

## Comparison of the Effectiveness of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, Cognitive Hypnotherapy, and EMDR on Improving anxiety and Autobiographical Memory in Women

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### Introduction

Every year around the world, natural disasters lead to death, disability, and financial damage to many people and governments. So distant, the focus of health systems has been on reducing the physical consequences of disasters. However, these incidents are a source of great stress for the survivors of the accident and have serious and long-lasting psychological consequences. Experiencing such an event leads to a wide range of disorders including symptoms of anxiety, neuroticism, depression, and psychosomatic. The aim of this study was to compare the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral therapy, cognitive hypnotherapy, and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) in reducing anxiety and autobiographical memory of flood-affected women in Poldokhtar.

### Method

The research was applied and quasi-experimental with a four-group pretest-posttest design. The statistical population included all middle-aged women in the flooded city of Poldokhtar in Lorestan province who had been referred to health and psychological centers during the first two months of 2019. Among them, 60 people who had the highest rate of post-traumatic stress disorder

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were in three experimental groups (N = 45; Mage = 42.02, SD = 7.03) and one control group (N = 15; Mage = 41.50, SD = 7.91) were assigned by accident. The measurement tools included Williams and Broadbent's (1986) autobiographical memory test and Beck and Esther's (1990) anxiety scale. Statistical data were analyzed using multivariate analysis of covariance, Bonferroni post hoc test, and L-Matrix test.

### Results

The results of the analysis of covariance showed that all three interventions of cognitive-behavioral therapy, cognitive hypnotherapy, and EMDR were effective in reducing anxiety and increasing autobiographical memory of positive words compared to the control group ( $p < 0.01$ ). In addition, No interventions were performed on women's anxiety. The results also showed that patients were introduced to anxiety symptoms and the course of PTSD during cognitive-behavioral interventions and received training related to anxiety management, sedation, guided imagery, cognition of misconceptions, and cognitive distortions.

### Discussion

Therefore, it can be concluded that cognitive-behavioral hypnotherapy followed by cognitive-behavioral therapy and EMDR have a favorable effect on reducing anxiety and increasing the autobiographical memory of positive words in flood-affected women. However, the results of the present study showed that cognitive-behavioral therapy and hypnotherapy were more effective than EMDR interventions. Among the reasons for this finding is the problem of patients with post-traumatic stress disorder in avoiding unpleasant emotions, using ineffective problem-solving strategies, and interpersonal relationships.

**Keywords:** Cognitive-behavioral, cognitive hypnotherapy, desensitization and reprocessing, eye movement, anxiety, autobiographical memory.

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