



2528-9705



EFFECTIVENESS OF INTEGRATED THERAPY ON SELF-FORGIVENESS IN DIVORCED WOMEN

Hossein ZARE¹, Nila ELMIMANESH^{2*}, Setareh TORABIE³

¹ Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Tehran, Iran,

² Assistant Professor of Psychology Department, University of Tehran, Iran,

³ Master of Science in Payame Noor University.

***Corresponding Author**

ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to investigate the effect of integrative therapy on self-forgiveness in divorced women aged between 30-40 in Isfahan, Iran. This is a semi-experimental study with pretest-posttest design and a control group. The statistical population consisted of divorced women aged between 30-40, who have been referred to counseling clinics for treatment. To collect the data, the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS) was firstly implemented and then was completed by the members of the group after receiving the intervention. Data were analyzed using SPSS software version 18 through inferential tests (multivariate covariance analysis). According to the results, there is a significant difference between the lowered scores of self-forgiveness in the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group compared to the control group. The findings of this study show that the use of group-based approach using Feldman's integrated therapy has an impact on the self-forgiveness of divorced women. Overall, the results of this study support the hypothesis that integrated therapy is effective on the self-forgiveness of divorced women.

Keywords: Integrated Therapy, Self-Forgiveness, Divorced Women.

INTRODUCTION

Divorce is the most important contributor to the collapse of family as the smallest social unit causing irreparable damage to the individual, family and community (Trudel, & Goldfarb, 2010). Divorce has been very common in today's societies and the world has witnessed a surge in the number of divorces taking place, so that there is a great fear of destruction of the family foundation and, consequently, the increasing prevalence of social deviations and psychological abnormalities in divorced couples and their children (Shamseddini, 2016). For whatever reason, divorce has many adverse effects on both family members and society. It presents a myriad of economic, social and psychological problems for divorced men and women leading to a sense of isolation for the abandoned couples (Yahyazadeh & Hamed, 2015). In fact, divorce has a beginning, but the psychological and emotional effects of divorce are long lasting and remain many years after the marital split (Inrait, 1996). The most important mental health benefit of forgiveness is the improvement of communication quality and interpersonal relationships (Linley & Joseph, 2004). Considering the crucial role of forgiveness in reducing negative emotions and increasing positive emotions following divorce, an integrated therapy can be used to more deeply investigate the role of self-forgiveness in divorced women. Forgiveness is defined as an as a conscious, deliberate decision or willingness to abandon one's right to resentment,

negative judgment, and indifferent behavior toward one who unjustly injured us, while fostering the undeserved qualities of compassion and generosity toward him or her. Forgiveness encompasses four phases: hurt, hate, healing and ultimately coming together and reconciliation with one other (Zakurini et al., 2012). In ancient times, the concept of forgiveness was utilized as an contributing factor for the health, consolidation and survival of relationships among the people in religious communities. However, there are two periods of time with a focus on the concept of forgiveness in the new century. Psychotherapy integration has a long history, but it was not until the late 1970s that it crystallized into a strong and coherent force on the psychotherapy scene. In addition to the development of psychotherapy schools in the last century, some authors have tried to integrate theories and techniques from two or more approaches or identify factors underlying common therapies. According to the historiography of psychotherapy integration, French (1933) produced one of the earliest comparisons between the psychoanalysis and operant conditioning and was strongly criticized for his assumptions (Vaziri & Lotfi Kashani, 2015). Then, Kuby (1934) provided some reasoning and exploration for some specific scenes of psychosis through conditional terms, and Dollard and Miller (1950) applied S-R theory to explain the theory of learning using psychotherapy treatments. Further, Marx and Gideler (1966) proposed some remarkable similarities between the behavioral therapy and psychoanalysis. Rosenzweig (1936) was probably the first writer to formulate the approach of common factors for psychotherapy on the frontier of integration. Later Garfield (1957) noted common factors theorist and significant contributor to the advancement of a common factors perspective, and a few years later Franck (1961) suggested that all effective methods work through common processes. Furthermore, Lazarus (1967) developed the underlying bases for a technique-based integrative approach. The integration front consisted of different approaches and tendencies; however, like the classification suggested by Erquises (1989), they can be categorized into three groups: theoretical integration, eclecticism and common factors approach. Psychotherapy integration and behavioral therapy have been discussed based on the scope of theoretical unity. Although this movement begun with the works of French (1933), Kuby (1934), Miller and Dollard (1950), Stamf Valley Wise (1967) and Max and Golder (1966), it was increasingly embraced and extended by Fider and Rhodes during 1970s. The appearance of Paul Wachtel's Psychoanalysis and Behavior Therapy (1997) is considered by some to mark the beginning of the contemporary psychotherapy integration movement. According to the Wachtel, imaginary exposures to conflicting and terrifying situations facilitate the psychoanalysis process of important issues. Meanwhile, the use of behavioral actions, such as assigning tasks for a courageous act not only changes the behavior of the clients but also results in a change in the inner structure of the clients due to the alternation in their responses to others (Wachtel 1977). Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of self-forgiveness therapy program on the self-forgiveness of divorced women in the form of group counseling using Feldman's integrated therapy and extraction of a plan incorporating self-forgiveness stages.

