Effect of Self-Management Technique on Aggressive Behaviour Tendency of Secondary School Adolescents in Enugu North Local Government Area

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ABSTRACT

One of the major problems associated with adolescents in secondary schools today is the tendency to act aggressively towards their teachers, schoolmates, and others in the school. Such an aggressive tendency could bring about tension both in school and at home. This study investigated the effect of self-management techniques on the tendency to aggressive behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Enugu North Local Government Area, Enugu State. Two research questions guided the study, while two null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. The design for the study was quasi-experimental, non-randomised pre- and post-test, control group research. The sample consisted of 28 senior secondary school adolescents purposefully drawn from a population of 212 students. A standardised instrument, "Tendency to Aggressive Behaviour Questionnaire (TABQ)," was adapted and used for data collection. The internal consistency reliability coefficient for the instrument was 0.89. Data was collected through direct delivery of the instrument to the respondents. Mean scores were used to answer the research questions, while the null hypotheses were tested using Analysis of Co-variance (ANCOVA). The norm of the instrument (70.00) guided the decision.The findings of the study revealed, among others, that self-management techniques were significantly effective in reducing aggressive tendencies among adolescents. The findings further revealed that self-management techniques were more effective in reducing female secondary school adolescents' aggressive tendencies. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that self-management techniques be adopted by counsellors in schools and other allied professionals as effective treatment techniques for reducing aggressive behaviour tendencies among secondary school adolescents.

Keywords: Self-management, technique, aggressive behaviour, tendency, school adolescents

INTRODUCTION

One of the major problems associated with adolescents in secondary schools today is the tendency to act aggressively towards their teachers, schoolmates, and others in the school. Sometimes, such a propensity for aggressive conduct tends to manifest at home. Thus, aggressive behaviour, according to Anagbogu, Nwankwo and Azuji (2020), is one of the most frustrating issues parents and teachers face. This aggressive act against persons or property takes place very frequently in schools and at homes in Nigeria today.

The term aggressive behaviour, as used by psychologists, describes any behaviour by an individual against another with the sole aim of inflicting pain (physical and psychological). Physical aggression involves physical abuse of another person or the person's property, while verbal aggression involves insults, invectives, and so forth (Okon, Momoh, Imhonde, and Idiakheua, 2011). Violent and bullying actions are specific types of aggressive behaviour that result in similar outcomes or functions of aggressive behaviour. These functions include power and control, affiliation, escape, gaining attention, and self-gratification. Although there seems to be no one globally accepted definition of aggressive behaviour, some consensus seems to exist that aggressive behaviour is meant either to injure another, to gain something for the aggressor, or to result in both injury and extraneous gains. In this study, aggressive behaviours refer to those behaviours, verbal, nonverbal, or physical, that injure another indirectly or directly and may result in extraneous gains for the aggressor.

Aggression is an observable behaviour that can denigrate, threaten, or hurt a person or destroy an object. It is a behaviour that could also be determined by measuring an individual's tendency to perform the acts. The student's body language for all of the aggressive behaviours is a stance that clearly communicates anger, rage, frustration, humiliation, and other feelings that motivate aggressive behaviour. However, in instances where verbal aggression is manifested, students will not always demonstrate the body language described (example, playful hits, kicks, punches, and sarcastic statements), but the intent of the behaviour is still clearly to hurt another person or to gain something for the

aggressor. The tendency to aggressive behaviour is thus defined as an individual's inclination to intentionally inflict physical or psychological harm on others.

Aggressive behaviour tendencies among secondary school adolescents are an issue of concern among stakeholders in education, essentially because a school is an institution designed for teaching and learning. Adolescents in secondary schools could become aggressive for different reasons. For instance, some students exhibit aggressive behaviours to gain an elevation of status, while others may exhibit aggressive behaviours in order to be feared by other students. Still, some adolescents in secondary school could become aggressive to maintain their membership in a certain peer group, while others may become aggressive to show superiority and to be respected by other students. More so, aggressive behaviour, as Freud (1962) noted, could also be a result of innate drives, frustration, or a form of defence mechanism when the ego is threatened.

