The effectiveness of self-control technique in reducing bully tendencies amongst primary school pupils in Edo State, Nigeria: Counselling implication

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Martins N. Igbineweka¹, Wellington O. Jesuorobo²

¹² Counselling Psychologist and Lecturer, Department of Educational Evaluation And Counselling Psychology, Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria.
¹martins.igbineweka@uniben.edu

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Bully, Effectiveness, Primary School Pupils and Self- Control Technique.		Abstract This research accessed the effectiveness of Social-control technique reducing bullying tendencies among primary school pupils and sex of Edo state, Nigeria and suggested some implications for counselling. The the quasi-experimental. The research questions and their corresponding were raised, the population comprised of four thousand four hundred seven (4467) 2020/2021Basic (5) pupils in primary schools in Government Area, Edo State, Nigeria. The questionnaire title Bully/Victims Questionnaire'' (OBVQ) and modified by the research instrument used. While the collected data were evaluated using pairse Fisher Z-test and independent samples statistics. Findings revealed the effective in decreasing bullying tendencies among primary school produced technique was efficacious in reducing bullying tendencies. The recommended that school Guidance Counsellors should take advant control technique to correct pupils' bullying						

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INTRODUCTION

Primary education forms the basis upon which the entire system of education stands and this infers that the system needs to be highly functional in its operations. High quality primary education is a prerequisite not only to good quality secondary and tertiary education but also to continuing education. While the school is perceived as a point of social interaction for adolescents, these adolescents may on occasions display bullying or been faced with numerous bullying types within during their interactions; thus making bulling a common problem in schools (Kapci, 2004; Karen & Karen 2004; Nelson, 1996 as cited by Karatas et al, 2016). Bullying which is perceived a global issue, even among school children in Africa (Kubwalo et al, 2013; Brown et al, 2008; Liang et al, 2007), in Europe (Craig et al, 2009), in Asia (Kim et al, 2011); Wong et al, 2008) and in Nigeria (Egbochuku, 2007). Thus, bullying which is not recent phenomenon but rather perceived to have existed all this while in Nigeria, as deliberations by most adults have that they experienced bullying while in school; some emphasised repeated occurring ill treatments, victimization, intimidations, harassments and abuse while in school. This

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aforementioned issue has perhaps been left aside with the feeling that it was a normal way of life for children (Owuamanam, 2015), and as such children not personally exposed to bullying could also perceive their learning environment as hostile and not fit for assimilation.

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Bullying in school can take place any were within the school, although it may take place more often during activities, recess, bathrooms, in physical education classes; it may also occur in classes during group work and this is due to the fact that these adolescents might not supervised by any adult at such places (School Bullying, 2012). Both the bullies and their victims might as a result of these be exposed to mental illness; while bullying could take the forms of physical abuse, exclusion from activities, name-calling, verbal or written abuses (Carey 2003, Whitted & Dupper, 2005); students who bully others often do this with the intent of getting attention or been seen as tough or popular. Bullying is a form of social interaction that many school children experience. Bullying character among pupils could be covert; which makes it cumbersome to observe the behaviour. It is also a deliberate attempt to injure or course psychological disturbances on their recipients (Ross, 2003); adolescents involved in bullying are often exposed to arrest, truancy, and dropout and are usually violent. Observation has showed that children bullied repeated develop health challenges which make them vulnerable, especially children (Rigby, 2003).

Bulling is a provocative intimidation of its victim, which involves attacking a person with lesser strength (Nansel et al, 2001). It is that in which perpetrator (s) plan to attack persons perceived as less powerful or disturb another child who is perceived as being unable to defend himself or herself and often known as the victim (Glew et al, 2000). This aforementioned situation often result to poor academic performance which leads to failure of such students and other health hazards, while perpetrators of bullying often involved in suicidal thoughts, which make them to act violently while experiencing anger, depression if not corrected. Victims of bullying usually lacks concentrate when studying, unhappy, anxious, and depressed and sometimes misses school due to the fear of being bullied (Lohmann, 2014); thus, making bullying which is associated with maladjustment a type of violence act that may seriously harm children in the school environment as well as outside the school environment if not properly controlled.

In a study carried out in 2005 by McEachern et al, among students in 24 selected elementary and middle schools in all areas of the city of Sheffield, UK comprising of 6,758 students. It was observed that 27% of the sampled revealed being bullied sometimes during the term. Systematic research has been conducted on bullying in Denmark, however a significant study observed that in 24 other countries when compared, Denmark was stated as to have scored high (top three) in bullying behaviour

and top half for students who revealed being bullied (McEachern et al, 2005). In Nigeria, 88.1% of the respondents had been bullied, 33.1% were bullies and 64.7% had been involved in relational bullying while retaliation for being bullied in the past was 51.2% (Omoteso, 2010). Students from six public secondary schools in Odo Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State Nigeria in 2007/2008 session, it was revealed that the students were bullied as stated; 1-2 days within a month 29.5%, 3-5

days 9.1%, 6-9 days 5% and 10-30 days 4.3% (Owoaje & Ndubisi, 2009).

