The effectiveness of preventive-behavioural therapy and cognitive anxiety group and student's attention

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Atefeh Ferdosipour [a*], Islamic Azad University, Department of Humanities, East Tehran Branch, Iran. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9463-8579

Zahraa Mirzaei [b], Islamic Azad University, Department of Humanities, East Tehran Branch, Iran. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3000-9706

Abstract

This study was performed with the purpose of determining the effectiveness of preventive- behavioural therapy and cognitive anxiety group and student's attention. The population and sample of the study were 35 students of Azad University, East Tehran, which were selected randomly. The data collection method was the researcher-made field method. The research tools were the Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI) and the video test. Through SPSS 23 software and using the Pearson correlation method, it was concluded that there was a direct relationship between therapy and training. Research tools were observed in the BAI. Based on the results of pre-test tests, none of the SBT and REDT methods led to a significant relationship between the level of anxiety and the attention of the respondents. The paper recommends that more comprehensive measurement tools are used in future research of a larger sample size.

Keywords: Attention; Cognitive Behaviour; Effectiveness; Group Therapy; Students.

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* Address of correspondence: Atefeh Ferdosipour, Islamic Azad University, Department of Humanities, East Tehran Branch, Iran.
Email address: atefeferdosipour@gmail.com

1. Introduction

Anxiety and related factors are one of the most comprehensive areas of research in recent decades. Anxiety is a condition that occurs almost for everyone to varying degrees throughout life. Everyone experiences this feeling at least once. A little bit of anxiety in a person is natural and necessary. Still, if it passes the natural limit, it will be problematic for that person, so that s/he will not be able to get the required score in case of having a huge amount of information and skills. (Emadifar, 2017). Anxiety is a natural sense of fear that all of us experience when facing demanding and threatening situations. This issue can help us avoid dangerous situations, conscious us, and motivate us in confronting problems. But, if the feeling of anxiety is so severe, it can inhibit from doing what we want to do. Different types of anxiety disorders are seen as separation anxiety disorder, selective mutism, specific phobias, social anxiety disorder, panic disorder and agoraphobia, and generalized anxiety disorder. Anxiety is seen as a psychological state that almost all human beings experience to varying degrees throughout their lives. When it increases, it reaches a level that causes distress and conflict McLean et al., (2016).

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) is considered as one of the most common disorders characterized by persistent, excessive, and exaggerated worry about everyday issues Mclean et al. (2016). GAD is of utmost paramount significance taken into consideration by world health organizations. There are several studies around the world exhibiting that GAD encompasses major occupational, physical, and social impairments compared to major depressive disorder (Motlagh, 2016). Excessive anxiety engages other cognitive changes, as it can impair concentration and memory. Attention is attributed to a consequence of complex mental operations that involves focusing or engaging in a goal, holding or enduring, and being alert for a long time, deciphering stimulus characteristics, and shifting focus from one goal to another. One of the most considerable clinical models of attention is the hierarchical model that presents different types of attention as the following sequence: focused ability (the ability to respond to visual, auditory, tactile stimuli separately), selective attention (the ability to maintain a behavioral or cognitive set when facing irrelevant and annoying competing stimuli), sustainable attention (the ability to maintain a stable behavioral response with repeated or continuous activity), attention transfer (the ability to transfer attention between tasks with different cognitive needs), divided attention (the ability to respond simultaneously to multiple tasks)

Attention can be defined as a state of possession of one thought or something by the mind clearly and concisely, which may concomitantly happen. The instance of attention is stemmed from the executive function and is considered as one of the most important fundamental functions in the human brain. Its components are the basis for other cognitive processes. The integration ofattention systems is the requisite of all other high-level cognitive systems. Attention is an act of cognitive process that is specified as a selective focus on one aspect of the environment while ignoring the other aspects of the environment. Attention is also associated with resource processing expertise. Moreover, it is manifested that some personality traits, such as neuroticism, are greatly effective in reducing the efficiency of the attention processing system (Shahsavarani et al.,2019.

Group psychotherapy, or group therapy, is a set of open treatment processes that consists of conscious and unconscious awareness met in the present and the past. Group therapy or group

psychotherapy is parallel to individual psychotherapy, with this difference that the psychologist in this method deals with one group or several people rather than focusing on one person and his/her specific problems. Group members represent their problems in the group. They also hear feedback and other members' problems and express their opinions, feelings, and thoughts. As a result of these interactions, the members of the group contribute each other in the process of making changes, and the psychologist, as a facilitator and neutral member of the group, guides the group in the right direction until reaching each member's vision to his/her problem. CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) is a therapy method through talking to the patient and is a common type of talk therapy. In the first step, the psychotherapist attempts to catch the patient's way of thinking about himself/herself, his/her surroundings, and others.

