

ABSTRACT

Subjective well being has long been studied in relation to a number of personality and demographic variables. A comparatively recently identified correlate of subjective well-being is belief in a just world (BJW). The present study aimed to explore how three dimensions of belief in a just world, personal belief in a just world, belief in ultimate justice, and belief in immanent justice relate to trait well-being dimensions and state well-being dimensions in mothers of normal and Down syndrome children. It further aimed to compare strength of justice beliefs in two groups of mothers. It was hypothesized that personal belief in a just world and ultimate belief in justice will be positively related with trait well-being dimensions and negatively related with state well-being dimensions in mothers of normal and Down syndrome children. Moreover, these relationships would be stronger for mothers of a Down syndrome child compared to mothers of normal children. Finally, the associations would persist after taking into account demographic variables, generalized self efficacy, personal perceived control and perceived social support. Tryout study was conducted to translate Scales of Belief in Immanent and Ultimate Justice (Maes, 1998b), Personal Perceived Control Scale (Hollway, 2003), and Social Support Short Form Questionnaire (Sarason, Sarason, Shearin & Pierce, 1987) into Urdu. Urdu translations of Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (Zigmond & Snaith, 1983) by Mumford, Tareen, Bajwa, Bhatti and Karim (1991), Trait Well-Being Inventory (Dalbert, 1992) by Fatima (2004), Personal Belief in a Just World Scale (Dalbert, 1999) by Fatima and Khalid (2007), Generalized Self Efficacy Scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995) by Tabbasum, Rehman, Schwarzer, and Jerusalem (2003) were already available. The two versions of all the scales except for Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale were administered on 35 bilingual females to check the equivalence of Urdu version of the scales with their English version. In main study mothers of normal and Down syndrome children ($n = 100$ each) were matched on age of the child, mothers' marital status, education level and monthly family income. Interviews were conducted with mothers using Urdu versions of all the scales. Psychometric properties of the scales were assessed before running the main analysis and all the scales were found to be reliable and valid. A set of hierarchical regression analyses revealed that personal belief in a just world was the strongest predictor of all aspects of well-being as expected in the two groups of mothers. Belief in ultimate justice was negatively related to anxiety in mothers of a Down syndrome child while it was positively related to anxiety in mothers of normal children. Contrary to the expectations, belief in immanent justice was positively related to life satisfaction and mood level in the two groups of mothers. These relationships persisted after controlling for

demographic and other psychological variables in the study. Moreover, mothers of a Down syndrome child did not differ from mothers of normal children in strength of BJW. The findings support the role of personal BJW as a personal resource to enhance the well-being of both people struggling with difficult conditions of life and those in normal circumstances. The results were discussed in the context of Pakistani socio-cultural scenario. The findings of this work have important implications for mental health professionals and researchers.