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Appraisal, emotion and coping in victims of peer-aggression and victimization

Simon C. Hunter, James M.E. Boyle & David Warden
University of Strathclyde

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Contact: simon.hunter@strath.ac.uk
Peer-aggression and victimization

**Aggression:**
- Within-species attacks or hostility

**Peer-victimization:**
- Repeated aggression

**Prevalence** (Hunter, Boyle & Warden, 2004):
- Peer-victimization: 12%-28%
- Peer-aggression: a further 16%-39%
The coping process (Lazarus & Colleagues)

Person Variables

Situation Variables
The coping process (Lazarus & Colleagues)

Person Variables → Appraisals → Situation Variables
The coping process (Lazarus & Colleagues)

Person Variables → Appraisals → Coping Strategy Use → Situation Variables
The coping process (Lazarus & Colleagues)

Person Variables → Appraisals → Emotional Reaction

Situation Variables → Appraisals → Coping Strategy Use
Aims

1. How well does the transactional model account for the coping processes of children experiencing peer-aggression and peer-victimization?

2. What are the effects of appraisals and emotions upon use of coping strategies?

3. Are developmental differences evident between late-childhood and early-adolescence?
Methodology

• N = 830 pupils in P6, S2, or S3 (9 to 14 years old).
• Self-report questionnaire, with items on:
  → peer-aggression/ victimisation (Hunter, Boyle & Warden, 2004)
  → coping strategy use (individual coping strategies)
  → control and threat appraisals (Hunter & Boyle & Warden, 2004)
  → emotions (anger, sadness, fear: individual emotion items)
Analysis - Structural equation model for each coping strategy:

Individual Coping Strategy

Threat

Control

Angry
Scared
Sad
Common to each SEM was the core appraisal/emotion aspect of the process, and across the coping strategies the pattern of covariances was as follows:
Direct standardised regression weights from appraisals and emotions to individual coping strategies were as follows:

NB. correlations between appraisals and emotions not shown here for clarity of presentation.
Direct standardised regression weights from appraisals and emotions to individual coping strategies were as follows:

**Threat**

- **Angry**: -0.03
- **Scared**: 0.12*
- **Sad**: -0.11**

**Control**

- **Angry**: -0.02
- **Scared**: -0.02
- **Sad**: 0.23**

*Stood up to them, told them to stop*

NB. correlations between appraisals and emotions not shown here for clarity of presentation.
Direct standardised regression weights from appraisals and emotions to individual coping strategies were as follows:

NB. correlations between appraisals and emotions not shown here for clarity of presentation.
Summary

• Distinct relationships between appraisals and emotional reactions

• Also, certain patterns of appraisal and emotion are linked to use of certain strategies

• Potential for new/improved interventions by focusing on appraisals and emotion regulation

• New ways of influencing strategy choice, but still unclear what the best strategies actually are

• No developmental differences evident

• Only one gender difference (*Threat* predicted *Crying* for girls but not boys)