

A Comparative Study of Emotion Control and Coping Strategies Between Engineering and Arts Students

¹Nikita Arya, ²Ayushi Dixit

¹Research Scholar, Department of Psychology, Maharaja Sayajirao University, Vadodara, India

²Research Scholar, Department of Humanities, The Bhopal School of Social Sciences, Bhopal, India

Email – ¹nikitaarya239@gmail.com, ²ayushidixit011@gmail.com

Abstract: The aim of this study was to compare the Emotion Control and Coping Strategies between Engineering and Arts students and whether Emotion Control is directly proportional to Coping Strategies using the method of correlation. The study was conducted on a total of 70 students, 35 from Engineering background and 35 from Arts background. The results clearly showed that Arts Students have better Emotion Control and better Coping Strategies than Engineering Students and Emotion Control is directly proportional to Coping Strategies.

1. INTRODUCTION:

EMOTION CONTROL: “Emotion is often defined as a complex state of feelings that results in physical and physiological changes that influence thought and behaviour”. A group of psychological aspects, including temperament, personality, mood, and motivation correlate emotionality. “According to author David G. Myers, human emotion involves physiological arousal, expressive behaviours, and conscious experience”. Theories of emotion, the major theories of emotion can be arranged into three main sections:

- Physiological theories: According to this, emotions are a result of responses within the body.
- Neurological theories: According to this, emotional responses are a result of activities within the brain.
- Cognitive theories: According to this, thoughts and other mental activities play an important role in forming emotions.[1]

Research on “Emotional Control, Stress and Health” by CF Lok, GD Bishop- Psychology and Health (1999) examined the relationship of four types of emotion control, rehearsal (mental rumination), emotional inhibition, aggression control and benign (impulse) control. It was hypothesised that rehearsal and emotional inhibition would be related to greater perceived stress as well as higher levels of health complaints whereas aggression control and benign control would be associated with lower perceived stress and fewer health complaints. Correlation as well as regression and structural equation analysis supported the hypotheses for rehearsal and benign control with respect to both stress and health complaints. However, emotional inhibition was negatively correlated with stress and unrelated to health complaints whereas aggression control was unrelated to either stress or health complaints. The implications of these results for understanding the role of emotional control in the stress process are discussed.[2] “Emotional control is the ability to respond to the ongoing demands of experience with the range of emotions in a manner that is socially tolerable and sufficiently flexible to permit spontaneous reactions, as well as the ability to delay spontaneous reactions as needed”. “It can also be defined as extrinsic and intrinsic processes responsible for monitoring, evaluating and modifying emotional reactions” [3]

In an earlier study, Roger and Nesselrover (Person. individual. Diff. 8, 527–534, 1987) reported the construction and validation of a scale for measuring emotion control entitled the Emotion Control Questionnaire (ECQ). It is the same Emotion Control Questionnaire that we have used in our study. Factor analysis revealed a 4-factor structure comprising Rehearsal, Emotional Inhibition, Aggression Control and Benign Control, which was replicated on an independent sample of subjects. The earlier study also presented the relationships between the ECQ factors and a variety of other personality scales. Subsequent work has shown that one of the ECQ factors in particular (Rehearsal) is significantly related to both heart-rate recovery and urinary cortisol elevations following stress. However, one of the disadvantages of the ECQ was the brevity of the factors, two of which (Emotional Inhibition and Benign Control) comprised just nine items each, and the present study was aimed at extending the range of behaviour sampled by the scale. Factor analyses of an expanded item pool confirmed the structure of the earlier scale and resulted in a new scale comprising 56 items, fourteen in each of the four factors. Other findings for the new scale (ECQ2) indicate that it is psychometrically equivalent to the original, and further data on the concurrent validation of the emotion control construct are presented.[4] Emotion control is an exceptionally important function in human life.[5]

COPING STRATEGIES: Coping behaviour is a response to unpleasant situation.[6]

Research on stress and coping on adolescent by K Williams and A McGillicuddy (1999) suggest that there are developmental changes in coping during adolescence and coping strategies vary with the type of stressors adolescents experience.[7] “Coping strategies refer to the specific efforts, both behavioural and psychological, that people employ to master, tolerate, reduce, or minimize stressful events” [8]

Three ways to gain better control over your emotions:

1. Label your emotions
2. Reframe your thoughts
3. Engage in a mood booster [9]

Types of coping strategies:

1. Problem solving strategies: It can be defined as the attempt to do something effective to ease stressful circumstances.
2. Emotion focused coping strategies: It can be defined as the attempts to control the emotional consequences of stressful events.

