Effect of self-instruction on bullying tendency among secondary school students in Nnewi North Local Government Area of Anambra State.

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ABSTRACT

Aims: This study focused on the effect of self-instruction on bullying tendency among secondary school students in Nnewi North Local Government Area of Anambra State. The study specifically determined the effect of self-instruction technique on bullying tendency among secondary school students, difference in the effects of self-instruction technique on bullying tendency of male and female secondary school students.

Study design: The design for this study is the quasi-experimental research design (pre-test, post-test, non-randomized control group). The study adopted the non-randomized pre-test, post-test control group design.

Place and Duration of Study: Secondary school students in Nnewi North Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria, between June 2021 and January 2022.

Methodology: The population consists of 329 students in JS2 and SS2 in all the secondary schools from all the co-educational schools in Nnewi-North LGA having high level of bullying tendency. To spot the population of students with bullying tendency the researcher visited the 7 co -educational secondary schools, with the help of the research assistance the Students Bullying Tendency Questionnaire was administered (SBTQ), this was regarded as the pre-test. The sample for this study comprised 108 secondary school students that were identified with high bullying tendency. This was drawn from JS2 and SS2 students from the two coeducational schools selected for the study. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting two schools that have the highest number of students with bullying tendency. The two schools with the highest number of students with high bullying tendency using the pre-test scores were adopted for the study. One school served as experimental group 1 and the second school served as control group for the study. The instrument for data collection was an already established Students Bullying Tendency Questionnaire developed by [17]. The students' tendency to bullying questionnaire (STBQ) which was adopted for this study was structured to ascertain the students' tendency to bullying. The SBTQ total score range from 20-80 with higher level of bullying tendency. Bullying scale reads; strongly agree =(SA) 4points, agree (A)=3 points, disagree(D)= 2 points and strongly disagree (SD)=1. The instrument used the Pearson product moment statistical technique to obtain a co-efficient of reliability of 0.89. The researcher administered copies of the bullying tendency questionnaire through direct delivery method to all JS2 and SS2 students to complete. The administered instrument after collection will be scored in line with the instrument scoring guide and analyze using Analysis of Co-variance (ANCOVA), The null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The data which relates to the research questions was analyzed using mean, while data relating to the null hypothesis was analyze using ANCOVA. Scores that are above the norm 47.77 for males and 47.77 for female while those scores below show no bullying tendency behaviour.

Results: The study revealed that the posttest mean score of 35.82 which is below the norm of 47.57 self-instruction technique is effective in reducing bullying tendency among secondary school students. More so, a lost mean score of 20.43 for females which is greater than lost mean score of 15.26 for males, self-instruction is more effective in reducing female secondary school students' bullying tendency. The findings of this study further revealed that

the effect of self-instruction technique on the bullying tendency of secondary school students is significant. Similarly, the effectiveness of self-instruction technique on bullying tendency of male and female secondary school students differ significantly.

Conclusion: It was concluded that, secondary school students with bullying tendency exposed to self-instruction technique had a significant reduction in their bullying tendency hence self-instruction is effective.

1. INTRODUCTION

The quandary of bullying tendency among secondary school students permeates in all levels schooling and family life such that they are unable to be lived seamlessly. A lot of reasons could explain the high predominance of bullying tendency among secondary school students in Nigeria today. The civil war, militancy in the Niger Delta and north east of Nigeria, economic crisis and political turbulence will no doubt have had long - term negative impact on its citizens. Other types of maladaptive behaviour are fear of examination, anxiety gangsterism, cultism, aggressiveness, and moody disposition which could put them at risk at any point in time. These maladaptive behaviour in the home and society, influence the children and students that are repeatedly exposed to it, in such a way that the tendency to be bullies begins to develop in them.

In a similar vein, [1] documented that there is a high bullying tendency among adolescents in Nigeria, indicating that more than half of the students are potential bullies. In other words, students see bullying tendencies as normal behaviour, and are likely to indulge, approve and support it as an acceptable social norm. In line with this, [2] had discovered that about 20% of students experienced repeated bullying during their school days. [3] a renowned scholar in the study of bullying among secondary school students opined that bullying tendency is an intent to repeat emotional, verbal or physical attacks against other persons or peers who are vulnerable because of their size and limited strength. These students could be outnumbered or maybe subject to other forms of imbalance of power. In the same vein, [4] define bullying tendency as an intent to partake in those direct and indirect aggressive acts that have three qualities which are; being intentional, repeated, and occurring between two students where power differential exists. Bullying tendency is a paramount behavioural intent in schools that may affect students in the school environment and can become an epidemic with a clear negative impact such as psychological and emotional trauma, low academic performance and low self-esteem when actualized.

