

# Effectiveness of Group Counseling with Solution Focused (Brief) Therapy (SFBT) on Increasing Self-Efficacy of Fifth Grade Primary School Female Students

Zahra Sarvi<sup>1</sup> & Mitra Ghazi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> MA in Academic Counseling, Allameh Tabatabaei University, Tehran, Iran

<sup>2</sup> MA in Educational psychology, Allameh Tabatabaei University, Tehran, Iran

Correspondence: Zahra Sarvi, Allameh Tabatabaei University, Tehran, Iran. E-mail: esfehani.mohamad3@gmail.com

Received: June 16, 2016

Accepted: June 28, 2016

Online Published: July 8, 2016

doi:10.5539/mas.v10n12p1

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/mas.v10n12p1>

## Abstract

The present study is aimed at investigating the effectiveness of group counseling with solution focused (brief) therapy (SFBT) on increasing self-efficacy of fifth grade primary school female students. Therefore, from among 88 fifth grade primary school female students, 16 individuals who had achieved the lowest scores in the pretest were selected and then divided into two 8 participant groups. SFBT was performed in five session for the experimental group and the second group received no educational and therapeutic intervention during these sessions. Regarding the obtained results, the research hypothesis was confirmed at the significance level  $p > 0.01$ . These results indicate that using SFBT, primary school students' self-efficacy can be improved.

**Keywords:** group counseling, solution focused (brief) therapy

## 1. Introduction

Adolescence is a sensitive period in the life of each person and it can be called the critical period. This period of life is with severe emotions, sense of uncertainty, incompatibility and aggression. In this period, the society demands adolescents to be independent and change their relations with adults and achieve compatibility and job preparedness (Bernard, 2010), while adolescents are mostly sullen, cynical, short-tempered, and aggressive.

In fact, this period can be considered as the period of conflicts because adolescents exerts efforts for intimacy, but they fear from intimacy and mostly avoid it and violate against control, while they need guidance and organization, they usually are autonomous and shy and are involved with their world mentally. In such conditions, adolescents severely feel instability and uncertainty which are stressful and anxious for them (Curie, 2014).

On the other hand, this wide range of changes and transformations and achievement of appropriate strategies for adolescents are very important, and shortage in this regard can have damaging consequences such as abnormalities, insecurity, personality and emotional problems, and behavioral and criminal behaviors (Nina et al. 2011). One of the cases taken from Bandura's leaning theory is self-Efficacy. This basic construct is related to individuals' judgment about their own abilities in doing tasks or compatibility with a particular situation (Parvin, 2005). As Bandura believes, self-efficacy is a constructive ability via which cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioral skills of human beings are effectively organized for realizing different aims. Therefore, main component of his approach is self-efficacy (Shultz and Shultz, 2008).in this theory, environmental factors and cognitive processes are effective on human behaviors and these cognitive processes cause the formation of individuals' perceptions and expectations of self-efficacy (Pachariz, 2002 as cited in Ghanbari et al. 2015). It is mostly a sense of autonomy and skills in the environment (Murphy and Murphy, 2006) which provides individuals' practical confidence for successful conduction a task (Hammond, 2005).

Moreover, Bandura believes that beliefs of self-efficacy is founded on individuals' perception of their own performance (Kurt et al. 2011) and results in the formation of senses of efficiency, adequacy, and adaptability with life. These perceptions of self-efficacy result in the formation of one of the unique abilities in human beings which is changed or assessed by them. Therefore, if self-efficacy perceptions are controlled, the occurrence of

appropriate functional behaviors will be expected in these individuals (Pachariz, 2003). Assessments obtained from this performance have effects on a lot of aspects of life such as aims, decision making, the degree of exerting efforts for doing tasks, perseverance in facing challenges, both positive and negative patterns of thinking and generally to behave, and thinking and feeling (Hejazi et al. 2007).

In this regard, Chen (2005) investigated the effectiveness of Group Counseling with Solution focused (brief) Therapy on art students with low self-concept. Their results indicated that this method is significantly effective on students' self-concept. Results obtained from Younesi et al. (2014) indicated the effect of Group Counseling with Solution focused (brief) Therapy on increasing self-efficacy and adaptability of male high school students. Another research indicated that this method has significant effects on male high school students' self-esteem, self-perception, and self-accountability (Jokar et al. 2012). In addition, there is a power relationship between self-efficacy and emotional intelligence. A lot of researchers believe that high emotional intelligence has relationship with better performance in self-regulation, representation of independence, sympathy with others, self-control, optimism, and self-efficacy (William et al. 2008; Beverly et al. 2008). Investigations of Rahi and Rastochi (2008) indicated that emotional intelligence has a positive relationship with self-efficacy. Therefore, regarding the role and significance of self-efficacy (individuals' efficacy) sense of competence, efficiency and coping with life, the present study is to answer this question that whether Group Counseling with Solution Focused (brief) Therapy is effective on primary school female students?

