vol9iss01pp34-45>

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1. Introduction

Attitude is perceived to be an important component of individual's personality, which tends to be highly consistent over time. It is defined as cognitive, emotional, and active predispositions toward a particular object or purpose. Numerous studies revealed that people's attitude toward suicide is correlated with their suicide attempt ([Arnautovska & Grad, 2010](#)).

The results of studies on suicidal attempts in adolescents suggested that there are two groups of teens who have a higher risk of suicide; the first group includes very smart teenagers who are lonely and isolated and are not able to meet their own perfectionism standards or the demands of their important people in their lives; the second group, with a higher frequency than the first group, has antisocial tendencies expressing their dissatisfaction with various forms of behaviors including threats, intimidation, fighting, conflict, theft and multiple risky behaviors including suicide and substance abuse ([Fergusson et al., 2000](#)).

There is no doubt that all teens experience some concerns that affect their lives. Longitudinal studies have emphasized the link between stressful life events, conflicts, family conflicts and struggles with abusive behaviors, self-harm, and social isolation in youth. However, stress is a normal part of life ([Friedenberg & Lewis, 1993](#)). Stress is a general experience in all human lives ([Varcarolis et al., 2006](#)).

Various models have been suggested that contrast in their accentuation on the part of mental, social, mental and neurobiological factors in clarifying self destruction hazard. Fundamental to numerous models is a pressure diathesis segment which expresses that self-destructive conduct is the aftereffect of a connection between intensely unpleasant occasions and a defenselessness to self-destructive conduct ([O'Connor et al., 2020](#)). Perceived pressure is a significant road to build distinguishing proof of people with a higher danger of self-destruction related ideation among more established grown-ups with a current analysis of significant melancholy ([Bickford et al., 2020](#)).

Through using coping styles, people try to adapt themselves when confronted with stressful situations. There are different types of coping styles with different definitions. For example, Endler and Parker (1990) proposed three stress coping styles: task-oriented coping (TOC), emotion-oriented coping (EOC), and avoidance-oriented coping (AOC). People who are unable to effectively cope with the complex situations experience greater stress and the resulting incompatibility can cause mental disorders and problems. Selecting ineffective coping styles is the main cause of many psychological problems. Studies have shown that teenagers will be less likely to be able to cope with adolescence crises showing their behavioral problems in the forms of aggressiveness, depression, and anxiety if they not equip themselves with stress coping styles, thus they would have low ability to cope with their own and others' emotions ([Elgar et al., 2003](#)).

Carnick, Edelman, Engebreston, and Espnes (1983) demonstrated that stress syndrome is a person's reaction to events or changes that are inconsistent with his or her social status. They are the result of one or more cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and physical reactions that can either occur immediately or with delay. These reactions include sleep disturbances, hypertension, depression and anxiety. People are adaptable to the environmental changes if they employ effective coping styles. However, the application of ineffective coping styles leads to the maladaptation, which decreases the individuals' quality of life and affects their interpersonal relationships (Barry, 2002). Alexithymic Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) outpatients might be described by higher confusion seriousness and trouble in distinguishing sentiments that might be connected to expanded self destruction ideation, paying little heed to full of feeling demeanors or homocysteine levels. Homocysteine levels were not identified with any considered variable (De Berardis, et al., 2020).

Stress openness is fundamental to hypotheses of self destruction. To propel comprehension of the connection among stress and self destruction, it is inspected whether explicit, hypothetically relevant life stressors were differentially identified with self-destructive reasoning versus self-destructive practices among hospitalized teenagers (Stewart, et al. 2019). An enormous corpus of examination has exhibited that pressure assumes a compelling part in the beginning, upkeep, and repeat of mental ailment, just as in a few significant actual medical conditions (Slavich & Auerbach, 2018)

South Korea has positioned first in self destruction mortality among the 35 OECD countries since 2003. Tragically, psychological well-being examination and proof based mediations to check the pace of self destruction have been restricted. Self destruction is the main source of death among South Korean young people. Scholastic pressure is an essential danger factor, which is profoundly connected with despondency. Social disgrace against psychological sicknesses and negative associations with companions and guardians are extra danger factors, while positive connections might be defensive (Kwak & Ickovics, 2019).

