

The Relationship between Coping Strategies and Perceived Stress with Psychological Well-being among Children of Drug-addicted Parents

Sevda Nezafat Takleh^{1*}, Mehryar Nadrmohammadi²

1. Department of Psychology, Ardabil Branch Islamic Azad University, Ardabil, Iran

2. Department of Psychology, Ardabil University of Medical Sciences, Ardabil, Iran

*Corresponding author email: psychic92@mailfa.com

K E Y W O R D S: Coping Strategies; Perceived Stress; Psychological Well-being; Children of Drug-addicted Parents

Abstract: The current research mainly intends to investigate the relationship between coping strategies and perceived stress with the psychological well-being of children of addicts. The research is descriptive and correlational. The statistical population is composed of the children from drug abusers referring to outpatient treatment centers in Ardebil city. Using a multi-stage cluster method, 60 children were selected as the sample, and underwent assessment using psychological well-being questionnaire, coping style questionnaire, and Perceived Stress Scale. The research data were analyzed using SPSS software and using Pearson correlation and multiple regression methods. The results showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between problem-oriented strategy ($r=0.61$) and avoidance strategy ($r=0.38$) with psychological well-being of children of addicts. There was also a significant relationship between positive perceived stress ($r=0.39$) and negative perceived stress ($r=-0.35$) with psychological well-being. In addition, coping strategies and perceived stress have a 60-percent ability to predict psychological well-being of the children from addicted parents. As a result, it could be stated that the variables namely coping strategies and perceived stress have greater ability to predict psychological well-being of the children of addicts, and require some programs for adjustment and proper training of these variables.

Introduction

Drug dependence and abuse is one of the most important problems of our time which has been widespread throughout the world and every day the number of victims is increasing. The relevant unpleasant consequences are one of the most important concerns of the communities and one of the worst social problems, and it has long preoccupied the mind of mental health specialists, and is considered to be one of the major issues in relation to health of juveniles and youth and especially the children of the addicted people. Addiction is a biological-mental-social disease and many factors affect the people's tendency toward drug abuse. These factors interact with each other and then leading to drug abuse and drug dependence because they play an intertwined role in the creation of addiction. Addiction is an individual disorder which afflicts the body, thinking, emotions and feelings, values, personal, social, family, and spiritual relationships (Rostami, 2009).

Addiction not only creates some problems for the addict but also leads to a lot of problems and difficulties for the family, wife and especially children, and it is highly likely that they get more and more afflicted with mental health problems, and experience severe damages in terms of life quality and mental well-being (Sadeghi, 2009). Psychological well-being can be defined as the ability to find all potential talents of people. People with high psychological well-being experience positive emotions, and have a positive assessment of the events taking place around them, while those with a low sense of psychological well-being evaluate their position and incidents in life as unpleasant, and experience more negative emotions such as anxiety, depression, anger (Sadeghi, 2009). Psychological well-being has some components including: 1-autonomy (feeling of competence and the ability to manage one's environment, etc.); 2- personal growth (continuous development, etc.); 3- positive relationships with others (warm relations, etc.); 4- purpose in life (being purposeful in life, etc.); 5-Self-acceptance (having a positive attitude towards themselves and others); and 6- control of the environment (the ability to choose and create a suitable environment, etc.). Psychological well-being requires an understanding of the existential challenges of life. Approach to psychological well-being examines growth and development seen in the existential challenges of life and focuses heavily on human development (Sadeghi, 2009). The findings of a research carried out by Sabour (2010) showed that children of people with substance abuse, compared to children of normal people, received lower scores on psychological well-being. Also Sezavar (2010) showed that the addicts had a lower level of the psychological well-being and social support than ordinary people.

Many factors affect psychological individual well-being. One of these factors is stress. Stress can influence personal and social life and individual achievement. The importance of this issue is due to the fact that if we have stressed people, they cannot properly carry out their responsibilities, and they would be weak in the face of different life pressures.