1.1. Related Study

In cognitive-behavioral therapy, the psychotherapist is concerned only about the problems in the present time and what makes them anxious and annoyed. There are some conducted researches in this area. In the study by Keshavarz (2017), entitled "the effect of Gestalt therapy on generalized anxiety disorder and test anxiety in students," the results exhibited that the effectiveness of Gestalt therapy was hopeful in reducing generalized anxiety and improving test anxiety in students. In one study written by Emadifar (2017) entitled "the effectiveness of attention training on attention control, focused attention and dispersed attention in girl students with test anxiety," it was concluded that attention training could be used to enhance the attention and the focus of the students with test anxiety.

The results of the study carried out by Zare et al., (2014), entitled "Comparison of selective attention between depressed, obsessive, anxiety with normal patients," revealed that due to the importance of selective attention in daily life, it was suggested to make a lot effort to enhance selective attention in patients. According to the study by Khanjani et al., (2018) entitled "the effectiveness of cognitive rehabilitation on executive functions in patients with stroke," it was deduced that there was a significant improvement in the executive functions by a cognitive rehabilitation program, leading as a result of changes in the neural organization in response to injury. In one study performed by Nasiri (2015) entitled "comparison of the effectiveness between cognitive- behavior group therapy and mindfulness-based cognitive therapy on females with a generalized anxiety disorder," it was displayed that mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) could be happened to improve patients with GAD through applying different exercises.

In a study by Motlagh (2016) entitled "The effect of cognitive-behavioral therapy on reducing anxiety in adolescent girls with a generalized anxiety disorder," it was understood that cognitive-behavioral therapy minimized anxiety in adolescent girls with GAD. In one study conducted by JanBozorgi (2011) entitled "multidimensional group therapy of obsessive-compulsive disorder," the results indicated that the prepared group therapy in line with Islamic culture was considered effective in treating OCD symptoms. In one study by Khezri et al., (2012) entitled "efficacy of group therapy on reduction of psychological signs of multiple sclerosis patients," the findings illustrated that the effectiveness of group therapy was so conducive in lessening the depression and anxiety in MS patients.

The results of one study conducted by Khodadadi et al., (2015), entitled "the effectiveness of existential group psychotherapy on student's mental health," it was cleared that making use of this group therapy method was effective in improving the students' mental health. Shafiea et al., (2013) carried out one study entitled "comparison of the effectiveness of cognitive behavior therapy and interpersonal psychotherapy in decreasing non-clinical depression of pregnant women," and it was found that CBT (Cognitive Behavior Therapy) and IPT (Interpersonal Psychotherapy) were more conductive in pregnant women.

In coping with generalized anxiety and especially test anxiety, psychologists, counsellors, and counselling centers at universities used multiple methods including relaxation, cognitive therapy, and cognitive-behavioral and educational therapy for self-control skills. However, since one of the main causes of anxiety was a person's fear of the future and the Gestalt therapy was a present-centered approach, it appeared to be one of the helpful approaches to students' anxiety disorders (Keshavarz, Haj and Ghadimi, 2017). This study was attempted to investigate the existence of a significant relationship between the effectiveness of the group therapy approach, behavioural cognition on anxiety, and students' attention.

1.2. Purpose of study

The study aimed at looking for issues and problems that lead to mental disorders in the individual. Cognitive-behavioral therapy guides you in thinking differently. After new thoughts appearing, you can cope with unwanted and unfortunate events with the help of healthier and more correct behaviours. This study was performed with the purpose of determining the effectiveness of preventive- behavioural therapy and cognitive anxiety group and student's attention.

2. Methods

The research method was semi-experimental.

2.1. Data collection

Data collection was conducted through correlational type. The samples were 35 students at Azad University, East Tehran, which were selected randomly. The library method was used, and various dissertations, sites, articles, and books were included in this study. Pre-test and post-test methods were taken from students. Moreover, BAI and d2 were observed in the research process.

2.2. Sample

At first, the samples selected from Azad University, East Tehran, became familiar with the conception of anxiety, and then 10 minutes was devoted to them to complete the questionnaire. They were assured that their response would be kept confidential. They even were allowed not to write their name or specify their questionnaire with one specific sign.

