Original Research

The Effectiveness of Compassion Therapy Group on Successful Identification of Risky Adolescents

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Abstract

Background: The present study was conducted with the aim of investigating the effectiveness of compassion therapy group on the successful identification of risky adolescents.

Method: The research method was semi-experimental with a pre-test and post-test design with experimental and control groups. The statistical population included all risky male adolescents and the sample size included 30 students who had obtained the highest risk score after the Iranian Adolescent Risk Scale (IARS) test and were selected by cluster sampling and randomly in two There were experimental and control groups. The measuring tool was the Benyon and Adams Identity States Questionnaire (EOM-EIS-2). Analysis of covariance was used to analyze the data.

Results: The results showed that in the experimental group, who participated in the compassion therapy group sessions, successful identification was strengthened and they had a significant difference in the post-test of successful identification compared to the control group. As a result, compassion therapy group can help these people by increasing the identification of risky adolescents.

Conclusion: Compassion therapy group is effective in identification of risky adolescents and can help these people by increasing the identification of risky adolescents.

Keywords: Compassion Therapy, Successful Identification, Risky Adolescents

Submitted: 13 Sep 2024 Revised: 17 Oct 2024 Accepted: 10 Nov 2024

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Introduction

Adolescence is a very sensitive phase of a person's life, in which the adolescent is faced with extensive cognitive and structural changes. In this age group, there are various risks that threaten them due to the requirements of this age and the areas of risk-seeking, excitement and curiosity, especially among teenagers, and these risks can be interpreted as a tendency to risky behaviors (1). Tendency to risky behavior is actually a form of escape from effective confrontation with stressful situations. Risky behaviors include a wide range of harmful behaviors such as smoking and drug use, aggression and fighting with others, harming oneself and others, illicit sexual relations, etc. (2). Risky behaviors are behaviors that endanger the physical, mental, and social health and well-being of individuals and society. A person who is accompanied by extensive physical, psychological and social changes, due to the lack of self-confidence of teenagers and the lack of correct understanding of their behaviors, is an important stage in the emergence of risky behaviors (3). Risky behaviors are behaviors that endanger the physical, psychological, and social health and well-being of individuals and society (4).

Prevalence of high-risk behaviors is one of the most serious threats to mental health and well-being among adolescents, which in recent years, due to the rapid changes in societies, has been considered as a behavioral and social disorder that threatens social order (5). If these behaviors are stable in a person's personality, his lifestyle is interpreted as unhealthy. The broad concept of risky behavior includes a series of behaviors that not only cause serious harm to the person involved in this behavior and the important people in his life, but also cause unintentional harm to other people (6).

Various factors influence the personality and behavior of teenagers, and in this research, one of these factors will be mentioned, which is identity. In other words, identity develops in a long-term interaction with the physical and social world, and for this reason, a part of the growth process of identity formation is risk-seeking, which may appear in the form of unhealthy and risky behaviors (7). People with normative identity styles are described as being subservient to the opinions of others, conscientious and having pre-formed goals (8). The formation of identity is a combination of skills, worldview and childhood identifications that become a more or less coherent, continuous and unique whole that provides a person with a sense of continuity of the past and orientation towards the future (9). The process of identity development is a progressive process that includes the conscious integration of one's beliefs about oneself, one's belief about how others view her, and commitment to personal values and life goals (10). Identity formation is considered as a process of integration of individual changes, social demands and expectations for the future. Identity is a change in the function of self-concept, internalization of values, goals, expectations and self-regulation processes (11). Therefore, in this research, a group approach focused on compassion is used in order to successfully identify adolescents prone to risky behaviors.

The basic principles of compassion-focused therapy point out that external soothing thoughts, factors, images, and behaviors must be internalized, and in this case, the human mind will calm down in the face of these internals, just as it reacts to external factors (12). Additionally, in compassion-focused therapy, people learn not to avoid or suppress their painful feelings. Therefore, in the first step, they can recognize their experience and have compassion for it (13). In self-compassion exercises, relaxation, mindfulness, self-compassion and mindfulness are emphasized, which will play a significant role in calming a person's mind, reducing stress and negative spontaneous thoughts (14).

