

A Comparison of Coping Styles of Exceptional Children's Mothers and Normal Children's Mothers

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Abstract

This research aims to compare the coping styles of exceptional children's mothers and normal children's mothers in Arak city. This is a causal-comparative study. The research population was included of all exceptional children's mothers and normal children's mothers in Arak city which they children were educated in special schools and normal primary schools. The number of these individuals was 150 who were selected randomly. The sample was included 50 ordinary women who were selected by random clustering method in Arak city. Coping skills (CISS) was used in this study. T-test was used to test the hypothesis. The results showed a significant difference between exceptional children's mothers and normal children's mothers. Hypothesis was confirmed. So it can be concluded that coping style scores in exceptional children's mothers is less than normal children's mothers.

Keywords: Coping Styles, Exceptional Children's Mothers, Normal Children's Mothers

Introduction

Family is one of the most natural groups that can satisfy the human needs. Family duties are take care of children and their education, healthy communication of members with together, the children's independence, even if the child is mentally retarded, blind, or deaf. Mental retardation is a particular state of mind which occurs in different conditions before or after the child's birth.

Birth and presence of children with intellectual disabilities in every family could be considered an adverse and challenging event which is likely to follow stress, frustration, feelings of sadness and despair. Various evidences suggests that parents of children with mental problems, are more likely to have social, economic and emotional problems and they are facing with limiting, destructive and pervasive nature. In such a situation, although all members of the family and their function are damaged, but it is assumed that parents, particularly mothers are at risk of developing mental health problems. Studies have shown that parents of children with intellectual disabilities, in comparison with the parents of normal children have less general health and more feeling of anxiety, shame and embarrassment (Mikaeili, 2009).

Each person may be suffering by mental illness because health is not limited to explaining the causes of behavioral disorders but its main purpose is the prevention of the disease. Prevention is the creation of factor which is complementary to a normal healthy life and the treatment of minor disorders of behavior

in order to prevent the occurrence of severe mental illnesses. Mental health is one of the basic health principles in which person respect and love himself (Shamloo, 2007).

The major features of human are awareness of his behavior and the power of thinking; Human can be aware of his behavior and use this power in facing with various matters. But human are not always aware of what he done, in other words, human sometimes do something but he is not aware of his behavior motivation or goal of the act. When parents understand that their child is exceptional, their reaction will have consequences. The presence of children with intellectual disabilities has profound effects on the relationship of family members with together and with disabled child. If these unpleasant effects don't solve reasonable, they may have irreparable effects on the psyche of the parents and other family members. Common reactions parents may be for feelings of guilt, frustration and deprivation, denial of reality or understatement (Milanifar, 2013).

Family is a social system and the pillars of society. The family is the smallest social cell that is formed of legal relations between husband and wife. Parent's duties are taking care of the children and their education, making healthy relationships with family members and helping the children independence. Group of psychologists believe that the most important tool to achieve human happiness is self-esteem. Lack of self-esteem or feelings of resistance in contact with others can be seen in feeling of embarrassment, shame and self-exaggerated (Farhadi, 2005).

Coping styles is one of the factors that its effectiveness has been confirmed in numerous studies. Today, tension and stress have become an important and inevitable part of human life. Studies about tension have emphasized that tension is not threaten health behavior, but individual assessment of stress and coping strategies and stress management are threaten health behavior (Andersoun & Romeo, 2006).

A comparative study of the relationship between lifestyle and coping with stress and burnout among teachers of special and regular educational took place in Birjand. The results of this study showed that there is a significant relationship between the control component with depersonalization variable and between perfectionism with a sense of personal accomplishment in exceptional teachers. Also there is a significant relationship between expected and perfectionism with emotional exhaustion, between perfectionism and control components with a sense of personal accomplishment in ordinary teachers. There is no significant difference between coping styles with stress, burnout and lifestyle in male and female teachers. Mean of sense of personal accomplishment, lifestyle and expectations components and self-esteem is significantly more in ordinary teachers than exceptional. But the mean difference is not significant between coping styles in both special and regular teachers. It was suggested that stress management should be considered as a fixed and permanent program for teachers to prevent burnout (Hojatinia, 2013).