According to the problem-oriented coping style, people interact directly with the stressful circumstances in order to adjust the stressor for achieving the goal through changing the relationship between individual and environment. Much research has been done on these variables; however, to date, no research has investigated the relationship between them. In a study by Poursharifi et al., (2012) found that happiness is negatively correlated with depression, stress and suicidal ideation, and it is positively correlated with social support. The maximum value of correlation was related to the depression and suicidal ideation variables. The results of the study by Orbach, et al., (1991) revealed that problem-oriented coping styles and high self-esteem in teenagers are important factors in preventing high-risk behaviors (such as suicide) and delinquency and other stress coping styles predict these behaviors. Zhang et al., (2010) reported that Chinese teenagers attempting suicide aged between 19 to 25 years and experienced a higher level of stress. The findings of the study by Ackerman et al. showed that adolescents with a history of suicide attempt had decision-making deficits in sensitive and stressful situations. According to the study by Andrew et al. (2007), students with suicide attempt were more likely to use avoidance style. Horosh et al. (1996) found that the emotion-oriented coping styles were positively correlated with suicide in adolescents, and problem-oriented coping styles were negatively correlated with suicide in this group. Wilson et al. (1995) reported that adolescents with suicide attempt focused more on emotion-oriented styles displaying more avoidant behaviors; whereas normal adolescents showed greater use of problem-oriented styles. According to the results of the studies, the rate of suicides has accelerated in recent years. Therefore, the community members especially professionals in the field need to have a more positive attitude toward suicide, raising their awareness about suicide and strategies to prevent it; the persons with a failed suicide attempt are mentally ill; they need help to prevent their suicide attempt again. Additionally, identifying the factors contributing to suicide will help therapists to take some measures for controlling these factors through clinical services and interventions. Besides, the rising suicide rate among this population necessitates for further research in the area. In this regard, this study aimed to investigate if there is a positive and significant association between the stress coping styles and attitude to suicide among the adolescents.

2. Methodology

The present study had an applied purpose, with a descriptive-survey design for methodology and was based on determining the relationship between the variables. This was a descriptive and correlational study, because it sought to investigate the relationship between stress coping styles, humor styles and attitude toward suicide in adolescents. Survey methodology was used for data collection and since the results of our study can be used as a guideline for counseling and psychotherapy centers of education institutes, welfare organization, education; it had an applied purpose. The statistical population included all adolescents aged 15-17 years (males and females) in Zahedan city in the academic year of 2018-19. In order to calculate the desired sample size, the population variance was estimated to be 0.25 based on the previous studies; therefore, the sample size was determined using Cochran formula, with a 95% confidence level and 0.05 accuracy. Firstly, among three areas of Zahedan city, area 1 and among nine districts, district 1 were selected using random cluster sampling method. Then, nine high schools were randomly selected and three classes from each were chosen; ten students were selected randomly from each class according to the fields of study in a high school. Based on the above calculations, the sample consisted of 270 adolescent students from 10th, 11th and 12th grades (both girls and boys) studying in all Experimental Sciences, Humanities and Mathematics majoring in an education area of Zahedan in the academic year of 2018-19. The sample consisted of 270 high school students, of whom 144 were girls and 126 boys; 89 students were 15 years old, 98 16 years old, and 83 17 years old. The average age of students in 10th, 11th and 12th grades were 15-17 years of age from the early to late adolescence. The present study used the questionnaire tool for collecting data since it is the most common tool used in the descriptive-survey research and interview.

A) Endler and Parker (1990) scale (1990): This scale has been translated by Akbarzadeh (1997). The test consists of 48 items whose responses have been rated based on a 5-point Likert scale from never (1) to always (5). The three main areas of coping behaviors include problem-oriented coping, emotion-oriented coping, and avoidance-oriented coping styles. Cronbach's alpha was used to obtain the reliability of the stress coping style scale.

