

# Systematic Investigation of the Effectiveness of Self Psychology Approach in Treatment of Mental Health Disorders

## Ruh Sağlığı Bozukluklarının İyileştirilmesinde Kendilik Psikolojisi Yaklaşımının Etkililiğinin Sistemik Olarak İncelenmesi

Ayşe Gök<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

The aim of this study was to review systematically the scientific literature on the effectiveness of the self-psychology approach in improving mental health disorders. An online search of the databases including the National Academic Network and Information Center (ULAKBİM), Google Scholar, Science Direct, Board of Higher Education Thesis Center database, and ProQuest thesis databases was conducted. For this purpose, the qualitative research papers that were published between 2010-2020 in respect to the keywords involving "self", "self psychology" and "self-object" were included. The synthesis of qualitative studies indicated that the self psychology approach could be an effective psychotherapy approach in the process of improving mental health disorders and create positive results.

**Keywords:** Self, self object, transference, empathy, self psychology

### Öz

Bu sistematik derlemede, ruh sağlığı bozukluklarının iyileştirilmesinde kendilik psikolojisi yaklaşımının etkililiğinin alanyazındaki çalışmaların taraması yaparak sergilenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda "Kendilik (Self)", "Kendilik Psikolojisi (Self Psychology)" ve "Kendilik nesnesi (Self-object)" gibi anahtar kelimeler ile Ulusal Akademik Ağ ve Bilgi Merkezi (ULAKBİM), Google Scholar, Science Direct, Yükseköğretim Kurulu Başkanlığı Tez Merkezi veri tabanı ve ProQuest tez veri tabanları 2010-2020 yıllarını kapsayacak şekilde taranmıştır. Nitel araştırma yöntemiyle yürütülen bu çalışmada, sistematik derleme deseni tercih edilmiştir. Toplanan verilerin analiz edilmesi amacıyla içerik analizi tekniğinden yararlanılmıştır. Değerlendirmeye alınan çalışmaların büyük çoğunluğunda kendilik psikolojisi yaklaşımının ruh sağlığı bozukluklarının iyileştirilmesi sürecinde etkili bir psikoterapi yaklaşımı olduğu ve olumlu sonuçlar yarattığı görülmüştür.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** Kendilik, kendilik nesnesi, aktarım, empati, kendilik psikolojisi

<sup>1</sup>Niğde Ömer Halisdemir University, Niğde, Turkey

✉ Ayşe Gök, Niğde Ömer Halisdemir University, Department of Psychological Counseling and Guidance, Niğde, Turkey  
aysegok1993@hotmail.com | 0000-0002-7544-5800

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**SELF** psychology is a psychoanalytic theory developed by Heinz Kohut in the 1970s. Self psychology, developed by Heinz Kohut, is a comprehensive psychoanalytic theory that, besides being a therapeutic model, also provides a developmental model (Dealey 2020). In the Self Psychology approach, it is a positive approach to human nature rather than a negative bio-psychological view (Rabstejnek 2015). According to this approach, the self is accepted as a psychological tool for processing subjective experiences in personality development (Kohut 1971). Kohut (1984) argued that all individuals come to the world with a core self, with the capacity to develop a healthy and harmonious self. To develop a healthy and harmonious self. He pointed out that the individual must have certain self-object needs that must be met by an empathic caregiver. Kohut suggested individuals need self-object interactions throughout their lives to maintain a healthy self (Dealey 2020).

## Self psychology theory

According to the Self Psychology approach, individuals who come to treatment extremely need positive reactions from others to feel good. For this reason, this theory has been accepted as “two person psychology” by some groups. The impressions during the psychoanalytic treatment of individuals with severe narcissistic symptoms were influential in the Self’s development psychology approach (Kohut 1971). During the therapy process of these individuals, different symptoms were encountered than neurotic patients. While these symptoms were sometimes a breakdown that individuals had difficulty defining, sometimes they were dissatisfaction in relationships. Another important point is that the value that these people attribute to themselves is often shaped by the reactions of the surrounding people. All this is Kohut. This led to the realization that the structural model presented by ego psychology in the therapy process did not understand the problems of these people and to heal them (Geçtan 1997). In this sense, it can be said that in the psychoanalytic field, Kohut constructed an alternative theory of the self. The most important point that distinguishes the psychology of the self from other psychoanalytic theories is that it does not accept the human soul as a closed system and determines that the human always needs a self-object environment. Thus, self psychology also emphasizes that the human being is never complete (Kohut 2015). This approach also included recent issues such as the development of the self, its distortions, and the treatment method. The self-psychology approach has been very useful for narcissistic clients and therapists seeking new perspectives to understand and help them. Also, the concepts specific to this approach provided a new general orientation towards thinking in terms of self-structures, self-representations, and self-images and understanding how he used internal processes from childhood to adulthood. Therefore, what distinguishes the psychology of the self is that it emphasizes that the self should be lively, creative, loving, and especially the development, and it is an approach focused on understanding the causes of disruptions in development (Flanagan 2011).

