

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Do Parents of Sick Children Use Religious Coping in Argentina?

HÜSEYİN ÇAKSEN

*Divisions of Pediatric Neurology and Genetics and Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics, Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, Necmettin Erbakan University, Meram, Konya, Türkiye**Correspondence to Prof. HÜSEYİN ÇAKSEN, MD, PhD, E-mail : huseyincaksen@hotmail.com, Telephone: +90 332 223 66 84;**Facsimile: +90 332 223 61 81 and +90 332 223 61 82, ORCID ID: HÜSEYİN ÇAKSEN <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8992-4386>*

To the editor,

Coping is the use of cognitive and behavioral strategies to manage the demands of a situation when these are appraised as taxing or exceeding one's resources or to reduce the negative emotions and conflict caused by stress¹. Religion is a declaration, a manifesto, describing both the One who made this beautiful universe and the universe itself². Religious coping is a means of seeking Allah's help, trusting and taking refuge in Allah, finding solace in religious provisions/teachings, and praying/worshiping more than usual during stressful events of life such as illness, calamity, death, or circumstances where a person is helpless³. Herein, we briefly discussed the use of religious coping among parents who had children with chronic disease to attract attention to the importance of religion coping.

Many studies have been conducted in the United States, Western and Middle Eastern countries on use of religious coping strategies by parents whose children have chronic diseases or have died; however, no study has been found about this subject from Argentina in the literature. Alemdar et al⁴ found a statistically advanced degree of significant correlation in a positive direction between effective coping with stress and spiritual coping, and a negative significant correlation between ineffective coping with stress and general self-efficacy in mothers with disabled children. In another study, positive religious coping scores were significantly positively correlated with vitality, social functioning, and mental health scores among parents of infants with congenital heart disease. There was also a significant negative correlation between negative religious coping scores and mental health scores⁵. Negative religious coping (feelings of negativity related to the divine) was associated with higher levels of psychological distress but positive religious coping, religiosity, and social support were not found to be significantly associated with psychological distress in parents of children with cancer⁶. Bereaved parents' greater use of spiritual activities was associated with lower symptoms of grief, mental health (depression and post-traumatic stress). Use of religious activities was significantly related to greater personal growth for mothers, but not fathers⁷.

The importance of parenting styles on development and welfare of children is widely known and also how parenting practices are linked to the social meanings of each culture or social group. The characteristics of particular parenting styles varies in different contexts, cultures and social classes in Argentina⁸. Pardo Campos et al⁹ reported that children with congenital hypothyroidism had a tendency to seek more support to deal with situations that were difficult to solve and to become paralyzed more often when facing a problem. Children with congenital hypothyroidism also perceived a higher level of paternal acceptance (acceptance of their individuation) than controls. Recently, Colmenares-Roa et al¹⁰ reported that faith and spiritual thoughts were coping strategies and religion was as important as medical treatment to cope with the disease in Latino adult patients with systemic lupus erythematosus.

In conclusion, we would like to emphasize that religious coping has been frequently used by patients with different diseases and by parents whose children have chronic diseases or have died in many cultures around the world for mental and psychospiritual benefits. Therefore, we suggest that comprehensive studies should be performed on the religious coping styles of parents of children with chronic diseases such as cancer, neurological, psychiatric disorders, etc. in Argentina. We think that these studies to be conducted in future will fill gap in the literature and make a great contribution to clinical practices.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, HÇ; Writing—original draft, HÇ; Writing—review & editing, HÇ.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests: The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding: The author received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Ethical Approval: This study was a review of published literature and no ethical approval was required.

REFERENCES

1. Coping. APA Dictionary of Psychology. Washington: American Psychological Association. [Online]. 2024. [cited 2024 January 26]. Available from: URL: <https://dictionary.apa.org/coping>.
2. Nursi BS. From the Risale-i Nur Collection. The Letters. The Nineteenth Letter. [Online]. Istanbul: Söz, 2012. [cited 2024 January 26]. Available from: URL: <http://www.erisale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.202.231>.
3. Çaksen H. Religious coping or spiritual coping: which one is correct? *Psychiatr Danub* 2024; (in press).
4. Alemdar DK, Yılmaz G, Günaydin N. The spiritual and religious coping of mothers with disabled children in turkey: correlation between stress coping styles and self-efficacy. *J Relig Health* 2023; 62: 888-905.
5. Liu JF, Xie WP, Lin WH, Cao H, Chen Q. The Association of positive or negative religious coping methods with psychological distress and quality of life among parents of infants with congenital heart disease. *Front Pediatr* 2021; 9: 753032.
6. Dolan JG, Hill DL, Faerber JA, Palmer LE, Barakat LP, Feudtner C. Association of psychological distress and religious coping tendencies in parents of children recently diagnosed with cancer: A cross-sectional study. *Pediatr Blood Cancer* 2021; 68: e28991.
7. Hawthorne DM, Youngblut JM, Broton D. Use of spiritual coping strategies by gender, race/ethnicity, and religion at 1 and 3 months after infant's/child's intensive care unit death. *J Am Assoc Nurse Pract* 2017; 29: 591-9.
8. de Minzi MCR, Lemos V, Rubilar JV. Argentine culture and parenting styles. In: Selin H, ed. *Parenting across cultures. childrearing, motherhood and fatherhood in non-Western cultures*. Dordrecht, The Netherland: Springer, 2014, pp 277-92.
9. Pardo Campos ML, Musso M, Keselman A, Gruñeiro L, Bergadá I, Chiesa A. Parenting styles and coping strategies among patients with early detected and treated congenital hypothyroidism. *Arch Argent Pediatr* 2018; 116: 142-5.
10. Colmenares-Roa T, Gastelum-Strozzi A, Crosley E, et al. Digital narratives of living with lupus: lived experiences and meanings for Latin American and Latino patients and their families. *Arthritis Care Res (Hoboken)* 2023; 75: 540-9.