

EFFECT OF TREATMENT ON SELF-CONCEPT OF NIGERIAN PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated effects of three treatment models on self-concept of Nigerian physically Handicapped secondary school students. Twenty-eight physically handicapped Secondary School Students were pretested treated and post-tested using Adolescent Personal Data Inventory. They were divided into four groups. Three were treated (with either Rational Emotive Therapy Model, Client-centered Therapy Model or the combination of both models) one was not treated (control). The groups comprised boys and girls, extroverts and introverts, with age range of 14 to 22. Three null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 significant level. No significant gender, personality type and age differences in self-concept were observed.

Keywords: Self-concept, physical Handicap, Rational emotive Therapy model, Client-centered Therapy model, extroverts, introverts.

INTRODUCTION

The variable of self-concept has received increasing attention during the past 30 years from educational researchers and evaluators. Self-concept means one's mental image, perception, understanding and evaluation of his abilities, attitudes, judgment, values and physical self. That is, how one perceives his personality. Studies have tried to prove that self-concept could be stable over time (Amao-Jehinde, 1993; Purdi & Hettie, 1995; Ogbuokiri, 2007). At the same time, intervention studies like those carried out by Obidoa (1985), Odoemelam (1994), Otta (1999) succeeded in their attempt to change self-concepts. This shows that self-concept which develops at early childhood (Nwachukwu, 1996), revised as the individual's personality changes due to his enlarged interaction at late childhood (Haber & Fried, 1975), and reinforced by his environmental conditions during adolescence, can be improved. An individual's self-concept can affect his values, desires, interests, aspirations and life satisfaction. Hence the need to investigate on the improvement of self-concept of some disadvantaged groups, in this case, the orthopedically handicapped secondary school students. Some studies have been conducted to relate self-concept to gender, location, age, and family structure (Jensen, 1983; Ezeilo, 1983). None of these treated self-concept.

Some studies have also been conducted using the handicapped subjects. However most of the studies reported have been with the blind (Igwe, 1998), the educable mentally retarded (Okobia, 1989), and students with behavior problems (Odoemelam, 1994). There is a dearth of studies with physically handicapped secondary school students (adolescents) a special group which Nigerian Counselors in schools have been interacting and will still interact with. A group much neglected by research and a group which need more care/help than their "normal" counterparts.

Evidences, both in Nigeria a western societies, especially in America, concerning the impact of age on children or adolescents' self-concept are inconsistent but generally lead to the conclusion that age affects the self-concept. That is, that self-concept becomes more positive with age (Grant, 1966; Ezeilo, 1983; Jensen, 1983). But in Obidoa (1985) study, no age varied with group-treatment.

In the same vein, gender differences in self-concept among the youth, especially among Nigerian youths are probably small, and ambivalent findings seem to have been reported. Some research studies have reported significant differences in self-concept for male and female youths (Shaikh, 1974; Ikeme, 1980). On the other hand, the report of the studies by Ezeilo (1983), Jensen (1983), Obido (1985), Amajiridonwu (1978) indicated no significant differences in self-concept among the males and females of their sample. Out of the four studies, it was only Obido who treated and measured self-concept after treatment. Yet there was no difference among boys and girls. The contradictory results on gender differences in self-concept with studies conducted in Nigeria have been attributed to the function of societal, cultural and biological influences (Obido, 1985). Socio-culturally, most Nigerian males have a derogatory attitude towards women and often relegate their presence, and so their ideas, to the background. The recent campaign on human right in Nigeria, seem to have made a little change on this attitude. This change must have affected the studies of Amajirionwu (1978), Ezeilo (1983) and Obido (1985). Biologically, Freud had noted that women generally have more inferiority feelings than men resulting from the "little girl penis envy". Otta (1999) has treated the self-concept of the physically handicapped adolescents but excluded the influence of age and gender on her subjects. This study therefore included personality type, age, and gender as possible influences on the subjects' self-concept after treatment.

METHOD

This study was experimental. The subject comprised 28 physically handicapped (orthopedically) Secondary School Students in all the Secondary schools in Afikpo North Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. Due to the number of the subjects, purposive sampling was adopted where all of them were pre-tested, treated and post-tested using the Adolescent Personal Data Inventory (APDI) by Akinboye. APDI has proved reliable with Nigerian adolescents self-concept measure with a test-retest reliability co-efficient of 0.79 (Otta, 1999) and internal consistency reliability of 0.75 (Akinboye, 1981). Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI) was used to classify subjects into extroverts and introverts. Any subject who scored 16 and above was considered an extrovert, while 15 and below were considered introverts. Altogether there were 13 extroverts and 15 introverts, 11 girls and 17 boys with range of 14 to 22 years. Rational Emotive Therapy and Client Centred Therapy and a combination of the two therapies were used as intervention models among three treatment groups.