## Self-object

Self-objects are objects that individual experiences as part of their self. Control over self-objects; It is closer to the concept of control an adult hopes to have over his body and mind than the concept of control he expects to have over others. For this reason, other people are objects that will meet and nurture these needs of the self for the development and enrichment of the self (Geçtan 1997). From the perspective of self psychology, people live in a self-object environment from birth to death. Just as humans need oxygen to survive physiologically, they also need self-objects to survive psychologically. There are two types of self-objects. The first of these are those that confirm the child's innate vitality and perfection, and the mirroring is called the self-object. The other self-object is those that the child respects and can integrate into an omnipotent image, and the idealized parent is called imago (Kohut and Wolf 1978). Parents with mature psychological organizations are self-objects that perform critical regulatory functions for the infant with the immature psychological organization (Schore 2002). As individuals mature, they abandon archaic self-objects and use more suitable self-objects. According to Kohut (2015, 2017), the need for self-object continues throughout one's life.

## Empathy

According to the self psychology approach, empathy is defined as indirect introspection. The empathic approach in the therapy process is accepted as the primary clinical tool. Kohut has used the concept of empathy to mean putting yourself in someone else's shoes for a moment (Murdock 2012). According to this approach, all individuals need empathic understanding. Kohut argued that when empathic failures hinder self-realization and integration efforts, individuals who cannot realize their ideas will emerge, and he used the concept of "tragic man" to describe these individuals with emptiness, depression, and dispersal anxiety (Flanagan 2011).

Kohut (1984) drew attention to the importance of empathy in responding to the need for understanding that individuals need. Kohut's goal is to reveal the experiences of individuals' introspection. He thought that this way, an empathic relationship could be established with them. He also argued that psychological understanding should be formed from an empathic attitude or at least compatible with it (Jacoby 1991). According to the self psychology approach, the therapist's task is to understand the client's inadequate or damaged self and try to empathize with him (Sharf 2014). Since empathy is the major component of the restorative therapeutic experience, the therapist's use of empathic perception facilitates self-repair (Rabstejnek 2015). Instead of referring to defenses and resistance, Kohut drew attention to trying to protect the clients' self from the expected dangers from old and failed self-objects. Such a stance needs to be maintained until empathic conditions allow it to sustain its arrested growth (Kitron 2003).

## Transference

According to the self psychology approach, there are two types of transference, namely mirror transference and idealizing transference. The affirmative reactions from the mother are important for the child's development and self-worth. When the child cannot receive these reactions from the mother, it has difficulty in protecting both the sense of integrity and self-esteem. For this reason, the child who is in despair tries to be perfect and tries to attract the attention of his mother. An adult client who comes to therapy can also develop mirroring transference and try to gain the therapist's approval, just like in his childhood (Geçtan 1997). The child's need for idealization may not be met if the mother does not receive affirmation reactions. Sometimes, the mother may not be idealized. In the idealizing transference, the client who comes to therapy unites with the therapist as someone who has unlimited power and heals (Flanagan 2011). Therefore, the client tries to fulfill the need for idealization with the therapist. The common feature of these two types of transference is that they are developed against the anxiety of disintegration that occurs as a result of inadequate parental support in early childhood.

## Unsolvable anxiety

With the approach of self psychology, the concept of unsolvable anxiety has been introduced to the analytical approach. According to this approach, unsolved anxiety is accepted as the most basic anxiety experienced by individuals throughout their lives. Although Kohut (1984) pointed out that it is difficult to fully explain the concept of unresolved anxiety, he still described this situation as fear of death. Also, some argue that such anxiety of individuals is a sign that the self is undergoing a dangerous change. It can be said that unresolved anxiety has an intuition that the self will break down (Kohut 2017).

