



Effects of Training the Methods of Coping with Stress on Reducing Anxiety in Student

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this study, was evaluating the Effects of training the methods of coping with stress on reducing anxiety in students.

The tool used in this study was Beck Anxiety Inventory. The independent variable in this study was 8 group therapy sessions of coping with stress in experimental group and the dependent variable was the score each subject gained from the Beck Anxiety Inventory. Subjects were randomly chosen in two groups of test and control each containing 15 individuals. Semi-experimental pretest-posttest study design was used in this experiment and data were analyzed with T-test exam using SPSS 16. The results showed that therapy of coping with stress could be effective in reducing anxiety in students.

Conclusion: According to the results, it could be concluded that coping with stress Curriculum has an effective role in reducing anxiety in students.

KEY WORDS: Training the methods of coping with stress; Anxiety (state); students.

INTRODUCTION

Anxiety as part of the life of every human being exists in all the individuals and as such, it can be considered as an adaptive response. Lack of anxiety might face us with considerable difficulties and risks(1,2). On the other hand, anxiety as part of every human life is also one of the components of personality structure. Primarily, through the anxiety comes the opportunity for individuals to expand their self-adaptive mechanisms to deal with these stressful and anxiety-provoking. In contrast, pathological anxiety that is not only useful and constructive, but also it may be dangerous to the person and it should be considered as a source of failure, conflict and widespread frustration which deprives the person from much of its resources and provides the person with a wide range of anxiety disorders, cognitive and physical impairments that spread unjustified fears and panic in the individual (3-5).

Anxiety disorders are the most common psychiatric disorders in the United States of America so that every year more than 23 million people are affected and in four cases, one is involved with this problem. People who are facing the anxiety disorders are helpless due to the chronic and intense feelings of anxiety. These feelings are so strong that people with kind of disorders are unable to do their daily activities. Their anxiety is unpleasant and makes them unable to enjoy normal situations (6).

Although anxiety is in everyone's life, it seems that it is more severe in the students' lives. Although quality of life of a person as a student is related to the field, degree of personal development and sense of isolation. However, due to the impact of stress and its negative implications, the sources of stress and its effects must be identified. Different Views of Anxiety have been presented. Safety training against anxiety is one of the several methods of cognitive - behavioral therapy which has emerged in recent years and it is not a single technique, but rather a general term that is applied to the medical model which is composed of semi-structured training programs and clinically sensitive. Safety training against anxiety consists of teaching techniques, Socratic discussion, problem solving, cognitive restructuring problem-solving, relaxation training, and maintenance and reviews of their education and strengthens their efforts to change the environment. This method is designed to teach and develop

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coping skills and not only to solve current problems but also to solve the problems of the future plans. This training prepares individuals or groups with Proactive Defense or set of coping skills for dealing with stressful situations in future (3).

Lazarus & Folkman have defined coping as constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to control the specific needs of internal and external stresses and beyond the individual sources. Coping occurs in psychological stress condition and it consists of basic steps to resolve the issue by seeking information about it or get away from the problem which is to reduce stress. Generally, coping mechanisms refer to behaviors that the reactions of the body against them show matching answers and it is known as overcoming forms. In this research, the concept of stress and stress coping skills training and stress management strategies, learning relaxation techniques, problem solving and cognitive methods in the interpretation of stress are included (5). Due to the impact of stress on mental health and well-being, and especially efficacy and student achievement, this study seeks to answer the question of whether stress management training is effective in reducing anxiety in students.

METHOD

In this study, 30 students who were studying at the Azad University of Torbat Heidariyeh in 2011 and 2012 participated and all of them were males. Participants aged between 26-18 years old. In general, the mean age of the participants was 22.12 and the standard deviation was 5.77.

This questionnaire is a 21-item scale that each item has four options and the range is 0 to 3. This test has both mental and physical anxiety subscale and the total test score is from 0 to 63. The coefficient of internal consistency (coefficient alpha) is 92%; Reliability coefficients done by retest which was reported within two weeks was 75%, and the items correlation varies from 30% to 76%. Five types of content validity, concurrent, construct and a contributor to the diagnostic test have been measured and all of which reflect the performance of the instrument in measuring the severity of anxiety. Reliability coefficients done by retest which was reported within two weeks was 80%. Kaviani and Mousavi (1999) have reported the test the psychometric properties of the Iranian population, validity and reliability coefficient was about 72% and test - retest within one month was 83% and Cronbach's alpha was 92%. In this study, 30 students who were studying at the Azad University of Torbat Heidariyeh in 2011 and 2012 participated and they were divided into two experimental and control groups. In each group, participants were divided randomly. Before the experimental manipulation, both groups were assessed on variables, then, new or different groups were affected by the independent variable and finally, at the end of the experimental period, both groups were measured on the dependent variable.

