

30-Oktyabr, 2025-yil

**THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL FEATURES ON PROACTIVE COPING
STRATEGIES AND COGNITIVE FLEXIBILITY AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN
THE CITY OF KOKAND**

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescents everywhere face stress, but how they cope depends on culture. In collectivist societies (such as Uzbekistan), family, traditions, and duty to parents are paramount. In individualistic ones (USA, Europe), personal goals and independence dominate. These differences affect proactive coping (planning ahead to avoid problems) and cognitive flexibility (the ability to quickly switch and see different options).

Proactive coping is not just a reaction but foresight. For example, a teenager negotiates with a teacher in advance if afraid of failing. In collectivism, such strategies may relate to family care rather than just self-interest.

Cognitive flexibility is the ability to change thoughts and behavior. In traditional cultures with strict rules, flexibility may be lower, but it helps balance “want” and “must.”

Novelty of the study: For the first time in Kokand (Uzbekistan), we examined how Uzbek culture influences the relationship between proactive coping and cognitive flexibility in adolescents. There are no data on how collectivism, respect for elders, and religious values shape these traits. Western studies (Hofstede, 2001) show that in collectivism, coping is often social (seeking help), but proactive coping is rarer. In our case, is it the opposite?

Objective: To determine how cultural values (collectivism, traditionality) affect proactive coping and cognitive flexibility among Kokand adolescents.

Hypothesis: Adolescents with high collectivism show a stronger relationship between proactive coping and cognitive flexibility (moderation).

METHODS

Participants

150 adolescents (76 boys, 74 girls), aged 15–17 years ($M=16.2$, $SD=0.8$), from schools in Kokand. Conducted in September–October 2025. Random sampling, parental consent.

Instruments

1. Proactive Coping Scale (PCS) — proactive coping ($\alpha=0.82$).
2. Cognitive Flexibility Inventory (CFI) — cognitive flexibility ($\alpha=0.89$).
3. Collectivism Scale (Triandis, 1995) — 8 items (e.g., “Family is more important than personal desires”). Likert 1–5. $\alpha=0.79$.

4. Traditionality (author’s scale) — 6 items (respect for elders, religiosity, traditions).
 $\alpha=0.81$.

Procedure

Group surveys in schools, anonymous. SPSS 27.0.

Analysis

- Correlations.
- Moderation analysis (PROCESS v4, Model 1): collectivism as moderator of PCS ↔ CFI link.

RESULTS

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	M	SD
Proactive Coping	20.4	4.2
Cognitive Flexibility	92.5	15.6
Collectivism	34.1	5.3
Traditionality	24.8	4.1

Correlations (Table 2):

	PCS	CFI	Collectivism
PCS	-	0.52*	0.38*
CFI		-	0.29**
Collectivism			-

* $p < 0.001$, $p < 0.01$ *

Moderation (Figure 1):

Collectivism strengthens the link between PCS and CFI ($\beta=0.31$, $p=0.002$).

- At high collectivism (M+1SD): $r=0.68$

- At low (M-1SD): $r=0.31$

Traditionality does not moderate ($p=0.21$).

Figure 1. Moderation of collectivism on the PCS–CFI relationship

(Simple slope: high values = stronger link)

DISCUSSION

Main finding: In Kokand, collectivism strengthens the relationship between proactive coping and cognitive flexibility. Adolescents who prioritize family better use flexibility for planning. Example: “I study ahead to not let my parents down” — both proactive and collectivist.

Why?

- Collectivism teaches thinking about consequences for others → develops flexibility (seeing different perspectives).

- Proactivity in such a culture is not egoism but group care.

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Comparison: In the USA (individualism), proactivity = personal success. Here = social responsibility.

Practical implications:

- In Kokand schools: teach proactivity through family scenarios (“How to help mom in advance?”).

- Flexibility training: role-playing with traditions in mind.

- For parents: encourage planning as family duty.

Limitations:

- Only Kokand.

- Self-reports.

- No longitudinal design.

Future research: Compare with Tashkent or Russia. Examine religion’s influence.

CONCLUSION

Culture is not a barrier but an amplifier. In Uzbek collectivism, proactive coping and cognitive flexibility work together more strongly. This discovery will help create culturally sensitive programs for Kokand adolescents.

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2. Triandis, H. C. (1995). **Individualism & Collectivism**.
3. Greenglass, E. R. (1999). **Proactive Coping Inventory**.