

Effectiveness of Group Therapy with Transactional Analysis on Reduction of the Tendency to Extramarital Relationships in Addicts

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of group therapy with transactional analysis on reduction of the tendency to extramarital relationships among addicts. The research method was a semi-experimental, having pretest-posttest and a control group with a month follow-up design. Research population included all addicts visiting the rehabilitation center in Kermanshah during 2016. Using purposive sampling method, 40 participants were selected, randomly divided into two equal groups of an experimental and a control. Extramarital Relationships Questionnaire were used. Group therapy interventions with transactional analysis were performed on the experimental group for 10 sessions of 2 hours once a week, while the control group did not receive the intervention. The results of repeated measures ANCOVA showed a significant difference between the rate of the tendency to extramarital relationships during post-test and follow-up. According to research results, this intervention seems to be effective in reducing the tendency to extramarital relationships among addicts .

Keywords: Addicts, extramarital relationships, transactional analysis

Introduction

Drug addiction is one of the health-related social problems in the current century, and it is considered as one of the most important concerns and social harms (Ranjbar, et al., 2017). There is usually a limited emotional exchange between the addicts and their spouses, and this situation intensifies their dissatisfaction with their marital relationships (Kishor, et al., 2013). One of risks threatening such families is marital disloyalty that results in many problems such as extramarital relationships (Levado, et al., 2013).

According to therapists, extramarital relationships mainly refer to disloyalty, sexual variety seeking, and infidelity (Mami, et al., 2018). Disloyalty includes all the behaviors and actions of a married person in relation to the opposite gender in extramarital relationships; so that it leads to friendship, intimacy, and emotional and romantic relationships. Such relationships cause especial emotions such as marital, mood, and behavioral distress and a sense of dissatisfaction for the spouse of the person involved in the relationship (Stephenson, et al., 2013).

Regarding the importance of the mentioned issues, one of the psychotherapeutic approaches that is effective in development of healthy interpersonal relationships and growth of intrapersonal

skills is mutual relationship analysis (Murakami, et al., 2006). However, the effectiveness of group counseling by mutual behavior analysis has been approved in the increase of marital adjustment (Rezaei Ostovar, et al., 2018), increase of hopefulness in the female adolescents receiving methadone treatment (Ranjbar Soudjani, et al., 2017), decrease of marital conflicts (Amini, et al., 2013), increase of communication skills (Fathipour, et al., 2010). Therefore, regarding the important role of mutual behavior analysis in improvement of intrapersonal and interpersonal skills (Ranjbar Soudjani, et al., 2017) and the serious need of addiction treatment centers to psychotherapy and especially group training programs, the present research investigates the effectiveness of mutual relationship analysis group training in decrease of the addicts' tendency to extramarital relationships. The research hypothesis was as the following: The group training by mutual relationship analysis is effective and efficient in decrease of the addicts' tendency to extramarital relationships.

Method

The research method was a semi-experimental design having control group with pretest-posttest, and a one-month follow up period. The population included all the male addicts referring to addiction treatment centers of the city of Kermanshah during 2016. By purposive sampling, 40 people with the age of 25-50 years, after completed the extramarital relationship tendency questionnaire and getting the highest scores, were selected and randomly assigned to the experimental and control groups. The research tools included the following: Demographic Characteristics Questionnaire and the extramarital relationship tendency questionnaire.

The extramarital relationship tendency questionnaire (ERQ). It is 21 items with 5-point Likert scale, having positive and negative load items, scoring 5 to 1 / 1 to 5 respectively. The questionnaire has 4 sub scales namely: Dissatisfaction with emotional relationships, dissatisfaction with sexual relations, sexual variety, sense of revenge with overall internal consistency of 0.93 (Shirdel, 2006).

The participants of the experimental group received group training by mutual relationship analysis (based on the studies performed by Torkan, 2006; Bern, translated by Fasih, 2010; 2012). The 10 group sessions were held once a week for two hours. The control group was kept in the waiting list for two months. The follow up test was done one month after the last session. Data analysis was done by analysis of variance (ANOVA) with repeated measures.