In addition, they cannot move toward their own goal so seriously and will feel disappointment in face of any obstacle, and perceived stress is referred to as individuals' overall interpretation and understanding of the impact of stressors. Different people have different perceptions and interpretations of different stressors. There are a variety of factors that can play effective roles in the creation of perceived stress and individual interpretation of the stress (Zibaei et al., 2012).

One of the strategies that affects stress outcomes is coping strategies by an informed and logical method. Coping strategies are the methods whose main intention is to combat stress source (Sadok & Sadok, 2010; translated by Rezaei, 2011). There are two main approaches for coping processes. One of these approaches focuses on man's ability to cope with and respond to the stressors. This approach seeks to answer the question whether the person can approach the problem and inactively resolve or avoid it or not. The approach mainly focuses on the control of stress-related emotions. The second approach attempts to find out, in the face of a stressful event, whether individual uses cognitive techniques or behavioral methods? By blending these two approaches, a more coherent concept can be achieved, i.e. it is possible to consider individual's tendency toward stressors, and to divide coping into two areas including avoiding and orientation coping (Mu & Schafer, 1993). In addition, according to Lazarus, in problem-oriented coping, individual acts directly to change stressful factors. However, in emotion-focused coping, man's attention is more directed toward change in relevant emotions. In the emotion-focused coping, people try to control their emotions (Bayrami et al., 2012). The results of the research conducted by Clarke et al (2013) showed that there is a significant relationship between coping styles and emotional states with drug and alcohol abuse. So, awareness of emotional states is widely associated with alcoholism and drug use through facilitating avoidance coping. In addition, the research by Simon and Cavay (2007) showed that the type of coping strategies used is predictor of substance abuse in the future.

Given the above-mentioned exploitations, the current research examined the relationship between coping strategies and perceived stress and psychological well-being of children of the addicts.

Methodology

The research is descriptive and correlational. The statistical population is composed of children of drug abusers referring to outpatient treatment centers in Ardebil city. Using a multi-stage cluster method, 60 children were selected as the sample. After obtaining the necessary permits and required coordination, the researchers referred to addiction treatment centers and outpatient treatment centers in Ardabil city. To select the statistical sample, with the permission of parents and receiving written consent, the children were invited to participate in the study. Then the objectives of the study were explained to them, and they entered. The research data were analyzed using SPSS software and using Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression. Data collection tools included the following questionnaires:

Reef Psychological well-being questionnaire

The questionnaire contains 54 questions which measures six scales including self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purposeful life and personal growth. For each subscale, nine 5-option questions are developed using Likert spectrum. Reef & Singer (1998) performed psychological well-being questionnaire on 1108 people of aged 25 and over. The factor analysis confirmed this six-dimensional questionnaire. The reliability coefficients of the psychological well-being questionnaire in the current research were calculated by Cronbach's alpha and internal consistency coefficient of 0.91. The internal consistency coefficient of the questionnaire was also calculated based on the subscales, as follows: independence (0.75), dominance on environment (0.75), personal development (0.61), positive relationships with others (0.71), purposefulness in life (0.72) and self-acceptance (0.78) (Reef & Singer, 1998). The coefficient of reliability obtained in the research performed by Zanjani Tabasi by internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) for the psychological well-being test was 0.94, and for the sub-tests was 0.63 to 0.89, respectively. The correlation coefficient based on the retest for the total test was 0.76, and for the total test was 0.67 to 0.73 (Zanjani Tabasi, 2004). The validity of the resulting construct based on the correlation method between the total score and subscales for life satisfaction was 0.51, for happiness was 0.66, for spirituality was 0.66, for positive relationships with others was 0.48, and for individual growth and development was 0.46 which all are significant (Zanjani Tabasi, 2004). In a study in which internal consistency was used, the validity of different dimensions of Reef test was 0.65 to 0.70 (Sezavar, 2010).

