





Effectiveness of Short-Term Psychodynamic Therapy on Negative Meta-Emotion and Marital Burnout in Betrayed Women

Farzam. Khodadad¹, Mojgan. Agah Heris^{2*}, Mahdieh. Rahmanian², Ezzatollah. Kordmirza Nikoozadeh²

¹ MS of Psychology, Department of Psychology, Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran

² Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: m_agah@pnu.ac.ir

Article Info

Article type:

Original Research

How to cite this article:

Khodadad, F., Agah Heris, M., Rahmanian, M., & Kordmirza Nikoozadeh, E. (2025). Effectiveness of Short-Term Psychodynamic Therapy on Negative Meta-Emotion and Marital Burnout in Betrayed Women. *Psychology of Woman Journal*, 1-9.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.61838/kman.pwj.6.3.11>



© 2025 the authors. Published by KMAN Publication Inc. (KMANPUB), Ontario, Canada. This is an open access article under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) License.

ABSTRACT

Objective: The aim of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of short-term psychodynamic therapy on negative meta-emotion and marital burnout in women who have experienced infidelity.

Materials and Methods: This research employed a quasi-experimental design with a pretest-posttest control group format and a two-month follow-up phase. The statistical population included women affected by infidelity who sought counseling services in Borujerd in 2024. The sample consisted of 30 women selected through convenience sampling and randomly assigned to either an experimental or a control group (15 participants per group). The intervention group received short-term psychodynamic therapy in nine weekly sessions lasting 75 minutes each. Data were collected using the Meta-Emotion Scale (MES) developed by Mitmansgruber et al. (2009) and the Couple Burnout Measure (CBM) developed by Pines (1996). Data analysis was conducted using repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Findings: The results indicated that short-term psychodynamic therapy significantly improved negative meta-emotion and marital burnout in women who had experienced infidelity ($p < .05$).

Conclusion: It is concluded that short-term psychodynamic therapy is effective in improving negative meta-emotion and marital burnout in betrayed women.

Keywords: short-term psychodynamic therapy, marital burnout, negative meta-emotion.

1. Introduction

M

arital infidelity is one of the most profound emotional and psychological crises that can significantly impact individuals' lives, especially women (Tan et al., 2025). Infidelity not only leads to the loss of trust and a sense of security within the marital relationship but also brings about a range of negative emotions such as sadness, grief, anxiety, and anger (Martínez Preciado et al., 2025). Women who experience infidelity often face more intense psychological consequences compared to men. This experience may lead to feelings of worthlessness, self-criticism, and even depression. Moreover, this form of betrayal can affect the individual's social and familial relationships, intensifying feelings of isolation and loneliness (Giacobbi & Lalot, 2025).

Negative meta-emotion refers to a state in which individuals experience unpleasant emotional and psychological reactions (Zhao et al., 2024). It encompasses emotional conditions that generally induce feelings of distress and hopelessness (Jia et al., 2025). These emotions may arise from various circumstances such as betrayal, loss, stress, or even daily life challenges (Schneider, 2025). When individuals are confronted with feelings such as worthlessness, despair, or anger, these emotions can deeply impact their psychological and social lives (Lişman & Holman, 2025). Such emotions naturally trigger both physiological and psychological responses that may weaken one's ability to cope with life's challenges (Ventura-León et al., 2025). One major consequence of negative meta-emotion is elevated stress levels (Woolley & Koren, 2025). When individuals encounter such negative emotions, they may experience anxiety and mental tension that adversely affect their daily functioning (Hoy & Oh, 2024). In such situations, people often feel overwhelmed and unable to think clearly or make appropriate decisions. This condition may also lead to physical problems such as headaches, sleep disturbances, or gastrointestinal issues. Ultimately, these conditions can create a vicious cycle that further entraps the individual in negative emotional states (Tsoi et al., 2024).

Negative meta-emotion can also affect one's social relationships. A person struggling with these emotions may withdraw from others, increasing feelings of loneliness. This isolation has further implications for their mental health and increases the risk of depression and life dissatisfaction (Kahraman & Özbay, 2025). In the case of women who have experienced betrayal, these negative meta-emotions may include anger, hopelessness, jealousy, and profound sorrow (Felder & Machia, 2024). These emotions directly impact the mental and physical health of women and may result in

early symptoms such as sleep disorders, changes in appetite, and loss of interest in social activities (Wang & Duh, 2024).

