

PSYCHOMETRIC PROPERTIES OF THE COPE QUESTIONNAIRE IN AN ALBANIAN CANCER CAREGIVERS SAMPLE

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Abstract

Research in the psychology of health is in an ongoing development in Albania. Many researchers and authors have contributed to the standardization of research instruments in the field of health psychology. This is the case of the COPE questionnaire (brief version) of Carver and Scheier (1997) in a cancer caregiver's sample. The brief COPE is a 28 items questionnaire developed to assess the coping strategies used by different groups. It is divided in 14 subscales, some of which are: active coping and problem solving, positive reformulation of the stressing situation, acceptance, abandonment, turning to religion, planning, seeking social support, self – distraction, emotional and instrumental support, disengagement etc. The aim of this paper is to identify the psychometric properties of the COPE brief version as well as to explore if they are major factor loadings to the original 28 items questionnaire. The participants of this study were $N=377$ cancer caregivers, reached at the University Center Hospital "Nene Tereza" in Tirana. Results showed that the COPE questionnaire had satisfying levels of the Cronbach alpha ($\alpha > .6$) after some modifications and deletion of few items. Prior to conducting the research a forward and backward translation was conducted, which indicated very few words for further adaptation. A factorial analysis using principal component analysis with Varimax rotation indicated that there were three factors in which most of the COPE original items loaded well (with explanation of more than 50% of the variance with eigenvalues > 1). Based on the existing literature in line with coping strategies identified in other studies the author named the new factors: active coping, emotion oriented coping and avoidance coping. The new factors had satisfying levels of validity (a Cronbach $> .6$). These results can be of value to other researchers that can use the COPE with the new factors.

Keywords: *coping strategies, COPE, factorial analysis, validity, cancer caregivers*