Perceived Stress Scale

This scale was developed by Cohen et al (1983) and is used to measure perceived stress in the past month. The scale has 14 items, and each item is answered on a five-point Likert scale (none, low, moderate, high and very high). These options achieve the scores 0, 1, 2, 3 and 4, respectively. Perceived Stress Scale measures two subscales: a) negative perception of stress, b) positive perception of stress. Cohen et al. calculated Cronbach's alpha for this scale which was 0.84 and 0.86 (Cohen et al., 1983). In the research conducted by Mimora and Grifits (2004), the coefficient of the original scale and revised scale were 0.88 and 0.81, respectively. In the main scale, two factors explained 53.20% of variance: the first factor 27.30 and the second one 25.90 percent. In contrast, the Japanese revised scale of two factors explained 49.90% variance, the first factor was 28.5% and the second factor was 21.40% of variance (Cohen et al., 1983). In addition, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the first factor was 0.73, and the second factor was 0.85 (Mimora, Grifits, 2004). In a research performed by Ghorbani et al. (2002), Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this scale in American society was 0.86, and in Iranian sample was 0.81.

Stress coping style questionnaire

The questionnaire was prepared by Endler and Park (1990; quoted from Mohammad Khani et al., 2008). In the research, to measure this variable, 48-item form of Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations (CISS) translated and adapted by Mohammad Khani et al. (2008) was used. This inventory has been developed for assessing three strategies including problem-oriented or practical coping, emotion-oriented coping, and avoidance coping (Mohammadkhani, 2008). The reliability of the questionnaire using Cronbach's alpha was 0.48, and for three abovementioned coping strategies was 0.81, 0.83 and 0.87, respectively (Mohammadkhani et al. 2008).

Research Findings

According to the research findings, the mean age of the sample under study was 15.72 with a standard deviation 3.94. In addition, 78.3% of the sample were male and 21.7% were female. 71.7% of the sample with the highest frequency had an education level below diploma and 3.3% with the lowest frequency had a bachelor degree.

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of the studied variables

Variable	Component	Mean	Standard Deviation
Coping Strategies	Problem-oriented	52.4000	6.23604
	Emotion-oriented	50.3333	8.99466
	Avoidance	56.2000	7.92705
Psychological Well-Being	Self-Acceptance	31.9750	4.6333
	Positive Relations with Others	30.7250	6.52964
	Self-Autonomy	30.6250	6.42065
	Dominance on Environment	27.9152	5.92398
	Goal-oriented Life	32.2750	6.60210
	Personal Growth	28.3875	3.52026
	Perceived Stress	Negative Perceived Stress	22.67
Positive Perceived Stress		22.55	3.90

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of the studied variables in the research.

Table 2: Pearson correlation coefficient for coping and perceived strategies with psychological well-being among the children of addicted people

	Component	Statistics	Psychological Well-being
Coping Strategies	Practical or Problem-oriented Strategy	Correlation Coefficient	**0.61
		Significance Level	0.001
	Emotion-Oriented Strategy	Correlation Coefficient	0.092
		Significance Level	0.483
	Avoidance Strategy	Correlation Coefficient	**0.381
		Significance Level	0.002
Perceived Stress	Positive Perceived Stress	Correlation Coefficient	**0.358
		Significance Level	0.002
	Negative Perceived Stress	Correlation Coefficient	** -0.357
		Significance Level	0.005

**The significance of the test for error level of 0.01

As Table 2 shows, there is a significant relationship between problem-oriented strategy (r=0.61) and avoidance strategy (r=0.38) with the psychological well-being of the children of the addicts (p<0.01). In addition, there is a significant relationship between positive perceived stress (r=0.39) and negative perceived stress (r=0.35) with psychological well-being.