The following hypothesis has been formulated and evaluated according to the research purpose and literature: Feldman's integrated therapy approach has an impact on self-forgiveness in divorced women aged between 30-40.



METHOD

The statistical population of this study consisted of 30 divorced women referred to counseling clinics for treatment and were selected using simple random sampling. The participants were randomly assigned to two experimental ($n = 15$) and control ($n = 15$) groups. To select the sample, 133 people were randomly selected based on a list of all client records in the psychology clinic and the researcher contacted them. Then, they were asked to refer to the psychology clinic to complete the questionnaire. In addition, the nature and objectives of the study were explained to them and they expressed their willingness to participate in the study; they were assured that their information and personal specifications would remain confidential. After completing the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS), participants who scored less than 18 on forgiveness scale were selected for the study ($n=30$).

RESEARCH TOOL

The following questionnaire was used to collect data:

Forgiveness Scale: The Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS) was developed in 2005 by Thompson, Snyder and Hoffman to assess forgiveness. This scale composed of 18 items and three subscales including: a) Forgiveness of Self (FSE), with six items (1–6); (b) Forgiveness of Others (FO), with six items (7–12); and (c) Forgiveness of Situations (FSI), with six items (13–18). Some items were scored in a reverse manner (2-4 -6 -7-9 -11 -13 -15 -17). The items were scored based on a seven-point Likert scale: totally agree = 7, slightly agree = 6, agree = 5, Neither agree nor disagree = 4, disagree = 3, slightly disagree = 2 and totally disagree = 1. The scores of the questionnaire range from 18 to 126 and higher scores indicate higher levels of forgiveness.



FINDINGS

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of pre-test and post-test scores of research variables by groups

Variable	group	Pre- test		post-test	
		mean	standard deviation	mean	standard deviation
Self-forgiveness	control	142.36	31.7	140.49	31.09
	experimental	102.65	6.08	140.03	9.38
Forgiveness of Self	experimental	12.3	2.3	19.8	2.4
	control	11.4	3.4	10.4	3.3
Forgiveness of Others	experimental	13.12	6.1	18.6	4.6
	control	11.04	6.6	11.9	5.7
Forgiveness of Situations	experimental	10.6	7.4	16.9	5.3
	control	11.7	6.3	12.3	6.7

Table 1 shows the mean of self-forgiveness variable in pre-test and post-test by treatment and control groups. According to the table, the mean of self-forgiveness in the experimental group in the pre-test is 102 and 140 in the post-test phase, indicating the higher levels of self-forgiveness among the participants. On the other hand, the mean of self-forgiveness in the control group in the pre-test is 142 and 140 in the post-test phase, indicating lower levels of self-forgiveness.

The self-forgiveness variable in the test group is 102 in the experimental group and 140 in the post-test, which indicates an increase in the mean in this variable. In the control group, forgiveness in the pre-test stage is equal to 114 and in the posttest test is 113, indicating that there has not been any significant change.

As can be seen in Table 2, the zero assumption for the normal distribution of the scores of the two groups in the pre-test and post-test was confirmed in all the variables ($P > 0.05$).