“Research indicates that people use both types of strategies to combat most stressful events. (Folkman and Lazarus, 1980). To handle stressful events in a correct manner, active coping strategies whereas behavioural or emotional are considered more helpful and avoidant coping strategies emerges to be a psychological risk factor. (Holahan and Moos, 1987).[10]

Three dimensions of coping include:

1. Avoidance-oriented,
2. Emotion-oriented, and
3. Task-oriented coping [11].

Coping attributes to the thoughts and action we use to handle a dangerous situation.[12]

1.1 LITERATURE REVIEW:

Ross A. Thompson (1994) did a research on “Emotion regulation: A theme in search of definition” which stresses that after more than a decade of research emphasizing the growth of discrete emotions and their consequences for social personality functioning,

David Glen Mick, Susan Fournier (1998) did a study on “Paradoxes of Technology consumer cognizance, emotions and coping strategies”. The objectives of the study were to investigate consumer perspectives meanings and experiences in relation to arranging of technological products emphasizing lengthy and repeated interviews with 29 households including a set of first-time owners.

Mehdi Malek Zadeh, Mumtaz Begum Mustafa and Adel Lahsasna (2014) did a review of “Emotion regulation in intelligent tutoring systems” the results of the review show that applying emotion regulation strategies during learning may produce more optimistic emotions as well as better learning gain.

Hong Ji Lei Zhang (2011) did a research on “College student stresses and coping strategies”, which says that the mental stresses of college students gain wide attention from the society currently in this research they investigate the mental stresses of college students and argue that there are four sources of stresses namely employment situations, study conditions, personal factors and economic conditions.

Elena Corcorda, Violeta Mihalascu (2012) did a research on “Adolescent coping strategies in secondary school” the study examines the coping strategies used by adolescence in secondary school, the result show that the whole sample got the highest scores on the productive strategies and the lowest scores on the non-productive strategies particularly on behavioural disengagement and emotional discharge

Tali Heiman and Dafna Kariv (2010) did a study of “Coping experience among students in higher education”. This study examines the coping strategies among 130 undergraduate college and university students with learning disabilities and 146 students without learning disabilities, the findings reveal that students without learning disabilities reported higher work stress, combined stress and more social support than did students with learning disabilities.

2. MATERIALS:

The tools used in this research were emotion control scale and coping strategies scale:

2.1. EMOTION CONTROL SCALE: The emotion control of the students was assessed through emotion control scale by Derek Rogers and Bahman Najarian. It is a standardized scale consisting of 56 items. The four factors include rehearsal, emotion inhibition, aggression control, and benign control. Participants rate statements as either true or false. The four factors comprise 14 items each.

There are four factors that comprised the Emotion Control Questionnaire-

Rehearsal - measures the degree of rumination over emotionally upsetting events

Emotional Inhibition - assesses the tendency to inhibit experienced emotion

Aggression Control - examines the inhibition of hostility

Benign Control - correlates with 'impulsiveness' and was included to distinguish it from aggression control.

2.2. COPING STRATEGIES SCALE: The coping strategies of the students were assessed through coping strategies by professor A.K. Shrivastava. It comprises 50 items to be rated on a 5-point scale. The response options were never, rarely, sometimes, most of the time and almost always. The Hindi version of the coping strategies scale was used.