2.3. Analysis

The data extracted from the questionnaires were analyzed through SPSS, the scores were recorded, and the mean, view, standard deviation, and variance were achieved through descriptive statistics. The existence of a significant relationship between therapy methods and training was determined using inferential statistics from the Pearson correlation method. BAI was proposed by Aaron Temkin Beck et al. and specifically evaluated the mild severity of clinical anxiety in individuals. The conducted works demonstrated that this inventory encompassed considerable reliability and validity. Its 92% alpha internal consistency coefficient and its validity varied by 75% by the test-retest method for one week, and its material correlation varied from 30% to 76%. Five kinds of content validity, concurrent validity, construct validity, diagnostic validity, and factor validity, were evaluated for the test. All of them indicated the high efficiency of these tools in measuring anxiety intensity (Beck et al., 1988).

There were some studies in Iran in the field of psychometric properties of this test. For example, Gharaei (1993) reported that its validity coefficient was 80% by the test-retest method with two weeks interval. Also, Kaviani and Mousoumi (1999) examined the psychometric properties of this test in the Iranian population, recorded a validity coefficient of almost 72%, and a reliability coefficient of the test-retest was reported as 83% of 93% Cronbach's alpha with one-month interval.

2.4.d2 Test

In the fifth decade of the twentieth century, after the end of World War II, d2 test was invented by the Institute for Supervision and Technology of Essen city in Germany, which was responsible for maintaining the security of the industry, mining, and transportation sector. The preliminary aim of this test was to measure the ability and competency of the driving skills of the applicants in this section.

Despite the differences of previous study and the researcher in terms of theoretical and methodological approaches, the achieved findings announced that attention property was one of the most important psychological functions which were able to distinguish between good and bad drivers, cautious and incautious workers, and drivers. Findings of some researches were collected, which were conducted before 1995 with various statistical populations such as students, adults, and people with certain behavioral disorders as well as patients admitted to psychiatric hospitals .

To this end, some techniques were exploited which were more suitable for speed test and totally all kinds of test division methods such as Speedman and Goodman halving and calculating the correlation between the two lines were used. Psychologically, the formal validity of the focus and effortful test could be justified trough self-test observation and reporting them after the test. Test's report obviously stated that performing the d2 test was required a high degree of selective attention. Furthermore, the performance of d2 test was demanding, and its success called a great deal of effort.

3. Results

Table 1

Demographic characteristics of respondents Gender of responders

Cumulative relative frequency	Relative frequency	Absolute frequency	
% 5/5	% 5/5	2	Male
% 100	% 5/94	34	Female
	% 100	36	Total

As we see, two respondents are male, and 34 remaining people are female.

Table 2

The frequency distribution chart of marital status of respondents

Cumulative relative frequency	Relative frequency	Absolute frequency	
% 77/77	% 77/77	28	Single
% 22/97	% 44/19	7	Married
% 100	% 78/2	1	Unclear
	% 100	36	Total

28 out of 36 people in the study population are single. Seven people are married, and one person has not given a clear answer to this question.

• Age of respondents

Table 3

The frequency distribution chart of gender respondents

Cumulative relative frequency	Relative frequency	Absolute frequency	Age	
% 33/83	% 33/83	30	Category 20 to 25 years	The majority of respondents aged 20 to 25 years are, in fact, 83% of the statistical sample. 5.5% between the ages of 26 to
% 11/86	% 78/2	1	Category 26 to 30 years	
% 89/88	% 78/2	1	Category 31 to 35 years	
% 22/97	% 33/8	3	Category 36 to 40 years	
% 100	% 78/2	1	Category higher than 40 years	
-	% 100	36	Total	

35 years, 33.8% between the ages of 36 to 40 years, and 78.2% are also over the age of 40. The statistical sample was 36. CBT and REBT therapies have been implemented on the statistical population, in which 14 first of them were tested with the CBT method and 22 of the next ones with the REBT method. As a result, the hypothesis of the research will be classified into two categories so that we can determine what effects are on respondents. Among the 14- member CBT group, 12 answered the research items, and 20 from the 22-member REBT group responded to the research items. As a result, the statistical sample is 12 and 20 people, respectively, and a total of 32 people.

First question: Does the group therapy reduce anxiety score?