The cooperation of the participants was that the children of martyrs who were the university students of Torbat Heidariyeh were invited to participate in the research project. If satisfactory, clinical interviews were conducted and after assuring to consider the inclusion and exclusion criteria, questionnaires were offered to the patients by the researcher and individually in a relaxed atmosphere of visited places. After a brief explanation on how to complete the test, they were told to ask any question if there was ambiguity about the items of the questionnaire. Certain time was given to them to fill out the questionnaires. However, it was explained to participants that first answer to each item is the best and the most appropriate option. To conduct the research, in order to measure anxiety, the participants were tested by the Beck Anxiety Inventory initially. Both groups were matched as a group by variables such as age, occupation, education level and marital status.

Structure of Therapy Sessions

Coping treatment group was implemented in 8 sessions, meetings were held twice a week, during the four weeks, training program was implemented to deal with stress, as follows:

Session 1: Justification of the participants in the study + pretest by Beck Anxiety Test (75 minutes).

Session 2: Concept of stress and stress theories with an emphasis on understanding the biological basis of stress + learning logic and active listening techniques and relaxation techniques, relaxation training (75 minutes).

Session 3: Model of coping the stress and the strategies to cope with stress and teaching the effective coping mechanisms + speaking skills + enhancing their sense of self-efficacy through the use of appropriate skills + (65 min).

Session 4: Conclusion of interpersonal communication skills (active listening - speaking skills) + relaxation techniques (60 minutes).

Session 5: Reviewing and defining problem solving skills and its the steps + fast relaxation training (75 minutes).

Session 6: Explaining how to use problem solving skills and interpersonal relationships in life by leader + using humor to get out of trouble (70 minutes).

Session 7: Presentation of topics to put in perspective + techniques described in this case + advanced muscle relaxation (85 min).

Session 8: Coordinating meetings of previous sessions by the therapist + explaining the future challenges of the member using the technique of projecting future interaction and collaboration with members of the team + interaction of members of the group about the previous presentations and feedback from the members of the group + application of the skills learned in the form of art-creation work along with the agreement and selection of the members + quick relaxation exercise. The appropriate statistical tools are used in this study (T-test differences between group means) to analyze the data from the survey questionnaire.

RESULTS

Independent t-test was used to evaluate the hypothesis.

Descriptive characteristics and control groups in test anxiety

Groups	n	Mean	SD
Experimental	15	-6.26	7.59
Control	15	0.20	3.07

Independent t-test comparison of the experimental and control groups in anxiety

95% confidence interval for the difference		Mean Difference	Significant Level	Degrees of Freedom	T	Test for equality of variances		Factor
Low	High					Significant Level	F	
-2/13	-10/79	-6/46	0/005	28	3/05	0/001	13/44	Hypothesis of equal variances
-2/03	-10/90	-6/46	0/007	18/47	3/05	0/001	13/44	Hypothesis of inequality of variances

As described in table 4.2, the results of the independent t-test, the difference in pre-test and post-test of the two groups is significant. Thus, the average rate of change in anxiety in the experimental group was significantly greater than the average rate of change of anxiety in the control group. Anxiety in the experimental group who received training to deal with stress was significantly lower than the control group that did not receive the training ($0.005 < p$).

Conclusions

The aim of this study was to examine the influence of ways of coping with stress to reduce anxiety in children of martyrs who are students. Based on the findings in the previous section, the results show that training on reducing students' anxiety and stress was effective. In justifying the finding that coping skills training will lead to lower levels of anxiety of students, We can say that the study is coordinated with Sakhvdasky and et al. research. Sakhvdasky and et al. demonstrated that students who suffer from high levels of anxiety, use avoidance coping skills more and the more they use these skills, their severity of anxiety increases and conversely, they found that active coping and positive interpretation reduce the anxiety. In this study, we also teach coping skills in which the use of coping skills, problem-solving and avoiding the use of avoidant coping is emphasized. This issue confirms the Misha's perspective of the use of active coping strategies which reduces the harmful effects of stress. And the result is entirely consistent with the results of Shapiro and et al. Shapiro and cet al. also observed that eight sessions reduced stress, anxiety and depression in the participants. The present findings are also consistent with safety training perspective of Maykenbam and these findings supports Mayknbam theory and the theory of stress and coping. Based on the theories of illness stress, stress does not determine the effects of the disease, but it determines the factors such as how to deal with stress and stress management intervention and its effect. In the present study it was observed that despite the stress of students, teaching coping skills reduce the stress and anxiety levels of the students significantly.

Teaching the coping skills such as relaxation training, cognitive restructuring, problem solving methods, for a short time reduce the harmful effects of stress and intensive tiredness of the students and provides them with reasonable opportunity to deal with stress to reduce the level of anxiety and adopt a more adaptive ways.

However, further studies with larger sample sizes and more accurate methodology (a control group) can assure us more about our hypothesis, but some examples of study results from other countries are shown here and we can conclude that students need to consider additional measures for the health of their soul, because they endure more psychosocial stress, therefore, adding the treatment groups in terms of coping skills training in their curriculum, can enhance the students' mental health and productivity of their curriculum to be more effective.

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