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Evaluation of the relationship between values and psychological resilience of individuals diagnosed with substance use disorder: A cross-sectional study

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between values and psychological resilience in individuals with substance use disorder. This descriptive and correlational study was conducted with 70 individuals diagnosed with substance use disorder who had applied to the Alcohol and Drug Addiction Treatment and Research Center between February and April 2022 and volunteered to participate in the study. The data were collected using the Personal Information Form, Values Scale, and Brief Resilience Scale (BRS). All participants were male, the average age of substance use onset was 17.67 ± 5.95 years, and they had been receiving addiction treatment for 1.97 ± 2.30 years on average. The average total score of the individuals on the BRS scale was 17.18 ± 1.45. A significant positive correlation was found between the social values, intellectual values, spiritual values, materialistic values, human dignity, and freedom sub-dimensions of the Values Scale and psychological resilience ($p < .001$). Additionally, spiritual values were found to have the highest positive effect on the psychological resilience levels of individuals ($B = 0.185$; $p < .05$). Individuals with higher levels of social values, intellectual values, spiritual values, materialistic values, human dignity, and freedom were found to have higher psychological resilience. Nursing care provided by taking into account the values of the individual and strengthening their values may contribute to the psychological resilience of the patient.

Introduction

Substance use disorder, which has rapidly become more prevalent in recent years, is one of the most important public health problems that can be seen in individuals of all sexes, ages, races, and social and economic conditions all over the world (Kargın & Hiçdurmaz, 2018). Substance-seeking and substance-using behaviors are frequently observed in individuals with substance use disorder (Stoops & Kearns, 2018) and the person enters a vicious cycle that is difficult to come out of (Shipley et al., 2017; Wise & Koob, 2014). With relapses, the individual's treatment process becomes long and challenging (Kargın & Hiçdurmaz, 2018).

Addiction causes physical, mental, social, family, academic, professional, legal and economic problems in individuals with substance use disorder (Şamar & Buz, 2022). Domestic problems, domestic violence, leave of employment, social isolation, litigation due to involvement in fights and crimes are among the common issues encountered in these individuals (Daley & Feit, 2013). Individuals are also diagnosed with severe physical and mental illnesses as a result of substance use disorder. These problems pose various risks and threats for both the individual and the society (Şamar & Buz, 2022). It is important to conduct interventions that will enable the individual to cope with these various issues and even prevent the occurrence of these issues. It is necessary to strengthen the individual spiritually in order to ensure that the individual can give up substance use and participate and finalize the treatment process effectively (Şahiner et al., 2022). It can be said that it is important to increase the psychological resilience of the individual to this end.

Psychological resilience is defined as the ability to be less affected by negative events or the ability to adapt to stressful situations (Şahiner

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et al., 2022). Individuals with high psychological resilience are those who have developed coping skills, have self-respect, can control their emotions, and can easily adapt to new situations (Akyel, 2021). Optimism, spirituality, communication skills, cognitive flexibility, sense of humor, empathy, awareness are individual characteristics associated with psychological resilience (Akyel, 2021; Gürgan, 2006). Individuals with high psychological resilience stay away from substance use with their self-control skills and strong social support such as family and school (Akyel, 2021). It has been reported that substance use behavior and relapses are less common in individuals with psychological resilience, a topic that has been the center of focus on more in recent years (Goldstein et al., 2013; Tilim & Murat, 2019). Studies have found that the psychological resilience levels of individuals with substance use disorder are lower than non-users (Akyel, 2021; Şahiner et al., 2022; Skrove et al., 2013). Therefore, psychological resilience is an even more important concept for individuals with substance use disorder. It is believed that one of the ways to strengthen psychological resilience is to have high human values. Values are the criteria that people use to choose and thus justify their behaviors, allowing them to evaluate other people, themselves and events (Kurnaz, 2021). Values are a set of beliefs that guide people's behaviors, contain the characteristics that make people human and distinguish them from other living beings (Dilmac et al., 2014). It is noted in the literature that values are hierarchically ranked in order of importance for individuals and that individuals feel the values at the center of their self very strongly (Kurnaz, 2021). Additionally, many functions of values are mentioned; they guide people's lives, shape the structure of society, facilitate the process of adapting to the social environment in which people live, provide social solidarity, have an ego-protective function, and lead to the personal development of the individual (Dilmac et al., 2014; Karababa et al., 2018; Karadeniz, 2021). From this point of view, the question is whether there is a relationship between the values of individuals with substance use disorder and their level of psychological resilience.

