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Orginal Article

The Effectiveness of Schema Therapy on Emotional Instability and Self-Injurious Behaviors of People with Borderline Personality Disorder and Drug Abusers

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Abstract

Due to coexistence of borderline personality disorder with substance abuse, it is felt necessary to pay attention to interventions. People with borderline personality disorder are at high risk for substance abuse. Also, Borderline personality disorder is the only disorder for which self-injurious behavior is a criterion behavior Reduction of symptoms and the harm caused by addiction in society is most important that make research necessary. The present study was conducted with the aim of studying the effectiveness of schema therapy on emotional instability and self-injurious behaviors of people with borderline personality disorder and substance abuse. This research was a semi-experimental study with pre-test-post-test method and control group. statistical population was all addicts living in three addiction treatment camps in Tabriz and Ahar. Milon's multi-axis questionnaire was implemented and 30 people who had highest score of borderline disorder were selected as research sample and randomly divided into two experimental and control groups. data collection tool was Milon's multi-axis questionnaire, Sanson et al.'s (1998), self-harm questionnaire, and Gratz and Roemer's (2004) emotion regulation difficulty questionnaire. The experimental group received two schema therapy sessions in 12 sessions of 90 minutes each week. Mean and standard deviation and covariance analysis were used to analyze the data. Data analysis was done by SPSS software. In order to investigate the effectiveness of schema therapy on self- injurious behaviors and emotional instability, separately, covariance tests were used. Based on the results obtained from the analysis of variance tests, the observed differences

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(decrease) in the averages of schema treatment and control groups, in the post-test, are significant in both variables. Therapeutic intervention was effective in reducing the symptoms of self-injurious behaviors and emotional instability, and schema therapy it is effective in improving self-harming behavior and emotional instability. The effectiveness of schema therapy is due to the focus of this treatment on the cognitive function of the person with an emphasis on emotions based on inconsistent schemas, and since in addicted people, the problems are mainly interpersonal, schema therapy has been able to be effective.

Keywords: schema therapy, emotional instability, self-injurious behaviors, borderline personality

Extended Abstract

Introduction

Given the coexistence of borderline personality disorder with substance abuse, the need to pay attention to therapeutic interventions is felt. People with borderline personality disorder are at high risk for substance abuse. Also, Borderline personality disorder is the only disorder for which self-injurious behavior is a criterion behavior. More than 75 percent of these individuals reported attempting self-injurious behaviors. The results of various studies show that schema therapy is effective on emotional instability, psychological well-being, and self-harming behaviors in addicted individuals, as well as individuals with borderline personality disorder. Reducing the symptoms and harms caused by addiction in society and the need to pay attention to the psychological well-being of individuals with borderline personality disorder are among the most important issues that make this research necessary. The present study was conducted to investigate the effectiveness of schema therapy on emotional instability and self-harming behaviors in individuals with borderline personality disorder and substance abuse.

Method

This research was a semi-experimental study with pre-test-post-test method and control group. statistical population was all addicts living in three addiction treatment camps in Tabriz and Ahar. Milon's multi-axis questionnaire was implemented and 30 people who had highest score of borderline disorder were selected as research sample and randomly divided into two experimental and control groups. data collection tool was Milon's multi-axis questionnaire (Millon, 1987), Sanson et al.'s (1998), self-harm

questionnaire, and Mlacic & Goldberg (2007) emotion regulation difficulty questionnaire. The experimental group received two schema therapy sessions in 12 sessions of 90 minutes each week. The control group did not receive any interventions. In the present study, the Declaration of Helsinki including: "explanation of research objectives and obtaining informed consent from the subjects, optionality of participation in the research, right to withdraw from the research, non-harmfulness of the intervention and provision of the results if desired" were observed. Mean and standard deviation indices and univariate covariance analysis were used to analyze the data. Data analysis was done by SPSS version 23 statistical software.

Results

Findings showed that the mean and standard deviation of the self-injurious behavior scores in the schema therapy group in the pre-test and post-test phases are (16.56, 3.49, 11.19, 2.85) respectively. The mean and standard deviation of scores of self-injurious behaviors in the control group are (16.37, 3.13, 16.89, 3.52) respectively. Also, the mean and standard deviation of emotional instability scores in the schema therapy group in the pre-test and post-test stages respectively (88.22, 11.8, 62.11, 10.13) and the mean and standard deviation of emotional instability scores in the control group were the order is (88/67, 11/44, 89/31, 11/56). In order to investigate the effectiveness of schema therapy on self- injurious behaviors and emotional instability, separately, covariance tests were used. Based on the results obtained from the analysis of variance tests, the observed differences (decrease) in the averages of schema treatment and control groups, in the post-test, are significant in both variables. Therapeutic intervention was effective in reducing the symptoms of self-injurious behaviors and emotional instability, and schema therapy it is effective in improving self-harming behavior and emotional instability.

Discussion

The findings showed that schema therapy was effective on emotional instability and self-harming behaviors among people with addiction and borderline personality disorder. The findings of this study on the effectiveness of schema therapy on self-harming behaviors among addicts with borderline personality disorder are consistent with the results of many studies in this field. In schema therapy, by using cognitive techniques, especially redefining the evidence supporting the schema and completing the schema registration form, the individual is placed in a non-judgmental, observer-like position and accurately defines the behaviors, and does not add or subtract anything from his or her observations. The effectiveness of

schema therapy is due to the fact that this therapy focuses on the individual's cognitive function with an emphasis on emotions based on maladaptive schemas and, by replacing adaptive emotional management strategies, leads to an increase in the individual's strategies for managing and regulating emotions. Since the problems in addicts with borderline personality disorder are mainly interpersonal, schema therapy has been effective.

Author Contributions: second author, has been responsible for supervising and strategizing the overall process of research and compiling and finalizing the corrections of the article. In developing the research plan, first author has been in charge of the process of gathering, analyzing and interpreting the findings and writing the text of the article, and in general, drawing conclusions from the findings and expanding and interpreting them jointly and with the discussion and exchange of opinions of all colleagues and accompanied by Dr. third author, The thesis advisor title was done.

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