In a research entitled studying the biological, psychological, emotional, cognitive, social cultural features of parents with more than one exceptional child and their coping styles in comparison with parents of normal children in urban and rural areas, the results showed that there is a significant difference between these two groups in the age of mothers at marriage, age of fathers at marriage , age of mothers during pregnancy and the birth of the first child, age of fathers during pregnancy and the birth of the first child, birth order of mothers, birth order of fathers, the mean height of mothers, the mean weight of mothers, history of illness during pregnancy, history of drug consumption before pregnancy, mothers addiction, fathers addiction, duration of pregnancy, blood group of mothers, blood groups of parents, parental consanguinity marriage, genetic counseling before marriage, having exceptional children in close

relatives, abortion and stillbirth, mothers education, fathers education, parents awareness of exceptional children, topics favorite of mothers, topics of interest fathers, parents awareness of effective factors of the exceptional child, parent awareness of ways to prevent the birth of an exceptional child, mental and emotional state of mothers before pregnancy, history of depression and mental illness in parents, history of depression and mental illness in parents, parental relationship before the child birth, parents tendency to childbearing, marital satisfaction of parents, public health and mental health of mothers, personality characteristics and components of mothers, marriage type of parents, immigrant background of parents, mothers jobs, fathers jobs, differences in living place and monthly income of parents and coping style. Overall, this study shows that there is a significant difference between the biological, psychological, emotional, cognitive, social cultural features of parents with exceptional child and with parents of normal children and their coping styles (Amini, 2011).

In a research entitled studying and stress assessment with coping strategies and mental health the results showed that stress assessment and coping strategies variables have an important role in mental health. Also the use of method of encounter causes life satisfaction and reducing psychological symptoms (Karimzadeh, 2010).

Nezami (2007) conducted a study as comparing the attitudes of parents with mentally retarded children. The results showed: 48% of fathers and 52% of mothers said that their mental health is disrupted due to the mentally retarded children. 54% of them felt frustration and disappointment and 64% of them felt apprehension and 24% of parents stated that the birth of mentally retarded children is resulting in the understanding of marital life, 29% of parents stated that the birth of mentally retarded children is resulting in argument and 4% were divorced due to the mentally retarded children.

Examining the relationship between coping styles and mental health of high school students showed that logical and problem-focused coping styles could predict health indices, and emotional and inefficient coping styles or indicators of disease avoidance. On the other hand, boys had more mental health than girls, but the mean scores of girls were higher than boys in all kinds of coping styles. These results indicated that adopting the avoidance and inefficient style could endanger the mental health of adolescents and adopting a problem-focused and logic coping styles should have a positive effect on mental health (Ferankel, 2005).

Research results of Vepsy (2004) showed that coping style was the most important predictor of parental stress in book of source control.

In another study conducted by Lazarus and Folkman (2004), It was found that people use emotion-focused more coping styles in situations of loss such as the death or illness, and they use problem-focused coping strategies in practical situations and interpersonal such as the threat or challenges.

In order to study the relationship between purpose in life, coping styles and mental health among college students was conducted the results showed that that there is a negative relationship between emotion-focused coping style and mental health. Also there are a significant positive problem-focused coping styles and mental health, goal in life and mental health. The analysis of variance showed that there is a significant difference goal in life in different fields, mental health in different fields, emotion-focused coping style in different fields and problem-focused coping styles in different fields. The results showed that the differences between girls and boys in terms of having a purpose in life and mental health are not significant. The difference between boys and girls is a significant in problem-focused coping styles. It means that boys are using problem-focused coping styles. Conclusion: Having a purpose in life has an

important role in the prevention of mental disorders. Considering that problem-focused coping strategies play an important role in maintaining mental health and life satisfaction, so a healthy and satisfying life can be created by teaching these strategies (Dafy, 2003). So this research aims to answer this question: is there a difference between the coping styles of exceptional children's mothers and normal children's mothers?

Research methodology:

This research is a descriptive and causal-comparative research according to its objectives and nature.

Research population:

The research population was included of all exceptional children's mothers and normal children's mothers in Arak city which their children were educated in special schools which the number of students in this year was 350 people and normal primary schools in 2015.

