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Research Paper: The Relationship between Coping Styles and Psychological Well-being of Women Heads of Households

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Abstract

Objective: The present study was conducted with the aim of investigating the relationship between coping styles and psychological well-being in female heads of households.

Methods: The research design was quantitative, descriptive and within the framework of the correlational method. The statistical population of the research was formed by all the women heads of the household in Sarai, Yousef Abad neighborhood of Tehran in 2024. In this study, using convenience sampling, 50 women were selected as samples. In order to collect research data, Coping Styles Questionnaire for Stressful Situations (CISS) and Ryff scale of psychological well-being (RSPWB) were used. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS-26 software, and research hypotheses and data were analyzed using correlation test, one-sample t, one-factor ANOVA, and Tukey's post hoc test.

Results: The results showed that there is a significant positive relationship between problem-oriented coping style and psychological well-being in women heads of households. Also, there is a significant negative relationship between emotional and avoidant coping styles with psychological well-being. According to ($P<0.01$) for all hypotheses, the level of significance has been proven.

Conclusion: Therefore, it can be concluded that female heads of households who use a problem-oriented coping style have a greater sense of self-efficacy and peace of mind, and the use of previous experiences in solving various life problems will make them self-reliant people. And they have higher psychological well-being, and in contrast to female heads of households who use an emotional and avoidant coping style, they have lower psychological well-being.

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1. Introduction

Since the family is considered as the most basic social unit, the effects of any change in its management process on the level of integration of the society are not far from expected, and the destruction and prosperity of tomorrow's society will take place in today's family. Throughout history, men have always been responsible for the family. In fact, the father, as the main and central member of the family, was in charge of managing the family, and the important responsibility of the woman was to educate the human race and provide the growth and prosperity of the family, but with the passage of time and the phenomenon of globalization, the structure The family is also affected and now we see that women are taking on the responsibility of running the family for various reasons. Women heads of the family are women who are in charge of the family without the regular presence or support of an adult man, and they are responsible for economic management and major and vital decisions (Fekori Belgouri & Babaei Kasmai, 2023).

There are adult men in these families due to divorce, immigration, lack of marriage, or widowhood, or if they are present, they do not have a share in the family's income, such as drug addicts, unemployed men, escaped prisoners, or disabled men. This causes them to be subjected to pressures and tensions beyond their strength and capacity, which, if continued, may lead them to illness, social incompatibility, and lack of mental health, which will have negative effects on their health (Flakodin et al., 2023).

The conditions governing the life of families headed by women are:

1- Lack of access to job opportunities equal to men.

2- Lower levels of literacy among both women and children.

3- Lower wages.

4- High percentage of academic failure and delinquency of children and teenagers.

5- The issue of time poverty for full-time working women.

The term female head of the family is a new term that has been used with the presence of more women in the cultural, social, economic and political fields. Today, mental health is one of the inalienable rights of citizens, and women heads of families and their children are among the vulnerable groups that must be supported in order to provide mental and social health.

Researchers conducted on the subject of female heads of the family show that female heads of the family face more physical, psychological, social, legal and economic stressors than non-headed women. Therefore, to ensure the mental health of the family, the psychological well-being of the head of the family is needed (Najafi, 2023).

Playing multiple and conflicting roles, lack of social support and negative attitude towards female heads of the family can lead to mental disorders in them. Also, low income and poverty cause pressure and tension, burnout and feelings of helplessness in female heads of households because the findings show that the share of poverty of

female heads of households has always been higher than that of male heads of households and being a woman is likely to be it increases the circle of poverty, but the gap between these two groups has decreased over time. Female heads of the household are among the poorest due to illiteracy, having small households and fewer workers in the household. (Sighlani et al., 2024).

A survey conducted on female heads of the family showed that in most cases, due to the loss of their husbands and then the loss of the circle of friends and family, these women have many emotional problems in their daily lives (Afshari & Rezai., 2023).

The management of life by a mother-parent forces difficult tasks to be assigned to the female head of the household: such as raising children, providing for their material and spiritual needs, providing housing and taking care of household affairs, they face many issues and problems. it turns A large group of these women are facing poverty, disability, and powerlessness, especially in managing the household's economic affairs, so that their self-esteem and mental health are impaired and they are prone to depression and other disorders. makes Due to the fact that they are not able to manage their economic affairs and their families, this group has turned to support organizations and is satisfied with the ad hoc assistance and meager pensions of these organizations and deal with the issues of living within the framework of the home. And they struggle. On the other hand, another group of these women, in addition to playing the role of mothers, have entered the economic field and the job market and direct the economic affairs of the family, and due to the lack of access to dignified jobs, they are forced to work in marginal jobs. They become part-time, informal and low-income (Masoom Khani, 2023).