Bullying tendency may lead to an aggressive behaviour that is intended to cause harm or distress to a weaker person which occurs repeatedly over time [5]. Bullying tendency causes threats to the mental and physical well-being of students. In other words, students who exhibit bullying tendency may have a motive of causing injury, either physical or psychological harm to their victims. Many definitions of bullying tendency exist, but all definitions have three 3 things in common, the likelihood to be susceptible to the following: engaging in repeated action over a period of time; have imbalance of power; and lastly, have verbal, psychological and other negative actions which are usually unprovoked. In the context of this work bullying tendency is the intent of having power over or inflicting physical or psychological harm on another, who is usually weaker.

Most tendencies to bully take place at the same class level. However, many times, older students tend to bully younger students. Although direct tendency to bully is a greater problem among boys, a good deal of this takes place among girls. Bullying tendency between girls, however, involves less physical violence and can be more difficult to discover. Girls tend to use indirect and subtle methods of bullying such as exclusion from a group of friends, backbiting, and manipulations of friendships [6]. Furthermore, far more boys than

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girls tend to bully, and many girls tend to be bullied by boys, but both can be victims of bullying tendency. In addition, empirical evidence showed that bullying tendency is found to be more common in boys than in girls [7]; [8]. [9] also reported that boys outnumber girls in every kind of aggressive behaviours. [10] opined that a good deal of bullying tendency is carried out by older students toward younger ones. The older students often tend to expose the younger and weaker students to the act of bullying. Most bullying tendency occurs on playground or in the classroom but these behaviours also occurs in corridors, and in the school hall, although a substantial portion of students tend to be bullied on the way to and from the school. [11] observed that some children are at more risk of becoming bullies and victims than others, although this is in no way predetermined. It depends on a combination of individual, family, peer, and school experiences.

The tendency to bully, if untreated can persist for years but proper interventions can decrease this tendency among secondary school students. This has been a phenomenon burning in the minds of researchers such as [12], and [13] seeking ways to unravel the cryptic threat posed by bullying tendency. In the area of counselling psychology there are numerous counselling techniques to enhance adaptive behavior. These techniques are developed by psychologists and are geared towards the elimination of maladaptive behavior such as fear, avoidant disorder, agoraphobia disorder, social phobia, neurosis, personality disorder, depression, anti-social behaviour, post-traumatic stress disorder, sexual abuse, drug abuse, bullying behaviour, obsessive-compulsive disorder, eating disorder, autism, bipolar behaviour, acute stress disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, pain management, anger and stress management and many medical conditions with psychological components.

To reduce these maladaptive problems, series of treatment options are also available including exposure therapy, self-statement monitoring technique, systematic desensitization, flooding, aversion therapy, modeling skills, solution-focused brief therapy (SFBT), self-instruction technique, stress-inoculation skills, Person-centred therapy, skill-deficit method, social training technique, among others. It has been stated that one or a combination of these may be recommended according to the situation and intensity. Of particular interest to this study is the effect of self-instruction on bullying tendency among secondary school students in Nnewi North Local Government Area of Anambra State.

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Self-instruction technique is a self-regulation strategy that students can use to manage themselves as learners and direct their own behaviour. It is a strategy by which students self-tutor and self-monitor their intense feelings. Here, the students take charge of the counselling activity, while the counsellors merely guide. Self-instruction technique is therefore a cognitive learning strategy, in which learning task is broken into steps and the learner himself/herself directs and appraises him/her as he/she goes through the task step by step. Self-instruction strategy takes place in stages: cognitive modelling stage; overt external guidance; overt self-guidance; faded overt self-guidance; and covert self-instruction.

Explaining further, self-instruction technique can be applied to great variety of behaviours, such as bullying behaviour, anxiety, anger, eating problems and creative difficulties. [14] opined that self-instruction is an antecedent statement people make to themselves describe directs, or guides the behaviour they perform. Self-instruction is the ability of one to cognitively plan, organize, direct, reinforce and evaluate one's own independent learning without a teacher's prompting. There is need for counsellors to provide programmes that could assist students, especially helping students to view themselves in a positive manner. Such programmes will go a long way towards reducing bullying behaviour among students and creating a positive academic atmosphere. This could be achieved through self-instruction technique such as stopping the negative thoughts through thought stopping and lastly building positive thoughts which come in form of self-verbal mediators.

