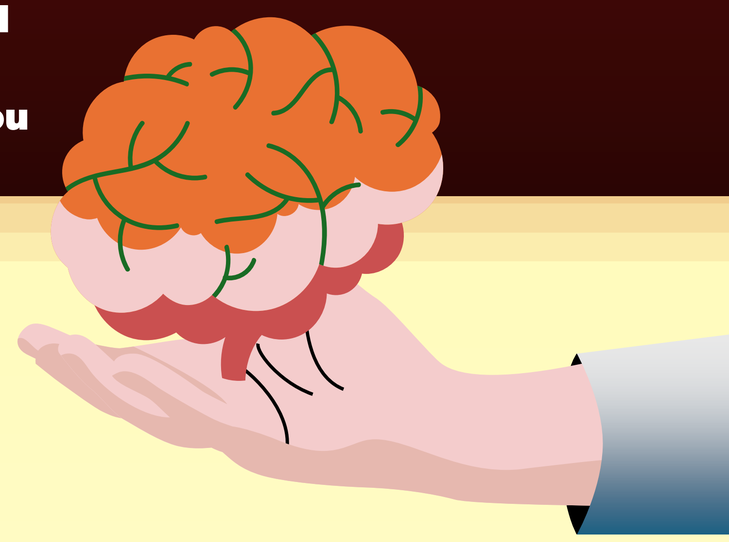
Neurodivergent Challenges in Higher Education: A Comparison to their Neurotypical Peers

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01. Introduction

Neurodivergent (ND) students experience more stressors than neurotypical (NT) students

There have been limited studies on ND students' coping strategies

ND students have lower academic achievement than NT peers due to discrimination and lack of accommodations

Academic entitlement (AE) has not been studied in the ND population and could be used to erase academic doubts.

02. Hypotheses

H1: Neurodivergent academic stress levels will be higher than neurotypical stress levels.

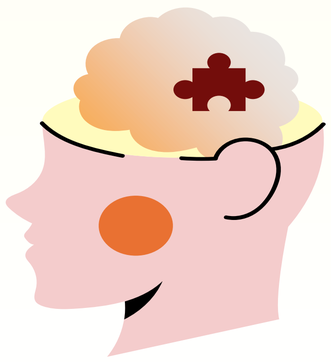
H2: Neurodivergent academic achievement will be lower than neurotypical academic achievement.

RQ1: Will there be differences in the coping strategies of neurotypical and neurodivergent students?

RQ2: Will there be any differences between neurodivergent and neurotypical academic entitlement?

RQ3: Will academic stress predict the relationship between neurodivergence and academic performance?

RQ4: Will coping strategies predict academic stress levels in neurodivergent students?



03. Methods

A hundred and nineteen neurodivergent (*n*=59, 49.6%) and neurotypical (*n*=60, 50.4%) students participated in a survey questionnaire by completing the CSS, Brief-Cope, APS and AEQ scales

04. Results

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations for College Stress Scale scores by Neurodivergence

College Stress Scale (CSS)	Neurotypical		Neurodivergent		t-value	p value
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
CSS	35.72	8.09	37.75	8.47	1.336	.184

Note. CSS= College Stress Scale

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for Academic Performance Scale scores by Neurodivergence.

Academic Performance Scores	Neurotypical		Neurodivergent		t-value	p value
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
APS	28.03	5.14	26.25	4.87	-1.936	.028

Note. APS: Academic Performance Scale

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations for Brief-Cope subscale scores by Neurodivergence.

Brief-Cope Subscale Scores	Neurotypical		Neurodivergent		t-value	p value
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
PF	2.70	.64	2.88	.55	1.594	.114
EF	2.58	.46	2.70	.35	1.504	.136
AV	1.95	.52	2.17	.53	2.206	.029

Note. PF= Problem-Focused Coping, EF= Emotion-Focused Coping, AV= Avoidance Coping

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations for Academic Entitlement Questionnaire Subscale scores by Neurodivergence.

Academic Entitlement Questionnaire Subscale	Neurotypical		Neurodivergent		t-value	p value
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
[K]	6.45	2.51	6.30	2.40	-.321	.749
[O]	7.91	2.56	7.77	2.38	-.301	.764
[P]	5.36	2.42	5.33	1.98	-.068	.946
[S]	4.30	1.77	3.90	1.87	-1.098	.274
[C]	1.95	1.48	1.64	1.22	-1.221	.224

Note. [K] = Knowledge is a right that should be delivered with a minimum of exertion and discomfort on the part of the 'consumer', [O]= Others will provide all of the education that is necessary, [P]= Problems in learning are due to the inadequacies of the teacher, the course, or the system, rather than to the student's own shortcomings, [S]= Students should have control over class policies, [C]= Certain outcomes are deserved because the student pays tuition.

Table 5

Summary of Regression Analysis between College Stress Scale (CSS) and Academic Performance Scale (APS) in the Neurodivergent group.

Variables	Beta Coefficient	*t*	Sig.
CSS	-.062	-.818	.417

Note. CSS = College Stress Scale

a. Dependent variable APS

Table 6

Summary of Regression Analysis between Brief-Cope and College Stress Scale (CSS) in the Neurodivergent group.

Variables	Beta Coefficient	*t*	Sig.
Problem-Focused	.056	.386	.074
Emotion-Focused	.061	.409	.684
Avoidance	.466	3.534	<.001

a. Dependent variable CSS

Table 7

Summary of Regression Analysis between Brief-Cope and College Stress Scale (CSS) in the Neurotypical group.

Variables	Beta Coefficient	*t*	Sig.
Problem-Focused	-.060	-.549	.584
Emotion-Focused	.186	2.04	.043
Avoidance	.235	1.86	.065

a. Dependent variable CSS

05. Discussion

- NT students had stress levels almost equal to ND students, which is consistent with the literature that university is a major stressor for NT students.
- ND students perform worse academically despite high achievement likely due to the inability of institutions to accommodate them.
- ND students use more 'maladaptive' coping (e.g., avoidance, emotion-focused).
- No differences in AE, meaning that ND students hesitate to ask for accommodations.
- Emotion-focused coping may increase stress for NT students but decrease it for ND ones.

06. Limitations

- No way to confirm official diagnosis.
- AEQ scale had low internal consistency
- Data collection during midterm period.

07. Future Directions

- Investigate moderators on the relationship between stress and academic achievement.
- Using other AE scales.
- Implementing inclusion and awareness practices.

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