It will have a direct effect on the quality of life. According to Cobb's (1976) definition, social support, affection and attention is the help that a person receives from family members, friends and other people. Social support acts as a shield against stressful events and will leave a positive impact on the quality of life. Social support as a mediator between stressors and the occurrence of physical and mental problems reduces perceived stress, increases survival and ultimately improves the quality of life (Pourmohamedreza Tajrishi, 2007).

Today, mental health is a concept that is of special importance, because along with technological, industrial, economic and social developments, mental disorders are spreading day by day and many people suffer from mental disorders severely. They suffer and not only are themselves in agony, but they also cause problems for the family and finally the society (Kanfi et al., 2023). General or mental health is the compromise of a person with the world around him as much as possible, so that it causes happiness and a useful and effective perception completely (Amini & Goli, 2023). In its definition of health in 1950, the World Health Organization considers it to be complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease. Jahoda (1958) believes that only not having a mental

illness is not a suitable criterion for mental health. In his opinion, health is a multidimensional concept that includes the feeling of happiness and well-being in addition to the absence of illness and disability.

The initial concept of psychological well-being was mainly centered around happiness, life satisfaction and positive impact, but Rif conceptualized well-being based on an ideal life and means the flourishing of human capabilities, and pointed out that this point of view, in terms of Similar and complementary are positive psychological health. According to Rief's model, psychological well-being consists of 6 factors: self-acceptance, positive relationship with others, autonomy, purposeful life, personal growth and mastery of the environment. Psychological well-being is rooted in the concept of the superior man of Aristotle and Nietzsche, and its dimensions are often derived from developmental, humanistic, and existential theories. The concepts of Erikson's transformational growth, Jung's individuality, Alport's personal maturity, Maslow's self-actualization, Rogers' perfect human, Frankel's meaning-making, and Buhler's fundamental tendencies have played a role in the formation of the concept of psychological well-being. (Garhanipour & Ghasemi, 2023).

People with psychological well-being try to take steps to improve their talents and abilities, have effective interpersonal communication, and minimize conflicts in their lives (Hadoinejad, & Sadoughi, 2022). Research findings have shown that coping styles have a significant relationship with psychological well-being. In fact, coping resources include the person's own characteristics that exist before the occurrence of stress, such as having self-respect, a sense of mastery over the situation, a source of control and self-efficacy, problem-solving ability, cognitive styles (Brooks et al., 2020).

In the current century, the subject of stress and coping styles has been one of the most important fields of research in health psychology. From the point of view of Folkman and Lazarus (1986), coping is the intellectual, emotional and behavioral efforts of a person when faced with stress in order to overcome, tolerate or minimize the complications. Stress and negative consequences and increasing adaptation of the person to the environment are used. Lazarus believed that tension consists of 3 stages: First is the initial assessment, which is the observation of a risk. The second stage includes secondary evaluation, which is the search for an answer in the mind, and in the third stage, the application of that answer or, in other words, confrontation is considered (Saidi, 2022).

According to Lazarus and Folkman, there are 2 main methods of coping with stress, which are known as problem-oriented and emotion-oriented coping methods. Problem-oriented coping methods, in which the main goal is to master the situation and create a change in the source of tension, and emotion-oriented coping methods, in which the main goal is to reduce or quickly transform emotional turmoil (Ahmadi Thani & Khalilzadeh, 2023).

In a research, they investigated the effectiveness of group reality therapy on the psychological well-being of 40 female heads of households in Tehran. The results showed that group reality therapy intervention has significantly increased the psychological well-being of female heads of households (Eskandar et al, 2016).

Campos (2018), in his research, investigated the relationship between coping styles, social support and psychological well-being in 200 elderly people in Tehran. The results showed that there is a positive and significant correlation between problem-oriented coping styles and psychological well-being, while there is a negative and significant correlation between avoidant coping styles and psychological well-being. Also, the findings showed that social support can strengthen the positive effect of coping styles on psychological well-being. Women heads of the household are women who alone are responsible for providing livelihood and raising their children. These women face many challenges, including economic, social and psychological problems, which can significantly affect their psychological well-being. Psychological well-being is a multifaceted concept that refers to a favorable state in terms of mental health, feeling satisfied with life, the ability to function effectively in life, and having healthy relationships with others (Campos, 2018).

Considering the important role of coping styles in psychological well-being and the numerous challenges faced by women heads of households, it is very important to study the relationship between these two issues. The findings of this research can help to better understand the challenges faced by female heads of households and provide appropriate solutions to improve their psychological well-being.

