

Group Counseling and Its Role in Changing Addicts' Attitude

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ABSTRACT

Drug abuse is one of the most important contemporary problems extended over the world. A catastrophe of ruining lives of millions of people that spend national macro capital to fight or compensate for induced damages of drug abuse. Number of drug abuse victims and its side effects including physical, psychological, family, cultural, economic and social disorders are increasing every day. These side effects have been crossed all cultural and social boundaries and threaten human health. Present study investigates effect of group counseling and its impact on changing addicts' attitude. For purpose of this study, 59 subjects were selected randomly among female and male addicts admitted to doctor Kafi clinic in Shahrbabak County in first six months of 2010. They were equally substituted in two test and control groups (each one including 18 males and 10 females). Data collection instrument in this study included a demographic characteristics questionnaire with 5 questions and a questionnaire of attitude towards drug with 30 questions in which addicts presented their attitude in a 5 degrees scale. Obtained alpha coefficients is 732/0 that shows acceptable and satisfactory internal consistency coefficient of questionnaire. Questionnaire validity was also confirmed by professors and experts. According to results of this study, group counseling is effective in changing of addicts' attitude towards drug. In addition, there is no significant difference between attitudes towards drug among male and female addicts.

KEYWORDS: Group counseling- attitude- addict.

INTRODUCTION

Drug abuse is considered as a major social, legal, family and individual problem by sociologists, psychologists and education scholars. This issue indicates that addiction phenomenon or drug abuse has multiple dimensions and many factors are involved in its incidence and prevalence (Beck, 1991).

Despite using therapeutic counseling, psychotherapy and rehabilitation efforts, Kelman claimed that only 15 percent of addicts will not relapse addiction following discharging from hospital (Ahmadvand,1995).

Individuals with positive or neutral attitudes and beliefs towards drugs are more likely to use drugs than those people with negative attitudes. Usually these positive attitudes include gaining greatness and personality, physical pain and fatigue relief, mental calm, ability of drug use without risk of addiction (Rahimi Movaghar et al, 1997).

It is known among drug users and common people that addiction is incurable. It is a negative belief resulting from unawareness and passivity. Addicts' belief in this area is more that causes dominated despair and frustration in addition to addiction. Most addicts believe that they do not have enough tolerance and resistance to leave drug and they will be relapsed (Ahmadvand,1995).

Studies show that teenagers with higher levels of decision-making skills have fewer tendencies to misbehaviors. In addition, relationship between self-respect that is beliefs in self-skills and reliance on self-inner and intellectual power and in time decision-making in critical condition has shown that presence or lack of self respect is effective in right choice and decision making skills, misbehaviors or being immune from addiction. Because addiction can be learned and learning is usually through peers and close friends (Part I, 1997).

Some studies have pointed the fact that addicts have tried self-therapy for several and relapsed addiction again. Among important issues when they to leave drug is how to persuade them to deal with factors that may cause relapse. Therefore, pre awareness of people about effective factors in addiction relapse and methods of dealing with these factors can be effective steps towards prevention of addiction relapse.

Attitude is a collection of knowledge, beliefs, opinions and facts including positive and rational evaluation of sentiments all of which are related to a central issue. This collection describes this central issue as subject or object that is related to attitude. Attitudes play an important role in life, thoughts and individual and social behaviors. People have special views on objects, various topics and special people. This view results from their awareness, their feeling about them and their tendency to do something for them (Karimi, 1996).

By studying different sources in the field of group counseling, cognitive - behavioral and relevant researches on this issue, it will be obvious that few studies have been performed in this field. According to cognitive -behavioral method of changing attitude by Kathleen Carroll considered as one of contemporary methods of treating addiction and other mental disorders and attitude changing, this study attempts to investigate effectiveness of cognitive -behavioral group counseling approach of Carroll in changing addicts' attitude towards drug.

2 - Theoretical perspectives on addiction

There are various opinions and perspectives on addicts and based on their theoretical foundations they are trying to interpret and provide interpretations of addiction (Nathan, 1980).

