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SELF-CONCEPT, SELF- AFFIRMATION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS IN WOMEN WITH POLYCYSTIC OVARIAN SYNDROME (PCOS)

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ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE: To study the relationship among self-concept, self- affirmation and psychological distress in females having Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS).

METHODOLOGY: In this correlational study one hundred patients with polycystic ovarian syndrome participated with age ranging from 21-40 years. Self-Concept questionnaire, self-Affirmation scale, and Kessler psychological distress scale were used to collect data

RESULTS: The results of this study revealed that negative-self-concept has significantly positive relationship with psychological distress. Multiple regression revealed that positive self-concept negatively predicted psychological distress in females having polycystic ovarian disease. Independent sample t=test revealed that psychological distress is more in married women (M= 32.96, SD=8.60) as compared to single women (M=28.12, SD, 8.14).

CONCLUSION: It was concluded that negative self-concept has positive association with psychological distress while self-affirmation is negatively correlated with psychological distress.

KEYWORDS: Polycystic ovarian disease, Self-concept, Self-affirmation, Psychological distress, Syndrome

INTRODUCTION

Polycystic ovarian disease is a “syndrome” or a group of symptoms in which the ovaries and ovulation are affected. It is an endocrine disorder which affects women in their reproductive years of life ¹. Studies have shown that in PCOS increased production of male hormones affects the ability of ovaries to releases eggs causing infertility ². Other symptoms may include disturbance in regulation of periods, sleep disturbance, disturbance in blood pressure, skin problems, infertility, acne, oily skin, weight gain, fatigue, type 2 diabetes, body pains, and excessive body hair ³. Self-Concept is knowledge about in different domains self, such as socially (what others think), personally (what I think

about myself), and physically (what I look like). Self-concept develops in childhood and adolescence years and changes over time to form new concepts after experiences and learning ⁴. It is a complex phenomenon organized in multiple aspects of cognitive self commonly known as schemas ⁵. Self-concept is important in dealing with stressful conditions ⁶. Self-affirmation refers to the physical and mental appreciation that maintain and strengthen the personal values and perceiving themselves capable and responsible person ^{7, 8, 13}. Psychological distress is a state of emotional suffering and discomfort; in which a person experience symptoms of depression, anxiety and somatic symptoms. These emotional sufferings are

linked with stressors that effect physical and mental health and person feel unable to deal with stressful situation in daily life^{9, 14}. Distress is an undesirable emotional response that effects on psychological, social and spiritual life of an individual and it is unable for an individual to cope with stressful situation¹⁵. It is an unpleasant state which consists of two forms such as depression and anxiety, in which depression is a low sad state of a person, loneliness, hopelessness and worthless and anxiety person remains tense, irritated, worried, restless and afraid¹⁰. Women with polycystic ovarian syndrome have abnormal hair growth, infertility, diabetes, and obesity which cause low self-esteem and negative self-image¹¹. The goal of this study is to study the relationship between self-concept and self-affirmation with psychological distress among female patients with polycystic ovary syndrome.

METHODOLOGY

Informed consent was signed by patients. Purposive sampling techniques were used to recruit 100 female patients between 21-40 years of age diagnosed with polycystic ovarian syndrome. Demographic information was obtained using a demographic sheet. An indigenous Self-concept Scale (Rehman & Jabeen, 2015) was used to measure self-concept. It is a 7 point rating scale with 22 items. This scale has both negative and positive dimensions, scoring for separate factors i.e. negative and positive self-concept. Alpha Coefficient, F1 Positive 11 items alpha is .85 and F2 Negative 11 items alpha is .674. Self-Affirmation Scale is a self-report questionnaire developed by Lisa Aspin wall in 1998 and consists of 20 items. It is a