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Studies have proven that girls are usually not victimised unlike boys who were more overtly victimized, it was also revealed that no significant difference existed between boys and girls in respect of victimization (Casper & Card, 2017). Study from Indian, revealed that adolescents male experienced victimization and bullying behaviours and more often than female of ages 14 and 20 years old, (Narayanan and Betts, 2014). While no difference in gender was observed in the study of Kljakovic, Hunt and Jose (2015) in New Zealand. Omotese, (2010) opined that 48.8% male and 51.2% female were involved in bullying. Cook et al, (2010) observed that girls displayed lesser in bullying than boys appeared in bullying. However several studies has been done as regards bullying victimization but however to the knowledge of the researchers none had been carried out using Self-Control Technique in Reducing Bully Tendencies amongst Primary School Pupils in Edo State, Nigeria a gap this study seeks to fill.

In Nigeria, government policy of free education permits all pupils into primary schools, irrespective of academic prowess, religious belief and any other factor, resulting in overcrowded classroom. Overcrowding in classrooms inhibits proper classroom management; which results in indiscipline, intolerance, and other behavioural issues among children. Children bully because they feel they need to overpower others (Chinweuba, 2011). According to Williams & Kennedy (2012), some children will never think themselves as bullying. They think all they are doing is teasing, and may even be trying to communicate or even befriend the person they bullying. This could lead to unhealthy communication and turn to insulting or violence against other pupils. Some children either lack empathy or just like seeing others being hurt. The feedback from the victims gives the bully a sense of accomplishment, so he continues the behaviour not considering the feelings others (Endcesen & Olweus 2001). Moreover, since the children are still developing emotional, cognitive and social skills necessary for handling conflicts and solving of problems, bullying behaviours such as forcefully taking toy from other pupils, pushing, kicking, name-calling and even fighting can be very common at this age and many of them are not able to control their emotions. From the experience of the researchers as counsellors and teachers, perpetrators of bullying tend to experience anger, lack of self-control, depression, leading to suicidal thoughts and when not corrected could lead to acts violent.

Those persons demonstrating bullying could be hated or neglected which may leads to poor academic achievement and indecisive behaviours as well as apathy for school. Bullies are commonly treated with corporal punishment, scolding and other forms of punishment, but this has not significantly helped to modify their behaviours (Egbochuku & Isele 2020). Some of the obvious indicators of bullying tendencies may include the child not willing to attend school and may request to changes his or her path to school or are scared of walking to school, does not want to go to school on the bus/tram/train, while their school grades reduces drastically. They are often alone and excluded, being scared of speaking up in class thus appearing frightened or insecure orarchers are of the opinion that pupils at the primary school level are still open to accommodate facts, when compared to students in Secondary and Tertiary Education level who are perceived to have attained maturity; thus making it the best time to frame good behavioural patterns and characteristics in people, most especially acceptable and desirable behaviour, while bullying correlates with diverse negative outcomes such as anxiety, suicidal tendencies and mental health issues (Rueger, Malecki, & Demaray, 2011).

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To lessen bullying incidence in schools, different strategies have been designed by different researchers and these include self-control technique, which is a cognitive behavioural skills applied with the help of therapists on clients so as to regulate self-motivation and attain personal goals. The skills might be acquired through therapeutic intervention or self-help book. Self-control skills are put in process to help pupils take charge of their own behaviour with lesser dependence on outside behaviour-change agents (Harrison, 2005). It exposes client to skills that will enable him take control of his activities and acquire self-regulatory capacity. These skills or strategies which serve as the basis for self-regulation and it include personal-study for which the client is meant to personally analyse, monitor, and reinforce his or her own self (Umezulike & Eneasator 2018). Evidences in literature have showed the efficacies of self-control technique in reducing maladaptive behaviours in children and adolescents (Adeoye et,al, 2012; Caldwell, 2010; Aderanti & Hassan, 2011; Dignath, et al 2008; Gureasko-Moore, et al 2006; Mirnasab, 2016; Rehman & khan, 2015; Griffin, et al 2009; Adebusuyi & Ayodele 2018; Magar et al, 2008).

