

Qualitative Study of Middle Age Crisis Coping Strategies among Middle-aged People in Tehran

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Introduction

Middle age is one of the periods or stages of life that has been less discussed in psychological research. However, middle age is said to be a period of life from the age of 45 to 64. One of the most important issues in the middle age period is the midlife crisis. The midlife crisis is an emotional state of doubt and anxiety in which a person becomes uneasy because the person understands that half of his or her life has passed. This usually includes reflections of the way a person has lived so far, and it is usually accompanied by a feeling that his life has not been adequately organized and has not achieved significant results. Accordingly, the present study aimed to identify the midlife crisis among a sample of middle-aged people in Tehran.

Method

The present study was conducted to identify the midlife crisis among a sample of middle-years in Tehran. In this research, qualitative methodology and grounded theory method have been conducted to study the midlife crisis. Participants in this study included all middle-aged people in Tehran. In this study, purposeful and theoretical sampling method was used to select participants and data were collected by using semi-structured interviews. Participants included 9 men with jobs such as (a pilot, a teacher, a freelance job, a taxi driver, a clergyman, an unemployed person, 3 employees) and 8 women with jobs such as (a teacher, a doctor, two employees, a housekeeper, a seller, two tailors). Therefore, the sample size was 17 middle-aged people based on theoretical saturation. The duration of each interview was about 30 to 45 minutes. To analyze the research data, Open, axial and selective coding was used. The first step is open coding, which means that a

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label is given to the interview text. To achieve this, the first interview was conducted and the concepts of the interview was labeled. After labeling or open- coding several interviews, the categories were prepared for axial coding. At this point, almost all the categories were identified. To achieve reliability criteria, three conventional techniques were used: 1- Control or validation by members; participants were asked to evaluate the overall findings and comment on its accuracy 2- Analytical comparison; to compare and evaluate the structure of the theory with the data, the raw data are conducted 3-the use of audit techniques; several experts in this field, supervise the different stages of coding, conceptualization and extraction of categories.

Results

Eventually, after three coding stages, 25 main categories in the field of midlife crisis were identified according to the research model. The findings showed that the central orientation of the midlife crisis is the subject-oriented crises which means that middle-aged people may be in crisis according to different subjects. If their lives are not accompanied by achievements, they walk into crisis. At the time of facing crises, Middle-aged people had chosen active strategies. Trying to compensate for failures, feeling responsible regarding to other people, reducing or deepening relationships, trying to maintain physical appearance are among their most important strategies for facing midlife crises.

Discussion

The findings showed that the main issue of the midlife crisis is midlife subject-oriented crises, meaning that middle-aged people may be in crisis due to various problems. If the expectations are not achieved, they will be in crisis. Middle-aged people chose active strategies in the face of crises. Trying to compensate for failures, feeling responsible regarding to other people, reducing or deepening relationships, trying to maintain physical appearance are among their most important strategies for facing midlife crises..

Keywords: midlife crisis, midlife subject- oriented crisis, coping strategies

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