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A CORRELATIONAL STUDY BETWEEN GRIEF AND COPING MECHANISM AMONG ADULTS

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ABSTRACT

The dictionary defines grief as keen mental suffering or distress over affliction or loss; sharp sorrow or a painful regret. A very personal and intricate emotion, grief follows any loss; be it the passing of a loved one, the breaking of a relationship, or any big life transition. It is a normal reaction to loss and can cause a variety of feelings, such as uncertainty, guilt, rage, and despair. Individuals employ coping mechanisms, or coping methods and behaviours, to control their sorrow and go through the mourning process. Supporting bereaved persons and encouraging healthy grieving processes need an understanding of the connection between coping techniques and sorrow. The current study aimed at understanding the relationship of grief, with special

Vol. 2, Issue 4 April 2024 ISSN: 2584-0142

emphasis on coping mechanisms in adults. Data was acquired from 100 respondents (58 females and 42 males), between the ages of 18 and 30, using The Traumatic Grief Inventory Self-Report Version (TGI-SR) by (Boelen & Smid), and Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced Inventory (Brief-COPE) by (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub). Studies have indicated that the efficacy of coping strategies in managing bereavement might differ significantly between individuals. Correlation was run using Pearson's correlation. The study found a significant and positive correlation between grief and coping mechanisms among adults. The findings indicates that as levels of grief increase, so do the strategies individuals use to cope with their grief. The strength of this correlation, at (r=0.343), suggests a moderate relationship between the two variables. These findings underscore the importance of addressing grief in therapeutic interventions, as understanding and effectively managing grief can significantly impact an individual's coping strategies and overall well-being.

Keywords*: Grief, Coping Mechanism, Adults*

INTRODUCTION

Grief

As psychologists, as scientists, one is often taught to learn from and rely on books, on definitions, on definitive. But in life, strict definitions rarely apply. In life, grief can look at a lot of things that bear little resemblance to sharp sorrow or mental suffering or distress over affliction or loss. Grief may be a thing we all have in common. However, it looks different on everyone. It isn't just death we have to grieve. Its life. Its loss. Its change.

When one wonder why it must be awful, why it must hurt so bad, the thing we got to try to remember is that it can turn on a dime. That's how one stays alive when it hurts so much one can't breathe, that's how one survives. Remembering that one day somehow impossibly,

Vol. 2, Issue 4 April 2024 ISSN: 2584-0142

one won't feel this way. It won't hurt this much. The terrible thing about grief is that one can't control it. The best one can do is try to let themselves feel it when it comes and then let it go.

Grief is strong, sometimes overwhelming emotion for individuals, it follows loss in all its forms—be it a loved one's passing, the breakup of a relationship, or a big life transition. Grief is a very personal experience that differs greatly from person to person. While some may feel numb or shocked, others may experience strong feelings like loneliness, remorse, rage, or grief. Even though it is common, sorrow is frequently misinterpreted or stigmatized, which makes individuals who are going through it feel alone and confused. It's critical to understand that there is no "right" or "wrong" way to grieve—rather, grieving is a normal reaction to loss. Everybody's experience of sorrow is different, so it's critical to treat it with tolerance, understanding, and compassion.

Coping Mechanism

Coping mechanisms are the strategies individuals often use in the face of stress and/or trauma to help manage painful or difficult emotions. Coping mechanisms can help individuals adjust to stressful events while helping them maintain their emotional well-being. Significant life events, whether positive or negative, can cause psychological stress. Difficult events, such as divorce, miscarriage, the death of a loved one, or the loss of a job, can cause most individuals to feel grief or distress.

To adjust to this stress, individuals may utilize some combination of behavior, thought, and emotion, depending on the situation. Coping mechanisms are strategies that help individuals deal with stress and uncomfortable emotions. Whether one realize it or not, one uses coping mechanisms regularly. These behaviors can help one cope with stress in a positive

Vol. 2, Issue 4 April 2024 ISSN: 2584-0142

way or can sometimes be harmful. Individuals employ coping mechanisms, or coping methods and behaviors, to deal with stress, hardship, or trauma.

These systems' ability to assist individuals in overcoming challenging circumstances determines whether they are adaptive or maladaptive. Gaining an understanding of coping strategies is crucial for fostering mental health and resilience as well as for creating successful treatments to help individuals who are going through difficult times. Studies have indicated that coping strategies are important in defining how individuals react to stress and hardship. Adaptive coping strategies, such asking for help from others or working through problems, are linked to improved mental health and increased resilience. Maladaptive coping strategies, on the other hand, including drug abuse or avoidance, can worsen stress and mental health issues in addition to having unfavorable effects.

Stages of Grief

The five stages of grief model were developed by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. It describes individuals with terminal illnesses facing their death. But it was soon adapted as a way of thinking about grief in general.

Denial : It's normal to feel numb in the early days following a loss. Some, first continue as if nothing had occurred. It might be difficult to accept that a significant person is not going to return, even though one is aware that they have passed away. Disbelief and a refusal to acknowledge the situation's actuality are characteristics of this stage. “This can't be happening to me,” or “I just need more tests, and then I'll be fine,” are common statements made by individuals. When someone is told they have a terminal illness, for instance, they could contest the seriousness of the news and think something went wrong.

