



Evaluation Of The Effectiveness Of Schema Therapy On Early Maladaptive Schemas And Feelings Of Loneliness In Divorced Women

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Abstract

Background and Aim: Today, the number of women who have lost their husbands due to divorce is increasing. Due to economic and social pressures, these women usually experience more loneliness than other women. Therefore, the aim of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of schema therapy on early maladaptive schemas and loneliness in divorced women.

Methods: The present study is applied and experimental with pre-test and post-test design. Among divorced women in Tehran in 1400, 30 were selected by convenience sampling and randomly assigned to two experimental and control groups of 15 people. The experimental group was trained in 8 sessions of 90 minutes with schema therapy and the members of the control group did not receive any intervention. The groups completed the Adult Social and Emotional Loneliness Questionnaire and the Early maladaptive Schema Questionnaire as pre-test and post-test. Multivariate analysis of covariance was used to analyze the data.

Results: The results showed that schema therapy significantly reduced loneliness in the experimental group compared to the control group. The results also showed that schema therapy is effective in improving the initial maladaptive schemas of divorced women.

Conclusion: According to these findings, counselors and therapists can use the rules of schema therapy to rehabilitate women after divorce to increase mental health, healthy social relationships and improve maladaptive schemas.

Keywords: Schema therapy, Early maladaptive schemas, Loneliness, Divorced women

Introduction

Divorce is the most important factor in the disintegration of the family structure - which is the most fundamental part of society - and allows men and women to break the marital bond and separate from each other under certain conditions (Hafarian, Aghaei, Kajbaf and Kamkar, 2009). Separation and divorce is one of the bitter and stressful phenomena of life that some couples experience and after the death of their spouse, they need the most change to readjust in individuals (Rajaei, 2015). This phenomenon has existed throughout the history of mankind and today, its course is increasing; If almost half of all marriages in the world lead to divorce (Ghahari, 2012). According to the increasing statistics of this social problem, there has never been a risk of dissolution of the family center and its adverse effects as in the present era. If divorce increases in a society, that society will surely be on the verge of crisis (Chaboki, 2013). According to the latest statistics reported on the website of the Civil Registration Organization, in 2019, 183193 divorces were registered in the country and after Tehran province with 31733 divorces were registered, Khorasan Razavi province with 18380 divorces was registered, as the second most divorced province It has occupied the country, of which 8732 divorces are related to the city of Mashhad. Also in this statistic, the ratio of marriage to divorce in the whole country is reported to be 4; In other words, one divorce has been registered for every 4 marriages. This ratio for the provinces of Tehran and Khorasan Razavi is 2.3 and 3.6, respectively (Civil Registration Organization, 2019). It is clear that today the Iranian family is experiencing the phenomenon of divorce widely; To the extent that its ugliness has been drastically reduced and it has become a common phenomenon in the face of life's problems.

The phenomenon of divorce has various economic, social and psychological consequences, among which the psychological dimension is very important (YahyaZadeh and Hamed, 2017). Many studies have shown the relationship between divorce and educational issues, personality imbalance, psychosis, depression, addiction, crime and delinquency, anti-socialism and suicide. Most studies show that the negative consequences and adverse effects of divorce on women are more than men (Mirzazadeh, Hossein Sabet and Borjali, 2017) and women are more vulnerable to physical and mental illnesses due to their special personality and social characteristics. Resulting from divorce (Gahler, 2009); On the one hand, women are half of the human resources of the society, and it is very important to pay attention to their mental health. Having a spirit of hope, vitality and vitality of women can have a significant impact on how they function and activity, and in turn, bring happiness to children and the next generation. On the other hand, emotional delicacy is an important feature of

women's personality and the possibility of disorders. And increases the numerous harms caused by divorce in them (Ebadi and Faqihi, 2010); Therefore, it seems necessary to pay attention to the harmful effects that divorce has on the mental health of this group of society. One of the most important feelings that women experience after divorce is feeling lonely. Feelings of loneliness can be seen as a perceived weakness and weakness in interpersonal relationships. Feeling lonely is a person's mental perception of the lack or lack of satisfactory social relationships and the result of being deprived of the basic human need for intimacy, it is an unpleasant experience, which appears in response to quantitative or qualitative deficiencies in social relationships And Meta 2013 (Bosarte and Swahan, 2018), in other words, have defined the feeling of loneliness as a mismatch between the level of social contact one seeks and the level of social contact one has in reality (Cassidy, 2012).