Today, physical fights between one student and another, including bullying, are frequent occurrences in secondary schools and at home. For instance, Aluede (2011) noted that bullying, a subcategory of aggressive behaviour, is encountered regularly by children and adolescents both in and out of schools worldwide. Consequently, several measures have been devised and employed that are aimed at curbing such aggressive acts in society, especially those of adolescents. Some of the curbing measures as outlined by Okorodudu (2010) include the establishment and administration of juvenile justice, the promulgation of juvenile courts of law, the establishment of remand homes, and the establishment of security and law enforcement agencies. Unfortunately, these measures seem not to have worked, as aggressive behaviour has remained on the rise.

Moreover, Obikeze and Obi's (2015) investigation into the prevalence and incidence of aggressive behaviours among adolescents in senior secondary schools in Anambra State revealed that adolescents in school are still manifesting aggressive behaviours such as arson, bullying, beating, hitting, speaking, and knife attacks, among others. The reason for this may

be attributed to an inappropriate response, either on the part of the school management or on the part of the parents and siblings at home.

The appropriate response to aggressive behaviour tendencies will depend on many factors, including the nature and severity of the event and the skills, techniques, experience, and confidence of those involved in helping the adolescents overcome their aggressive behaviour or the tendencies to exhibit such aggressive acts. In that regard, some researchers (for example, Obikeze & Obi, 2015; Azuji & Anagbogu, 2016) in their studies recommended using psychotherapeutic techniques. Following their recommendation and using self-management techniques, for instance, the adolescents could be taught to use the techniques to deal with stressful situations and manage their emotions.

The self-management technique originated from the work of Donald Meichenbaum (1962), who used the self-management counselling technique as a behaviour modification technique to help his schizophrenic clients replace their maladaptive behaviour (maladaptive cognitions or maladaptive thought processes) with more rational and positive thoughts, particularly where they were in situations that were very challenging for them or when they were unable to control or manage themselves. Self-management is thus defined as a motivational intervention in which the individual actively participates in designing and carrying out the modification programme (Aderanti & Hassan, 2012).

Training through this technique could help an individual regulate his emotions to handle stress, control impulses, and persevere in overcoming obstacles, setting personal and academic goals, and then checking one's progress towards achieving them and expressing emotions constructively. In the context of this study, self-management is seen as a counselling technique in which the client is schooled in a number of techniques that enable him to take control of his activities and acquire self-regulatory capacity.

The technique also emphasises establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships based on cooperation, resisting inappropriate social pressure, preventing,

managing, and resolving interpersonal conflict, and seeking help when needed (Omisakin & Ncama, 2011). The self-management counselling skill could be applied to helping adolescents, especially those in secondary schools, develop and maintain a healthy and acceptable relationship with classmates and others in the school.

Both male and female students perpetrate aggressive behaviour. Male students are usually associated with the physical form of aggressive behaviour, while female students are most often linked with the verbal form of the behaviour. As Connor (2004) notes, males were more aggressive than females across various types of cultures, scientific studies, and categories of aggression. Similarly, based on the results obtained by Akhtar and Kushwaha (2015), it was discovered that adolescent boys and girls are significantly different in the perpetration of aggressive acts. Consequently, aggressive behaviour, irrespective of the channel in which it is exhibited—physical, verbal, or through other means—is hurtful and affects the health and well-being of students in schools and needs to be nipped in the bud using appropriate psychological techniques.

Despite the importance of the self-management technique, there are limited research findings concerning the effects of the technique on aggressive adolescents in Nigeria. The most common applied self-management techniques in past studies include the components of self-evaluation, self-control, self-education, self-monitoring, and self-reinforcement (Anyamene, Nwokolo, & Azuji, 2016; Caldwell, 2010; Choi, Chung, 2010; Oguzie, Obi & Nnadi, 2019). The self-management techniques utilised in these studies were somewhat different from the current study, being that the studies either addressed different problems, different populations, or were carried out outside Nigeria. Considering the importance of self-management techniques among secondary school adolescents and limited research findings in the field, this study is aimed at examining the effect of self-management on the tendency to aggressive behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Enugu North Local Government Area, Enugu State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the effect of Self- management technique on the tendency to aggressive behaviour among secondary schools adolescents in Enugu North Local Government Area, Enugu State. Specifically, the study seeks to determine:

1. The effect of self-management technique on secondary school adolescents' tendency to aggressive behaviours when compared with those who received conventional counselling using their pre-test and post-test.