dichotomous scale with two sub scales, personal attributes inventory include 10 items and personal opinion survey include 10 items. The reliability of tool is (.87). The original scale was used in this study. Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10) measures the expressive circumstance of the person. This scale was developed by Kessler in 1994. It is a 10 items Likert scale based on low to high range responses to measure anxiety and depression. Score ranging in 10-15 explain low or no risk, 16 to 29 replicate medium threat and 30 to 50 identify excessive chance of having anxiety and depression. The Cranbach's alpha is .89 with high internal consistency. Participants were selected from the hospitals and they were informed that data will be used only for the research purpose and ethical approval were taken. Confidentiality was maintained in the study. All participants were selected after medical report of diagnosed PCOS. All scales used in this study were fill out from participants individually. The personal information was not revealed.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The data was obtained from questionnaires and analyzed by the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Correlation statistical method was used to evaluate the relationship between variables and t- test to evaluate the mean differences in demographic. Alpha p-value ≤ 0.05 was considered significant.

RESULTS

Sample size was 100, 47% participants were single and 53% were married.

Table I

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability of Self Concept, Negative Self-Concept, Positive Self Concept, Self-Affirmation, Psychological Distress (N=100)

Variable	No of items	A
Positive self-concept	11	.78
Negative self-concept	11	.87
Self-affirmation	10	.59
Psychological Distress	10	.94

Note. *a* = Cronbach's Alpha

Table I indicates that reliability analysis of sub-scale of self-concept shows high reliability. Alpha coefficient for negative self-concept scale included 11 items is .87 which is highly reliable. The reliability analysis of positive Self-Concept Scale included 11 items has .78 reliability. The reliability analysis of Self- Affirmation Scale included 10 items shows that alpha coefficient of .59 while Psychological Distress Scale included 10 items with .94 Cronbach's alpha.

Table II

Pearson Correlation, Mean and standard deviation between Self Concept, Negative Self Concept, Positive Self Concept, Self-Affirmation and Psychological Distress (N= 100).

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1.Self-concept	---	.55***	.35***	.21*	.30**
2.Negative-self-concept	---	---	-.59***	.26**	.73***
3.Positive -self-concept	---	---	---	-.08	-.58***
4.Self -affirmation	---	---	---	---	.18
5.Psychological- distress	---	---	---	---	---
<i>M</i>	66.83	31.84	34.99	11.64	30.69
<i>SD</i>	11.26	13.14	11.73	1.71	8.69

Note. *M*=Mean, *SD*=Standard Deviation, **p* < 0.05, ***p* < 0.1, ****p* < 0.001.

Table II shows that Pearson Correlation among Self-concept, Self-affirmation and Psychological-distress. The findings indicate that Negative-self-concept has significant positive relationship with self-affirmation and psychological distress. Positive self-concept has non-significant relationship with self-affirmation and highly negative relationship with psychological distress.

Table III

Multiple Regression Analysis of Self-concept and Self-affirmation on Psychological Distress for PCOS patients (N= 100).

	<i>B</i>	<i>SEB</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
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Self-Concept	.42	.06	.55	7.26	.001***
Positive Self Concept	-.53	-.055	-.719	-9.66	.001***
Self-Affirmation	.03	.362	.006	.087	0.93 ^{ns}

Note. *SEB*=Standard Error of Beta, *** $p < 0.001$, *ns*=Non-significant

Above table shows the effect of self-concept and self-affirmation in psychological distress in females experiencing polycystic ovarian disease. The R^2 value .53 revealed that the predictors explained 53% variance in the outcome variable with $F(2,97)=58.71$, $p < .001$. The findings revealed that positive self-concept negatively predicted with psychological distress in females having polycystic ovarian disease ($\beta = -.72$, $p < .001$) whereas self-affirmation has non-significant effect on psychological distress ($\beta = .01$).

Table IV

One Way Variance of Analysis for Self-concept, Negative Self Concept, Positive Self Concept, Self-Affirmation, Psychological Distress of PCOS patients for Marital Status (N= 100).