Given that the psychological damage caused by divorce due to gender discrimination in society is more pronounced in women, the need for psychological interventions for this group is necessary. One of the relatively new interventions in the field of psychological problems as well as family injuries is the schema therapy approach. In general, by reviewing researches such as Khoshnood, Shirkavand, Orove, Kalout and Padila (2014); Tapia et al. (2018); Ashuri and Arab (2014) can be found in the study of divorce, in addition to social, economic and legal factors, attention to individual and psychological causes, including early maladaptive schemas, can cause different attitudes in the family environment.

Schema therapy intervention tries to develop a new treatment model by applying the principles and methods of cognitive and behavioral therapy and components of other theories such as attachment, object relations, structuralism and psychoanalysis and integrating them together. Provide. The goal of treatment is for patients to use more adaptive coping styles instead of maladaptive coping styles so that they can satisfy their basic emotional needs. In this approach, schemas are constructed structures, frameworks or patterns of cognitive content that serve as an underlying cognitive scheme to guide information interpretation and problem solving (Raphael, Bernstein, Young, 2014). Schema therapy deals with the deepest level of cognition and targets the initial maladaptive schemas and helps patients to overcome the mentioned schemas by using cognitive, experimental (emotional), behavioral and interpersonal strategies. The primary goal of this model of psychotherapy is to create psychological awareness and increase conscious control over schemas and its ultimate goal is to improve schemas and coping styles (Young et al., 2003 / translated by Hassan Hamidpour and Zahra Andouz, 2012). The results of Hassani (2016) showed that schema therapy method is effective on marital satisfaction of couples. The results of Taghyar Yar (2016) showed that teaching schema therapy approach has reduced women's marital frustration. Iraqi (2016) in a study showed that schema therapy increases intimacy, lust and commitment as well as the overall score of lovemaking. Also, schema therapy has increased marital satisfaction. Calout et al. (2013) showed in a study that early maladaptive schemas in accordance with the cognitive hierarchical models of social isolation

affect the levels of thought layers and in turn these levels of thoughts play a role in the continuity of schemas. Demitresco and Rousseau (2012) showed that levels of early maladaptive schemas were able to predict levels of marital satisfaction. Researchers have found in their findings the effectiveness of schema therapy in increasing quality and life satisfaction and improving early maladaptive schemas (Morrison, 2000; Jillian, Philip, Mahli & Skill, 2003; Huffart, Versland, and Sexton, 2002; Giesenblow et al., 2006). Confirmed.

Accordingly, according to the studies and theories presented in this study, the effectiveness of schema therapy on early maladaptive schemas and feelings of loneliness in divorced women was considered, so the researcher seeks to answer the question of whether schema therapy on maladaptive schemas Does the initial feeling of loneliness affect divorced women?

Method

The present study is applied and experimental with pre-test and post-test design. Among divorced women in Tehran in 1400, 30 were selected by convenience sampling and randomly assigned to two experimental and control groups of 15 people. The experimental group was trained in 8 sessions of 90 minutes with schema therapy and the members of the control group did not receive any intervention. The groups completed the Adult Social and Emotional Loneliness Questionnaire and the Early maladaptive Schema Questionnaire as pre-test and post-test. Multivariate analysis of covariance was used to analyze the data.