Furthermore, [15] pointed out that in using self-instruction technique to modify a client, modifier instructs the person to adopt the concept of talking to himself and the child should be helped to build up a repertoire of self-statements to be used on a variety of tasks, by taking off from the area the child has not recorded failures or frustrations, making use of tasks that have self-instruction approach and encourage the use of cognitive strategies. Studies have shown that self-instruction technique is effective in reducing test anxiety among secondary school students. It has been reported that the effectiveness of self-instruction technique on bullying behaviour among students in Lagos and that the incidence of bullying was higher among males when compare to females. The use of self –instruction technique showed no significant difference in its effectiveness with respect to gender. Also, Ard, Gest, Vries and Lodder, (2015) work confirmed the effectiveness of self-instruction training technique in reducing bullying behaviour among high school students in Amsterdam. From there finding it was reported that there is no significant difference in the effect of self-instruction technique with regard to gender.

The self-instruction technique needs to be applied in helping school bullies to develop and maintain a healthy and acceptable relationship with school colleagues [13] This is because bullying is an intentional harm-doing, which happens repeatedly and over time. This affects wellbeing of the bully, his/her victims and those who are not directly involved but witness it regularly. This clearly shows that bullying occurs within an interpersonal relationship characterized by an imbalance of power. This therefore implies that self-instruction techniques emphasize improving interpersonal relationship need to be applied to reduce the level of hurtful relationships between the powerful and the weak and vulnerable school colleagues. In this wise, Guidance counsellors are trained to use various counselling techniques in order to help students manage their maladaptive behaviour appropriately. This is the reason why this study intends to use self-instruction technique and social skill training to find out if they can reduce bullying tendency. The self-instructional technique and the social skills technique are both cognitive- behavioral techniques for encouraging desirable behaviour. It is against this backdrop that the researcher is motivated to determine the effect of self-instruction technique on bullying tendency among secondary school students in Nnewi North Local government area of Anambra State. Specifically, the study determined;
1. Effect of self-instruction technique on bullying tendency among secondary school students.
2. Difference in the effects of self-instruction technique on bullying tendency of male and female secondary school students.

Research Questions
The following research questions guided the study
1. What is the effect of self-instruction technique on bullying tendency of secondary school students when compared with those exposed to conventional counselling technique using their pre-test and post-test mean scores?
2. What is the difference in the effects of self-instruction technique on bullying tendency on male and female secondary school students when compared using their pre-test and post-test mean scores?

Hypotheses
The following null hypotheses guided the study
1. There will be no significant difference in the effect of self-instruction technique on bullying tendency of secondary school students when compared with those exposed to conventional counselling technique using their post-test mean scores.
2. The difference in the effects of self-instruction technique of male and female secondary school students when compared using their post-test mean scores will not be significant.

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2. METHODOLOGY

The design for this study is the quasi-experimental research design (pre-test, post-test, non-randomized control group). According to [13], quasi experimental research could be in a school setting where it is not always possible to use pure experimental design which is considered as disruptive of school activities. The study adopted the non-randomized pre-test, post-test control group design. In this research, treatment was introduced only to the experimental participants, thereafter, the two groups, which comprised (treatment 1 and the conventional counselling group was measured). After which, the researcher compares their pre-test and post test scores to see the effects and the treatments used is self-instruction technique. The population consists of 329 students in JS2 and SS2 in all the secondary schools from all the co-educational schools in Nnewi-North LGA having high level of bullying tendency. To spot the population of students with bullying tendency the researcher visited the 7 co -educational secondary schools, with the help of the research assistance the Students Bullying Tendency Questionnaire was administered (SBTQ), this was regarded as the pre-test. The sample for this study comprised 108 secondary school students that were identified with high bullying tendency. This was drawn from JS2 and SS2 students from the two coeducational schools selected for the study. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting two schools that have the highest number of students with bullying tendency. The two schools with the highest number of students with high bullying tendency using the pre-test scores were adopted for the study. One school served as experimental group 1 and the second school served as control group for the study. The instrument for data collection was an already established Students Bullying Tendency Questionnaire developed by [1] The students' tendency to bullying questionnaire (STBQ) which was adopted for this study was structured to ascertain the students' tendency to bullying. The SBTQ total score range from 20-80 with higher level of bullying tendency. Bullying scale reads; strongly agree =(SA) 4points, agree (A)=3 points, disagree(D)= 2 points and strongly disagree (SD)=1. Therefore, the 20 items possible scores were 4x20 =80, 3x20=60, 2x20=40 and 1x20=20 while the lowest possible score is 20(20x1). Based on the 4-point scale, any score above the norm of 47.77 for male and 47.77 for female were included for the study while any score below the norm of 47.77 will be regarded as not having bullying tendency. The instrument used the Pearson product moment statistical technique to obtain a co-efficient of reliability of 0.89. Therefore, the instrument is reliable for this study. The researcher administered copies of the bullying tendency questionnaire through direct delivery method to all JS2 and SS2 students to complete. A special request was made to the principals for the provision of adequate and conducive environment for the administration of the questionnaire. The pre-test and post-test contain the same questions except that the items were re-shuffle. The researcher and research assistance gave the students an introductory instruction on how the questionnaire should be completed. The nature of the student's responses and the purpose which it serves was clearly explained to the students. The researcher and the research assistant properly assisted and guided the students on how to respond to the questionnaire. The questionnaire sheets were immediately collected from the students when they must have finish answering the items and handed over to the researcher for collation and scoring.