Table (1): Reliability of the questionnaire of stress coping styles` components

Component	Reliability
Problem-oriented coping	0.93
Emotion- oriented coping	0.88
Avoidance -oriented coping	0.94

B) Multi-Attitude Suicide Tendency (MAST) scale: This scale was developed by Israel Orbach, Ilana Milstein, Dov Har-Even, Alan Apter, Sam Tiano and Avner Elizur. It consists of 30 items and 4 subscales of attraction to life, repulsion by life, attraction to death, and repulsion by death, which is used to assess suicidal tendencies in youth. The items have been rated based on a 5-point Likert scoring ranging from " 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Don't agree, 3 = Sometimes agree, Sometimes disagree, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree. In Orbach et al., (1991), estimates of coefficient alpha ranged from 0.76 (repulsion by life and death) to 0.83 (attraction to life and repulsion by death), showing a good internal consistency. In the present study, the reliability of the scale items was as follows:

Table (2): Reliability of the components of suicide attitude scale

Component	Reliability
Attraction to life	0.94
Repulsion by life	0.90
Attraction of death	0.93
Repulsion by death	0.88

After collecting the questionnaires, the data were analyzed using SPSS, version 25, software. The data were firstly coded and then entered into the software. They were then analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. In descriptive statistics section, frequency distribution tables, percentage, mean and variance were used, and, Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis were used for inferential statistics section.

3. Results

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between stress coping styles and attitude towards suicide among the adolescents studying in Zahedan schools in the academic year of 2018-19. Results showed that 53.3% of the sample were males and 46.7% females; therefore, most of the samples were males and the students aged 16 and 17 had the highest and lowest frequency, respectively.

Table (3): Descriptive statistics for stress coping styles

Statistics Variable	Mean	SD
Problem-oriented coping style	45.71	10.33
Emotion- oriented coping style	44.98	11.18
Avoidance -oriented coping style	31.84	11.17

According to the results in Table (3), the analysis of the means of stress coping styles showed that among the dimensions of stress coping styles, problem-oriented and avoidant-oriented styles had the highest and lowest means, respectively.

Table (4): Descriptive statistics related to suicide attitude and its dimensions

Statistics Variable	Mean	SD
Total score	87.84	11.23
Attraction to life	21.48	11.14
Repulsion by life	19.94	9.27
Attraction of death	23.08	10.69
Repulsion by death	23.73	10.17

As shown in Table (4), analyzing the means of attitude to suicide and its dimensions showed that among the dimensions of attitude to suicide, repulsion by death and repulsion by life had the highest and lowest means, respectively. According to the data obtained from the research instrument, adequacy of sample size was firstly examined using Bartlett's test and the research hypotheses were then analyzed using Pearson correlation and multiple linear regression tests.

Table (5): Bartlett's test for sample size adequacy

KMO	Chi-square	Degrees of freedom	Significance level
0.864	21845.104	5995	0.000

As can be seen in Table(5), since the value of Chi-square calculated from the critical value of the table, with a degree of freedom of 5995, was at a significance level of 0.05 ($p \leq 0.05$); the sample size was adequate.

Table (6): Correlation matrix between research variables

Variation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Attitude to suicide	1											
Attraction to life	-	1										
Repulsion by life	0.901	0.842	1									
Attraction of death	0.750	0.814	0.684	1								
Repulsion by death	0.803	-0.807	-0.693	-0.718	1							
Problem-oriented coping style	0.809	0.154	-0.102	-0.153	-0.009	1						
Emotion- oriented coping style	0.062	0.190	-0.164	-0.150	0.055	0.736	1					
Avoidance -oriented coping style	0.099	0.541	-0.625	0.587	0.499	-0.005	-0.702	-1.10	1			

Significance level of 0.01. **
 Significance level of 0.05
 - Bold coefficients with signal * are not significant

The results of Table(6) indicated that there was a significant and negative relationship between the suicide attitude and variables of attraction to life, repulsion by death and a positive and significant relationship with the variables of attraction to death, repulsion by life, avoidant-coping style. However, no significant relationships was found between the suicidal tendency and problem-oriented and emotion- oriented coping styles. Overall, current study`s results showed a correlation between the stress coping styles and suicidal attitude in adolescents. More details on the relationships between the research variables can be found in Table (1-6).

