Effectiveness of Client-centered Play Therapy on Fear and Anxiety in Preschool Children

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Abstract

Background and Objective: Preschool period is playing main role in development and adjustment of children. Fear and anxiety are of externalizing disorders, providing untreated it leads to negative effects on individual and social relationship specially in adulthood therefore, this research investigates the influence of client-centered play therapy on fear and anxiety among preschool children (5-6 aged).

Materials and Methods: This study is a quasi-experimental study with pre and post- tests. 14 male and female preschool children (5-6 aged) who were obtaining scores higher than cut-off in Spence anxiety scale (SAS) and fear survey schedule for children-revised (FSSC-R) parents’ form questionnaires were selected, and then they were assigned randomly to the control and experimental groups. The experimental group received techniques of client-centered play therapy for six treatment sessions (45minutes for each session). The fear and anxiety were measured at the beginning and at end of therapeutic session, utilizing the Spence Children's Anxiety Scale and fear survey schedule for children-revised (FSSC-R) parents’ form. Statistical analysis conducted by analysis of covariance (ANCOVA).

Results: There is significantly difference in Mean (SD) scores of pretest 130.4 (3.3) and posttest 127.1 (4.6) fear (P<0.001, F= 24.6) and in scores of pretest 58.6 (2.6) and post-test 48.28 (3.6) anxiety (P<0.001, F=19.5) between preschool children in pre and post-test.

Conclusion: Findings indicated that client-centered play therapy has effective in reducing behavioral problem such as fear and anxiety disorders in preschool children. Therefore, it can be useful and applicable as the psychological therapeutic interventions for decreasing behavioral distress in children.

Keywords: Play therapy, Fear, Anxiety, Children, Preschool