

The effectiveness of psychological capital training program on happiness of divorced women in Darrehshahr city

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Abstract

This study aimed to evaluate the impact of psychological capital training program on happiness of divorced women. This was semi-experimental study; the pretest-posttest was conducted with a control group. Using purposive sampling method, 30 divorced women who were supported by Imam Khomeini Relief Committee in Darrehshahr were selected as sample; then, they were randomly assigned to two treatment and control groups (15 in each group). The Oxford's Happiness Questionnaire was used to collect data in pretest and posttest. The psychological capital training program was conducted in treatment group for 8 sessions, 2 hours in each session. The data were then analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and SD) and ANCOVA test. The findings showed that the psychological capital training program impacted significantly on happiness score of treatment group ($P < 0.01$). Considering the effectiveness of psychological capital training program in increasing the happiness of divorced women, it was suggested that this training program be conducted to increase the happiness of this group of people.

Keywords: Psychological Capital, Happiness, Divorced Women.

1. Introduction

The family forms the basic identity, culture, and personality of individuals. If it is damaged, the future generations will not be immune from its abuse effects and many social organizations will be affected by it (Cohen, Klein, O' leary, 2007). The divorce is one of the damages which may occur in any family. It is an emotional crisis and the most important and most serious social problem which causes unpleasant consequences (GhamariGivi, Khoshnudniay Chamachaei & Rafei, 2012). In recent years, the increasing divorce rate has become an important social dilemma; now, Iran is in world's fourth ranking in terms of divorce rate (Meshki et al., 2011). The studies have shown that the married people have more happiness than unmarried or divorced people (Diener, Gohm, Suh, Oishi, 2000; Stack, Eshleman, 1998; Coombs, 1991; Graham, Pettinato, 2002; Lee, Seccombe, Shehan, 1991; Myers, 1999). In addition, the lack of happiness in married life predicts divorce (Guyen, Senik, Stichnoth, 2007). Also, Baily and Snyder (2007) state that the level of hope, happiness, and life satisfaction in separated, divorced, or widowed people is less than other people.

The happiness is an emotional experience which makes good feelings (Veenhoven, 2006). As a psychological capital, the happiness increases positive emotions, psychological well-being, and positive attitudes (Jain, 2012). The higher level of happiness improves social skills and prevents from depression among divorced women (L.Hernández, Aranda, & Ramírez, 2009). The happy people have a positive attitude towards living events and conditions and also have less stress and stronger immune system (Lybomirsky, Sheldon, Schkade, 2005). Due to its contagious nature, the happiness may be extended to other family members (Abedi, 2004).

Due to positive effects of happy life, especially for divorced women, the researchers have proposed methods to improve and enhance it; the psychological capital training is one of these methods (Luthans, 2009). The psychological capital is the third generation of human and social capitals which includes psychological capacities such as hope, resiliency, optimism, and self-efficacy (Aveyet al., 2006). There are four sources to define self-efficacy: knowledge of senior management or performance result, substitution or modeling experience, social encouragement, and psychological (emotional) arousal; each of these may be used to promote self-efficacy (Luthans, 2010). According to psychological capital model, the optimism relates the positive

events to internal, permanent, and pervasive factors and the negative events to a variety of temporary and specific conditions (Luthans, Youssef, Avolio, 2004). The resiliency is a character trait which causes compatibility with dangerous situations and helps people to deal with stressful changes and difficulties and turn them to profitable opportunities (waugh, Fredriksson & Taylor, 2008). The hope is one of the basic structures; in recent years, it has been considered by positive psychology (Seligman, 2002). The self-efficacy is the judgment of people about their ability to perform an action (Bandura, 2008). The various studies have confirmed the positive effects of these structures on physical and mental health. For example, a study showed that the hope impacts on increase of meaningfulness of life, self-esteem, and happiness (Sherwin et al., 1992). In another study, it was shown that the psychological capital predicts the mental health. Kappagoda, Othman, and Alwis (2014) showed that the psychological capital impacts on improvement of job performance and job motivation. Isanejad and colleagues (2011) studied the effectiveness of relationship enrichment training on promotion of marital happiness and optimism. The findings showed that the relationship enrichment increases marital happiness and optimism.

Considering the high rate of divorce in Iran, the divorced women's health is an important issue. However, different research are required to achieve strategies which will improve the level of happiness among divorced women. Also, considering the positive effects of psychological capital on happiness and since there is no research on impact of psychological capital on happiness, this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of psychological capital on happiness of divorced women in Darrehshahr.

2. Methodology

This was semi-experimental study; the pretest-posttest was conducted with a control group. Using purposive sampling method, 30 divorced women who were supported by Imam Khomeini Relief Committee in Darrehshahr were selected as sample; then, they were randomly assigned to two treatment and control groups (15 in each group).