2. Differences in the effect of self-management technique on male and female secondary school adolescents' tendency to aggressive behaviours when compared with those who received conventional counselling using their pre-test and post-test.

Research Questions

The following research questions will serve as a guide for study-:

1. What is the effect of self-management technique on secondary school adolescents' tendency to aggressive behaviours when compared with those who received conventional counselling using their pre-test and post-test scores?

2. What are the differences in the effect of self-management technique on male and female secondary school adolescents' tendency to aggressive behaviours when compared with those who received conventional counselling using their pre-test and post-test scores?

Hypotheses

The following null hypothesis will guide the study, and will be tested at the 0.05 level of significance

1. The effect of self-management technique on secondary school adolescents' tendency to aggressive behaviours when compared with those who received conventional counselling using their pre-test and post-test scores is not significant.

2. Differences in the effect of self-management technique on male and female secondary school adolescents' tendency to aggressive behaviours when compared with those who received conventional counselling using their pre-test and post-test scores is not significant.

METHOD

This study adopted a quasi-experimental, pre-test, post-test, and control research design. Quasi-experimental research, according to Nwogu (2015), is described as a type of experimental study that determines the effect(s) of a treatment paradigm on a non-randomised sample. This quasi-experimental research design was conducted in a school setting where it was not possible to use a pure experimental design due to the likely disruption of school activities.

This study was conducted in the Enugu North Local Government Area. Enugu North Local Government Area is located in Enugu State, which is one of the 36 states of Nigeria. Enugu State is located in the south-eastern part of the six geopolitical zones in the country. Enugu North Local Government Area is chosen for the study because the social, economic, and public health burden created by the perpetration of aggressive acts is notable in the activities of different cult groups in the higher institutions situated in the area. Victims of their atrocious acts often suffer from serious physical injuries that require immediate and long-term medical attention. Thus, the researcher saw the need to conduct a study of this nature in the area. The sample size for the study comprised 28 SSII secondary school adolescents. This comprises all the SSII students identified from two secondary schools. These secondary

schools were purposefully selected for the study. The sample size was derived from the population of 212 adolescents that exhibit the tendency to aggressive behaviour in the nine secondary schools in the Enugu North Local Government area.

The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire termed the Tendency to Aggressive Behaviour Questionnaire (TABQ). The instrument is a modified version of the Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire (BPAQ) (Buss & Perry, 1992), which was adapted to suit the purpose of this study. This questionnaire, comprising twenty-four self-reported items, is based on a five-point scale ranging from "completely like me" to "not at all like me."

The items were structured to measure different types of aggressive tendencies: physical aggressive tendency, verbal aggressive tendency, anger tendency, and hostility tendency. The instrument asks respondents to rate items on a scale from one to five based on whether the statement is "completely like" or "not at all like" them. Thus, the questionnaire was made up of 24 items, yielding a minimum score of 24 points and a maximum score of 120 (see appendix B, p.90). The Cronbach's alpha statistical technique was used in order to ascertain the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. A reliability coefficient alpha of 0.89 was obtained for the instrument.

The completed instrument was scored following the scoring instructions as specified in the manual. The collected data were analysed using SPSS version 23. Scores that were above the norm (72.0) indicated an aggressive tendency, and scores below this show no aggressive problem. The research questions were answered using the statistical mean, while the null hypotheses were tested using the analysis of co-variance (ANCOVA).

Results

Data collected were analysed and presented in tables as follows:

Research Question 1

What is the effect of the self-management technique on the aggressive tendency of secondary school students when compared to those treated with conventional counselling using their pre-test and post-test scores?