2-1 - Psychoanalysis perspective

Oral fixations: It is said that psychodynamic views have also contributed psychological perspectives of drug dependency. Here it is believed that drug use is a mean to compensate for self-impaired function (Roznahan and Sylgman quoted from Etrys and Fantezian,1986, translated by Mohammadi, 2000, p 250).

Initial perspectives tended to focus on oral fixation dependency and libido drives(Roznahan and Sylgman, translated by Mohammadi, 2000). Freud in his writings considered regressive characteristics for addicts due to their oral fixation (Chyrilo and et al, translated by Pirmoradi,1999).

Perspectives that are more new consider addiction as representation of fundamental deficiencies of addicts in their growth and affection. Drugs are used as reducers of irritating emotional state or as defensive mechanisms used related to internal conflict (Roznahan and Sylgman, translated by Mohammadi, 2000). Tibot believes that addicts are characteristically incomplete, excessively use certain defensive mechanisms such as projection and denial of drug use and try to deal with external facts (Chyrilo and et al, translated by Pirmoradi,1999).

2-2 - Bio - genetic perspective

Biological view considers drug dependency with attention to biological explanation. According to this view, most individual behavior changes are caused by biological and physiological changes with bio-genetic factors. Proponents of this view by referring to various and special centers in the nervous system, consider that addiction is induced via neurological and chemical changes as well as hereditary and genetic vulnerability and willingness in nervous system of people.

In first study of Danish studies, Goudin et al selected 55 individuals whose biological father was once hospitalized because of alcoholism and those individuals themselves were adapted as child before 6 months of their birth due to no blood relationship. A control group of 50 people from the foster child whose fathers were not known as alcoholic were selected to be compared. This study had several interesting results: foster children with alcoholic biological fathers were more than control group involved in alcohol problems. Even sometimes debauchery pattern of experimental group seemed to be more extreme in some cases than control group. There was a main and obvious difference in form of alcohol use, easily tagged as alcoholism, with that of numerous issues of personal, social, occupational, physical and mental health and alcohol problems associated with lack of control over alcohol use. (Poorafkary, 1990, p 193).

Inheritance factor causes person's vulnerability to alcoholism. This factor is not a dominant gene like that of determining eye color. For occurrence of disorder, environmental factors must also act in accordance with genetic vulnerability (Costell , translated by Poorafkary, 1994, p 345).

Generally, there are conflicting theories about inheritance that make its role in addiction less obvious. A group of psychologists such as Kalat, Costell and Rooznahan and Seligman consider evidence very convincing while others (like Carlson and Poorafkary) consider it less important.

2-3 - learning perspective

Learning perspective focuses on addiction dependency on environmental issues and individual acquisition from external environment. In this perspective, it is believed that learning is an important factor in drug dependency. Hebb believes that learning happens in form of associations between sensory – environmental events and tipsy state created by drug(1949).

Sarason believes that people use drug through learning. They learn this behavior through reinforcement (acceptance by friends who value using alcohol), pattern-making (to see those who solve their problems by alcohol) and other learning mechanisms (translated by Najarian et al,2008).

Alcohol is associated with both positive and negative reinforcement for a person. For example, increased activity of alpha waves that some addicts may experience after drinking alcohol has a positive role that may lead to more drinking of alcohol (Niaura et al, 1988).

2-4 - Cognitive perspective

Behavior is influenced by expected consequences of certain behaviors as well as what truly happens. Therefore, behavior can be formed and maintained with assessment of what has happened and what will be happened. Alcohol abuse is a problem. Expected positive effects of drinking and his experience will be interpreted this way. Although using alcohol is problematic, there are some positive expectancies of drinking alcohol and addicts interpret their experience via these expectancies. Despite the fact that overall quality of actual experience is negative (Sarason, translated by Najarian et al, 2008, p 214), in addition to alcohol, it disrupts knowledge causing person's humiliation. As a result, person's thoughts become more superficial and negative self-perceptions decreases (Hall and Roter, 1981).

A person who drinks alcohol has a conflicting self-perception as a non-alcoholic person and he may drink more alcohol to overcome this conflict or may change his self-perception as non-alcoholic person to alcoholic person (for Niaura et al, 1988, p 152).

