

Effect of Solution Focused Brief Therapy on Adolescents' Self Concept among Secondary School Students in Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Area in Edo State

Egbochuku Elizabeth Omotunde^{1,*}, Oduh William Akporobaro², Agboola James Odunayo²

¹Department of Educational Evaluation and Counselling Psychology, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State

²Department of Education, Benson Idahosa University, Benin City, Edo State

*Corresponding author: agboolajames20@yahoo.com

Abstract This study investigated the effect of Solution Focused Brief Therapy on adolescents' self concept among secondary school students in Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Area in Edo State. The sample of the study was 493 students out of which 34 students were identified with low self concept. This sample comprised of nine (09) males and eight (08) females in the experimental group and five (05) males and twelve (12) females in the control group. To guide the study, three research questions and their corresponding hypotheses were raised and tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The data collected were analyzed using the descriptive statistics of mean and the independent sample student t - test. The results showed that students exposed to solution focused brief therapy had a higher mean self concept score than those in the control group at post-test, the students in the experimental group had a higher score at post-test when compared with their pretest and sex has no significant influence on the self concept score among the students in the experimental group at post-test. It was therefore recommended that schools should have trained counsellors to help the adolescent students build their self concept irrespective of their sex using solution focused brief therapy since the therapy is not sex biased.

Keywords: *solution focused brief therapy, self concept and adolescents*

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1. Background to the Study

1.1. Introduction

Developmental psychology classified adolescence stage as a period of stress and storm. This period is equally mixed with confusion about their personality according to Eric Erickson but when adolescents understand themselves and view themselves ideally in reality, they will have a positive self-concept. On the other hand, when adolescents' views about themselves are not ideally viewed in congruence with what they are, they will be susceptible to negative or low self-concept. Self concept is the belief one has about him/herself. Self-concept can also be seen as one's perception or image of his/her abilities and uniqueness. At first one's self-concept is very general and changeable. Self-concept is not only seen as the image an individual has of himself or herself but also including his or her physical, psychological, social and emotional characteristics, aspirations and achievement [1].

There are some factors like education, sex, age among others that can either have positive or negative influence on one's self concept which may lead one to develop either a high self concept (if positive) or a low self

concept (if negative). An adolescent with a positive self concept has stronger abilities to patiently endure difficulties and challenges and are also willing to spend more time and efforts to work harder. According to Olorunfemi-Olabisi and Akomolafe [2], self-concept can be of two levels, there are high self concept and low self-concept. Adolescents who have high or positive self-esteem will look at their self capable to do something and doubtless that they can do anything. But, when the adolescents who have negative self-concept or low self-concept failed to do something, they will interpret themselves as worthless individuals, feels that life is meaningless, hopeless and influence him to behave [3]. Negative or low self concept fosters negative influences and thoughts within the individuals. When these negative influences and thoughts are prevalent, generated either from within such individuals or through others, it adversely affects the way they think and feel about themselves which is made evident in their behavioural dispositions and over time, reduces the quality of such a person's life in many different ways. Unchecked, low self concept may even lead to mental health issues such as anxiety and depression, sometimes with tragic results. Thus, low or high self concept affects the all-round decisions the adolescents make either positively or negatively [1].

As a result of the few facts that are mentioned, signifying a relationship between adolescent behaviour problems and low self concept, counsellors carried out studies to combat the problem. Egbochuku & Aihie [4] carried out a study titled "the influence of peer group counselling and school influence on the self-concept of adolescents' in Nigerian secondary schools. In the same vein, Aihie, [5] looked at the influence of sex on secondary school students' self concept. Result indicated that sex has no significant influence on the self concept of the adolescents.

