

**Investigating Gender Differences, Loneliness, and the Coping Skills of Individuals with Developmental Disabilities During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

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**Females were more likely to use adaptive coping skills in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in comparison to male and non-binary individuals.**



**BACKGROUND**

- ❖ The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in widespread isolation, which increases the risk of psychological harm on individuals with DD (Holingue et al., 2020, Zaon & Rudolph, 2020, Usher et al., 2020, Perrin et al., 2012).
- ❖ Adaptive coping is a protective factor against loneliness with females being more likely to engage in adaptive coping than males (Mcwhirter et al., 2010, Park et al., 2020). Research on the coping skills of individuals identifying as non-binary is limited.

**AIM**

- ❖ The purpose of this study was to examine adaptive coping skills, loneliness, and gender differences in adults with DD and parents of children with DD during the pandemic.

**PARTICIPANTS**

- ❖ 65 Parents of Children with DD
- ❖ 35 Adults with DD
- ❖ 6 Adults with DD who also have children with DD
- ❖ 83 Identified as Female
- ❖ 15 Identified as Male
- ❖ 7 Identified as Non-Binary

**METHODS**

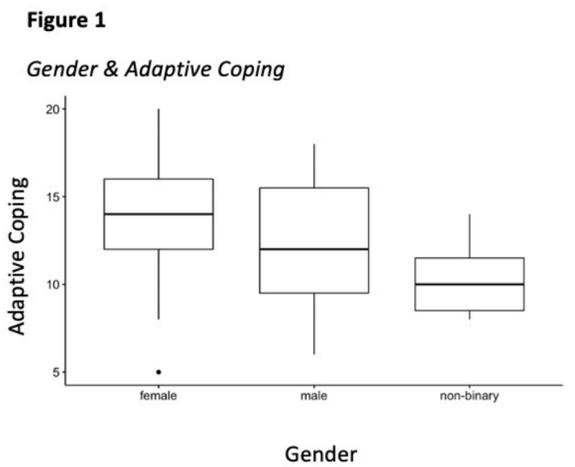
- ❖ A linear regression was used to investigate the relationship between adaptive coping and loneliness.
- ❖ A one-way analysis of variance and post-hoc comparisons analyzed gender differences in coping.
- ❖ The Brief Resilience Coping Scale (BRCS) evaluated tendencies to cope adaptively in stressful situations (Sinclair & Wallston, 2004).
- ❖ The UCLA Loneliness Scale measured loneliness (Russell et al., 1978).

**RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

- ❖ A simple linear regression revealed that higher adaptive coping scores predicted lower loneliness scores.
- ❖ A one-way analysis of variance indicated statistically significant differences in coping scores based on gender. Post-hoc comparisons demonstrated significant differences in coping scores between female and non-binary individuals.
- ❖ Results extend on previous research by demonstrating a significant negative association between adaptive coping and loneliness.
- ❖ Findings suggest that individuals identifying as male or non-binary with DD may benefit from additional support related to active coping.

**Table 1**  
*Adaptive Coping Scores by Gender*

Gender	N	Mean	F	p
Female	83	13.82	5.18	.007
Male	15	12.07		
Non-Binary	7	10.29		



**Table 2**  
*Adaptive Coping & Loneliness*

	B	SE	t	p
(Intercept)	3.13	0.38	8.24	< .001
Adaptive Coping	-0.06	0.028	-2.04	.044

$\Delta R^2 = .04, F(1, 102) = 4.15, p = .044$