2-5 - Social perspective

In some cultures, some drugs are easily available for people. For example, opium use has spread widely among Asian people. In South America cocaine is much used and in Western societies, marijuana, heroin, and stimulants are easily available (Ahmadvand, 1995, p 128).

There are different amount and types of used drugs, given social and cultural context of each country. Even changes in cultural background and customs as well as differences in generation of a culture are followed by different amount of drug use and changes in social practices within a cultural group is an important factor in these patterns (Sarason, translated by Najarian et al, 2008).

In communities where drug use not only is not considered as anti-values but also are a part of society culture or traditions or it is considered as sign of respect and being well known, there is no resistance to drug abuse and addiction is more prevalent. In social issues and their impact on the prevalence of drug use, we should consider social learning factor particularly making patterns. For example, in 60 percent of cases occur drug is offered by friends for first time. In fact, drug users try to force others to be accompanied with them in drug use to get their approval (Rahimi Movaghar et al, 1997).

2-6 - Motivational perspective

This perspective by considering motivational theory called opponent processes (rival processes) tend to explain drug use by people. According to this theory, person experiences different excitements one after another. It means that a lot of emotional arousal states are followed by conflict or contradictory state. Hence, feelings of pleasure and happiness come after fear or panic. This process can also be happened vice versa. For example, someone who uses heroin for first time may initially feel intense rush of pleasure followed by less intense and desirable pleasure after which feeling of pain and irritating comes back to normal baseline (Mohieddin, 1996, p 11).

Richard Salmon (1977) described three features or steps for drug abuse that creates a strong incentive to continue drug use. He called his analysis as rival process of addiction (opponent process). Denomination aspect is related to contradiction between two phases of drug use. Generally, Solomon model has three steps: emotional enjoyment, emotional tolerance and emotional deprivation. First, addict is looking for pleasure in first stage. In the third stage, when addict experiences signs of emotional deprivation without using drug, he tends to use drug to avoid unpleasant effects of quitting drug. It is easy to observe contradictory nature of this process. In fact, they are two opponents (Costell, translated by Poorafkary, 1994, pp. 340-341).

3 – Review of internal and external literature

Ghorbani (2001) in a study of Social Welfare Organization of Isfahan province performed on a number of self-introduced addicts represented three methods of training attitude changing methods, assertiveness training, and also attitude changing method combined with and assertiveness training and he achieved following results:

Assertiveness training had no significant effect on decreased tendency to drug, changing attitude training significantly reduced drug use, and training of assertiveness combined with training of attitude changing had more impact on reduction of drug use in self-introduced addicts compared with using these methods alone. In this study, there was a significant relation between tendency of individuals to drugs and their economic situation (Ghorbani, 2001).

Shahbazi (1997) in a survey of 200 people of regressive help-seekers of rehabilitation center of Lorestan mentioned that 50% of help-seekers considered lack of confidence as an important factor in tendency to addiction relapse. 70 % considered positive attitude to drug and incorrect social attitude and lack of social support as important factors of addiction relapse. 83 percent considered lack of psychological counseling centers as important factor of addiction relapse (Shahbazi, 1997).

In another study conducted by Moghadas (2005), impact of cognitive - behavioral therapy on changing addicts attitudes towards drug was examined. Research subjects were selected among addicts attending addiction abandonment center of Welfare Organization of Isfahan. They classified in two control and experimental groups. Control group members were inclusively detoxified and experimental groups used cognitive - behavioral counseling in addition to detoxification. Obtained results of this study showed that there is a significant difference between amount of addicts' attitude towards drug before applying methods of group cognitive – behavioral counseling and using this method. It means that group cognitive - behavioral counseling method was significantly effective in addicts' attitude towards drug.

Poorshahbaz et al (2002) in their study concluded that opiate addicts had less efficient attitudes compared with healthy individuals and they used coping strategies based on emotion and physical containment. Therefore, according to theoretical foundations and researches, it can be proposed that prevention, especially in education, teaching effective coping strategies and group counseling are important components of addiction treatment and changing attitude. On one hand, this type of group counseling may include receiving appropriate abilities in stressful situations, long-term changes in attitudes toward drug use etc. On the other hand, stressful situation should also be considered under title of reduced supply and demand in consumption market. Because these points can hinder individual tendency towards drug use or prevent it. C.K. Lee (1992) considered most important priorities of performance of different political, economic and cultural in identification and changing of citizens attitude (Koushki, 2002).

