

Abstract

Romantic irrationality has been a cause of concern for the researchers for its role in relationship conflicts and impact of mental health especially in young adults. The aim of the current study was to study the construct of irrational romantic beliefs along with its correlates and also devise a suitable intervention for treating them. The present research consisted of three studies. Study I was about developing an indigenous scale of irrational romantic beliefs prevalent among university students. A phenomenological approach consisting of 20 in depth interviews was used to study the irrational romantic beliefs that resulted in a 42 items scale with three subscales over dependence, over demandingness and awfulizing. The psychometric properties of the scale on a sample of 500 university students yielded impressive values, KMO of .92 ($p < .01$) and Bartlett's test of sphericity (6669.19). IRBS occurred to be highly reliable scale with the split half reliability (.84), alpha coefficient (.92), and Spearman-Brown Coefficient (.84). IRBS's Concurrent validity with respect to Romantic Relationships Beliefs Inventory (RRBI; Kalkan, 2006) was moderately high ($r = .49$, $p < .01$). In Study II, the role of critical parenting (Randolph & Dykman, 1996) in the development of irrational romantic beliefs (Majeed, Ijaz, Naz, & Tariq, 2018) and its impact on the mental health (Viet & Ware, 1983) of university students was studied. A sample of ($N = 1298$) university students, male ($n = 593$) and female ($n = 705$) was collected through stratified random sampling from public and private universities of Lahore. Results showed that overdependence by mother ($p < .05$) was found to be mediate psychological distress positively while awfulizing mediated it negatively both for father ($p < .01$) and mother ($p < .01$). Study III demonstrated the effectiveness of treatment modalities in treating irrational romantic beliefs, reducing psychological distress and improving psychological well-being both nomothetically and

ideographically. Post therapy assessment on IRBS and MHI (nomothetic) ($z=-2.02$, $p<.05$) for REBT and NLP groups showed the effectiveness of both treatment modalities in reducing irrational romantic beliefs and psychological distress and in improving psychological well-being as compared to the control group. Between groups analysis revealed that REBT was a better treatment option for irrational romantic beliefs ($\chi^2(2 N=15) = -8.40$, $p<.05$) as compared to the control group while NLP served effectively in reducing psychological distress ($\chi^2(2 N=15) = -6.80$, $p<.05$) and psychological well-being ($\chi^2(2 N=15) = -8.80$, $p<.05$) as compared to the control group. There were no significant differences found in REBT and NLP in reducing irrational romantic beliefs and psychological distress and in improving psychological well-being. While on repertory grid of irrational romantic beliefs results showed that irrational romantic beliefs were effectively treated both in REBT and NLP groups showing improvement in post assessment. Between groups analysis on repertory grid also confirmed the equality of REBT and NLP in treating irrational romantic beliefs and relate distress.

Key words: Irrational Romantic Beliefs, Critical Parenting, Mental Health, Repertory Grid, Intervention for Romantic Relationship Problems, REBT, NLP, University Students