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Poster Presentation Research

The Impact of Cognitive-Behavioral Group Therapy on Anxiety, Intolerance of Uncertainty, Negative Self-Beliefs and Self-Esteem of People with Social Anxiety Disorder

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Abstract

Cognitive restructuring and exposure therapy have been integrated into a highly structured package for the treatment of social phobia termed cognitive-behavioral group therapy (CBGT). The first two sessions of CBGT for social phobia are devoted to training clients in the basic tenets of cognitive therapy. Clients learn to identify their own irrational thoughts and to challenge the content of these thoughts. Each of the remaining ten sessions begins with a review of homework assignments followed by two or three restructuring/exposure exercises. CBGT has been evaluated in controlled trials with favorable outcomes. The aim of this study was to investigate the impact of group cognitive therapy on anxiety, intolerance of uncertainty, negative self-beliefs and self-esteem of people with social anxiety disorder. An experimental research design with a single group and pre- and post-test method was used. The population in this study comprised all the students with social anxiety at the University of Mohaghegh Ardebili in 2013-2014 academic years. Using a purposive sampling procedure, the study sample consisting of 10 students with social anxiety disorder was selected through a social anxiety diagnostic questionnaire. Data were collected using the social anxiety scale, interactive anxiety inventory, intolerance of uncertainty inventory, negative self beliefs and the self-esteem scale. The statistical analysis was performed using Wilcoxon signed test. The results of this study showed no significant differences between pre-test and post-test scores on interactive anxiety, self-esteem and negative self-beliefs variables. But there were significant differences between pre-test and post-test scores of social anxiety and intolerance of uncertainty. Findings imply that group cognitive therapy has an immediate effect on social anxiety and intolerance of uncertainty, while its effects in terms of improved self-esteem and decreased negative self-beliefs may be delayed or require longer duration of therapy.

Keywords: Cognitive-Behavioral Group Therapy, Anxiety, Intolerance of Uncertainty, Negative Self-Beliefs, Self-Esteem, Social Anxiety Disorder.

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