

The Effect of Self Monitoring Technique on Bullying Behaviour among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaduna State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the effect of self-monitoring technique on bullying behaviour among senior secondary School Students in Kaduna State. The study was guided by one research question and two null hypotheses. A non-equivalent control group Quasi-experimental design involving one treatment and one control group was adopted. A total of 106 senior secondary school students (SSII) with high record of Behavioural problems in School within Zaria Educational Zone of Kaduna State were used for the study. The instrument used for the study was the Bullying Behavioural Scale (BBS) which was validated by experts and used for data collection. Mean, standard deviation and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) were used to analyze the data collected. The results revealed that self monitoring technique is effective in reducing Bullying behaviour in schools. Based on the finding, it is recommended that the school counselors or psychologists should be trained on using the new technique to redress bullying behaviours among others.

Keywords: *Self-monitoring, bullying, behaviour*

INTRODUCTION

The manifestation of bullying is one of the most pervasive problems in schools today. It exists in all levels of the educational system (Primary, Secondary and Tertiary). Bullying in schools is an age long behaviour problems. The incident is increasing daily and media reports on it are also increasing. The dimensions involved are becoming more sophisticated. Presently, there exist digital bullying which involves using cell phones and computers to send menacing text messages or creating threatening and hate filled web pages about a victim including personal information (American Psychiatric Association, 2010).

Bullying is wide spread and, not confined to a particular segment of individuals. It is chiefly manifested by using ones strength, power and position to frighten or hurt the weaker individual. Such individuals may be of the same age or younger than the bully or may be the bully's junior in school. It is a misconduct that could be carried out by an individual or group (Nnodum, 2005). In trying to

define bullying, Olweus (1987, 1995, 1996) states that: a child is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed repeatedly and over time to negative actions on the part of one or more other children. It is negative action when someone intentionally inflicts, or attempts to inflict injury or discomfort upon another. It could be verbally, for instance, by threatening, taunting, teasing and calling names. Others include hitting; pushing, kicking, pinching or restraining another by physical contact. It can also be in the form of locking one up in a room, sending, writing nasty notes to the individual, taking or damaging his things, making him do things he does not want to do and making him feel uncomfortable and scared. The victim in this case finds it difficult to defend him or herself.

According to Olweus, (1987) reasons for bullying include self-defense, survival, revenge, protection of one's ego, testing one's power/strength, show of superiority, and just for the fun of it. Olweus (1987) availed that people bully for popularity purposes, make themselves look tough and in charge, to get people afraid of them and as a result of jealousy. Etiologically, bullying is linked to several factors: it can be learned through modeling processes and can be reinforced and maintained by a number of rewarding conditions, which may be found in families, peers and the general environment.

For instance, the kind of movies children watch can motivate bullying tendencies in them. It can also be caused by frustration of needs (Obiekezie and Odomelan, 1998). Children could be come easily irritated, angered and bully when their needs are not satisfied or they fail to get what they want. They could bully simply to satisfy their drive. Faulty parents child relationships such as rejection, neglect and over-protected and faulty disciplinary measures can bring about bullying. Furthermore, lack of material care, affection, interaction with parents or their substitutes, warmth and physical contact, during the formative years can bring about bullying. Bullying be it physical, verbal or psychological or whether mildly or severely done, have devastating consequences on both the bullied and bully. It could hurt the bullied physically, health wise, socially, and/or psychological.

Bullying can disrupt the enabling environment for effective learning. It can create social, health and psychological maladjustment in the learners (recipients). It prevents the victims from enjoying a safe stress free learning environment (Nnodum, 2005). Nnodum (2005) availed that the victims of bullying report school phobia fear of bullies, felling of anxiety, physical symptoms of illness, progressive lower levels of self-esteem, high levels of depression and diminished ability to learn in school. Such reports indicate that bullying can lower the academic achievement of the victims. Furthermore, bullying can have deadly consequences in acts of revenge, such as suicidal thinking (Carney, as cited in Nnodum, 2005) and suicidal acts (Olweus, 1995). Literature reveals that teachers have been trying to control this behaviour through the application of different types of punishment

measures include flogging, manual work, (of different types), kneeling down, writing imposition, standing up in the class, sending the individual out, and these were inappropriate. They lamented strongly over the increasing rate of the behaviour and the dimensions employed despite their effort in controlling its occurrence. However, some of the teachers in their response were nonchalant and no longer interested in cases of bullying. For them the bullied should try to cope with it because it is 'part of school life.' Others complained about the unwelcome behaviour and attitude of some parents when they are informed about what their children did or when their children are punished.

Some parents and bullies even threaten the teachers. The increase and dimensions involved and prevalence observed by earlier researchers probably indicate that the measure adopted by schools (teachers) in fighting this canker worm may be ineffective or inadequate or might be reinforcing the behaviour. Studies have shown that self-monitoring technique was efficacious in treatment of bullying, fighting and quarreling behaviour in schools (Reid, 1996; Olweus, 1987; Copper, Heron and Heward, 1987). Self-Monitoring describes a process of the student assessing whether or not he/she has performed a particular behaviour and then recording the result. Self Monitoring requires the student to self-assess and self record accurately his/her behaviour. Two different types of self monitoring are often employed. The students may be asked to self-record their attention to the task or problem behaviours (Reid, 1996). In Self-Monitoring attention to task, the student is asked to record whether or not they are paying attention and to self-record when cued or problem occurs.