Anger: Anger is a perfectly normal emotion, especially in the wake of a death. Particularly, if one believes someone passed away too soon or one had plans for the future with them, death

Vol. 2, Issue 4 April 2024 ISSN: 2584-0142

might seem harsh and unfair. It's also typical to feel resentment towards the deceased or towards ourselves for actions or inactions on our part before to their passing. Individuals may become angry and lash out at others at this phase. One can feel enraged at the unfairness of it all and hold others responsible for their predicament. For instance, someone who has lost a loved one could be upset with themselves or the physicians for not being able to save them.

Bargaining : It can be difficult to believe that there is nothing one can do to make things better when we are in agony. When one begins to form agreements with themselves—or, if they are religious, perhaps with God, they are engaging in bargaining. The individual wants to think that they will feel better if they take specific actions. It's also normal to find ourselves replaying past events and pondering many "what if" scenarios, desiring to go back in time and make new decisions in the hopes that things would have worked out differently. In order to escape the situation's reality, this stage entails a desire to bargain or make deals. Individuals could say things such as, "If only I had done this differently, things would be better," or even "Please, God, just let me live to see my children grow up." A terminally ill individual might, for instance, plead with a higher power for a cure or more time.

Depression: When one think about grief, the first things that come to mind is sadness. Over the course of several months or years, this pain may be very severe and intermittent. It can be terrifying to feel as though life has lost all meaning. At this point, individuals accept the situation as it is and experience intense grief over their loss. They might become more reclusive and lose interest in activities they used to enjoy. For instance, someone who has lost a loved one could have intense grief and uncontrollably cry all the time.

Acceptance : Waves of grief can make it seem as though nothing will ever be right again. However, most individuals discover that the anguish eventually subsides and that accepting what has happened is feasible. Even while we might never truly "get over" the loss

Vol. 2, Issue 4 April 2024 ISSN: 2584-0142

of a loved one, one can learn to let go and live their lives while holding their memories of them close to their hearts. Finding a method to move forward and acknowledging the situation as it is being the tasks of this last phase. Individuals could have a sense of calm and start thinking about the future. When a person receives a terminal illness diagnosis, for instance, they may come to terms with the fact that they are dying and concentrate on living each day to the fullest.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Burrell and Selman (2022) collected conflicting evidence in 17 studies regarding the effects of funeral customs on the mental health and bereavement outcomes of bereaved families. Six observational studies did not find benefits, compared to five that did.

Harrop and Morgan (2020) found weak quantitative evidence, improvements in outcomes were reported in a comprehensive analysis of 31 research on bereavement assistance for persons with advanced disease. Three primary effects were found by qualitative research; social support, sense of mastery, and loss resolution.

Eisma and Stroebe (2021), in their study collected seventy African American children, aged six to twelve. The researchers studied their grief and trauma intervention (GTI) compared with coping strategies and trauma story processing. Social support and symptoms associated with distress were significantly reduced in both groups, indicating that coping skills are an effective tactic.

Linde and Treml (2017) in their study examined bereavement support groups, cognitive-behavioural techniques, writing therapy, and other seven grief therapies for suicide bereaved individuals. While, bereavement groups and writing were beneficial for simple grieving and components related to suicide, five interventions lessened the severity of the loss. However, because of poor methodological quality, the evidence was not conclusive.

Vol. 2, Issue 4 April 2024 ISSN: 2584-0142

Boelen and Hout (2006) stated that three major processes are introduced by the cognitive-behavioural framework of complicated grieving (CG); avoidance techniques, negative global beliefs, and inadequate loss integration. The formation and maintenance of CG symptoms are facilitated by these mechanisms, and the persistence of symptoms depends critically on the interplay between these processes.

METHODOLOGY

Aim

The aim is to explore how the experience of grief influences the way individuals cope with loss.

Research Objective

By analysing the relationship between grief and coping, the current study looks for patterns and traits that result in both adaptive and maladaptive coping strategies in the context of loss. The findings of this study could help develop targeted interventions and programs of support for bereaved individuals, improving their overall well-being and coping abilities. The objectives were to establish a relationship between grief and coping mechanisms in adults.

Hypothesis:

- There will be a significant relationship between grief and coping mechanism.

Vol. 2, Issue 4 April 2024 ISSN: 2584-0142

Variables

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE: Grief

DEPENDENT VARIABLE: Coping Mechanism

Sampling Design

A sample size of 100 volunteers, ranging in age from 18 to 30, was used for this study. Convenience sampling was used to select the sample, taking into account the researcher's accessibility and availability. An assessment measuring the participants' coping strategies and level of grief was given to them to complete. Two standardized questionnaires and a form for gathering demographic information were used in this study.

Research Design

The current study used correlational research design to fulfil the study objectives.

