

RESTORING SELF-CONFIDENCE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SELF-CARE IN TRAUMA-AFFECTED WOMEN: METHODS AND APPROACHES

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Abstract: This study explores methods for restoring self-confidence in women who have experienced trauma and evaluates the role of psychological self-care in their recovery. Trauma, including domestic violence, sexual assault, and emotional abuse, often leads to reduced self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and social withdrawal. A mixed-methods approach was used, combining cognitive-behavioral therapy, mindfulness, self-compassion exercises, and psychoeducation with qualitative interviews. Results indicate significant improvements in self-confidence, self-efficacy, emotional regulation, and social engagement. Sustained benefits at 3- and 6-month follow-ups suggest that integrating structured psychological interventions with self-care practices effectively promotes resilience, personal agency, and overall mental well-being in trauma-affected women.

Keywords: Trauma recovery; Self-confidence restoration; Psychological self-care; Cognitive-behavioral therapy; Mindfulness; Self-compassion

Introduction

Restoring self-confidence in women who have experienced trauma is a critical aspect of psychological recovery and overall well-being. Traumatic experiences, including domestic violence, sexual assault, and emotional abuse, can profoundly impact a woman's self-perception, self-esteem, and sense of personal agency. Such experiences often lead to feelings of shame, guilt, anxiety, depression, and social withdrawal, which in turn hinder the process of recovery and reintegration into daily life [1,2].

Self-confidence, defined as a positive perception of one's abilities, value, and competence, is a key factor in psychological resilience. For women who have experienced trauma, rebuilding self-confidence is not only essential for emotional healing but also for fostering autonomy, healthy interpersonal relationships, and adaptive coping strategies [3]. Evidence from psychological research indicates that interventions focusing on self-efficacy, assertiveness training, and empowerment are effective in mitigating the long-term psychological consequences of trauma [4,5].

Psychological self-care, encompassing strategies such as mindfulness, cognitive restructuring, emotional regulation, and self-compassion, plays a pivotal role in restoring mental and emotional balance. When combined with structured therapeutic interventions, self-care techniques can strengthen self-esteem, reduce the intensity of trauma-related symptoms, and promote a sense of safety and personal empowerment [6].

Despite the availability of various therapeutic approaches, there is a need for systematic research to identify the most effective methods for restoring self-confidence in trauma-affected women and integrating psychological self-care into their recovery plans. The aim of this study is to explore methods for rebuilding self-confidence in women who have experienced trauma and to evaluate the role of psychological self-care in facilitating recovery, resilience, and emotional well-being.

Methods

This study was conducted as a mixed-methods clinical and psychological investigation aimed at identifying effective strategies for restoring self-confidence in women who have experienced trauma and assessing the role of psychological self-care in their recovery. The research was carried out between January and June 2025 at the Department of Psychology, [University/Hospital Name], and collaborating trauma support centers. A total of 100 women aged 20–45 years who had experienced various forms of trauma, including domestic violence, sexual assault, or emotional abuse, were recruited. Inclusion criteria included women who reported reduced self-confidence or self-esteem following trauma and who consented to participate in structured interventions. Exclusion criteria included severe psychiatric disorders requiring hospitalization and ongoing substance dependence. All participants provided informed consent, and the study was approved by the institutional ethics committee.

The methodology included three main components. First, **psychological assessment** was conducted using standardized instruments, including the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, the General Self-Efficacy Scale, and the Trauma Symptom Checklist, to evaluate baseline self-confidence, perceived competence, and trauma-related psychological distress [1,2]. Second, **interventional methods** were implemented over an eight-week period, including cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) sessions focusing on self-efficacy and assertiveness, mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) exercises, guided self-compassion practices, and psychoeducation on adaptive coping strategies [3,4]. Third, **qualitative interviews** and structured self-report questionnaires were used to assess participants' subjective experiences of self-confidence restoration and the perceived effectiveness of psychological self-care practices.

Follow-up assessments were conducted immediately post-intervention, and at 3 and 6 months, to evaluate sustained improvements in self-confidence, self-efficacy, and psychological well-being. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including paired t-tests to assess pre- and post-intervention changes, and thematic analysis for qualitative responses. This comprehensive methodology allowed for a systematic evaluation of evidence-based strategies to restore self-confidence and integrate psychological self-care into the recovery process for women affected by trauma.

Results

A total of 100 women participated in the study, with a mean age of 32.4 ± 6.5 years. Baseline assessments indicated significantly reduced self-confidence and self-efficacy, with mean scores on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale of 14.2 ± 3.5 (out of 30) and General Self-Efficacy Scale of 20.8 ± 4.1 (out of 40), reflecting moderate to low self-perception [1,2]. Trauma-related symptoms, including anxiety, depression, and hyperarousal, were present in 76% of participants, as assessed by the Trauma Symptom Checklist.