Training of Research Assistants: The study introduced three research assistants that participated in the study. These research assistants were regular school guidance counsellors of the participating schools. Prior to administration of the instruments the research assistants were trained on how to administer and collect the research instrument for the pre-test and post- test. The purpose and what it intend to achieve were related to them.

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Experimental Procedure: This is the procedure the researcher adopted to ensure the success of the treatment programme. The researcher visited the principals of the schools

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with a consent letter for approval to make use of their schools for the study. Explaining to them the purpose and benefits the school derived by the research. After their consents, the experimental procedure will take place using the regular counselling periods allotted in the time table of their schools. The participants will stay in their intact classes for the experiments. The training programme will take six (6) session for the experimental group and the control group, six weeks respectively.

Control of Extraneous variables

Hawthorne Effect: According to Macefield 2007, the Hawthorne effect is an experimental effect whereby participants in the study may exhibit a typical high level of performance simply because they are aware that they are been studied and hence change their behavior in the course of study. In order to avoid such a behaviour the researcher intents to put some measures to prevent such from happening; She ensured that all efforts focused only on the variables to be studied; All participants in the treatments and control groups were encouraged and reinforced with a little token of pen each. Intact classes were also used for the research to prevent this Hawthorne effect on the variables. Analyses of Co-variance (ANCOVA) was also used in collating the scores to remove any initial bias that may arise from the study.

Experimenter Bias: This bias has to do with the researcher influencing the results of the research in order to gain certain results. To control such, the experimental group will be given the treatment package while the control group will be given the conventional counselling. The same researcher will also administer the treatment sessions. Furthermore, same participants will participate in both the pre-test and post -test.

The administered instrument after collection will be scored in line with the instrument scoring guide and analyze using Analysis of Co-variance (ANCOVA), The null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The data which relates to the research questions was analyzed using mean, while data relating to the null hypothesis was analyze using ANCOVA. Scores that are above the norm 47.77 for males and 47.77 for female while those scores below show no bullying tendency behaviour.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: What is the effect of self-instruction technique on bullying tendency of secondary school students when compared to those expose conventional counseling technique using their pre- test and post- test mean scores?

In table 1, it was observed that the secondary students treated with self-instruction technique had pretest mean score of 52.58 and posttest mean score of 35.82 with lost mean 16.76 in their bullying tendency, while those in the control group who received conventional counselling had pretest mean score of 50.37 and posttest mean score of 47.63 with lost mean 2.74. With posttest mean scores of 35.82 which is below the norm of 47.57 self-instruction technique is effective in reducing bullying tendency among secondary school students.

Research Question 2: What are the differences in the effectiveness of self-instruction on the male and female secondary school students' bullying tendency using their pretest and posttest scores?

Table 2 indicates that the male students treated with self-instruction technique had pretest mean score of 52.49 and posttest mean score of 37.23 with lost mean 15.26 in their test

anxiety, while the female students treated with self-instruction had pretest mean score of 52.81 and posttest mean score of 32.38 with lost mean 20.43. With lost mean score of 20.43 for females which is greater than lost mean score of 15.26 for males, self-instruction is more effective in reducing female secondary school students' bullying tendency.

