

## **Abstract**

The goal of current study was to evaluate the effectiveness of Positive Psychotherapy (PPT) on psychological distress and psychological wellbeing of mothers who have autistic children. A sample of 12 mothers were selected based on their high scores on distress and low scores on wellbeing, positive emotions, engagement, relations, meaning and accomplishment in pre-assessment. The age range of participants was between 28 to 40 years. There were three phases to this study. A semi-structured clinical interview, subjective ratings, Mental Health Inventory and Positive Psychotherapy Inventory were used to explore and assess their mental health issues, and levels of distress and wellbeing as the pre-assessment in phase I. In II phase, a quasi-experimental research design was used, comprised 12 participants (experimental group = 6, waiting-list control group = 6). The treatment was administered to the experimental group, while the waiting-list control group was put on hold. The intervention period was made up of 9 sessions spread out across 5–6 weeks. The main techniques used were Positive Introduction, Gratitude Journal, Character Strengths, Under and Over-use of Strengths, Positive Appraisal, Gratitude Letter and Visit, Gift of Time, Active Constructive Responding and Positive Legacy. In Phase III, post assessment was carried out. Reliability analysis revealed acceptable internal consistency of subscales. Statistically significant differences were revealed by Mann-Whitney U test between experimental and waiting-list control group on subscales of Mental Health Inventory and Positive Psychotherapy Inventory. The scores decreased in psychological distress subscale and increased in psychological wellbeing, positive emotions, engagement, relations, meaning and accomplishment subscales in the experimental group after the treatment, but waiting-list control group scores remain the same. The Wilcoxon Signed Rank test also showed significant differences in the pre-test and post-test of experimental group, but not in the waiting-list control group on the subscales. Lastly, in Phase IV, after compiling the data for a month, therapy was given to the waiting-list control group.

Key words: psychological distress, psychological wellbeing, positive emotions, engagement, relations, meaning, accomplishment, and PPT.