Negative meta-emotion may lead to reduced interest in sexual activities and ultimately marital burnout, which reflects dissatisfaction and vulnerability within the relationship (de Oliveira et al., 2025). Marital burnout is a common challenge in long-term relationships that can gradually develop and lead to dissatisfaction and distress (Bhat & Shastri, 2025). This issue typically arises over time with the natural changes of married life and may manifest through a loss of interest, decreased emotional communication, and a decline in enjoyment from previously pleasurable activities (Jia et al., 2025). Given that marital relationships require constant effort and attention, burnout can directly affect the quality of marital life and may even result in separation (Apostolou et al., 2025).

The results of various studies indicate that the harmful effects of infidelity can persist for a long time, or even indefinitely, unless couples receive appropriate treatment (Kovács et al., 2025; Malkomsen et al., 2025). Therefore, considering this issue, one psychological treatment that may be helpful in this context is short-term psychodynamic therapy. This type of therapy helps individuals explore their cognitive patterns and negative emotions, allowing for a deeper understanding of their experiences (Miggliels et al., 2025). Short-term psychodynamic therapy is a form of psychotherapy that emphasizes the analysis of interpersonal relationships and past experiences. It typically focuses on behavioral and emotional patterns shaped by early childhood experiences and initial relationships. Due to its limited timeframe, this approach aims to achieve tangible results in a shorter period compared to long-term psychodynamic therapy (Diener et al., 2025). The therapist plays an active role in the process, using questions and feedback to help the individual gain deeper insight into their problems and discover strategies to facilitate changes in their life (Hong et al., 2025). Short-term psychodynamic therapy can assist individuals in revisiting complex emotions and experiences, leading to new perspectives about themselves and their relationships. As a result, this type of therapy can be effective in addressing issues such as anxiety, depression, and interpersonal disorders (Di Salvo et al., 2024). It functions by reducing negative meta-emotions (Milo et al., 2024) and marital burnout (Viganò et al., 2025) through fostering insight and empowering individuals to improve their inner relational dynamics.

Despite the extensive literature on the psychological consequences of infidelity, few studies have investigated

effective therapeutic approaches for the specific group of women who have experienced betrayal. Negative meta-emotion includes feelings such as depression, anxiety, and hopelessness, which may arise from a partner's infidelity and profoundly affect the quality of emotional and sexual relationships. Specifically, managing these negative emotions and addressing marital burnout in this group of women warrants further attention. The necessity of this research arises from the fact that infidelity is not just an acute experience but a multidimensional process that can result in complex emotional consequences. Short-term psychodynamic therapy, as a treatment approach, can help heal these injuries by focusing on the unconscious roots and effects of such experiences. However, there is currently insufficient empirical evidence evaluating the effectiveness of this type of therapy specifically for betrayed women. Research in this area could lead to the development of specialized therapeutic protocols tailored for women affected by infidelity. These protocols may improve the quality of these women's relationships and emotional lives while also enhancing their mental health. Moreover, a better understanding of the impact of short-term psychodynamic therapy on negative meta-emotion and marital burnout can help clinicians and counselors offer better services to such individuals. Therefore, research in this area is essential not only from a scientific standpoint but also from a social perspective. The present study thus aimed to examine the effectiveness of short-term psychodynamic therapy on negative meta-emotion and marital burnout in betrayed women.

2. Methods and Materials

2.1. Study design and Participant

The present study employed a quasi-experimental design with a pretest-posttest control group format and a two-month follow-up period. The statistical population consisted of women who had experienced infidelity and had referred to counseling centers in Borujerd in 2024. From this population, 30 participants were selected through non-random convenience sampling (based on G*Power 3 software, with effect size = 0.36, alpha level = 0.05, and test power = 0.95). The sample size was set at 15 participants for each group (experimental and control), resulting in a total sample of 30 individuals. These 30 participants were then randomly assigned to either the experimental or control group.

Inclusion criteria included: women who had experienced infidelity, aged between 25 and 45 years, with psychological health (no history of severe psychological or physical disorders based on clinical interviews), no exposure to major stressful events (such as bereavement or migration) in the past three months, having at least a high school diploma, not participating in any other therapy program during the study, and willingness to participate. Exclusion criteria included: missing more than two sessions, incomplete questionnaire responses, withdrawal from the study, lack of commitment to intervention-related exercises, and simultaneous participation in other counseling or psychotherapy programs.

