Critical Review of Article Acoeslamic Faith as a Facilitator for Accessing Counselling: The Experience of Three Kuwaiti Clients

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Mini Review

ABSTRACT

The comprised of one well developed paragraph that encompassed purpose, findings and conclusion. It was concise and provided logical connections. However, besides mention of purpose, finding and conclusion, recommendation was also needed to be included. As the mainstream research suggests that Islamic faith act as a hindrance in gaining access to mental health services. Those who participated in this research expressed their opinions regarding Islamic faith as an aid for reaching out for counselling rather than a hindrance.

INTRODUCTION

Introduction of the study summarized what was done in the study, introduced the research problem, developed the background of study, and clearly stated the purpose and rationale of study.

Title of the study effectively clarified theme under the study making the reader aware of upcoming discussion. Process that has been adopted for this research is qualitative that is appropriately in line with the research topic. As this study explores understanding of people's views, ideas, opinions and experiences with regards to a specific situation, and this similarly concurs with the features of qualitative research. Apart from stating this research as qualitative study, no mention of research design has been found. The research design should have been clearly stated in the article, however the research design used is phenomenology and it was specifically used to explore the experiences of clients who accessed counseling [1]. Phenomenology is also used to recognize phenomena and put emphasis on subjective experiences and also understands the organization of those lived experiences. It

describes the common characteristics of phenomenon that has taken place and uses in-depth interviews for primary data collection.

This study is established on original research instead of summarizing previously done research's knowledge, it gathered and summarized findings purely based on its own data. It is an important addition of knowledge related to the concerned discipline. Previously done studies based on Islamic faith and mental health were mainly concerned with the stigma related to mental health in Muslim communities. These studies discussed that faith mostly leads to negative attitude towards counselling and help seeking. However, this study discovered new information and analyzed subject matter in a new way.

Current study provides the overview of the previous work related to the subject matter. Summary of the literature comprised of the factors which contributed in associating stigma towards taking assistance regarding mental health issues. Moreover literature was distinguishing between cultural factors and Muslim faith. It clearly draws the line among local cultures and Islamic teachings, thus established the basis and set the scene for current study. While the literature review related to the concerns have been done thoroughly it also needed to build the argument as to why and how this study is now going to further put up an argument in support of faith as a facilitator for help seeking in Muslim community and what were the previous gaps in previous researches which current study is going to fill. For the better clarification it could have been mentioned regarding previous researches that they were missing the exploration regarding identification of positive trends that Islamic faith has delivered to the Muslim communities [2].

Process used for selection of participant was clearly described. Participant's selection was done through self-selected small scale sample that was recruited with the help of snow ball technique using Whatsapp and email. Use of snow ball sampling technique did not allow the researcher to have a large sample. As the Study draws upon sample of three Kuwaiti women counselling clients, aged between 28 and 39 for research data. Consequently sample of this study does not include range of experiences encompassing age, gender, location, socio economic background and ethnicity that is necessary for the generalization of the results. Instead of snow ball technique, purposive sampling could have been selected for this study as it helps in reaching at target sample more quickly. Purposive sampling is planned selection of informants that is based on their capability to explain a specific concept, theme or phenomenon.

Data collection method that was used for study included in-depth semi structured individual interviews these were helpful in exploring personal experiences of the clients.

Ethical considerations were taken in to account to maintain privacy of the participants who shared their views regarding subject matter. Confidentiality and anonymity was maintained, safe context for the sharing of personal experience was established. Careful measures were taken to handle pre and post emotional disturbance of participants. Research participant had autonomy in withdrawing from research at any time. All these aforementioned considerations made research ethically sound.

For data analysis interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed, and translated from Arabic to English. To identify themes from collected data, thematic analysis was done. Three key themes appeared: experiencing and negotiating stigma and shame; the power of the media and public education; faith as a facilitator and support in accessing help. This paper emphasizes on the third theme. The theme of faith as a facilitator and support in formal help-seeking consisted of four sub-themes, which are now addressed in turn. These four sub-themes have been termed: refuting illness as sinfulness or lack of devotion prayer [3]. counselling both/and rather than either/or; religious obligation to seek help; and understanding the self, strengthens faith. In data analysis details needed to be mentioned as to how coding, documenting and theming was carried out step by step to establish the rigor of the study.