Research tools

Adult Social and Emotional Loneliness Scale

This scale was designed and developed by Ditomaso, Brann and Best (2004). This scale includes 14 items and three subscales of romantic loneliness (five items), family (five items) and social (five items) and emotional loneliness is obtained from the sum of scores of romantic and family subscales. In front of each item in the spectrum, there are 5 options from strongly disagree (score 1) to strongly agree score 5), and getting a higher score in each of the dimensions of this scale indicates a greater sense of loneliness in that dimension. The authors of this scale report Cronbach's alpha coefficient between 0.87 and 0.90, which indicates the appropriate internal consistency of the scale. In Jokar and Salimi (2009) research, the validity and reliability of this questionnaire have been investigated. The correlation results of this scale with other scales showed convergent validity and favorable differentiation of this questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was also used for its reliability and the value of this coefficient for the dimensions of this questionnaire for romantic loneliness, family loneliness, social loneliness are 0.92, 0.85, 0.78, respectively. In the present study, the reliability of Cronbach's alpha method for the total score of loneliness was 0.83.

Primary maladaptive schemas questionnaire

This questionnaire was developed by Young (2003). The Early Incompatible Schemas Self-Report Questionnaire has 90 items, including 18 areas of early maladaptive schemas such as emotional deprivation, unstable abandonment, mistrust / abuse, social isolation / alienation, defect / unkindness, lack of affection, failure in love, failure in love. Measures harm, suffering, obedience, self-sacrifice, emotional inhibition, strict criteria, merit / excellence, self-control / insufficient self-discipline, admiration / attention, concern / pessimism, and self-punishment. Each item is graded on a 6-point scale (1. It is completely false about me. 2. It is almost false about me. 3. It is a little true until it is false. Almost true of me 6. Absolutely true of me); Therefore, the scores of this questionnaire are obtained by adding the scores of the items of each scale. In other words, each scale has 5 items that measure the type of initial incompatible schema. The minimum and maximum scores for measuring early maladaptive schemas are between 1 and 6, and the high score indicates the high rate of early maladaptive schemas in the subjects (Jones, Young, & Telchai, 1995; quoted in Latifi, 2006). Factor analysis showed that the extracted factors were highly capable and satisfactory. The convergence validity of the questionnaire was evaluated by measuring the tools of psychological helplessness, positive and negative emotions, self-confidence, cognitive vulnerability for depressive disorder and personality disorder. , 0.37, 0.35 and 0.36 - have been reported to be significant at the level of $P > 0.0001$.

Summary of schema therapy sessions

In the first session, after getting acquainted and creating a good relationship, the importance and purpose of schema therapy were expressed and the clients' problems were formulated in the form of schema therapy approach. In the second session, the objective evidence confirming and rejecting the schemas based on the current and past life evidences was examined and the aspect of the existing schemas was discussed with the healthy schemas. In the third session, cognitive techniques such as the schema validity test, a new definition of evidence confirming the existing schema, and the evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of coping styles were taught. In the fourth session, the concept of a healthy adult was reinforced in the patient's mind, their unsatisfied emotional needs were identified, and strategies for expelling blocked emotions were taught. In the fifth session, healthy communication and imaginative dialogue were taught. In the sixth session, experimental techniques such as mental imagery of problematic situations and dealing with the most problematic ones were taught. In the seventh session, relationship therapy, relationships with important people in life, and the practice of healthy behaviors through role-playing and homework related to new behavioral patterns were taught. Barriers to behavioral change were taught.

Results

The mean and standard deviation of the variables of early maladaptive schemas and feelings of loneliness in the two groups of schema therapy training and the control group separately before and after the test are shown in Table (1).

Table (1): Mean and standard deviation of variables of initial maladaptive schemas and loneliness

Standard deviation		Average		group	Variable
Post-test	pre-exam	Post-test	pre-exam		
1/75	1/96	17/25	23/08	Schema therapy	Early incompatible schemas
1/92	1/78	21/47	23/69	Control	
2/08	3/45	42/68	58/20	Schema therapy	Feeling lonely
2/07	2/15	56/66	55/68	Control	

As shown in Table 1, changes in pre-scores- Test, post-test occurred in the variables of early maladaptive schemas and loneliness in the schema therapy group. In schema therapy, the mean and standard deviation of the scores of early maladaptive schemas and the feeling of loneliness in the post-test were significantly reduced compared to the pre-test. In this research, the statistical test of covariance has been used due to its greater relevance and compatibility with the research hypothesis.

