

Coping Flexibility Among Young Adults from Six Countries: Cross-Cultural Validation of the Coping Flexibility Scale (CFS)

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Poster

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Abstract

Youth is a period of significant change in which contextual demands can lead to maladaptation and impaired personal and social functioning. An adequate repertoire of coping strategies during this critical life stage is essential for achieving personal and social adjustment. In this regard, cognitive flexibility—operationalized as the ability to adapt coping strategies in response to changing environmental demands (Cheng et al., 2014; Kato et al., 2012)—is strongly associated with better psychological and social adjustment.

The Coping Flexibility Scale (CFS; Kato, 2012) is one of the most widely used instruments for assessing coping flexibility. It comprises 10 items divided into two dimensions: evaluative coping (five items) and adaptive coping (five items). While this instrument has demonstrated evidence of adequate psychometric properties, some studies have identified issues related to its structural validity and the performance of specific items (Janicka, 2015; Soltys et al., 2015).

The present study aims to cross-culturally test the psychometric properties of the CFS in its Spanish and English versions. To do this, we conducted two different studies. In Study 1, we accessed 3753 university students from six countries (USA, Canada, Spain, Argentina, England and South Africa). We conducted confirmatory factor analyses to test four models. Our results supported an 8-item unidimensional measure (CFI = .992; TLI = .989, RMSEA = .117, Cronbach alpha = .89; items 2 and 7 were removed), which was invariant across the six countries. Cronbach's Alpha ranged between .79 and .90. Moreover, this model showed evidence of validity according to the relationships between the CFS scores and other variables such as depression, anxiety and emotion regulation. In study 2, we used targeted sampling procedure to recruit a community sample of 612 cannabis-using young adults in Spain. In terms of internal structure, the results replicated those of Study 1, this is, they supported an 8-item unidimensional measure in which items 2 and 7 were removed (CFI = .994; TLI = .992, RMSEA = .066, Cronbach alpha = .83). Evidence of validity according to the relationships between the CFS scores and other related measures were also provided. In particular, CFS scores were negatively associated with mental health measures (anxiety, depression, stress), and problematic cannabis use.

Our results support the use of the 8-item unidimensional measure of the Coping Flexibility Scales across Spanish and English-speaking countries. Also, its use with different young-adults subpopulations (students-non students, and people using and not using cannabis) is supported.

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Keywords

Coping Flexibility; young adults; cross-cultural.

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