Table 3: The results of multiple regression analysis on coping strategies and the perceived stress in predicting psychological well-being of children of addicted people

Model		ss	df	ms	F	P		
Total Regression	Left-over	4825.048	5	965.010	18.661	0.000		
		2792.552	54	51.714				
		7617.600	59					
Predictor Variables		R	R2	Non-standard Coefficients		Standard Coefficients	T	P
				B	SE	BETA		
Constant Value		-	-	15.324	8.746		1.752	0.085
Problem-oriented Strategies		0.61	0.37	1.115	0.189	0.612	5.596	0.000
Emotion-oriented Strategies		0.71	0.51	-0.608	0.150	-0.481	-4.096	0.000
Avoidance Strategy		0.78	0.62	0.626	0.158	0.437	3.961	0.000
Positive Perceived Stress		0.78	0.62	0.036	0.142	0.028	0.256	0.799
Negative Perceived Stress		0.79	0.63	-0.41	0.031	-0.117	-1.314	0.195

To determine the function of the variables namely relationship between coping and perceived strategies as predictor variables and psychological well-being of children of addicts as the criterion variable in multiple regression equation, these variables were analyzed. As seen in Table 3, the amount of observed F is significant ($F=18.66$ & $p < 0.01$), coping strategies and perceived stress have 63% predictive ability to predict psychological well-being of children of addicts. Given the beta values, problem-oriented strategy ($\beta=0.61$), emotion-focused strategy ($\beta=-0.48$) and avoidance strategy ($\beta=0.43$) can significantly predict the changes relevant to the psychological well-being of children of addicts

Discussion and conclusion

The current research was aimed at investigating the relationship between coping strategies and perceived stress with the psychological well-being of the children of addicted people. The research findings indicated that there is a significant and positive relationship between problem-oriented strategy and avoidance strategy with the psychological well-being of the children of addicted parents. However, there was not any significant relationship between emotion-oriented strategy and the psychological well-being of the children of addicted people. The results obtained were consistent with the research results of Momeni et al., (2012), Khosravani et al. (2012), Behrozian et al. (2009) and Melores (2012). Momeni et al (2012) in a study showed that there is a positive relationship between the variables namely resiliency and problem-oriented coping strategy with well-being. However, there was not any significant relationship between emotion-oriented coping strategy and well-being. In addition, Khosravani et al. (2012) showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between quality of life and psychological well-being with problem-oriented strategy and avoidance strategy. In another study, Behrozian et al. (2009) reported that there is a significant relationship between the well-being of individuals and coping styles.

The purpose and function of coping strategies is to modify stressful situations. The adaptive and logical styles such as problem-oriented strategy mostly reduce the negative effects of the stresses on physical and mental health. However, even though coping styles such as emotion-oriented coping strategy can reduce such stresses, in the long term can lead to consequences such as increased pressure, anxiety and depression (Aveiro et al., 2003). In fact, by engaging people, problem-oriented coping strategy searches for solutions to problems, can bring about intellectual coherence, and helps man to explore the source of stress, and to come to the realization that the stress can be controlled. Thus, such approach can positively affect individuals' psychological well-being and health. In contrast, emotion-based coping strategy negatively cause mental distress and affect man's psychological well-being, and prevent him from being directly involved with the problem, and leads to a false assessment of stress source, and this can negatively influence mental well-being.

Another part of the results in the current research indicated that there is a positive and significant relationship between positive perceived stresses with psychological well-being of the children of addicted people, and there is a significant negative relationship between negative perceived stress and psychological well-being of the children of addicted people. The results obtained were consistent with the results from the research carried out by Besharat et al (2008), Masoudnia (2011), Nourani (2013), Monta et al. (2014). Nourani (2013) in his research showed that there is a negative and significant relationship between negative perceived stress and irrational thinking with mental well-being, and there is a positive and significant relationship between positive perceived stress and mental well-being in coping with stressful situations. In addition, Monta et al. (2014) concluded that mental well-being is positively correlated with positive perceived stress and social support (all aspects of social perceived support), and is negatively correlated with negative perceived stress.

