EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL SKILLS TRAINING TECHNIQUE ON BULLYING BEHAVIOUR OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KATSINA STATE OF NIGERIA

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Abstract
The study was conducted to examine the effectiveness of social skills training technique on bullying behaviour among secondary school students in Katsina State of Nigeria. One objective, two research questions and two hypotheses were raised to guide the study. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The design of the study was quasi experimental involving pretest and posttest control group procedures. The total population of the study was one hundred and twenty one (121) school bullies, identified from a total of twenty four thousand and sixty two (24,062) public secondary school students in Katsina metropolis with the help of the schools’ management and staff members. The study used one treatment group and one control group. The treatment group underwent social skills training session for eight weeks at the rate of one hour per week by cognitive-behavioural working template. The researcher used students’ bullying behaviour questionnaire (SBBQ) for data collection. The researcher established face and content validity for the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was also established using Pearson Product Moment Coefficient (PPMC). The reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.70. The researcher used paired sample t-test and mean and standard deviation as well as t-test for independent samples for data analysis. The result of the study showed that social skills training technique was effective on reducing the level of students’ bullying behaviour and the technique also had same level of effectiveness on both the male and female school bullies.

Background to the Study
In Nigeria and elsewhere throughout the world, secondary school students experience an increase in the rate repeated acts of disturbance among them. On daily basis, we receive print and electronic media reports on the use of force by stronger and more senior students in hurting their weak and vulnerable fellow students through verbal, physical and cyber means. The victims of these hurtful behaviours suffer untold
hardship from their nasty experiences. Some of the victims are reported to withdraw from schools while others go to the extent of committing suicide to escape the disturbances. This indicates the daunting need for the study of students’ negative relational behaviours and how best to approach the issue of preventing and managing them before they affect the smooth running of schools.

Bullying behaviour among students are repeatedly aggressive acts by one or more students against another weak and vulnerable student with difference in power between the perpetrator and the victim with the intention of inflicting hostile verbal, physical and cyber harm on the victim. Bullying behaviour among students are rampant social vices carried out through various means to disturb the victim and his/her social relationships. The genesis of these negative behaviours is the child’s home whereby relationships between children and their parents/guardians and other primary caregivers are harsh and critical. Many parents/guardians and other primary caregivers today fail to meet the physiological and psychological needs of their children. The result of this unfortunate development is that the children develop the habit of cruelty and wanting to harm others.

Students who bully others on regular basis face a wide range of mental health, safety and educational problems including injury requiring hospitalization and other juvenile crimes. Strabstein and Piazza (2008) opined that “school bullies are at risk of a wide range of health, safety and educational problems including injury requiring hospitalization, weapon carrying, setting fires and run away episodes”. School bullies also have a higher incidence of mental health and social problems than those who do not involve in such relational problems (Zubrick, Sulburn and Gurrin, 1997). School bullies are also more likely to have low academic achievement, are more unhappy at school and demonstrate an increased likelihood of engaging in delinquent behaviours (Kumpainen and Rasanen, 20-00; Van Dewit and Hirasing, 2003). School bullies also engage in smoking, drinking alcohol and substance use (Strabstein and Piazza, 2008). It can therefore be inferred that the above enumerated negative relational behaviours could lead to manifestation of repeated hurtful behaviours exhibited by the perpetrators of bullying that are inimical to the smooth running of school activities.

Objective of the Study
To examine the effectiveness of social skills training technique on bullying behaviour among secondary school students.

Research Questions
1. What is the effectiveness of social skills training technique on bullying behaviour?
2. What is the effectiveness of social skills training technique on bullying behaviour of male and female secondary school students?

**Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant effectiveness of social skills training technique on bullying behaviour.
2. There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of social skills training technique on bullying behaviour of male and female school bullies.

**Scope and Delimitation of the Study**

The study was confined to two public secondary schools in Katsina metropolis because they are the most populated. There are several assumptions about bully/victim episodes and their causes. These include the claim that bullying is a consequence of large classes or school size (Olweus, 1993 and 1997).

