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The Impact of Sand Play Therapy on the Improvement of Responsibility in Male Students

Vahideh Yousofzade^{1*} and Mahmoud Sabahizad²

1. Department of Educational Psychology, Bandar Abbas Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas, Iran
2. Department of Educational Scences, Bandar Abbas Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas, Iran

*Corresponding author: Yousofzadeh, V.

Abstract This study aimed to determine the effect of sand play therapy on the improvement of responsibility in the second grade elementary school male students in 2015-16 academic years in the city of Kahnooj. The statistical population of this study includes all secondary school students in 2015-16 academic years in Kahnooj elementary schools as 4230 students. In this study, the pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design was used with control group. There are two groups in this study. Both groups were assessed at the same time and before the implementation of the independent variable and both groups were reassessed at the same time and after the implementation of the independent variable. The subjects were selected randomly and were placed in the groups. The test group was in the domain of the independent variable but this variable was not conducted on the control group. Gough (1984) responsibility questionnaire was used and frequency, mean, standard deviation, percentage and table were used in the descriptive statistics in order to analyze the data and in the inferential statistics, Chi2 test was used to analyze the research data via SPSS and covariance and independent t test. The covariance analysis results showed that sand play therapy is significant on the improvement of responsibility in the second grade elementary school male students in the city of Kahnooj at 0.001. So, the hypothesis was confirmed.

Keywords: sand, sand play, responsibility, games

Introduction

Playing is the way that helps adults to understand and reform children's social expectations and images. Children are encouraged to do some tasks in play therapy and the therapist shows reacts to them or participates in it (Paul Henry Mason et al, 1989: 391).

Playing helps the child to know himself and identify his surrounding world by discovering mental and physical capabilities using imagination, to develop his sight view, to change the world into a controllable complex in his mind and to control his mind in the strong flow of sensations and love form outside world to him. Playing is the way through which children can express their positive emotions and open a way through negative emotions (Qaemi, 1996: 46). The play therapy is an approach that helps problematic children until they can solve their problems by themselves through games. Meanwhile, it indicates the fact that playing for children is as a natural tool with the aim of knowing their self and their internal characteristics to do them. In this therapy, the children are given opportunity to express their annoying thoughts and internal problems through playing and show them similar to the adult therapy that they express their problems through talking (Akslayn, 1990:20).

Play and play therapy is of methods that has significant and beneficial consequences and justifies emotional and stressful situations in a positive way. Play will cause the reduction of stress caused by environmental stresses, comfort creation and the player relaxedness (Harviz,

1979).

Among the therapeutic games, sand play therapy is a non-verbal technique in which children express their conflicts, desires and emotions by building their world in the sand tray. The therapist plays the role of silent observer during creating the scene by the child, the explanation and interpretation is done until several trays are made by children at the set time (Mohammadi, 2005:10). This study investigates the effect of sand play therapy on the improvement of responsibility among Kahnnoj city elementary school male students and has been developed in five seasons.

Methodology

In this research, quasi-experimental or semi-experimental methods are used for there is not the possibility of controlling or manipulating the variable or variables in this study. In this study, the subjects were randomly divided into two test and control groups. The plan can be displayed using signs as follows:

Table 1. Pre-test and post-test design with test and control groups

Post test	Independent variable	Pre test	Groups
+	+	+	Test
+	-	+	control

As the figure shows, pretest and posttest are implemented in both test and control groups and this is only the test group that is affected by the effect of the independent variable and the control group is not affected.

The statistical population of this study included all second grade elementary school male students in 2015-16 academic years in the city of Kahnnoj. The total number of students was 4230.

The following questionnaires were used to collect the required information of the study.

Responsibility Questionnaire (CPI-RE):

The scale was first introduced along with 14 other scales in "California Psychological Inventory" by Gough (1984) (marnott, 1990). Responsibility assessment scale has 42 questions to assess features such as loyalty, dedication, hard work, diligence, confidentiality, discipline-based behavior, logic and sense of responsibility (Marnott, translated by Nikkhoo, 1995).