Regarding this finding, it should be said that different people have different perceptions and interpretations of different stressors. There are a variety of factors that can influence the creation of perceived stress and individual interpretation of the stress (Zibaei et al., 2012). In the meantime, the children of the addicted parents which have positive stress (positive perceived stress) select a proper and positive coping strategy which enables them to cope with stressful events effectively, and minimize their own distress and anxiety, which this factor can increase mental well-being.

In contrast, application of improper stress coping strategies (negative perception of stress) not only does not eradicate or minimize stress but also leads to unnecessary distress and anxiety.

Because the lack of practical and constructive measures leads to the perpetuity of stressors, and in turn continued inability of man to cope with stress. On the other hand, negative attitudes of oneself and others can further prevent individual from a proper assessment of internal resources and environmental impacts. As a result, individual feels helplessness and is failed to control his own situation (Maslow, 1990; translated by Rezvani, 2000) and will face the significant reduction in psychological well-being.

Another part of the results showed that coping strategies and perceived stress have a 60-percent ability to predict the psychological well-being of the children of addicted parents. Psychological well-being requires an understanding of the existential challenges of life. This approach investigates development psychology and the perceived evolution in the face of life problems, and emphatically focuses on human development, and mainly attempts to achieve significant objectives, individual progress and establishment of qualitative relationships with others (Kis & Reef, 2002). Despite their own intrinsic constraints, all human beings attempt to have a positive attitude toward themselves, which it is called self-acceptance. Another feature is autonomy which encompasses independence, self-sufficiency and freedom from norms. Someone who can make decisions based on his thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs is characterized by autonomy (Reef et al., 1995). In fact, the ability to deal with social pressures is related to this component, and having positive relationships with others as another component of this model means having high quality and satisfying relationships with others. People with these characteristics are pleasant, altruistic and capable of loving others and try to establish warm relationship based on mutual trust. They attempt to develop appropriate strategies to deal with stressful situations. In addition, the purposeful persons show interest in daily activities and incidents and effectively get involved with them, and have a positive perception of any problem (positive conception of stress) (Reef, 1989).

In general it can be said that the variables namely coping strategies and perceived stress are highly capable of predicting psychological well-being of children of addicts, and require proper training programs for adjustment and proper training of such variables. Two limitations of the preset study is that the tool used in the current research is self-report, and it is only done on the children of addicted parents in a city, thus it is not possible to generalize the research findings. Therefore, to increase the generalizability of the obtained results, it is recommended to do such research on another statistical community. Also, it is recommended to provide this group of people with effective trainings on the application of coping strategies. This can enable them to use these strategies in the face of problems, and naturally reduce their predilection to drug abuses, because as it was told earlier, the children of the addicted people are more susceptible to drug abuse.

