

EFFECT OF SELF-MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUE ON SHYNESS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN IMO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Shyness is one of the behaviour problems that have plagued many secondary school students for a long time. The problem of shyness has raised great concern in the Imo state education system and the Nigerian society in general. Therefore, this study investigated the effect of self-management technique on shyness among Secondary School Students in Aboh Mbaise Local Government Area of Imo State. Two research questions guided the study, while two null hypotheses were posed and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The pre-test post-test control-group quasi-experimental research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study was a total of 884 junior and senior (JSS2 and SS2) students identified with shyness from all public Secondary Schools in Aboh Mbaise Local Government Area. Purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 69 students with the highest pre-test scores in the shyness measuring instrument. The Researchers used a standardised instrument called Revised Cheek and Buss Shyness Scale (RCBS) for collection of data for this study. Data collected for this study were analysed using mean and ANCOVA. Results obtained from the study indicated that self-management technique was significantly effective in reducing shyness among the participants. The results equally showed that self management technique was more effective in reducing shyness among the female participants than that of their male counterparts. However, it was found that the gender difference in the effectiveness of self-management technique in reducing the participants' shyness was not significant. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended among others, that Guidance Counsellors and Psychologists should adopt self-management technique as an effective intervention measure in solving the problem of shyness among secondary school students.

Keywords: Effect, Self-management technique, Shyness, Students, Guidance Counsellors.

1.1. Introduction

Every country worldwide, whether big or small has recognized and embraced schooling as a veritable platform for educating her citizens. Perhaps, this is basically because of the fact that 'school' has been identified as a hub for transformational learning and life skills (Igbokwe, 2019). The above statement therefore underscores the reason why the school is generally accepted as one of the key agencies of socialisation (Oguzie, Ezunu, Uba & Osagie, 2018). However, during schooling, some students exhibit different forms of maladaptive behaviours which could mar the peaceful co-existence and effective interpersonal relationship expected to be the characteristic features of every school as a social milieu. Consequently, some of these maladaptive behaviours exhibited by students are easily noticed while some are not. Those that are easily noticed are usually given attention and remedied, while those that are not easily noticed are often given less attention or completely neglected. One of such maladaptive behaviours among students that do not attract the desired attention for remediation is shyness.

Shyness has often been defined as the feeling of apprehension, lack of comfort, or awkwardness especially when a person is around other people. According to Hillard (2005), shyness is a psychological state that causes one to feel discomfort in social situations in a way that interferes with one's enjoyment or that causes avoidance of social contacts. It is an emotion that affects how a person feels and behaves around others (D'Arcy, 2016). According to Natesha (2007) shyness may be defined as being timid, circumspect and reserved. Again, Konya (2010) views shyness as a subjective experience which is exhibited as nervousness and apprehension in interpersonal encounters. In addition, Crozier and Alden (2006) pointed out that shyness has been identified by being absent in certain environments. Similarly, Buss (2000) defined shyness as an inhibition of expected social behaviour, together with feelings of tension and awkwardness. This line of definitions can be said to regard shyness as a social phenomenon, and a form of social anxiety. Shyness is the tendency to feel awkward, worried or tensed during social encounters, especially with unfamiliar people (American Psychological Association, 2012).

In another development, Durmus (2007) was of the view that shyness should be described as character trait, an attitude, or a state of social inhibition. In the same vein Rubin, Coplan and Bowker (2009) opined that shyness is a temperamental trait characterised by the experience of wariness and anxiety in novel social situations and those perceived to be socially evaluative in nature. This signifies that shyness is a tendency to avoid social interactions and to fail to participate appropriately in social situations. Leary (2006) proposed that shyness is totally a social phenomenon, and that it should be defined in terms of both social anxiety and inhibition. He thus, defined shyness as an affective-behavioural syndrome characterised by social anxiety and interpersonal inhibition which results from the prospect or present of others of interpersonal evaluation. Moreover, Rubin and Coplan (2010) observed that shyness can be present in different levels and look different between people. In the context of this study, shyness is defined as a behavioural deficit that makes it very difficult for people to be at ease with themselves around others or during social situations. Shyness usually occurs during novel social situations.