Behavioural approach category: 15 items

Cognitive approach: 6 items

Cognitive behavioural approach: 8 items

Behavioural avoidance: 14 items

Cognitive avoidance: 7 items

3. METHOD:

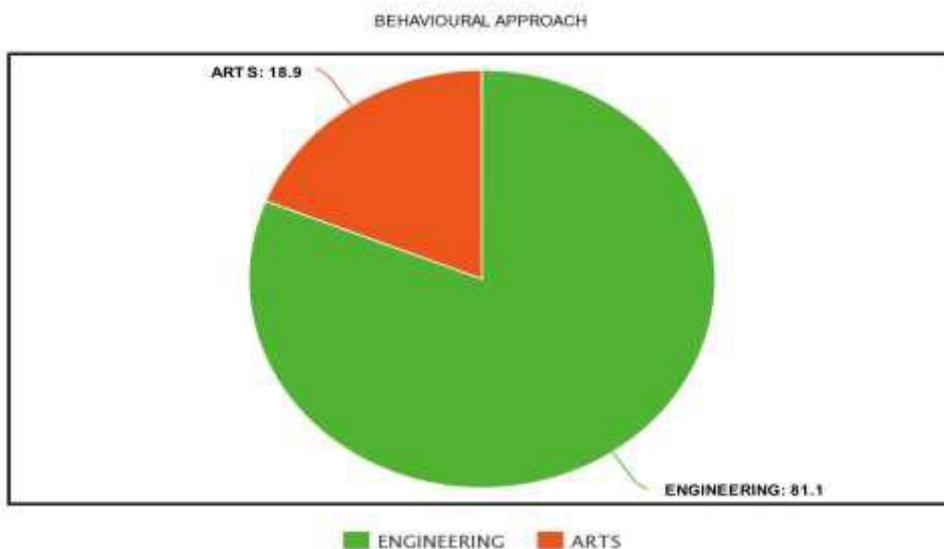
A correlational research design was used in the study. The study was carried out in Bhopal, a city of M.P. The correspondents of the study were the adolescents of the age 19-24 years belonging to different colleges of two streams – engineering and arts. There were 30 undergraduate students of arts and 30 undergraduate students of engineering for the present study.

4. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS:

The results of the present study reveal that the emotion control of arts students is better than those of students studying engineering. The results reject the first hypothesis of this research, which stated, "Engineering students have higher emotion control than arts students." The mean values of both the groups were calculated and compared for results. The reason associated for the so found results might be the varied knowledge of human behaviour in various settings which the Arts students are more exposed to. Engineering students, on the other hand, study the structures and designs of machines, etc. Their exposure and emphasis is more towards the mechanical domains than emotions. The term emotion is derived from Latin term "emovere" which means to stir, to agitate, to move. Hence an emotion is referred to as a stirred-up state of an organism we feel aroused or excited when we experience anger, fear joy grief etc. The capacity to control emotion is important for human adoption. Emotion control can be understood as a feature of emotion regulation but refers primarily to efforts by an individual to manage the generation experience or verbalization of emotion and /or one's emotional reaction. Emotion control can appear as a precedent focus adjustment prior to generation of emotion or through response focus regulation after an emotion has been developed. Emotion control can attribute to the capability to exercise control over emotions through the use of cognitive behavioural strategies. Emotion control is a complicated process that involves originating inhibiting and modulating one's dignity of behaviour in a given situation - for example the instinctive experience(feelings), cognitive feedbacks(thoughts), emotion pertinent physiological responses (for example heart rate or hormonal activity) and emotion related behaviour. Everyday people are constantly exposed to a broad variety of potentially instigating stimuli, improper extreme or unbridled emotional reactions to such stimuli could hamper functional fit within society, therefore people must engage in some form of emotional regulation around all the time. Another relevant result was also similar to the first one. It revealed that Arts students have better coping strategies than Engineering students, which rejects the second hypothesis stating, "Engineering students have better coping strategies than Arts students. As it was for the previous result, here too the mean values of the scores obtained by both the groups were analysed. This outcome might be because as the Arts students study about human behaviour, their interactions, various human settings and what impact they have on human behaviour, they tend to get equipped with managing them with healthy coping strategies. Coping strategies attribute to the specific efforts, both behavioural and psychological, that people engage to master, accept, reduce, or minimize stressful events. Active coping strategies are either behavioural or psychological responses devised to change the nature of the stressors itself or how one thing about it, whereas avoidant coping strategies advance people into activities or mental states that keep them from directly addressing stressful events. Coping means to devote one's own attentive effort to solve personal and interpersonal problems, in order to try to adapt, minimize or tolerate stress and conflict. The psychological coping mechanisms are generally termed coping strategies for coping skills. The term coping generally assigned to adaptive coping strategies, that is, strategies which reduce stress. In contrast, coping strategies may be termed as maladaptive, if they increase stress. Maladaptive coping is therefore also described, when looking at the result, as non- coping. Furthermore, the term coping commonly refers to the responsive coping, i.e., the coping response which follows the stressor. This is different from proactive coping,