Table 2. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test on the presupposition of the normal distribution of pre-test and post-test scores

Variable	group	pre-test		post-test	
		statistics	significance level	statistics	significance level
Self-forgiveness	control	0.81	0.29	0.85	0.63
	experimental	0.87	0.253	0.81	0.08
Forgiveness of Self	control	0.95	0.063	0.97	0.06
	experimental	0.93	0.06	0.95	0.42
Forgiveness of Others	control	0.98	0.36	0.96	0.19
	experimental	0.86	0.19	0.98	0.16
Forgiveness of Situations	control	0.22	0.15	0.36	0.019
	experimental	0.34	0.16	0.67	0.1
	control	0.43	0.23	0.56	0.12
	experimental	0.62	0.19	0.51	0.14

As can be seen in Table 2, the zero assumption for the normal distribution of the scores of the two groups in the pre-test and post-test was confirmed in all the variables ($P > 0.05$).

Other necessary assumptions including equality of variances and covariance are presented separately in each hypothesis. But in order to ensure the results of parametric tests, we report the equivalent non-parametric samplers for variables with the default of normality and equality of variance for each of them in the end, and the results will be compared.

Table 3. The total results of multivariate covariance analysis of the effect of integrative therapy on forgiveness

Variable		coefficient	F	Degree of Freedom assumption	Degree of Freedom error	significance level	Size effect
Pre-test	Pillai's Trace	0.84	72.85	2	25	0.005	0.86
	Wilks' Lambda	0.16	72.85	2	25	0.005	0.86
	Hotelling's Trace	5.25	72.85	2	25	0.005	0.86
	Roy's Largest Root	5.25	72.85	2	25	0.005	0.86
Group	Pillai's Trace	0.46	63.61	2	25	0.005	0.65
	Wilks' Lambda	0.15	63.61	2	25	0.005	0.65
	Hotelling's Trace	3.62	63.61	2	25	0.005	0.65
	Roy's Largest Root	3.62	63.61	2	25	0.005	0.65

According to the findings in Table 3, the relationship between pre-test and post-test of forgiveness scores is significant. In addition, there is a significant difference between the mean scores of forgiveness in the post-test in both the experimental and control groups. Thus, the main

hypothesis of the research is confirmed. The results showed that individual differences in the forgiveness variable in both pre-test and post-test steps can be attributed to the discrepancies between the groups, indicating the effectiveness of one forgiveness- based treatment

Table 4. Results of univariate analysis of variance

	source	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean squares	F	Significance level	Size effect
Self-forgiveness	post-test	713.65	1	713.65	19.2	0.005	26.7
Forgiveness of Self	post-test	572.9	1	572.9	24.5	0.002	19.3
Forgiveness of others	post-test	716.98	1	716.98	9.3	0.005	25.6
Forgiveness of situations	post-test	834.6	1	834.6	5.2	0.005	38.9

As can be seen from the data in Table 4, the null assumption for the normal distribution of the scores in the pre-test and post-test groups was verified in all the research variables ($P > 0.05$). By controlling this relationship, the mean scores of forgiveness in the post-test stage were significantly different in both the experimental and control groups ($P = 0.001$). Therefore, the main hypothesis of the research is confirmed. The results show that nearly 86% of the individual differences in at least one of the excuse variables in the two stages of research are related to the difference between the groups. In other words, one treatment has been able to affect the amount of forgiveness. The effect of treatment on increasing self-forgiveness is generally 26.7% in the post-test phase. Forgiveness is equal to 19.3, forgiveness of others is equal to 25.6 and forgiveness is equal to 38.9

According to the results obtained from the calculation of differences between groups, it can be said that the assumption of zeroing and the assumption of the research, namely, the effectiveness of integrated therapy, on the forgiveness of others in general is confirmed.



