



Original Article (Quantified)

Comparing the effectiveness of group reality therapy and positive attitude training on academic procrastination in female students with academic burnout in high school in Ardabil city

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to compare the effectiveness of group reality therapy and positive attitude training on academic procrastination in female high school students with academic burnout in Ardabil city. The present research method is experimental (pre-test-post-test design with control group). The statistical population of this study includes 400 female high school students in the second year of the Ardabil city in the academic year 2024-2025. The academic burnout questionnaire was randomly distributed among them, and among the students who scored high in this questionnaire and had academic burnout, 90 people were randomly assigned to three groups (30 in the first experimental group, 30 in the second, and 30 in the control group). The research instrument is the Solomon and Roth-Bloom Procrastination Questionnaire. The first group received Glasser (1999) group reality therapy training for 7 sessions, and the second group received Quilliam (2003) positive attitude training for 8 sessions, and then the third group, the control group, did not receive any intervention. In the following stages, all three groups answered the research questionnaires again, and then the data were collected and analyzed using SPSS statistical software. The results showed that group reality therapy and positive attitude training reduce academic procrastination in female students, and group reality therapy reduces academic procrastination more than positive attitude training.

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Education is the foundation of the progress of human society, and as the core of this system, students play an important role in promoting and improving the state of society (Sheikh-ul-Islami et al., 2015). Therefore, the educational policies of the education institution, in addition to scientific development and expanding the level of literacy and information, should also include the growth and development of the mental health of the community. Children and adolescents spend the best years of their lives in school, and experiencing any failure or success during this period has a profound impact on their positive or negative attitude towards themselves and their abilities (Soltani Majd et al., 2014).

Psychological harms in society in general and among students in particular arise from defective and imperfect infrastructures and contexts, which require intervention and research in this area. These harms can be explained among students in three specific areas: individual, organizational, and family (Sharififard et al., 2020). Among the psychological harms that negatively affect students' academic performance is academic burnout. It causes adverse physical and psychological effects on students (Fallah Madvari et al., 2019).

Procrastination is a common human behavior that has been widely studied over the years. It is often viewed as negative because it can lead to missed deadlines and other consequences (Zhu, 2023). Procrastination is defined as a lack of self-regulatory function and a behavioral tendency to delay doing what is necessary to achieve a goal (Ellis & Knass, 2013). Soroushnia (2022) in his research showed that positive-oriented education has an effect on academic procrastination in students. Positive psychology is one of the newest branches of psychology. This specific field of psychology focuses on human success. While many other branches of psychology focus on abnormal and disordered behaviors, positive psychology focuses on helping people become happier and more fulfilled. Therefore, given the lack of studies and the gap in the subject area of this study, the researcher was motivated to conduct this research in order to investigate this situation more precisely. He is faced with the basic question: Is there a significant difference between the group reality therapy intervention and positive attitude training in their effectiveness on the aforementioned variable of academic procrastination in female students with academic burnout?

Theoretical Framework

Group Reality Therapy

Group reality therapy, which is considered one of the most innovative approaches to counseling and psychotherapy, is based on the theory of choice and control, and considers the cause of psychological problems to be in individuals' choices and the individual's lack of responsibility in satisfying their needs; in this treatment, efforts are made to enable individuals to meet their basic needs through better choices (Karimi et al., 2020).

Positivity

Positive psychological states are a sample of human abilities that constitute the main theme of positive psychology: happiness, enjoyment, flexibility, resilience, self-control, optimism, optimistic explanatory style, hope, sense of efficacy, goal setting, meaning, love of knowledge, wisdom, originality, ability to be psychological, autonomy (Farnam & Madadzade, 2017).

Academic procrastination

Procrastination is a pervasive behavioral pattern observed among individuals in society and at different levels, from laypeople to educated scientists; procrastination has a negative impact on education due to its importance in the field of education (Ayadi et al., 2021).



Academic burnout

Burnout means the emergence of negative attitudes, behaviors, and feelings in the face of severe psychological pressures related to work or education. In fact, academic burnout causes adverse physical and psychological effects on the student. The most important symptoms of academic burnout include emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and decreased personal performance (Khojasteh & Abdoli, 2023).

Khojasteh & Abdoli (2023) investigated the effectiveness of positive thinking intervention on academic burnout and academic engagement of students. The findings of the implementation of two questionnaires showed that positive thinking training has a significant effect on academic burnout and academic engagement of students; therefore, it can be concluded that positive thinking training has improved academic burnout and academic engagement of students. Also, positive thinking training in students has eliminated negative thoughts and fostered positive thoughts, increased the energy and empowerment levels of students, and provided the opportunity for students to free themselves from negative thinking, turn failure into success, and turn threats into opportunities.

Zhu (2023) in a study titled Positive and Negative Aspects of Procrastination in College Students showed that, on the positive side, aggressive procrastination can help increase productivity and creativity as deadlines approach. This last-minute rush can also lead to feelings of accomplishment and pride in completing tasks under pressure. How to empower students to overcome negative procrastination behaviors and how to use positive procrastination behaviors to improve students' learning and productivity are discussed in this literature review. There are also limitations in recent studies, such as small sample sizes, future studies should incorporate these factors into the experimental design. This study can provide insights for designing relevant college intervention programs.

Research Methodology

The present research method is experimental (pretest-posttest design with control group). The statistical population of this study included 400 female students of the second year of secondary school in Ardabil in the academic year 2024-2025. The academic burnout questionnaire was randomly distributed among them. Among the students who scored high in this questionnaire and had academic burnout, 90 people were randomly assigned to three groups (30 in the first experimental group, 30 in the second experimental group, and 30 in the control group). The research tool was the Solomon and Roth Bloom procrastination questionnaire. The first group received group reality therapy using Glasser's (1999) training method during 7 sessions, and the second group received positive attitude training intervention (Quilliam, 2003) during 8 intervention sessions. Then the third group, the control group, did not receive any intervention, and in the following stages, all three groups answered the research questionnaires again.

Research findings

Data were collected and information was analyzed using SPSS statistical software. The results showed that group reality therapy and positive attitude training reduced academic procrastination in female students, and group reality therapy reduced academic procrastination more than positive attitude training.

Conclusion

The present study aimed to compare the effectiveness of group reality therapy and positive attitude training on academic procrastination in female students with academic burnout in high school in Ardabil. The results of this hypothesis are consistent with the findings of the



studies of Khojasteh & Abdoli (2023), Zhu (2023), Abron et al. (2023), Hassani et al. (2023), Dehghani et al. (2022), Soroushnia (2022), Sheikhi et al. (2022), Lambert et al. (2021), and Kotera et al. (2021). In this regard, Soroushnia (2022) showed that positive education is effective on academic meaning, academic motivation and academic procrastination in male students of the second year of secondary school in Tehran at the $\alpha=0.01$ level.

According to the results of the study, the following suggestion was made:

-if group reality therapy and positive education are included as an optional course unit in the students' curriculum, this can greatly improve the psychological state, rebuild social relationships and resolve problems more logically in students.