

## The Effectiveness of Functional Analytic Psychotherapy on Depression, Quality of Life and Obsession Symptoms in Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

1. Nila Elmi Manesh\*, 2. Khadijeh Arab Shaibani, 3. Gazale Javanmard

1. Corresponding Author: Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran, danravan20@yahoo.com
2. Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran. shakiba\_a\_shaibani@yahoo.com
3. Master's Degree, Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran, ghazaljavanmard@yahoo.com

### Abstract

The purpose of study was to determine the effectiveness of Functional Analytic Psychotherapy on Obsessive Symptoms, Depression and Quality of Life in Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). This semi-experimental research was conducted with pre-posttest design with an experimental and a control group. The statistical population consisted of patients with a diagnosis of Obsessive Disorder, that among them 30 married patients with OCD were selected. Divided randomly to an experimental and a control group. All patients were assessed by demographic information Questionnaire, The Beck Depression Inventory, The World Health Organization Quality of Life Assessment, and Yale Brown Obsessive-Compulsive Scale. The experimental group received 10 Functional Analytic Psychotherapy. Analysis of covariance showed significant improvement on the experimental group in all variables. Accordingly, on reducing Obsessive Symptoms, Depression and increasing Quality of Life, treatment can be used for people with OCD.

**Keywords:** Depression, functional analytic psychotherapy, obsessive-compulsive disorder, quality of life

### Introduction

Obsessive-compulsive disorder is a mental disorder characterized by disturbing thoughts and actions which are a waste of time and disrupt the natural course of life along with family and social relationships (Melin, et al, 2019). If OCD untreated, it can also cause depression and poor quality of life which is an important psychological construct. Q of Life is one of the important growth and development factors and a measure in evaluating psychological and social needs, as well as a powerful tool for monitoring community development. Unattended problem may become a chronic condition affecting the patients and their caregivers' quality of life (Melin, 2019). Numerous studies confirmed the low quality of life and the high rate of depression in these people. Functional analytic psychotherapy (FAP) can be effective in reducing the symptoms of obsession. Kanter et al. (2017) stated in a meta-analysis that this method increases the quality of life. It seems that FAP can be effective in reducing the limitations and shortcomings of previous treatments; therefore, the present study investigates the effectiveness of FAP on obsession, depression, and quality of life in OCD patients.

## Method

The present study is quasi-experimental with pre-test and post-test design. The statistical population included OCD patients from counseling center included whom 30 married patients with depression scores and quality of life below the baseline were selected and divided into experimental and control groups. Then, the experimental group received the intervention.

## Research Tools

**Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder Scale**, developed by **Yale-Brown** in 1989. Cronbach's alpha was reported 0.95 in Iran and 0.79 in the present study.

**Depression Inventory** was developed by Beck in 1961. scores more than 40 show requirement to prompt treatment. Internal consistency was 0.88 (Beck, et al., 1961). Internal consistency was 0.87 in Iran (Kazemeyni, et al., 2018) and 0.89 in this study.

**Quality of Life Inventory** was developed by in 1996 and includes subscales of physical, psychological, environmental health and social relationships (Ganesan, et al., 2019). Cronbach's coefficient was between 0.73 and 0.89 for subscales and the whole scale, respectively (WHO, 1996). In Iran, reliability coefficient of the whole test was 0.89, while values of 0.76, 0.71, 0.82, and 0.70 were obtained for physical health, psychological health, social relationships, and environment, respectively, using Cronbach's alpha method. In the present study, Cronbach's alpha was 0.75, and values of 0.78, 0.76, 0.73, and 0.80 were obtained for physical health, psychological health, social relationships and environmental health, respectively.

**Couple Therapy Based on Functional Analysis** was implemented according to treatment guidelines (Darrow, et al., 2014).

## Findings

According to Table 1, the mean scores of obsessive-compulsive disorder and depression decreased in the experimental group compared to the control group in the post-test stage while the scores associated with the quality of life increased. The significance of the results is determined through statistical tests. The normality of data distribution and homogeneity of variance were also confirmed by the Shapiro-Wilkes test and therefore the conditions for using the MANCOVA test were met.

Table1. Mean and Standard Deviation

variable	Group	Pretest	Posttest
		Mean $\pm$ SD	Mean $\pm$ SD
Obsession	Experimental	1.37 $\pm$ 16.9	2.01 $\pm$ 12.3
	Control	2.31 $\pm$ 16.18	2.41 $\pm$ 15.72
Compulsion	Experimental	3.37 $\pm$ 15	4.27 $\pm$ 8.5
	Control	3.23 $\pm$ 12.73	3.16 $\pm$ 12
Depression	Experimental	8.56 $\pm$ 22.5	10.5 $\pm$ 17.5
	Control	7.73 $\pm$ 20.27	8.18 $\pm$ 20.36
Quality of Life	Experimental	17.5 $\pm$ -14.5	19.9 $\pm$ -1.1
	Control	19.51 $\pm$ -12.09	21.47 $\pm$ -12.18

The results of multivariate covariance analysis showed a difference between the groups in obsession, depression, and quality of life ( $P \leq 0.01$ ).

One-way covariance in MANCOVA was used to identify which variables were different. According to Table 4, since the ETA squares for obsession, compulsion, depression, and quality of life are 51.71, 35.0, 0.0, and 0.24, respectively, 71%, 51%, 35%, and 24% of changes in the variance of obsession, compulsion, depression, and quality of life scores can be explained by functional analytic psychotherapy, respectively. Therefore, it can be said that the rates of obsession, compulsion, and depression have decreased in the experimental group while the quality of life has increased.

Table2. The Results of One-way covariance in MANCOVA

Variables	Sum of Squares	D F	Mean of Squares	F	P	ETA Coefficient	Test Power
Obsession	70.94	1	70.94	40.92	0.0001	0.71	1
Compulsion	132.69	1	132.69	17.25	0.001	0.51	97
Depression	147.8	1	147.8	9.58	0.006	0.35	83
Quality of Life	913.72	1	913.72	5.6	0.03	0.24	61

## Discussion and Conclusion

According to the findings of the present study, the symptoms of obsession have decreased. A meta-analysis study by Kanter et al. (2017) also showed that FAP could be appropriate to improve living conditions and reduce the symptoms of OCD. To explain the findings, it is noteworthy that FAP establishes strong therapeutic relationships along with the appropriate reinforcement of motivation in clients, leading to lower depression. On the other hand, unpleasant behaviors are not reinforced and are consequently extinguished, while good behaviors are repeated with reinforcement. Accordingly, the increase in positive activities leads to a decrease in depression, and an increase in quality of life. Also, in explaining the reduction of obsession, it can be said that when techniques such as rejecting unreasonable requests are used, the tendency to obsessive thoughts and actions decreases. Moreover, with the design of new empowerment methods, anxiety, and with it, the symptoms of obsession reduce while the increase in interpersonal interactions improves the quality of life. One of the limitations of this research is the lack of considering factors such as age and duration of the disease. Given the effectiveness of this intervention, it is recommended to use it to reduce depression, obsession, and improve the quality of life. It is recommended to perform this study on patients with OCD considering the duration of the disease and using effective interventions on OCD.

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