The Effect of Psychodrama on Women's Codependence, Self-Realization and Problem Solving Skill Perception

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Abstract

The aim of the present study was to investigate the impact of psychodrama on the codependency, self-actualization and problem-solving skills of women attending Public Education Center Tailoring Courses. The study was conducted with the quasi-experimental design based on the pretest-posttest model with an experimental group. Fifteen volunteering women attending tailoring courses at Malatya Battalgazi District Public Education Center during the 2015-2016 academic year participated in the study. The study data were collected with the Composite Codependency Scale, Health-Promoting Lifestyle Profile, and Problem-Solving Inventory. These three scales were applied to the study group before the application. After the pre-test, a psychodrama group study that included 18 sessions was conducted with eight women in the study group. At the end of the application, the scales were applied as post-test measurements to the study group. To test the effectiveness of the experimental process, the dependent samples t test technique was used. The comparison of the study group pretest and posttest scores revealed a significant difference between pretest and posttest self-actualization scores; however, there was no significant difference between codependency, interpersonal control, self-sacrifice, suppression of emotions, and problem-solving skill perception pretest and posttest scores. Thus, it was observed that psychodrama had a significant effect on the improvement of the self-actualization levels of participating women; however, it did not have a significant effect on the reduction of their negative perceptions about problem-solving skills and codependency levels.

Keywords: Psychodrama, codependency, self-actualization, problem-solving skills.

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Psikodramanın Kadınların Karşılıklı Bağımlılık, Kendini Gerçekleştirme ve Problem Çözme Beceri Algılayışları Üzerindeki Etkisi

Öz

Bu araştırmanın amacı, psikodramanın Halk Eğitim Merkezi Biçki Dikiş kursuna katılan kadınların karşılıklı bağımlılıkları, kendilerini gerçekleştirmeleri ve problem çözme becerileri üzerindeki etkisini araştırmaktır. Araştırma, deney gruplu ön test-son test modeline dayalı yarı deneysel bir çalışmadır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubuna 2015-2016 Eğitim Öğretim yılında Malatya Battalgazi İlçesi Halk Eğitim Merkezi Biçki Dikiş kursuna devam eden 15 gönüllü kadın katılmıştır. Araştırmaların Bileşik Karşılıklı Bağımlılık Ölçeği, Sağlıklı Yaşam Biçimi Davranışları Ölçeği ve Problem Çözme Envanteri ile toplanmıştır. Uygulama öncesinde deney grubuna bu üç ölçek uygulanmıştır. Ön-test ölçümleri sonrasında deney grubunda yer alan sekiz kadınla 18 oturumdan oluşan psikodrama grubu yapılmıştır. Uygulamanın bitiminde deney grubunun son-test ölçümleri alınmıştır. Deneysel işlemin etkiliğini sınamak amacıyla, ilişkili örneklemler için t testi tekniğinden yararlanılmıştır. Yapılan analizler deney grubunun ön test ve son test ölçümleri karşılaştırıldığında kendini gerçekleştirme puanları arasında anlamlı bir farklılık olduğu; karşılıklı bağımlılık, kişilerarası kontrol, kendini feda etme, duyguları bastırma ve problem çözme becerilerini algılayış puanları arasında anlamlı bir farklılık olmadığını göstermektedir. Sonuç olarak psikodramanın kadınlarının kendini gerçekleştirme düzeylerinin artmasında anlamlı bir etkisi olduğu; problem çözme becerilerini yetersiz algılayışlarını ve karşılıklı bağımlılık düzeylerini azaltmada anlamlı bir etkisinin olmadığı görülmüştür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Psikodrama, Karşılıklı bağımlılık, Kendini gerçekleştirme, Problem çözme becerileri.