The psychological capital training program was conducted in treatment group for 8 sessions, 2 hours in each session. The Oxford's Happiness Questionnaire was used to collect data in pretest

and posttest. The data were then analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and SD) and ANCOVA test.

3. Findings

A total of 30 divorced women who were supported by Relief Committee were studied in two treatment and control groups. The mean age of participants in treatment group and control group was 33 and 31 years old, respectively. The table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of treatment and control groups' scores at pre-test and post-test.

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of happiness and psychological well-being test scores of participants

Mean of post-test (SD) score	Mean Pre-test (SD) score	Group
Happiness	Happiness	
(3/22)50/33	(2/34)32/93	Treatment
(2/41)33/53	(1/34)33/2	Group

The findings showed that in pre-test, the happiness scores mean in treatment group and control group was 32.93 and 33.2, respectively. After applying the independent (psychological capital) variable, the mean of happiness in treatment group changed to 50.33. In post-test, the mean of happiness in control group was 33.53; this was not a significant change. The analysis of covariance was used to test the effectiveness of psychological capital and eliminate the effects of pre-test. In other words, the covariance was used for statistical analysis to increase the internal research capacity through pre-test score adjustment. However, the Kolmogorov - Smirnov test was used to investigate the normality of scores distribution. The findings are provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Normality of happiness test's scores distribution at pre-test and post-test

		Sig. level		Kolmogorov-Smirnov z statistic				Scale
		Pre-test		Post-test		Pre-test		
Control	Treatment	Control	Treatment	Control	Treatment	Control	Treatment	
		1						
0/79	0/25	0/44	0/53	0/68	0/41	0/64	0/63	Happiness

According to above table, the depression has normal distribution in pre-test and post-test; so, the parametric tests may be used.

Table 3: Results of multivariate analysis of covariance in treatment and control groups in in terms of happiness variables

P	F	DF	MS	SS	Dependent variable	Source
0/001	100/74	3	719/4	2158/20	Happiness	Model
0/004	10/13	1	72/35	72/35	Happiness	Intercept
0/001	284/26	1	2029/92	2029/92	Happiness	Group

4. Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of psychological capital on increasing of happiness among divorced women. The findings showed that the psychological capital impacts on increasing happiness among divorced women. This is consistent with findings of previous

research (Bahari (2009), Sherwin et al (2006); Babaian et al (2012); Bandura (2008); Lyubomirsky (2005)).

Sherwin et al (2006) showed that the hope impacts on increase of meaningfulness of life, self-esteem, and happiness. Babaian et al (2012) showed that the psychological capital impacts on job satisfaction of male police officers. Also, the findings showed that among the psychological capital components, the self-efficacy has the most positive and significant impact and optimism has the least impact on job satisfaction. The research also has shown that there is relationship between positivism and mental health (Bandura, 2008; Lyubomirsky, King & Diener, 2005).

According to Adler and Kwon (2002), the people who have high psychological capital, have higher ability in group interaction and social participation. Therefore, the psychological capital binds people to each other and causes repeated and continued interactions. It seems that the people with higher psychological capital have sustained and enhanced social interaction and benefit from better social life. This social relationships may act as a factor for increasing happiness.

The people with more hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience have more positive expectations of life. Therefore, the positive expectations acts as a mediating factor for happiness. As one of the psychological capital components, the self-efficacy causes the divorced women to be responsible in dealing with setbacks, tragedies, and conflicts of life and even positive events and progresses and try to achieve success; these may be steps towards happiness among divorced women.

Also, Kappagoda, Othman, and Alwis (2014) showed that the psychological capital impacts on improvement of job performance and job motivation. HashemiNosrat Abad et al (2012) showed that the people with more psychological capital have more social capital. Hosseinpur and Alizadeh (2012) showed that the social capital impacts on teleworking.

As a complement to traditional approaches, the psychological capital is basically related to human capabilities, considers the factors which increase mental health, its objectives are beyond repairing social injurious, and aims to optimize the quality of life. This psychological approach tries to use the strengths of humans to protect them against mental diseases. The self-efficacy causes positive emotions.

The study population was divorced women. The difficulties of this event may lead to reduced happiness among them. The psychological capital training increased optimism and helped the divorced women to identify their strengths and abilities and gain greater happiness. Therefore, they achieved to more optimistic vision of their future. The hope for a bright future among divorced women may increase their tolerance and promote their efforts to fight challenges, achieve life goals, and have hopeful life.

Obviously, an appropriate and effective training method for preventing psychiatric problems such as depression and anxiety may be a major step towards protecting health and saving health care costs; this requires further research in this field. Since this study was conducted on divorced women, the findings should not be generalized to other social groups. In addition, the measurement of happiness was subjective and imprecise which has led to inaccuracies in measurement. It is recommended that this study to be conducted on samples other than divorced women; boys or other age groups such as adolescents and adults. However, it is recommended that the psychologists and consultants use this method for increasing happiness; it is likely to have positive effects.

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