

Identity processing styles and cell phone addiction: The mediating role of religious coping

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Abstract

Background and Objectives: The aim of this study was to investigate the mediating role of religious coping in the relationship between identity processing styles and cell phone addiction.

Materials & Methods: This descriptive and correlational study encompassed all students in Zahedan University in 2016 as its research population. From this population, 384 were selected using simple random sampling by Krejcie Morgan Table. Questionnaires of Identity processing styles, religious coping and addiction to cell phones were used for data collection. For data analysis, SPSS 19 was used for descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficient and LISREL 8.50 software was used for structural equation modeling (path analysis). In this study, all relevant ethical issues were considered.

Results: Results showed that there is a positive significant correlation between cell phone addiction with diffuse-avoidant style ($p \leq 0/01$) and negative religious coping ($p \leq 0/05$). The relationship between negative religious coping with informational and normative styles is negative and with diffuse-avoidant style is positively meaningful ($p \leq 0/01$). Path analysis supported the mediating role of negative religious coping in the relationship between normative and diffuse-avoidant identity processing styles with cell phone addiction.

Conclusion: The results of this study indicated that negative religious coping has restricted mediating role in the relationship between identity processing styles and cellphone addiction.

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Summary

Background and Objectives: Cell phone is one of the greatest inventions in the world today (1). Its widespread use has led to many social and personal problems one of which is cell phone addiction (2). Addicts, compared with ordinary people, feel depressed, isolated and lost without a cell phone and sometimes even their lives are disrupted because of frequent calls, text messages, web surfing and online chat (1).

One of the factors that affect the way cell phone is used is the user's identity. Identity is a framework based on which people interpret the meaning of their experiences and identify their life direction (4).

Berzonsky has identified three identity processing styles of informational identity, normative and diffuse-avoidant, to explain the cognitive and social infrastructure assuming that each of them has different information processing styles for decision-making and problem solving (5).

Anyone with informational identity processing style, actively searches for, processes and evaluates relevant information. Normative style is related to following normative standards and guidelines that are determined by important referents like parents. Diffuse-avoidant style encompasses people who are not committed, avoid encountering problems, and procrastinate decision making to a time when situational occurrences happen (6).

Spirituality and religion are also among factors that provide mental health and have a negative relationship

with addiction. These two factors are the proper directions to reach the final destination in life. For example, those who have more consolidated religious framework, make better use of religious coping strategies in stressful situations (7). This means that they establish a better connection with God, seek greater moral support, forgive better and have better spiritual re-evaluations. As such, they compromise better to negative life circumstances. In contrast, those who use negative religious coping strategies are more spiritually discontent, believe in God's punishment and have demonic evaluation of events. Therefore, emotional and psychological symptoms of stress such as depression emerge in them. In addition, they have lower life quality (8).

There are different studies conducted separately on each of this study's variables; although the relationship between these variables with other types of addiction, such as drug addiction or internet addiction has been investigated, surveying their relationship with a cell phone addiction is ignored. Therefore, this study poses the query of direct and indirect effects of these variables on each other and their relationship with cell phone addiction.

Materials and Methods: The research method was descriptive and correlational and the study population consisted of all students (total number of 21217) in Zahedan University in 2015, 384 of which were randomly selected using the Krejcie Morgan (1970) Table. For data analysis, SPSS 19 was used for descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficient and LISREL 8.50 software was used for structural equation modeling (path analysis).

Questionnaires of identity processing styles of White, Vampller and Winn (1998) (ISI-6G), addiction to cell phones questionnaire of Savari (2013), and religious coping questionnaire of Pargament (2000) (R-Cope) were used for data collection.

The total number of 384 participants took part in this study .64 percent (248) were female and 35 percent (136) were male with the age range between 18 to 36 years. In order to examine the mediating role of positive and negative religious coping in the relationship between identity processing styles and cell phone addiction, path analysis method was used.

Results: The results showed that the model is not meaningful for positive religious coping, whereas it was significant for negative religious coping. Therefore, the first model was discarded from the analysis. Among all the path coefficients of this model, only path coefficient of normative identity processing styles ($\beta = -.18$) and diffused-avoidant style ($\beta = .20$) to negative religious coping and negative religious coping to addiction ($\beta = .24$) was significant ($p \leq .05$) and the other factors was not significant. The greatest variance determined is related to negative religious coping effect on addiction ($r^2 = .057$). Coefficients of indirect paths in the model are also calculated and Sobel test was conducted to calculate and determine its meaningfulness.

Results showed that there is an indirect effect of

normative identity processing style on cell phone addiction ($\beta = -.04$) and also indirect effect of diffuse-avoidant style on cell phone addiction ($\beta = .05$) ($p \leq 0/01$). Therefore, negative religious coping style plays a mediating role in the relationship between these variables. Finally, it should be noted that the fit indices were indicative of complete fitness model.

Conclusion: The important finding of this study is the mediating role of negative religious coping style in the relationship between identity processing styles and cell phone addiction supporting the mediating role of this variable between normative and diffuse-avoidant identity styles with cell phone addiction.

Explanation of this finding is that people's identity style is associated with their reaction to events, so that people with diffuse-avoidant style usually avoid facing the problems and use negative and incompatible coping styles and will consequently face problems in their relations with other people for which they do not have necessary skills to solve (9). Therefore they detach from others and entertain themselves with cell phone. Berzonsky (1992) maintains that there is a relationship between normative and avoidant styles which can be a result of following other important people's style that have negative and incompatible avoidant coping style (10). As mentioned earlier, there is a meaningful relationship between negative religious coping style with different types of addiction. Therefore, they may become addicted to cell phone due to the type of coping they imply in life.

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