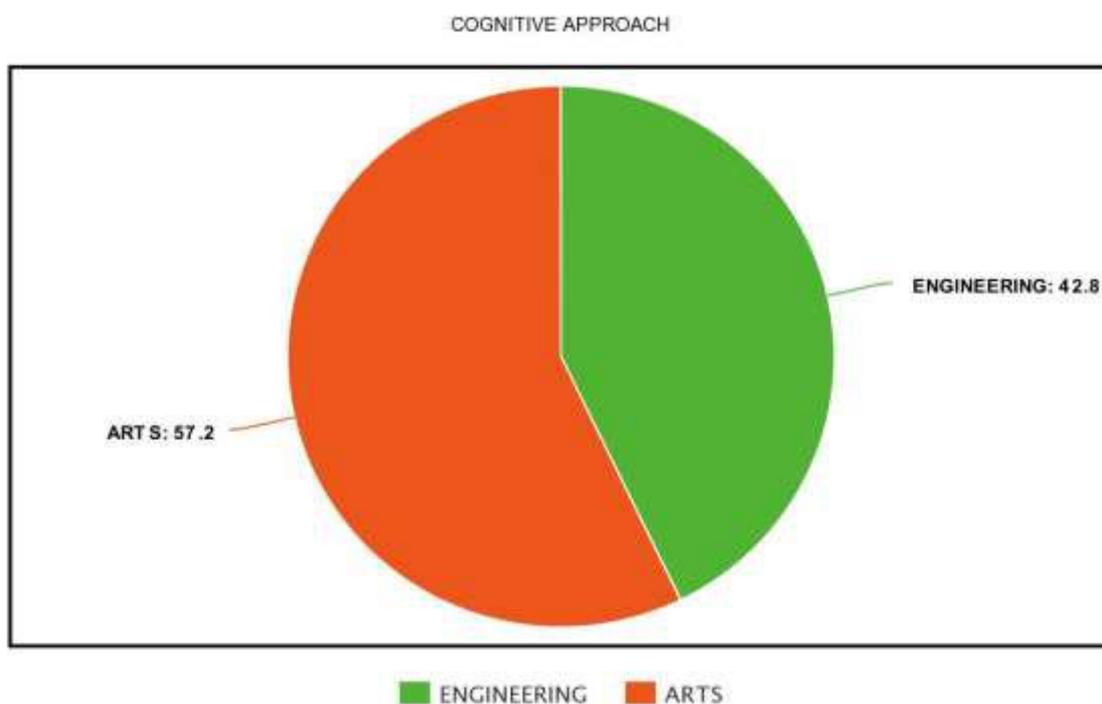
in which a coping response aims to neutralize a future stressor. The efficiency of the coping effort depends on the type of stress the individual and the circumstances. Coping reactions are partially controlled by personality, but also partially by the social environment, especially the nature of the stressful environment. Emotion approach coping is a psychological design that involves the use of emotional processing and emotional explanation in response to a stressful situation. Coping is a keen attempt to address and elevate requirements perceived as stressful. The third hypothesis statement was, “Emotion control will be directly proportional to coping strategies.” The outcomes of assessment and analysis of correlation rejected this hypothesis and established that that emotion control is directly proportional to coping strategies i.e. A person with good emotion control will be able to cope with the everyday stress in a better way. Healthy coping strategies determine a dominant percentage of satisfaction which a person experiences from her/his life. Coping strategies has the following types:

4.1 BEHAVIOURAL APPROACH:



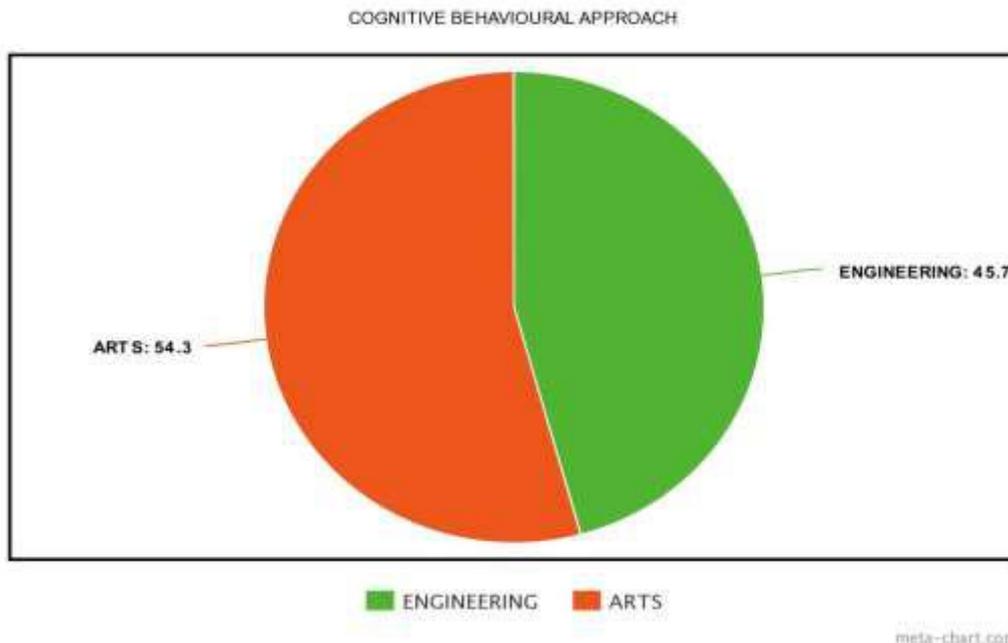
The consequent coping behaviours of behavioural approach include confronting, planning, suppressing competing activities, seeking social support, self control, negotiations etc. In this research it has been observed that engineering students are more problem focused and have much better behavioural approach of coping strategies than arts students.

4.2 COGNITIVE APPROACH:



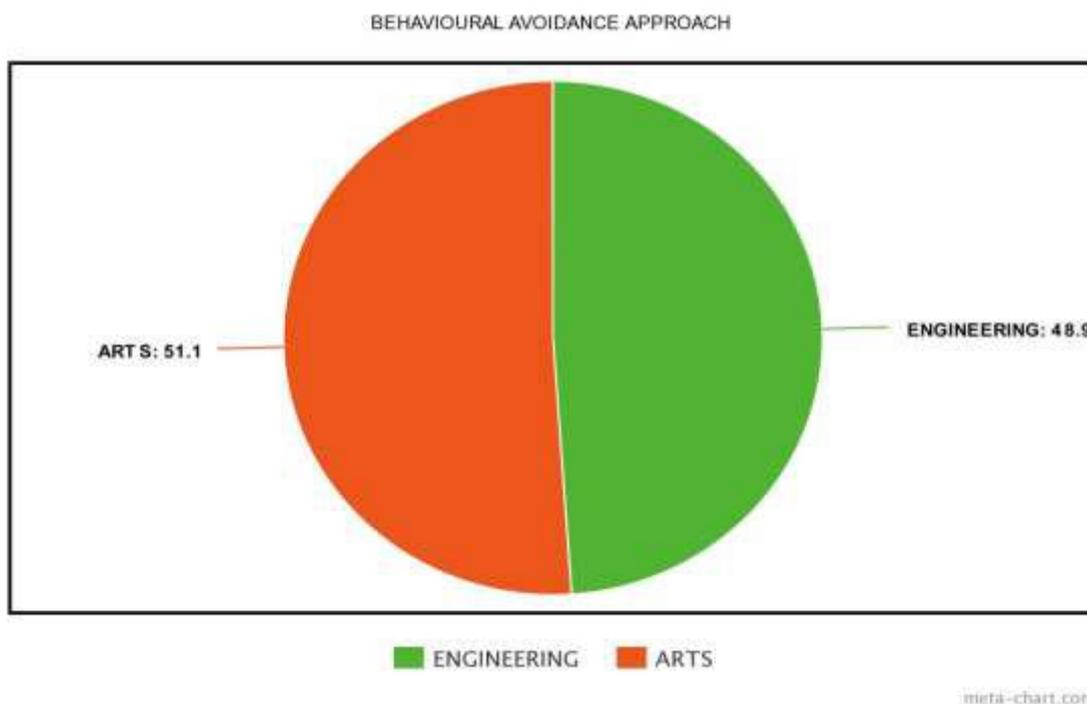
The consequent coping behaviours of cognitive approach include intellectualization, positive reinterpretation, and cognitive reappraisal. In the research it has been observed that arts students have better cognitive approach to coping strategies. They often seek social support for emotional reactions.

