

IMPACT OF COGNITIVE DISTORTION ON MENTAL HEALTH AMONG PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDER PATIENTS

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Abstract

Cognitive distortion is the most important factor in maintaining excellent mental health. Good mental health is impossible to achieve while cognitive distortions are present. The importance of cognition to mental wellness cannot be overstated. Strong mental health is characterized by error-free cognition as an essential component. The primary objective of this study is to shed light on the significant role those cognitive distortions play in the onset of a variety of mental illnesses, including stress, anxiety, and depression, in the province of Punjab, Pakistan. Three hypotheses provided in this study are intended to serve as a basis for addressing the purpose of this research, which was to identify whether cognitive distortions can have a significant effect on the mental health of patients with psychological disorders suffering from cognitive distortions. In addition, a research model as well as potential future avenues for testing and validating the existing model.

Keywords: Cognitive distortion, Mental Health, Psychological Disorder, Mental Illness

INTRODUCTION

As a part of psychological well-being, mental health is being able to cope with the stresses of life, realizing our abilities, learning well and working effectively, and contributing to our society. A mental health problem is widely recognized as one of the biggest social problems in the world and needs to be tackled aggressively on a global scale. Despite the fact that 30% to 50% of the world's population is thought to suffer from mental illness (Mackenzie, Gekoski, & Knox, 2006), studies have reported varying rates of mental disorders in different countries, such as 10.1% for Canadians, 18.5% for Americans, and 38.2% for Europeans (Pearson, Janz, & Ali, 2013). It has also been proven to a large degree that mental problems are prevalent in countries that practise Islam. Saudi Arabian primary-care patients were found to have about one fifth of mental illnesses (Almutairi, 2015), more than half of UAE patients had mental illnesses (Abdel Aziz, Elamin, El-Saadouni, El-Gabry, Barakat, Alhayyas, & Moselhy, 2016), and about seventeen percent of Egyptians suffered from a mental illness (Ghanem, Gadallah, Meky, Mourad, & El-Kholy, 2009). According to research conducted in India (Math, Chandrashekar, and Bhugra, 2007), at least ten million people in India struggle with a severe form of mental illness.

Countries with a lower middle income, such as India, the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Pakistan are some examples. In this region, there is a significant lack of medical treatment available, insufficient investment (typically only 1% or less of meagre healthcare budgets), insufficient capacity to spend funds effectively, deteriorating facilities, and an extremely low number of mental health professionals. These are just some of the many challenges that are present. For example, there are 0.3 or fewer psychiatrists for per 100,000 people in the populations of India, Pakistan, and Indonesia (Boyle & Plummer, 2017). There are around 24 million people in Pakistan who are in need of

psychiatric assistance, according to estimates. According to further Worldometer research, as of this past Friday, February 11, 2022, the total population of Pakistan was exactly 227 million individuals. This accounts for 2.83% of the total population of the world, which places it fifth on the list of countries. The urban population makes up 35.1% of the total population and has a median age of 22.8 years. The majority of individuals in Pakistan are prone to developing cognitive distortions as a result of the many difficulties and stressful situations that they are forced to deal with on a daily basis. These errors in information processing and thought are referred to as cognitive distortions. There are certain cognitive distortions that arise because of a flawed way in which information is processed, such as unreliable, biased, or others, resulting in an inaccuracy in an individual's cognition. (Yurica and DiTomasso 2005).

There are numerous mental, emotional, and behavioural issues that can be traced back to flawed thinking. These thinking errors, also known as cognitive distortions, are a contributing factor in the development of a wide variety of psychiatric disorders, including stress, anxiety, and depression. It is now well acknowledged that stress is a significant influence in a variety of negative outcomes, including health, productivity, interpersonal relationships, and accidents. As a consequence of this, the reduction of stress has become a significant subject of research all over the world. Cognitive distortions are a significant contributor to stress, which can be caused by a number of other variables as well. The cognitive model argues that we, as individuals, are exposed to situations that can be either positive or negative, as well as neutral, and that these events are interpreted through a series of ideas, which ultimately results in unique sensations and moods (Jha, Bhoi, Saha, Singh, Mukherjee & Sharma, 2022)..

People having cognitive distortions not only develop stressful thoughts but sometimes they develop many excessive worrying,

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and fearful thoughts and such type of errors in thinking lead this person toward the development of anxiety disorders. Individuals with anxiety disorders made more cognitive distortions than healthy individuals (Clark & Beck, 2011).

Second, cognitive distortions are a significant factor in major depression and are an important part of the disorder. Cognitive distortions of a similar nature can be observed in those who gamble and in those who suffer from major depression. People who suffer from depression are unable to accurately predict what will happen in the future, and they are able to recall unpleasant experiences more easily than positive ones (Beck & Bredemeier, 2016). Many research has highlighted the danger of disrupted cognitive processes in the onset and maintenance of depression (Possel & Black, 2014). Recent interpretations of cognitive models of depression highlight the bi-directional link between cognitive distortions and depression.