In the light of all this information, it can be said that the primary purpose of the self psychology approach is to preserve the integrity of the self. This is possible by repairing the deficiencies in the self-structure or by restructuring the self (Murdock 2012). This study, it is aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of this approach by systematically compiling national and international academic studies based on the self-psychology approach. Revealing the general trend in studies based on the self-psychology approach may be important for future studies. Considering the increasing number of researches on self psychology, this study was needed to develop a new perspective for future research. Because of this study, it is aimed to get information about the study group, with the publication, distribution according to national-international status, methods, and designs of the researches that are systematically compiled. Also, determining the data collection tools used in these studies and the important results got from the findings of the studies are among the aims of the study.

## Method

In this study, conducted with a qualitative research method to examine national and international academic studies to examine the effectiveness of the self-psychology approach

in improving mental health disorders, a systematic review design was preferred. A systematic review is a scientific study in which research on a specific subject is reviewed and extensively, exclusion and inclusion criteria are used, and the findings got are synthesized (Aslan 2018; Bown and Sutton 2010). Perestelo-Pérez (2013) emphasized the necessity to follow some steps while conducting systematic reviews. These steps are listed as determining the problem, selecting the studies according to the information search references, analyzing the data to reveal and interpreting the results got. The structure of this research has been created, considering the relevant steps.

## Data collection tools

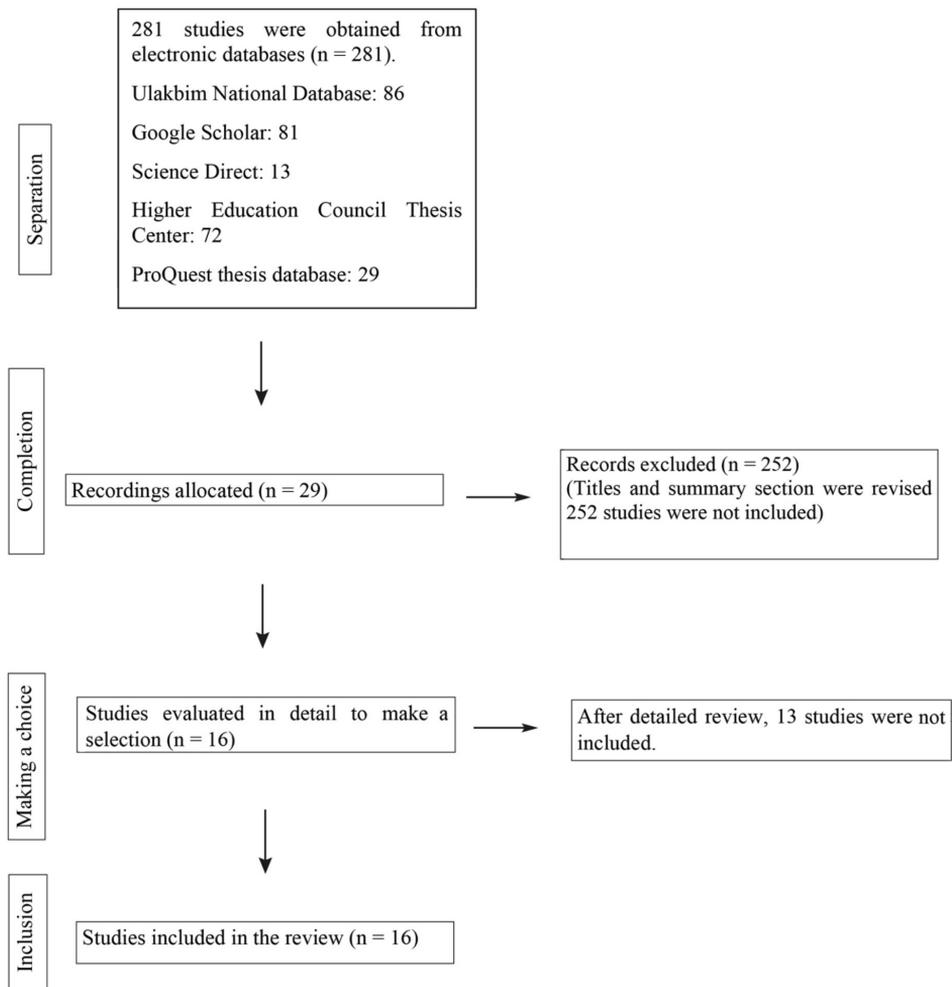
In this study, the Academic Study Classification Form was created by the researcher as the data collection tool. While preparing this form, some changes were made to the form based on the form developed by Sözbilir and Kutu (2008). In the form's content, the aims of the researches, national-international status, patterns, study groups, data collection tools used, important results got from the findings and the categories of suggestions presented according to the results are included. With this form, article reviews were made, and the form was completed because of this pilot study. The issues determined in the articles were entered into the forms one by one. For the expert assessment strategy, the form created and all the raw data collected were sent to an expert. Thus, from another perspective, the validity and consistency of the stages of the research were provided.