Table 4
Descriptive statistics of dependent samples

Average criterion Error	Standard Deviation	Number	Mean		
2/84933	9/87037	12	15/1667	Pre-Test Anxiety score	Related samples
1/52484	5/28219	12	13/0833	Post-Test anxiety score	

As we see, the mean score of anxiety is decreased after CBT method has been reduced to 2 units. Also, the standard deviation decreased to 28.5, which was 87.9 in the pre-Test stage. This indicates more symmetry of data to mean.

Table 5

Correlation of dependent samples

Correlation of dependent samples

The correlation between pre-test and post-test anxiety scores was measured at a rate of 389.0. However, this correlation is rejected at an error level of 05.0. This means that correlation is not statistically significant.

Table 6

Dependent sample T Test Difference between dependent samples

Significance level	Freedom Degree	T statistics	Confidence interval 95% of the average difference		Average criterion Error	Standard Deviation	Mean	
			Higher limit	Lower limit				
45/0							Pre-Test and post-test anxiety score	Related samples
	11	/0784	7/93462	-3/76796	2/65849	9/20927	2/08333	

The obtained T-Statistics in the above table states that, despite the reduction of anxiety score in post-Test level, there is no significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores. There is no significant difference in the 5% error level, and there is also a certain distance between them, including zero. (The average difference between the intervals is -76.3and +93.7, which includes zero numbers), then it is not possible to assume that the zero that slab has the equality of pre-test and post-test scores. Therefore, the first hypothesis of the research is rejected in relation to

CBT method. The second question of research: what treatment group affects three subscales of attention CBT Method F and KL subscales at the pre-test and post-test stages are close to each other, which may affect the likelihood of a meaningful difference. However, the GZ sub-scale has an average difference of 3333.2, which is a significant number. The correlation coefficient in all three subscales had significant numbers at the confidence level of 95%.

Table 7

Descriptive statistics, correlation of dependent samples

Significance Level	Correlation coefficient	Average criterion Error	Standard Deviation	Number	Mean		
0/0054	0/745	2/79565	9/68441	12	49/8333	F-Pre-Test scale	First subscale
		3/37428	11/68883	12	49/0833	F-posttest Scale	
0/0000	0/906	2/13364	7/39113	12	55/9167	KL-Pre-Test scale	Second subscale
		2/60281	9/01640	12	55/2500	KL-Posttest Scale	
0/0000	0/864	1/55923	5/40132	12	55/4167	GZ-Pre-Test scale	Third subscale
		1/25000	4/33013	12	57/7500	GZ-Posttest Scale	

Table 8

Dependent sample T-Test, Difference between dependent samples

Significance Level	Freedom Degree	T statistics	Confidence interval 95% of the average difference		Average criterion Error	Standard Deviation	Mean
			Higher limit	Lower limit			

								Subscales 1
							F-scale Pre-Test and post	
0/747	11	0/331	5/73913	-4/23913	2/26677	7/85233	0/75000	
							test	
							KL Scale Pre-Test and post	Subscales 2
0/565	11	0/593	3/13984	-1/80651	1/12367	3/89249	0/66667	test
							GZ Scale Pre-Test and post	Subscales 3
0/013	11	-2/948	0/59155	-4/07512	0/79137	2/74138	-2/33333	test

As we observe in the above table, there is only a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test levels in the GZ subscale. The GZ-scale subscales mean –3333.2 (the pre-test stage has less mean compared to the post-test), and T-Statistics is equal to -948.2 and the level of error 013.0 (which is less than 05.0). The confidence interval is less than zero. (The average difference is between -075.4and -592.0 and therefore does not include zero). Therefore, a significant difference in the GZ scale is

Results of second test

Implementation of CBT method in the treatment group increases the GZ-based subscales and does not affect the other two variables. None of the CBT and REBT methods have a significant effect on the KL's subscales of variable attention. Third research question: How does anxiety affect three subscales of attention?

CBT Method

Table 9
Model Summary Table

Durbin-Watson Statistics	Estimated criterion Error	Modified determination coefficient	Determination coefficient	Correlation coefficient	Model

2/134	13/63	/0110	/0191	/0437	1

The correlation coefficient between post-test anxiety and post-test was 437.0. The coefficient of determination is 19%. ever, this number has been reduced to 11.0 by the modified coefficient of determination. This means that 11% of the changes in the post-test were affected by post-test anxiety. To ensure the lack of correlation of data, we have used the Durbin-Watson test if the output of this test is between the numbers 5.1 to 5.2, there is no problem of self-solidarity data, which is obtained in the table above the number of 134.2.

