

LETTER TO THE EDITOR



Therapeutic Competencies in Reducing Emotional and Social Distress after Cognitive Behavior Therapy Training Program

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Dear Editor!

Psychotherapeutic competence is conceptualized as a therapist's general and treatment-specific knowledge level, skill level, and values or attitudes while implementing therapeutic interventions (Kühne, Meister, Maaß, Paunov, & Weck, 2019). Assessment of psychotherapeutic competences are essential to training, supervision, clients care, quality control, and life-long practice (Kühne, Lacki, Muse, & Weck, 2019). Assessment of therapeutic competence may provide therapists with formative and summative feedback and may guide self-reflection (Muse & McManus, 2013). This study is interested in investigating how cognitive therapy training could help school psychologists to offer better help for students known with emotional and social problems. School psychologists are capable to help students with their psychological problems, as they spend relatively long time with them and know about their strengths and weaknesses as well. Adjustment in school environment is very important and has a great impact on student's overall adjustment and psychological health. Cognitive behavior therapy is known as an effective treatment for many of the psychological problems (Beck, 1993; Beck, 1997; Beck, 2005; Beck, Baruch, Balter, Steer, & Warman, 2005). but results depend on the therapists' skill and competences (Kazantzis et al., 2018). Training could enhance cognitive behavior therapy skills and enable

those psychologists to help students to cope with their emotional and interpersonal problems. Supervision is essential in learning cognitive behavior therapy. Despite the divergence in systems of psychotherapy, their goals and varied training practices, supervision remains the one component considered essential to all (O'Donovan, Halford, & Walters, 2011).

This paper addresses the question: is a brief cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) training program enhances psychologist's skills as reflected in scores on Cognitive Therapy Skills scale and in helping students with emotional and social problems.

35 school psychologists (20 Female and 15 male) have received intensive CBT training for 6 days during two weeks followed by one to one supervision in school sittings for three months. Participants completed cognitive behavior therapy scale (CBTS) before and after training. Individual and group counseling sessions delivered to male and female (age mean=13.7 years) students known of emotional and social problems during the current school year. Supervisors wrote a report in the end of three months' practice, students and parent's feedback collected.

Results show that differences between pre and post scores on CBTS scale are statistically significant ($t=4.92$), supervisors reports and students' feedback indicate improving therapeutic skills by the end of three months' practice.



CBT training program has positive influence in enhancing CBT skills in school psychologists that reflected in providing effective counseling for students with emotional and social problems. Supervision helped in optimizing the therapeutic outcome in both individual and group therapy sessions.

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Ethical Approval

The study protocol was consistent with the ethical guidelines of the 1975 Declaration of Helsinki as reflected in a prior approval by the Institution's Human Research Committee.

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