## 2. Methods

In the present study, the quasi-experimental design with pretest-posttest and control group was used. To conduct this study, from among 88 fifth grade primary school students, 16 individuals who had achieved the lowest scores in the pretest were selected and then divided into two 8 participant groups. SFBT was performed in five sessions for the experimental group and the second group received no educational and therapeutic intervention during these sessions. Each session last averagely about 75 min. the content and aim of each session are summarily as follows:

First session: to familiarize the members of the group with each other

Second session:

Aim: to help in targeting and concentrating aims.

Task: to apply the best strategies and trained methods.

Third session:

Aim: to change behavioral patterns resulting from the lack of control over negative emotions

Task: The use of solutions presented in the Group to control negative emotions

Fourth session:

Aim: Disruption of behavioral patterns resulting from the lack of social competence

Task: to practice bravely behaviors

Fifth session:

Aim: to summarize and answer questions

Task: A short presentation of previous sessions and solutions used by group members, presenting 16 questions of miracle for each of the members (the assumption of occurring miracle and solving problems and expressing changes as well as senses caused by it), giving positive feedback of members to each other, investigating their own advancement in academic affairs, social proficiency, and controlling negative emotions.

## 3. Research Instrument

The instrument for collecting data is SEQ-C. This questionnaire was developed by Morris (2002) for assessing children's and adolescents' self-efficacy in four social, academic, emotional, and general fields. It includes 23 items and is based on the Self-Efficacy Questionnaire developed by Bandura et al. (1996).

Conducting and scoring of the test is in such a way that each item is evaluated in a five-point scale including 1 (never) to 5 (very high). In conducting this test, subjects are asked to select one of the options according to their own abilities in doing the task. Then, with the sum of the value of selecting each item for each subject, four scores are calculated. In the present study, only the total score of self-efficacy is used. For the general effectiveness, the score range is from 23 to 115. The reliability of this test in general self-efficacy is 89% and its validity is 73%. Normalization of the test was conducted by Tahmasian (2005) in Iran.

### Descriptive analysis of self-efficacy between experimental and control group

The dependent variable of the research is sense of self-efficacy consisting of three components of competence, respect and perseverance, and assertiveness. Each student of the sample has two values from pretest and posttest which are at two control and experimental groups. The data collected from the sense of self-efficacy were investigated by considering the period of the test and groups with measures of central tendency and dispersion. As follows, descriptive analyses of these variables are presented.

The results of statistical indices in pretest for self-efficacy and its components in the two experimental and control groups are presented in table 1 and chart 1.

Table 1. statistical indices in pretest-posttest for self-efficacy and its components in the two experimental and control groups

Posttest چولگی		Pretest		No.	Group	Period
SD	Mean	SD	Mean			
<b>5.592</b>	<b>28.125</b>	3.271	18.875	8	Experimental	Competence
<b>2.588</b>	<b>23.125</b>	5.503	22.000	8	Control	
<b>6.861</b>	<b>28.750</b>	7.482	23.375	8	Experimental	respect and perseverance
<b>6.414</b>	<b>23.000</b>	5.127	25.500	8	Control	
<b>6.022</b>	<b>21.625</b>	3.889	12.375	8	Experimental	Assertiveness
<b>4.567</b>	<b>17.000</b>	4.166	15.750	8	Control	
<b>14.871</b>	<b>78.500</b>	9.706	54.250	8	Experimental	Self-efficacy
<b>7.736</b>	<b>63.125</b>	8.311	63.250	8	Control	

### 4. Inferential Analysis

With regard that the aim of the present study is to investigate the effect of intervention of Group Counseling with Solution focused (brief) Therapy (SFBT) on the sense of self-efficacy and its components including competence, respect and perseverance, and assertiveness, with the pretest-posttest design and control and experimental groups, therefore, for investigating the results of this intervention, ANCOVA was used.