In terms of studies on the values of individuals with substance use disorder, it seems that there are only studies on the concept of spirituality (Debnam et al., 2018; Park et al., 2017; Ryan et al., 2015). There are no studies examining other important value areas for humans. This study will contribute to understanding how the value areas that are important in human life affect the psychological resilience of individuals with substance use disorder. It will inform psychiatric nurses about the interventions to be applied in the treatment and care process of such individuals. This study will provide important and up-to-date data to the literature.

Aim

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between values and psychological resilience in individuals with substance use disorder.

Method

Design

This study is descriptive, cross-sectional, and correlational.

Participants

This study was conducted at an Alcohol and Drug Addiction Treatment and Research Center in the Eastern Anatolia Region of Turkey with 108 cases who had been admitted to the Center between February and April 2022. However, 32 of these cases were repeated admissions of the same patients. Therefore, the population of this study consisted of 76 individuals diagnosed with substance use disorder. The sample size calculated using the sample size formula in a known population was determined as 64 individuals with a 95 % confidence interval and a 5 % error margin. This indicates the minimum number of individuals to be included in the sample. Six individuals who did not agree to participate in the study were excluded from the study, and the data collection process was completed with 70 individuals who met the inclusion criteria.

Inclusion criteria of the study

No diagnosis of severe mental disorder (assessed by psychological interview), receiving outpatient treatment, agreeing to participate in the study.

Exclusion criteria of the study

Diagnosis of severe mental disorder (assessed by psychological interview), receiving inpatient treatment, not agreeing to participate in the study.

Ethics

This study was conducted in compliance with the principles of the Helsinki Declaration. Before the study was conducted, the ethics committee approval was obtained from the Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee of a university (numbered XXX and dated XXX) and the institutional permission was obtained from Alcohol and Drug Addicts Treatment and Research Center, where the study was to be conducted. After the individuals were informed verbally and in writing about the study, their written informed consent was obtained.

Data collection

The researcher made face-to-face interviews with each patient for about 30 min in the private interview room, and the answers given by the patients during the interview were also recorded in the questionnaires by the researcher.

Data measurement

Data were collected using the Personal Information Form, Values Scale, Brief Resilience Scale (BRS).

Personal information form

In this study, a personal information form developed by the researchers in line with the literature was used to collect the data on the sociodemographic characteristics and health status of the participants (Akyel, 2021; Bekircan & Tanriverdi, 2020; Şahiner et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2018). The form consists of two parts: The sociodemographic data section comprises of eight items questioning the participants' characteristics such as age, sex, educational status, and marital status. The health status section consists of six items questioning information such as the substance used, the characteristics and duration of the treatment, the age at which the treatment was started, etc.

Values scale

The scale developed by Dilmac et al. (2014) to determine the values of individuals includes 39 value statements and 9 sub-dimensions in total. These sub-dimensions are “Social Values”, “Career Values”, “Intellectual Values”, “Spirituality”, “Materialistic Values”, “Human Dignity”, “Romantic Values”, “Freedom” and “Futuwwa”. The scale is a 10-point Likert scale and the responses range from “0 = Not important at all” to “9 = Very important”. A score closer to zero indicates that the value is not very important in the person's life, while a score closer to nine indicates that the value is very important and indispensable in the person's life. In the study conducted by Dilmac et al. (2014), the Cronbach's alpha internal coefficients of the sub-dimensions ranged between 0.61 and 0.90, while in our study, the Cronbach's alpha internal coefficients of the sub-dimensions were calculated between 0.78 and 0.94.