Variables	Group	M	SD	T	p	95% interval		Cohen's d
						LL	UL	
Self -concept	Single	64.97	10.45	-1.55	.12	-7.94	.95	.31
	Married	68.47	11.79					
Negative-self concept	Single	27.12	10.53	-2.63	.010**	-11.88	-1.67	.52
	Married	36.01	13.89					
Positive -self -concept	Single	37.85	11.10	2.06	.041*	.19	9.42	.41
	Married	32.45	11.79					
Self-affirmation	Single	11.36	1.77	-.56	.57	-.88	.49	.11
	Married	11.88	1.63					
Psychological-distress	Single	28.12	8.14	-3.29	.001***	-8.82	-2.18	.66
	Married	32.96	8.60					

Note. M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation, ** $P < 0.01$, LL=Lower Limit, UL=Upper Limit

Table IV shows mean and standard deviation of self-concept, negative self-concept, positive self-concept, self-affirmation and psychological-distress. Results reveals that self-concept is higher in married group (M=68.47, SD =11.79) as compared to single group (M=64.97, SD=10.45). Results also indicate that negative self-concept is higher in married group (M=36.01, SD=13.89) as compared to the single group (M=27.12, SD=10.53), It also indicates that positive self-concept is higher in single group (M=37.85, SD=11.10) as compare to the married group (M=32.45, SD=11.79).Results also shows that there is no difference in self-affirmation between married and single groups. Results also reveals that the psychological distress is more in married group (M=32.96, SD=8.60) as compared to the single group (M=28.12, SD, 8.14).

DISCUSSION:

Polycystic ovarian disease is a “syndrome” affecting ovaries and ovulation in women of child bearing age ¹. A study reported that women with polycystic ovary syndrome having low self-concept experience high level of psychological distress. It has been observed that low level of self-concept increases anxiety and depression ¹². The present study also reported that negative self-concept and psychological distress have positive relation. Female’s concept of physical appearance increased their level of psychological disturbances including depression, anxiety, and mood disorder and eating disorders. Females who were diagnosed with PCOS experienced depressive symptoms. PCOS not only affects girl's physical health but also disturbed their mental health this happened because they make negative concept about their physical appearance ¹⁶. The results of present study support previous research which revealed that PCOS also affect the mental health. The present study revealed there is a significant positive relationship between psychological distress and PCOS in females. A study in America reported that women with PCOS are at high risk of depression. PCOS is directly linked with psychological problems such as depression and other mood disorders ¹⁷. A study in Pakistan reported that female diagnosed with PCOS are highly prevalence depression and anxiety. Study reported prevalence of depression in 31% of participants having PCOS. Depression and anxiety rate in PCOS women is increasing in Pakistan ¹⁸. A study reported that self-affirmation has a positive relationship with mental health. A study was conducted in America revealed that self-affirmation contribute to increase the positivity that leads to healthy mental and

physical health. Self-affirmation reduce the psychological distress ¹⁹. The present also reported that self-affirmation has highly negative relationship with psychological distress.

The present study reported that self-affirmation has non-significant relationship with positive self-concept. A previous study reported that self-affirmation has a positive correlation with self-concept as self-affirmation improves an individual concept about themselves and they avoid comparing with others ²⁰.

CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that negative self-concept has significant positive relationship with psychological distress. Results also indicate that negative self-concept is higher in married group as compared to the single group because of the responsibilities and external pressures of society. It also indicated that positive self-concept is more in single group as compared to the married group. Results also revealed that the psychological distress is more in married group as compare to the single group. The group experiencing PCOS for years exhibited greater level of psychological distress in contrast to the groups experiencing symptoms for days, weeks and months.

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Sample size was small and limited age range was selected. This study can be generalize as sample was selected on inclusion and exclusion criteria. All scales used in this study were valid and reliable. This study will help women having PCOS to manage their mental health and cope with all stressful situations.

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Zeenash Mazhar Dar; data collection, data analysis, manuscript writing, manuscript review

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Fatima javed; data analysis, manuscript writing, manuscript review