Egbochuku & Obiunu, [6] carried out a study on The Effect of Reciprocal Peer Counselling in the Enhancement of Self-Concept among Adolescents. In sum, the study provides evidence that reciprocal peer counselling is an effective intervention for the enhancement of self-concept. But still, the problem persists. There is therefore the need for counsellors to conduct individual counselling for students, using the approach that is more efficient and effective and one of the therapies which can be presumed that can appropriately answer this adolescent's problem is the application of Solution Focused Brief Therapy. Solution Focused Brief Therapy usually called SFBT is one approach to counselling which is mostly used by practitioners of the profession today [7]. SFBT is the therapy that is more focused on how to find a solution rather than problem oriented. Researchers have confirmed the effectiveness of SFBT approach on depression [8], among primary school students, secondary school and high school ([9], p. 136). This study therefore seeks to determine the impact of SFBT on the enhancement of adolescents' self concept in Ikpoba Okha Local Government Area of Edo State.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Egbochuku [10] showed that educational issues and future vocational decisions are of great importance to the young ones especially the adolescents. Research has equally shown that decision making processes, whether educational or vocational, are related to one's self concept. In Nigeria, literature has shown that more than 50% of the adolescents are exhibiting low self concept [11]. If the adolescents must make decisions in life to achieve their maximum potentials, and there is a possibility of exhibiting low self concept which has the ability to deny their achievements in all facets of life, then there is a need to enhance these adolescents' self concept through the use of counselling techniques/ interventions. The problem of the study therefore is: would Solution Focused Brief Therapy have impact on the enhancement of adolescents self concept in Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Area of Edo State?

1.3. Purpose of Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the impact of Solution Focused Brief Therapy on the enhancement of self concept of the adolescents' in the secondary schools in Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Area of Edo State.

To guide the study, three research questions and their corresponding hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

1.4. Research Questions

1. Is there a difference in the self concept of the experimental group students before and after treatment?
2. Is there is a difference between the self concept of the experimental and the control groups at post test?
3. Is there a difference in the self concept of male and female students in the experimental group at post-test.

1.5. Hypotheses

- H₀₁:** There is no significant difference in the self concept of the experimental group students before and after treatment.
- H₀₂:** There is no significant difference between the self concept of the experimental and the control groups at post test.
- H₀₃:** There is no significant difference in the self concept of male and female students in the experimental group at post-test.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

Two research designs were used for the study. The first was the descriptive survey, which was used to collect the baseline data. The second design was a pre-test post test non-equivalent control group quasi- experimental design used for the study. Two independent variables (Solution Focused Brief Therapy and Study Habit), one intervening variable (sex) of two (2) levels and one dependent variable (self concept) also of two (2) levels were involved in this study. The participants at the pretest with score of 45 and above were regarded as those with high self concept while those with 44 and below were regarded as those with low self concept. At the point of analysis, it was only those with low self concept that were of interest to the researcher. As a result, treatment was only given to students with low self concept and they were post tested.

The independent variable of the study was counselling therapy. This variable is of two levels which are Solution Focused Brief Therapy and Study habit skills. These were manipulated through the sensitization and training of the counsellors on the skills and usage of SFBT and study habit as the control group on self concept enhancement.

2.2. Population for the Study

The population of the study consisted of all the public mixed Senior Secondary 11 students in Ikpoba Okha Local Government Area of Edo State with counsellors. There are 5 public mixed schools that have counsellors with 2,761 numbers of students

2.3. Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample of the study consisted of 493 Secondary School II students among which 34 were identified with

low self concept at the pre-test in the two schools randomly selected in Ikpoba-Okha Local Government from the five (5) schools with counsellors in the local government and consequently, these 34 students became the treated sample for the study. Out of these schools, two (2) of them were randomly selected using simple random technique through balloting. From these two schools selected, school A was randomly assigned as experimental group while school B was the control group. School A was exposed to Solution Focused Brief Therapy while school B was exposed to study habit package. The participants were 35 students identified with low self concept from the pre-self concept ratings who score below 45 in the Adolescent Self - Concept Scales (ASCS) developed by Obiunu [12], and adapted by the researcher. One of the students was out of school A after the pretest and the remaining 34 students became the treated sample for the study. Out of the 34 students, 17 students comprising of 9 males and 8 females were exposed to Solution Focused Brief Therapy in school A while 17 students comprising of 6 males and 11 females were exposed to study habit skills in school B.