4.3 COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL APPROACH:



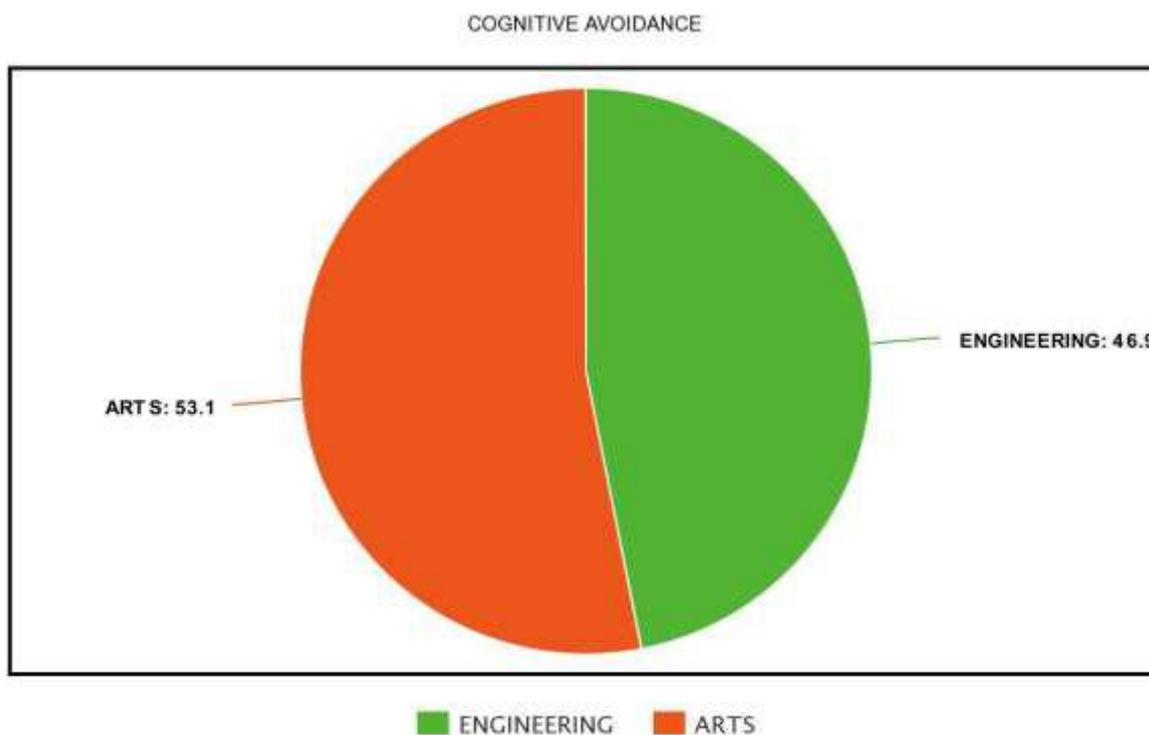
Cognitive behavioural approach focuses more specifically upon accessing those thoughts, moods and behaviours that lead to depression and anxiety. Arts students have shown more cognitive behavioural approach for coping strategies. They are more able to think in a positive way without any cognitive biases and have better staged goals.