Cognitive distortion is false or irrationalized attitude towards, views of, and opinions in, their own or others' social actions. This false and irrational way of thinking is considered as cognitive distortion and are part of cognitive approach. Lots of problems arise because of cognitive distortions because of these false thoughts, the person develops an exaggerated negative image toward and toward himself/herself (Şimşek, Koçak, & Younis, 2021). Many other studies, have highlighted that there is link between irrational thoughts and psychological well-being. Emotional problems, depression and anxiety are linked with early maladaptive schemas and irrational thoughts (da Luz, Sainsbury, Hay, Roekenes, Swinbourne, da Silva & Oliveira, 2017).

We can define stress as bad emotional experience along with cognitive, biological, behavioral and physical responses. Mostly reasons of stress and reasons of associated symptoms of stress causes of stress differ greatly (Beidel et al. 2014).

Anxiety is defined as beliefs which are distorted about some dangerous situation and about inner stimuli. As compared to depression, onset of anxiety disorders in adulthood is common too, and occurrence rates is (1.69% per 100 persons-years) comparable to those in depression (1.65% per 100 person-years) (De Graaf, ten Have, et al., 2013).

Depression is such type of emotional condition which is well recognized by everyone, but it is not experienced by everyone. It is a such type of state that tears away energy of someone, and puts the patient into hopelessness darkness and pessimism, regardless of this that there are many reasons to be happy (Bulut, Hajiyousouf, & Nazir, 2021).

Furthermore, one critical region that receives a disproportionately small amount of attention is the manner in which cognitive distortion negatively impacts mental health and contributes to the development of psychological disorders such as stress, anxiety, and depression. This brings the present conversation around to the idea of absorptive capacity. It is necessary to place one's attention on cognitive distortions in order to improve one's mental health (Ahmet & Dris, 2022).

The primary purpose of the current research is to highlight the link that exists between cognitive distortion and the mental health of individuals who are suffering from psychological disorders. Despite the fact that cognitive distortion had already been

investigated in prior research (Ahmet & Dris, 2022) On the other hand, there have only been a handful of research done in underdeveloped nations like Pakistan that look into the link between cognitive distortion and mental health. In light of this, the current research study intends to address a gap in the knowledge base by exploring the connection between cognitive distortion and the mental health of individuals suffering from psychological disorders in Pakistan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Cognitive Distortion

Researcher already conducted research and heightened the importance of cognitive distortion. Barrault and Varescon (2013) studied on cognitive distortions, anxiety, and depression among regular and pathological gambling online poker players. Online poker players were surveyed on an Internet forum using self-report questionnaires including the South Oaks Gambling Screen [SOGS], Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale [HADS], and Gambling-Related Cognition Scale. The sample consisted of 245 regular online poker players (non-pathological gamblers, problem gamblers, and pathological gamblers). Anxiety was more common in all poker players than depression. Pathological gamblers showed advanced levels of depression and anxiety than did PbG and NPG. A regression model showed that there is also difference in cognitive distortion that the perceived inability to the illusion of control, stop gambling, anxiety and depression were considered well predictors for pathological gambling among poker players. Results of the study suggested that there is an important role of cognitive distortions in the creating and keeping gambling pathology. A growing body of evidence suggests that anxiety as well as depression may play a role in pathological gambling among players of poker.

2.2 Mental Health

According to Goldstein, Topitzes, Brown, and Jussel, a study published in 2022 investigated the impact of earlier life trauma and current posttraumatic stress symptoms on posttraumatic stress symptoms in the present. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this study examined the mental health of university employees. There was a cross-sectional survey conducted in the spring of 2021 to gather the opinions of 641 employees at a public university in the United States using an online system. The survey included validated scales of traumatic life events (TLE) and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as well as single-item measures of mental health harm (MHH) and stress taken from published COVID-19 studies. A structural probit model was utilised for the purposes of determining: (a) the direct effects of cumulative traumatic life event (TLE) on mental health harm (MHH), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and stress; and (b) the indirect effects of cumulative traumatic life event (TLE) via post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in an age-adjusted manner. Both of these analyses were conducted with the intention of determining the relationship between cumulative TLE and mental health harm (MHH). In order to evaluate the impact of moderating factors, gender was used as the moderator. In addition to significant rates of harm to mental health (22.5%) and stress (42.3%), over 36% of the group showed positive post-traumatic stress disorder screenings. Both stress and mental health harm (MHH) were found to have a positive

association with collective TLE. Full or moderately detrimental effects of PTSD on mental health and stress have been documented in both male and female patients with PTSD; however, the gender by trauma interaction term was not significant. Increases were seen in both cases of post-traumatic stress disorder and in injuries to mental health. When someone's age went down, they got younger.