**Literature Review**

In this aspect of the study, the literature that is related to the topic of the study is reviewed. Some of the items discussed in this section include the concept of bullying, its causes, types and consequences. Another indispensable item discussed here is the concept of social skills training technique.

Bullying behaviour implies repeated aggressive acts by the more senior and stronger students against their weak and vulnerable school colleagues in form of inflicting verbal, physical or cyber harm on the victim. Olweus (1999) defined bullying as repeated aggressive acts within a relationship characterized by a real or perceived imbalance of power in which the student exposed to the behaviour cannot adequately defend him/herself.

Some of the factors responsible for bullying behaviour among students include emotional abuse of students by their parents and significant others. Emotional abuse and neglect is a problem affecting all races, religious and socio-economic status. The World Health Organization (WHO) for example, estimates that around the world, forty million children suffer from abuse and neglect and need health and social intervention (WHO, 1999). Emotional abuse is a concerted attack by an adult on child’s development of self and social competence (Garbarino and Abramowitz, 1992).

Other factors responsible for the development of bullying behaviour include exposure to TV aggression, large school population of students with limited resources to meet the varying needs of the students and modeling of harsh response to the physiological and psychological needs of students.
Different Types of Bullying Behaviour

Students’ bullying behaviours can be manifested in different ways. They include direct or face to face bullying behaviours and indirect or behind someone’s face or cyber bullying which is manifested through the use of electronic technology (Besay, 2004). The direct or face to face bullying include verbal bullying behaviours such as name calling, mocking, hurtful teasing, insults, putdowns and harassment. Physical bullying includes such behaviours as shoving, pushing, hitting, beating up or damaging property and assault. The indirect or psychological bullying include such behaviours as giving dirty looks, uttering threats and other forms of intimidation. Other indirect bullying behaviours include such as gossiping or lowering people’s opinion about the targeted victim, telling fellow students not to befriend a student, spreading rumours and damaging friendships. It also includes such behaviours as leaving out or shunning or exclusion of others from social relationships.

Another form of bullying behaviour today is the cyber type of behaviour which is carried through the employment of electronic technology to inflict harm on fellow students. It includes such behaviours as sending threatening or harassing e-mail or creating a web site that belittles or ridicules fellow students or taking inappropriate pictures of fellow students without their permission and sharing sensitive information with instant messaging of such information and forwarding it to others etc.

Consequences of Bullying Behaviours

Bullying is a terribly hurtful behaviour not only to the perpetrators of the behaviour but also the victims, the social community and the society at large. The consequences of bullying are enormous ranging from lower school attendance, students’ poor academic achievement, increased hostility and juvenile crimes. Students who engage in bullying others experience a wide range of mental health, academic and social problems. Development of bullying at childhood leads to violent behaviours later at adolescence and adulthood. The victims of bully/victim episodes often fear school attendance and consider school as unhappy and unsafe place. Repeated bullying of weak school students leads to anxiety, low self-esteem and depression problems (Olweus, 1991; Pepler and Craig, 2000).

The Concept of Social Skills Training Technique

The social skills training technique stems from Bandura’s (1986) social cognitive theory. In this theory, Bandura described how individuals vicariously learn behaviours through their belief in their efficacy to observe the modeled behaviours, imitate and maintain them to become part of them as their second nature. It is a treatment technique aimed at assisting individuals with personality disorder better relate with other people and handle social situation effectively (Kopelowics, Liberman and Zarate, 2006). The technique typically consists of modeling or video footage of typical social behaviours,
followed by role playing and eventual follow-up sessions to ensure the behaviour is properly acquired and practiced outside the therapy session (Dam-Beggen and Karaaimat, 2000).