The procedure was as follows: after selecting the sample based on inclusion criteria, the participants completed the questionnaires. Then, short-term psychodynamic therapy was administered at one of the counseling centers in Borujerd, which was suitably equipped with appropriate educational facilities. All participants who agreed to take part completed the questionnaires in both the pretest and posttest phases in group settings, with no time restrictions imposed.

The therapy intervention consisted of nine 90-minute sessions conducted weekly in a group format. Ethical considerations were also observed, including ensuring participants that no personal or family-related information would be collected, and all data would be kept confidential and secured by the researcher.

2.2. Measures

2.2.1. Meta-Emotion

This self-report scale was developed by Mitmansgruber et al. (2009) to assess both negative and positive meta-emotions. It consists of 28 items rated on a 6-point Likert scale (from 1 = "not at all true" to 6 = "completely true"). The scale measures six components: anger, humiliation/shame, overcontrol, and suppression (negative meta-emotions), and compassion and interest (positive meta-emotions). The Cronbach's alpha values reported by the developers were 0.76, 0.77, 0.83, 0.82, and 0.85 for each component, respectively, and 0.87 for the entire scale (Mitmansgruber et al., 2009). The construct validity of the scale was confirmed using exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. The results showed that the test comprised two factors, with each item's loading on its respective factor above 0.40. Benisi (2019) reported a Cronbach's alpha of 0.78 for the total scale in Iran. Factor analysis in that study

confirmed the two main components of positive and negative meta-emotions. Convergent validity of positive meta-emotions with components of the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire was found to be 0.51 (Naderipour et al., 2022). In the present study, Cronbach's alpha was reported at 0.81.

2.2.2. Marital Burnout

This questionnaire was developed by Pines in 1996. Responses are rated on a 7-point Likert scale (from 1 = "never" to 7 = "always"). The scale assesses three dimensions: physical exhaustion, emotional exhaustion, and psychological exhaustion. Total scores range from 21 to 147, with higher scores indicating greater burnout. The validity of the measure has been supported by negative correlations ranging from -0.33 to -0.42 with positive relationship attributes such as perceived security, self-actualization, and emotional and sexual relationship quality, as well as quality of communication (Pines & Nunes, 2003). Pines (1996) reported the reliability of the scale using Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.91 to 0.93. In Iran, Navidi (2005) calculated Cronbach's alpha on a sample of 120 nurses and 120 teachers, resulting in a reliability score of 0.86. Naderi et al. (2009) assessed the scale's validity by correlating it with the ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire and reported a correlation coefficient of -0.40 (Sharifi et al., 2024). In the present study, internal consistency measured by Cronbach's alpha was 0.84.

2.3. Intervention

2.3.1. Short-Term Psychodynamic Therapy

In this study, short-term psychodynamic therapy consisted of nine 75-minute weekly sessions based on the Short-Term Dynamic Psychotherapy manual by Davanloo (1995). The short-term psychodynamic therapy intervention protocol consisted of nine structured sessions. Session 1 focused on introductions, setting therapeutic ground rules, and conducting an initial interview using the trial dynamic therapy framework. Session 2 targeted tactical defenses, with tailored interventions based on individual defense styles. Session 3 involved identifying positive and negative personality traits, analyzing patients' language, indirect

speech, and pathological thoughts, and engaging in defense challenges. Session 4 introduced conflict resolution strategies, focusing on ruminative and rationalizing defenses through interventions such as clarification, demand for decisive responses, and defense blocking. Session 5 addressed intellectualization and overgeneralization, using clarification, challenge, and specification. Session 6 taught emotion regulation skills by addressing avoidance tactics like distraction and forgetting, using defense blocking and confrontation. Session 7 focused on managing resistance to emotional disclosure, particularly denial, with clarification and challenge techniques. Session 8 encouraged emotional engagement by challenging verbal avoidance and non-verbal cues like compliance and passivity. Finally, Session 9 provided a comprehensive review of therapeutic progress, expressed appreciation for participation, and formally terminated the treatment.

2.4. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) with SPSS version 26.

3. Findings and Results

The reported mean age for the participants in the present study, separated by groups, was 37.8 ± 3.51 years for the short-term psychodynamic therapy group and 38.3 ± 3.9 years for the control group. The minimum age of participants was 25 and the maximum was 45. The mean duration of marriage was 6.20 ± 1.89 years in the intervention group and 5.46 ± 2.26 years in the control group, with a minimum of 2 years and a maximum of 10 years.