Brief Resilience Scale (BRS)

The scale was developed by Smith et al. (2008) to measure the psychological resilience of individuals. The Turkish adaptation of the scale was made by Doğan (2015). The self-report scale consists of 6, 5-point Likert-type items. The scores to be taken from the scale are in the range of 6–30 points, and high scores from the scale indicate a high level of psychological resilience. The factor loadings of the scale items ranged from 0.68 to 0.91. The test-retest reliability coefficient was found to be between 0.62 and 0.69 (Doğan, 2015). In our study, the Cronbach's alpha internal coefficient was calculated as 0.92.

Data analysis

The data obtained from the research were evaluated in the SPSS 22.0 (IBM Corp, Armonk, NY) package program. Data are accepted to have normal distribution if the skewness and kurtosis values are between −2 and +2 (George & Mallery, 2010). The data have normal distribution. Descriptive data were analyzed using numbers, percentages, arithmetic mean, and standard deviation. Pearson correlation analysis, Regression analysis were used to determine the relationship between the scales. In the multiple linear regression analysis, a model was created in line with the aim and the effect of social values, intellectual values, spirituality, materialistic values, human dignity and freedom on resilience was examined. Therefore, resilience was taken as the dependent variable. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to calculate the reliability coefficients of the scales. *p*-Values less than 0.05 were considered statistically significant.

Results

61.4 % of the participants were between 25 and 35 years of age, all of them were male, 54.3 % were single, 44.3 % lived with their spouse and children, 71.4 % were unemployed and 54.3 % perceived their economic situation as poor (Table 1). It was found that 92.8 % of the participants had used alcohol, 75.7 % heroin and 71.4 % cannabis in the last year, 70 % had received treatment before and 83.7 % had received both outpatient and inpatient treatment. The average age at substance use onset was 17.67 ± 5.95 years and they had been receiving addiction treatment for an average of 1.97 ± 2.30 years (Table 2).

Table 3 shows the mean scores of the participants in the sub-dimensions of the Values Scale. The mean score was 49.32 ± 23.72 in the social values sub-dimension, 23.68 ± 12.14 in the career values sub-dimension, 29.90 ± 13.23 in the intellectual values sub-dimension, 18.05 ± 9.77 in the spiritual values sub-dimension, 15.01 ± 6.16 in the materialistic values sub-dimension, 15.10 ± 7.03 in the human dignity sub-dimension, 13.65 ± 7.36 in the romantic values sub-dimension, 13.65 ± 6.68 in the freedom sub-dimension, and 10.34 ± 5.13 in the futuwwa sub-dimension. The average total score of the individuals on the BRS scale was 17.18 ± 1.45 (Table 3).

In terms of the relationship between the sub-dimensions of the Values Scale and the BRS total mean scores of the participants, it was found that there was a positive, weak and significant correlation between the social values, intellectual values, spirituality, materialistic values, human dignity, and freedom sub-dimensions of the Values Scale and the BRS total mean scores (Table 4).

The regression analysis between the BRS total mean scores and Values Scale sub-dimensions showed that the social values, intellectual values, spirituality, materialistic values, human dignity, and freedom sub-dimensions had an impact of 17.4 % on resilience levels of the individuals ($R^2 = 0.174$), while spirituality had the highest positive effect on resilience levels ($B = 0.185$; $p < .05$) (Table 5).

Discussion

In this study evaluating the relationship between the values and psychological resilience levels of individuals with substance use disorder, it was found that the individuals had moderate values and psychological resilience levels and psychological resilience had a significant positive correlation between the social values, intellectual values, spirituality, materialistic values, human dignity, and freedom.

Table 1
Sociodemographic characteristics of the patients (n = 70).

Characteristic	X ± *SD*	Min-Max
Age (years)	30.07 ± 8.22	18–57
	Number	**%**
Age range		
18–24	16	22.9
25–35	43	61.4
36–50	7	10.0
51+	4	5.7
Gender		
Female	–	–
Male	70	100
Marital status		
Married	25	35.7
Unmarried	38	54.3
Widowed/divorced	7	10.0
Number of children		
None	39	55.7
1	11	15.7
2	9	12.9
3+	11	15.7
People living with them		
Alone	13	18.5
With spouse/children	31	44.3
With mother/father	24	34.3
Others (relative etc.)	2	2.9
Education level		
Illiterate	4	5.7
Primary/secondary	42	60.0
High school	18	25.7
University	6	8.6
Employment status		
Working	20	28.6
Not working	50	71.4
Economic status		
High	10	14.3
Middle	22	31.4
Low	38	54.3

X = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation.