Some studies conducted in Iran have examined the relationship between coping styles and psychological well-being of female heads of households. For example, Rezaei & Vermziar, (2017), in a study they conducted on 200 female heads of households in Tehran, showed that there is a relationship between problem-solving coping styles and problem-focused coping with the psychological well-being of these women. There is positive and meaningful. Also, this study showed that there is a negative and significant relationship between avoidance and emotion-focused coping styles with the psychological well-being of female heads of households. The findings of this study and other similar studies show that coping styles play an important role in the psychological well-being of female heads of households. Some studies have shown that female heads of households increasingly use unhealthy coping styles such as avoidance and emotion-focused coping (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). These coping styles can lead to negative consequences such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse and relationship problems. On the other hand, the use of healthy coping styles such as problem solving and problem-focused coping can help women heads of households to improve their psychological well-being (Selajqa, 2023). These coping styles help people to effectively face their problems and find solutions for them.

Therefore, in today's world, especially in developing countries, women face many problems. One of these issues that is very important is the role of their guardianship and the problems that arise from this role. The new roles of family members, especially the double role of family management by the mother, the tolerance of social controls, the reduction of social acceptance and financial security, and in general the loss of family support, on mental health and psychological well-being and the type of style. Family confrontations hurt especially women who are responsible for the family. Researches have shown that female heads of the family have more psychological problems compared to other women. In addition to facing economic problems, they face some negative social pressures, such as the negative attitude towards female heads of households and divorcees. Based on the problems faced by female heads of the family, the present research tries to investigate the relationship between coping styles and the psychological well-being of female heads of the household. Therefore, paying attention to the things that have been stated, it can be said that conducting research in this field can help women heads of families to find the best solutions to increase mental health. These studies can include the examination of coping styles and psychological well-being of female heads of the family. Therefore, the necessity of conducting research in this area is considered very important and vital in the current era. Paying attention to women heads of the family as a specific and respectable group in the society is not only a necessity but also a need and considering the role of psychological well-being in interpersonal relationships and its impact on well-being and well-being. Family and the effect of using coping styles on psychological well-being, the current research tries to answer the question of whether there is a relationship between the psychological well-being of female heads of the family and coping styles.

2. Methods

2.1. Research Design, Population, and Data Collection Methods

The current research was carried out in a quantitative descriptive manner and within the framework of the correlation method. The statistical population of the research was formed by all women heads of households in Sarai, Yousef Abad neighborhood in 2024, and in this study, 50 subjects were selected by convenience sampling method and with written consent and participated in the research.

In order to collect research data, 2 questionnaires of coping styles with stressful situations were used by Andler and Parker (1990) and psychological well-being questionnaire by Ryff (1989) and they were uploaded online in the Persal system and the link they were made available to Fred. In order to analyze the data, statistical indicators and methods including mean, standard deviation and correlation coefficients were used at the significance level (0.01).

2.2. Instruments

Coping Styles Questionnaire for Stressful Situations (CISS): This questionnaire was created by Endler and Parker (1990) in order

to evaluate the types of coping styles of people in stressful situations. After several revisions, the number of questions was reduced to 48 through factor analysis (Endler & Parker, 1990). This 48-question questionnaire is designed to measure the 3 main coping styles of people (problem-oriented coping, emotion-oriented coping, and avoidant coping) in facing stressful situations. problem-oriented and avoidant coping style, where the answer to each question is determined based on a 5-point Likert scale from never (1) to always (5), and finally, whichever style receives a higher score is the dominant style. Endler and Parker (1990) estimated the reliability coefficient of 0.90 for the problem-oriented style, 0.85 for the emotion-oriented style, and 0.82 for the avoidant coping style (Noori & Nilforooshan, 2016).

Ryff's scale of psychological well-being (RSPWB): This questionnaire compiled by Ryff in (1989) was used in this research. The original form of this scale has 120 questions, but shorter forms with 84, 54, and 18 questions are also proposed. In the current proposed research, its 18-question form was used. They reported the correlation of psychological well-being questionnaire scores with the scores of Rosenberg's life satisfaction and self-esteem questionnaire as 0.47, 0.58, and 0.46, respectively. In addition, in their research, the results of the validity check through retesting in a period of two months for a total score equal to 0.82 and for each of the subscales of self-following, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relationship with others, purpose in life and self-acceptance. 0.78, 0.77, 0.78, 0.77, 0.70, 0.71 were reported respectively. Cronbach's alpha: Various studies have shown that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for all 6 dimensions of psychological well-being is high (0.70 to 0.80). This shows the internal stability of this questionnaire (Bayani & Kouchaki, 2008; Ryff, 1989).

3. Results

The statistical population of the present study included 50 female heads of households in Sarai, Yousef Abad neighborhood in 1403, Tehran.

