

The Effectiveness of Acceptance and Commitment Based Therapy on Psychological Capitals and Neuroticism among Mothers of Children with Down Syndrome

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Introduction

Children with Down syndrome have a significant challenge for their families. It has been shown that mothers of children with Down Syndrome are depressed and have fewer maternal and emotional relationships with their children. Also, they experience higher levels of depression and anxiety than mothers of healthy children. One of the influential factors on psychological health is psychological capitals, which includes the four components: self-efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism. People with greater psychological capital are highly motivated and more resilient. Due to the high prevalence of Down Syndrome, mothers with children with Down Syndrome experience high stress and may prevent them from meeting the needs of their disabled children. To enhance psychological capital and mental health, psychological therapy programs have been introduced and validated, such as acceptance and commitment-based therapy (ACT). The primary goal of ACT is to increase the quality of life by minimizing the impact of ineffective control strategies and supporting value-oriented behavior change. Therefore, considering the conditions of children with Down Syndrome and its effect on the mothers of these children, this study seeks to answer the question of whether treatment based on acceptance and commitment is effective on psychological capital and neuroticism of mothers

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with Down Syndrome children or not.

Method

This research is a semi-experimental with pre- and post-test design and a control group. The statistical population of this study consisted of all mothers with Down Syndrome children who referred to the Down Syndrome Association of Mashhad. 30 mothers with Down Syndrome were selected by purposeful and convenience sampling as a research sample and randomly assigned to two experimental (n=15) and control (n=15) groups. Participants completed the psychological capital scales and the neuroticism subscale of the Five-Factor Personality Questionnaire (NEO). The experimental group received 8 sessions of ACT in 90-minute per week, but the control group did not receive any treatment. Data were analyzed by analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) and multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA).

Results

By controlling the pre-tests in the experimental and control groups, Acceptance and Commitment-based therapy (ACT) increased the psychological capitals and reduced the neuroticism in the subjects of the experimental group, compared to the controlled group ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusion

Based on the findings, Acceptance and Commitment Based Therapy (ACT) has an impact on psychological capitals and neuroticism of mothers with a Down Syndrome child.

Keywords: acceptance and commitment based therapy, psychological capitals, neuroticism, mothers, Down Syndrome.

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