Table (2): Comparison of the difference between the post-test-pre-test scores of early maladaptive schemas and the feeling of loneliness in the two groups of schema therapy and control

P	F	MS	DF	SS	Dependent variable	Source
0/001	23/70	1604/41	1	1604/41	Early incompatible schemas	group
0/001	155/30	2789/63	1	2789/63	Feeling lonely	
		0/250	38	9/52	Early incompatible schemas	Error
		9/803	38	372/52	Feeling lonely	

40	2105/22	Early incompatible schemas	Total
40	5899/22	Feeling lonely	

According to the results of Table 2, after adjusting the pre-test scores, the difference between the groups at the alpha level of 0.001 is significant; Therefore, the research hypothesis on the effectiveness of schema therapy on early maladaptive schemas and feelings of loneliness in divorced women and the differences between groups in the post-test is confirmed.

Discussion and conclusion

The aim of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of schema therapy on early maladaptive schemas and loneliness in divorced women. The results showed that schema therapy significantly reduced the feeling of loneliness in the experimental group compared to the control group. The results also showed that schema therapy is effective in improving the initial maladaptive schemas of divorced women. Findings of this study with the researches of Mohammadi, Sepehri Shamloo and Asghari Ebrahimabad (2018); Sangani and Dasht-e Bozorgi (2017); Yousefi (2012), Plowman (2016); Aghaei, Hatamipour and Ashouri (2017); Panahifar, Yousefi and Armani (2014); Dickhat and Arendtz (2012) are consistent. The results of concurrent findings show that schema therapy causes changes in cognitive and experimental, emotional, and behavioral fields. This approach has been effective in replacing it with more appropriate and healthier thoughts and responses by challenging inconsistent schemas and inefficient responses. Schema therapy, by improving some of the basic and destructive components such as negative emotions and thoughts, seems to be able to improve mental health in general and consequently mental health in individuals. Schema therapy techniques help the patient to improve the schema by emotionally reorganizing, exploring new self-learning, regulating interpersonal emotion, and self-relaxation. At the deepest level of cognition, these schemas usually operate outside the level of consciousness (Titov et al., 2015).

To further explain these findings, we can say that the schema therapy approach is an approach consisting of cognitive, behavioral, interpersonal, attachment and experimental approaches in the form of an integrated treatment model that uses four main cognitive, behavioral, relational and experimental techniques in individuals in addition to the following Questioning maladaptive schemas, which are the main cause of dysfunctional and irrational thoughts, emotionally drains buried negative emotions and feelings such as anger due to unsatisfied spontaneous needs and secure attachment to others in childhood, which can lead to calming and reducing anxiety. Low negative rumination results in less physical arousal experiences, which can be a beneficial determinant of health. In fact, schema therapy is the ability to break behavioral patterns, and this strategy helps clients to design and execute

behavioral tasks to replace adaptive behaviors with inappropriate and ineffective coping responses, which can improve motivation. Improve social and communication skills, which also reduces the feeling of social and psychological loneliness. In the process of schema therapy, the person learns how to choose the people around them and how to best express their needs, then other people will respond to their emotions in the right way, thus all these paths Leads to a decrease in feelings of loneliness, not to an increase in social relations in terms of population density. Therefore, it can be said that having an efficient model based on basic schemas reduces the divorce rate, increases the effectiveness of treatment and intervention in marital disputes, and reduces the risk of divorce, which is unfortunately increasing today, when couples from Early maladaptive schemas become negative, their insights increase and they become more predictable for each other, and they may also minimize different, conflicting perceptions, and ultimately marital discord.

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