Table 1: Pre-test and Post-test aggressive tendency mean scores of adolescents treated with Self-management technique and those treated with conventional counselling (Norm= 70.00)

Source of variation	N	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Lost Mean	Remark
Self-management	13	87.77	67.15	20.62	Effective
Control	11	90.36	79.09	10.27	

Table 1 reveals that the adolescents treated with the self-management technique had a pre-test mean score of 87.77 and a post-test mean score of 67.15 with a lost mean of 20.62 in their aggressive tendency, while those in the control group who received conventional counselling had a pre-test mean score of 90.36 and a post-test mean score of 79.99 with a lost mean of 10.27. With a post-test mean score of 67.15, which is below the norm of 70.00, the self-management technique is effective in reducing aggressive tendencies among adolescents.

Research Question 2

What is the difference in the effectiveness of Self-management techniques on the aggressive tendency of male and female secondary school adolescents using their pre-test and post-test scores?

Table 2: Pre-test and Post-test aggressive tendency mean scores of male and female adolescents treated with self-management technique (Norm= 70.00)

Source of variation	**N**	**Pre-test Mean**	**Post-test Mean**	**Lost Mean**	**Remark**
Male	10	86.70	67.60	19.1	
Female	3	87.00	65.67	21.33	More effective

In table 2, it was observed that the male adolescents treated with self-management technique had a pre-test mean score of 86.70 and a post-test mean score of 67.60 with a lost mean of 19.1 in their aggressive tendency, while the female adolescents treated with self-management technique had a pre-test mean score of 87.00 and a post-test mean score of 65.67 with a lost mean of 21.33 in their aggressive tendency. With both techniques having post-test mean scores below the norm of 70.00 and a very narrow difference in their lost means, both of the techniques are effective in reducing aggressive tendencies among adolescents, but the self-management technique was more effective on female adolescents with a mean loss of 21.33.

Null Hypothesis 1

The effect of Self-management technique on secondary school adolescents' aggressive tendency will not be significant when compared with those who received conventional counselling using their mean scores.

Table 3: ANCOVA on the aggressive tendency post-test mean scores of adolescents treated with Self-management technique and those who received conventional counselling.

Source of variation	**SS**	**df**	**MS**	**Cal. F**	**Pvalue**	**P≤0.05**
Corrected Model	942.905	2	471.452			
Intercept	269.206	1	269.206			
Pre-test	93.881	1	93.881			
Treatment Model	192.148	1	192.148	12.90	0.002	S
Error	312.720	21	14.891			
Total	127841.000	24				
Corrected Total	1255.625	23				

In table 3, it was observed that at the 0.05 level of significance, with 1 df numerator and 23 df denominator, the calculated F is 12.90 with a P value of 0.002, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the second null hypothesis is rejected. So, the effect of self-management techniques on secondary school adolescents' aggressive tendencies is significant.

Null Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of Self-management technique on the aggressive tendency of male and female adolescents.

Table 4: ANCOVA on the post-test aggressive tendency of male and female adolescents treated with Self-management technique

Source of variation	SS	df	MS	Cal. F	Pvalue	P≤0.05
Corrected Model	29.533	2	14.767			
Intercept	96.024	1	96.024			
Pre-test	20.928	1	20.928			
Treatment Model	9.285	1	9.285	0.57	0.47	NS
Error	162.159	10	16.216			
Total	58817.000	13				
Corrected Total	191.692	12				

Table 4 shows that at the 0.05 level of significance for the 1DF numerator and 12DF denominator, the calculated F is 0.57 with a P value of 0.47, which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the fifth null hypothesis is accepted. So the difference in the effectiveness of the self-management technique on male and female secondary school adolescents' aggressive tendencies is not significant.

Discussion

The results from data analysis are hereby discussed.

