



The Effect of REBT on Reducing the Depression and Anxiety of Women in Qom

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ABSTRACT: The present study is aimed to examine “the effect of REBT on decreasing depression and anxiety of women living in Qom.” Thirty people were randomly chosen in this intervention. Then, the group was randomly divided into two test and control groups (each 15 people). Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) was administered twice a week for test group in eight 2h training sessions. To measure the dependent variables of the study, SCL-90-R was applied. Data analysis was conducted using Covariance Analysis. Results indicated significant difference between mean test and control groups regarding depression and anxiety. Based on the results, REBT significantly reduced these variables.

Keywords: REBT, Depression, Anxiety

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INTRODUCTION

Depression has long been considered as a major mental disorder. However, for the last two decades, it has been, more than ever, the focus of attention due to the suffering of patients and the heavy load on national treatment resources caused by this disease (Weissman et al. 1996). Depression has different effects on humans and its symptoms appear in different aspects of behavior. Depression affects motivation and reduces the energy and interest of the individual towards the surrounding issues. It seems that depression is a kind of disorder which most people and patients, going to hospitals, complain about. According to studies in Europe and America, between 9% to 26% of women and 5% to 12% of men have had a major depressing illness during their lifetime. Moreover, it is estimated that between 4.5% to 9.3% of women and 2.3% to 3.2% of men are at some time, afflicted by this disease (Weissman et al. 1996).

Anxiety means discomfort and points to the mental and physical sensitivities in response to threats, including actual or imaginary threats expressed and created by the organism (Dyrbye, 2006). Anxiety is usually defined as a diffused, vague and unpleasant feeling of fear and concern. The anxious person is mostly worried about unknown dangers. Furthermore, the anxious person shows a combination of the symptoms below:

Increased heart rate, shortness of breath, anorexia, laziness, dizziness, sweating, insomnia and tremor, all of which are coupled with fear and anxiety. Anxious people are not aware of the reason for their fear. The intensity of anxiety can change from the feeling of mild discomfort to the fear of complete chaos and depends on the individual's evaluation of the

intensity of the threat. We must note that this threat is often originated from a self-conscious source and situations which threaten the competency, security and values of the individual causes the most intense anxieties (Dyrbye, 2006). For treating anxiety, medication, diet, psychotherapy, family therapy, modeling and music therapy are used which can mostly mitigate anxious states of the patient and completely remove it. Moreover, hospitalizations is recommended in extreme cases whose main objective is nurse care, increasing confidence and recuperation for the patient (Sareen and Stein, 2000).

One of the appropriate therapies for depression and anxiety is rational-emotional behavior therapy (REBT). REBT is a psychotherapy approach which was introduced by Albert Alice in 1955. This therapy was first called rational therapy (RT). After some years, it was changed to rational-emotional therapy (RET) and eventually in 1993, according to Alice, its final name was changed to rational-emotional behavior therapy (REBT) (Ellis, 2000). Many studies have shown that this approach can be effective in reducing depression and anxiety. For instance, Conway (1999) showed in his research that this treating approach can significantly reduce the depression of teenagers. In another study, David et al. (2008) showed that rational-emotional behavior therapy and cognitive therapy has been effective in reducing the depression symptoms of the research participants. These researchers have reported that treating effects were persistent after a six month follow-up.

According to the previous research and existing theories, the main question of this study is that whether rational-emotional behavior therapy has been effective

in reducing the depression and anxiety of women living in Qom.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study uses Pre-test post-test scheme with a control group. The population consists of all women living in Qom in which 30 woman between 18 to 45 years old were selected voluntarily (available sample) using the SMS system of Kimiyayeh Mehr psychiatric institution and randomly distributed among test and training groups. In order to study the effect of REBT on reducing depression, anxiety and paranoid thoughts, this method was performed on the test group for 8 weeks. After collecting data, Covariance analysis was used to test our hypothesis. Moreover, SPSS version 19, a statistics software, was used for statistical analysis.

SCL-0-R questionnaire was used to evaluate the dependent variables. This test consists of 90 questions to evaluate psychological symptoms and it was first

designed to show the psychological aspects of physical and mental patients. Using this test, we can distinguish healthy people from the patients. This check list is suitable for rapid evaluation of type and intensity of the patient`s symptoms through self-evaluation. The validity and durability of this measure is approved by many studies (Clark, 1983). The durability of this measure was calculated in this study by Cronbach`s alpha value of 0.84.

RESULTS

In Table 1, the mean and standard deviation of dependent variables were estimated in REBT pretest and posttest. Multivariate Covariance Analysis (MANCOVA) was used for hypothesis testing. Covariance analysis results are presented in Table 2. In the test, the statistical values gained are significant at 0.05. Then, it can be concluded that the therapy is effective in reducing the depression and anxiety.

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of dependent variables of the study in pretest and posttest

Variable	Pretest				Posttest			
	Test		Control		Test		Control	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Depression	16.66	11.77	12	6.43	8.73	7.22	15.06	8.61
Anxiety	8.73	7.15	6.06	4.25	11.33	9.58	7.13	6.32

Table 2. A summary of dependent variables covariance analysis

Variable	Source	SS	DF	MS	Sig.	R ²
Depression	Modified model	1369.23	2	698.12	0.001	0.57
	Coefficient	75.32	1	75.32	0.17	
	Before	1291.70	1	1291.70	0.001	
	Approach	352.43	1	352.43	0.005	
	Error	1032.56	27	38.24		
Anxiety	Modified model	638.93	2	319.46	0.001	0.59
	Coefficient	1.12	1	1.12	0.97	
	Before	612.80	1	612.80	0.001	
	Approach	112.97	1	112.97	0.001	
	Error	435.86	27	16.14		

DISCUSSION

Results of this study showed that REBT can reduce depression and anxiety symptoms among women participating in this research. Results of this study are in line with Heimberg et al. (2010), Deale et al (1997), Deale et al (2001), Lopez et al. (2001), Twisk and Maes (2009), David et al. (2008) and Conoway (1999).

A possible explanation of the effectiveness of REBT on reducing depression and anxiety symptoms can be presented according to Alice`s theory. Alice believes that anxiety and behavioral disorders originate from the imaginary and meaningless thinking of human beings. Therefore, the existence of false beliefs in mind leads to depression and anxiety (Alice, 2000). It is clear that knowledge and beliefs are one of the considered aspects in the process of cognitive-behavioral therapy. During this therapy, beliefs and knowledge of the

individual change in relation to life events and in turn, his negative emotions, e.g. depression and anxiety, are also reduced.

According to results of this study, it is recommended to use REBT to reduce ill symptoms of different patients, particularly people going to psychiatrists. Moreover, it is suggested to researchers to investigate the effect of this therapy on other mental disorders in future research.

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