Investigating basic assumptions of the test: temporal distribution normality is important when the sample size is low. Distribution of values in pretest and posttest of dependent variable and its components in the two groups is investigated with Kolmogorov - Smirnov Test. The significance level calculated for all variables in groups was bigger than 0.05 supporting their normal distributions. Another assumption of ANCOVA is homogeneity of the variance of the dependent variable in the compared groups. Variance homogeneity was investigated with Levine's test and its significant level was bigger than 0.05 supporting the homogeneity of variances in the posttest of the research variables in the experimental and control groups. The results of distribution normality of the research variables are indicated in table 2, and homogeneity of variances in the posttest for the dependent variable is indicated in table 3.

Table 2. The results of distribution normality of the research variables

Variable	Group	No.	Variables of pretest		Variables of posttest	
			z-score	Probability of Error	z-score	Probability of Error
Competence	Experimental	8	.664	.770	.682	.741
	Control	8	.557	.915	.585	.883
Respect and perseverance	Experimental	8	.526	.945	.421	.994
	Control	8	.679	.746	.529	.943
Assertiveness	Experimental	8	.564	.908	.470	.980
	Control	8	.687	.733	.582	.887
Self-efficacy	Experimental	8	.631	.820	.439	.990
	Control	8	.720	.677	.763	.605

Table 3. Homogeneity of variances in the posttest for the dependent variable

Dependent variable	homogeneity of variances test			
	f-score	df 1	df 2	Probability of Error
Competence	2.338	1	14	.149
Respect and perseverance	.204	1	14	.658
Assertiveness	1.259	1	14	.281
Self-efficacy	1.795	1	14	.202

Therefore, Group Counseling with Solution Focused (brief) Therapy (SFBT) results in increasing self-efficacy and its components: competence, respect and perseverance, and assertiveness in female students.

Table 4. The results of MANCOVA in the two groups

Test	Value	f	df hypothesis	df error	Sig.	Eta square
Group Pillai's Trace	.774	7.632 <sup>a</sup>	9.000	20.000	.000	.774
Wilks's lambda	.226	7.632 <sup>a</sup>	9.000	20.000	.000	.774
Hotelling effect	3.434	7.632 <sup>a</sup>	9.000	20.000	.000	.774
The greatest root of error	3.434	7.632 <sup>a</sup>	9.000	20.000	.000	.774

The results of table 4 indicate that significance levels of all tests confirms the use of MANCOVA. These results also indicate that in the groups, there is differences at least in terms of one of the dependent variables. The eta square indicates that the difference between the two groups is generally significant regarding dependent variables. The magnitude of this difference is 77.4%. That is 77.4% of the variance related to the difference between the two groups is because of the mutual effects of dependent variables.

Table 5. A summary of results of MANCOVA in investigating the effect of cognitive rehabilitation of executive functions on improving selective attention of adolescents cured from leukemia

Eta square	Sig.	F	Mean of squares	Sum of squares	Index	Sources of changes
<b>.278</b>	<b>.044</b>	<b>4.997</b>	<b>100.767</b>	<b>100.767</b>	Competence	The effect of groups for posttest
<b>.296</b>	<b>.036</b>	<b>5.464</b>	<b>185.855</b>	<b>185.855</b>	Respect and perseverance	
<b>.408</b>	<b>.010</b>	<b>8.973</b>	<b>177.511</b>	<b>177.511</b>	Assertiveness	
<b>.397</b>	<b>.012</b>	<b>8.551</b>	<b>1154.528</b>	<b>1154.528</b>	Self-efficacy	

Regarding the data in the above table, because the f-value with df as 1 and 15 are significant in competence components (F=4.997, P=0.044), respect and perseverance (F=5.464, P=0.036), assertiveness (F=8.973, P=0.010) and the total number of self-efficacy (F=8.551, P=0.001) at the significance level  $\alpha=0.05$ ; therefore, it can be conclude that Group Counseling with Solution Focused (brief) Therapy (SFBT) results in increasing self-efficacy and its components: competence, respect and perseverance, and assertiveness in female students. In addition, the eta value indicates that the effect of Group Counseling with Solution Focused (brief) Therapy (SFBT) resulting in increasing self-efficacy and its components: competence, respect and perseverance, and assertiveness in female students is from 27% to 40%. Therefore, the research hypothesis is confirmed with 95% of confidence.