## Data collection process

In line with the purpose of the study, keywords such as "Self", "Self Psychology" and "Self-object" and National Academic Network and Information Center (ULAKBİM), Google Scholar, Science Direct, Higher Education Council Thesis Center database, and ProQuest thesis databases 2010-2020 It has been scanned to cover the years. Inclusion/exclusion criteria have been determined such that those open to access, full-text and one or all of the fundamental building blocks of the self-psychology approach will be included and other studies will be excluded. In line with these criteria, full-text articles in Turkish and English languages, the subject of which is "self psychology" and whose research design is composed of qualitative and/or quantitative methods, are included. Written in languages other than Turkish and English, the subject is not "self psychology". The exclusion criteria of the study were those articles whose research design was a compilation and whose full text could not be reached. Flow information of the studies included in the study is presented in Figure 1.

## Data analysis

Content analysis technique was used to analyze the data collected in this study. Content analysis is a careful, detailed, and systematic analysis and interpretation of a certain amount of material to draw patterns, themes, assumptions, and meanings (Berg et al. 2004, Berg and Latin 2008). Content analysis is carried out in four steps: coding data, determining themes, organizing codes and themes, and defining and interpreting the findings (Yıldırım



**Figure 1. Flowchart of studies included in the review**

and Şimşek 2008). In line with the steps specified in this study, first, the data were coded and themes were got in this context. Then, the data were organized and grouped according to themes. The data divided into groups are presented by digitization when appropriate. Finally, the findings were interpreted.

## Results

### Types of publications

When the academic studies published on the psychology of the self are examined, it is seen that 16 studies comprise 13 articles, 2 master theses, and 1 doctoral dissertation.

## **National-international status of the publications**

When the national-international status of the academic studies published about self psychology within the research is examined, 9 of the 16 publications examined in this study are national and 7 are international publications. While 7 of the national type publications examined in this study are articles, 2 of them are master's theses, 6 of international publications are articles and one is the doctoral dissertation.

## **Methods and designs of the studies**

When the methods and patterns of the studies determined about self psychology are examined, 5 of the publications examined in this study were prepared using the quantitative method and 11 of them were prepared using the qualitative method. Of the publications using quantitative research method, 3 comprises experimental design (Control Group Pretest-Posttest), 2 of them are causal-comparative design. While 10 of the publications using qualitative research method are case studies, one comprises phenomenology design.

## **Study group and data collection tools of the studies**

Information on the study group and data collection tools of the studies examined about self psychology are given in Table 1.

According to Table 1, in the studies examined, the most preferred study group to be used in 14 studies was adults. Unlike these studies, the adolescent level was preferred in the study by Leone (2019) and the older adult level in the study by Deshpande (2010). As the data collection tool, clinical interviews used in 11 studies are in the first place, while Self Psychology Inventory (Levi 1994) is in the second place.

## **Results and suggestions of the researches**

The results and suggestions based on the findings of the investigated studies are classified within the framework of themes. The results and recommendations highlighted in the studies and sample studies are presented in Table 2.

