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Designing and validating of executive functions training program for primary school teachers and studying its effectiveness on their professional competence

Abstract

Executive functions play an important role in the cognitive and social development of individuals. In recent years, executive functions have been studied as one of the most important neuropsychological variables affecting the reform and development of teachers' professions and as a result, better academic and social performance of students. The purpose of this study was to design and validate an executive function training program for elementary school teachers. The research method for the design and development part was a qualitative method. To validate the program, while using the face validity method, the content validity method with a panel of 10 experts was used and to calculate the content validity, two relative content validity coefficients (CVR) and content validity index (CVI) were used. The minimum and maximum CVR for each item or component of the program were calculated to be 0.80 and 1, respectively. Also, the minimum and maximum CVI rates for each item or component of the program were 0.80 and 0.93, respectively. Finally, the average content validity index for the whole program was 0.85. The results showed that the executive functions training program for primary school teachers has a face and content validity and has the necessary validity for using in educational centers, in-service courses, extracurricular classes in schools and research use. In the second stage of the research, which was related to the implementation of the executive functions training program, an experimental method was used with a pre-test-post-test design and follow-up with a control group. The statistical population of the research at this stage included all female teachers working in the academic year of 1400-1401 in the 1st district of Yazd province, and 30 teachers were selected as a sample with the purposeful sampling method and randomly assigned to the control and experimental groups. The experimental group received the training program within 45 days (15 sessions of 45 minutes). The research data were analyzed using mixed variance analysis. The research findings at this stage of the analysis showed that there is a significant difference between the experimental and control groups in terms of the sub-components of self-regulation executive functions and teachers' professional competencies. Therefore, the effectiveness of the executive functions training program on the executive skills and professional competencies of primary school teachers, as well as the sustainable effect of this training program over time, were confirmed.

Keywords:Executive function, Professional competencies, Teachers, Training program