Introduction

The increase in the number of women studies, the foundation of women research departments, and the promotion of female life experiences in the media have made the needs and problems of women more visible to the public. Horney (1998) reported that there was a distinct difference between male and female psychology. The differences between the sexes lead to different expectations, opportunities and costs for men and women (Cook, 1990). Women are raised to be polite, submissive, and believe that they were helpless and weak since childhood (Estês, 2014). While men have more opportunities to express their freedom, women, who do not share these opportunities, feel discriminated due to the privileges that men enjoy (de Beauvoir, 1993). Hoffman and Hurst (1990) emphasized the significance of gender role patterns in the sharp distinction between the sexes. In general, women are considered as individuals responsible from conducting household chores (cooking food, cleaning the house, caregiving, etc.). Furthermore, women are asked to protect their partners' individual values that are considered important by society and to fulfill their emotional and sexual expectations (Milkman, 1976). Moreover, women are expected to surrender to men and dedicate themselves to their partners in several cultures (Chodorow, 2007). In short, their insubordination is promoted. Dependency is not considered a problem but a requirement to be together, (Dowling, 1994) and it is considered quite natural or normal for a woman to be subordinate. Codependency, which is a psychological issue, was observed to be closely associated with women's health (Martsolf, Hughes-Hammer, Estok and Zeller, 1999).

Codependency is a combination of the control of other individuals' behavior by an individual, prevention of the natural flow of events, ignorance of one's own needs to fulfill the needs of others, and inadequate expression of one's emotions (Dear, Roberts & Lange, 2004; p.77). Codependency leads individuals to seek an identity and self-value outside of themselves and to engage in relationships where their self-satisfaction depends on external factors (Zelvin, 1999). Women socialize by taking care of others (by providing care) and taking responsibility for others (Frank & Golden, 1992; Anderson, 1994), sacrificing themselves and acting like slaves for the benefit of others (Strakes, 1997), feeling helpless and inadequate (Engel, 2002). Socialization of women based on the gender roles is critical in building codependency (Granello & Beamish, 1998). Women learn to deny traits associated with power and competence (other than housework and childcare) by socializing based on the relevant gender roles (Widom, 1984). In other words, they learn to neglect the talents and potential they possess.

The exhibition, utilization and development of an individual's hidden powers, skills and capacity is described by the concept of self-actualization (Yeşilyaprak, 2005). Maslow (2015) argued that the concept of self-actualization could be defined as self-fulfillment, integrity, psychological health, individualization, autonomy, creativity and productivity. He stated that self-actualization does not mean that the individual had overcome all human problems; self-actualized individuals experienced emotions of conflict, frustration, sadness, hurt and guilt as well. Thus, it could be suggested that self-actualized people experience problems like all people. When individuals could effectively tackle the problems they encounter, there is no problem. When the opposite is true, there is a problem. It is known that individuals' mental adaptability and capacity would be significantly affected by this development (Eskin, 2011). Maslow (1970) reported that self-actualized individuals do not experience problems with themselves in general; however, since they perceive the problems from a philosophical or ethical perspective similar to others, the approach the problems from a very broad point of view. A problem can usually be considered as a negative phenomenon; however, problem-solving approach could prevent an individual from self-development, but it may also become an opportunity for self-improvement (Eskin, 2011). Maslow (1971) stated that individuals should live under good conditions to actualize themselves; in short, societies that support individual development are required.

It cannot be argued that the traditions of the society always support human development. Everything that societies came up with to survive; the stereotypes, laws, prejudices or prohibitions could also oppress individual voices and desires (Laborit, 1996). Edgerton (2016) argued that most societies resist changing their conventional beliefs and practices; even ineffective or harmful beliefs and practices become constant because people in that culture opposed the change. Closed societies, which do not interact with foreigners, include those who meet their criteria (religious identity, social origins, lifestyle, etc.), while excluding all others (Marshall, 1999). Behind the ways that societies implement the things that serve the needs of a part of that society and inevitability of this attitude to harm people lays inequality (Edgerton, 2016). Often, it is observed that women in closed societies, who do not share the male privileges (position, education, economic freedom, rule-making, decision-making, etc.), and live under oppression (conservatism, extreme normativity, social pressures, etc.), consider the male privileges normal and accept these privileges. As Benedict (2003) mentioned, the vast majority of individuals in a society consider the behavioral patterns approved by the society universal and internalize these behavioral patterns.