The null hypotheses tested were;

1. There is no significant difference in the self-concept of subject classified as extroverts and introverts after treatment.
2. There is no significant difference in the self-concept of male and female subjects after treatment.
3. There is no significant difference in the self-concept of treated subjects due to age difference.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hypothesis I

There is no significant difference in the self-concept of subject classified as extroverts and introverts after treatment.

The result tabulated above shows that the F-ratio (P 0.05) of .195 on personality (extroversion/introversion) is less than the table value (1, 13, 0.05) of 4.67. There is therefore no significant difference in the level of self-concept of the treated subjects classified as extroverts and introverts. The hypothesis is not rejected.

Hypothesis II

There is no significant difference in the self-concept of male and female subjects after treatment.

From the table above, gender had no significant effect on the level of self-concept of treated subjects. Both boys and girls improved on their self-concept when pre-test was compared with post test. This is because the computed F ratio (.248) is less than the table value of 4.67. This means that the hypothesis is not rejected.

Hypothesis III

There is no significant difference in the self-concept of treated subject due to age difference.

Source of Variation	Sum of Square	DF	Mean Square	F calculated	P	Table Value
Covariate	578.813	1	578.813	0.683	0.05	
Mean Effects	14,250.183	11	1,295.471	1.529		
Group	12,569.528	3	4,189.843	4.946		3.4
Personality Type	165.570	1	165.570	0.195		4.67
Gender	209.868	1	219.868	0.248		4.67
Age	759.072	6	126.512	0.149		2.92
Explained	14,828.996	12	1,235.750	1.456		
Residual	11,011.620	13	847.048			
Total	54,373.649	48	8,658.875			

ANCOVA for effect of treatment on Self-concept based on Personality type, Gender and Age.

Still from the result in the above table, the F-ratio ($P < 0.05$) of .149 on age difference is less than the table value (6,13,0.05) of 2.92. It means that there is no significant difference in the level of self-concept of treated subjects due to age difference (14 to 22 years).

The response in the table are quite revealing. The computed data showed the calculated F-ratio ($P < 0.05$) of .1995 on Personality Type as less than the critical F which is 4.67. This implies that no significant difference existed in the level of self-concept of the treated subjects classified as either extroverts or introverts. The hypothesis is not rejected. This finding is not in agreement with the finding of a study by Diloreto (1971) who discovered that introverts gained more in the level of self-concept after treatment than their extrovert counterparts. Extroverts and introverts having no marked difference in self-concept gain could be as a result of their stage of development and change may be the same for them.

For hypothesis two, the result shows that gender had no significant effect on the level of self-concept of treated subjects. In other words, both boys and girls improved on their self-concept when pretest was compared with post-test because the F-ratio of .285 is less than the table value of 4.67 at 0.05

probability level. This finding agrees with Obidoa's (1985) result when she discovered no significant difference between gender differences after three months treatments. It is understandable because adolescents in Nigeria especially the subjects for this study almost face the developmental tasks, desires, treatment, and aspirations. Only few differ, and so may be equally influenced in self-concept by any intervention programme.

Again, the response in the table show the calculated F-ratio ($P < 0.05$) of .149 on age as less than the table value of 2.92 at 0.05 probability level. The hypothesis of no significant difference in self-concept of treated subjects due to age difference is not rejected. The ages range from 14 years to 22 years. This could also be as a result of some developmental stage or some physical condition of handicap. Again, the finding agrees with Obidoa's (1985) finding and disagrees with the results of Ezeilo (1983) and Grant, (1966) who recorded increase in self-concept with age advancement.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study imply that self-concept of the Nigerian physically handicapped Secondary School Students can be improved irrespective of age, gender and personality type. Already it had been noted that the handicapped adolescents feel inferior and so exhibit low self-concept (Hulock, 1980), In the same vein, Odoemelam (1997) observed that physical impairment may make a child clumsy and awkward. This is as a result of his reaction to people's feedback of his handicap. This in turn can lead to a lot of psychosocial disorders among this group. The School Counselor therefore can have group counseling with this group of students irrespective of their age, gender or personality type and still improve their concept of self.

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