Table 2
Distribution of patients health-related characteristics (n = 70).

	Number	%
Substances used in the past year[a]		
Alcohol	65	92.8
Marijuana	50	71.4
Heroin	53	75.7
Ecstasy	21	30.0
Cocaine	3	4.3
Crack cocaine	2	2.9
Volatile	27	38.6
Drugs (Akinetone, Xanax etc.)	11	15.8
Amphetamine derivatives	46	65.7
Smoking		
Yes	68	97.1
No	2	2.9
Previous addiction treatment		
Yes	49	70.0
No	21	30.0
Form of addiction treatment (n = 49)		
Outpatient treatment	8	16.3
Both outpatient and inpatient treatment	41	83.7
	X ± *SD*	**Min-Max**
Age at onset of substance use	17.67 ± 5.95	10–46
Addiction treatment time (years)	1.97 ± 2.30	0–10

X = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation.
[a] More than one option is marked.

Table 3
Mean values scale and BRS scores of the patients.

Scales		Obtainable min-max points	Obtained min-max points	X ± *SD*
VS	Social values	0–90	13–85	49.32 ± 23.72
	Career values	0–45	3–43	23.68 ± 12.14
	Intellectual values	0–54	10–50	29.90 ± 13.23
	Spiritual values	0–36	2–34	18.05 ± 9.77
	Materialistic values	0–27	3–27	15.01 ± 6.16
	Human dignity	0–27	2–26	15.10 ± 7.03
	Romantic values	0–27	1–27	13.65 ± 7.36
	Freedom	0–27	1–26	13.65 ± 6.68
	Futuwwa	0–18	0–18	10.34 ± 5.13
BRS	Total	6–30	12–20	17.18 ± 1.45

X = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; VS = Values Scale; BRS = Brief Resilience Scale.

Table 4
The scales of values scale and BRS with correlation.

Scales		BRS	
		r	p
Values scale	Social values	0.252*	0.035
	Career values	0.156	0.196
	Intellectual values	0.279*	0.019
	Spiritual values	0.386**	0.001
	Materialistic values	0.253*	0.035
	Human dignity	0.256*	0.033
	Romantic values	0.223	0.063
	Freedom	0.294*	0.014
	Futuwwa	0.073	0.553

BRS = Brief Resilience Scale; r = Pearson Correlation.
* $p < .05$.
** $p < .001$.

Additionally, spirituality was found to have the highest positive effect on the psychological resilience levels of the individuals.

In this study, a significant positive correlation was found between social values and psychological resilience of the individuals with substance use disorder. Based on this finding, it can be said that individuals with high social values have higher psychological resilience. In the study conducted by Yang et al. (2018), the researchers found a significant negative correlation between social relationships and stress levels of individuals with substance use disorder. Fathian Dastgerdi and Eslami (2018) and Pettersen et al. (2019) also emphasize that social relations should be taken into consideration in the treatment processes of individuals with substance use disorder, and report that individuals with high levels of social relations are less likely to display substance use behaviors and receive faster responses from treatment processes. In line with these similar studies, it is understood that social relations and social values are important in individuals with substance use disorder and improve their treatment processes. The social values sub-dimension of the scale includes expressions such as social peace, respect, courtesy, responsibility, kindness, goodness, and self-discipline (Dilmac et al., 2014). These expressions are important characteristics that an individual should possess in order to find a place in society and maintain social relations. These characteristics help the individual adapt to the society and lead a good social life. Thus, it is believed to positively affect the mental health of the individual. In this study, it was found that social values were a factor that positively affects the psychological resilience level of the individual.