In terms of educational attainment, in the experimental group: 37.5% had a high school diploma, 7.5% an associate degree, 27.5% a bachelor's degree, 20% a master's degree, and 7.5% a doctorate. In the control group: 35% had a high school diploma, 2.5% an associate degree, 30% a bachelor's degree, 17.5% a master's degree, and 15% a doctorate. Given the significance level greater than .05, there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups in terms of age, duration of marriage, and education level. Thus, the two groups were considered homogeneous in these demographic variables. Descriptive results from the three phases of the study for both groups are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics for Negative Meta-Emotion and Marital Burnout across three time points (pretest, posttest, follow-up) in both groups

Variable	Group	Pretest (M ± SD)	Posttest (M ± SD)	Follow-up (M ± SD)
Negative Meta-Emotion	Behavioral Activation Therapy	67.3 ± 6.94	60.9 ± 4.34	59.3 ± 4.09
	Control	66.8 ± 5.66	67.6 ± 6.83	68 ± 7.21
Marital Burnout	Behavioral Activation Therapy	74.4 ± 7.69	69.6 ± 6.66	70.9 ± 6.96
	Control	73.06 ± 6.95	72.7 ± 6.29	73.3 ± 6.83

Table 1 presents the means of the variables negative meta-emotion and marital burnout in both groups across the three assessment points. As observed, there was no substantial difference between the two groups at the pretest phase. However, after the intervention, the experimental group showed a significant improvement compared to the control group. This difference was also observed at the follow-up stage.

The results of the Shapiro–Wilk test, conducted to assess the normality of data distribution (as a prerequisite for repeated measures analysis), indicated that at a significance level of $p > .05$, the collected data for all variables in both groups were normally distributed, satisfying the assumption of parametric analysis.

Levene’s test for homogeneity of variances (another assumption of mixed ANOVA) showed results for negative

meta-emotion ($F = 4.21$, $p = .051$) and marital burnout ($F = 2.97$, $p = .096$). Since the p -values were greater than .05, the assumption of variance homogeneity was not violated.

Given that the present study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of short-term psychodynamic therapy on negative meta-emotion and marital burnout in women who had experienced infidelity, Mauchly’s test of sphericity was also used to examine the assumption of covariance matrix homogeneity. Since this assumption was violated ($\chi^2 = 284.9$, $p = .001$), the results of within-subject effects were adjusted using the Greenhouse–Geisser correction.

Subsequently, the results of the repeated measures ANOVA (2×3) for comparing the experimental and control groups across the three phases (pretest, posttest, follow-up) on the study variables are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Multivariate ANOVA (MANOVA) results for the study groups

Test Name	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta Squared
Sphericity Assumed	1049.2	5	209.8	26.001	.001	.481
Greenhouse-Geisser	1049.2	1.79	584.2	26.001	.001	.481
Huynh-Feldt	1049.2	1.98	529.9	26.001	.001	.481
Lower-bound	1049.2	1	1049.2	26.001	.001	.481

Table 2 shows that there was a statistically significant difference between the study groups in at least one of the dependent variables. The eta squared value of .481 indicates that the difference between the two groups, in terms of the

dependent variables, is significant and explains approximately 48.1% of the variance, which is statistically substantial and generalizable. Therefore, a detailed report of simple and interaction effects is provided in Table 3.

Table 3

Results of 2×3 Repeated Measures ANOVA to Evaluate the Effectiveness of Short-Term Psychodynamic Therapy on Negative Meta-Emotion and Marital Burnout in Betrayed Women

Variable	Test Name	F	Significance (p)	Effect Size (η^2)	Statistical Power
Negative Meta-Emotion	Main Effect of Group	247.3	.001	.662	1.00
	Main Effect of Time (3 phases)	198.4	.001	.686	1.00
Marital Burnout	Main Effect of Group	232.06	.001	.890	1.00
	Main Effect of Time (3 phases)	12.2	.001	.310	1.00

The results in Table 3 show that the main effect of group was statistically significant for both negative meta-emotion ($F = 247.3, p < .05, \eta^2 = .662$) and marital burnout ($F = 232.06, p < .05, \eta^2 = .890$), indicating a significant difference in mean scores of these variables between the two groups. Furthermore, the main effect of time across the three phases (pretest, posttest, follow-up) was also significant for

negative meta-emotion ($F = 198.4, p < .05, \eta^2 = .686$) and for marital burnout ($F = 12.2, p < .05, \eta^2 = .310$), suggesting meaningful changes over time in both variables when group assignment is considered.