Studies have shown that the consequences of shyness among students are enormous. For instance, Jefferson (2001) observed that shyness may lead to social anxiety disorder or avoidant personality disorder, both of which are characterized by the avoidance of interpersonal contacts accompanied by significant fears of embarrassment in social interaction. A study by D'Souza, Urs and Ramanswang (2008) indicated that shyness leads to decreased levels of happiness, lower academic performance, lowered self-esteem and negative self concept and social and emotional maladjustment. Furthermore, shyness may reduce students' academic performance. Also, Hughes and Coplan (2010) reviewed that schooling is particularly more stressful for shy students than for their non-shy counterpart. Evans (2010) noted that shy individuals are often fearful, anxious, cautious, and reluctant to take part in interactions with others in situations that involve uncertainty, novelty, and actual or perceived judgment by others. Shyness makes people feel uncomfortable, timid and/or insecure. Shyness may sometimes cause people to experience physical sensations like blushing or feeling speechless, shaky, or breathless. People with shyness may also experience unusual sweating, pounding of heart, stomach upset, as well as developing negative feelings about themselves and excessive worry about how others view them. Thus shyness may negatively affect people's thinking, feelings, mood, memory and their ability to function well during social situations. In an attempt to further stress out the negative impacts of shyness, Urs and Jayaraju (2008) lamented that students with high level of shyness may be at the risk of Parkinson disease later in life.

Undoubtedly, shyness is a very serious problem among secondary school students particularly in Imo State, and Nigeria in general. The need, therefore, to help students overcome shyness cannot be overstressed. Unfortunately, previous efforts such as the use of medication, cognitive behavioural therapy and bibliotherapy made by therapists, researchers and other scholars to curb the problem of shyness among students appear to have met with limited success due to their long-term treatment procedure, short-lasting results, high cost of treatment, methodological complexities and therapeutic complications (Scott, 2006; Hirshfeld-Becker et al., 2010; Kasper, 2012; Oguzie, 2016). Against this backdrop, it is very important for counsellors and other therapists to explore more effective intervention strategies to help students with the problem of shyness so that they can perform optimally in their academic and social lives and achieve their full potentials in life. Therefore, the present researchers were motivated to find out if self-management technique was effective in reducing shyness among secondary school students.

Self-Management Technique (SMT) is a technique derived from the social cognitive theory developed by Bandura (1986), which provided a theoretical basis for the development of model of self-regulated learning in which personal contextual and behavioural factors interact in such a way that gives students an opportunity to control their behaviour. According to Ekwe and Nwamuo (2005), self-management is a behaviour intervention process in which clients alter their personal behaviours by the use of certain newly learned skills and by rearranging their environment. The rationale for this treatment is the belief that behavioural self-control can be increased by enhancing specific, cognitive, or meta-cognitive skills that are believed to underlie and promote impulse control (Waschush & Hill, 2007). Self management technique is a behaviour modification technique

in which people are taught to discriminate their own target behaviour and record the occurrence or absence of that target behaviour (Buckmann, 2015). It represents a process of achieving the goal of getting an individual to assume responsibility for his own decisions and actions. Sometimes, a problem requiring modification may not be of a therapist. In addition, the psychological climate may be such that the client acquires the intrinsic motivation which is required for behaviour modification. In such case, what is needed is that the client be schooled in techniques that would enable him take control of his activities and acquire self-regulatory capacity. This is why the technique is also referred to as self control technique (Eneasator & Umezulike, 2010).

The use of the term self-management has its origin in the early 19th century by trade unions, libertarian socialism and political philosophies that promoted the right of the workers to assume control of production and resources (Gomez, et al, 2008). This model of self management is based on a cooperative and participatory decision-making framework in which workers themselves make choice collectively, and power relations are equalised (Kanar, 2007). In psychology and education, the concept of self-management emerged in response to the need for improved methods of promoting clinical and behavioural change in the search for improved outcomes. Early research in this area concluded that self management consisted of three components, namely, self-monitoring, self-evaluation and self-reinforcement that interacted to create personal self-management of one's behaviour. Self-management technique is used to assist individuals with maladaptive behaviours, such as shyness, low self-concept, bullying, anxiety, autism among others, to achieve greater levels of independence in vocational, social and academic activities (Olorunfemi-Olabisi & Akomolafe, 2013; Anyamene, Nwokolo & Azuji, 2016; Igbokwe, 2019). By learning self-management technique, students can become more self-directed and less dependent on continuous supervision. Self-management technique has emerged as an effective approach for improving students' behaviour (Barry & Messer, 2008). In the context of this study, self-management technique is defined as a behaviour intervention strategy which is used to help clients to achieve adequate self-awareness and self control. The modification of thought pattern is the goal of this treatment technique and as such the researchers believed that this technique if applied will serve as a veritable tool in solving the problem of shyness among students.