Sample and Sampling methods:

Random cluster sampling method was used in 6 special schools in Arak and then they randomly selected a special school. 50 mothers with exceptional children were selected randomly among 150 mothers. Also an ordinary school was selected by cluster sampling method among 50 school and then 50 mothers with normal children were selected randomly. It was tried to select mothers with the same educational and age in order to match the sample.

Research Tool:

Coping Skills Questionnaire (CISS):

The questionnaire was used to evaluate a variety of coping strategies in stressful situations by Endler and Parker (1990). This test contains 48 items which is given one to five to each term based on the Likert score and measures three problem-focused coping strategies, emotion-focused coping strategies and avoidance coping strategies. The validity of the test by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficient for triple skills is as follows: it is 90.0 for girls and 92.0 for boys in problem-focused strategies; it is 85.0 for girls and 82.0 for boys in emotion-focused strategies and it is 82.0 for girls and 85.0 for boys in avoidance strategies (Endler and Parker, 1990).

Jafarnejad (2003) calculated reliability for problem-oriented style equal to 0.83, emotion-oriented style equal to 0.80 and avoidance style equal to 0.72.

Findings

Table 1: Descriptive data related to coping styles questionnaire

Group	Variable	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error	Highest score	Lowest score
exceptional children's mothers	Coping Styles	50	147.35	3.65	0.301	165	130
normal children's mothers	Coping Styles	50	203.05	7.31	1.41	220	186

According to the above table , descriptive data related to coping styles questionnaire in mothers with exceptional children are as follow, mean score is equal to 147.35, Standard deviation is equal to 3.65, Standard error is equal to 0.301 , Highest score is equal to 165 and lowest score is equal to 130.

Descriptive data related to coping styles questionnaire in mothers with normal children are as follow, mean score is equal to 203.05, Standard deviation is equal to 7.31, Standard error is equal to 1.41, Highest score is equal to 220 and lowest score is equal to 186.

The main hypothesis: there is a difference between coping styles of exceptional children's mothers and normal children's mothers.

Table 2: Statistical indicators related to differences in coping style

Group	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error mean
exceptional children's mothers	50	113.312	7.654	0.987
normal children's mothers	50	150.321	9.376	2.4539

Table 3: t-test results for the two groups

Levin Variances	Test for equality	Confidence interval 0.95 differences
	y	

	F	t	df	sig	mean differences	Standard deviation	lower	upper
Assuming equal variances	4.647	0.042	2.46 5	98	0.019	6.17	1.19	0.51 5.65
Without assuming equal variances		2.65	83.684	0.019	6.17	1.19	0.7	5.65

Results: According to the table, Levin test is significant ($p < 0.05$), so t-test can be used by assuming lack of variances equality.

Therefore, the null hypothesis (no difference between the means) is rejected and the research hypothesis (there is a significant difference between the two groups) is confirmed. So there is a difference between coping styles of exceptional children's mothers and normal children's mothers with the possibility of 0.95.

Discussion and conclusion

The main hypothesis: there is a difference between coping styles of exceptional children's mothers and normal children's mothers.

The results of testing the hypothesis showed that there is a difference between coping styles of exceptional children's mothers and normal children's mothers with the possibility of 0.95. So the main hypothesis is confirmed. The findings of this research are consistent with results of internal investigations of Hojati Nia (2013), Amini (2011), Amini (2009), Besharat (2008), Ahmadi (2008), Bahrami (2006), Ramazani (2004), Lajvardi (2002), Shariati & Davar Manesh (2001), Ahmadi Et Al (2001), Faramarzi Et Al (2001) and are consistent with results of external investigations of Karter (2009), Seligman (2008), Karoul (2 Mayer (2000)007), Jacques (2006), Fronkel (2005), Jones (2004), Dafei (2003), Rooney (2003), Azarmnia(2001), Mayer (2000) and Waddington Bush (1992).

In explaining the results, it can be noted that coping styles in exceptional children's mothers is less than normal children's mothers. It can be said that having an exceptional child has a considerable impact on the parents' lives. It has psychological problems on parents that can affect their coping styles and these two variables in the women are more than others. In fact, having an exceptional child in the family has a significant impact on parental stress and assertiveness is a way to reduce stress.

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