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Family Functioning, Cognitive Distortion and Resilience among Clients under Treatment in Drug Rehabilitation Centres in Malaysia

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Abstract

The process of drug rehabilitation is an important agenda for the National Anti-Drug Agency (NADA) in Malaysia. Various efforts have been taken to aid NADA in treating drug addicts. This study focuses on identifying the mental health status and psychological factors to design appropriate treatment strategies. Therefore, this research aims to determine the level of family functioning, cognitive distortion and resilience among clients of Care and Cure Rehabilitation Center (CCRC) and Care & Cure Clinic (C & C Clinic). A total of 493 clients from these institutions took part in this study. The instruments used were FACES III to measure family functioning, Cognitive Distortion Scale (CD) to measure cognitive distortion and Resilience Scale to measure resilience. Results indicate that clients' family functioning is at a moderate level, clients' cognitive distortion is at a low level, whilst their resilience is at a higher level. This indicates that the rehabilitation programs conducted at the institution had an impact on clients' resiliency and cognitive distortion. The implication of the study can be attributed to the counselling intervention at NADA.

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Keywords: Family functioning, Cognitive distortion, Resilience; Drug Rehabilitation Centres

1. Introduction

Substance abuse is a serious problem in a country because it can affect family, society and the country. In Malaysia, the trend of substance and drug abuse during the period of five years (2007 to 2011) showed the ups and down but

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stable condition (National Anti-Drug Agency, 2011). In 2007, about 14,489 drug addicts was caught, and in the following year, 12,252; 15,736 (2009) and 23,642 (2010). As for drug abuse there has been a consistent increase of 150 percent from year 2007 about 26,763 to 72,369 in 2011 (National Anti Drug Agency, 2011)

According to Bozarth (1990) the main factors associated with the reasons to be involved in drug abuse during the earlier stage of addiction are social factors, personality and cognition. The risk factors related to drug addiction includes low self-esteem, inability to control behavior toward fulfill drives, negative perception, poor relationship with parents and having dysfunctional family, unassertive and psychopathological problems (Lang, 1983; Newcomb & Bentler, 1986; Pinger et. al, 1998; Shedler & Block, 1990; Kumpfer & Bluth, 2004).

Although there has been numerous research on drug addiction in Malaysia (Mohamad Husin & Mustafa, 2001; Fauziah & Naresh, 2009), especially in the aspects of treatment and rehabilitation, however the focus on the psychological problems of the drug addicts under treatment still remains scarce. It is crucial to examine the mental status of this group in the aspect of family functioning and other psychological factors for various interventions and strategies can be implemented by the National Anti-Drug Agency (NADA).

Previous research showed that family plays an important role in the physical and psychological development of an individual. Instilling beliefs, values and acceptable behavior in a society especially during childhood are the basic functions of a family. Family functioning in this research refers to family cohesion and adaptability. Family cohesion is the emotional bonding of family members, a situation whereby every member of the family are responsible towards one another while adaptability refers to the extend of a family system that are flexible towards change.

Cognitive distortion refers to unusual beliefs about self such having self-blame, self-cirticism, helplessness and hopelessness (Abela et. al, 1989). Chabon and Robins (1986) found that 52 depressed drug addicts displayed high level of cognitive distortion that relates to helplessness and suicidal ideation. In addition, resilience is defined as the ability of an individual to deal with difficult and challenges in life. According to Masten et.al 1990), resilience is a process, the ability of an individual to adapt with challenging situations successfully. The inability to adapt with these difficult and risky situations will lead to risks behaviors which includes drug addiction.

With the variables defined above and literature reviewed hence, this study aims to examine:

1. The relationship between family functioning, cognitive distortion and resilience among drug addicts under treatment
2. The level of family functioning, cognitive distortion and resilience among drug addicts under treatment

2.0 Method and Materials

This research employs a survey method using three sets of questionnaires comprised of (i) FACES III (Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale III) to measure family functioning (2) Cognitive Distortion Scale (CDS) to measure cognitive distortion and (3) Resilience Scale to measure levels of resilience. A total of 493 drug addicts under treatment in rehabilitation centres in Malaysia took part in this study.

3.0 Results and Discussion

Table I shows the results of the correlations between family functioning, cognitive distortion and resilience. Results indicate that the positive family functioning reflects a lower level of cognitive distortion with $r = -0.186^{**}$. For correlations between family functioning and resilience, results showed a positive correlations with $r = 0.391^{**}$ which indicates the positive family functioning, the higher the level of resilience. However, there seems to be no significant correlations between resilience and cognitive distortion, with $r = 0.025$.

Family influence has always been an important influence of substance use, the aspects of family functioning such as family conflict and cohesion and communication among the most powerful predictors of development outcomes. This research support findings by Fisher (2003) that reports the existence of a positive correlation between resiliency and family adaptability and family cohesion, which are the dimensions in family functioning. Similarly, Kim and Yoo (2010) also reported the significant relationship found between resilience and family adaptability.

Table 1: Correlations between family functioning, cognitive distortion and resilience

Variables	Cognitive distortion	Resilience
Family functioning	r= -.186**	r= .391**
Resilience	r = .025	

**p< .05

Table 2 shows the results of level of family functioning, cognitive distortion and resilience of drug addicts under treatment. For family functioning, majority of the respondents have moderate family functioning that is 338 (68.3%) followed by high level of family functioning 145 or 29.3% and 12 (2.4%) respondents experienced low level of family functioning. As for cognitive distortion variables, majority of the respondents have low level of cognitive distortion, it is 262 (52.9%) respondents, followed by moderate level, 214 or 43.2% and 19 respondents or 3.8% at high level. A total of 253 (51.1%) of the respondents have high level of resilience, followed by 232 (46.9%) at moderate level and 10 (2%) respondents have low level of resilience. Implications for the research findings showed that clients that are undergoing the drug rehabilitation treatment or interventions that comprised of counselling, spiritual programs would have an effect on the level of family functioning and resiliency being moderate and high. The rehabilitation programs that are offered at the respective centres contributed to the positive outcomes in terms of the level of family functioning, cognitive distortion and resilience.

Velleman, et. al. (2005) suggested that family involvement in prevention programs may lead to reduced levels of substance use and misuse. The processes can serve to increase the resilience, thus strengthening the likelihood of preventing substance use and misuse.

Table 2: Level of family functioning, cognitive distortion and resilience

Variables	Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Family Functioning	Low	12	2.4
	Moderate	338	68.3
	High	145	29.3
Cognitive Distortion	Low	262	52.9
	Moderate	214	43.2
	High	19	3.8

Resilience			
	Low	10	2
	Moderate	253	46.9
	High	252	51.1

4.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has provided a view of mental health issues of family functioning, cognitive distortion and resilience among drug addicts in rehabilitations centres. Although results showed levels of resilience among these respondents are high, continuous interventions and strategies for rehabilitation or prevention from drug addiction should be emphasized. It is also clear that prevention programs need to involve and harness the family to help strengthen the resilience and cognitive ability of individuals because it will serve to increase the likelihood of preventing substance use and misuse especially on drugs. Thus, this matter warrants proper attention from the National Anti-Drug Agency to provide better mental health care for those going through the drug addiction treatment.

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