2.4. Research Instrument

The main instrument used for this study was questionnaire titled Adolescent Self Concept Scale. This instrument was made up of two sections. Section A contains the information about the students' bio-data; section B consists of forty (40) items on self concept on a five-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Not Sure, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

2.5. Validation of Instrument

The instrument was adapted from Obiunu [12] and was modified by the researcher. Since the instrument was modified, the instrument was re-validated by three experts in the field of Measurement and Evaluation and the validity was established.

2.6. Reliability of the Instrument

The test-re-test method was used to establish the reliability of the section B of the instrument and it was found to have a reliability of 0.85 using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient.

2.7. Treatment Procedure

The counsellor/researcher began the treatment procedures by pre-testing. The two groups were pre-tested on the first two days using the Adolescent's Self-concept Scale (ASCS) questionnaire. This was followed by sensitization of the students in the experimental group on the enhancement of self concept using the Solution Focused Brief Therapy treatment manual after which the sensitization of control groups on enhancement of good study habit using the instrument titled study habit skills for better performance followed. At the end of the treatment sessions, both groups were post-tested and all data were recorded.

2.8. Data Analysis

Scoring of the data collected follows thus: Positive worded items in the instrument were scored 5.4.3.2.1 on the scale while negative worded items were scored 1.2.3.4.5 respectively. There are forty (40) items on the scale. If a respondent rates himself 5 on every item, the maximum of two hundred scores will be recorded and this represents the highest level of self-concept. Scores of 100 and above represents average to high self-concept while scores below 100 represents low self-concept. The data generated from the study was analyzed to test the hypotheses formulated for the study using the independent sample t- test to determine if there is a significant difference between the self concepts of students before and after treatment; between the experimental and control groups and between male and female students in the experimental group.

3. Results and Discussion

The analysis of the data generated from the respondents through the Adolescents Self Concept Scale (ASCS) was conducted and the result was used to test the hypotheses raised for the study as shown below:

Research Question One: Is there a difference between the self concept of the experimental group students before and after treatment?

Table 1. Showing the descriptive statistics of the difference between the self concept of the experimental group students before and after treatment

Exp. Group	Period	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Ascstotal	Before Treatment	17	34.8235	5.27062
	After Treatment	17	81.9412	11.32735

From the table above, it is shown that the self concept mean score of the students in the experimental group before treatment was 34.82 (Std. deviation =5.27) while after the treatment rose to 81.94 (Std. deviation =11.33) with a mean difference of 47.11.

Research Question Two: Is there a difference between the self concept of the experimental and the control groups at post test?

Table 2. Showing the descriptive statistics of the difference between the self concept of the experimental and the control groups at post-test

Group Statistics					
	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Postascstotal	Experimental	17	81.94	11.32	2.74
	Control	17	36.52	8.22	1.99

From the table above, it is shown that the students in the experimental group had self concept mean score of 81.94 (Std.= 11.32) while their counterparts in the control group had 36.52 (Std. = 8.22) with mean difference of 45.41 in favour of the those in the experimental group.

Research Question Three: Is there a difference in the self concept of male and female students in the experimental group at post-test?

Table 3. Showing the descriptive statistics of the difference between the self concept of male and female students in the experimental group at post-test

	SEX	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
POSTASCSTOTAL	MALE	9	82.33	12.30
	FEMALE	8	81.50	10.94

From the table above, it is shown that the male students in the experimental group had self concept mean score of 82.33 (Std.= 12.30) while their female counterparts had 81.50 (Std. = 10.94) with mean difference of 0.83 in favour of the male students.

3.1. Testing of Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the self concept of the experimental group students before and after treatment.