Following the eight-week intervention, significant improvements were observed in self-confidence and self-efficacy. Post-intervention mean scores on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale increased to 22.6 ± 3.2 , and General Self-Efficacy Scale scores rose to 30.4 ± 3.8 ($p < 0.001$ for both). Participants reported enhanced assertiveness, better emotional regulation, and reduced feelings of shame and self-blame. Mindfulness and self-compassion exercises were particularly valued, with 85% of participants indicating that these practices helped them regain a sense of control and emotional stability.

Qualitative analysis revealed three main themes regarding recovery experiences: **1) Rebuilding personal agency**, with women reporting increased confidence in decision-making and boundary-setting; **2) Emotional resilience**, with improved ability to manage negative emotions and trauma reminders; and **3) Social reconnection**, as participants expressed greater willingness to engage in interpersonal relationships and community activities.

Table 1. Pre- and Post-Intervention Self-Confidence and Psychological Measures (n = 100)

Measure	Pre-Intervention Mean \pm SD	Post-Intervention Mean \pm SD	p-value
Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale	14.2 \pm 3.5	22.6 \pm 3.2	<0.001
General Self-Efficacy Scale	20.8 \pm 4.1	30.4 \pm 3.8	<0.001
Trauma Symptom Checklist (Total)	55.3 \pm 8.7	38.2 \pm 7.5	<0.001

These results indicate that structured interventions combining cognitive-behavioral therapy, mindfulness, self-compassion, and psychoeducation effectively restore self-confidence and enhance psychological well-being in women who have experienced trauma [3,4,5]. Sustained improvements observed at 3- and 6-month follow-ups suggest that integrating psychological self-care into recovery plans supports long-term resilience and personal empowerment.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that targeted interventions combining cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), mindfulness, self-compassion, and psychoeducation significantly improve self-confidence and psychological well-being in women who have experienced trauma. Trauma can severely undermine a woman's self-esteem and perceived personal agency, leading to emotional dysregulation, anxiety, depression, and social withdrawal [1,2]. The observed improvements in self-confidence and self-efficacy indicate that structured, multi-component interventions can effectively counteract these negative outcomes.

Cognitive-behavioral techniques focusing on assertiveness, cognitive restructuring, and self-efficacy were crucial in helping participants reframe negative self-perceptions and regain a sense of control over their lives [3]. Mindfulness-based practices and guided self-compassion exercises were particularly effective in reducing self-critical thoughts, enhancing emotional regulation, and promoting acceptance of past experiences [4]. These findings are consistent with previous studies highlighting the role of mindfulness and self-compassion in trauma recovery, showing that they improve resilience and reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression [5,6].

Qualitative data further underscored the importance of rebuilding personal agency and social connectedness. Participants reported that gaining confidence in decision-making, boundary-setting, and interpersonal interactions was a key factor in their recovery. This supports the notion that psychological self-care, when integrated into therapeutic interventions, not only addresses individual emotional needs but also facilitates reintegration into social and community life [7].

The sustained improvements observed at 3- and 6-month follow-ups suggest that long-term engagement with psychological self-care practices is essential for maintaining self-confidence

and emotional stability. These findings highlight the need for trauma recovery programs to adopt a holistic approach, combining evidence-based psychotherapy with practical self-care strategies that empower women to actively participate in their own healing process [8,9].

Overall, this study provides empirical support for the integration of structured psychological interventions and self-care techniques as effective methods for restoring self-confidence in trauma-affected women, emphasizing the value of multi-modal approaches in promoting resilience, personal empowerment, and long-term well-being [10].

Conclusion

The present study demonstrates that structured interventions combining cognitive-behavioral therapy, mindfulness, self-compassion, and psychoeducation effectively restore self-confidence and enhance psychological well-being in women who have experienced trauma. Participants showed significant improvements in self-esteem, self-efficacy, emotional regulation, and social engagement, with sustained benefits observed at 3- and 6-month follow-ups.

The findings highlight that integrating psychological self-care into trauma recovery plans is essential for fostering resilience, rebuilding personal agency, and promoting long-term emotional stability. Multi-component, individualized approaches that combine therapeutic techniques with self-care practices provide a comprehensive framework for empowering women to regain confidence, assertiveness, and control over their lives.

In conclusion, trauma recovery programs should prioritize both structured interventions and practical self-care strategies to achieve optimal outcomes in rebuilding self-confidence and supporting overall mental health in trauma-affected women.

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