To further examine the observed differences in the main effect of time (three phases), the Bonferroni post hoc test was used, and the results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Bonferroni Test for Comparing Negative Meta-Emotion and Marital Burnout Across Three Phases

Variable	Phase I	Phase J	Mean Difference (I-J)	Significance (p)
Negative Meta-Emotion	Pretest	Posttest	*8.86	.001
		Follow-up	*6.34	.001
Marital Burnout	Pretest	Posttest	*7.75	.021
		Follow-up	*5.06	.004

As shown in Table 4, overall scores for negative meta-emotion and marital burnout decreased from the pretest to the posttest and follow-up phases, indicating the effectiveness of short-term psychodynamic therapy in reducing both variables in betrayed women.

Specifically, for the variable of negative meta-emotion, the difference between the pretest and posttest ($p < .05, d = 8.86$), and between the pretest and follow-up ($p < .05, d = 6.34$) was statistically significant. This confirms that short-term psychodynamic therapy significantly reduced negative meta-emotion in the participants.

Similarly, for marital burnout, the difference between the pretest and posttest ($p < .05, d = 7.75$) and between the pretest and follow-up ($p < .05, d = 5.06$) was statistically significant. These results indicate that short-term psychodynamic therapy was effective in reducing marital burnout among betrayed women.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study was conducted to examine the effectiveness of short-term psychodynamic therapy on negative meta-emotion and marital burnout in women who had experienced infidelity. The findings revealed that short-term psychodynamic therapy had a significant effect on reducing negative meta-emotion in these women. This result aligns with the findings of Malcolmson et al. (2025), Kovács et al. (2025), Diener et al. (2025), and Miller et al. (2024).

In explaining the effectiveness of short-term psychodynamic therapy on negative meta-emotion, it can be stated that this intervention, which focuses on inner reconstruction and analysis, can meaningfully influence negative meta-emotional states in betrayed women.

Negative meta-emotion—including feelings such as anger, hopelessness, mistrust, and depression—commonly arises following betrayal in marital relationships. This therapeutic method provides a non-judgmental, supportive space, allowing women to identify, experience, and process their negative emotions (Miller et al., 2024).

The therapy emphasizes deep-seated personality structures and past experiences that may contribute to negative reactions to betrayal. Through specific psychodynamic techniques, women gain greater self-awareness regarding their emotional and behavioral patterns. This awareness helps them manage and regulate their emotional responses. For example, by better understanding the roots of their negative emotions, women can develop new perspectives on themselves and their relationships (Malcolmson et al., 2025). Additionally, the therapy helps enhance communication skills and the ability to express emotions more effectively, facilitating healthier interactions and rebuilding trust. Ultimately, the effectiveness of short-term psychodynamic therapy may be observed through the reduction of negative meta-emotion and the creation of positive conditions for relationship repair. These changes not only improve individual mental health but also strengthen marital relationships, fostering emotional calm and satisfaction (Diener et al., 2025).

The results also indicate that the effects of short-term psychodynamic therapy on negative meta-emotion are enduring. One explanation for this persistence is the therapy's capacity to foster deeper self-awareness in the client. By confronting past experiences and emotions, women learn how to regulate emotional reactions and understand the origins of their negative meta-emotions

(Migueles et al., 2025). The process also enables them to reevaluate negative thought patterns and adopt new views of themselves and their relationships. This cognitive and emotional transformation contributes to increased psychological resilience, helping women cope more effectively with relational challenges. Over time, these shifts lead to sustained reductions in negative meta-emotion and improved marital satisfaction (Kovács et al., 2025). The lasting impact of this approach is also supported by its emphasis on effective communication and empowering women to express their feelings, equipping them with tools to build healthier relationships. Therefore, it can be concluded that short-term psychodynamic therapy has a long-term positive impact on reducing negative meta-emotion in betrayed women.