4.4 BEHAVIOURAL AVOIDANCE APPROACH:



Coping refers to behaviours that attempt to protect oneself from psychological damage. Behavioural avoidance coping includes modifying or eliminating those behaviours that give rise to the problem. The constituent coping behaviours of behavioural avoidance coping strategies include restraint coping, inhibition of action, turning towards religion, escaping behavioural disengagement, withdrawal etc. This type is almost equal in both engineering and arts students but arts students have slightly higher behavioural avoidance.

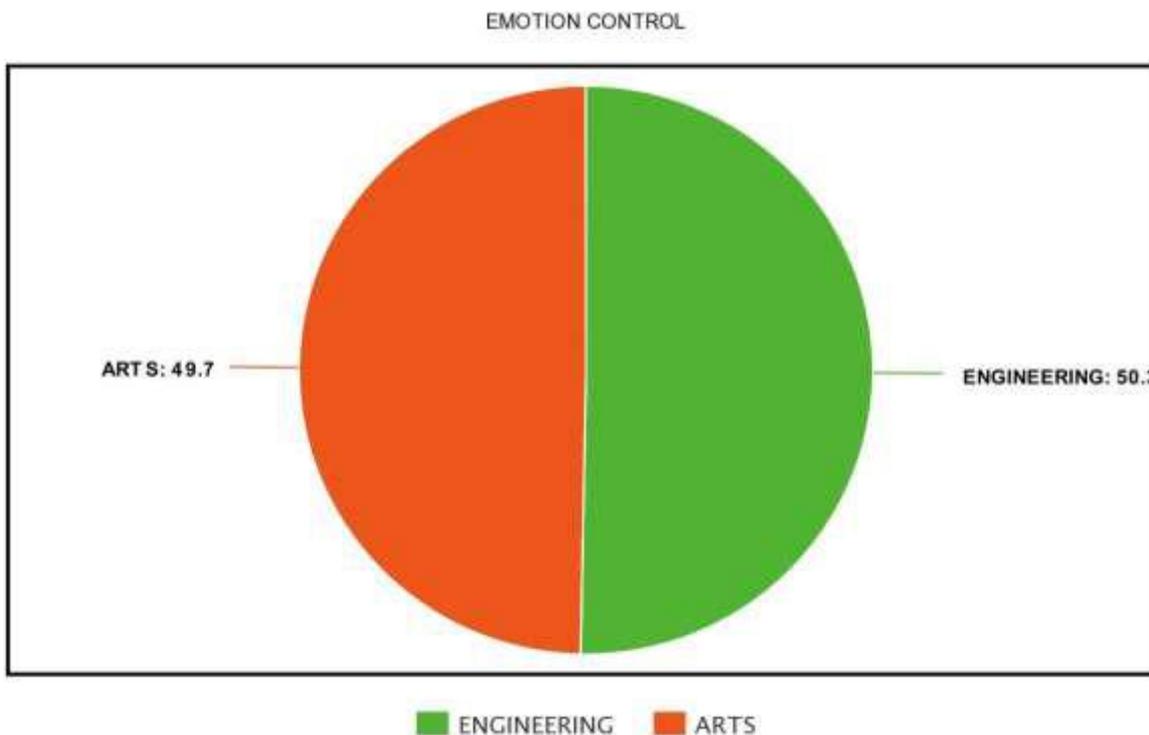
4.5 COGNITIVE AVOIDANCE:



meta-chart.com

Cognitive avoidance approach includes rationalization of thoughts, distancing, cognitive restructuring etc. Arts students have shown more cognitive avoidance approach than engineering students.