In this study, a significant positive correlation was found between intellectual values and psychological resilience of the individuals with substance use disorder. In the meta-analysis study conducted by Derzon and Lipsey (2002) to evaluate the effects of media interventions on substance use behaviors, attitudes and knowledge of the youth, the researchers found that increasing the knowledge and awareness levels of the youth about substance use caused a positive change in substance use behavior. The intellectual values sub-dimension of the scale evaluates the importance attached by the individual to physical health, mental health, knowledge, success and personal development (Dilmac et al., 2014). Individuals with high intellectual values take the necessary measures against situations that may adversely affect their health, have a critical view and find more diverse solutions with their knowledge and awareness level, and are able to support their personal development. Thus, it positively impacts the level of psychological resilience of the individual. In this study, it was found that high intellectual values had a positive effect on the individual's psychological resilience level. In the light of this information, increasing the level of knowledge and awareness of the individual about the difficulties they may encounter during the treatment and care process may help the individual cope better with those difficulties and stand firmer in the face of adversities.

In this study, a significant positive correlation was found between spirituality and psychological resilience of the individuals with substance use disorder. Additionally, it was found that spirituality had a greater impact on the psychological resilience levels of individuals. Studies have reported that spirituality are a protective factor for substance use disorder and substance use behavior is less common among individuals with high spirituality (Park et al., 2017; Ryan et al., 2015). Debnam et al. (2018) have found that spirituality reduces substance use rates and stress levels in individuals with substance use disorder. Studies have shown that spirituality has positive effects on individuals with substance use disorder, and it is also reported in the literature that spirituality can make the individual's life more meaningful and help the individual find the strength for change. In a qualitative study from Turkey, Ceylan (2020) evaluated how individuals with substance use disorder interpret spirituality and what spirituality means to them, and

Table 5
The scales of values scale and BRS with regression analysis.

Scales		BRS						
		B	Std error	ß	*t*	R^2	*F*	*p*
Values Scale	Social values	0.011	0.018	−0.171	−0.589	0.174	6.212	0.043*
	Intellectual values	0.004	0.031	0.034	0.123			
	Spiritual values	0.185	0.034	0.570	2.483			
	Materialistic values	0.029	0.070	−0.121	−0.411			
	Human dignity	0.026	0.065	−0.125	−0.398			
	Freedom	0.036	0.054	0.166	0.669			
Durbin-Watson = 1.524								

Dependent variable = BRS; BRS = Brief Resilience Scale.
* $p < .05$.

the emerging themes were 'seeking meaning, the search for life goals, recognizing the obstacles to change, and the need for change and purification'. It seems that spirituality is a helpful tool for individuals with substance use disorder to find meaning and goals in life, and for their desire for change and purification. Additionally, it is reported that individuals can protect and improve their mental health thanks to spirituality, and they are less affected spiritually even in difficult processes (Şahin Altun et al., 2022). In the light of this information, it was determined in this study that individuals with higher spiritual values have higher levels of psychological resilience. In addition, the fact that spirituality was found to be the value that affects psychological resilience levels most may guide psychiatric nurses in the planning and implementation of treatment and care processes in accordance with spiritual values of individuals.

In this study, a significant positive correlation was found between materialistic values and psychological resilience of the individuals with substance use disorder. The materialistic values sub-dimension of the scale evaluates the value attached to such things as money, property and status (Dilmac et al., 2014). Individuals with higher materialistic values have better living conditions and have easier access to health services. In fact, it also means less stressors and difficulties in an individual's life. This is a protective factor for individuals, and it can be interpreted as to have a role in the finding that such individuals have higher levels of psychological resilience.

In this study, a significant positive correlation was found between human dignity and psychological resilience of the individuals with substance use disorder. Human dignity indicates that the individual has higher characteristics such as virtue, honor, esteem, and self-respect (Dilmac et al., 2014). Human dignity is a very important concept that is also considered in nursing care. Human dignity, which is included in the ethical principles of nursing of The International Council of Nurses (ICN), (2021), is a principle that should be considered for every individual in nursing care, and care should be provided in accordance with human dignity. It is also an important concept in protecting and improving the mental health of the individual. Individuals with mental issues according to the wrong views and beliefs of the society are excluded from society and are not regarded as individuals. Due to these stigmatizing attitudes of the society, the dignity and self-respect levels of individuals with mental disorders may be lower (Yılmaz & Cüceler, 2019). Considering that individuals with substance use disorders are more exposed to stigmatizing attitudes, it becomes even more important to increase the human dignity of such individuals and to provide treatment and care with dignity (Avcil et al., 2016; Yılmaz & Cüceler, 2019). In this study, it was found that individuals with a higher level of human dignity had higher levels of psychological resilience. This is an important finding demonstrating the important role of human dignity on mental health.