Furthermore, the findings showed that short-term psychodynamic therapy significantly reduced marital burnout in women who had experienced infidelity. This is consistent with the prior results (Di Salvo et al., 2024; Hong et al., 2025; Viganò et al., 2025). In explaining the effectiveness of short-term psychodynamic therapy on marital burnout, it can be argued that this therapeutic approach—especially in emotionally challenging contexts—can have substantial effects on alleviating marital exhaustion (Hong et al., 2025). In betrayed women, marital burnout often stems from emotional trauma, mistrust, and hopelessness. Short-term psychodynamic therapy helps identify and process unconscious emotions underlying such burnout (Viganò et al., 2025).

One reason for its effectiveness is its ability to raise awareness of emotional and behavioral patterns. Women may experience intense feelings such as anger, grief, and mistrust after betrayal, which can manifest as marital burnout. Through psychodynamic techniques, these women can not only identify these emotions but also explore and analyze them. This awareness enables them to understand the emotional and cognitive causes of their burnout and move closer to healing (Di Salvo et al., 2024). Moreover, the therapy facilitates a shift in how they perceive and deal with the issue. By recognizing and working through past experiences, women can adopt a new perspective on their partner and relationship. This change fosters empathy and mutual support, thereby reducing marital burnout (Diener et al., 2025).

Ultimately, this therapy helps betrayed women regain self-confidence and develop a positive self-image. By learning coping and problem-solving techniques, they gain a greater sense of control in their marital life. This

empowerment can directly reduce burnout and support the development of a healthier, more sustainable relationship with their partner. With this approach, betrayed women can not only overcome burnout but also emerge with a valuable, growth-oriented experience from a difficult life event.

The results also indicate that the effects of short-term psychodynamic therapy on marital burnout in betrayed women are long-lasting. First, this therapy enables women to work through negative emotions. Many women experience complex emotional responses—such as anger, confusion, and despair—after infidelity. Short-term psychodynamic therapy provides a safe space to examine these emotions deeply, helping them manage disillusionment and emotional fatigue constructively. This process not only soothes negative feelings but also equips them with the tools needed to confront future challenges more effectively (Hong et al., 2025).

Second, short-term psychodynamic therapy helps link current emotional states to past experiences. It enables women to understand how earlier emotional and behavioral patterns, particularly from previous relationships, might influence their current ones. This insight not only helps them understand the roots of their burnout but also motivates them to break old patterns and create healthier relationships (Di Salvo et al., 2024). Third, developing empathy and reconnecting emotionally with their spouse is another benefit of this therapy. Women learn not only to acknowledge their own feelings but also to recognize the emotions and needs of their partners. This helps transform a crisis like infidelity into an opportunity for growth and healing (Miggiels et al., 2025).

Finally, this approach enhances life skills and the ability to process difficult experiences. By learning new coping and problem-solving strategies, women can move beyond marital burnout and build a more emotionally fulfilling life. Thus, the sustained effect of short-term psychodynamic therapy is evident not only in the reduction of marital burnout but also in strengthened relationships and improved overall mental health.

5. Limitations and Suggestions

The results of this study demonstrate that short-term psychodynamic therapy significantly reduces negative meta-emotion and marital burnout in betrayed women. The therapy helped participants identify and manage their negative emotions and provided them with the tools needed to improve relationship quality and marital satisfaction.

Given its effectiveness, it can be concluded that psychodynamic interventions in crisis situations are a valuable and practical solution for improving the emotional and psychological well-being of betrayed women. In other words, this type of therapy not only alleviates emotional distress but can also contribute to rebuilding and reinforcing the marital bond. Therefore, integrating this therapy into support programs for women in such conditions can yield both positive and lasting effects.

This study faced certain limitations, including the restriction of the sample to the city of Borujerd, the use of convenience sampling, a short follow-up period, and reliance on self-report questionnaires, which may introduce response bias. It is therefore recommended that future studies be conducted in other cities, with larger sample sizes and by using tools such as interviews to enhance generalizability.

Authors' Contributions

Authors contributed equally to this article.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

Acknowledgments

We would like to express our gratitude to all individuals helped us to do the project.

Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

Funding

According to the authors, this article has no financial support.

Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants.