The Effect of Self-Management Technique on Secondary School Adolescents' Tendency to Aggressive

Findings from the data analysed in this study showed that self-management techniques are effective in reducing aggressive tendencies among secondary school adolescents in the treatment group as compared with those in the conventional counselling

group. The findings further showed that the effect of self-management techniques on secondary school adolescents' aggressive tendencies is significant. This indicates that students with aggressive behaviour tendencies who were treated with self-management had a better understanding of how their views and perceptions can affect their feelings. Self-management helps them develop methods, skills, and strategies to effectively direct their own activities towards avoiding aggressive behaviour. The findings imply that the self-management technique, which emphasises self-help and self-reliance, assists students in the treatment group to develop self-monitoring, self-evaluation, and self-reinforcement, and such awareness prompts the individuals to stop the behaviour before it escalates.

The finding is consistent with a previous research study by Anyamene, Nwokolo, and Azuji (2016), whose results showed that self-management techniques were effective and significant in reducing test anxiety through self-monitoring, self-evaluation, and self-reinforcement. The findings of the data analysis are also consistent with studies such as Anyamene, Nwokolo, and Nwosu (2019) and Oparaduru, Okoli, and Omoegun (2020), who found that self-management techniques are effective in changing maladaptive behaviours to adaptive behaviours among secondary students. McCoach's (2008) study, which supports the findings of this study, showed that self-management techniques help students increase their appropriate behaviour of raising hands and decrease their inappropriate behaviour of calling out in the classroom.

Possibly, the reason for the decrease in aggressive behaviour tendency among secondary school students exposed to self-management techniques was as a result of various activities carried out during the experiment in which they could adopt skills such as self-monitoring and self-instructions that will encourage better social adjustment in school and other social environments. In line with the findings above, Anyamene, et al, (2016) observed that the self-management technique involves personal learning, planning action, and self-regulation in our views, perceptions, and behaviours within our social circle and environment.

Findings from the data analysis indicated that the self-management technique is effective in reducing aggressive tendencies among adolescents, but the technique was more effective on female adolescents. The findings further revealed that the difference in the effectiveness of self-management techniques on male and female secondary school adolescents' aggressive tendencies is not significant. This signifies that female secondary school students benefited slightly more from the treatment package than male students. The reason for the above findings in this study may be because female students easily yield

themselves to change and are usually willing to participate in activities like self-management techniques and experiments that involve less physical stress, especially when the environment is conducive, peaceful, and interactive. Female students are also likely to be patient, self-observant, and follow counselling suggestions.

The findings of this study are consistent with the reports of the study by Aderanti and Hassan (2012), who found that female students benefited more from behavioural counselling intervention techniques than male students. However, the findings of this study disagree with those of Ayodele and Sotonade (2014), whose findings showed that male participants benefit more from self-management and assertiveness training programmes, while female participants benefit more from emotional intelligence training.

Self-management techniques are effective in reducing aggressive tendencies among adolescents because they provide a way for adolescents to be in control of their behaviour and emotions. It can help adolescents identify triggers for their aggressive behaviour and develop strategies to manage their aggression in a constructive way. However, female adolescents may be more likely to benefit from self-management techniques because they are often more attuned to their emotions and may be more willing to talk about them. Additionally, female adolescents may be more likely to be open to learning new ways of managing their emotions and behaviour.

Conclusion

In line with the findings of this study, therefore, the following conclusions were drawn:

The self-management technique is effective in reducing aggressive tendencies among secondary school adolescents in the treatment group, and the effect of the self-management technique on secondary school adolescents' aggressive tendencies is significant. Furthermore, the researcher concluded that female secondary school adolescents who participated in self-management benefitted more than their male counterparts. However, the difference in the effectiveness of self-management techniques on adolescents' aggressive behaviour tendencies was not significant based on gender.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are hereby made:

1. Counsellors in schools and other allied professionals should adopt self-management techniques as effective treatment techniques for reducing aggressive behaviour

tendencies among secondary school adolescents and also for reducing other behavioural disorders in the school setting. Self-management skills such as self-reliance, self-monitoring, self-evaluation, self-reinforcement, and other similar psychotherapeutic skills should be promoted and encouraged in secondary schools.

2. Government and school administrators should support using self-management techniques in various schools, especially at the secondary school level, to reduce aggressive behaviour tendencies and promote national development and academic achievement.

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