Table (7): Correlation coefficient between the emotion-oriented coping style and attitude to suicide and its components

Correlation matrix		Total score of suicidal attitude	Attraction to life	Repulsion by life	Attraction to death	Repulsion by death
Emotion-oriented coping style	Pearson correlation coefficient	99	190	164	150	055
	Significance level	105	2	7	14	366

It should be noted that in order to calculate the total score of suicidal attitude items related to the two domains of attraction to life and repulsion by death were combined.

According to the results of correlation coefficient test in Table (7), there was no significant correlation between emotion-oriented coping style and suicidal attitude and repulsion by death ($P < 0.05$); however, the above findings indicated that emotion-oriented coping style had a direct and significant correlation with attraction to life, and had a reverse and significant relationship with the components of repulsion by life and attraction to death ($P \geq 0.05$). The implication is that people with a high emotion-oriented coping style have a high attraction to life and have a low repulsion by life and are less attracted to death.

Table (8): Correlation coefficient between problem-oriented coping style and suicide attitude and its components

Correlation matrix		Total score of suicidal attitude	Attraction to life	Repulsion by life	Attraction to death	Repulsion by death
Problem-oriented coping style	Pearson correlation coefficient	62	154	102	153	9
	Significance level	311	11	95	12	878

According to the results of correlation coefficient test in Table (8), there was no significant correlation between the problem-oriented coping style and suicidal attitude and components of repulsion by life and repulsion by death ($P > 0.05$); however, the above findings revealed that problem-oriented coping style had a direct and significant correlation with attraction to life, and had a reverse and significant relationship with the attraction to death ($P < 0.05$). The implication is that people with a problem-oriented coping style have a high attraction to life and low attraction to death.

Table (9): Correlation coefficient between the avoidance-oriented coping style and suicide attitude and its components

Correlation matrix		Total score of suicidal attitude	Attraction to life	Repulsion by life	Attraction to death	Repulsion by death
Avoidance-oriented coping style	Pearson correlation coefficient	541	625	587	499	500
	Significance level	0	0	0	0	0

Based on the results of correlation coefficient test in Table (9), there was a significant correlation between the avoidance-oriented coping style and suicidal attitude and components of repulsion by life and attraction to death ($P < 0.05$); whereas, the above findings showed that avoidance-oriented coping

style had a direct and reverse correlation with attraction to life and repulsion by death ($P < 0.05$). The implication is that people with an avoidance-oriented coping style have a high suicidal attitude, attraction to death and repulsion by life and a low repulsion by death and attraction to life. Multiple regression has been used to analyze the predictive ability of suicidal attitude based on the stress coping styles. This suggests that attitude towards suicide is considered as a criterion variable influencing the predictor variables of stress coping styles.

Table (10): Multiple linear regression analysis statistics and summary of fitted regression model of suicidal attitude based on the stress coping styles

Multiple correlation	Coefficient of determination	Adjusted coefficient of determination	f coefficient	Significance level
543	295	287	95.37	0

As indicated in Table (10), multiple correlation coefficient related to stress coping styles with suicidal attitude was 0.54 and the coefficient of determination (0.29) indicated that almost about 29% of changes in suicidal attitude were explained by stress coping styles. Also, the observed f coefficient statistic was significant at $p \geq 0.05$; thus, the estimated linear regression was adequate and acceptable.

