

The Effectiveness of Executive Functions Training on Self-Control and Social Competence for Children with Low Self-Control

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Extended Abstract

Aim

Childhood, during which a person's personality is formed, is one of the most significant stages of existence. The majority of behavioral disorders and inconsistencies in adolescence and maturity are the result of ignoring emotional and behavioral issues in childhood. Childhood difficulties not only impede a child's performance and abilities, but also predispose her to additional difficulties and future disorders. Due to the fact that childhood disorders can persist into maturity, more emphasis has been placed on their prevention and treatment. Poor self-control is a problem among school-aged children. This process facilitates the occurrence of emotional, psychological, behavioral, and academic harm. The results of research indicate that there is a negative relationship between mental problems and self-control, i.e. those with a greater number of mental problems have less self-control. In light of this, the present study investigated the effectiveness of executive functions training on the self-control and social competence of children with low self-control.

Methodology

It was an experimental study with pre-test, post-test, control group, and a two-month follow-up period design. In the academic year 2021-2022, the statistical population of the study consisted of Tehran primary school children with low self-control. 26 children with limited self-control were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups through multistage cluster sampling. The experimental group received eight 75-minute executive functions training sessions. This research employed the Children's Self-control Questionnaire (CSQ) and the Social Competence Questionnaire (SCQ). Using SPSS23, the data were analyzed using a mixed ANOVA and Bonferroni Follow-up test.

Findings

Executive functions training has a significant impact on the self-control and social competence of children with limited self-control ($p < 0.001$). In this way, the executive functions training was able to significantly improve the average social competence and self-control scores of the study's children. In addition, the results demonstrated that this effectiveness was maintained during the two-month follow-up period.

Conclusion

Using techniques such as increasing attention, concentration, and accuracy, organizing activities, avoiding response, and controlling impulsivity, the present study concludes that executive functions training is an efficient method to increase self-control and social competence in children with low self-control. Through the training of executive functions and the assignment of appropriate assignments, it is possible to influence the functions of organization, planning, and impulse control, allowing children with low self-control to have better cognitive processing and organization before the occurrence of behavior, thereby exercising greater control over their responses.

Keywords: Executive Functions Training, Self-Control, Social Competence.