The relationship between hardiness, and perfectionism with coping strategies with stress

*Maral Haghighi Kermanshahi  
Ms.c in General Psychology, Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah Branch, Kermanshah, Iran  
*Corresponding Author: Maral Haghighi Kermanshahi

Afsaneh Shahbazirad  
Ph.D Student in Psychology, Lorestan University, Khoram Abad, Iran

Maryam Soleymani  
Ms.c in General Psychology, Hamedan Medical University, Hamedan, Iran

Bentolhoda Amiri  
Ms.c in Educational Psychology, Alzahra University, Tehran, Iran

Fatemeh Azargoone  
Ms.c in Clinical Psychology, Tabriz University, Tabriz, Iran

Abstract

The goal of this study is to assign the relationship between hardiness, and perfectionism with coping strategies with stress. This study is descriptive-co relational type and 278 people from students of Razi University in Kermanshah city were selected by cluster sampling. They are chosen based on cluster in the different levels. They answered the questionnaires of hardiness (Poolti et al 1998), perfectionism (Hill, 2004), and coping strategies with stress (Andler & Parker 1990).

The results showed that there is a meaningful relation between hardiness and emotion-oriented strategy and problem-oriented strategy with stress (P<0/05). But there is no meaningful relationship between hardiness and avoidance-oriented strategy with stress. There is meaningful correlation between perfectionism and emotion-oriented strategy and avoidance-oriented strategy with stress (P<0/05). There isn't any meaningful relation between perfectionism and problem-oriented strategy with stress (P<0/001). Results of regression analysis showed that hardiness could be predicted by problem-oriented strategy with stress, and perfectionism could be predicted by avoidance-oriented strategy and emotion-oriented strategy with stress.

Regarding the findings of this study, it is a must to recognize that the personality traits, and coping strategies with stress were evident in teaching students in order to use coping strategies appropriate in stressful situation.

Keywords: Hardiness, Perfectionism, Coping strategies, Students.
Introduction

Folk Man Lazarus (1985) believes that confrontation is a complex process which changes regarding the person's aspects in the stress and pressure. Hence, it includes the person's behaviors and knowledge.

Lazarus (1993) differentiates between problem-oriented strategy (trying to decrease anxiety by reforming a person or his environment), and the emotion-oriented strategy (the application of knowing functions of confrontation in order to change the meaning of stressful conditions and to decrease anxiety and embarrassment). It is clear that the anxious reply to stressful conditions is controlled by the known functions to confront them.

As a reaction, hardiness is a positive phenomenon in humans which empowers them to coping with stress. The personality traits of hardiness have special, internal aspects involving the person's whole life. Besides, hardiness originates from knowledge, in the other word, emotions function to control the persons, and they provide some lists for the hard persons to find the useful functions to cope with stress. Hardiness provides optimistic view to cope with psychological pressures. In other words, the aggressive personality of a hard person makes him able to change the miserable events of his life into a chance to learn. All of these conditions decrease or avoid the negative aspects of an event (Kobasa & Pucceti, 1983).

Studies also show that the hard people believe that the stressful condition is less stressful than those who are less hard. The former controls the condition and uses useful methods to cope with stress (Maddi & Hightower, 1999, Weibbe & Williams, 1992).

In Hung's (1995) study which was based on the relations between hardiness and stress, it concludes that hardiness decreases the negative effects of stress. Therefore, the role of hardiness is strong because of factors such as control, aggression, devotion and self-confidence in the hard people.

One of the main personality traits is perfectionism. Perfectionists experience more stress than those who are not perfectionists (which originate from their internality and externality). Frost et al (1990) define the perfectionists as a collection of high ideals in function involving the exaggerated self-criticism.

Perfectionists experience the stressful events more than non-perfectionists. These people make themselves more stressed because they seek perfection in all of their behaviors (Flett & Hewit, 2002). While those who are exaggerated perfectionist face the stressful condition, they will use some incomplete forms of solving problems or the incompatible styles to cope with stress (Hewitt, 1995).

In spite of importance of hardiness and perfectionism in the confrontation styles, there are few studies in the same matter. The goal of present study is to examine the relations between hardiness, perfectionism and coping strategy with stress.

Research Hypotheses:

-There is correlation between hardiness and coping strategy with stress.
- There is correlation between perfectionism and coping strategy with stress.
- How much hardiness and perfectionism could be predicted by coping strategy with stress?