The acceptance of women as passive and dependent in Turkey and the acceptance of the roles of independence, administration and management as masculine prevent women to exist in equality with men in social, political and economic fields (Imamoglu, 1993, Çaha, Aydın, & Çaha, 2014; Sancar,

2017). Based on the studies conducted in Turkey in 2017, 8% of the illiterate individuals over the age of 25 were female, 1.5% were male, and 72.5% of the employed individuals over the age of 15 were male and 33.6% were female (TUIK, 2017). These findings demonstrate that today there is no equality between women and men based on both educational and professional opportunities.

Adult Education centers were established in Turkey to improve the knowledge, skills and growth of individuals who never attended formal education or dropped out (Nightingale, 1991; Act. Çoşkun, 2012). In Turkey, women constitute the majority of applicants to public education centers (TurkStat, 2013). It was observed that the majority of women who applied to public education centers were primary school graduates, 26-35 years olf, unemployed and they stated that they expect to improve their personal traits in the centers (Baytemir & Güven, 2015).

It was reported that employed women and women who gave birth when mature were more successful in self-control in problem solving and problem situations when compared to unemployed women and women who gave birth in adolescence (Adagide, 2008) and women with low education level and unemployed women exhibited lower self-actualization levels when compared to women with high education level and employed women (Sezer, 2005). These findings demonstrated that young mothers, women with low education level, and unemployed women need to improve problem solving skills and self-actualization levels more. Imamoglu (1993) reported that women consider themselves unhealthier, feel lonely and unhappy when compared to men. The fact that the female codependency levels were higher in studies that compared the codependency levels of women and men (Cowan, Bommersbach & Curtis, 1995; Roehling, Koelbel & Rutgers, 1996) and the positive correlation between feminine gender roles and codependency (Dias, 2002; Dear & Roberts, 2002) demonstrated that codependency is a problem that affects all women, employed or unemployed, married young or old.

It was suggested that especially women in closed societies, who dropped out of formal education in early grades, married young and are unemployed need help to fight against codependency, and to improve self-actualization and problem-solving skills. The aim of the present study was to determine the impact of psychodrama on perceptions about codependency, self-actualization and problem solving skills among a group of women trainees attending the Public Education Center. It was expected that psychodrama conducted with women attending courses in Public Education Centers would be effective on codependency, self-realization and problem-solving skills. Furthermore, it was suggested that due to the lack of any previous studies on the impact of psychodrama on individuals attending the Public Education Centers, the present study would lead to an increase in psychodrama applications that could fulfill the psychological requirements of all individuals attending courses in Public Education Centers.

Method

The present study is a quasi-experimental study that investigated the impact of psychodrama application on the codependency, self-actualization and problem-solving skill levels of a group of women attending a tailoring course at a Public Education Center. Although the participants selected in experimental studies are determined randomly, quasi-experimental study participants should meet certain criteria for participation (age, gender, etc.) (Sani & Todman, 2006). The inclusion criteria in the present study included voluntary participation, being a woman and in need of assistance due to personal and interpersonal problems. Exclusion criteria were psychiatric treatment history and meeting a single criterion (not attending the training center, employment, etc.). The study participants included women attending a tailoring course at Malatya National Education Directorate Battalgazi Public Education Center during the 2015-2016 academic year. Seventeen 16-45 years old women were

interviewed personally, information was provided on the group, their goals in attending the group and expectations from the group, and psychiatric treatment history were discussed, and measurement instruments were applied. In brief, the study group included 13 members with an average age of 38.25 and who were 19-45 years old. All members signed the informed consent form and the experiment was conducted with only the volunteering group members.