These cues usually are given by a tape recording which sounds a beep at a variable interval during the students work period in the classroom. The student may then be instructed to mark a chart for every interval and to tally the number of intervals of paying attention at the end of the work time. In the self monitoring of problem behaviours, the student is asked to record the extent they exhibit the problems; accuracy of responding to self record their behaviour or whether or not the student has followed the steps in a particular strategy. Once again the student may be cured by the teacher, or a tape recorder sounding a variable signal to self-record, whether or not he is performing the behaviour of interest or deviating to anti social behaviour.

Student using either the techniques of self-recording attention to task or self-monitoring problems behaviours often use charts, graphs or tally sheets to record their performance (Copper, Heron and Heward, 1987). Self monitoring has been shown to increase accuracy over didactic instruction plus reinforcement. Numerous studies have demonstrated the usefulness of self-monitoring procedures with range students (Copper, Heron and Heward, 1987, Reid 1996). This approach is much more appropriate when a student accepts that a pattern of

behaviour is inappropriate and is desirous to change. Students, who learn to self-regulate their own behaviour has been found to be more determined, possess higher self-efficacy and are intrinsically motivated to learn and achieve success in the classroom (Eze, 2009). They engaged more in productive classroom activities and as such teachers are relieved of the function of frequently monitoring the students as they set more time to engage in other activities that will promote classroom (Cooper, Heron & Heward, 2007).

Guideline for teaching students to use self-monitoring programme among which include: Identify target behaviours, Discuss target behaviours with students, Select a way to measure behaviour, Train students to use the measurement system, Once the student is using the system do accuracy check, and Provide feedback (Copper, Heron and Heward, 1987, 2007).

Research Question

What is the effect of Self-Monitoring on bullying behaviour in treatment and untreated group as measured by Bullying Behavioural Scale (BBS)?

This study was guided by the following hypotheses that were tested at 0.05 levels, of significance

- H₀1:** There is no significant difference of male and female students on the pre-test and post test of self monitoring on bullying behaviour in treated and untreated subject.
- H₀2:** There is no significant difference in the interaction effect of self-monitoring and gender on bullying behaviour in treatment and untreated group as measured by BBS.

METHOD

The study was executed using a quasi-experimental, non equivalent control group, pretest – posttest design. The population of the study was all Secondary School Students in Zaria Education Zone, Kaduna State, Nigeria. The sample was 106 (50 males and 56 Females) students drawn from four schools drawn from 20 schools in Zaria Education Zone of Kaduna State. The two schools were purposefully assigned to experimental and control group. In each of the two schools, one intact stream each of SSII and SSIII class was randomly selected for the study. The instrument used for the study was a 10 item questionnaire tagged Bullying Behavioural Scale (BBS) developed through extensive literature review by the researcher. Each item on the questionnaire was rated on a five point scale of very low extent (5) (VLE), low extent (4) (LE), moderate extent (3) (ME), High extent (2) (HE), and very high extent (VHE) (1). The internal consistency estimate obtained for (CBIS) using Cronbach alpha was 0.66, the

coefficient of stability obtained using Pearson Product Moment Correlation was .78. Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA). Before the commencement of the training, the trainer familiarise themselves with the subjects to ascertain whether student experience Bullying behaviours in school. This, it was believed helped the trainers in determining how best to motivate the subject to acquire the new strategy. Immediately after assigning the subject to treatment and control groups, the pretest was administered to them.

Instructions on Self -Monitoring Techniques were taught to those in treatment groups. All these were done through the following: Biographic histories of non bullied personalities, civility recitation environment, changing skills and contractual; fulfillment; self record of good/bad behaviour, reinforcement skills and evaluation of feedback, respectively. While the control group, were only been exposed to the normal classroom management (punishment) in reducing bullying behaviours. The trained research assistants who are school counselors were used. Each one handled the treatment and the control group respectively. This will help to minimize the teacher effect. The study lasted for eight weeks through which scores are gathered for the pretest and the post-test. The data collected were analyzed using analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significant.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 indicates that male students exposed to instruction in self-monitoring techniques (SMT) had a posttest mean score of 107.92 with SD of 9.57 as against their male counterpart in the control group with a posttest mean score of 89.92 with SD 10.15 the difference in the group was 18.00. Female students exposed to instruction in SMT had a higher posttest mean score of 105.10 with a SD of 6.80 as against the female counterpart in the control group with a posttest mean score of 86.19 with a SD of 11.61. The differences in the posttest mean score of female in the two groups is 18.91. The results showed that male and female students in the treatment groups reduce rate of Bullying behaviour than males and female in the control groups in favour of the treatment groups.