Five different themes were determined because of the content analysis made regarding the results and suggestions of the researches within the study. These themes are self-object, empathy, unsolvable anxiety, mental health disorders, and the therapy process. The theme of mental health disorders is divided into four sub-themes: pathological narcissism, substance use disorders, alcohol use disorder, and fragile narcissism. Since the study group of the researches examined consists mostly of adults, the emphasized results and suggestions are mostly shaped around the self-development and self-integrity of adults. Also, in the vast majority of research results, the influence of other people, called self-objects, for the development of the self draws attention. According to the self psychology approach. Since the therapist's task is to understand and empathize with the client's inadequate or damaged self, some observe that the relationship with the therapist is reflected in the results.

**Table 1. Study group of studies and data collection tools**

Research	Working group	Data collection tool
Brown (2010)	Mike and Trina are in their mid-30s and have been together for 3 years.	Clinical interview
Deshpande (2010)	Mrs. D is a 93-year-old Caucasian woman who has been residing in a nursing home for the past 10 years.	Clinical interview
Taşkıntuna and Özçürümez (2011)	Mrs. A, in her late twenties, is a lawyer married woman.	Clinical interview
Eren (2013)	G, a 28-year-old female client, has been married to her aunt's son for five years and has a four-year-old boy.	Clinical interview
Bivans (2013)	26 adults (10 females, 13 males, and 3 not reporting, N=33.6)	Clinical interview
Alaggia and Mishna (2014)	The man is a 39-year-old male between the ages of 11 and 14 who have been sexually abused.	University of Rhode Island Exchange Assessment (URICA)
Yurduşen (2015)	Ms. K. is 35 years old.	Clinical interview
Akça (2017)	Ms. R. is 36 years old and married.	Clinical interview
Aydoğmuş et al. (2017)	The client is a 23-year-old female university student.	Clinical interview
Anlı et al. (2017)	The sample consisted of 308 individuals, including 206 male patients diagnosed with APD according to DSM-5 and 102 men randomly selected as the comparison group without any problem related to alcohol use and any psychiatric diagnosis.	Clinical interview Self Psychology Inventory (Levi, 1994)
Dobson (2017)	The Dora case is an 18-year-old woman.	Clinical interview
Yurduşen and Gençöz (2018)	305 (78%) females and 86 (22%) males with an average age of 38.9 took part.	Selfobject Needs Inventory (Banai et al., 2005), Interpersonal Relationship Dimensions Scale (İmamoğlu-Erden and Aydın 2009) and Basic Personality Traits Scale (Gençöz and Öncül 2012)
Can and Anlı (2018)	The experimental group was formed from 55 male patients diagnosed with substance use disorder and who received inpatient treatment, and the control group was formed from randomly selected 49 men without substance use or other psychological disorders.	Self Psychology Inventory (Levi, 1994)
Peynirci (2018)	Seven people, 3 women, 6 of whom were members of Alcoholics Anonymous groups, and 1 person who had received alcohol addiction treatment but never joined the Alcoholics Anonymous group took part.	The form that includes questions about alcohol consumption history, addiction and treatment, and the form created with Frankl's existential analysis concept set
Gür (2019)	153 (123 female, 30 male) graduate students took part.	Self Psychology Inventory (Levi, 1994)
Leone (2019)	13-year-old Jessie, her mom, and dad	Clinical interview