Table 1-11: Multiple linear regression analysis coefficients of attitude toward the suicide based on stress coping styles

Regression model	Non-standard coefficients		Beta standard coefficient	Coefficient t	Significance level
	Beta	Standard error			
Constant	990.2	181		477.16	0
Problem-oriented coping style	014	052	021	272	786
Emotion-oriented coping style	052	066	060	785	433
Avoidance-oriented coping style	358	035	537	369.10	0

In Table (11), the coefficients of multiple linear regression model have been utilized to examine the significant impact of each predictor variable (stress coping styles) on the criterion variable (attitude toward suicide). According to the obtained significant levels, it can be concluded that among the stress coping styles, only the avoidance coping style could predict the suicidal attitude ($P \geq 0.05$). Despite the significant correlation coefficients between the problem-oriented and emotion-oriented coping styles with the suicidal attitude, these two styles were not able to predict the suicidal attitude ($P > 0.05$).

Table (12): Summary of multiple regression coefficients for dimensions of attitude toward the suicide based on the stress coping styles

Criterion variable	Predictor variable	β	Beta	T	P-value	R	R ²	F	P-value
Attraction to life	Constant	043.5		85.15	0	0.638	407	922.60	0
	Problem-oriented coping style	0.046	0.034	0.484	0.629				
	Emotion-oriented coping style	0.181	0.103	1.477	0.141				
	Avoidance-oriented coping style	821	612	12.9	0				
Repulsion by life	Constant	1.416		4.162	0	0.597	0.356	49.071	0
	Problem-oriented coping style	0.05	0.037	0.515	0.67				
	Emotion-oriented coping style	228	133	828.1	0.069				
	Avoidance-oriented coping style	0.754	0.576	11.655	0				
Attraction to death	Constant	2.009		5.371	0	0.466	0.217	24.553	0
	Problem-oriented coping style	127	095	1.189	0.235				
	Emotion-oriented coping style	060	035	438	0.661				
	Avoidance-oriented coping style	0.573	0.439	8.044	0				
Repulsion by death	Constant	5.036		13.863	0	0.505	0.255	30.317	0
	Problem-oriented coping style	141	106	1.363	0.174				
	Emotion-oriented coping style	0.141	0.083	1.062	0.289				
	Avoidance-oriented coping style	648	499	9.376	0				

According to the results of Table (12), analyzing the relationship between the stress coping styles and dimensions of suicidal attitude revealed that only the avoidance-coping style could predict the

suicidal attitude ($P > 0.05$; $t < 1.96$); however, both problem-oriented and emotion-oriented coping styles were unable to predict any of the dimensions of suicidal attitude ($P < 0.05$ 96 1.96). Results of multiple regression analysis suggested that the avoidance style, with regression coefficients of 0.64, 0.60, 0.47 and 0.51, could approximately explain the variance of attraction to life (41%), repulsion by life (36%), attraction to death (22%) and repulsion by death (26%), respectively. It should be noted that based on the beta coefficients and the corresponding t-statistic, there was an inverse relationship between the avoidance style and two dimensions of attraction to life and repulsion by death and also there was a direct association between the two dimensions of repulsion by life and attraction to death.