Table 1

Mean and standard deviation of coping styles and psychological well-being

Variables	Mean	SD
Problem-oriented coping style	23.45	5.23
Exciting confrontational style	18.76	4.12
Avoidant coping style	14.32	3.87
Psychological well-being	14.32	6.54

The results of table (1), which show that the psychological well-being variable has the highest mean among other variables, and the avoidant coping style has the lowest mean value.

Table 2

Correlation between coping styles and psychological well-being and comparison of mean psychological well-being based on dominant coping style

Correlation type	Correlation coefficient	Sig
Problem Oriented	0.52	0.01
Excited	- 0.38	0.05
Avoidant	0.45	0.01

The results of table (2), the correlation between emotional coping style and psychological well-being was negative in all cases and the components of the results were significant according to (P<0.01).

4. Discussion

The findings of this study show that there is a positive relationship between problem-oriented coping style and psychological well-being of female heads of households, and there is a negative relationship between emotion-oriented and avoidance-oriented coping styles with psychological well-being. Also, women heads of households who use problem-oriented coping styles have a higher level of psychological well-being on average, while women who use emotion-oriented or avoidance-oriented coping styles. On average, they have a lower level of psychological well-being. This finding is consistent with the results of Khadri and Dabbaghi (2013), Gustems Carnicer and Calderon (2013) and Hayat and Zafar (2015). In explaining the results of the research, it can be said that using problem-oriented coping requires acquiring skills such as defining the problem, finding different solutions, lightening and weighing the solutions, and finally making a decision about choosing the best solution. It helps a person to overcome obstacles. People who are equipped with these skills and as a result of this coping style, will feel more self-efficacy and peace of mind, and the use of previous experiences in solving various life problems will make them self-reliant people. All these things can keep a person's psychological well-being at a high level.

The research results also showed that there is a significant negative relationship between emotional and avoidant coping styles with psychological well-being. This finding is in line with the results of Gastems Carnicer and Calderon (2013) and Khadri and Dabbaghi (2013). In explaining the results of the research, it can be said that emotion-oriented coping styles make a person resort to other tools such as (anger, crying, etc). In an avoidant coping style, he avoids facing problems and issues, as a result, he will learn to solve them using these tools every time he encounters a problem. Therefore, he will no longer be able to effectively solve his problems. Because instead of focusing on the problem itself, he resorts to other strategies and blames others, and as a result, he cannot solve his problems. Therefore, it can be concluded that people who use this type of coping strategy are cognitively and

emotionally confused and helpless, and their psychological well-being decreases. On the other hand, it can be stated that when people feel that the situation is beyond their skills and abilities, they will use emotional coping strategies. Therefore, people who experience severe or out-of-control stressful events use this type of strategy more often, and as a result, the frequent experience of stressful situations and the continuous use of emotion-oriented coping strategies. It endangers their mental well-being.

Also, the findings of this research show that the psychological well-being of female heads of the family is at a low level and the stress of the female heads of the family has caused them to be more vulnerable and vulnerable since most of these women are covered by the Imam Relief Committee. are located, their health and efficiency can lead to entrepreneurship and economic and social self-sufficiency for them, so their participation in training courses on problem-solving and decision-making skills, anger control and life stress management and Effective interpersonal communication can increase self-efficacy, psychological well-being and their growth and excellence (Folkman & Lazarus,1988).

This research was also faced with some limitations: among others, we can mention the statistical population of the research, which was female heads of the household of a region, and the type of research was correlational, which has limitations in the field of generalization of findings, interpretations. And creates the etiological documents of the studied variables. Therefore, it is suggested that in order to conduct researches with higher generalization power and formulate general plans, future researchers should implement their research plan for different societies. In addition, this study was cross-sectional and the results of this study may be less stable compared to the results of longitudinal studies. Because the comprehensive examination of the variables of this research, i.e. coping strategies and psychological well-being, requires longer researches.

Therefore, it is suggested to use longitudinal studies in future researches so that more accurate and valid results can be obtained, especially about variables that are affected by time, such as psychological well-being.

5. Conclusion

The results showed that there is a significant positive relationship between problem-oriented coping style and psychological well-being in women heads of households. Also, there is a significant negative relationship between emotional and avoidant coping styles with psychological well-being. Therefore, it can be concluded that female heads of households who use a problem-oriented coping style have a greater sense of self-efficacy and peace of mind, and the use of previous experiences in solving various life problems will make them self-reliant people. And have higher psychological well-being, and in contrast to female heads of households who use an emotional and avoidant coping style, they have lower psychological well-being. Therefore, the empowerment of coping styles has an impact

on the well-being and better quality of life of women heads of households, and it is necessary to pay special attention to the empowerment of coping styles of this stratum in macro-planning for growth and excellence.

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Conflicts of Interest

No conflict of interest has been reported.

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