Studies have shown that gender is significantly correlated with the problem of shyness (Olorunfemi-Olabisi & Akomolafe, 2013). Gender may be defined as the state of being a male or a female. Azuji (2010) in his study observed that female students benefited more from self-management technique than male students. Also, a study by Igbokwe (2019) found that self-management technique was significant more effective in changing maladaptive behaviours among female students than their male counterpart. It is very important to recall that the inculcation of desirable behaviours in students has been the generally acclaimed goal of education and the achievement of the noble goal is entrusted on the shoulders of counsellors and other stakeholders. To successfully achieve this goal, counsellors should be armed with effective behaviour intervention techniques to help ensure that students learn and exhibit self-enhancing behaviours. However, common observation shows that interpersonal relationship among some secondary school students in Imo State appears to be threatened by shyness.

Although shyness has long been known to psychologists and other scholars as a behavioural problem, it is very surprising that literature concerning this problem seems to be scarce. Since self-management technique has been found to be effective in handling other maladaptive behaviours among students, it is therefore necessary to use this technique in tackling the problem of shyness among secondary school students. In the light of the above, the present study determined the effects of self management technique on shyness among secondary school students in Aboh Mbaise Local Government Area of Imo State.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Shyness is a very serious problem that has incapacitated some students. The problem of shyness has raised great concern in the Imo state education system and the Nigerian society in general. Observation has shown that some secondary school students in Imo State suffer from shyness, and the problem has led this category of students to rely on various other maladaptive behaviours such as avoidance and withdrawal from public scenes, illicit use of hard drugs, lying and cheating, among others, as mechanisms of ego defence. This in turn has immense devastating effects on the social and academic lives of such students, and if not well tackled in a timely fashion, may cause untold negative impacts on the students, the school and the general society. Previous efforts made by parents, teachers, and other stakeholders in education seem to have not yielded the desired positive results.

The above scenario no doubt reveals the urgent need for a more effective behaviour intervention measure to curb shyness so that those students affected may have peace, joy, happiness, comfort, and relaxation of mind in order to be able to live in harmony with themselves and people around them so as to contribute optimally to the growth and development of the society as an integral part of it. As a pervasive problem, shyness poses great danger to the social and academic wellbeing of students. Hence, the researchers deemed it necessary to help solve the problem of shyness by embarking on the present study that examined the effect of self-management technique on shyness among secondary school students in Aboh Mbaise Local Government Area, of Imo State, Nigeria.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the effect of self-management technique in reducing shyness among secondary school students in Aboh Mbaise Local Government Area of Imo State.

1.4. Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the differences between the Pre-test and Post-test shyness mean scores of students treated with self-management technique (SMT) and those in the control group?

2. What are the differences between the Pre-test and Post-test shyness mean scores of male and female students treated with (SMT)?

1.5. Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 significant level:

1. There is no significant difference between the Pre-test and Post-test shyness mean scores of students treated with (SMT) and those in the control group.
2. There is no significant difference between the Pre-test and Post-test shyness mean scores of male and female students treated with (SMT).

2.1. Method

This study adopted the pretest-posttest quasi-experimental research design. The design is called quasi experimental because it does not employ randomisation in the placement of participants into experimental and control groups. Nworgu (2015) described a quasi experimental study as a type of experiment study where random assignment of participants into experimental and control groups is not possible. The population of the study was 884 students. This comprised all junior and senior secondary school students (JSS11 and SS11) identified as shy students from all coeducational public secondary schools in Aboh Mbaise Local Government Area of Imo State. A total sample size of sixty nine (69) students drawn through purposive sampling technique was used in the study.

