



Pain Metaphors as Fundamental Factors to Mental Health

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Based on the research conducted and the literature background, it can be concluded that conceptual metaphors of pain play a serious role in the mental health of patients. Conceptual metaphors of pain, in addition to arising from the human cognitive system and expressed through words, can also target human emotions and psychology due to their metaphorical nature. In other words, conceptual metaphors of pain, in addition to having cultural roots, are strongly influenced by psychological characteristics. For this reason, they change the quality of life of patients. Interdisciplinary studies in the field of pain, which address cognitive, cultural, psychological, and even verbal aspects, can pave the way for deeper and broader research into human pain. Qualitative and quantitative research in the field of conceptual metaphors of pain is among these studies that try to examine pain from different dimensions as much as possible, because in these interdisciplinary approaches, pain treatment is also possible from different dimensions.

According to the articles published in this journal with the titles "Understanding Cancer Patients' Lived Experience of Pain through Metaphors: A

Qualitative Study. *IJMPP* 2022; 7(3):759-764. [1]" in this article, the author considers the most common pain metaphors for Persian speakers with cancer. In other words, Findings on common pain metaphors among cancer patients reveal a universal phenomenon that has only recently entered the research literature. Conceptual metaphors continue to play a role today in various areas of health and psychological illnesses [2]. In completing this issue, it can be said that conceptual metaphors of pain, such as existing interpretations of pain, can be related to individual and psychological characteristics [3], and lead to changes in quality of life [4]. The most important aspect in this context is that pain metaphors have a linguistic-cognitive aspect, not merely physiological or medical. Today, interdisciplinary experts are trying to measure pain metaphors and the types of expressions using tools such as questionnaires or task designs [5]. As a result, it is necessary to pay more attention to this style of interdisciplinary articles in the research literature to examine pain from different perspectives. Furthermore, researchers should note that the type of pain metaphors used by patients can.

affect their mental health. Conceptual metaphors are a vessel for human thought and the cognitive system. On the one hand, they are universal. Although they may be influenced by culture, they are helpful in understanding pain. To advance this understanding, interdisciplinary researchers should prioritize correlational, structural equation, and interventional studies focused on whether modifying individuals' interpretations of pain can effectively prevent pain catastrophizing.

On the other hand, conceptual pain metaphors may vary in different Iranian cultures, and identifying their underlying mechanisms will help patients' cognitive systems for treatment. Therapists and professionals in the field are advised to pay close attention to conceptual pain metaphors when describing their pain, as they can be the key to solving the problem for improving the condition.

Doctors across Iran should actively identify and inquire about patients' conceptual pain metaphors from the patients' viewpoints, repeating these inquiries as needed to enhance treatment. The Ministry of Health and its provincial branches can be encouraged to initiate research projects that systematically analyze prevalent pain metaphors among specific patient groups and explore each metaphor's connection to mental health outcomes.

Based on the research conducted and the literature background, it can be concluded that conceptual pain metaphors play a serious role in the mental health of patients. Conceptual metaphors of pain, in addition to arising from the human cognitive system and expressed through words, can also target human emotions and psychology due to their metaphorical nature. In other words, conceptual metaphors of pain, in addition to having cultural roots, are strongly influenced by psychological characteristics. For this reason, they change the quality of life of patients.

Interdisciplinary studies in the field of pain, which address cognitive, cultural, psychological, and even verbal aspects, can pave the way for deeper and broader research into human pain. Qualitative and quantitative

research in the field of conceptual pain metaphors is among these studies that try to examine pain from different dimensions as much as possible, because in these interdisciplinary approaches, pain treatment is also possible from different dimensions [5]. Physicians, clinical psychologists, and health psychologists can be expected to look at conceptual metaphors from a higher dimension and see it as the key to solving the puzzle of the psychological characteristics of pain so that they can better help patients with chronic pain.

The author of this letter is trying to show the importance of the connection between mental health and pain metaphors so that she can further explore this topic in her future studies. Referring to an article published in this journal, she tried to remind the importance of this issue so that researchers in Iran and other countries will be more aware of the importance of conceptual pain metaphors in the field of mental health.

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