3.3. Data Collection Instruments

3.3.1. Composite Codependency Scale

The Composite Codependency Scale was developed by Marks, Blore, Hine and Dear (2012) to measure codependency and it was adapted to Turkish language by Ulusoy (2015). The 19-item Composite Codependency Scale, which includes three sub-dimensions, namely interpersonal control, self-sacrifice, and emotional suppression, is a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 completely disagree - 5 completely agree). During the adaptation of the scale to Turkish culture, the construct validity was tested, and it was decided to exclude two items due to low factor loads and the fact that these items loaded on factors other than their own. The Turkish version of the scale included 17 items. While the internal consistency coefficients for the total score and mean subscale score were between .61 and .76, test-retest reliability values were between .60 and .66 (Ulusoy, 2015). In the present research, the total mean scores were utilized.

3.3.2. Health-Promoting Lifestyle Profile

The Health-Promoting Lifestyle Profile was developed by Walker, Sechrist and Pender (1987) to measure healthy lifestyle behavior and adapted to Turkish culture by Esin (1997). The scale includes 48 items and six dimensions: self-actualization, health responsibility, exercise, nutrition, interpersonal support and stress management. The instrument is a 4-point Likert-type scale (1 never - 4 regularly). It was found that the internal consistency coefficients for the total score and the mean subscale scores were between .63 and .91 (Esin, 1997). In the present study, only the self-actualization subscale was used and the subscale measures the individual's goals in life, self-actualization skills, and self-knowledge and self-satisfaction levels.

3.3.3. Problem-Solving Inventory

The Problem-Solving Inventory was developed by Heppner and Petersen (1982) to reveal the dimensions of the problem-solving process and adapted to Turkish culture by Şahin, Şahin and Hepper (1993). Although the original scale included the three sub-dimensions of confidence, approach avoidance and personal control (Heppner and Petersen, 1982), six factors of hasty approach, deliberative approach, avoidant approach, evaluative approach, self-confident approach and planned approach were obtained in the Turkish version and this version measured the individual's self-perception on problem solving-skills. The Turkish version includes 35 items and it is a 6-point Likert-type scale (1 always behave like this - 6 never behave like this). The internal consistency coefficients for the total scale score and mean subscale scores were between .59 and .78 (Şahin, Şahin, and Hepper, 1993). A high scale score reflects that the individual perceives herself/himself inadequate in problem solving (Öner, 2012). In the present study, total mean scores were used.

3.4. Application

Within the scope of the present study, the study group met at Malatya National Education Directorate, Ayşe İlbak Kindergarten classroom once a week, and in seldom occasions twice a week between 06.11.2015 and 24.02.2016 under the leadership of the author. Pretest measurements were conducted during individual interviews before the group met and posttest measurements were conducted three days after the last group session, also during the individual interviews. The interviews

were recorded after the written consent of the participants was obtained after the second session. Eighteen sessions were held and each session lasted between 105 and 195 minutes.

Psychodrama functions as a theory, technique or research method that allows the individuals to stage their problems instead of talking about them and integrates cognitive analysis methods with experiences and participants (Blatner, 1993). The feature that distinguishes psychodrama from other psychotherapeutic methods is the fact that it is based on enactment and role-play (Altınay, 2007, p.73). Psychodrama includes three stages of warm-up, action and sharing (Karp, 2013). In psychodrama, five instruments are used: the stage, a subject or a protagonist (client), manager, therapeutic assistants or auxiliary egos, and the audience (Moreno, 1946). Matching, exchanging roles and mirroring are the basic techniques in psychodrama (Özbek & Leutz, 2011).

