

Appendix - J

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Paper-7

Coping Skills Employed by Students to Meet the Challenges of 21st Century

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Abstract

21st century is likely to be more and more complex with passage of time as it is a period where profound changes are taking place both globally and locally that is leading and will lead to various challenges. Coping with today's challenges calls for better development of individuals' skills to tackle complex tasks. Good coping means to recognize and fulfill own needs as a member of local society in particular and global society in general. Thus, there is a need of instantaneous coping skills for 21st century each individual in varied time to survive under complex/adverse conditions, to function smoothly in meeting challenges. These skills are defined under three basic concerns i.e. functioning in socially heterogeneous groups, acting autonomously and using tools interactively. Students are trying to explore self and the world by their own unique experiences and perceptions. They try to cope up with the challenges they face in peers, personal life, academic life and social life. For the same they use skills such as study skills, problem solving skills, thinking skills, research skills, management skills, self directional skills, communication skills, info-savvy skills, interpersonal skills, social responsibility skills and many more skills. This paper is an attempt to collect voices of student on what problems they face and unique way to cope up with the problems.

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Introduction-

21st century is likely to be more and more complex. Coping with today's challenges is highly challenging. There is a need to develop cope up skills for meeting the challenges. Rychen and Salganik (2001), have defined 21st century needs of society and their individuals i.e. the need to realize one's identity and set goals in complex world, the need to exercise rights and take responsibility, the need to understand one's environment and its functioning, the need to deal with diversity in pluralistic societies, the need to keep up to date with technologies, the need to adapt tools to own purposes, the need to conduct active dialogue with the world, the importance of empathy, and the importance of social capital. Good coping also implies knowledge of one's physical and social environment that lets an individual to achieve what is important to societies and their individuals, at the same time it demands to understand global nature of needs and transfer of local knowledge to global setting.

Students are trying to explore self and the world by their own unique experiences and perceptions. They try to cope up with the challenges they face in personal life, academic life and social life. Thus, there is a need of instantaneous coping skills for 21st century in students under complex/adverse conditions, to function smoothly in meeting challenges. They have unique way to cope up with the challenges. This paper is an attempt to know how they cope up with the challenges.

Cope up Skills for 21st Century-

Skills are cluster of behaviours which express ease and precision in action. Forecasting and defining specific skills in 21st century will be quite difficult as it changes rapidly as we just entered in second decade of 21st century and still long run to go and during this time need and hence challenges will emerges. Defining

skills is an attempt to achieve a common outcome i.e. an individual can live optimally by coping with the challenges in his/her life space region.

DeSeCo (2001) opined, “Coping with today’s challenges calls for better development of individuals’ skills to tackle complex tasks.” Coping with these challenges implies to recognize and fulfill own needs as a member of local society in particular and global society in general. Good coping also implies knowledge of one’s physical and social environment that lets an individual to achieve what is important to societies and their individuals, at the same time it demands to understand global nature of needs and transfer of local knowledge to global setting. The skills are required to cope with the needs and hence to meet the challenges of 21st century, such skills are called ‘Coping Skills for 21st Century’.

Rychen & Salganik (2001) have defined skills to meet the challenges in 21st century with three focuses: First, individual can function in socially heterogeneous groups i.e. relate well to others, co-operate, work in teams, manage and resolve conflicts. Second, act autonomously i.e. understand the pattern, have ideas of system in which they exist, form and conduct life plans and personal projects and defend and assert rights, interests, limits and needs. Third is, use tools interactively i.e. Language, communication and Technologies. Defining and classifying such skills depends upon nature of individual and social goals, but should be bound together in an integrated approach of local and global.

Specification of the Problem-

A study of Coping Skills Employed by Students to meet the Challenges of 21st Century

Objectives of the study-

1. To identify challenges of 21st century that the students are facing.

2. To study mechanisms for meeting challenges of 21st Century.
3. To draw out coping skills for 21st century employed by the students.

Definition of the terms-

- **Challenges of 21st Century:** There are various challenges of 21st Century, such as, working with people & group with varied profile, alienated identity, working with varied tools (languages, communication channels, electronic gadgets).
- **Coping Skills for 21st century:** Coping skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable an individual to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of the time.

Methodology-

Participants-

The participants are students of age group eleven to thirteen studying in various English medium schools of Baroda city.

Tools used-

- The semi structured group interview was conducted. The interview was aimed at students' liking-disliking, planning and preparation for study, leisure time activities, aims of life, that is, happy, productive and peaceful life.
- The video camera was used to record the interviews. Further 'Free Studio' software was used to convert video file into audio.

Data Collection-

Researchers requested the students and as per their time convenience the interview was scheduled.

Data Analysis-

The collected data were analyzed through content analysis. The initial data was coded, categorized and classified.