**Table 2. Results of studies and recommendations**

Theme	Highlighted results and suggestions	Sample studies
Self-object	<p>Demonstration of self-object function by the therapist provided a more systematic task or ritual for the couple to explore between sessions.</p> <p>Through an emotionally corrective experience, previous self-object failures can be studied and opportunities allow these needs to be met at the moment.</p> <p>The client could evaluate me as the new self-object, and in this way, could increase his self-worth.</p> <p>The self-structure of the child who is neglected by his parents cannot develop, and the absence of an "empty sense of self" and identity integrity are the chief characteristics of APD.</p> <p>It was found that the participants were exposed to the experience of incomplete self-objects and consumed alcohol by resorting to transformative externalization with damage to their self-structures. Testing the results in different samples is important to show how self-object needs are experienced in our society and distinct groups within this society and how they relate to other variables.</p>	<p>Brown (2010)</p> <p>Alaggia and Mishna (2014)</p> <p>Yurduşen (2015)</p> <p>Anlı et al. (2017)</p> <p>Peynirci (2018)</p> <p>Yurduşen and Gençöz (2018)</p>
Empathy	<p>Systemic questions can deepen empathic attunement and improve the client-therapist relationship.</p> <p>Poetry therapy can be a powerful aid to self psychology, as they share goals of empathy, ego harmony, and trust-building.</p> <p>Considering the Dora case from Heinz Kohut's revolutionary view, which privileges the subjective and empathetic stance in treatment, it can be concluded that Dora's hysterical symptoms are not pathological as Freud thought, but healthy attempts to support a weak self.</p>	<p>Brown (2010)</p> <p>Deshpande (2010)</p> <p>Dobson (2017)</p>
Unsolvable anxiety	<p>It was concluded that the client gained insight into anxiety and human relations, and followed his own needs and desires.</p>	<p>Akça (2017)</p>
Mental health disorders	<p>In the growth adventure, the child can only be protected from pathological narcissism in adult life when his narcissistic needs are optimally met by self-objects.</p> <p>It is important to consider the theory of self-psychology when planning treatment for substance use disorder. In this way, new therapy methods can be developed to understand the origin of the disorder and to prevent its recurrence.</p> <p>At the end of the process, the client's desire to use psychogenic substances or the desire to enter conflictual situations decreased, and he developed a positive desire and interest in life.</p> <p>Feedback based on Kohut's principles of self-psychology motivated the participants to change their substance use behavior and take part in treatment.</p> <p>A statistically significant difference was found between the alcohol use disorder group and the control group in terms of pathological narcissism and early maladaptive schemas.</p> <p>It was observed that the client thought about the effect of his/her perception and attitude on others in his / her relationships with others, and he established closer relations with others and to think about the points that excite him and hold him.</p>	<p>Taşkıntuna and Özçürümez (2011)</p> <p>Can and Anlı (2018)</p> <p>Bivans (2013)</p> <p>Yurduşen (2015)</p> <p>Anlı et al. (2017)</p> <p>Akça (2017)</p>

**Table 2. Continued**

Theme	Highlighted results and suggestions	Sample studies
Therapy process	Through an emotionally corrective experience, previous self-object failures can be studied and opportunities allow these needs to be met at the moment.	Alaggia and Mishna (2014) Aydođmuş et al. (2017)
	It was observed that as the psychotherapy sessions progressed, the emotion regulation capacity related to the trust relationship improved and he entered a relationship with realistic roles towards both his boyfriend and those around him.	
	Functioning as a potential source of self-object experience for each family member, the therapist focuses on equal empathic immersion in the inner world of each family member, balanced adapted responsiveness to each, and forward-emphasizing, collaborative interpretation.	Leone (2019) Eren (2013)
	If the fit objects that are taken in during the therapy process are established safely enough, it can be said that the client continues the process that creates a change in the self and object designs outside the psychotherapy room.	

## Discussion

In this study, general information about academic studies on self psychology was tried to be explained. It is aimed to reflect this information through the academic publications examined. Data were obtained through systematic compilation in line with the research problem and sub-problems.

It was seen that most of the studies examined were case studies. Case studies are a method that can enable the case discussed in the study to be examined in depth from various angles. In case studies focusing on the originality of each situation, those that are overlooked in other research methods can also be revealed (Berg et al. 2004). For this reason, it can be said that the systematic review of case studies contributed to getting important results in this study, in which the effectiveness of the self-psychology approach was examined in the improvement of mental health disorders. In the studies included in the review, it was observed that women were sampled. This can be explained because women seek psychological help more frequently than men regarding their mental health problems. Differences between men and women based on gender roles significantly affect their psychological help-seeking attitudes. It is known that women's feminine gender role characteristics strengthen their beliefs about seeking psychological help (Juvrud and Rennels 2017, Campagna and Zaykowski 2020, Kiss et al. 2020).

