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How do men and women view stress differently?

Many people do not know how to deal with their stress and might use unsafe coping mechanisms such as smoking, drinking etc. But might question is how do people register their stress differently? I should not say people I mean men are people so how do men and women view stress differently? Well, that question may seem easy to answer because men seem to go down the unsafe route and drink and smoke and may turn to abuse and women are just dainty and are hormonal monsters. However, that may seem true but what specifically do they tend to view stress? For starters, “men prefer task-oriented strategies and women preferred emotion-oriented strategies” (Guszkowska et al.,2016). To put into definition for both starting with task oriented which is when people or in this case men prefer prioritizing their stressful situation in attempt to limit the impact of the stressful situation which is emotional and social elements which involves them to focus more on watching tv or sleeping anything to avoid having a man tap into his inner sensitivity. While emotion-oriented strategies are the tendency to focus on their own emotional experiences which is obvious considering women are more inclined to express their emotions than men.

Interestingly, the culprit might not be the stressor itself, but how our bodies react to it. Women tend to have a stronger "fight-or-flight" response, with surges in hormones like cortisol that put them on high alert (APA, 2019). This can lead to hyperarousal, that jittery feeling that makes it hard to concentrate or sleep. It seems as if nothing really changes with the initial hypothesis of either genders viewing stress in different ways may cause more women to experience anxiety while men will lash out or become angered but that could also led up to hormones, “[like] estrogen can play a role in limiting the effects of stress on cognition in

women”(APA,2019). It is the women sex hormone that helps with cognitive process of a women’s emotion which also might explain why women experience hyperarousal or have that “fight or flight response. Another twist “[a mixture of] oxytocin and the interplay between oxytocin and estrogen, as well as lower levels of hormones associated with physically aggressive responses to stress (tend and befriend)”(Padkapayeva et al.,2018). More women who are social will tend to develop interpersonal relationships with others which might help them regulate their stress or even just any support group can help with the calming effects on oxytocin.

Now to switch gears into men who sex hormone is testosterone and when are stressed their testosterone levels may decrease which can limit a man’s sex drive, increase in depression, or hair loss. Moving forward to putting this motion into perspective of jobs, “low job control and high-strain work (characterized by high demands and low control) have been more strongly related to stress levels among men compared with women” (Padkapayeva et al.,2018). This could be because men are seen as providers, and not following that gender norm could create a lot of pressure for men especially if they are in an environment where they are not in control compared to women who might think that might be undervalued because of their gender and because gender norms for women are to be at home and with the family.

But college students studies have shown that college students face a lot of potential problems like paper deadlines they wait for the last minute to do, or other external factors not linked to school. This stress can manifest in many ways, from memory problems and illness to anxiety and depression which call for a disaster. Now, let us talk about the casualty of the gender gap in stress. Some research suggests that college women might report higher stress levels, particularly when it comes to academics (Brougham et al.,2009).Which could be attributed to

society expectations of even self-sabotage according to a study by Graves et al. (2021) stated that female students tend to report higher stress levels than their male counterparts, particularly towards the end of the semester. This might be because women are more likely to take on the emotional burden of stress, dwelling on upcoming exams and potential failures spent re-reading the same paragraph ten times, convinced you have forgotten everything. Guys, on the other hand, might be more likely to compartmentalize stress, focusing on the task at hand and (just maybe) fitting in for a nap between cramming sessions.

So why this difference? Well, it could be a combination of biology and social conditioning. Women might be more subjected to emotional cues, making them more sensitive to the environment of finals week. Societal expectations can also play a role, with women often feeling the need to excel academically and socially. Guys, might feel more pressure to succeed financially after graduation, leading to a different kind of stress. The same study also looked at coping mechanisms. Women tend to favor "emotion-oriented" coping strategies, like talking to friends, family, or even a therapist women enjoy talking with their friends so maybe having a safe place to talk about their emotions might relieve some of that burden of stress. Guys might lean towards "task-oriented" approaches, diving headfirst into studying or hitting the gym to blow off some steam with their gym bros (Guszkowska et al.,2016). As a result, potential gender differences in stress and coping styles can be a powerful tool. If you are a lady and you are feeling overwhelmed, do not bottle it up! Reach out to your support system and vent away. And if you are a guy, do not just dive first, do something else like exercising with your close bud to help improve your focus and retention.



Overall studies have shown there is mixed results, with some finding no significant difference in overall stress levels between men and women (Brougham et al., 2009). It suggests that there is a bigger picture than just gender. We all view stress in the same way, there is no actual difference, and our initial theory is wrong. There may not be as many ways to cope with this stress but understanding what tendencies we choose, task oriented or emotion oriented could just be simple and be so obvious that we tend to ignore it. When it is whom, you surround yourself with. College stress is real, but it does not let it make it your whole personality. By recognizing potential gender differences in stress and utilizing healthy coping mechanisms, during tough times. Instead of just ignoring stress we should find ways to react to stress when we find ourselves in troubling tasks.

Furthermore, the context of stress may result in how each gender copes with stress on their own and may explain why we see those differences, but it could be other factors that might explain their stress or even society expectations. Briefly, stress can be managed if the person is able to recognize how to cope with their stress and reach out to others. Stress does not have to be detrimental for each gender, but it does not have to be a burden, nor do we have to differentiate between genders to see the stress variation it all is in a matter of what we do in the context and how do we approach it. It is also good to note that stress is a universal experience for humans,

and it is normal to deal with stress and if there are gender differences or not it is relevant how we navigate through the stress and tackle it head on.

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