4. Discussion

The present study aimed to investigate the stress coping styles and attitude toward suicide in adolescents. The first finding showed a significant positive relationship between the suicide attitude and stress coping styles. A negative and significant relationship was also found between the suicide attitude and variables of attraction to life, repulsion by death, and a positive and significant association with the variables of attraction to death, repulsion to life and avoidance coping style. However, the results showed no significant relationships between the suicidal tendency and problem-oriented and emotion-oriented coping styles. These results were consistent with those results of the studies by [Poursharifi et al., \(2012\)](#). A more contemporary psychodynamic theory of suicide is that adolescents who complete suicide escape conflict and stress. Evidence of the stress impacts can be extracted from the findings and observations that the highest rate of suicide was observed during the great depression, a time of great stress (Holmes, 1991, quoted by Ben Razi Ghabashi, 2008). Further analysis indicated a positive and significant correlation between the emotion-oriented coping style and suicide attitude. Correlation coefficient test also revealed no significant relationships between the components of emotion-oriented coping style with the suicide attitude and repulsion by death; whereas the above findings showed that the emotion-oriented coping style was directly and significantly correlated with the attraction to life and a significant inverse relationship with the components of repulsion by life and attraction of death. The common emotion in suicide is hopelessness-helplessness. This pervasive feeling is very common among the adolescents and adults: there is nothing I can do except to commit suicide and there is no one who can help me. Earlier psychoanalytic formulations of suicide stressed the unconscious hostility, but nowadays the suicide specialists believe that there are other fundamental and profound emotions (Ben Razi Ghabeshi, 2008). We also found a positive and significant relationship between the problem-oriented coping style and attitude to suicide. The results of correlation coefficient test showed that there was no significant relationships between the problem-oriented coping style with suicide attitude and components of repulsion by life and repulsion by death; however, the above findings indicated that the problem-oriented coping style had a direct and significant relationship with the attraction to life. These results were in agreement with those results of the studies by Horosh et al. (1996), Wilson et al. (1995) and Pascar et al. (1992). The implication is that the suicide is not an accidental; rather it is the only way out of a problem or crisis suffering the person deeply. Suicide is associated with vicious or unfulfilled needs, feelings of despair and frustration, irresolutely conflicts between life and unbearable stress, narrowing the way out of one's perspective, and the need to escape; the suicidal person shows signs of discomfort (Ben Razi Ghabeshi, 2007). When dealing with a problem, the person with problem-oriented coping style uses successful strategies to solve such problems; analyzes it and considers different ways to respond to it before answering the question (Saruchi et al., translated by Nuri Imamzadehie & Nasiri, 2005). There is a strong scientific evidence that the majority of suicide attempters suffer some deficiencies in problem-solving skills, particularly in dealing with problems in interpersonal relationships (Maclivy et al., 1987, quoted by Ben Razi Ghabeshi, 2008). In a study of adolescent's coping with stress, Kamphaus et al. (1998) found that the persons have more control over situations where they use a problem-oriented approach. Finally, there was a positive and significant relationship found between the

avoidance-coping style and attitude to suicide. The results of correlation coefficient test indicated that there was a direct and significant correlation between the avoidance-coping style with attitude to suicide and the components of repulsion by life and attraction of death; however, it was shown that avoidance-coping style was inversely correlated with the attraction of life and repulsion by death. These findings corroborated those results by Orbeck et al. (2012), Andrew et al. (2007). It can be inferred that people with avoidance coping strategies typically deny or get out of stressful situations or turn to alcohol and substance. If the avoidance-coping style is an adaptive strategy for dealing with problems, they should get rid of the problem using a variety of ways including watching or going shopping (Saroughad et al., 2011). People who attempt suicide, experience frustration more than people who only think about suicide before the stressful event. Before any action, the suicide attempters feel rejected than suicidal thinkers and do not want to talk to anyone about their suicidal thoughts (Negron et al., 1998).

5. Conclusions

Overall, the findings of the present study showed that the people with problem-oriented style have high attraction to life and low attraction to death. According to the evidence, the use of problem-solving style to cope with stress by the individual reveals his/her negative attitude toward the suicide. People with high emotion-oriented style have high attraction to life and low repulsion by life and attraction to death. Adolescents who use emotion-oriented styles in response to stress had a negative attitude toward suicide and were not willing to commit suicide. In addition, people with problem-oriented styles have high attraction to life and low attraction to death, suggesting that the use of problem-solving style to cope with stress by the individual reveals his/her negative attitude toward the suicide. Attitude toward suicide, attraction to death and repulsion by life are high in people with avoidance-coping styles and attraction to life and repulsion by death are low. The implication is that the more one uses the avoidance-coping style, the more likely he commits suicide having a positive attitude toward the suicide. It is therefore recommended that the mental health centers, counselors, and psychologists provide the information necessary for its application and develop adolescents' emotion-oriented and problem-oriented styles, thereby decrease their tendencies to death and suicide by addressing stress in a positive and correct way. Moreover, change in adolescents' beliefs and their familiarity with emotion-oriented and problem-oriented coping styles can be considered as the first and most important step towards decreasing the suicide tendency and suicidal ideation among the adolescents.

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