ABSTRACT

The present study was carried out to find out the Impact of Cognitive Behavior Therapy on Anxiety, Depression and Coping Strategies in Adolescent Students.

The period of Adolescence is one of the relatively brief period of the human life span as well as the most critical and unique period. Adolescence is a period of active growth and development in all aspects such as physical, psychological, emotional, sexual and social. This stage usually begins with the onset of puberty and lasts until the child completes the sexual maturation. Within the broad meaning of the term adolescence, the present study has focused on this particular period of transition from childhood and adulthood. Adolescence begins around 12 or 13 years of age extends into the early or mid twenties especially in the Indian context as individuals of this particular age group still dependant on their families of origin and complete independence from their family ties have not yet been achieved though in legal terms they are ‘independent adults’. The “I am not a child anymore” attitude of the adolescents while they are pulling to break away from the bondage of their families, which restricts their efforts at complete freedom due to their inexperience, results from ‘emotional turmoil’ during this stage of the life span. The ‘emotional turmoil gives rise to many psychological difficulties that affect different areas of functioning of the adolescents, for which intervention strategies that treat them as adults, but that challenge and alter their wrong thinking patterns are needed. In this context the present study focused on how effective Cognitive Behavior Therapy is on this age group in reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression; and enhancing adaptive coping strategies, which are a few among the many correlates of psychological-turmoil of this age group.
The present study has been carried out with the objective of studying the impact of Cognitive Behavior Therapy on Anxiety, Depression and Coping Strategies in Adolescent Students and secondly, to help the adolescents to reduce their anxiety and depression, and enhancing the adaptive coping strategies to face the problems effectively. Based on the above objective the following hypotheses were formulated:

1. Cognitive Behavior Therapy will have a positive impact in reducing the level of anxiety in adolescent students.

2. Cognitive Behavior Therapy will have a positive impact in reducing the level of depression in adolescent students.

3. Cognitive Behavior Therapy will have a positive impact on enhancing coping strategies in adolescent students.

4. Coping strategies will have a significant relationship with anxiety and depression.

5. Gender will have a significant influence on anxiety, depression and coping strategies in adolescent students.

6. Socio-economic status will have a significant influence on anxiety, depression and coping strategies in adolescent students.

With the above objectives and hypotheses, for the purpose of the present study 380 adolescent students were screened with the help of questionnaires to assess the anxiety, depression and coping strategies. Based on the scores finally 120 participants were chosen for the study who had scored high in anxiety and depression, low scores on problem focused coping strategy and high scores on avoidant focused coping strategy. The participants were classified into two groups namely Experimental group (N= 60, Males=30. Females=30) and Control group (N= 60, Males=30. Females=30). The participants of experimental group received 12
sessions of Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) of approximately 60 to 90 minutes per week, for 12 weeks and the other group did not receive any intervention. All the participants of the experimental group successfully completed the 12 sessions of Cognitive Behavior Therapy. Participants of the control group or non-experimental group did not receive any intervention program during these 12 weeks. After two weeks of follow up, post assessment was carried out on both the groups with the same questionnaires that were used for initial screening. The scores of the two groups on the same questionnaires were compared with each other, as well as scores of the experimental group before and after the intervention program was also compared using statistical techniques to find the effectiveness of CBT in reducing anxiety and depression, enhancing problem focused coping and reducing avoidant focused coping in adolescent students.

After making detailed analysis of the results with statistical techniques, it has been found that Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) has a positive impact in reducing the level of anxiety and depression, and enhancing adaptive coping strategy such as problem focused coping in adolescent students. The study also found significant difference between male and female adolescent students in anxiety, depression and coping strategies before intervention program. The present study also found that coping strategies have significant relationship with anxiety and depression. Finally, the results of the study also had shown that socio-economic status influenced greatly on adolescent students’ anxiety, depression and coping strategies.