

Psychological Intervention on Self-Esteem among School Students

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ABSTRACT: *Self-esteem is considered to be one of the core components of individuals' life skills. It refers to an overall evaluation about one's own self. It plays a mediator role in many psychological constructs. A survey method was adopted in this study. 60 school students were participated in this study. A quasi-experimental design such as pre-test post-test control group design was used in this study. The data was collected with the help of "The Self-esteem Scale" by Rosenberg (1965). The result revealed that there is a significant difference in self-esteem of school students due to psychological intervention. The detailed result and discussion were present in this article.*

Key Words: *Self-esteem, Life skills and Adolescents.*

Introduction

Adolescence is an exciting and dynamic period with remarkable transformation. This period is accompanied by deep psychological, biological and sociological changes (Kaplan & Sadock, 1994). These changes create a turmoil within that aggravates their problems. Nowadays adolescents encounter more difficulties and life challenges. Due to the invisible problems adolescents damage their self-image and level of confidence which affects their psychological wellbeing (Pajares & Urdan, 2004). Generally, individuals' stage of adolescence life is greatly influenced by their family, school environment and social context. In this context self-esteem plays a vital role in individuals' life in different domains. Self-esteem is a "developmental phenomenon but it develops gradually being affected by and in turn effecting experience and behavior" (Robert White, 1963). It refers to an overall evaluation about one's own self (Rosenberg, 1965). It is an "affective phenomenon and a dynamic process affected by successes and failures and thus opens to enhancement, or a comparison between the ideal-self and the actual-self" (James, 1983; Prihadi & Chua, 2012). Studies indicated that self-esteem plays a mediator role in individuals' ability, academic success and psychological well-being (Ferkany, 2008; Humphrey, 2004).

The level of self-esteem such as higher or lower indicates individuals' success in many areas. Previous studies indicated that students with low level of self-esteem were less successful in their academic setting, poor in maintaining interpersonal relationship, and it also related to many psychological disorders" (Muris, Meesters, & Fijen, 2003; Mann et al, 2004; Donders & Verschuere, 2004). On the other hand, "individual with high level of self-esteem would likely to be motivated to strive for higher academic achievements, and in turn, higher academic achievements would likely to enhance their self-esteem" (Prihadi & Chua, 2012). Studies also stated that "adolescents with high level of self-esteem are optimistic, tolerant, and responsible with good self control where as low self-esteem influences adolescent's emotional regulation negatively" (Lin, Tang, Yen, Ko, Huang, Liu et al., 2008).

Need for the Study

Adolescence stage is one the crucial stage in individuals' life. Recent studies indicated that there was a significant rise in emotional disturbances faced by adolescents (WHO, 2001). In the current context adolescents face a great threat to their well being as the rates of depression, suicide, homicide, and substance abuse are increasing. One of the studies indicating that "one third to one half of adolescents struggle with low self-esteem resulting in various problems like poor academic performance, depression, self-inflicted behavior, delinquency and so on" (Shanmugam Valliammal, Kathayayini, 2017). It is found that prevalence of depression increases in adolescence for which one of the major contributing factors is low self-esteem (Hankin et al. 1998; Oldehinkel and Ormel 2015, Beck 1967; Orth et al. 2016). Hence it is need to provide an intervention program on self-esteem to the adolescents at the school level, which help them to prevent many psychological problems.

Hypothesis

1. There will be a significant difference in self-esteem of school students due to the effectiveness of psychological intervention.

Research Paper

Research Method

A survey method was adopted in this study. A quasi-experimental design was used. The participants were selected based on the inclusion criteria viz. good health status, willing to participate, adolescent students from Trichy and exclusion criteria viz. adolescent students from special schools, students below 13 and above 14 yrs. After defining the population based on exclusion and inclusion criteria, the initial sample size of 80 was selected using simple random sampling method from two schools in Trichy. "The Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale" developed by Rosenberg (1965) was used to find out students' self-esteem. This scale consisted of 10 items with four point Likert Scale such as, Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The scores range from 0 to 40, a score less than 15 indicates problematic low self-esteem. The reliability of the scale was 0.84 and validity is 0.7.

After screening with self-esteem scale, the members falling below the cut off score 15 were randomly assigned to experimental (N=40) and control group (N=30). Six members from experimental group were unwilling and four members could not attend the complete intervention. Hence, the final study sample was 60 school students [experimental (N=30) and control group (N=30)]. The intervention program was undertaken for one hour per day in a week. "Facilitators manual on enhancing life skills" developed by Radhakrishnan Nair (2008) was adopted in this intervention program. In this training module only self-esteem component related activities were utilized. In this intervention program the experimental group participants only participated in all the events and the control group did not participate in any activities. The effectiveness of intervention was analyzed with the help of manual scoring key.

Results and Discussion

**Table-1: Effectiveness of Intervention Program on Self-esteem of School Students:
An Experimental Group**

| Variable | Pre-test [N1=30] | | Post-test [N1=30] | | t'-value |
|--------------------|---------------------|------|----------------------|------|----------|
| | Mean | S.D | Mean | S.D | |
| Self-esteem | 17.44 | 4.04 | 19.86 | 3.11 | 4.18* |

*Significant at 0.05 level.

**Table-2: Effectiveness of Intervention Program on Self-esteem of School Students:
A Control Group**

| Variable | Pre-test [N2=30] | | Post-test [N2=30] | | t'-value |
|--------------------|---------------------|------|----------------------|------|---------------------|
| | Mean | S.D | Mean | S.D | |
| Self-esteem | 19.86 | 3.11 | 20.36 | 2.83 | 0.825 ^{NS} |

NS - Not Significant.

From the table-1 it is observed that there is a significant difference in self-esteem of school students due to the intervention program. It is noticed that the experimental group had displayed higher score after intervention than before intervention program. This finding is in line with the findings of Sharma Shraddha, Agarwala Surila (2015) which reported that the school students had displayed significantly higher self-esteem due to psychological intervention program. Generally, self-esteem is considered to be one of the core life skills of the individual. It plays a predominant role in many aspect of individual's life. Higher level of self-esteem indicates many positive outcomes such as, academic rewards, good self-confidence and goal directed behaviors, maintaining good interpersonal relationship, ability to meet any task difficulties and so on. Hence, good self-esteem promotes many positive changes in individuals' life at personal, social and societal level. One of the previous studies indicated that self-esteem not only improves adolescents' psychosocial competence but also improves their well-being (Aparna & Rakhee; 2011). In table-2, the t' value indicated that there is no significant difference among the control group before and after intervention program on self-esteem of school students. In this study, students from control group haven't taken the intervention program for their development of self-esteem. Hence, it is witnessed that there is no improvement in self-esteem of students in the control group is quite logical. Thus the results support the study hypothesis that there is a significant difference in self-esteem of school students due to psychological intervention.

Conclusion

The implementation of positive psychology in school settings is gaining sustainable attention. Schools are the central developmental context in adolescent's lives along with families and communities that play a critical role in the development of crucial life and social skills. The finding of the study indicates

that the intervention program had a significant positive improvement on self-esteem of school students. Hence, it is concluded that appropriate intervention program will enhance individuals' self-esteem thus will be utilized by them in many domains of their life. However, this study also suggests that the appropriate psychological intervention program is needed to reach all school students for their positive mental health and well-being.

Delimitations

The study consisted of a small sample size and the intervention consisted of only 7 hours.

Suggestions

Such interventions can be carried out for a longer period of time with different population like parents, teachers and many other skills can be combined during the intervention.

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