



## Choice Theory Implementation on Hope, Resilience and Psychological Well-being of Divorced Women

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**Citation:** Mahmoudi Tabar, M., & Dargahi, Z. (2022). choice theory implementation on hope, resilience, and psychological well-being of divorced women. *Journal of Woman and Culture*, 13(50), 95- 110.

DOR: 20.1001.1.20088426.1400.13.50.7.9

### ARTICLE INFO

**Received:** 16.08.2021

**Accepted:** 13.10.2021

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**Keywords:**

Choice theory  
Hope, Resilience  
Psychological well-being  
Divorced women

### Abstract

The aim of the current study was to investigate the choice theory implementation on hope, resilience, and psychological well-being of divorced women in Ahvaz. The statistical population embraced all Ahvaz divorced women whose process of their legal separations was completed at the time of the investigation. The research sample consisted of 40 divorced women selected through purposive sampling and was randomly assigned into two experimental and control groups (20 subjects in each group). The research design was a quasi-experimental of the pretest-posttest type with a control group. The data collecting instruments utilized in this study were Schneider et al. Hope Scale (1991), Connor & Davidson Resilience Scale (2003) and Reef Psychological Well-being Questionnaire (1989). The experimental group received the choice theory intervention consisted of 8 weekly 120-minutes group sessions. On the other hand, the control group did not receive any interventions. After a month and a half, follow-up phase was performed. Data were analyzed applying multivariate as well as univariate analyses of covariance methods. The Results showed that the implementation of choice theory was effective on hope, resilience and psychological well-being in divorced women. The results were similar across target groups and were generally maintained at follow-up phase one month and a half later as well.



## Extended abstract

**Introduction:** As one of the life crises, divorce can result emotional and behavioral disorders. The life of divorced wives is often confronted with abundant risks and ambiguities, including child custody and parenting single-handedly, the difficulty of economic issues, and keeps going unaided, along with depression and deep despair caused by loneliness and abandonment. As a result, one of the components that shapes the lives of divorced women is hope. Hope rising can be effective on the divorced women's psychological stress. Divorced women, therefore, need to build up their resilience to stressful life events to learn how to deal with stressors they cannot control. Furthermore, psychological well-being assists divorced women to be pioneers in work, leisure, relationships expansion with others, and building self-determination and purpose. As per the divorced women's harms, studies of various interventions were conducted to improve their mental health indicators, and the choice theory is one of these cases. According to this theory, individuals should hold responsibility for enjoying better feelings about themselves and their lives. When people ignore or deny reality; they are more likely to repeat their failures. Based on the above explanation, the current study was inquiring the answer to the question of whether the choice theory implementation, was effective on hope, resilience and the psychological well-being of divorced women in Ahvaz.

**Method:** The present study was a quasi-experimental with pretest/posttest design and a follow-up phase with a control group. The statistical population consisted of all divorced women in Ahvaz who were referred to the Justice Administration and assistance centers in 1399 and the process of their legal separations was completed at the time of the investigation. Among this population, 40 were selected through a purposive sampling method and were randomly assigned into two groups of experimental ( $n = 20$ ), and control ( $n = 20$ ) groups. To collect participants' data, Schneider et al. (1991) Hope, Connor & Davidson Resilience Scale (2003), and Reef Psychological Well-being Questionnaire (1989) were implemented as a pretest. Soon after for the experimental group, the Glasser Choice Theory (2001) implementation was administered during 8 consecutive sessions, one session per week for 120 minutes. At the end of the eighth session, a posttest was conducted on both groups and one month and a half later the follow-up phase was administered.

**Results:** the results showed that with pre-test control, the level of significance of all tests in the experimental and control groups was significantly different in at least one of the dependent variables (i.e. hope, resilience, and psychological well-being) ( $F = 9.35$ ,  $P < 0.0001$ ). This effect or difference was equal to 0.74. 74% of individual differences in post-test scores of hope, resilience, and psychological well-being were affected by the choice theory (group membership). The statistical power or test power of the hypothesis was 1.00. On this basis, and without hesitation, the test had correctly rejected the null hypothesis. In terms of hope, results also indicated that there existed a significant difference between the control and the experimental groups while pretest control ( $p < 0.0001$  and  $F = 89.32$ ). What was more in pretest control, there was a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group in terms of resilience ( $p < 0.0001$  and  $F = 28.31$ ). During pretest control, there was a significant difference between the experimental and the control group in terms of psychological well-being ( $p < 0.0001$  and  $F = 44 / 24$ ).



At the same time as pretest control, there existed a significant difference between the experimental and the control group in terms of resilience ( $p < 0.0001$  and  $F = 28.28.31$ ). There also existed a significant difference between the experimental and the control group in terms of psychological well-being ( $p < 0.0001$  and  $F = 44 / 24$ ), through pretest control. Moreover, in the follow-up phase, there existed a significant difference between divorced women in the experimental and the control group in terms of hope, resilience, and psychological well-being due to pretest control. In other words, the experimental group in the follow-up phase (one and a half months later) compared to the divorced women mean in the control group, had caused the continuation of the application of choice theory in the experimental group.

**Conclusion:** According to the findings, the choice theory implementation was effective on hope, resilience, and psychological well-being of divorced women. To better explain the findings, through theory of choice implementation, divorced women learned to control their lives. Re-examining their situations and planning to fit in with their life, divorced women took control of their life situation and avoided confusion and distress. Choice theory training helped one to understand that staying in the current situation or getting rid of problematic situations was influenced by one's own ability and decision-making. Accordingly, the person was reminded that she might hope to get out of the miserable situation with her own effort and will. It also helped her to find the best way to establish safe relationships with others and resolve her problems, and taught the person to adapt well to the situation in some cases, and thus developed resilience in the person. Developing resilience can help a person to cope adaptively and bounce back after changes, challenges, setbacks, disappointments, and failures. On the other hand, when a person knew that she is responsible for her life and tries, she is less likely to suffer from depression or other mental disorders, and as a result, her mental health is maintained.

**Author Contributions:** Mina Mahmoudi Tabar: collaborated in planning the general framework, content editing and analysis. Zahra Dargahi: contributed in general framework planning, final review and she is the corresponding author. This research is independent. All authors have reviewed and endorsed the final version of the article.

**Acknowledgment:** The authors thank all individuals who have helped us in this research.

**Conflicts of interest:** The authors declared there is no conflicts of interest in this article.

**Funding:** This article did not receive any financial support.