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object needs during the therapy process and to create a safe environment for the intense emotions worked on. It is known that the self-structure of the child who is neglected by his parents cannot develop. This “empty sense of self” is also specific to individuals with alcohol use disorder. Alcohol is often used by these individuals to cope with sensitive, fragile and stressful self-sensations. Anlı et al. (2017) emphasized that for this disorder not to recur, the underlying reasons should be based on the theory of self psychology. When the relevant literature was examined, the needs of the self-object in the therapy process were also emphasized in the study by Leone (2008). In the therapy process, self-object needs and learned relational patterns were used to conceptualize the difficulties that couples experience in their relationships. With the couple’s therapy process based on the self psychology approach, the couple’s formation of new relational experiences was supported. The self-psychology approach can be of great help to clinicians dealing with the difficulties encountered in treating couples. Understanding and reframing conflicts in terms of the underlying self-object needs, the impact of unconscious organizational frameworks, and the effect of learned patterns related to cooperation can make them better able to meet each other’s self-object needs (Leone 2008).

Kohut described these individuals as “tragic men” because empathic failures hinder individuals’ efforts to realize and integrate themselves (Flanagan 2011). For this reason, the self psychology approach sees the therapy process as an opportunity for the individual to overcome empathic failures. Brown (2010) utilized systemic questions to deepen empathic adaptation in the therapy process. Deshpande (2010), on the other hand, obtained important results in achieving the goals of empathy, ego harmony, and trust-building with the help of poetry therapy in the therapy process based on the self-psychology approach. In the research conducted by Pienaar and Molteno (2010), it has been concluded that the self-psychology approach constitutes an important framework in understanding the emotional world of the child suffering from fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and developing a sense of empathy.

It was determined that only one study among the studies examined within the scope of the study included the theme of “unresolved anxiety”. Akça (2017) found that a patient diagnosed with fragile narcissism gained insight into anxiety and human relationships at the end of the therapy process. Another theme, mental health disorders, is divided into four sub-themes: pathological narcissism, substance use disorders, alcohol use disorder, and fragile narcissism. Taşkıntuna and Özçürümez (2011) determined that the basis of the pathological narcissism diagnosis of the subject of the study was that the narcissistic needs were not optimally met by self objects. Can and Anlı (2018) drew attention to the effectiveness of the self-psychology approach in the therapy process, as people with substance use disorders may also have serious damage to their narcissistic development. Anlı et al. (2017) found that there is a significant difference in pathological narcissism between the group with alcohol use disorder and the control group. Akça (2017) stated that the client with a diagnosis of fragile narcissism started to think about the effect of self-perception on others in his relationships with others along with the therapy process, and he could establish closer relationships with others. Apart from the disorders in these four sub-areas of the study, other mental health

disorders are considered within the scope of the self-psychology approach. It is known that the self-psychology approach is also effective in psychosis, borderline situations, schizoid and paranoid personalities (Kohut 2017), and eating disorders (Bachar et al. 1999).

According to the self-psychology approach, clients quickly establish an idealizing transference relationship with the therapist due to developmental defects in early childhood. This transference relationship allows the restrained needs and processes of the client to be reactivated (Murdock 2012). The transference relationship, which is an important component of the therapy process, could not be addressed as a theme, as it was not encountered in the studies addressed in the current study. Improving the emotional regulation capacity of the client regarding the trust relationship during the therapy process is another process goal that is considered important in terms of the self-psychology approach. Aydoğmuş et al. (2017) concluded that the client, whom they addressed within the scope of their studies, was able to relax by expressing his anger and disappointment at the end of the process and gave himself the right to mourn the loss he experienced. Leone (2019), on the other hand, focuses on balanced adapted responsiveness and collaborative interpretation emphasizing forward to each, as well as functioning as a potential source of self-object experience for each family member throughout the family therapy process. Another important point in the therapy process is that the process can be ended healthily. Even if psychotherapy ends before the therapist's internal functions are integrated and negative feelings towards the therapist are fully resolved if the good objects that are taken inside are established in a safe enough manner. It can be said that the client continues the process that creates change in self and object designs later (Eren 2013).

## Conclusion

Self psychology is an approach that focuses on the restructuring of the self in the therapy process to preserve the integrity of the self. The studies covered within the scope of the study contain important results that reveal the effectiveness of the self-psychology approach in improving mental health disorders. In most of the studies evaluated, it was observed that the self psychology approach was an effective psychotherapy approach in the process of improving mental health disorders and created positive results. Also, it can be said that the number of studies evaluating the effectiveness of the self psychology approach is limited. Also, in terms of guiding new studies, developing scales related to the subject. It is thought that adapting the existing ones to our culture can contribute to filling the gap in this field.

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