**Methodology of the Study**

**Population and Sample**

The present study is a descriptive-correlation type. The statistical society of this study is whole students who had studied in Razi University in 2010-2011 in Kermanshah. For selection, sampling was used from cluster sampling. The amount of example of the same study (n=278) are more than the least, necessary examples which were based on Tabochinak's and Fidel's (2001) who believe that the number of participants should be either equal to or more than one of them: eight times of predicted factors plus fifty or the number of predicted factors plus one hundred four (23). In order to analyze data of study, these cases are used including the correlation coefficient and Regression coefficient with using SPSS Microsoft (V-17).

**Data collection tools**

In the same study, in order to gather data, there were some tools including:
- The questionnaire of psychological hardiness: to measure hardiness from Pooltis et al (1998) questionnaires are used. It includes 45 items which were designed in Likert's plan of four degrees. The same measurement includes other items such as devotion, control and aggression. The permanence of hardiness questionnaire was assigned based on Kiomarsi (1997) by using Cronbach’s Alpha 0/68.
- Hill's perfectionism scale: to measure perfectionism from Hill's perspective, questionnaire (2004) was used, that included 58 items in four degrees of Likert containing items such as ABSOLUTELY AGREED and ABSOLUTELY DISAGREED. This measurement was used by Samaei (2010) in Iran. He had recovered 0/926 reliability by Cronbach’s Alpha. The questionnaire to cope with stressful conditions (CISS): The same questionnaire was designed by Endler and Parker (1990), in order to examine the methods of coping with the problems. The same questionnaire includes 48 items, and three main styles of confrontation that mean the problem-oriented strategy, emotion-oriented strategy and avoidance-oriented strategy. The questions should be based on Likert's five degrees (including NONE to A LOT) to answer the questions. Shokri et al (2004) report Cronbach’s Alpha for problem-oriented strategy; 0.75, and emotion-oriented strategy; 0/82, and avoidance – oriented strategy; 0/73.

**Findings**

**Descriptive Findings**

Girls student were 60% and boys student were 40%. Students of group 18-21, presented approximately 62%, and students of group 26-39, approximately 10% of group of age. The mean and standard deviation of age were 21/27 and 3/15.
**Inferential Findings**

The results showed there was positive correlation between hardiness and aspects of coping with stress that means problem-oriented strategy, and emotion-oriented strategy. But there was not a meaningful relation between hardiness and avoidance-oriented strategy. Results showed that there was a positive relation between perfectionism, problem-oriented strategy, emotion-oriented strategy, and avoidance-oriented strategy (Table1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>variable</th>
<th>Problem solving strategy</th>
<th>Emotion-oriented strategy</th>
<th>Avoidance-oriented strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hardiness</td>
<td>*0/39</td>
<td>*0/23</td>
<td>0/06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perfectionism</td>
<td>*0/145</td>
<td>*0/492</td>
<td>*0/156</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*P<0/05

Results of regression analysis to predict problem-oriented strategy by hardiness, perfectionism were significant (F=31/33, P<0/001). Perfectionism variable with was Beta coefficient; 0/185, psychological hardiness was with Beta coefficient; 0/407 could predict positively and significantly the variance of problem-oriented strategy. Also R2 indicated that 18/6% of variance of problem-oriented strategy by above-mentioned variables was predicted.

Results of regression analysis to predict emotion-oriented strategy by hardiness, perfectionism was significant (F=57/791, P<0/001). Perfectionism variable with Beta coefficient; 0/269, psychological hardiness with Beta coefficient; -0/247 could predict significantly the variance of emotion-oriented strategy. Also R2 indicated 30/3% of the variance of emotion-oriented strategy by above-mentioned variables was predicted.

Results of regression analysis to predict avoidance-oriented strategy by hardiness, perfectionism was significant (F=3/83, P=0/02). Perfectionism variable with Beta coefficient; 0/151, psychological hardiness with Beta coefficient; -0/053 could predict significantly the variance of avoidance-oriented strategy. Also R2 indicated 23% of variance of avoidance-oriented strategy by above-mentioned variables was predicted.

Coping with stress, regression analysis is significant (F=27/11, P<0/001). Perfectionism variable with Beta coefficient; 0/407, could predict significantly the variance of coping with stress. Also R2 indicated 16/5% of the variance of coping with stress by above-mentioned variables was predicted.

