

Improving Depression, Anxiety and Distress Symptoms in Type 2 Diabetes Patients

Authors : Seyed Reza Alvani, Norzarina Mohd Zaharim

Abstract : Diabetes mellitus is one of the chronic, progressive illnesses that has reached a widespread level all over the world and considered an extreme life-threatening condition in South East Asian countries region include Malaysia. Co-morbid psychological factors like diabetes-related distress and low level of psychological well-being are related to high levels of blood sugar and hypo/hyperglycemia complications. As a result, the implementation of any effective psychological interventions among diabetes patients is necessary. One such intervention is cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) that is approved and suggested by many professionals as an empirically-supported technique of treatment for people how are suffering from diabetes around the world where there is no clear evidence of using this technique in Malaysia. The target of this study was to see whether or not participation in group CBT would end in an improvement of psychological well-being (by decreasing the levels of depression and anxiety) and diabetes-related distress followed by lower level of blood sugar level. The sample of the present study was 60 type 2 diabetes adults (ages 20-65) with HbA1c ≥ 7 from Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) clinic. All participants were selected by the convenience sampling technique. Participants completed Well-Being Questionnaire (W-BQ) and Distress Scale (DDS-17) after signing written consent form. Those participants who were interested to join CBT groups were placed to the experimental groups, and people who were not interested were assigned to the control group. The experimental groups (n = 30) received group CBT, whereas participants in the control group (n = 30) did not receive any kind of psychological intervention. For testing the effect of intervention, mixed between-within ANOVA used. The entire intervention program took three months, and a significant improvement in the level of psychological well-being and decline in the level of diabetes distress observed among participants from experimental group, but not for those in the control group. Additionally, the result of the study suggested that group CBT could help participants in experimental group achieve more acceptable HbA1c levels in comparison with those in the control group. Malaysian Ministry of Health, researcher and governors should give due interest and commitment to psychological care as a pathway to diabetes mitigation among Malaysian adults.

Keywords : cognitive behavioral therapy, diabetes related distress, diabetes type 2, Malaysia, well-being

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