References

- Apostolou, M., Samara, A., & Lajunen, T. J. (2025). How People Manage Relationship Problems: An Exploratory Study in the Greek Cultural Context. *Behavioral Sciences*, 15(2), 218. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs15020218>
- Bhat, G., & Shastri, A. (2025). Evaluation of efficacy of sexual novelty as a novel therapeutic strategy to treat Hypoactive Sexual Desire Disorder in women in monogamous heterosexual relationships attributing reduced sexual desire to sexual boredom: A prospective randomized study. *[Add Journal Title]*. <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-5861026/v1>
- de Oliveira, L., Vallejo-Medina, P., & Carvalho, J. (2025). The Mediating Role of Sexual Boredom in Women's Sexual Desire and Satisfaction. *Journal of sex & marital therapy*, 51(1), 96-109. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0092623X.2024.2442958>
- Di Salvo, G., Perotti, C., Ricci, V., Maina, G., & Rosso, G. (2024). Efficacy and suitability of adding short-term psychodynamic psychotherapy (STPP) to pharmacotherapy in patients with depressive disorders: A systematic review. *Trends in Psychiatry and Psychotherapy*, 265-279. <https://doi.org/10.47626/2237-6089-2023-0764>
- Diener, M. J., Hilsenroth, M. J., & Giannopoulos, E. (2025). Therapist affect focus and patient outcomes in psychodynamic therapy: An updated systematic review and meta-analysis. *Psychotherapy*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pst0000568>
- Felder, J. P., & Machia, L. V. (2024). Direct-proactive communication and the post-infidelity stay-leave decision. *Communication Quarterly*, 72(2), 148-166. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01463373.2023.2293974>
- Giacobbi, M., & Lalot, F. (2025). Unpacking trust repair in couples: A systematic literature review. *Journal of Family Therapy*, 47(1), e12483. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-6427.12483>
- Hong, S., Ribaud, J. M., Safyer, P., Route, I. E., & Watkins, D. C. (2025). Advancing Psychodynamic-Based Clinical Social Work Practice to Address Structural Trauma: Integrating Neuroscience and Attachment Theory. *Social Work*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/swaf003>
- Hoy, E. Q., & Oh, V. Y. (2024). The consequences of spousal infidelity for long-term chronic health: A two-wave longitudinal analysis. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 41(12), 3720-3740. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02654075241276713>
- Jia, L., Antonides, G., & Liu, Z. (2025). Spouses' personalities and marital satisfaction in Chinese families. *Frontiers in psychology*, 16, 1480570. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1480570>
- Kahraman, S., & Özbay, A. (2025). Examining Mindfulness's Mediating Role in the Relationship Between Infidelity Tendency and Divorce Anxiety. *Psychological Reports*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00332941241313436>
- Kovács, G., Van Dijke, A., Leontjevas, R., & Enders-Slegers, M. J. (2025). Equine-assisted short-term psychodynamic psychotherapy and the role of personality functioning, emphasizing self-control and identity integration. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, 55(1), 77-87. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10879-024-09648-4>
- Lişman, C. G., & Holman, A. C. (2025). Principled Faithfulness: A Measure of Moral Reasons for Fidelity and Its Associations with the Tendency to Engage in Extramarital Relationships, Moral Emotions and Emotion Regulation. *Social Sciences*, 14(2), 81. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci14020081>
- Malkomsen, A., Wilberg, T., Bull-Hansen, B., Dammen, T., Evensen, J. H., Hummelen, B., Løvgren, A., Osnes, K., Ulberg, R., & Røssberg, J. I. (2025). Comparative

