



Research Paper

Effectiveness of Resilience-Based Training for Mothers on Reducing Parenting Stress and Promoting Resilience of 4–6-Year-old Children

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Abstract

Aim: The objective of the present study was to determine the effectiveness of resilience-based training for mothers on reducing parenting stress and promoting resilience of 4–6-year-old children. This study was a quasi-experimental study with a pretest-posttest design. In this study, using convenience sampling method, 24 mothers with 4–6-year-old children in Meybod, who were studying at Nobahar Preschool Center during 2019-2020 were selected and randomly divided into experimental and control groups. The experimental group underwent children resilience training program for nine sessions of 90 minutes and the control group received no intervention. The participants in both groups completed Parenting Stress Index and Child and Adolescent Resilience Scale before and one week after the intervention. The results showed that resilience training for parents significantly reduced parenting stress and increased children's resilience.

Keywords: Resilience training, parenting stress, mothers, resilience of 4–6-year-old children.

Introduction

Children comprise a major portion of the world's population. According to the latest report of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) in 2020, there are about 1.9 billion children in the world, making 27% of the world's population. Hence, addressing their mental health helps them be mentally and physically healthy, and play their social role better (Hayden and Mash, 2014). Among the factors affecting child development, family is the first and most enduring element, which in almost all societies is considered a constructive factor and the cornerstone for development of the child's personality and future behaviors (Amiri and Kalkian, 2012). Among family members, mothers are the first person to build a close relationship with children, not only during the fetal period, but also after that. Due to the central role of mothers in the psychological and emotional development of children, mother's mental health is one of the most fundamental factors that shape child's personality (Diaz, 2005). Parenting stress which most mothers experience in several areas of life related to parenting is the result of a perceived mismatch between parental demand and individual resources (Rabiee-Kenari et al., 2014). Such stress has not only negative impacts on maternal health, but also destructive effects on the child (Hughes et al., 2015). Resilience-based training is one of the important interventions to improve mothers' mental health and reduce their stress (Shahriarimanesh et al., 2020). Studies have shown the effectiveness of resilience training for mothers on increasing psychological well-being and reducing maternal parenting stress (Halstead et al., 2018; Kaboudi et al., 2018; Ambrosio et al., 2021; Chitra et al., 2018; Tabatabaei et al., 2020). In addition, different theoretical models support resilience training for parents, especially mothers (McCobin, 1996; quoted by Sixbey, 2005; Tommy et al., 2012; Henry et al., 2015). However, in today's stressful life, no child is safe from stress and even children who are not exposed to stress experience pressures and expectations (Arianfar et al., 2016). Therefore, the importance of raising resilient children becomes clearer than ever. Hence, the objective of the present study was to investigate the effectiveness of resilience training for mothers with 4–6-year-old children on promoting and nurturing children's resilience and reducing parenting stress.

Methodology

This study used a quasi-experimental design with pretest-posttest and a control group. The statistical population included all mothers with 4–6-year-old children in Meybod during 2019-2020. The sample consisted of 24 mothers whose children were studying at Nobahar Preschool Center. These

mothers were selected by convenience sampling method and randomly divided into experimental and control groups. The participants first completed the Parenting Stress Index (PSI) (Abidin, 1983) and the Child and Adolescent Resilience Scale (Angar and Liebenberg, 2011). Then, the experimental group received a training program for promoting and developing children's resilience in nine sessions of 90 minutes, but the control group did not. One week after the last session, the same scales were given to the participants of both groups again. Data were analyzed with descriptive (frequency, mean and standard deviation) and inferential (multivariate analysis of covariance) statistical methods.

Results

Table 1. Results of analysis of covariance to investigate the effects of resilience-based training on post-test scores of parenting stress and children's resilience by controlling the effects of pre-test

Variable	Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean squares	F	Significance	Eta squared	Statistical power
Parenting stress	Pre-test	379.48	1	379.48	21.66	0.003*	0.21	0.99
	group membership	268.83	1	268.83	27.25	0.002*	0.44	0.97
Children's resilience	Pre-test	306.33	1	306.33	33.74	0.001*	0.32	0.99
	group membership	211.95	1	211.95	37.21	0.002*	0.69	0.98

0.01 >P*

Table 1 shows a significant difference between the experimental and control groups in terms of the variables of parenting stress ($F = 27.25$, $P < 0.01$) and children's resilience ($F = 37.21$, $P < 0.01$) in the post-test. In other words, resilience-based training reduced parenting stress and increased children's resilience, and the effect of the intervention on parenting stress and children's resilience was 0.44 and 0.69, respectively. This finding means that 44% and 69% of the changes in the variables of parenting stress and children's resilience were explained by group membership (resilience-based training), respectively.

Discussion and conclusion

The study results showed that resilience training for mothers was effective on reducing parenting stress. In other words, resilience-based training approach helps mothers become aware of their individual characteristics and abilities, use resilience as an internal resilient factor, and increase their

power by learning problem-solving, and help their child act more effectively in the face of adverse conditions (Hosseini Ghomi and Jahanbakhshi, 2021). Also, the study results showed that resilience training for mothers was effective on increasing children's resilience. Resilience training can lead to the strengthening of abilities such as managing negative emotions, problem solving, and constructive thinking in mothers, which improves the parent-child relationship, and mothers encourage their children to do their favorite hobbies and activities, help improve self-efficacy and self-confidence, and finally promote and nurture their children's resilience (Fogarty et al., 2019). The limitations of the present study included recruiting only mothers and its cross-sectional nature. Therefore, it is suggested to conduct longitudinal studies to investigate if the effectiveness of this program sustains. It is also suggested to conduct studies on fathers and compare the results with the present study results. In addition, it is suggested that relevant counselors and specialists use intervention programs to increase parental resilience at schools, especially in regions that lack professional facilities and counselors.

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