The instrument used for data collection in this study was the Revised Cheek and Buss Shyness Scale (RCBS) developed in 1990. RCBS is one of the most commonly employed measures of dispositional shyness (Cheek & Briggs, 1990). The Revised Cheek and Buss Shyness Scale for this study had two sections: A and B. Section A is an introductory part that solicited for the bio-data of the respondents and section B is directed towards measuring students level of shyness. The RCBS was found to be internally consistent (coefficient alpha = .90), and 45-day test-retest reliability coefficient was $r = .88$ (Cheek & Briggs, 1990). Considerable support was also reported for the validity of the scale. The convergent validity was supported via strong correlations with Social Avoidance and Distress Scale ($r = .77$), and Social Reticence Scale (Jones, Rose & Russell, 2005, $r = .79$). The scale also correlated with the original 9-item version ($r = .96$).

Two research assistants participated in this study. The research assistants were the resident Guidance Counsellors of each of the two selected secondary schools. Revised Cheek and Buss Shyness Scale (RCBS) for the pre-test was administered on the students in both the experimental and control groups. The research assistant in the experimental school administered the experimental treatment, while the research assistant in the control school handled the control group and administered copies of the instrument respectively. The treatment lasted for six weeks using 1 hour per session for each group. The experimental group was exposed to self-management technique training, while the control group received conventional Counselling. After the treatment, the RCBS

instrument was reshuffled and re-administered to the experimental and control groups respectively. This was done by the sixth week. The participants' responses were then scored and overall data generated were subjected to statistical analysis. All data collected for this study were organised in tables and analysed. Mean was used to answer the research questions while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

3.1. Results

Table 1: Pre-test and Post-test shyness mean scores of students treated with Self-management technique (SMT) and those in the control group.

Source of Variation	N	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Mean Loss	Remark
SMT	37	57.23	26.44	30.79	Effective
Control	32	52.81	47.41	4.77	

Norm=32.85.

SMT=Self-management technique

In table 1, it was observed that students treated with self-management technique had a pre-test mean score of 57.23 and post-test mean score of 26.44 with a mean loss of 30.79, while students in the control group had a pre-test mean score of 52.81 and post-test mean score of 47.41 with a mean loss of 4.77. Therefore, self-management technique (SMT) was effective in reducing shyness among the students who participated in the experiment. Moreover, the post-test shyness mean score (30.79) of students treated with self-management technique was below the norm of 32.85.

Table 2: Pre-test and Post-test shyness mean scores of male and female students treated with SMT.

Source of Variation	N	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Mean Loss	Remark
Male	17	57.58	28.92	28.66	
Female	20	59.16	26.51	32.65	More effective

Table 2 revealed that male students treated with self-management technique had a pre-test mean score of 57.58 and post-test mean score of 28.92 with a mean loss of 28.66, while the female students had a pre-test mean score of 59.16 and post-test mean score of 26.51 with a mean loss of 32.65. Also the post-test mean scores of 28.92 and 26.51 respectively, for male and female students treated with a self-management technique were all below the norm 32.85. This implies that self-management technique was more effective in reducing female students' shyness than their male counterparts.

Table 3: ANCOVA on the pre-test and post-test mean scores of students treated with SMT and those in the control group.

Source of variation	SS	Df	MS	Cal. F	P-value	P ≥ 0.05
Corrected Model	74180.133	2	39442.062			
Intercept	20.648	1	20.648			
Pretest Scores	3430.365	1	3430.265			
Treatment Models	26135.007	1	26135.007	148.207	0.000	S
Error	5952.651	66	122.038			
Residual	685712.000	69				
Corrected Total	33119.125	68				

Table 3 indicated that at 0.05 level of significance, 1df numerator and 68df denominator, the calculated F is 148.21 with P-value of 0.00 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the first null

hypothesis (H_{01}) is rejected. This indicated that the self-management technique was significantly effective in reducing shyness among secondary school students.