Table 10

Analysis of variance

Significance Level	F Statistics	Mean squares	Freedom Degree	Total Squares	Model	
/0155	2/363	439/045	1	439/045	Regression	
		185/787	10	1857/872	Residue	1
			11	2296/917	Total	

The obtained number for F statistic at the confidence level of 95% was not significant isolation of the regression model. The claim confirms the results that will come in the chart of the odds.

Table 11

Table of coefficients

95% confidence interval of the B coefficient		Significance Level	T statistics	Standard coefficients	Non-standard coefficients		Model
Higher limit	Lower Limit			Beta	Criterion Error	Coefficient B	

202/048	153/415	/0000	16/286			10/913	177/731	constant number
/0538	-2/930	/0155	-1/537	-/0437	/0778	-1/196	anxiety Post-Test	1

As we see in the table above, the value of T-Test of anxiety posttest in the confidence level of 95% is not significant, so with the implementation of CBT method, there is no significant relationship between level of anxiety and attention level.

Test Result: CBT does not cause a significant relationship between anxiety level and attention level of respondents.

4. Discussion

According to the results of the fourth season, the SPSS, pre-Test, and post-tests, which were taken from students, none of CBT and REBT methods caused a meaningful relationship between the level of anxiety and the attention level of respondents. Mean anxiety score decreased after CBT method in 2 units. The standard deviation of the pre-test was 87.9 decreased to 28.5. This means more symmetry of data to average. The correlation between pre-test and post-test anxiety scores was measured at a rate of 38.5. However, this correlation is not statistically significant. The mean score of anxiety after REBT method was reduced to 95.1 units. The standard deviation of the pre-test was 88.7 increased to 56.9. This means greater dispersion of data to mean that it is not considered as good. The correlation between pre-test and post-test anxiety scores is confirmed as 05.5. This means that the correlation was statistically significant. As a result of group therapy, there is no significant effect on reducing anxiety scores in any CBT method. F-scales, KL's subscales in the pre-test, and post-test stages close to each other, and this would affect the likelihood of a meaningful difference. But GZ subscales have an average difference of3333.2, which is a significant number.

The correlation coefficient in all three subscales had significant numbers at the confidence level of 95%. The F-scales have an average difference of 05.4, which is a significant figure. The correlation coefficient in two subscales of F and KL at the confidence level of 95% is significant. However, in the GZ scale, the correlation coefficient at the confidence level of 95% is not significant. In the treatment group, CBT subscales increase the implementation of the variable method and do not affect two GZ scale variables. In the treatment group, the reduction of REBT is considered a variable method, and it does not affect the two F-scale subscales. The effect on CBT and REBT did not consider any of the variable methods. Also, the effects of Hypericum perforate on the reduction of social anxiety, fear, freak, and other psychological problems were evaluated.

Gestalt therapy, in addition to being an experience of being in the present time, it is to the authorities that his individuality is a comprehensive way beyond the sum of his experiences, feelings, and thoughts. But to overcome his negative feelings, it is necessary to have a holistic understanding of their components and to integrate their parts into a comprehensive perceptual restoration of their current feelings and thoughts. This conscious reconstruction has involved him in

the process of self-awareness and is far from a daunting emotional forecast and therefore helps him to focus on a person's attention to the restored reality and accept that his feelings are self-owned and controlled (Prout 2002; Seyed, 2018). The results of studies indicate that excessive anxiety affects different cognitive and metacognitive abilities, as it can disrupt concentration and memory. According to the results of this study, the hypothesis of the study was confirmed that the training of attention on focused attention, sporadic attention, inhibiting the attention of female students with test anxiety, had a significant impact.

5. Conclusion

In line with this research, the study of the effectiveness of two methods of cognitive rehabilitation and educational inhibition to modify metacognitive beliefs and educational inhibition of metacognitive beliefs of students with test anxiety showed that there was a significant difference between cognitive and educational reconstruction groups in test anxiety and metacognitive beliefs.Due to the flexible phenomenon of the brain and its attempts to improve post-traumatic brain injury, cognitive rehabilitation by providing sensory inputs and creating cognitive exercises improves working memory and selective attention in people with stroke. Still, for possible reasons, it has little effect on scattered attention and executive functions (problem-solving).

Due to the limitations of the present study, the amount of the sample size of the time limits and implementation of the questionnaires that led to the validity of the test and the participation of the subjects in the presentation of the answer which caused several questionnaires to be implemented, since the aforementioned limitations may affect the generalization of the findings and limit the findings. In terms of research, it is suggested that more comprehensive measurement tools are used in future research of a larger sample size.

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