Due to the fact that adolescence is an important period that can affect a person's life path and due to the special physical, psychological, personal and social conditions of this period, adolescents face various risks more than other ages; In addition, considering the recent attention of counseling and psychotherapy experts to the field of compassion and the inadequacy of researches in this field, the present study seeks to examine this question, does compassion therapy group have an effect on the successful identification of risky adolescents?

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In their research, Chubforoshzadeh et al. (2023) investigated the mediating role of self-efficacy in predicting high-risk behaviors based on identity styles and parental supervision in adolescents. The results of path analysis showed that normative identity style, parental supervision and self-efficacy had a direct effect on high-risk behaviors. The results of the Bootstrap test showed that the self-efficacy variable played a mediating role in the relationship between parental supervision, identity style and risky behaviors. As a result, it is necessary to plan relevant institutions and educate parents, considering the important role of parental supervision, self-efficacy level and adolescent identity style in the occurrence of high-risk behaviors (15).

Shabani and Bagheri (2023) presented a research titled predicting high-risk behaviors based on parenting styles and identity styles in adolescents. The research findings showed that authoritative parenting style, identity commitment style, confused identity style and authoritarian parenting style can predict high-risk behaviors in teenagers. The role of parenting styles and identity styles in the formation of high-risk behaviors of adolescents is significant (16).

Bahramian et al. (2020) investigated the effectiveness of group therapy based on self-compassion on the happiness and resilience of students with risky behaviors. The results of the data analysis showed that the treatment based on self-compassion was effective on the resilience and happiness of students. Based on the results of the present study, it can be said that the use of self-compassion-based therapy has had an important impact on the lives of students with risky behaviors and has led to the improvement of the happiness and resilience of these students (17).

The results of Gregory et al.'s research (2017) show that people with a history of self-harm have less self-compassion (18).

The study of Berzonski and Sichiuch (2016) shows that there is a significant relationship between informational, normative and confused identity styles with dimensions of psychological well-being, and commitment to identity can play a role in the psychological well-being of adolescents (19).

Method

The current study is a semi-experimental type with pre-test-post-test along with a control and follow-up group. The statistical population of this study consists of all risky adolescents of Iranshahr city, three schools were selected by cluster method to select the sample of this population. In this research, first, one region (Delgan region) was selected from among the education regions of Iranshahr city, and three schools were selected from the second secondary schools of this region, and the risk tolerance scale of Iranian adolescents was implemented on 200 second secondary students who were willing to cooperate. Among them, 30 people who had the highest risk score in this questionnaire (114 and above) were selected and randomly divided into two groups of 15 people: one group as a control and one as an experiment (test) group. After that, the identification questionnaire was implemented on both groups, then the test group received psychological interventions based on compassion during 10 sessions, and the control group did not receive any training. After the training, the data results were analyzed using SPSS-21 software and they were analyzed by the method of analysis of covariance with repeated measurements.

In this research, two questionnaires were used, the explanations of each of which are briefly stated. Zadeh Mohammadi et al. (2011), with the help of tools such as Adolescent Riskiness Questionnaire (ARQ) Galune et al. (2000) and Youth Risk Behavior Control System Questionnaire (YRBSS); Brenner et al. (2004) and considering the cultural conditions of Iranian society, the scale the Riskiness of Iranian adolescents was created. In the research of Zadeh Mohammadi et al. (2011), construct validity explains 64.84% of the variance of risk taking. Cronbach's alpha for the whole scale was 0.94 and for its subscales was in the range of 0.93 to 0.74, which indicates the good reliability of this scale. 2. The identity states questionnaire was designed by Benyon and Adams in 1986 by modifying the identity states questionnaire of the first version, and according to the theory of Erikson and Marcia. Rahiminejad (2000) also studied the reliability coefficient of this questionnaire with the retest method in Iranian students, which ranges from

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0.54 to 0.76. The construct validity of the questionnaire was checked using factor analysis. The fourth factor (identity of progress) was identified with a specific value of 2.52 according to the appropriateness of the materials of the four scales of the identity measurement questionnaire. The aforementioned questionnaire, the progress identity scale with a factor load of 0.30 to 0.69 confirms the existence of 4 identity factors in the Iranian group (20).