Measures

Traumatic Grief Inventory Self-Report version (TGI-SR)

The Traumatic Grief Inventory Self-Report Version (TGI-SR) is a tool designed to assess symptoms of traumatic grief, which is the experience of grief complicated by traumatic circumstances. The 18-item TGI-SR is a tool used to assess the presence and severity of symptoms associated with traumatic grieving, including intrusive thoughts, emotions of denial, avoiding reminders, and meaninglessness or emptiness. Scores indicating the intensity of symptoms associated with traumatic grieving are computed based on the responses. In

Vol. 2, Issue 4 April 2024 ISSN: 2584-0142

evaluating and comprehending the effects of traumatic loss on individuals, as well as assisting in the selection of suitable interventions and support, the TGI-SR can be a useful instrument.

Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced Inventory (Brief-COPE)

The Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced Inventory (Brief-COPE) is a popular self-report tool used to evaluate the many ways individuals handle stress and challenging circumstances. A 28-item self-report questionnaire called the Brief-COPE was created to assess the successful and unsuccessful coping mechanisms used during a stressful life event. On a scale that normally goes from 1 (I haven't been doing this at all) to 4 (I have been doing this a lot), individuals rate how frequently they employ each coping approach. An individual's coping strategies and reactions to stress and adversity can be better understood by using the inventory.

Procedure

The survey was sent electronically to the participants through Google Forms. A sample of one hundred individuals, all between the ages of 18 and 30, were given the exam at the time of the study. They indicated on a consent form that they had received information regarding the test and confidentiality. After each participant signed a consent form, the questionnaire was administered.

Statistical Analyses

The statistical analyses used for this test was Pearson’s Correlation using SPSS.

Vol. 2, Issue 4 April 2024 ISSN: 2584-0142

RESULT

The above research study was conducted to assess how the experience of grief influences the way individuals cope with loss. A sample size of 100 volunteers, ranging in age from 18 to 30, was used for this study. The participants voluntarily participated in the research. From the data it revealed that there is a positive correlation between grief and coping mechanism.

Table 1

Correlation analysis between Grief and Coping Mechanism.

Correlations

		GRIEF	COPING
GRIEF	Pearson Correlation	1	.343**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	100
COPING	Pearson Correlation	.343**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	100	100

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 represents the correlation between grief and coping mechanism. The correlation between the 2 variables, grief and coping mechanism was significant and positive. The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). There is positive correlation at (r=0.343) between grief and coping mechanism.

Vol. 2, Issue 4 April 2024 ISSN: 2584-0142

DISCUSSION

The study aimed to investigate the relationship of grief on coping mechanisms employed by individuals who have suffered a loss. It specifically tries to understand how the experience of grief, including its severity, duration, and the type of loss experienced, influences the choice and effectiveness of coping mechanisms. By analysing the relationship between grief and coping, this study looks for patterns and traits that result in both adaptive and maladaptive coping strategies in the context of loss. The research also aimed to discover potential moderators of this relationship, such as personality traits and social support, to provide a comprehensive picture of how individuals cope with loss. The findings of this study could help develop targeted interventions and programs of support for bereaved individuals, improving their overall well-being and coping abilities.

The sample size for this study was 100, with 58 females and 42 males. The sample comprised of 100 volunteers, who were between the age of 18 and 30 at the time of study. To measure grief, the Traumatic Grief Inventory Self-Report version (TGI-SR) was used, and to measure coping mechanisms, the Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced Inventory (Brief-COPE) was utilized. Data was collected, scored, and then analysed by using Pearson's Correlation using the SPSS.

The first hypothesis stated that "there will be a significant relationship between grief and coping mechanisms." This was tested using the correlation analysis between grief and coping mechanisms. The correlation between grief and coping mechanisms was significant and positive, as shown in Table 1. Hence, the hypothesis will be accepted in the case of grief and coping mechanisms.

The results computed in Table 1 show the correlation between grief and coping mechanisms. The correlation between the 2 variables, grief and coping mechanism was

Vol. 2, Issue 4 April 2024 ISSN: 2584-0142

significant and positive. The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). There is a positive correlation at 0.343 between grief and coping mechanisms. From the above results, we can infer that grief and coping mechanisms have a positive and significant relationship.

CONCLUSION

The aim of the study was to investigate the impact of grief on coping mechanisms employed by individuals who have suffered a loss. It specifically tries to understand how the experience of grief, including its severity, duration, and the type of loss experienced, influences the choice and effectiveness of coping mechanisms. Data was collected and scored using the Traumatic Grief Inventory Self-Report version (TGI-SR) and Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced Inventory (Brief-COPE). The objective was to study a relationship between grief and coping mechanisms in adults.

The findings enunciated that the correlation between grief and coping mechanisms was significant and positive. The correlation between the 2 variables, grief and coping mechanism was significant and positive. The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). There is a positive correlation at 0.343 between grief and coping mechanism.

In conclusion, the study found a significant and positive correlation between grief and coping mechanisms in adults. This indicates that as levels of grief increase, so do the strategies individuals use to cope with their grief. The strength of this correlation, at 0.343, suggests a moderate relationship between the two variables. These findings underscore the importance of addressing grief in therapeutic interventions, as understanding and effectively managing grief can significantly impact an individual's coping strategies and overall well-being.

Vol. 2, Issue 4 April 2024 ISSN: 2584-0142

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Vol. 2, Issue 4 April 2024 ISSN: 2584-0142

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