Findings

Table 1 presents the pretest and posttest descriptive statistics of the variables.

Table1. Descriptive statistics of the scores of extramarital relationship tendency in pretest, posttest, and follow up

Source		pretest		posttest		follow-up	
Indicators	n	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Groups							
Experiment	20	30.77	70.5	60.67	48.5	50.67	90.5
Control	20	10.76	30.5	70.76	89.5	21.77	81.5
Total	40	70.76	50.5	10.72	39.5	40.72	64.5

The effectiveness of the intervention was evaluated by repeated measure ANOVA. According to the results of Levene's test measuring the equality of variances in the two groups in terms of extramarital relationship, the sig levels of the two groups were higher than 0.05. So, it can be concluded that the experimental and control groups are at a same level in terms of the dispersion of the pretest and posttest scores of extramarital relationships (confidence level=95%). Also, F statistic (Mauchly's sphericity test) and M-Box test (extramarital relationships) were respectively used for checking the sphericity of the variance-covariance matrix and the homogeneity of the variances; both the statistics were obtained higher than 0.05. So, all the assumptions of repeated measure ANOVA were approved. In this analysis, the two experimental and control groups were considered as between-subject factors; extramarital relationship tendency was considered as the covariate in the pretest and as the within-subject factor in the posttest and follow up. According to the table 2 and sig values reported for extramarital relationship tendency (F=17.212 and P=0.001), it can be stated that there is a significant difference between the two groups. So, it can be concluded that the effect of time has not been significant; rather, the intervention i.e. group training by mutual relationship analysis has been effective in decrease of extramarital relationship tendency. Meanwhile, the intervention effect was sustainable in the posttest and follow up.

Table2. The results of repeated measure ANOVA for the mean scores of extramarital relationship in pretest, posttest, and follow up

Effects	Source of change	df	F	P
Within subject	tendency to extramarital relationships	1	0.649	0.420
	tendency to extramarital relationships and Group	1	0.160	0.682
	Error	37		
Between subjects	Group	1	17.212	0.001
	Error	37		

Discussion and conclusion

The result of the present research are consistent with the findings reported by Naghibi et al (2017), Ranjbar Soudjani, et al. (2017), Rezaei Ostovar, et al. (2017), Amini, et al. (2013), Fathipour, et al. (2010), and McKim, et al. (2011).

To explain the mentioned findings, it can be stated that group training of mutual relationship analysis enables the subjects to control their relationships with other people and achieve a higher satisfaction with their interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, by promoting the ego states and stroke seeking, the person can increase honesty and intimacy in his/her interpersonal relationships. In this way, emotional withdrawal will decrease. So, mutual relationship analysis helps the persons to control their automatic emotional reactions in the face of problems and enables them to express their emotions to other people especially the opposite gender rather than following the others and being affected by emotional involvements; they will be also able to follow their own rational thoughts (Booth, 2007). This research has tried to use training sessions and tasks to improve the addicts' negative relationships that lead to their tendency to extramarital relationships. Improving the addicts' improper behaviors and their relationship with their spouse can decrease their conflicts and increase their attention to the positive behaviors of their partners. This improvement can finally lead to a decreased marital burnout; so, it brings more hopefulness and viability in their relationships. Also, they can become more willful in recovering their relationship with their spouse. These changes can lead to the decrease of high-risk behaviors and increase of loyalty among the spouses. In fact, communication skills enable the persons to review and modify their relationships and these skills are usually so poor before receiving education. Moreover, inefficient communication skills can affect the marital relationships. So, education of communication skills can improve the marital relationships and decrease the misunderstandings and conflicts and increase the couples' attention to the positive aspects of their spouse's behaviors. The final result is the increase of marital adjustment and development of emotional relationships (Rezaei Ostovar, et al., 2017).

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