Creative Exposure Intervention – Group Version for Social Anxiety: A Mixed Methods Replication Study

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Abstract
College counseling centers struggle to accommodate the number of students seeking mental health services today. For the last decade, the leading problem among college students has been anxiety, including social anxiety. Studies indicate that group counseling is a practical solution to address these concerns. This mixed methods replication study explored the use of the Creative Exposure Intervention – Group Version (CEI-GV) with social anxiety. The CEI-GV is a brief, integrative approach that incorporates art with anchoring skills, cognitive-behavioral interventions, and mindfulness with self-compassion. Descriptive statistics, a paired t test, and Moustakas's methods were used to analyze the data in this study. Results indicated that CEI-GV impacted group participants (N = 8) as described by three themes: emotion regulation, helpful, and difficult. Participants also reported several positive changes in their physical sensations/feelings, thoughts and emotions, and social behavior and experience as a result of attending the group. These changes included: less physical tension, more awareness of their feelings and physical sensations, more control over their sensations, more skill and control in managing their thoughts and emotions, more objectivity in their thoughts and emotions, and more control and comfortability in social behavior and experience. Overall, participant social anxiety severity decreased from severe to mild as indicated by the Social Phobia Inventory. This dissertation study concludes with implications, limitations, and recommendations for future research as they pertain to college counseling and clinical practice.

Objective: Social anxiety increases college student drop-out risk and stifles employment opportunities. Group cognitive-behavioral therapy with exposure (CBT ERP)
has the potential to alleviate campus resource strain but remains under-researched with college students. The present study investigated the efficacy of group CBT ERP in a randomized clinical trial on a college campus. Method: Thirty-one postsecondary students were randomly assigned to an exposure-only group or an active control. Results: Linear mixed-effects models indicated significant Group by Time interactions for general social anxiety. Using an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, the study investigated high school students' affordances for social media, their attitudes and beliefs about these new technologies, and related obstacles and issues. The affordance findings indicate that students depend on social media in their daily lives for leisure and social connections. A mixed within/between conditions design will be applied, with therapists and patients being randomly allocated to one of two conditions: (1) training of CT plus BEs, (2) training of CT “as usual”. Sixty patients with the primary diagnosis of SAD will be recruited and treated in the outpatient clinic of the Department of Psychology, University of Frankfurt. The present study investigates the question of whether enhanced training and the use of behavioral experiments (BEs) increases the efficacy of traditional CT, based on verbal methods of cognitive restructuring. Methods/design. Social anxiety disorder (SAD) is a highly prevalent and chronic psychiatric disorder associated with considerable psychosocial impairment. This study contradicts a number of previous studies that have indicated a positive relation among social anxiety, alcohol expectancies, and drinking (e.g., Burke & Stephens, 1999; Lewis & O’Neill, 2000). Anxiety-related constructs—Social anxiety is positively correlated with global anxiety and negative affect (e.g., Brown, Chorpita, & Barlow, 1998). We included measures of anxiety-related constructs to provide a method to statistically control for global anxiety and negative affect. The findings have implications for the development of prevention and intervention programs for college student problem drinking, particularly by the targeting of social influences related to drinking and attention to socially anxious students with high perceived drinking. NIH-PA Author Manuscript Background Social anxiety disorder is one of the most persistent and common anxiety disorders. Individually delivered psychological therapies are the most effective treatment options for adults with social anxiety disorder, but they are associated with high intervention costs. Therefore, the objective of this study was to assess the relative cost effectiveness of a variety of psychological and pharmacological interventions for adults with social anxiety disorder. Other drugs, group-based psychological interventions and other individually delivered psychological interventions were less cost-effective. Results were influenced by limited evidence suggesting superiority of psychological interventions over drugs in retaining long-term effects.