In the first session, the group leader and members get acquainted, group rules were discussed, information was provided about psychodrama, and the idea of a member leaving the group was addressed. The member who wanted to leave the group finally decided to stay. In the *second session*, the decision of another member to leave group was studied and finally, the member left the group. After saying goodbye to the member who left the group, a break was taken, and in the second part of the session, the group members were asked to find a nickname for themselves and decide on the name of the group. *In the third session*, in a mirror play, themes of direction and being directed were studied. Then, a group play was played where group members enacted the role of the group and voiced the needs of the group. *In the fourth session*, the decision of the members to leave group was studied, those who were undecided about the leaving the group remained in the study and others left the group. After saying goodbye to the members who left the group, a break was taken, and in the second part of the session, a confidence play (group play), and then a group tree play (group play) were played. *In the fifth session*, rumors spread by the members who left the group were studied. After this play, the idea of accepting new members (due to the insufficient number of members after certain members left the group) was discussed with the group members who closed ranks. *In the sixth session*, the feelings of the members who recently joined the group and the original members were studied. New group members were informed about the group process and rules. *In the seventh session*, the protagonist play was played with the member who warmed up (emotions) in the previous session, lost his son a year ago, and accumulated her emotions since she was affected by the attitude of the society that prevented her from mourning (imposing his idea that she would hurt her dead son if she cries). *In the eighth session*, the protagonist play was played with the member who experienced problems due to her efforts to change and control her husband. *In the ninth session*, a group play that allowed them to conduct a dialogue between their current self and the future self who accomplished her dreams with the group members. A member did not participate in this play because she did not feel well and preferred to only watch the play. *In the tenth session*, a protagonist play was played with the member who did not participate in the play in the previous session, where the efforts of the member who attempted to change her husband who abused alcohol with the support of her children. *In the eleventh session*, the protagonist play was played with the member who had communication problems with her son, who she kept at a distance since she thought her mother in law would take away. *In the twelfth session*, a space play (group play), which allowed them to recognize the effects of the roles they played with the group members and to make changes to these roles, was played. *In his thirteenth session*, the protagonist play was played with the member who experienced burnout since she sacrificed herself to her mother in her childhood and currently to other people in her life. *In the fourteenth session*, the warm-up play where members enacted the roles (in society) that they said they never could play to expand their role repertoire and the group play where they played themselves forty years on to encourage the members who were not able to open up. *In the fifteenth session*, an obstacle play (group

play), which allowed the group members to find the obstacles to opening up, was played when a member stated that she could not open up. *In the sixteenth session*, the group members were asked to focus on their emotions about the knowledge that the group will end soon. A protagonist play, where the social distrust of a member, who was alienated and punished after a behavior that the society considered a mistake (communicating with the opposite sex) after being a loved child by her family, was played. In the seventeenth session, the member, who was the protagonist the previous week, expressed her discomfort with the fact that another member had been talking about her outside the group (group rule violation). Since the member who violated the rule warmed up while expressing her emotions, a protagonist play was played with this member, where she realized that her strict and prescriptive inner voice that was very similar to that of her mother, was harming her. *In the eighteenth and the last session,* the resistance against the termination of the group, unfinished group tasks, group objectives and future plans were discussed and the group members and the author said farewell to each other. The group had eight members when terminated. The participant demographics and the reasons of the 8 participants for joining the group are presented in Table 1. Nicknames selected by the group members and used within the group are utilized in the table 1.

Table 1. The group member demographics and their participation reasons

Member	Age	Age of marriage	# of children	Education level	Reason for participation
Reyhan	31	20	1	Literate. She attends distance education.	Devotes herself to her family and thinks that this behavior harms her and desires to focus on her own life.
Cüce	46	16	2	Primary school	She is afraid of upsetting both her husband and son when expressing her emotions and wants to express her feeling freely.
Zeynosultan	45	15	3	Primary school	She takes care of her children most of the time and desires to spare time for herself and expects to sacrifice less
Nazlı	31	17	3	Primary school, She attends distance education.	She experiences problems with her husband and wants to solve these problems
Hasret	31	15	1	Primary school	She had lost her son and decided to attend the Public Training course to pull herself together; however, she thinks the course was not enough and desires to live her life as before
Savcı	44	21	4	Literate	She cannot get along with her son, does not know how to communicate with him and wants a better relationship with him.
Dağ	39	20	4	Primary school, She attends distance education	She has low self-esteem, she is frustrated with saying something wrong when among others and withdraws, she desires to improve her self-esteem and express herself better