Brook (2002) examined students' attitudes towards drug use and indicated obtained results of multi variable regression. People with more positive attitude towards drug use indicated heavier drug use.

According to conducted research and surveys, addiction processes are influenced by patients beliefs and attitudes (holman, 2004).

Flenz and Ivanz (1988) in a study showed that high levels of depression and low levels of anxiety and self-esteem are associated with positive attitudes towards drug use. High self-esteem acts as a mediator in relationship between insufficient, negative life events and symptoms of depression. Researchers argue that adolescents with cognitive vulnerability to depression will be able to keep self-maintenance and positive self-evaluation followed by negative life events if they have a high level of self esteem. (Sotal and Robert, 2002).

We can refer to Brook(2002) study in field of student's attitude towards drug use. Obtained results of statistical regression analysis indicated how person's attitude towards smoking, alcohol and other drugs, is associated with their drug use. Findings of this study showed that people who have positive attitudes toward drug use will have heavier drug use.

Gassp (2004) investigated role of beliefs, expectations and attitudes of addicts. According to him, addicts feel that drugs help them to cope with their social and personal problems such as social anxiety.

Aiken and Dreger (2006) investigated role of attitudes in high-risk behaviors like addiction and concluded that there is a significant and positive relationship between attitudes toward drug use and multiple drug use in long term. They suggested in their research that there is "primary voices" for anti-social patterns and attitudes of tendency to excitement.

In a study on a group of 28 persons in America participated in therapy groups undergone education and training therapy, self-expression, medication therapy, family therapy, counseling mediator and display therapy to resolve their conflicts. They were asked to express their feelings and find new ways to solve problems. Results of increased self-esteem was shown in this group and attitude change in their relationships pattern was observed (Duffy and Terredy, 1990, quoted by Bozani, 1996, p. 30).

4 - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Since this study was to investigate effects of group counseling by Kathleen Carroll on changing of addicts' attitude towards drug use(injection, smoking and oral), it is considered as most appropriate method for experimental research. In this study, pre-test and post-test research design is used in control group.

Subjects of this study are selected randomly and are substituted in experimental and control groups. Next, subjects are selected in both groups and are measured by pre-test before performance of independent variable (K Carroll group counseling method). In next stage, independent variable is provided to members of experimental groups. Finally, both groups will be measured by post-test.

4-1 - Research hypotheses:

Main hypothesis:

Kathleen Carroll group counseling to drug users has an impact on addicts' attitude change.

Sub-hypothesis:

Kathleen Carroll group counseling method has an impact on addicts' attitude change.

Kathleen Carroll group counseling method has an impact on female addicts' attitude change.

Kathleen Carroll group counseling method has an impact on male addicts' attitude change

There is a significant difference between amount of attitudes towards addiction in male and female addicts.

4-2 -Research population

According to research problem, research population consists of male and female addicts admitted to doctor Kafi clinic in Shahrabak County in first six months of 2010. Total number of addicts admitted to to this center was about 100 among which 16 people were female and the rest were male.

4-3 - Sampling method

In this study, random sampling is selected, Samples are selected among 100 attended addiction abandonment center, 56 were randomly selected and substituted equally in both experimental and control groups (each group included 18 males and 10 females).

4-4 – Sample size

Sample size of present study includes 56 addicts of Babakshahr County addiction abandonment center. They were substituted in both experimental (18 males and 10 females) and control groups (18 males and 10 females) according to their gender.

4-5 - Data collection instrument

Data collection instrument in this study included a demographic characteristics questionnaire with 5 questions and a questionnaire of attitude towards drug with 30 questions in which addicts presented their attitude in a 5 degrees scale. Most

questions are related to addiction and testees were asked to represent their attitudes towards addiction in a 5 degrees scale and assign 1-5 points. For prevention of biased answers of testees, some questions are scored reverse and high score is indicative of a positive attitude towards drugs and vice versa. Validity and reliability of this questionnaire is determined by Akhlaghi Bozani (1996) and Moghadas(2005) using received surveys of professor's psychometric and psychology tests.