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study was conducted with the aim of effectiveness of group counseling with solution focused (brief) therapy (SFBT) on increasing self-efficacy of fifth grade primary school female students. The results obtained from investigating the hypothesis at the level  $p>0.01$  was confirmed. These results indicated that this treatment method can increase self-efficacy in primary school students. The results obtained from the present study in terms of the effectiveness of SFBT are consistent with the results of Jess and Franklin (2009) who used this

method for students with negative self-percept and problems in managing behaviors. The results also are consistent with findings of Chen (2005) investigating the effect of this method on self-percept of students in academies of Taiwan. Findings also are consistent with Dezhbakhsh (2010) conducted with the aim of investigating the effectiveness of this treatment method on changing satisfaction with life and sense of self-efficacy of couples referring to the counseling center of Boushehr Township.

Regarding the fact that researches conducted in Iran mostly investigated the effect of SFBT in family relations and the reduction of job stress among adolescents and the youth, and none of them have studied the effect this method in relation with children, and also the present research has been conducted about enhancing the sense of social self-efficacy with regard to children and adolescents' needs to assertiveness and communication skills is very low in Iran, the present study has considered solution-focused concepts in a new domain because this approach emphasizes on abilities due to short-term session and relies on partial changes as main factors for greater changes.

## References

- Amini, S. (2004). Examining the role of self-efficacy, self-regulation, self-esteem and academic achievement of students in junior high school, Experiment field of study in Shahr-e-Kord. Master's thesis Teacher Training University.
- Carson, J., et al. (1999). Family therapy, ensuring efficient treatment. Sh. Navabi Nejad. (Trans.). Tehran: Parents and Teachers Community.
- Chen, F., & Chou, H. W. (2005). Study of solution focused brief group counseling for low self-concept locational high school students. *British Journal*, 13, 1-9.
- Curie, G. (2014). Theory and practice of psychotherapy. Y. Seyyed Mohammadi (Trans.). Tehran: Arasbaran.
- Davis, T., & Sinta, J. A. (2007). School counseling, solution-focused approach. N. Adib Rad and M. A. Nazari (Trans.). Tehran: Elm.
- Dezhbakhsh, P. (2010). The effectiveness of solution-focused counseling group therapy on the changes in life satisfaction and self-efficacy couples referred to counseling center in Boushehr. Master's Thesis.
- Fersing, C. (2009). School counseling in the present day: Theory, Research, Application. A. M. Nazari and A. A. Soleimanian. Tehran: Elm.
- Karimzadeh, M. (2005). Academic and non-academic self-concept study and identify predictive of academic achievement in the life of the high school girl students in Tehran (Mathematics - Physics and Humanities). Master's thesis.
- Kinn, J., & S-franklin, C. (2009). Solution focused brief therapy in school. *Children and Youth Services*, 31(4), 4G4-470
- Macdonald, A. (2009). Solution focused brief therapy evaluation list. Research coordinator, EBTA
- Mortazavi, S. (2010). Interrelationships between self-efficacy and perceived support from family, teachers and friends is closely associated with life satisfaction in a sample of high school student status, in Tehran. *Journal of Educational Innovation*, 8, 48-26.
- New some, W. S. (2004). The impact of solution focused brief therapy with At-risk junior high school students. *Children and School*, 87, 83-91.
- Nina, R., Sylvie, M., & Kimberly, G. (2012). Spiritual and Psychosocial Adjustment of Adolescents with Chronic Illness: The Role of Cognitive Attributions, Age, and Disease Group. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 1-7.
- Pajares F. (2003). Self-efficacy, beliefs, motivation and achievement in writing: A review of the literature. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 19, 139-158.
- Parvin, L., & John, O. B. (2015). Personality psychology theory and research. M. J. Javadi and P. Kadivar. Tehran: Aeish Publication.
- Perki, W. W. (1999). Self-percept and academic achievement M. Mir Kamali (Trans.). Tehran: Seitaroun.
- Printrich, P., & K-Degroot, E. V. (1990). Motivational and self-regulated learning components of classroom academic.
- Procheska, J., & Norkeras, J. (2008). System of Psychotherapy. Y. Seyyed Mohammadi (Trans.). Tehran: Ravan.

Saif, A. A. (2013). Research psychology. Tehran: Agah.

Tahmasian, K. (2005). Validation and standardization Efficacy Questionnaire Form of Iranian Children (SEQ-C). Tehran: Agah.

### **Copyrights**

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>).