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The comparison of the effect of transactional analysis and emotion regulation strategies on irrational beliefs and decision making styles in female adolescents

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Introduction

Irrational beliefs are the basis of many psychological problems, especially depression. On the other hand, people's beliefs are related to their decision-making styles and how to process or estimate information that is relevant to decision-making. In order to develop rational beliefs and reduce the harm caused by emotional decisions and irrational thoughts and beliefs, methods and information based on thoughtful thinking should be taught and promote the use of these methods. Since the structures of rational thinking in adolescence begin to progress and complete, this period can be considered one of the most sensitive and important stage of human development; therefore the purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of transactional analysis and emotion regulation interventions and to explain the differences between these two methods on irrational beliefs and decision-making styles of female adolescent.

Method

In this research a quasi-experimental method was used with pre-test and post-test design with control group. Transactional analysis and emotion regulation interventions were considered as independent variables and irrational beliefs and decision making styles as dependent variables. The sample of this study consisted of 34 female students from 2nd to 3rd grade, who were studying in high schools in Fardis during academic year of 2016-

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2017. They were selected through convenience sampling method and were randomly assigned to three groups. Irrational beliefs and decision-making styles of all two experimental and one control groups were examined in two stages (pretest and posttest), using Scott and Bruce's General Decision Making Styles Questionnaire (1995) and Jones' Irrational Beliefs Scale (1969). Transactional analysis was administered, based on Jones and Stewart (1987) training package and Gross' (2015) model was used for training emotion regulation. The data of the experimental and control groups were analyzed using analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) and multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA).

Results

Before using analysis of covariance, the normality of the data distribution (Shapiro-Wilk test), homogeneity of variance (Levene's test) and homogeneity of regression slopes were tested. All the assumptions were confirmed for all variables. The results showed that both approaches, transactional analysis and emotion regulation were effective on reducing adolescent irrational beliefs ($p < 0.01$). However, there was no significant difference in effectiveness of the two interventions on those variables. In addition, the results indicate that the effects of both approaches, transactional analysis and emotion regulation, on rational, dependent and avoidant decision making styles were significant, but no significant difference was found between posttest scores of the experimental groups ($p > 0.05$), indicating there is no significant difference in effectiveness of transactional analysis and emotion regulation on mentioned decision making styles.

Conclusion

The results showed that transactional analysis and emotion regulation can be effective on reducing irrational beliefs and dependent and avoidant decision making styles. Also both interventions could increase the rational decision making style in adolescents. Since both approaches affect the cognitive functions of individuals, the same effect of these two training methods can be reasonable.

Keywords: transactional analysis, emotion regulation, irrational beliefs, decision making style