| Rüzgar | 42 | 22 | 2 | Primary school | She considers herself right in her arguments with her husband, she thinks that he should change and desires a better relationship with her husband |

In Table 1, it could be observed that the group member age varied between 31 and 46, the age of marriage varied between 15 and 22, they were all mothers of one to four children, most were primary school graduates, some attended Distance Education, and one member only knew how to read and write. Review of their reasons for participation could demonstrate that they needed to improve their familial relationships, spare time for themselves, express themselves better and solve their problems.

3.5. Data Analysis

The data analysis was conducted with SPSS 15.0 statistics software. The normal distribution of the data was tested with the Shaphiro-Wilk test. The parametric dependent samples t-test is conducted to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between the data means obtained with two consecutive measurements conducted on the same data source (Can, 2014). In the present study, t-test was used for dependent samples. The level of significance was accepted as $p < 0.05$.

Findings

The results of the t test conducted to determine the impact of the psychodrama group on codependency, self-actualization and problem solving skills are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The results of the t-test conducted on the study group mean Composite Codependency Scale, Self-Actualization sub-scale and Problem-Solving Inventory pretest and posttest scores

Scale	Test	N	$\overline{X}$	S	Sd	T	P
Composite Codependency Scale	Pretest	8	56.62	8.19			
	Posttest	8	50.00	3.82	7	2.30	.053
Self-Actıalization Subscale	Pretest	8	28.75	5.23			
	Posttest	8	38.25	4.20	7	4.53	.003
Problem-Solving Inventory	Pretest	8	100.50	14.73			
	Posttest	8	86.62	7.90	7	2.28	.056

As seen in Table 2, the difference between the pretest and posttest Composite Codependency Scale total scores was not significant (t = 2.39, p> .05). While the mean pretest score in the Composite Codependency Scale was = 56.62, it decreased to 50.00 after the experimental application. However, based on the findings, it was observed that the psychodrama group did not have a significant impact on codependency.

It was determined that the difference between the pretest and posttest Health-Promoting Lifestyle Profile Self-Actualization subscale scores was significantly different (t = 4.53, p <.05). The

mean pretest Health-Promoting Lifestyle Profile Self-Actualization subscale score was 28.75 and the mean posttest score was 38.25 after the experimental application. Based on the findings, the psychodrama group had a significant effect on self-actualization.

The difference between the pretest and posttest Problem-Solving Inventory total scores was not significant (t=2.28, p>.05). While the mean pretest score in the Problem-Solving Inventory was 100.50, it decreased to 86.62 after the experimental application. Based on the study findings, it was observed that the psychodrama group did not have a significant impact on the participant perceptions about their problem solving skills.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings obtained in the current study demonstrated that although the psychodrama application had a significant impact on self-actualization, its effects on codependency and problem solving-skills were not significant.

In the present study, it was determined that the self-actualization levels of the women who participated in the psychodrama group increased significantly. In the literature, the studies conducted on the impact of psychodrama on self-actualization reported contrasting findings. Certain study findings demonstrated that psychodrama was effective on self-actualization (Kilmann, Follinstad, Price, Rowland, and Robinson, 1976) and certain others reported that it was not (Rosenthal, 1976). In the present study, the findings suggested that the impact of psychodrama on self-realization was partly due to the fact that the participants could implement the awareness during both group and protagonist plays in their lives. The statements that Ruzgar accepted the others the way they were, Reyhan applied for distance education for her own personal development, and Cuce accepted herself the way she was, as expressed in the eighteenth session, could explain the improvements in their self-actualization levels. Below are the direct quote examples about the fact that the group members transferred the things they learned about self-actualization to their real lives:

Rüzgar: My problem was to the fact that I never accepted my husband the way he was. Now I accept him as he is and we are happier (Accepting others the way they are, eighteenth session, sharing group contributions).