4-6 – Questionnaire reliability

Cronbach's alpha method was used to estimate reliability coefficient of scale. Cronbach's alpha was used for investigation of internal consistency of scales. Obtained alpha coefficient was 632/0 that indicates acceptable and satisfactory internal consistency of questionnaire.

4-7 – Questionnaire validity

Content validity and construct validity of questionnaire was investigated to evaluate its validity.

5 - Data Analysis

Pre-test post-test research design is used in control group. In this section, research hypotheses were tested using statistical covariance analysis method and the results interpreted.

5-1 - First hypothesis: Group counseling has an impact on addicts' attitude change.

	SS	df	MS	F	sig
Corrected model	21653/127	2	10826/564	170/834	0.000
constant	963/188	1	963/188	15/198	0.000
Pretest	785/966	1	785/966	12/402	0.001
Group	20852/926	1	20852/926	329/042	0.000
error	3358/855	53	63/375		
Total	228175	56			
Total corrected	12077/982	55			

As can be seen in the table,F test is significant (meaningful) considering significant level of (P<0.0005).There is a significant difference between mean value of attitude tester of experimental and control groups in post-test. Therefore, research hypothesis is accepted. It means that group counseling has an impact on addicts' attitude change.

5-2- Second hypothesis: Group counseling has an impact on female addicts' attitude change.

	SS	df	MS	F	sig
Corrected model	9639/285	2	4819/642	81/83	0.000
constant	408/533	1	408/533	6/936	0.017
Pretest	178/035	1	178/035	3/023	0. 1
Group	9596/078	1	9596/078	162/927	0.000
error	1001/265	17	58/898		
Total	78736	20			
Total corrected	1064/550	19			

As can be seen in the table,F test is significant (meaningful) considering significant level of (P<0.0005).There is a significant difference between mean value of attitude tester of experimental and control groups in post-test. Therefore, research hypothesis is accepted. It means that group counseling has an impact on female addicts' attitude change.

5-3- Third hypothesis: Group counseling has an impact on male addicts' attitude change.

	SS	df	MS	F	sig
Corrected model	12289/044	2	6144/522	102/815	0.000
constant	490/791	1	490/791	8/212	0.007
Pretest	696/932	1	696/932	11/662	0. 002
Group	11343/231	1	11343/231	189/804	0.000
error	1972/179	33	59/763		
Total	149440	36			
Total corrected	14261/222	35			

As can be seen in the table,F test is significant (meaningful) considering significant level of (P<0.0005). There is a significant difference between mean value of attitude tester of experimental and control groups in post-test. Therefore, research hypothesis is accepted. It means that group counseling has an impact on male addicts' attitude change.

5-4- forth hypothesis: There is a significant difference between amount of attitudes towards addiction in male and female addicts.

Test	gendor	number	mean	SD	t	df	sig
Pretest	femal	20	78	10/36	0.25	54	0.79
	male	36	77/25	10/39			
Post test	female	20	58/35	23/66	0.48	54	0.62
	male	36	61/35	20/18			

As can be seen in the table, research hypothesis is refused. It means that There is not a significant difference between amount of attitudes towards addiction in male and female addicts.

6 - Conclusion

According to obtained results, effect of group counseling based on Karroll method on addicts' attitude change has been proved. According to this fact that most scholars including Karroll (1998) consider this type of treatment in outpatients very promising, it is suggested that therapists use this type of treatment in other situations especially in treatment of addict outpatients.

Considering CBT treatment model prepared for present study from final product of research by Dr. Kathleen Carroll and Dr. Ransvil about its impact on those addicted to tobacco, narcotics, alcohol and other drugs in all situations (individual, group, hospitalized). Moreover, evidence of present study also emphasizes its impact on mentioned cases and it is suggested to use CBT in above cases.

- According to obtained results based on effectiveness of treatment methods for changing attitudes, these treatment methods can be used as selected method in addicts' psychotherapy process.

- According to average age of addicts and their education, it is recommended to education authorities to perform proper extensive training programs for different ages and raise level of people education in society.

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