
Abstract

The moderating effects of stress experiences and coping on autistic traits and mental health

MOHRI, Maki

Faculty of Education, Soka University

University students with autism spectrum traits often experience stagnation in many aspects of campus life due to mental health problems such as anxiety and depression. Therefore, it is necessary to clarify the factors leading to these mental health problems and to obtain clues for effective intervention. This study examined both the mediating effect of daily life stressors on the association between autistic traits and mental health and the moderating effect of the coping and stress responses. Our questionnaire survey showed that university students with higher autistic traits experienced more daily stressors. These daily stress experiences had a mediating effect on the association between autistic traits and mental health. In addition, the moderation analysis suggested that in the association between autistic traits and mental health, secondary control coping (positive cognitive/emotional coping with stress) inhibited mental health deterioration, while disengagement coping (intentional distancing from stressors) and daily life stressors synergistically exacerbated mental health problems. We discuss these findings from the perspective of preventing mental health problems.

Keywords: autism spectrum traits, university students, daily life stressors, coping and stress responses, mental health