References

- Avero, P., Corace, KM., Endler, NS., & Calvo, MG. (2003). Coping styles and threat processing. *Pers Indiv Differ.* 35(2), 843-61.
- Bahrami, M., Zahm Taiar, H., Bahadori Khoramshahi, J., 2012. Prediction of coping with stress in pregnancy in nulliparous pregnant women based on the components of hardness and social support. *Journal of Nursing Research*, 27 (7), pp. 1-9.
- Behrozyan, F., Khajedin, N., Hadaee, F., & Zamani N. (2009). The relationship of job satisfaction and coping mechanism with general health, among private industrial's staff. *Private Sector Industrial. Journal of Medicine Science.* 8(3), 345-53.
- Besharat, M. A., Barati, N., Lotfi, J., 2008. The relationship between stress coping styles and levels of psychological adaptation in patients with multiple sclerosis: a medical research. *Research Journal published by Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences and Health & Treatment Services*, 32 (1), pp. 27-34.
- Clarke, M., Hollin, C., & Viktor, S. (2013). Coping strategies and relapse to drug use. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence.* 15 (3): 283-301.
- Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., & Mermelstein, R. (1983). A global measure of perceived stress. *Journal of Health Soc Behav*, 24(4), 96- 385.
- Ghorbani, N., Bing, MN., Watson, PJ., Davison, HK., & Mack, DA. (2002). Self-reported emotional intelligence: Construct similarity and functional dissimilarity of higher-order processing in Iran and the United States. *International Journal of Psychology*, 37(5), 297-308.
- Khosrovani, E., Mahmoudirad, Gh. Dastjerdi, R., 2012. The relationship between coping strategies and quality of life and psychological well-being of patients with coronary heart disease. *Fourth International Congress of Psychosomatic Diseases; Tehran, Iran.*
- Maslow, E., 1990. *Motivation and personality*; translated by Ahmad Rezvani, 2000; Mashhadd, Qods Razavi Publications
- Masoudnia, E., 2011. The severity of perceived stress and coping strategies. *Journal of Contemporary Psychology*, 4 (2), pp. 71- 79.
- Mellors, P. (2012). Self-transcendence, and quality of life. *Dissertation Abstracts International: Section Bo. The Sciences and Engineering*, 60(4), 1533.
- Mimura, C.M., & Griffithdis, P. (2004). A Japanese Version of the Perceived Stress scale. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 41(4), 85-379.
- Moemeni, Kh., Shahbazirad, A., Karami, J., 2012. The relationship between spirituality, resiliency and strategies of coping with psychological well-being of students. *Scientific Journal of Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences*, 16 (8), pp. 72- 79.
- Mohammadkhani, Sh., Bashqareh, R., 2008. The relationship between emotional intelligence and coping styles with public health of students. *Quarterly research on mental health published by Teacher training University. Scientific center for studies on psychology of stress*, 2 (1), pp. 37- 47.
- Moneta, G. B., Lowell, S., & A. Limke. (2014). Well-Beig Effect of Social Support on the Stress-burnout Relationship. *Journal of Applied Psychology.* 69(4), 615-622.
- Moos, R.H., & Schaefer, J.A. (1993). Coping Resources and Processes: Current Concept and Measure's. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 2(4), 297-314.
- Nourani, S., 2012. The Relationship between irrational thoughts, and perceived stress and psychological well-being in coping with stressful situations. *Master thesis of the field of survey and measurement (psychometric); Allameh Tabatabai University.*
- Rostami, R. 2009. History of childhood abuse in male addicts than non-addicted population. *MA thesis. Tehran University, Faculty of Psychology.*
- Ryff, C. D., & Keyes, C. L. M. (1995). The structure of psychological well-being revisited. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69(4), 716-727.

- Ryff, C. D., & Singer, B. (1998). The Contours of Positive Human Health. *Psychological Inquiry*, 9(3), 1-28.
- Sabour, H., 2010. A comparison of the psychological well-being of children (in the age group of elementary and secondary) of addicted and non-addicts parents. Master thesis in psychology; PNU Tabriz, Faculty of Humanities.
- Sadeqi, S., 2009. The relationship between optimism, psychological well-being and coping styles among students. Master thesis of General Psychology. Allameh Tabatabai University.
- Sadok, B., Sadok, V., 2010. Pocket Handbook of Kaplan & Sadok Clinical Psychiatry. Translated by Mohsen Arjmand, Farzin Rezaei, Nadia Feqani Jadidi; 2011; Tehran; Arjmand Publications; Nasl Farda
- Sezavar, H., 2010. A comparison of psychological well-being, coping styles and social support in addicts and normal people. General psychology master's thesis. Islamic Azad University of Tabriz.
- Simons, S., & Carvey, B. (2007). Attitudes toward marijuana use and drug. Free experience. *Journal of Elsevier*, 16(2), 203-214.
- Zanjani Tabasi, R., 2004. Construction and preliminary standardization of psychological well-being test. MA thesis, Tehran University.
- Zibaei, F., Akbari, A., Dehkordi, M., Alipour, A. 2012. The effectiveness of the meaning therapy on the treatment of perceived stress and life expectancy in patients with multiple sclerosis. *Journal of Tehran University of Medical Sciences*, 6 (4), pp. 12- 20.