Table 5. Pair-wise comparison of the mean score of guilt in the post-test stage

variable	group	difference in means	Significance level
Forgiveness	experimental	37.65	0.001
	control	-1.43	0.41
Self forgiveness	experimental	7.5	0.005
	control	-1	0.17
Forgiveness of others	experimental	5.47	0.004
	control	1.3	0/01
Forgiveness of situations	experimental	6.3	0.004
	control	0.6	0.34

According to the results of Table 5 in the forgiveness variable, the difference in mean scores in the post-test stage is significant in the integrated treatment group ($P \leq 0.05$). In other words, the efficacy of treatment in improving the forgiveness variables in the post-test stage according to the results of the table is that the self-forgiveness components have the most changes in the post-test phase. In all of the components of forgiveness, the difference between pre-test and post-test in the experimental group is positive and significant. In fact, after the post-test, the scores increased, so forgiveness has risen after the integrated treatment.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

According to the findings in Table 5, the relationship between pre-test and post-test scores of forgiveness is significant ($p < 0.05$). In addition, there is a significant difference between the mean scores of forgiveness in the post-test in both experimental and control groups. Thus, the main hypothesis of the research is confirmed. The results showed that nearly 86% of individual differences in the forgiveness variable in both pre-test and post-test steps can be attributed to the discrepancies between the groups, indicating the effectiveness of forgiveness-based treatment. Further, based on the results in Table 3, the mean scores of self-forgiveness in both experimental and control groups in post-test were significant ($p = 0.001$). In other words, the use of Feldman' integrated therapy changed the forgiveness level in the post-test stage. Overall, the high level of self-forgiveness among the participants support the effectiveness of the integrated therapy intervention used in the post-test stage. Thus, based on the findings, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the second assumption based on the effectiveness of integrated therapy for self-forgiveness is confirmed. Further analysis also showed that an increased level of self-forgiveness in the pre-test stage in the experimental group reflects the high level of this variable among the participants. However, the level of self-forgiveness in the control group has not been markedly changed in the pre-test stage. It is recommended that further research be undertaken to analyze the effectiveness of this treatment on other variables, such as depression and anxiety in divorced women.

References

- Dollard, J., & Miller, N. E. (1950). Personality and psychotherapy. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Enright, R. D. (1996). Counseling within the forgiveness triad: On forgiving, receiving forgiveness, and self-forgiveness. *Counseling and Values*, 40(2), 107–126.
- Frank, J. D. (1961). Persuasion and healing. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- French, T. M. (1933). Interrelations between psychoanalysis and the experimental work of Pavlov. *Am J, Psychiatry*, 89:1165–203.
- Kubie, L. S. (1934). Relation of the conditioned reflex to psychoanalytic technique. *Archive of neurology and psychiatry*, 32, 1137-1142.
- Lazarus, A. A. (1967). In support of technical eclecticism. *Psychological Reports*, 21, 415–416.
- Linley, P.a & Joseph, S. (2004). Positive psychology in practice, Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.
- Lotfi Kashani Farah, Vaziri Shahram, 2015. The Quadrilateral Approach in Therapy: Foundations and Achievements. *Journal: Thoughts and Behavior*, Vol. 9, No. 35.
- Marks, L.M., & Gelder, M.G. (1966). Different ages of onset in varieties of phobias. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 123, 218-221.
- Master of Law, Faculty of Law and Political Science, Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman.

- Rosenzweig, S. (1936). Some implicit common factors in diverse methods in psychotherapy. "At last the Dodo said, 'Everybody has won and all must have prizes.'" *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 6, 412-415.
- Shamseddini, (2016). The evolution of divorce legislation in Iranian law and its causes. Thesis Master of Law, Faculty of Law and Political Science, Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman.
- Stampfl, T., & Levis, D. (1967). Essentials of implosion therapy: A learning theory-based psychodynamic behavioral therapy. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 72, 496-503.
- Trudel, & Goldfarb (2010) Marital and sexual functioning and dysfunctioning, depression and anxiety. Article in *Sexologies* 19(3):137-142.
- Wachtel, P. L. (Ed.). (1982). *Resistance: Psychodynamic and behavioral approaches*. New York, NY: Plenum.
- Yahya zade, Hamed, (2015). Issues of Divorce Children in Iran and Related Interventions: Meta-Analysis of Available Articles. *Journal: Women and Family Studies*. Volume 3, Number 2; 91 -120.
- Zuccurini, D; Johnson, S.M; Dalglish, T.L; & Makinen, J.A. (2012). forgiveness and reconciliation in emotionally focused therapy for couples: the client change and therapist intervention. *Journal of Marital & Family Therapy*, 39(2): 148-162.