In this study, a significant positive correlation was found between freedom and psychological resilience of the individuals with substance use disorder. The freedom sub-dimension of the scale evaluates characteristics such as independence and labor. Bekircan and Tanriverdi (2020) found that individuals with substance use disorder had low functionality and quit working life after substance use disorder. Substance use disorder disrupts the daily routines of individuals, adversely affects their working life, and reduces their level of independence by causing additional physical diseases. It is reported that preserving and increasing the level of independence of individuals in the treatment and care process also prevent the individual from experiencing mental problems (Bekircan & Tanriverdi, 2020). Our study supports this finding. It is understood that individuals with a higher level of freedom have higher psychological resilience levels and decreased likelihood of experiencing mental problems.

Strengths and limitations

This study focused on the human values of individuals with substance use disorder and examined their relationship with psychological resilience, which is an important factor in protecting mental health. This study did not focus on a single human value, but on many values that play an important role in an individual's life such as social values, spirituality, intellectual values, and human dignity, and examined their effects on mental health. No domestic or international study has been found on this subject, which is an important strength.

The limitation of this study is that it was applied to a limited group of individuals. Thus, the results of the study can only be generalized to this study group. In addition, the evaluations in this study are based on the scales used and the self-reports of the participants. It can be recommended that the study be carried out in a multicenter, larger sample and in other countries.

Conclusion

In this study, we evaluated the relationship between the values and psychological resilience levels of individuals with substance use disorder, and found that the individuals had moderate values and psychological resilience levels. A significant positive correlation was found between the social values, spirituality, intellectual values, materialistic values, human dignity, and freedom sub-dimensions of the Values Scale and psychological resilience. Additionally, spirituality were found to have the highest positive effect on the psychological resilience levels of the individuals.

Since relapses are common in individuals with substance use disorder and treatment processes are very long and challenging, it is very important to identify the factors that can help individuals cope with these difficulties effectively. This was attempted in this study and social values, spirituality, intellectual values, materialistic values, human dignity, and freedom were identified as the values effective on psychological resilience of these individuals. Interventions to strengthen these values can be implemented in treatment and care processes, which would allow individuals to continue the treatment process regularly and conclude it effectively.

Implications for psychiatric nursing practice

Psychiatric nurse, who are involved in the recovery management of an individual with substance use disorder, should determine the personal protective factors that will help the individual in the treatment and care process and enable the individual to continue the treatment process effectively. The individual's social values, spirituality, human dignity and freedom should be included in nursing care and plans should be made to strengthen these values. Nursing interventions should be carried out to help individuals spend time in the society, in the social environment, to increase their independence and to ensure that they receive treatment and care in a manner befitting human dignity. It is understood that spirituality has the greatest effect on psychological resilience levels. Taking into account the spiritual dimension, supportive spiritual interventions should be planned in nursing care that will positively affect the mental state of the patients and help them continue their treatment. It is understood that nurses should provide care for the individual needs of patients without judging their religious beliefs and spiritual values.

Ethics

Before the study, approval was obtained from the Scientific Ethics Committee of X University (numbered 3812 and dated September 22, 2021). Institutional permission was obtained from the Mental Health and Diseases Hospital, where the study was to be conducted. After the patients were informed verbally and in writing about this study, their written consent was obtained.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Study conception/design; DÖ, ÖŞA.
Data collection/analysis; KK, ABT.
Drafting of manuscript; DÖ, ÖŞA.
Critical revisions for important intellectual content; supervision; DÖ, ÖŞA, KK, ABT.
Statistical expertise; DÖ, ÖŞA.
Administrative/technical/material support; DÖ, ÖŞA, KK, ABT.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors report no conflicts of interest. The authors alone are responsible for the content and writing of this paper.

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