Table 4: ANCOVA on the post-test shyness mean scores of male and female students treated with SMT

Source of variation	SS	Df	MS	Cal. F	Pvalue	$P \geq 0.05$
Corrected Model	552.141	2	700.376			
Intercept	226.104	1	222.104			
PRETEST	208.375	1	208.375			
GENDER	72.883	1	72.883	0.102	0.406	NS
Error	416.337	34	30.035			
Total	37292.000	37				
Corrected Total	921.036	36				

Table 4 showed that at 0.05 level of significance, 1df numerator and 36df denominator, the calculated F is 0.102 with P-value of 0.406 which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the second null hypothesis (H_{02}) is accepted. This implies that there was no significant difference between the effectiveness of self-management technique in reducing shyness among male and female secondary school students.

3.2. Discussion

Findings from the data analysed in this study showed that self-management technique was effective in reducing shyness among secondary school students in the treatment group as compared with those in the control group. Specifically, the findings revealed that the students in both the experimental and control groups exhibited high level of shyness before the commencement of the study as indicated in their pre-test scores. The findings also indicated that the difference in level of shyness between the participants in the experimental and control groups was significant in the post-test.

Moreover, participants in the experimental group reported a significant decrease in their shyness as compared to those in the control group. This may be an indication that during the self-management technique experiment, secondary school students in the experimental group acquired the necessary skills and competences needed to enable exercise better control over their faulty thought patterns and belief system that trigger shyness among them. This finding is consistent with prior researches that suggested that self management technique is effective in reducing shyness among secondary school students (Azuji, 2010; Bialas & Boom, 2012; Olorunfemi-Olabisi & Akomolafe, 2013, Igbokwe, 2019).

One possible reason for the reduction in shyness among participants in the experimental group may be due to the self-regulatory and self-control skill which were inculcated into them by the counsellor during the self-management training. Perhaps, the participants have been able to control and regulate their irrational thoughts thereby reducing the probability for which shyness occurs. This statement is in-line with the Rational emotive theory of Albert Ellis which asserted that irrational feelings and behaviours such as shyness are cause by irrational thoughts and belief patterns. It is very important to note that self-management is geared towards extinguishing irrational thoughts, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours through self-monitoring, self-regulation, self-control,

self-evaluation, and self-reinforcement. Ekwe and Nwamuo (2005) therefore emphasized that self management enables clients to alter their personal behaviours by the use of certain newly learned skills and by rearranging their environment. Self-management technique has emerged as an effective approach for encouraging adaptive behaviours among students (Barry & Messer, 2008).

Another finding of this study is that self-management technique was more effective in reducing shyness among female secondary school students than their male counterparts. This signifies that female secondary school students benefited more from the self-management technique treatment than the male students. This finding of the study is in consonance with the findings of previous researchers who reported that female students benefited more from self-management technique training than the male students (Olorunfemi-Olabisi & Akomolafe, 2013, Igbokwe, 2019). The finding also supports the result of the study by Oguzie, Ezunu, Uba & Osagie-Obazee (2018) who found that female students embrace and benefit more from behaviour intervention programs than their male counterparts. The above authors further observed that female students are more likely to easily yield themselves to change and are usually willing to participate in group activities that require less physical stress, especially when the environment is peaceful and interactive.

However, it is important to note here that the observed gender difference in the effectiveness of self-management technique in reducing shyness among the participants was not significant. This is so because the test of null hypothesis two showed that the effectiveness of self-management technique between the male and female students who participated in the experiment was no significantly different.

3.3. Conclusion

Based on the results of this study and the discussion that followed, the researchers concluded that self-management technique is significantly effective in reducing shyness among secondary school students. It was also concluded that self-management technique is more effective in reducing shyness among female students than the male students. However, the gender difference in the effectiveness of self-management technique was not significant in this study.

3.4. Recommendations

In-line the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. That secondary school guidance counsellors and psychologists should adopt self-management technique as an effective intervention measure in solving the problem of shyness among secondary school students.
2. That teachers and school administrators should fashion out programs that will help to instil self-management capacities among secondary school students.
3. That the curriculum planners should lay enough emphasis on self-management training in the subsequent secondary school guidance and counselling curriculum.
4. That form teachers and class prefects should quickly refer students identified with shyness to the school-based guidance counsellor for proper

3.5. References

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