

Improving the comparability of Brief-COPE results through examination of second-order structures: A study with Spanish adolescents (pp. 437-454)

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The Brief-Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced (Brief-COPE) is a widely used instrument, although with limitations regarding reliability and factorial structure. This study with 611 adolescents examines the Brief-COPE's internal structure, reliability, and convergent validity. Structures tested through confirmatory factor analysis were the original 14 subscales, as well as three second-order structures derived from previous COPE research and from Connor-Smith and Flachsbart's proposal. All the structures examined obtained a good fit. However, internal consistency and convergent validity findings only supported the use of a model in which religion and self-blame constitute independent subscales while the remaining subscales shaped three second-order factors: self-sufficient, socially supported, and disengagement coping. This hierarchical structure reflects a model emphasized by research with adolescents, makes the use of this instrument valuable, and does not prevent the exploration of original subscales with appropriate reliability levels. Consequently, our results constitute a significant step forward in the improvement of the usefulness and comparability of the coping results obtained with the Brief-COPE.