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# Comparing the Effectiveness of ACT and SFT on Quality of Life and Depression in Young Girls

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#### **Abstract**

The research aim was to compare the effectiveness of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy and Solution-focused Therapy on Quality of Life and Depression in depressed young girls. This study was semi-experimental, pretest and post-test design with a control group. Population included all depressed girls in Tehran in 2019. The sample included 40 depressed young girls, selected by available sampling method that were randomly assigned to three groups of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy; Solution-focused therapy and a control group. Data collected with a depression questionnaire and a quality of life questionnaire. Then Acceptance and Commitment Therapy and Solution-focused Therapy for 9 sessions of 2 hours treated and the control group did not receive anything. Data were analyzed using multiple covariance analyses. Although the results showed that both treatments had a positive effect on depression and improved quality of life, but acceptance commitment therapy was more effective.

Keywords: Acceptance and commitment therapy, depression, quality of life, solution-focused therapy

#### Introduction

Depression reduces quality of life with a negative impact on daily life and reduces performance (Mobaraki Asl, et al., 2019); quality of life is a perceived personal concept of feeling good and satisfied with life (Baciu and Baciu, 2015). To increase the quality of life and reduce depression, a group of psychotherapies known as third-wave therapies has been considered by many psychologists, two of which are acceptance-commitment therapy and solution-focused therapy. In acceptance-commitment therapy, principles and skills are taught to help clients to identification, pursue and meet needs, goals, and aspirations (Elahifar, et al., 2019). Also, the underlying views of solution-focused therapy is that change is continuous and inevitable, and it based on the belief that focusing on the now and exploring problems to seek solutions by resorting to the client's capabilities of references

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(Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2017). Considering the importance and necessity of resolving emotional crises and reducing its psychological damage, including depression, as well as the importance of finding the most effective treatment to increase quality of life in young girls, the aim of this study was to compare the effectiveness of these two treatments on quality of life and depression in young girls suffer from depression. The hypothesis of the present study was that the two treatments can reduce depression and improve the quality of life of young girls and that there is a difference between the two treatments in terms of its effectiveness on depression and quality of life.

#### Method

The method of the present study was quasi-experimental with pretest and post-test design with parallel experimental groups and the control group. The statistical population consisted of young girls with depression who referred to counseling centers in Tehran in 2020 for the depression treatment. After announcing the call to take part in the treatment plan, 40 people who wished to take part in the treatment plan and received a diagnosis of major depression during a psychological interview, were randomly divided into three groups of acceptance - commitment therapy (14 people), solution focused therapy (n = 13) and control group (n = 13). The research instruments were the Quality of Life Questionnaire and the Beck Depression Inventory. The format of acceptance and commitment therapy sessions based on Harris (2007) and the format of solution-focused therapy sessions based on the sources of Nelson and Thomas (2007) treatment approach, without change. The acceptance- commitment therapy, and solution-focused therapy treated in 9 sessions of 2 hours and the control group did not receive any treatment. Initially and after treatments, all three groups completed the Beck Depression Inventory and Quality of Life Questionnaire. Then, the research data were analyzed using analysis of covariance.

#### **Findings**

After considering that the most important assumptions of using the analysis of covariance observed, this analyze was used and results of this test was presented in Table 1. As can be seen, according to the control of the effect of pretest on the post-test, the difference between the groups in post-test scores of the Quality of Life and Depression were statistically significant (Sig = 0.001), meaning that therapeutic approaches were effective on quality of life and depression

Table 1. Results of analysis of covariance to check the significance of the difference between the means in the variables of quality of life and depression

| in the variables of quanty of the and depression |                |         |        |       |       |                   |       |       |                |  |
|--|----------------|---------|--------|-------|-------|-------------------|-------|-------|----------------|--|
| Source   | DF             | MS      |        | F     |       | Sig               | Eta   |       | Power          |  |
| variable   | Both variables | QOL     | D      | QOL   | D     | Both<br>variables | QOL   | D     | Both variables |  |
| pre-test   | 1              | 1236.26 | 266.16 | 36.25 | 50.21 | 0.001             | 0.431 | 0.516 | 1              |  |
| group  | 2              | 1763.17 | 225.84 | 51.70 | 42.61 | 0.001             | 0.767 | 0.731 | 1              |  |
| Error  | 32             | 34.10   | 5.30   |       |       |                   |       |       |                |  |
| Total  | 36             |         |        |       |       |                   |       |       |                |  |

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Finally, using the LSD post hoc test method, it was found that acceptance - commitment therapy was more effective than solution focused therapy in both reducing depression and increasing quality of life.

Table 2. LSD Post Hoc Test to determine more effective method on depression and quality of life

| variable   | I Group | J group | Mean differences I-J | Sig   |
|------------|---------|---------|----------------------|-------|
| quality of | control | ACT     | -27.12               | 0.001 |
| life       |         | SFT     | -21.64               | 0.001 |
| depression | control | ACT     | 9.19                 | 0.001 |
| -          |         | SFT     | 8.19                 | 0.001 |

#### Conclusion

Findings indicated the effectiveness of solution-focused therapy on increasing quality of life and reducing depression, which overlaps with the results of research by Mahmoudi, et al. (2019). Explaining the effectiveness of solution-focused therapy on quality of life and depression, it can say that finding exceptions in clients' lives can give clients hope for a better future and by focusing on problem-solving instead of psychotherapy techniques, encourage them to adopt effective mental and practical views and strategies (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2017).

Another part of the findings was the effectiveness of acceptance – commitment therapy in increasing quality of life and reducing depression, which is consistent with the results of Mofid et al. (201<sup>v</sup>). Explaining this effectiveness, it should say that the subject of this method is value-based actions, based on mindfulness situations. Also in ACT due to the training of value-based practice combined with the wish to acting as meaningful personal goals before elimination of experiences, causes girls to express thoughts and feelings when faced with stress caused by depression. Value themselves directly and reducing irritability, sadness, impatience, restlessness, and other tensions caused by an emotional failure while maintaining self-control. Therefore, by overcoming depression, they will have a better evaluation of themselves, and their quality of life will increase by trying again.

The participants of the present study were young girls suffering from depression who referred to counseling centers in Tehran. Care should take in generalizing the findings to people with other mental problems as well as men.

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