Reyhan: I re-applied to attend Distance Education to graduate from high school this week. My son made fun of me, but I felt very good. I am very happy (Developing their potential, sixteenth session, sharing phase).

Cüce: I always questioned myself about my relationship with my husband, whether I was doing the right thing or not. I always blamed myself when there was a problem. Actually, it was in vain, what I thought I was doing wrong was actually right, I realized this in the group. I keep doing the right thing (Self-acceptance, eighteenth session, sharing group contributions).

The present study finding that the codependency levels of the women who participated in the psychodrama group did not significantly decrease contradicted the finding that psychodrama conducted with female college students was effective on codependency (Ulusoy, 2015). Literature review revealed that group therapy was the method of preference in codependency interventions. While the findings of certain studies demonstrated that group therapy was effective on reducing codependency (Sheets, 1988; Edmundson, Byrne & Rankin, 2000), in the study conducted by Strakes (1997), it was reported that group therapy was not effective in reducing codependency. Apart from group therapy, it was observed that self-help and psycho-education groups were also used in reducing codependency. While Hodgson (1993) reported that self-help groups were effective in reducing

codependency, Nancy-Bartot (1989) found that psycho-education group was not effective in reducing codependency. There were only limited number of studies that investigated psychodrama to reduce codependency.

Although it was evidenced that psychodrama did not have a significant impact on the codependency levels of women, the realization of the group member Rüzgar after the protagonist play in the tenth session that her efforts to change her husband were in vain and the happiness she declared in the eighteenth session since she stopped trying to change her husband demonstrated that the application reduced interpersonal control, which is a sub-dimension of codependency. The statements of Savcı in the seventeenth session that her son called him four times in the previous session, but since he could not pick up the phone he got angry, and at that time she expressed herself directly for the first time, explained why she could not pick up the phone, apologized and was surprised that her son understood her reasons demonstrated that the application reduced emotional suppression. The statements by Dag in the eighteenth session that he started to sleep comfortably since she stopped doing her husband's chores and started to wake up rested demonstrated that the application reduced self-sacrifice, which is a sub-dimension of codependency. Therefore, based on the individual developments of the members, it could be suggested that the participants have taken steps to reduce codependency and the change has started. Considering the positive correlation between codependency and female gender roles and that gender role patterns could be resistant to change; psychodrama could not be expected to significantly reduce codependency.

In the present study, it was determined that the perceptions of the women who participated in the psychodrama group about their problem-solving skills did not significantly decrease after the application. Literature review demonstrated that the most frequently used method was psychoeducation in problem-solving interventions. In a study where the effectiveness of group work using role-play techniques and encounter-based group work on problem solving was compared, it was determined that the stress levels and negative emotions of the group where role-play techniques were used decreased more when compared to the other group (Sirridge, 2009), psychoeducation reduced the perceptions of inadequacy about the problem-solving skills (Yıldız, 2006) and improved social problem-solving skills (Çekici, 2009).

Group members may not have had the opportunity to transfer what they learned in problem solving in psychodrama application to real life, or they may have developed resistance against trying alternative solutions in problem-solving, leading to the ineffectiveness of psychodrama on problem-solving skills. Below is a quote where the member, who experienced problems because she could not cope with her emotions about another member who expressed negative emotions about her in the final session, used the problem-solving method she had used in the initial group sessions in the final group sessions as well.

Hasret: I have been thinking about leaving the group since the last session… I do not want to be misunderstood and I will not let anyone know me. I will leave the group (Seventh session, sharing phase).