The data presented in table 2 above showed that treatment group as main factor had a significant effect on Bullying Behaviour among students. The F-value of 51.76 was significant at .000 levels and also at $P < .05$ levels of significance. This suggested that the null hypothesis of no significance difference in the SMT of students taught using the techniques was rejected. In other words, there was significance differences in the reducing of rate of Bullying Behaviour of the two groups in favour of those exposed to SMT as measured by BBS. The adjusted R-squared of 0.55 further suggested that of the total variance on the dependent

measures was contributed by treatment using instruction in SMT. This evidence showed that instruction in SMT was effective in enhancing positive behaviour or reducing in bullying behaviour of students in treatment groups as compared to those in control groups. The finding in table 2 indicate that main effect of gender on Bullying Behaviour posttest mean scores on BBS was not significant ($p = .175$) the null hypothesis of no sign. Gender effect was not rejected. The findings further revealed that interaction effect of gender and SMT on Bullying Behaviour was not significant ($p = .948$). Hence the null hypothesis of no significant interaction effect was not rejected.

The results of this study show that the use of self monitoring technique was effective management tools for redressing Bullying behaviours in school. This is suggested by the fact that those exposed to treatment show reduction in Bullying behaviours among adolescent in schools than the untreated control group with a mean difference of 106.42 and 87.94 respectively. The SMT help learners to think more effectively, managed conflict by themselves, engage in practical thought, experiment and question their basic assumptions and correction of bad habits to good behaviour of not engaged in Bullying one another. This finding is in line with the findings of Obiekezie and Odomelam (1996); Copper, Heron and Heward (1987), and Reid (1996) who used self monitoring, as a cognitive process in managing Deviant behaviours among school children.

Self-Monitoring as a self-regulatory technique is especially important as it enable students to monitor and record the frequency of occurrence of inappropriate behaviour and take required steps to control the occurrence of such behaviour (Copper, Heron and Heward, (1987, 2007). Student exposed to instruction in using self-monitoring techniques are also able to judge their own behaviour as appropriate or inappropriate; can spend more time in teaching tasks and learning as well as ability to manage their own behaviour which may facilitate generalization and maintenance of newly acquired techniques in inclusive setting than those who are not exposed to the use of this techniques. The result in table 1 reveals that bullying is highly prevalent in the schools. This agrees with the findings of Ekoja and Ekoja (2002) and Nnodum (2005) who in their studies, found that about 80% of their subjects admitted bullying others and 85% admitted being bullied. The high prevalence could be explained in terms of poor attention from both the school authority and the government and use of ineffective control measures and approaches as measured by BBS. Similarly the finding reveals no significance difference in the interaction effects of instruction on SMT Gender on Bullying Behaviours as measured by BBS. Olweus (1996) maintained that Gender is socially ascribed. Gender roles stereotypes are acquired passively.

Table 1: Description Statistic

Experimental Groups	Gender of Respondents	Mean	Std Deviation	N
Treatment	Males	107.92	9.57	26
	Females	105.07	6.80	29
	Total	106.428.25		55
Control	Males	89.92	10.15	24
	Females	86.19	11.61	27
	Total	87.94	11.00	51
Total	Males	99.30	13.33	50
	Females	95.96	13.32	56
	Total	97.53	13.37	106

Table 2: Summary of Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) on the Effect of self-monitoring techniques on BBS

Source of Variation	Sum of square	DF	Mean square	F	Significance of F.
Covariates	12609.59	4	3152.39	51.76	.000
Pretest	3186.25	1	3168.25	52.02	.000
Experimental Groups	3286.79	1	3286.79	53.97	.000
Gender	5869.61	1	5869.61	96.38	.000*
Experimental groups	113.65	1	113.65	1.87	.175
Gender			.259	.004	.948
Error	.259	1	60.89		
Total	6150.82	101			
Corrected Total	1027008.00	106			
	18760.41	105			

Significant at .05 level Adjusted R. Squared. 55

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study examines the effect of self-monitoring technique on bullying behaviour among senior secondary School Students in Kaduna State. The results revealed that self monitoring technique is effective in reducing Bullying behaviour in schools. Findings show inconsistencies in researches on gender differences on the effects of self monitoring on bullying behaviour among students. This study may therefore, contribute significantly to the unresolved controversy on gender factor as it affects bullying behaviour among senior secondary school students. This revelation calls for attention and urgent need to create awareness on the need to use the new technique in reducing the high existence of bullying behaviour in schools and the dangers associated with it. Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- 1 Teachers/school counselors should be encouraged and trained in using the new techniques to handle bullying in the classroom.
- 2 School psychologist or counselors should be trained on self monitoring modification techniques in handling cases of bullying as well as using other behavioural modification techniques, self-control, aversive training and their combination.

- 3 The government should set up committee to form anti-bullying policies. These policies should be sent to all school levels and its implementation should be ensured.
- 4 School should develop a curriculum that promotes kindness, commutations, cooperation and friendship.
- 5 Stressing empathy, anger management and conflict resolution skills should be included.
- 6 The different group activities of school children in the school such as games, manual work etc., should be supervised.
- 7 Get older peers to serve as mentors for bullying and to intervene when they see it taking place.

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