Reflection on Adolescent Playfulness

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Playfulness – and related literature

Personality and leisure

Measures of playfulness

- Playfulness (Lieberman, 1971)
- CPS (Barnett, 1982)
- PSYA (Barnett, 2005)
- ToP and TOES (Bundy, 1997)
- APS (Glynn & Webster, 1992)
- SOPLAY (McKenzie, 2002)
Measuring Playfulness

- **Children**
  - Lieberman (1971)
  - Barnett (1991)
  - Bundy (1997)
  - Observational rating scales

- **Adolescents**
  - Lieberman (1971)
  - McKenzie (2002)
  - Observational rating scale

- **Adults**
  - Glynn & Webster (1992)
  - Self-report scale

- **Young Adults**
  - Barnett (2005)
Playfulness – what is in a word

- Self-confidence
- Relaxed
- Sociable
- Teasing / joking
- Not caring what others think of you
- Humor
- Laughter
- Happiness
- Smiling
- Easy going
- Wittiness with words
Playfulness and Gender

Males
- physical
- rough & tumble
- sexually expressive
- universally similar
- Not very self-conscious (in presence of females)

Females
- emotional
- caring & touchy-feely
- flirtatious
- individually different
- very self-conscious (in presence of males)
Playfulness and Context

School
- The more playful the teacher the more playful the classroom / learning environment
- In-class time - a time for work
- School specific code of conduct
Playfulness and Context cont.

Leisure
- Opportunities are people, place and situation dependent
  - Same-sex friends (less pressure to conform, more honesty and trust)
- Friendships
- Socialization
- Relax, chill – a great way to ease tension
  - *But it may also increase level of stress*
Measuring Playfulness – APF20
(Alpha=.90)

- I like to play and horse around with my friends
- When I hang out with friends, we usually like to play around
- I like to be active physically
- Being physically active keeps me stimulated and motivated

- By being playful it is easier to get along with people
- I like to interact with people in a playful way
- I like to make people laugh
- I feel comfortable joking around with others

- I like to imagine myself and other people in funny situations
- I like to play with ideas
- I have an active imagination
- I like to imagine myself as being different people or different characters

- I like to sing and hum out loud when I am happy
- I laugh and smile a lot
- My friends can tell when I am having a good time
- In most situations I express my emotions freely

- I like to clown around
- I can usually find something to laugh and joke about in difficult situations
- I can find something comical or humorous in most situations
- I like to tell funny stories

- Physical animation
- Social engagement
- Mental spontaneity
- Emotional fluidity
- Humorous perspective
## Measuring Playfulness – APF20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How playful a person are you?</th>
<th>Almost never true for me</th>
<th>Seldom true for me</th>
<th>Sometimes true for me</th>
<th>Often true for me</th>
<th>Almost always true for me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I like to play and horse around with my friends</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I often sing or hum out loud when I am happy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I hang out with my friends, we usually like to play and joke around</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Playfulness and Well-being

Research questions:

1. Do adolescents with higher levels of playfulness differ in their perception of normative stressors?

2. Do adolescents with higher levels of playfulness make use of different coping strategies or cope more effectively than less playful adolescents?

3. What is the relationship between playfulness, and the perception of daily stressors, coping styles and psychological well-being?

4. Are there significant gender and age differences?
Participants:

- 290: 41% females & 59% males
- Age groups: 44% / 23% / 33%

Playfulness score: mean 3.6 (range 1 - 4.95)
  - Low pf = 1-3.4
  - Med pf = 3.41-3.95
  - High pf = 3.96-5.0
1. Do adolescents with higher levels of playfulness differ in their perception of normative stressors?

**Stress Domains:**
- Future
- Parents
- Peers
- Self
- Romantic relationships
- School
- Leisure
2. Do adolescents with higher levels of playfulness make use of different coping strategies or cope more effectively than less playful adolescents?

- Peers & romantic relationships
- Future
- Leisure, parents, school, self
Coping styles (CASQ, Seiffge-Krenke, 1995)

**Active coping**
- I disclose the problem to my parents or other adults
- I talk-straight away about the problem when it appears and don’t worry much
- I try to talk about the problem with the person concerned

**Internal coping**
- I expect the worst
- I compromise
- I tell myself that there always will be problems

**Withdrawal**
- I try to forget the problem with alcohol and drugs
- I do not worry because usually everything turns out all right
- I try to let my aggression out (with loud music, riding my bike, wild dancing, sports, etc.)
3. What is the relationship between playfulness and the perception of daily stressors and coping styles, as well as psychological well-being?

During leisure & school
- Functional coping
- Avoidance coping
Playfulness and Well-being cont.

IV:
- Playfulness (APF20)

DV:
- Perceived normative stress (PQ - Seiffge-Krenke, 1995)
- Coping (CASQ - Seiffge-Krenke, 1995)
- School (Extra curricular involv. & satisfaction)
- Leisure (Participation and satisfaction)
- Psychological health (self-confidence, affect)
Findings - Leisure cont.

- Leisure Participation
- Leisure Satisfaction
- Psychological Health
- Stress
- Avoidance Coping
- Functional Coping

Playfulness:
- B = .24, p < .001
- B = .37, p < .001

Leisure Participation:
- B = .24, p < .001
- B = .57, p < .001

Leisure Satisfaction:
- B = .15, p < .01
- B = .21, p < .005

Psychological Health:
- B = -.37, p < .001

Stress:
- B = .31, p < .001

Avoidance Coping:
- B = .16, p < .05

Functional Coping:
- B = .15, p < .01
Findings - School cont.

- School Satisfaction
- Psychological Health
  - Stress
  - Avoidance Coping
  - Functional Coping

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Extra curricular activities $B = .18, p < .001$

School Satisfaction $B = .22, p < .001$

Psychological Health

Playfulness $B = .15, p < .001$

Stress $B = .23, p < .001$

Avoidance Coping

Functional Coping $B = .34, p < .001$
4. Are there significant gender and age differences for highly playful adolescents?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coping Styles</th>
<th>Playfulness $(r)$</th>
<th>Regression Coefficients (Standardized Beta values)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>gender age PF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Coping</td>
<td>.293**</td>
<td>$\beta = -0.265^{<strong>}$ $\beta = 0.052$ $\beta = 0.268^{</strong>}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$R^2 = 0.140$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Coping</td>
<td>.207**</td>
<td>$\beta = -0.092$ $\beta = -0.026$ $\beta = 0.195^{**}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$R^2 = 0.037$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal</td>
<td>.262**</td>
<td>$\beta = -0.057$ $\beta = -0.097$ $\beta = 0.246^{**}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$R^2 = 0.065$</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

What was learned

- Contextual differences observed (e.g. leisure, school)
- Not more stressors but different stressors are perceived between high and low playful teens
- Minimal differences in terms of coping style between high / low playful teens
- Gender differences identified (verbal & statistical)
- Indirect relationship between playfulness and adolescent psychological health for leisure - not for school