Table2: Regression coefficient of coping with stress, hardiness, and perfectionism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perfectionism</td>
<td>0/185</td>
<td>33/37</td>
<td>0/001</td>
<td>0/431</td>
<td>0/186</td>
<td>0/407</td>
<td>7/45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardiness</td>
<td>31/33</td>
<td>0/001</td>
<td>0/431</td>
<td>0/186</td>
<td>0/407</td>
<td>7/45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfectionism</td>
<td>0/269</td>
<td>9/26</td>
<td>0/001</td>
<td>0/186</td>
<td>0/407</td>
<td>7/45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion and Conclusion

In the first hypothesis, that survey relationship between psychological hardiness and coping with stress, results indicate that from among components of coping with stress, problem-oriented coping and emotion-oriented coping, their relationship with psychological hardiness was significant. But there was no relationship between psychological hardiness and emotion-oriented coping. The results of this finding agree with previous studies, such as study of Fiezi et al (2001). Also with the study of Beshahrt (2008), it is consonant that psychological hardiness has positive correlation with problem-oriented coping and emotion-oriented coping. Hardiness continues through confidence, strengthens their sense of independence and compliance. Bar to stress, positive personal relation (communication variable), and attract emotional support with problem-oriented coping, and negative emotion-oriented coping. Also hardiness decreased through activating regressive coping strategy (denial, avoidance), risk of physical illness, mental illness and weakness, and behavioral performance (Maddi, 1990).

For this reason, in this study, significant relationship between psychological hardiness and avoidance-oriented coping was not seen, but there was significant correlation between psychological hardiness and problem-oriented coping and emotion-oriented coping. In the second hypothesis, it is noted that there was relationship between perfectionism and coping with stress; that results showed that there was not relationship between perfectionism and problem-oriented coping strategy, but perfectionism had significant correlation with emotion-oriented coping strategy, and avoidance-oriented coping strategy, which means that perfectionism is used more than emotion-oriented coping strategy, and it is consonant with studies of Ghorbani (2000), and Flett et al(2001), and Hewit et al (1995). In fact, it could be said that perfectionist students with sense of own perfectionism, often go to the tasks and activities that are far beyond their capabilities. This is reason for failure that continues in them, and they suffer from procrastination and neglect in education, lack of time management. They spent high time in solving slight problem, to enlarge the problem and be obsessed more about problem and blame themselves. They attempt to solve problem personally. Much effort for solving educational problem doesn’t answer. They experience negative emotion (such as stress, and show states of anxiety, anger, and using defense mechanisms). This reduces effectiveness of individuals and causes applying emotional coping strategy.

For determination of amount of components of psychological hardiness and perfectionism in predicting aspects coping with stress, results showed that psychological hardiness had more amounts in predication to use from problem-oriented coping. Perfectionism had more amounts in predication to use than emotion-oriented coping. Also hardiness can predict the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hardiness</th>
<th>Emotion oriented</th>
<th>Problem oriented</th>
<th>Avoidance oriented</th>
<th>Coping with stress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>57/791</td>
<td>0/001</td>
<td>0/551</td>
<td>0/303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfectionism Hardness</td>
<td>0/247</td>
<td>0/151</td>
<td>2/528</td>
<td>0/012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfectionism hardness</td>
<td>3/83</td>
<td>0/02</td>
<td>0/165</td>
<td>0/027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0/053</td>
<td>0/855</td>
<td>0/37</td>
<td>0/011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0/407</td>
<td>7/34</td>
<td>0/001</td>
<td>1/22 N.S</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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use of emotion-oriented strategy and avoidance-oriented strategy reversely. In exploration of the highest amount hardiness in prediction to use problem-oriented strategy, it can be said that hardiness person, in confront with stress, activates coping, which means that this coping style applies problem-oriented strategy, to convert stress to safe experience. Conversely, non hardiness person uses backwardness, isolates and denies coping strategy that not only doesn’t solve the problem, but also it raises emotional incompatibilities problems (Florin et al, 1995). Concerning the highest amount perfectionism in predication to use from emotion-oriented strategy, we can say that primary stimulus in life of person, achievement happiness isn’t guarantee of evolution and excellence. They must excel in everything, and this generates anxiety, depression and excessive guilt for them (Vroodi, 1999). They experience the highest stress, due to feeling of lack of control in stressful situation; they have more willing to use style and emotion-oriented strategy, this people use emotion-oriented strategy in confront with stress (Haghighi Kermanshahi, 2011).

Finally, with teaching problem-oriented strategy and positive emotion-oriented strategy in confront with stress to perfectionist person, they can prepare to deal with their crises.
References


Endler NS, Parker JDA. 1990. Coping Inventory for stressful situations.