4.6 EMOTION CONTROL:



meta-chart.com

As it is clearly evident from the above pie chart that the emotion control of both the engineering and arts students is almost the same, it is found that this is because nowadays both the engineering and arts students have the same social environment, the same strict curriculum and therefore both have developed good emotion control. Children need to learn to adapt to the surrounding and environment because then only they will be able to cope, proceed and excel. Pressure of studies has become an important stress source for college students. In engineering colleges, teaching

should focus on training college student’s ability to learn and stimulating their motivation for study. They should be taught time management and how to improve self monitoring abilities.

4. RESULT:

Table 1.1

Groups	Sum of x	Sum of y
Engineering students	939	2542
Arts students	962	3023

Table 1.2

	x	y
Correlation values	0.1781	0.5493

5. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- There is scope for further research conducted on a larger population of students.
- There can be comparisons drawn among various other streams of students as well.
- The role of gender in determining and influencing emotion control and coping strategies can be assessed as well.

6. CONCLUSION / SUMMARY:

REFERENCES:

1. [www.verywellmind.com>theories>cognitive psychology](http://www.verywellmind.com/theories/cognitive-psychology). Overview of the six major theories of emotion.
2. Emotion Control, Stress and Health. CF Lok, GD Bishop- Psychology and Health,1999- Taylor and Francis.
3. [psychology.wikia.org>wiki>Emotion- Control](https://psychology.wikia.org/wiki/Emotion-Control). Emotional Control/ Psychology Wiki/ Fandom.
4. The construction and validation of a new scale for measuring emotion control. D Roger, B Najarian- Personality and individual differences, 1989- Elsevier. Vol.10, Issue 8, pages 845-853.
5. [psychology.wikia.org>wiki>Emotion- Control](https://psychology.wikia.org/wiki/Emotion-Control). Emotional Control/ Psychology Wiki/ Fandom.
6. Coping and Coping Strategies: a behavioural view B Wechsler- Applied Animal Behaviour Science, 1995- Elsevier. vol43, Issue2, may1995, Pages 123-134.
7. Coping Strategies in adolescents. K Williams, A Mc Gillicuddy- De Lisi- Journal of applied developmental,1999- Elsevier vol.20, Issue4, Dec 1999, Pages 537- 549.
8. Mac Arthur SES & Health Network/ Research [macses.ucsf.edu>research>psychosocial>coping](http://macses.ucsf.edu/research/psychosocial/coping).
9. [www.inc.com>amy-morin>how-to-control-your-emotions](http://www.inc.com/amy-morin/how-to-control-your-emotions).
10. Mac Arthur SES & Health Network/ Research [macses.ucsf.edu>research>psychosocial>coping](http://macses.ucsf.edu/research/psychosocial/coping).
11. [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>pmc>articles>PMC6972873](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6972873) ; The relationship between Personality Traits and Coping Styles among first- time & Recurrent Prisoners in Poland. Magdalena Leszko, Rafal Iwanski, Aneta Jarzebinska. Frontiers of Psychology, published 14 Jan 2020.
12. Coping Strategies - CESH/CSHS [humanstress.ca>steps-to-instant-stress-management](http://humanstress.ca/steps-to-instant-stress-management).
13. Ross A. Thompson (1994). Emotion regulation: A theme in search of definition. SRCD.
14. Paradoxes of technology: Consumer Cognizance emotions and coping strategies. David Glen Mick, Susan Fournier. Journal of consumer research, vol25 issue 2 September 1998, pages 123-143.
15. A review of emotional regulation in intelligent tutoring systems. Mehdi Malek Zadeh, Mumtaz Begum Mustafa and Adel Lahsana. Educational Technology and society 18(4), 435-445.
16. Elena Corcoda, Violeta Mihalascu (2012) did a research on adolescent coping strategies secondary school. (Procedia – social & behavioural sciences) volume.33.2012, pages 188-192.
17. Hong Ji, Lei Jhang (2011) did a research on college student stressors coping strategies: Archives of General Psychology, 336-378(70).
18. Tali Heiman and Dafna Kariv (2010), Coping experience among students in higher education, Educational Studies 30(4):441-455.