



## The Effectiveness of Emotion-Focused Therapy on Perceived Stress and Resiliency of Women with Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder Based On Cultural Factors

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### Abstract

The present study was conducted with the aim of determining the effectiveness of emotion focused therapy on perceived stress and resiliency of women with obsessive-compulsive disorder based on cultural factors. The statistical population included all women who referred to counseling centers in Ahvaz city in 2024. The sample consisted of 50 women with obsessive-compulsive disorder who were selected according to the convenient sampling procedure among women who referred to one of Ahvaz counseling centers and were randomly assigned into two experimental (25 people) and control (25 people) groups. The present study was designed as semi-experimental with pre-test, post-test and control group. The research tools included; Cohen et al. (1983) Perceived Stress Scale and Connor & Davidson (2003) Resiliency Questionnaire. The experimental group received emotion-focused therapy for 8 sessions, 90-minutes each. The control group did not receive any intervention. Data was analyzed via using Multivariate Analysis of Covariance(MANCOVA) and Univariate Analysis of Covariance(ANCOVA). The results showed that emotion-focused therapy was effective on the perceived stress and resiliency of women with culture-based obsessive-compulsive disorder, and therefore it could be used as complementary treatment for women with cultural-based obsessions.



## Extended abstract

**Introduction:** Cultural and environmental factors, along with underlying genetic factors, could lead to mental disorders and decrease in mental health. In general, cultural syndrome is a common pattern of attitudes, beliefs, classifications, self-descriptions, norms, values and other mental elements of culture that is organized around certain topics and in those who speak the same language. These symptoms can be effective in the occurrence of injuries and can also show the role of socio-cultural factors such as gender, race, culture, ethnicity, customs and socio-economic status in the formation and evolution of mental disorders. This problem can be explained based on the model of morbidity - mental stress in the occurrence of mental injury, which considers the causes of mental illnesses to be multiple. In fact, most of the disorders are caused by the interaction of neurological-biological defects and cultural-environmental factors. Obsessive Compulsive Disorder is one of the mental illnesses that can appear under the influence of cultural factors. In addition to the above causes and symptoms, social and cultural factors are also effective in the occurrence of obsession, that is, both genetic factors and environmental and cultural stressors are effective. Among the symptoms related to obsession, we can mention perceived stress and reduced flexibility of action. These factors can be controlled and treated with psychological methods such as emotion-focused therapy. Accordingly, the aim of the research was to investigate the effectiveness of emotion-focused therapy on perceived stress and resiliency of women with obsessive compulsive disorder based on cultural factors.

**Methods:** The statistical population included all women who referred to counseling centers in Ahvaz city in 2024. The sample consisted of 50 women with obsessive-compulsive disorder who were selected according to the convenient sampling procedure among women who referred to one of Ahvaz counseling centers and were randomly assigned into two experimental (25 people) and control (25 people) groups. The present study was designed as semi-experimental with pre-test, post-test and control group. The research tools included; Cohen et al. (1983) Perceived Stress Scale and Connor & Davidson (2003) Resiliency Questionnaire. The experimental group received emotion-focused therapy for 8 sessions, 90-minutes each. The control group did not receive any intervention. Data was analyzed via using Multivariate Analysis of Covariance(MANCOVA) and Univariate Analysis of Covariance(ANCOVA).

**Results:** The results obtained through multivariate and univariate covariance analysis showed that emotion-focused therapy was effective on the perceived stress and resiliency of women with culture-based obsessive-compulsive disorder.

**Conclusion:** Cultural-social forces play a great role in the etiology and treatment of mental disorders. One of the most prevalent related disorder to culture is the prevalence of obsessive-compulsive disorder. Also, culture affects the symptoms of the disease, how to deal with psychological problems, and people's willingness to seek treatment. Obsessive-compulsive disorder is one of the mental illnesses that could appear under the influence of cultural factors. These cases add to the amount of stress in a person's life, and hence, more emotional signs could be observed from the person, and they show little resiliency in dealing with problems and difficulties. In emotion-focused therapy, a person is given



skills to control emotion or to reduce the effect of emotion on stereotyped behaviors such as washing or focusing too much on checking religious practices. Because these issues are rooted in a person's family life and are encouraged by the family's emotions, emotion-focused treatment using control techniques could reduce family reinforces and focus more on the individual's own behavior, leading to a reduction in obsessive actions. Therefore, it could be used as complementary treatment for women with cultural-based obsessions.

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