2.3 Psychological Disorders

2.3.1 Stress

Researchers Rehman, Shah Nawaz, Khan, Kharshiing, Khursheed, Gupta, Kashyap, and Uniyal (2021) conducted research on the prevalence of depression, anxiety, and tension in Indians during the Covid 19 lockdown. This study involves doing an analysis of the people of India in order to assess the prevalence of psychological issues among those Indians who were living in India during the lockdown. A questionnaire was utilized for the goal of collecting the 403 samples, and participants were asked to respond to the items contained on the questionnaire. These questions pertained to the manifestations of a variety of psychological conditions, such as melancholy, worry, stress, and financial stability and prosperity in the family. According to the findings, those Indians who did not have a lot of income and who had to deal with supply challenges were the ones most likely to suffer from psychological disorders, in comparison to those who had a lot of money. There was a negative association between the financial well-being of families and psychological problems such as stress, anxiety, and depression. People from a variety of occupations, students, and those working in healthcare reported higher levels of stress, anxiety, and depression compared to those in other walks of life. As a result of this circumstance, professionals in the field of mental health are now considered to be normal. Stress, anxiety, and depression were discovered to be typical in the category of these professionals, and they maintain their composure in the face of stressful situations.

2.3.2 Anxiety

Bandelow & Michaelis (2015) reported on Epidemiology of anxiety disorders in the 21st century. All the anxiety disorders are very common and its treatment is costly and the disease has high burden. A survey which was based on a large population, it showed that in their lifetime up to 33.7% of the population experience an anxiety disorder. It was found that there was much under recognition and undertreatment of anxiety disorders. It was not found that rate of anxiety disorders has changed in last years. In cross-cultural comparisons, there was variation in the rate of prevalence. There are many chances that this variation was due to different methods than because of cultural influences. Anxiety disorders has chronic course but with the old age rate of anxiety disorders decreases. There is high comorbidity of anxiety disorders with many other psychological disorders and with the other disorders of anxiety.

2.3.3. Depression

Huang, Fang, Tan and Zhao (2022) studied on Childhood trauma, stressful life events, and depression: Exploring the mediating effect of cognitive flexibility. Childhood trauma and stressful life events are very important in developing depression in someone. Under these associations role of cognition is studied by very few people. From a medical university of Guangzhou, China 2627

first-year university students were taken as sample. Total 1,600 females and 1,027 males taken part in the study. In order to assess all variables self-report measures were administered. Cognitive flexibility somewhat played its role in mediating the relationship between childhood trauma and depression and also played its role in mediating the relationship between stressful life events and depression. The study investigated that trauma of childhood and life events which were full of stress have direct impact on depression and it too increases someone's risk toward depression by lowering his/her cognitive flexibility.

Conceptual framework

On the basis of above literature discussion following conceptual model is derived for this study. Cognitive distortion is the independent variable of the study and Psychological Disorders which is compose of Stress, Anxiety and Depression, consider as Dependent variable of the study. Conceptual framework is presented in the following figure 1.

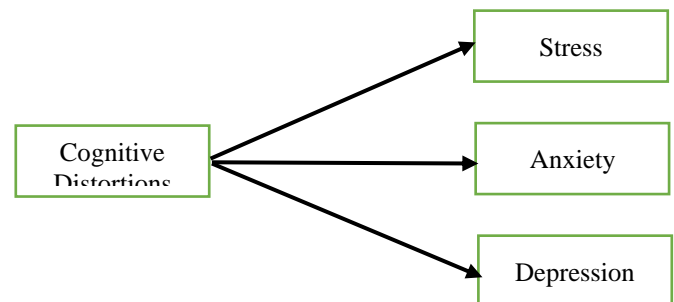


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework.

Research Propositions

On the basis of above research model following research propositions are derived which are as follow:

Hypothesis H1: It will be hypothesized that cognitive distortions significantly effect on the stress among psychological disorders patients.

Hypothesis H2: It will be hypothesized that cognitive distortions significantly effect on the anxiety among psychological disorders patients.

Hypothesis H3: It will be hypothesized that cognitive distortions significantly effect on the depression among psychological disorders patients.

Research Design

The cross-sectional method will be used for the research design. The nature of the research being done right now is quantitative. research that is based on deductions. An strategy based on a questionnaire survey will be carried out. The method of data collection that will be employed is the self-administered questionnaire approach. For the purpose of data analysis, statistical methods will be utilized. The statistical analysis will be carried out with the help of SPSS. After that, the Smart-PLS (SEM) method will be applied in order to evaluate the measurement, as well as the structural model. We will be making use of scales, and all of the measurements of the structures will be modified from work done in earlier research.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The key pillar for any nation's success is its mental health. Strong

cognitive abilities are essential to maintaining healthy mental health. When a person's emotional health is good, they have an easier time keeping their feelings and their behavior under control. They are easily able to deal with the difficulties that life throws at them, are able to maintain good and better relationships, and are easily able to recover from the failures that can befall any one of us. People tend to suffer from a wide variety of psychological problems like stress, anxiety, and depression as a direct result of cognitive distortion. We are unable to overlook the effect that cognitive distortion plays on the mental health of people in Punjab, Pakistan who are suffering from psychological disorders such as stress, anxiety, and depression. However, there is currently a lack of knowledge concerning the influence that cognitive distortion has on mental health. The findings of this study will contribute new information to the existing body of literature on cognitive distortion and mental health. It will open the eyes of policy makers, academics, families, and professionals working in mental health. Current research will recommend that there is a huge need to establish different counselling centers in different cities of Punjab, Pakistan. This research will open the eyes of policy makers, academics, families, and professionals working in mental health. In the future, research will concentrate on conducting empirical tests in order to validate the current model.

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