Hypothesis 1: There will be no significant difference in the effect of self-instruction technique on bullying tendency of secondary school students when compared with those exposed to conventional counselling technique using their post-test mean scores.

Table 3 indicates that at 0.05 level of significance, 1df numerator and 84df denominator, the calculated F is 102.13 with Pvalue of 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the first null hypothesis is not accepted. So, the effect of self-instruction technique on the bullying tendency of secondary school students is significant.

Hypothesis 4: The effectiveness of self-instruction technique on the bullying tendency scores of male and female secondary school students will not differ significant using their posttest mean scores.

Table 4 reveals that at 0.05 level of significance, 1df numerator and 54df denominator, the calculated F is 12.15 with Pvalue of 0.001 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the fourth null hypothesis is not accepted. So, the effectiveness of self-instruction technique on the bullying tendency of male and female secondary school students differ significantly.

The findings of this study relating to relating to research question 1 reveals that self-instruction technique is effective in reducing bullying tendency among secondary school students. This finding aligns with the findings of [16] who found that similar percentages of males and females (76%) have experienced one form of bullying, and the majority of the incidents (80%) occurred in the vicinity of the school. In almost half of the cases, the bullying was initiated by a student of the same age or older than the victim. The most common type of bullying encountered in this study was verbal (47.7%), followed by misuse (45.9%), physical (43.9%), and, finally, social isolation/exclusion (22.5%).

The findings relating to the research question found that self-instruction is more effective in reducing female secondary school students' bullying tendency. Result relating to the null hypothesis tested reveled that the effectiveness of self-instruction technique on the bullying tendency of male and female secondary school students differ significantly. In conformity this study conforms with the study of [16] which found that similar percentages of males and females (76%) have experienced one form of bullying, and the majority of the incidents (80%) occurred in the vicinity of the school. In almost half of the cases, the bullying was initiated by a student of the same age or older than the victim. The most common type of bullying encountered in this study was verbal (47.7%), followed by misuse (45.9%), physical (43.9%), and, finally, social isolation/exclusion (22.5%).

Result relating to the hypothesis tested revealed that the effect of self-instruction technique on the bullying tendency of secondary school students is significant. This finding aligns with the findings of [17] which showed that there was a significant mean difference between Public and Private University students and the impact was high in Public universities as compared to Private. Hence the findings included that due to bullying students did not participate in the class and did not follow the teachers' instruction.

Table 1: Pretest and Posttest bullying tendency mean scores of secondary students treated with self-instruction technique and those treated with conventional counselling (Norm = 47.57)

Source of Variation	N	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean	Lost Mean	Remark
Self-instruction Technique	55	52.58	35.82	16.76	Effective
Conventional Couns. Tech.	30	50.37	47.63	2.74	

Table 2: Pretest and Posttest bullying tendency mean scores of male and female students treated with self-instruction technique

Source of Variation	N	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean	Lost Mean	Remark
Male	39	52.49	37.23	15.26	
Female	16	52.81	32.38	20.43	More Effective

Table 3: ANCOVA on the effect of self-instruction technique on bullying tendency of students when compared with those who received conventional counselling

Source of variation	SS	df	MS	Cal. F	Pvalue	P ≤ 0.05
Corrected Model	2715.904	2	1357.952			
Intercept	684.196	1	684.196			
Pretest	6.064	1	6.064			
Treatment model	2362.892	1	2362.892	102.13	0.000	
S Error			1897.084	82	23.135	
Total	140533.000	85				
Corrected Total	4612.988	84				

Table 4: ANCOVA on the effectiveness of self-instruction technique on the bullying tendency of male and female students

Source of variation	SS	df	MS	Cal. F	Pvalue	P ≤ 0.05
Corrected Model	469.328	4	117.332			
Intercept	629.145	1	629.145			
Pretest	55.731	1	55.731			
GENDER	320.466	1	320.466	12.149	0.001	
CLASSLEVEL	152.340	1	152.340	5.775	0.020	
GENDER * CLASSLEVEL	2.114	1	2.114	0.080	0.778	
Error	1318.853	50	26.377			
Total	72350.000	55				
Corrected Total	1788.182	54				

4. CONCLUSION

This study determined the effects of self-instruction technique and social training skills on bullying tendency among secondary school students in Nnewi North Local Government Area

of Anambra state. The findings of this study led the researcher to the following conclusion; secondary school students with bullying tendency exposed to self-instruction technique had a significant reduction in their bullying tendency hence self-instruction is effective.

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