

INTRODUCTION

The literature on gender differences in adolescents' and emerging adults' use of coping strategies is mixed.

- Might be due to how coping was assessed (e.g., dichotomized instead of using more nuanced scales)
- Only assessed at a single time point

Given that the use of coping strategies develops throughout adolescence and emerging adulthood (Zimmer-Gembeck & Skinner, 2011), it is important to examine gender differences in coping strategies across these developmental periods.

OBJECTIVE

To examine how gender differences in coping strategies change from early adolescence into emerging adulthood, using time-varying effect modeling (TVEM).

METHODS

Participants

- Participants were drawn from a longitudinal study that followed adolescents annually through high school and then again five years later in emerging adulthood.
- Individuals who responded to the COPE Inventory (Carver et al., 1989) during at least one wave were included (N = 1,846; 54.3% female; 52.1% non-Hispanic White). All available data across waves were included (N = 3,365 measurement occasions).

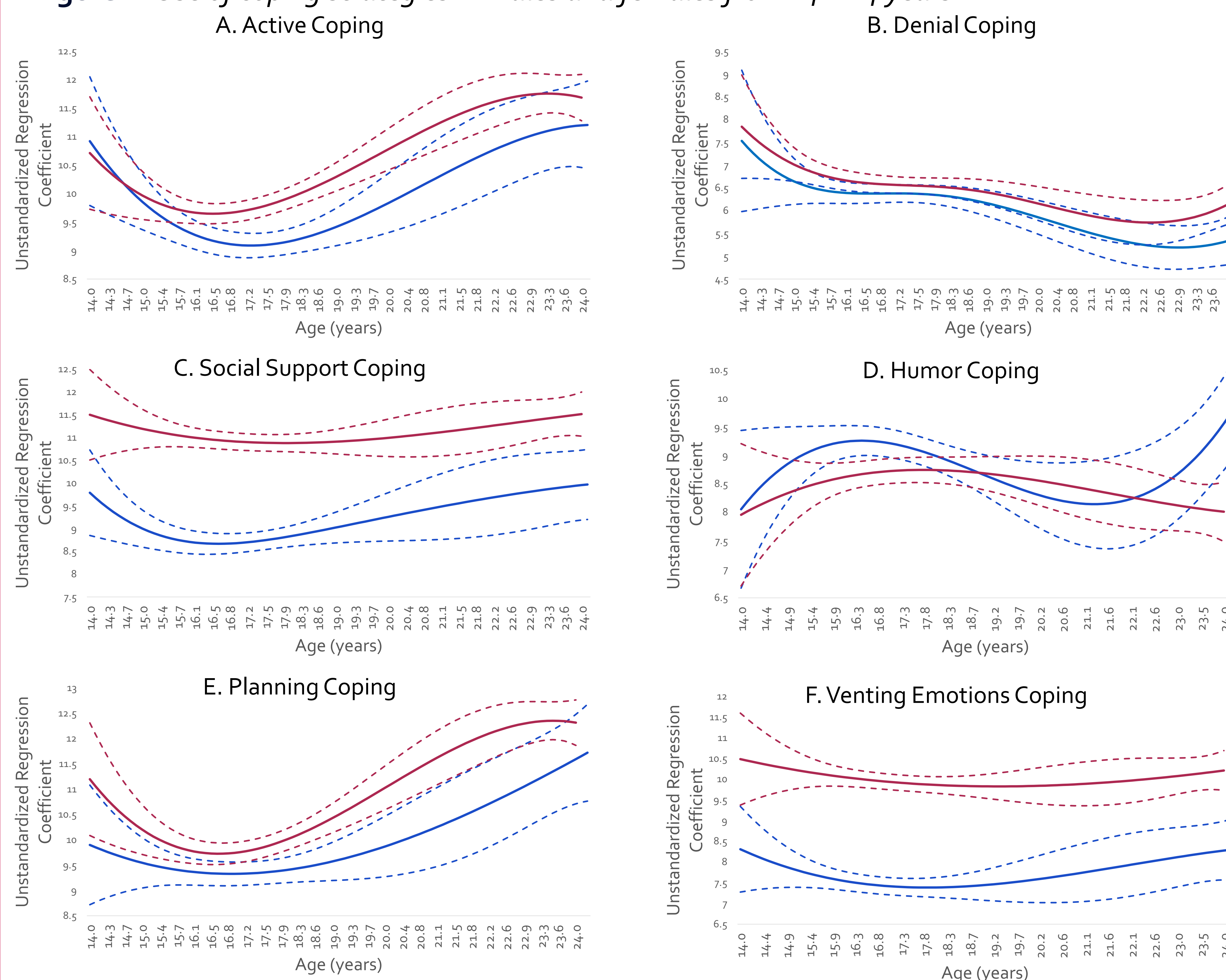
METHODS

Analytic Plan

- *Time-varying effect modeling* (TVEM) is a novel statistical approach that utilizes non-parametric p-spline regression to estimate intercept values of coping strategies as a continuous function of time.
- Separate models for males and females
- Time metric: Age to the nearest month (14.0 – 24.0 years)

RESULTS

Figure 1. Use of coping strategies in males and females from 14 – 24 years.



Note. Pink lines represent girls, blue lines represent boys. Dashed lines indicate 95% confidence intervals. Gender differences were considered statistically significant if the 95% confidence intervals did not overlap.

RESULTS

- Active Coping:
- Denial Coping:
- Social Support Coping:
- Humor Coping:
- Planning Coping:
- Venting Emotions Coping:

CONCLUSIONS

The current study is novel in that it examined gender differences in several nuanced coping strategies across adolescence and emerging adulthood, and revealed that gender differences only emerged during specific age ranges for many strategies. Future work should examine whether coping strategies have time-varying associations with psychological adjustment outcomes across developmental age.