



# The Effectiveness of Group Therapy Based on Acceptance and Commitment on Social Functioning, Fear of Negative Evaluation and Anger Rumination on Cultural Background of Divorced Women

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## Abstract

The aim of the present study was to investigate the effectiveness of group therapy based on acceptance and commitment on social functioning, fear of negative evaluation and anger rumination on divorced women cultural background. The statistical population included all divorced women in Isfahan city on May 2024. The sample subsumed 30 divorced women who referred to Aftab Visitation Center and were selected by convenience sampling procedure. The participants were assigned in two experimental and control group fifteen individuals each. The research method was semi-experimental with pre-test-post-test and control group. The data were collected via implementing Self-Assessment Scale of Social Adaptation by Bosc et al. (1997), the Fear of Negative Evaluation Questionnaire by Watson & Friend (1969), and the Anger Rumination Scale by Sukhodolsky et al. (2001). The data was analyzed through applying analysis of covariance. The findings showed that group therapy based on acceptance and commitment increased social functioning and reduced fear of negative evaluation and anger rumination in divorced women ( $p \geq 0.05$ ). As a result, according to group therapy based on acceptance and commitment, which had improved the conditions of divorced women, nowadays, it would no longer be necessary for divorced women to endure unpleasant marital conditions despite the cultural, social and psychological consequences.



## Extended abstract

**Introduction:** Family and structural and cultural changes have undergone significant changes in the transition of society from traditional order to modern order. When individuals choose to get married, they usually do so with the intention of staying together forever. However, almost half of all marriages in the United States end in divorce. This issue has high census frequency in Iran as well. This issue is costly for both parties, especially women. Since women have less support, more economic problems and sometimes the responsibility of child custody due to gender differences in society. In other words, women suffer more than men from personal, social, cultural, economic, emotional and parental problems after divorce and its damages. So that the economic concerns and responsibilities of children and their psychological problems will increase. Based on this, unfortunately, despite the changes in society, the lives of divorced women still face many uncertainties and dangers, including the guardianship of children and financial and spiritual problems, in the meantime, the discriminatory and sexist attitudes of the society towards women have caused many problems for them regarding their presence in the society. Of course, these issues would have an impact on their social performance due to cultural issues. Individuals who are highly sensitive to the fear of negative evaluation feel more anxious in social situations where there is a possibility of evaluating their performance by others or social evaluation situations at work and life. Rumination is a cognitive style that involves repeatedly dwelling on one's own past problems, thoughts, actions, feelings, or events. This form of thinking has received empirical attention as a process that increases negative emotions and reinforces impaired behavioral control. Concerning the cultural problematics related to the above mentions situations of divorce the aim of the present study was to investigate the effectiveness of group therapy based on acceptance and commitment on social functioning, fear of negative evaluation and anger rumination on divorced women cultural background.

**Method:** The statistical population included all divorced women in Isfahan city on May 2024. The sample subsumed 30 divorced women who refereed to Aftab Visitation Center and were selected by convenience sampling procedure. The participants were assigned in two experimental and control group fifteen individuals each. The research method was semi-experimental with pre-test-post-test and control group. The data were collected via implementing Self-Assessment Scale of Social Adaptation by Bosc et al. (1997), the Fear of Negative Evaluation Questionnaire by Watson & Friend (1969), and the Anger Rumination Scale by Sukhodolsky et al. (2001). The data was analyzed through applying analysis of covariance.

**Results:** The findings showed that group therapy based on acceptance and commitment increased social functioning and reduced fear of negative evaluation and anger rumination in divorced women ( $p \geq 0.05$ ). As a result, according to group therapy based on acceptance and commitment, which had improved the conditions of divorced women, nowadays, it would no longer be necessary for divorced women to endure unpleasant marital conditions despite the cultural, social and psychological consequences.

**Conclusions:** As the obtain results revealed that group therapy based on acceptance and commitment reduced the fear of negative evaluation and rumination of anger and



increased social functioning in divorced women. To explain the obtained findings, it could be stated that according to the therapy based on acceptance and commitment, thoughts, feelings or memories (divorce experience) would not be problematic, ineffective or traumatic in themselves; rather, it depended on the context in which they happened. Based on this, when there would be experiential avoidance and cognitive fusion, the ground for traumatic thoughts and internal experiences could be provided. And it would cause rumination of anger and fear of evaluation by others. In acceptance and commitment therapy, it is believed that individuals might somehow be influenced by their thoughts to perceive them as real. In this way, these thoughts determine the behavior by mastering the action. Instead of directly experiencing the world around them, people are guided by the verbal content of their thoughts and their social functioning decreases. Finally it could be concluded that group therapy based on acceptance and commitment can be used by psychologists and counselors as a culture-based intervention for divorced women.

**Authors Contributions:** Marjan Aram: Editing the content, collecting information. Dr. Alireza Taghvaei: Designing the general framework, conceptualizing, editing the article and being the responsible author. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the article.

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