

THE EFFICACY OF EYE MOVEMENT DESENSITIZATION REPROCESSING
(EMDR)

IN THE TREATMENT OF DEPRESSION

By

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As a student of psychology I find the particular domain of research very intriguing and gratifying. Having said that I acknowledge that this research was a tedious project to undertake and I could not have reached the finish line all by myself.

Foremost, I am grateful to Allah Almighty for providing me with this opportunity to be able to make a significant discovery which could be used for the betterment of people who have suffered psychologically. Depression is one of the most common psychological disorders known to the common man in today's time. I find it hugely rewarding to be able to contribute to dealing with it.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the seekers of knowledge, to those who are in the caring profession and support humanity in whatever capacity they can, my teachers, guides, scholars, role models friends and my children Mussawir and Anna for always believing in me, encouraging me and inspiring in me the motivation for achieving higher goals.

PREFACE

The purpose of the current thesis was to expand the healing effects of Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) psychotherapy intervention into alleviating the debilitating symptoms of Depression experienced due to earlier and current trauma. Depressive illness is usually managed through medication and EMDR has generally been used as a treatment modality to treat traumatic stress and related memories. This study found that depression could also be treated through EMDR. The variable of depression was looked at as a result of trauma or emotional wounds experienced due to difficult and challenging life events. This suggested trauma as a contributing factor to depression that could be cured in fewer sessions through EMDR, which is an established therapy for trauma based disorders. The study has wider scope and implication in the field of mental and physical health as depression co-morbid with mental and physical health disorders. The finding of this study opened a new door for the researchers- clinicians to further explore or replicate the study and add EMDR treatment to their repertoire of therapeutic tools. The results of the study also provided hope for the depressed population who had been on medication and on long term talk therapy, as well as for those who have not receive any treatment for many reasons. On humanitarian grounds, the therapy can be provided free of cost to reduce depressive and trauma symptoms in the times of disaster and also to those who cannot afford it economically.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the current study was to investigate the efficacy of Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) psychotherapy in treating depression caused due to trauma experienced in the past or present, and that was affecting the quality of life. It was hypothesized that there would be significant reduction in the level of depressive and trauma symptoms of the participants after taking Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) Treatment and the quality of life of participants would improve. A sample of 26 participants was purposively taken from psychiatric referrals and mental health clinical settings and was assigned randomly to treatment and waiting list control groups after they were screened for dissociative symptoms through Dissociative Experience Scale- II (Bernstein & Putnam, 1986). Dissociative Experience Scale- II (Bernstein & Putnam, 1986) was used for screening purpose only. Participants scoring higher than 35 on Dissociative Experience Scale- II (Bernstein & Putnam, 1986) were not included in the study. The age limit for the particular sample was from 18 to 60 years and their educational level was metric onwards. Beck Depression Inventory (Beck & Brown 1996), Trauma Symptom Checklist (Briere & Runtz, 1989) and Quality of Life Index Inventory (Ferrans & Powel, 1984) were used to measure, depressive symptoms trauma symptoms, and quality of life of the participants. Paired sampled t-test and independent sample t-test were applied using SPSS to analyse the data statistically. The results of the study supported the research hypothesis at 95% confidence interval and found EMDR as an effective treatment for significantly reducing depressive symptoms experienced due to past or present trauma. The quality of the life of the participants also improved as a result of diminished depressive and trauma symptoms.