Hasret: I think about the feelings I had in the previous session. I still cannot believe that my best friend did not recognize that I was joking with good intentions, I feel like I was stabbed on the back… I cannot stand anymore and want to leave the group (the eighteenth session, sharing phase).

Although it was not statistically significant, it was observed that there was learning on problem-solving during the psychodrama applications. The fact that in the seventh session, Reyhan, who did not communicate with her relative due to misunderstandings, stated she had to contact her

relative when she observed that the problem was resolved when the group members who misunderstood each other expressed their emotions directly, demonstrated her willingness for problem-solving. The fact that Savcı expressed herself and her feelings directly about the communication problem she experienced with her son in the seventeenth session and her son understood her and they did not experience problems any more demonstrated that the problem was solved.

In short, while psychodrama had an impact on self-actualization, it was not effective on codependency and problem-solving skills. In the present study, the women could have considered their need for self-actualization more important when compared to the need to reduce codependency and increase problem-solving skills. In a study conducted for the psychological counseling and guidance needs of the trainees who attend the courses at a public education center, personal awareness and development, interpersonal relations, autonomy, compliance and coping needs were determined to be the prominent needs (Baytemir & Güven, 2015). Self-awareness and development, interpersonal relationships, autonomy, compliance and coping needs refer to self-actualization needs. The present study findings confirmed that the self-actualization needs of women who participated in the tailoring course at the Public Education Center were more important when compared to the need to reduce codependency and improve problem-solving skills.

Yalom (2002) reported that the continuity of the group members was important for group development, and leaving the group delayed the maturation of the group. In the present study, the fact that psychodrama did not have the expected effect on codependency and problem-solving skills could have been due to the fact that the group spent their energy and time on the members who wanted to leave the group and accepting the new members. Generally, the length of the group training period, the adequacy of the group leader, and the needs of the individuals participating in the group could determine the number of sessions (Masson, Jacobs, Harvill & Schimmel, 2014). In the present study, eighteen sessions were conducted based on the length of the tailoring course in the Public Education Center. This period could have been sufficient to increase the self-actualization levels of the group members, but not to reduce their codependency levels and to improve their perceptions about their problem-solving skills.

Blatner (2005) reported that the protagonists might not be ready to go deeper; thus, leaders should not feel obliged to create a dramatic catharsis in every play. In the present study, the protagonist plays did not include events in the distant past such as their childhood since the group members could meet again after the group work and it was considered that they might feel guilty about their past experiences that they have enacted during the plays in these future encounters. This may have prevented the effectiveness of psychodrama on codependence and problem-solving skills.

The main advantage of working with assistant therapists is that it is easier to manage a group with someone. A leader working with an assistant therapist would also have the opportunity to get feedback from another leader. Furthermore, the interaction between these two leaders could also serve as a model for the group members (Masson, Jacobs, Harvill & Schimmel, 2014). In the present study, the group leader could not work with an assistant therapist. Not working with an assistant therapist may have played a role in the ineffectiveness of psychodrama on codependence and problem-solving skills.

Voltan-Acar (2011) stated that in groups that include members with social ties, members might not talk about several topics with the fear that others could discuss these events outside the group, leading to resistance. In the present study, the acquaintance of the members in the psychodrama

group may have prevented the in-depth study of the perceptions about codependency and problem-solving skills.

It could be suggested that future researchers, who will implement psychodrama, should use the experimental design model with control group to achieve stronger results. Furthermore, it should be taken into consideration that similar demographics (age, marital status, etc.) may lead to a spreading effect in leaving a group when selecting members for groups of individuals who know each other. It may be suggested to work with assistant therapists, both for the ability to follow up the current needs of the members and due to the possible contributions of the assistant to the group leader in process management. Future studies could be conducted on the reasons for the absence of a significant difference in perception of dependency and problem solving-skills among women after the experimental study.

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