The researcher's position was described in study related to their position in relation to research question, first author was a Kuwaiti based female counselling psychologist, and she was aware of the trends which were eminent in community. She was concerned with the fact that how people accessed counselling while living in this context.

Data analysis approach that has been used by the researcher is inductive, which is beginning with framing data and then moving towards the conversion of data into themes and then deriving results out of it. Findings were consistent with the data and adequately reflected the facts which were gathered through interviews.

Data of the research study revealed that within Muslim communities, expression of mental health issues is taken as a weakness or failure of faith. The opinions which research participant presented were opposed to it, as their feedback revealed opposition towards this misconception. They believed that this understanding is emerging from a lack of understanding of religion, mental health and counselling. Participants acknowledged that Kuwaiti people considered that it is more socially acceptable for people suffering from psychological distress to consult religious leaders and employ religious practices, such as reciting verses from the Quran or praying more persistently, than to consult a mental health practitioner. Participants acknowledged those people who search for comfort and relief through religious practice or spiritual way. In its place, they made a point that formal help-seeking act as an alternative or an aide to faith-based help-seeking [4].

DISCUSSION

In results section researchers have provided data in the form of quotes that is supporting interpretations comprising of themes/theoretical concepts. Statements of research participants have been stated as a quoted text. Authors did not provide negative cases, all the cases were supporting the themes/theoretical framework.

Through discussion, researcher provided a meaningful depiction of phenomenon under study. Discussion and findings section defined theoretical concepts, themes and relationship present among themes and sub-themes. It described integration of relationships among themes emerged from the data in order to produce a meaningful depiction of the phenomenon under study. The results which have been interpreted were in relation to the research's aims. Conclusions have been made with reference to the theoretical and conceptual framework. While

elucidating usefulness of current study in contrast with the previously done studies, it was clearly highlighted that this study has a lead with regards to its originality.

In discussion section authors have also mentioned regarding transferability of the findings and stated that this research was on small scale and the study design employed that participants were self-selecting, so consequently the results that have been raised cannot be considered generalizable, representative or transferable. Apart from being a small scale study the participants who became part of research, all three of them were females. The researchers also mentioned that the study's time-frame did not allow them to recruit further participants in order to take in the experience related to wide variety of contexts and counselling clients. That created hindrance in generalizability of this research to other Muslim communities [5].

In conclusion main points were summarized, usefulness of study its implication and limitations were mentioned. Researchers discovered the fact that how all the participants who were unknown to each other somehow in a similar way took help from Islamic scripture that helped these women to access services related to mental health. In implications researchers established the fact that the researches on Islamic faith, mental health, culture and counselling are very limited, whereas research with Muslim counselling service users are non-existent. In this situation current study has paved a way for the concerned practitioners and researchers to further explore the phenomenon with Muslims, who are taking counselling services that would help in understanding the complications Muslim communities have regarding mental health and counselling services. Consequently such researches would generate resolution for the concerns Muslims have.

CONCLUSION

As a qualitative research study, prospect of rigorous analysis was very low, however there are certain steps that could be taken to enhance the overall rigor of this study. Data could have been collected over a long period of time and from range of participants having various characteristics including gender, age and background. For the gathering of data variety of methods could be used. Researchers could write down their own reflections regarding the subject matter so as to become aware of their own perspectives and avoid any biases and personal opinions, preconceptions that they have towards subject under study.

Largely this research was a pioneering with regards to the area of study that has been chosen by the researcher, thus making a groundbreaking statement that is usually not discussed before in Muslim communities' contexts, so implication of this study suggest further exploration of the subject matter.

However while the research study made a valuable contribution in this area of subject there are some considerations regarding the rigor of study, generalizability and transferability of the research's findings that needed to be fulfilled for the transference of findings to other contexts.

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