Results

In this part, we present the average and standard deviation of the subjects' scores in the successful identity.

As Table 1 shows, the average score of successful identification in the test group is (58.600) and in the post-test stage is (69.066). Also, in the control group, the average score of successful identity in the pre-test stage is (60.533) and in the post-test stage is (60.733).

In this research, in order to test the hypotheses and determine the significance of the difference between the scores of the experimental and control groups in the variable of successful identity, univariate covariance analysis was used. Before analyzing the data related to the hypotheses, they were examined to ensure that the data of this research meets the underlying assumptions of covariance.

Compassion therapy group has an effect on the successful identity of risky adolescents

As can be seen in the above table, after controlling the effect of the pre-test, the effect of compassion therapy group on the post-test scores of the two experimental and control groups was investigated in the variable of successful identity. As the data in Table 2 shows, there is a significant difference between the average of the two groups ($P<0.05$ and $F=8.341$). It means that its effect was 0.23. Therefore, the research hypothesis is confirmed. This result means that the compassion therapy group was effective in the subjects of the experimental group in the post-test stage, and their successful identity increased to a significant and statistically acceptable level.

Discussion

The present research aims to investigate the effectiveness of compassion therapy group on the successful identification of risky adolescents. The results of the present study show that compassion therapy group was effective in the subjects of the experimental group in the post-test stage, and their successful identity increased to a significant and acceptable level from a statistical point of view. Therefore, compassion therapy group has an effect on the successful identification of risky adolescents; According to Marcia et al. (1993), people who are in a successful identity base have experienced a crisis, successfully resolved it, and are pursuing their chosen goals. Bishab et al. (2002) have reported an inverse and negative linear relationship between the complexity of the identity base and students' scores in the alcohol consumption test. Students with less identity complexity had reported a higher level of alcohol consumption both in terms of consumption frequency and quantity. In addition, an inverse linear relationship was observed between the complexity of my identity base and the annual level of alcohol consumption (6). In line with the above research, the investigation of the current hypothesis showed that there was a significant difference between the post-test scores of the two experimental and control groups (by controlling the effect of the pre-test scores) in the variable of successful identity. As a result, this hypothesis is confirmed, that is, compassion therapy group is effective on the identification of risky adolescents. And the above trainings have had a positive effect on the identification process.

Conclusion

Identity is one of the factors that is very important in adolescence and teenagers know their identity at this age. So, if they recognize their identity as a risky teenager and the recognition they find of themselves is accompanied by anger, violence and aggression, it can endanger their current life and can cause problems in their future. The formation of identity is considered one of the basic topics in adolescence, which can guarantee the continuation of a person's life. Considering the treatment of compassion, which can create positive effects on successful identity, the researcher used this treatment and reached the mentioned results. Self-compassion activates areas of the brain

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responsible for reducing stress and creating positive emotions. Self-compassion is an adaptive psychological process that can help regulate negative emotion. In this way, a person with high self-compassion looks at negative emotions with awareness and without judgment, as a result, she creates a sense of common human experience that reduces the possibility of engaging in self-harming behavior.

Acknowledgment:
None
Funding
None

Authors Contributions
The author contributed to the data analysis. Drafting, revising and approving the article, responsible for all aspects of this work.

Ethical Consideration
The research data and literature have not been copied from any works author upon reasonable request.

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Tables

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of the successful identity score in the experimental and control groups

Stage	Statistical indicators / Groups	mean	standard deviation
Pre-test	experiment	58.600	8.13
	Control	60.533	7.01
	experiment	69.066	9.00
	Control	60.733	8.91

Table 2. The results of univariate covariance analysis on the average scores of the successful identity post-test in the experimental and control groups.

Source of changes	sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	mean square	F	Significance level	Statistical power
pre-exam	264.889	1	264.889	3.607	0.068	0.118
group	612.609	1	612.609	8.341	0.008	0.236
error	1982.978	27	73.444			
Total	129129.000	30				

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