The reliability coefficients of responsibility scale through split-half and Cronbach's alpha in Askari, Enayati and Roshani research (2011) is 0.70 and 0.81 respectively and in Hamidi and Qeytasi research (2010) was equal to 0.50 and 0.55. In another study, the reliability of this test in Iran was 0.81 through retest (Saadati Shamir, 2004).

In this study, sand play therapy is held in ten 30-minute sessions and the description of the procedure is discussed as the following:

Introducing the sand play equipment:

In this study, a box with dimensions of 70 by 60 inches with a depth of 10 cm is used. The walls and the floor of the box are painted by blue color and it was filled with sand up to 5 cm. The mini puppets and toys are also used their list of which is as follows:

- human puppets (father, mother, boy, doctor, nurse, stone age man)
- fantasy dolls (Superman, Spiderman, Mickey Mouse)
- soldier doll and war equipment (tanks, flags)
- farm animals (dogs, cats, birds and wild animals)
- a big house and a small house with furniture and appliances

- variety of vehicles: planes, boats, helicopters, jeeps, buses, police cars, ambulances, vans, trucks and fire truck
- driving pointers: Stop, No Entry, speed limit, etc.
- trees entanglement (Zolmajd, 2002).

Instructions of sand play therapy:

Instructions of sand play therapy is a general guide to inform students how to begin the play, how to use the equipment and how to play the game that can be expressed as follows at the beginning of the meeting: Here we have a sand box and some different toys, I ask you to look at the toys carefully, for example, you can use animals in the picture. You can make whatever picture you like and use whatever toy you want. If you put the sand away, you will see that the floor of the box is blue. This could be a sea or lake and if you do not like, you have not to do it. Now starts. You have 30 minutes to make your picture and in the end, you must choose a name for the picture and explain it to me.

Covariance test analysis was used to analyze the data.

Results

Quantitative description indexes of responsibility in boys are listed in the table below in both test and control groups. Also, the condition of the most important descriptive indicator of this variable (mean) is specified.

Table 2. Quantitative description of responsibility in the control and test groups

Variable	Statistical indexes	Control group		Test group	
		Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
Responsibility	Mean	3.25	3.43	3.27	3.74
	Standard deviation	0.50	0.49	0.48	0.56
	variance	0.25	0.24	0.23	0.32

After ensuring the normality of the total scores of responsibility in the test and control groups, and the homogeneity of variance in the pretest to run the above test, independent t test was used to compare the difference (pre-test, post-test).

Table 3. Results of t-test for difference (pre-test, post-test) of exam anxiety mean scores of test and control groups

Variable	Group	Mean	Standard deviation	Degree of freedom	t	Level of significance
Mental health	Test	-0.6	1.77	18	7.740	0.0001
	Control	-12.90	4.70			

According to Table 3, we find that there is a significant difference between (pretest-posttest) the mean of students in the test group and the control group in terms of increasing individual responsibility ($p = 0.0001$ and $t = 7.740$). In other words, sand play caused an increase in the responsibility of the test group according to the mean difference of responsibility (-12.90) of the test group compared to the mean difference of the control group (-0.6). Thus the first hypothesis is confirmed.

Table 4. Results of independent t-test for difference (pre-test, post-test) of mean scores of the social responsibility of test and control groups

Variable	Group	Mean	Standard deviation	Degree of freedom	t	Level of significance
Social responsibility	Test	0.9	2.55	18	-9.378	0.0001
	Control	12.30	2.86			

According to Table 4, we find that there is a significant difference between (pretest-posttest) the mean of students in the test group and the control group in terms of social responsibility ($p = 0.0001$ and $t = -9.378$). In other words, sand play caused an increase in the responsibility of the test group according to the mean difference of social responsibility (12.30) of the test group compared to the mean difference of the control group (0.9). Thus the second hypothesis is confirmed.

Conclusion

The aim of the present study was to investigate the effect of sand play therapy on the improvement of responsibility in the second grade elementary school male students in 2015-16 academic years in the city of Kahnooj. The results showed that sand play affects the improvement of individual and social responsibility.

As was mentioned in the results, the results of the hypotheses of the present study are consistent with the other research results as was mentioned earlier. It seems that sand play therapy can be one of the important and effective techniques in the improvement of responsibility in children and adolescents.

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