- effectiveness of short-term psychodynamic psychotherapy and cognitive behavioral therapy for major depression in psychiatric outpatient clinics: a randomized controlled trial. *BMC psychiatry*, 25, 113. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-025-06544-6>
- Martínez Preciado, J. M., Sandoval-Salinas, C., & Corredor Ayala, H. (2025). Infidelity in Men with Erectile Dysfunction and Its Association with the Severity of the Condition: A Comparative Analysis Across Six Ibero-american Countries. *Journal of sex & marital therapy*, 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0092623X.2025.2456317>
- Miggels, M., Ten Klooster, P., Beekman, A., Bremer, S., Dekker, J., Janssen, C., & van Dijk, M. K. (2025). The D* Phase-study: Comparing short-term psychodynamic psychotherapy and cognitive behavioral therapy for major depressive disorder in a randomised controlled non-inferiority trial. *Journal of affective disorders*, 371, 344-351. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2024.10.122>
- Milo, F., Imondi, C., D'Amore, C., Angelino, G., Knafelz, D., Bracci, F., Dall'Oglio, L., De Angelis, P., & Tabarini, P. (2024). Short-term Psychodynamic Psychotherapy in Addition to Standard Medical Therapy Increases Clinical Remission in Adolescents and Young Adults with Inflammatory Bowel Disease: a Randomised Controlled Trial. *Journal of Crohn's and Colitis*, 18(2), 256-263. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ecco-jcc/jjad145>
- Mitmansgruber, H., Beck, T. N., Höfer, S., & Schüßler, G. (2009). When you don't like what you feel: Experiential avoidance, mindfulness and meta-emotion in emotion regulation. *Personality and individual differences*, 46(4), 448-453. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2008.11.013>
- Naderipour, A., Tozandehjani, H., Bagherzadeh Golmakani, Z., & Zendedel, A. (2022). The effectiveness of behavioral activation therapy on distress tolerance and negative meta-emotion dimensions in female patients with multiple sclerosis. *Rooyesh-e-Ravanshenasi Journal (Psychology Rising)*, 11(11), 125-134. https://frooyesh.ir/browse.php?a_id=4191&slc_lang=en&sid=1&printcase=1&hbnr=1&hmb=1
- Pines, A. M., & Nunes, R. (2003). The relationship between career and couple burnout: Implications for career and couple counseling. *Journal of employment counseling*, 40(2), 50-64. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1920.2003.tb00856.x>
- Schneider, S. (2025). 'Because like if you feel guilty, then it's usually a sign': on the role of emotions in conceptualising infidelity. *Emotions and Society*, 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.1332/26316897Y2025D000000056>
- Sharifi, B., Raeisi, F., & Haji Hassani, M. (2024). The relationship between self-compassion and forgiveness with marital burnout: The mediating role of self-criticism in married individuals. *Rooyesh-e-Ravanshenasi Journal (Psychology Rising)*, 13(9), 21-30. <https://frooyesh.ir/article-1-5199-en.html>
- Tan, S. A., Ang, S. M., Pung, P. W., Teoh, X. Y., & Ooh, S. L. (2025). Sex life dissatisfaction contribute to intention toward infidelity among Malaysians: relationship satisfaction as a mediator. *BMC psychology*, 13(1), 68. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-025-02414-8>
- Tsoi, L. H., Lam, W., Lau, C. K., & Wong, K. C. (2024). Does Absence Make the Heart Grow Fonder? An Exploratory Study of the Marital Quality of Filipina Domestic Helpers in Hong Kong. *Sociology Mind*, 14(4), 245-265. <https://doi.org/10.4236/sm.2024.144014>
- Ventura-León, J., Tocco-Muñoz, S., Lino-Cruz, C., Sánchez-Villena, A. R., Martínez-Munive, R., Talledo-Sánchez, K., & Casiano-Valdivieso, K. (2025). Myths of Romantic Love, Negative Interactions, Relationship Involvement, Satisfaction, Infidelity, and Jealousy in Peruvian Individuals With Couples: Directed and Undirected Network Analysis. *Journal of marital and family therapy*, 51(2), e70014. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jmft.70014>
- Viganò, A., Petolicchio, B., Toscano, M., Ruggero, S., Di Giambattista, R., Puma, M., Lanzone, J., Bellinva, A., Diani, N., Castaldo, M., Valota, C., De Sanctis, R., Tiberio, P., Altieri, M., Gillieron, E., & Di Piero, V. (2025). Real-world application of Short Term Psychodynamic Psychotherapy (STPP) as chronic migraine preventive therapy: Profiling responders and predictive factors. *Neurological Sciences*, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10072-025-08075-0>
- Wang, S. S., & Duh, Y. C. (2024). Non-single dating app use and the cognitive and psychological mechanisms of infidelity: gender differences. *Chinese Journal of Communication*, 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17544750.2024.2409651>
- Woolley, S. R., & Koren, R. (2025). Using the Woolley Motivation Typology to Heal Infidelity With Emotionally Focused Therapy. *European Journal of Mental Health*, 20, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.5708/EJMH.20.2025.0035>
- Zhao, W., Van Someren, E. J., Xu, Z., Ren, Z., Tang, L., Li, C., & Lei, X. (2024). Identifying the insomnia-related psychological issues associated with hyperarousal: A network perspective. *International Journal of Psychophysiology*, 195, 112276. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijpsy.2023.112276>