Generally accepted social behaviours such as verbal acknowledgement when someone is spoken to, eye contact during conversations are all discussed and explored during the social skills training sessions. Some examples of social skills training according to De-Rossier (2004) include:

a) Eye contact during conversation.
b) Smiling while greeting people.
c) Shaking hands when greeting people.
d) Using the right tone and volume of voice.
e) Expressing opinions to others.
f) Perceiving how others are feeling.
g) Appropriate emotional responses e.g. crying when something bad happens or laughing when someone says something funny.

Methodology
This paper discussed the research design, the target population of the study, the sample of the study and the sampling procedure, instrumentation, the procedure for data collection and treatment and the procedure for data analysis.

The Design of the Study
The research design used in this study is quasi-experimental involving pretest and posttest control group procedures. The design is diagrammatically represented according to Best and Kahn (2010) as follows:

\[
R_1O_1 \quad \text{X} \quad O_2 \quad R_1O_3 \quad \text{X} \quad O_4
\]

The Target Population of the Study
The target population of this study includes a total of one hundred and twenty one (121) school bullies identified from a total of twenty thousand and sixty two (20,062) students of two public secondary schools in Katsina metropolis. The school managers and their teachers assisted the researcher in this direction. They made sure that only bullies who were reported to have bullied others repeatedly i.e. three to four times (3-4) were included. Table 3.1 below depicts the total population of students in the schools slated for the study and the number of bullies identified per school.
Table 3.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Name of school</th>
<th>Population of students</th>
<th>No. of bullies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Sir Usman Nagogo College of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Katsina</td>
<td>16,765</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Government Girls’ College, Katsina</td>
<td>7,297</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24,062</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Schools’ Principals

Sample and Sampling Technique

From the population of twenty four thousand and sixty two (24,062), a total of one hundred and twenty one (121) school bullies were identified. The researcher used purposive sampling technique and selected twenty four (24) bullies to serve as the sample of the study. Table 3.2 below shows the sample selected per school.

Table 3.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Name of school</th>
<th>Sample selected per school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Sir Usman Nagogo College of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Katsina</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Government Girls’ College, Katsina</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kolo (1992) opined that “group counselling members could vary between three and twelve persons (3 and 12). This implies that the researcher had a total of twenty four (24) subjects as depicted in the above table. Each secondary school was allotted a group of twelve (12) school bullies. One of the two groups was treatment and received treatment and the other one was the control group and did not receive any treatment. Both the treatment and the control group members were from the schools slated for the study.
The researcher used Students’ Bullying Behaviour Questionnaire (SBBQ). A researcher developed questionnaire.

**Validity of the Instrument**

The researcher established face and content validity for the instrument by distributing copies of the instrument to colleagues at work who made favourable comment that the instrument could adequately measure the dependent variable of the study i.e students’ bullying behaviour.

**Reliability of the Instrument**

The researcher validated the instrument with samples of students from Funtua and Malumfashi secondary schools. The researcher used Pearson Product Moment Coefficient (PPMC) in carrying this exercise. The reliability coefficient after the revalidation exercise was 0.70.

**The Treatment Sessions**

The treatment group underwent an eight (8) week treatment sessions at the rate of one hour per week conducted by the researcher in collaboration with the parents, guardians and other primary caregivers of the school bullies by demonstrating the socially acceptable ways of handling social interactions while the school bullies watched and observed the actions taking place. They were later one allowed to imitate and role-play the modeled behaviours until they could maintain the behaviour outside the therapy session until the behaviour became part of their nature.

**Data Collection Procedure**

The researcher collected data from the participants in the study before and after the treatment sessions by administering the “Students’ Bullying Behaviour Questionnaire (SBBQ)” on the participants.

**The Procedure for Data Analysis**

The research used mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions. On the other hand, the researcher used paired sample t-test and t-test for dependant samples in testing the research hypotheses.

**Results and Discussions**

This aspect of the study presents the result of the study and discussions arising from the findings of the study.
Table 4.1 below shows the demographic information of the participants in the study.

### Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>29.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational Level</strong></td>
<td>SS III</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research question one states: What is the effectiveness of social skills training technique on bullying behaviour? Table 4.2 below shows the effectiveness of social skills training technique on bullying behaviour.

### Table 4.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment Technique</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Skills pretest</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>130.750</td>
<td>3.934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Skills posttest</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>41.750</td>
<td>1.371</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The outcome of the descriptive statistics above showed that bullying behaviour had been significantly reduced. The pretest mean scores of the school bullies was 130.750 while the posttest mean scores was 41.750. Their standard deviation at pretest was 3.934 while at posttest, it was 1.371.
Research question two states: What is the effectiveness of social skills training technique on bullying behaviour of male and female school bullies? Table 4.3 below depicts the similar effectiveness of social skills training technique on bullying behaviour of male and female school bullies.

**Table 4.3:** Showing descriptive statistics on effectiveness of SST on bullying behaviour of male and female school bullies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SST Pretest</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>127.2500</td>
<td>4.245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SST Posttest</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>38.4167</td>
<td>3.118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The outcome of the descriptive statistics above showed that bullying behaviour had been reduced significantly. The pretest mean scores of the school bullies was 127.2500 while the posttest mean score was reduced to 38.4167. Their standard deviation at pretest was 4.245 at posttest it came down to 3.118.

**Hypothesis one states:**
There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of social skills training technique on bullying behaviour.

**Table 4.4** Below depicts the effectiveness of social skills training technique on bullying behaviour.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>T_{Cal}</th>
<th>T_{crit}</th>
<th>P_{Value}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social skills training pretest</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>130.7500</td>
<td>3.93412</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39.504</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social skills training posttest</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>41.7500</td>
<td>4.75060</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P_{Calculated} < 0.05, T_{Calculated} > 1.96 at df 11

The results of the above paired sample t-test table revealed that significant effect of social skills training technique is glaringly clear. Reasons being that the calculated P-value of 0.000 was found to be lower than the 0.05 level of significance.
while the calculated t-value of 39.504 was found to be higher than the critical value of 1.96 at df 11. The means of students’ bullying behaviour were 130.7500 and 41.7500 at the pretest and posttest respectively. This means that their mean level of bullying behaviour has significantly reduced after they were exposed to the treatment technique. Consequently, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected.

**Hypothesis two states:**

There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of social skills training technique on bullying behaviour of male and female secondary school students.

**Table 4.5** below depicts similar effectiveness of social skills training technique on bullying behaviour of male and female school bullies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>T Cal</th>
<th>T crit</th>
<th>P Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>42.167</td>
<td>5.492</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.291</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>0.777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>41.333</td>
<td>4.367</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Calculated P > 0.05, Calculated t < 1.96 at df 10

The outcome of the independent t-test statistics above showed that there is similar effect of social skills training technique on bullying behaviour of male and female school bullies. Consequently, the null hypothesis is hereby retained.

**Discussion of Results**

The results of this study revealed that there was significant improvements on bullying behaviour of secondary schools students who have undergone the social skills training technique. The finding confirmed some previous findings of the study conducted by Stavie and Colleen in 2008 in the United States of America on the effectiveness of social skills training technique on bullying behaviour among secondary school students. At the end of the study, the researcher found a significant reduction in the level of bullying behaviour among the treatment group members who went through the social skills training technique.

**Conclusions**

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were therefore drawn:

1. Less coercive and punitive counselling techniques if effectively used by practicing counsellors could serve as effective means of managing social ills bedeviling the society.
2. School counselling programmes could be used to serve as essential instrument of crises management in the school system especially at the post basic level of education, the beneficiaries of which are at their adolescence period that is believed to be a period of storm and stress.

3. Guidance and counselling was primarily introduced in our formal school system to enhance the safety and quality of the system to respond to the varying needs of its recipients with respect to education, career and personality maladjustment.

References