Findings-

Objective wise findings are as follow:

Objective 1: To identify challenges of 21st century that the students face-

1. Finding leisure time out of the tight schedule of school and then private tuition.
2. Learning school subjects, such as, Social-Science, Mathematics, and Science
3. Wholistic Adjustment (Home, School, Social, Emotional and Health)
4. Parental Pressure for High Achievement
5. Gaps between parental expectation and students profile
6. Underestimation of Abilities of Students
7. Aimless Social Networking
8. Digital Age
9. Value Dilemma
10. Devoid of the Beauty of Nature
11. Child Rights not fully observed
12. Absence of Creativity Culture
13. Career Choice

Objective 2: To study mechanisms for meeting challenges of 21st Century-

1. The students could manage time for study, along with spare time for playing computer games, outdoor games, cycling, internet surfing, and other leisure time activities

2. They well appreciated and encouraged by their teachers. They developed interest in the subjects like Social-Science, Mathematics, and Science
3. The students employed various coping mechanism for wholistic adjustment. For home adjustment they were found quite adaptive. They could communicate with parents and peers at the point of disagreement and shorting out the matter. Also they could employ collective wisdom to be positive and share feelings with family members and peers for healthy and balanced life.
 - a. Have healthy friend circle, wherein they have healthy communication, negotiation, cooperation and path finding.
 - b. Consider assignments and projects as joyful learning experience.
 - c. Prayer is used to cope up with the stress. Prayer gives peace of mind and confidence
 - d. For sound physical health, they do exercise, jogging, cycling, outdoor games, walking and observe healthy food habits
 - e. For the emotional adjustment, they do Yoga, meditation, observe silence, laughter, positive approach and realize resilience quickly
4. Parents' academic expectations are high. So at times students are not allowed to play games. Still they steal time for play.
5. They use the social networking as per need. They are well aware that excessive, unscientific and uncivilized use is damaging.
6. To cope up with the challenging digital age and demands of 21st century concentration in every field is a must; along with adaptability, flexibility and versatile value system is required.

7. The students opined that collective efforts may help to sustain the beauty of nature. Further, Mobile Phones should be used sparingly. Excessive use of mobile phones may disturb the environmental balance.
8. They try to be up to date with current affairs through news channels, educational channels, library, books, and internet.

Objective 3: To draw out coping skills for 21st century employed by the students-

Following Coping skills for meeting the needs of 21st century were observed and classified under three categories namely, act autonomously, functioning in socially heterogeneous group and use tools interactively.

A. Act Autonomously

A.1. Study Skills

- a. Collecting Information
 - i. Locating Information
 - ii. Identifying the Relevant Information
- b. Processing the Information
 - i. Analyzing the Information
 - ii. Synthesizing the Information
 - iii. Derive Meaning
- c. Utilizing Leisure Time

A.2. Skill of Problem Solving

- a. Identify the problem
- b. Analyzing the Problem
- c. Find Probable Solutions for the Problem
- d. Selecting the best suitable solution of the Problem

e. Implementing the Selected Solution

f. Consolidation

A.3. Thinking Skills

a. Creative thinking

b. Critical thinking

A.4. Reflective Skills

a. Thinking about thinking

A.5. Learning Skills

a. Locating Resources

b. Problem Solving

A.6. Management Skills (Time/Personnel/Resources)

a. Setting Goal

b. Estimating Time, Personnel and Resources Required

c. Plan out Strategies

d. Implement/Tryout the Strategy

A.7. Self Directional Skills

a. Identifying Own Need

b. Set Priorities

c. Goal Setting

d. Decision Making

e. Self Monitoring

f. Leading

B. Function in Socially Heterogeneous Group

B.1. Skill of Acceptance

a. Awareness

b. Sensitivity

c. Openness

d. Valuing

e. Judging

f. Responding

B.2. Skill of Adaptability

B.3. Adjustment Skill

a. Harmony with Self and Nature

b. Acceptance

c. Adaptation

d. Understanding

B.4. Social Responsibility Skills

B.5. Human Relationship Skills

a. Decency

b. Decorum

c. Discipline

d. Empathy

e. Sharing

f. Politeness

g. Peace and Harmony

h. Healthy Competition

B.6. Skill of Synergy

a. Know the Peers

b. Strength and weaknesses of Peers

c. Fellow-Feelings

- d. Empathy
- e. Acceptance
- f. Adaptation
- g. Adjustment

C. Use Tools Interactively

C.1. Communication Skills

- a. Listening/Paying Attention
 - i. Concentration and Energy
 - ii. Connection with Speaker
 - iii. Desire & Willingness to try and see from another perspective
- b. Reflecting/Responding/Feedback
- c. Choosing Medium

C.2. Collaborative Skills

Concluding Remarks-

The findings show, students have their own cope up mechanism to meet the challenges of the 21st Century Effectively. The major challenge the group faces is that of time playing. The parents want them to study at the cost of playing when students are at their significant stage of studies. From their voices it was reflected that parents assume that the offsprings is avoiding study. As a result, the parents believe that the child needs to be closely supervised. But, on the other side the students were found to be very active and they were found to have own ways out to manage study, social life, home, time and health. They also spare time for leisure. They want to be cared and supervised, but at the same time they want some freedom. The voices also reflect, the students have some irritation when control of television is not in their hand. But some of them were found quite adaptive, they

make like the TV channels and programmes as per their parents liking and vice-versa.

Thus, it is concluded that the students have their own self-sustained mechanism to meet their ends, i.e., “do the work that you like or make the work to be liked”. The students employ many of Coping skills for 21st century i.e. skill of adaptability, skill of adjustment, skill of time management, self directional skills, skill of problem solving, communication skills, human relationship skills and skills of synergy. The nature of coping skills for 21st century could be Preventive, Corrective, Adaptive and Perfective.

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