Table 4. Showing independent sample t-test statistics of difference between self concept of the experimental group students before and after treatment

Time	N	t	Mean	Mean diff.	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Before	17		34.82				
		-15.55*		-47.11	32	0.00	Significant
After	17		81.94				

*Significant at ≤ 0.05 .

Table 4 shows that the difference between the self concept of the experimental group students before and after treatment is significant at 0.00 ($t = -15.55$; $df = 32$). Since 0.00 is lesser than 0.05, the observed difference among the students is significant. With this, the null hypothesis which says there is no significant difference between the self concept of the experimental group students before and after treatment is not accepted. This implied that there is a significant difference in students' self concept before and after treatment.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the self concept of the experimental and the control groups at post test.

Table 5. Showing independent sample t-test statistics of difference between self concept of the experimental and the control groups at post test

Group	N	t	Mean	Mean diff.	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Experimental	17		81.94				
		13.37*		45.41	32	0.00	Significant
Control	17		36.52				

*Significant at ≤ 0.05 .

Table 5 shows that the difference between the self concept of the experimental and control groups students at

post-test is significant at 0.00 ($t = 13.37$; $df = 32$). Since 0.00 is lesser than 0.05, the observed difference among the students is significant. With this, the null hypothesis which says there is no significant difference between the self concept of the experimental and the control groups students at post-test is not accepted. This implied that there is a significant difference in students' self concept between these groups at post-test.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference in the self concept of male and female students in the experimental group at post-test.

Table 6. Showing independent sample t-test statistics of difference between self concept of male and female students in the experimental group at post test

Sex	N	t	Mean	Mean diff.	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Male	9		81.94				
		0.14		0.83	15	0.88	Not Significant
Female	8		36.52				

Table 6 shows that the difference between the self concept of the male and female students in the experimental groups at post-test is not significant at 0.88 ($t = 0.14$; $df = 15$). Since 0.88 is higher than 0.05, the observed difference among the students is not significant. With this, the null hypothesis which says there is no significant difference in the self concept of male and female students in the experimental group at post-test is accepted. This implied that there is no significant difference in students' self concept in the experimental group at post-test.

3.2. Discussion

From this study, it was discovered that a significant difference existed between the self concept scores among students of the experimental group (SFBT) after treatment when compared with their score before treatment as addressed by hypothesis one. This could be as a result of the tenets of SFBT that de-emphasize the problem while focusing on solution and also this difference could be traceable to the individualistic nature of the counselling setting.

Another finding in this study showed that students who were exposed to treatment had the higher self- concept scores than those in the control group when compared at post-test. This could be as a result of the treatment given to the experimental group because during the treatment, they were exposed to the consequences of negative self-concept and were equally taught how to overcome low self- concept. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Egbochuku and Obiunu [6] and Egbochuku & Aihie [4] who found out that reciprocal peer counselling and peer group counselling as treatments enhanced adolescents' self-concept.

Finally, the last finding showed that there is no significant difference between the self concept scores of the male and females' students in the experimental group. This shows that the treatment is not gender biased. This finding is in agreement with the work of Aihie [5] who

found that there was no significant effect of sex on the self concept of the adolescents.

4. Conclusion

This study examined the impact of solution focused brief therapy on adolescents self concept in Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Area of Edo State. It is found out that:

- Solution Focused Brief Therapy enhances self concept after treatment when compared with their scores before treatment.
- Students exposed to Solution focused brief therapy had a higher score when compared with their counterparts in the control group.
- There is no significant difference in the mean scores of the males and female students in the experimental group at post-test.

5. Recommendations

a. All secondary schools in Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Area of Edo State should have good and appropriate numbers of trained counsellors in their schools basically for encouragement and appropriately directing the adolescents in the schools so as to enable them have high self concept using solution focused brief therapy

b. Since this therapy is not gender biased, the school counsellors should strive hard to erase the inferiority complex and gender inequality in secondary school adolescents so that the students can equally develop high self concept to enable them make appropriate career decisions without regarding their sex.

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