Researchers in Nigeria seem to focus on secondary school students while dealing with the issues of bullying and this may have led to the perceived dearth of counselling programmes, literatures, interventions and scientific data with respect to bullying in primary schools in Nigeria where pupils are at the formative stages of their development a gap this study fills. The study therefore is to find out if 'Self-control technique is effective in managing bullying behaviours in primary schools pupils.

Objective of the study:

The research objective was to investigate Effectiveness of Self-Control Technique in Reducing Bully Tendencies amongst 'Primary School Pupils in Edo State, Nigeria: Counselling Implication'. Specifically, this study was designed to find out:

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If any difference exists in the pre-test and post-test bullying tendencies scores of pupils exposed to SCT treatment.

Whether difference exists in the pre-test and post-test bullying tendencies scores of pupils exposed to SCT and Control group.

If any interaction effect of treatment by sex exists on the bullying tendencies of pupils.

Research Aims

- 1. Is there a difference in the pre-test and post-test bullying tendencies scores of pupils exposed to Self-control Technique?
- 2. Is there a difference in the pre-test and post-test bullying tendencies scores of pupils exposed to Self-control technique and those in the Control group?
- 3. Is there a difference in the pre-test and post-test bullying tendencies scores of pupils exposed to Self-control technique by sex at post-test?

Research Advantages

- 1. There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test bullying tendencies scores of pupils exposed to Self-control technique.
- 2. There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test bullying tendencies scores of pupils exposed to Self-control technique and those in the Control group.
- 3. There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test bullying tendencies scores of pupils exposed to Self-control technique by sex at post-test.

METHOD

The pre-test post-test quasi-experimental control group design was adopted. It was chosen because the study investigated the cause-effect relationship by exposing the experimental group to treatment condition. The study involved independent variables (Self-control therapy and a Non attention Control Group) and dependent variable (bully tendencies). The intervening variable consisted of the sex of the participants.

Participants

Population of this research included all the primary schools pupils in Egor Local Government area of Edo state. With a target population of four thousand four hundred and sixty seven (4467) 2020/2021 Primary five (Basic 5) pupils in primary schools in Egor. The researchers chose primary 5 pupils for this study because they were likely to understand and use the benefit of the treatment in this experimental study more than pupils in the lower classes and they could also be able to internalize its gains before proceeding into high school. The sample for the study was eighty seven (87) primary five pupils (43 males and 44 females). The samples for this study was gotten using the multistage sampling method: In stage one; the researchers used a simple random sampling technique to select two schools out of the thirty nine primary schools in Egor local government area of Edo state. In stage two, from the two schools selected, a school was randomly assigned to the experimental group and the other school for the control group. Finally, through cluster sampling, an intact class each was selected, from the streams of primary five classes in the two schools respectively. Each class has 45 and 42 pupils.

e-ISSN: 2548-1800

p-ISSN: 1693-2552

Instrument

An adapted questionnaire titled "Olweus Bully/Victims Questionnaire" (OBVQ, 1996) was used for the study. The original version of the instrument is made up of 42 items with three subscales (the victim, the bullied, and teacher responses to bullying behaviours). The researchers selected 16 items from the instrument relating to bullied, and restructured the items to enable them comprehensible by the pupils as well as fit the design of the study. The questionnaire has two sections: section A contains items on biographical data of participants while section B was a survey of self-report which is to help select the bullies among primary pupils. The items covered verbal, relational and physical bullying behaviours and. Content validity of OBVQ was established using lecturers in the "Department of Educational Evaluation and Counselling Psychology, University of Benin, Nigeria" while a reliability Coefficient of 0.71 was obtained.

Treatment Procedure

This treatment was conducted for six weeks comprising of twelve (12) sessions. At the first meeting, the instrument titled "Owens Bully/Victims Questionnaire" (OBVQ) was administered to both groups in order to collect data for the pre-test, This was followed by the treatment which included manipulation of the treatment process using Self-control techniques so as to manage the bullying tendencies of the pupils. The children were exposed to relevant issues such as meaning and types of bullying. They were taught the "skills of guiding, regulating and directing their behaviours toward desired positive consequences". Such skills include self-study and analysis, self-monitoring, self-reinforcement and self-evaluation. The children were exposed to five major steps often involved while applying Self-control training and they are setting a goal, action planning, making commitment, self-monitoring and self-reward. The participants in the control group received a non-attention treatment. Both groups were subjected to post-test to obtain post-test scores, using the same instrument that was used for the pre-test. Data were analysed using Fisher Z and independence t-test statistics.

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Basically, this section describes the way the research was done. The main materials must be written here: (1) research design; (2) population and samples; (3) sample collection techniques and instrumental development; and (4) data analysis techniques.

The specification and type of tools and materials must be written in case the researches have been conducted by using them.

The qualitative research, such as classroom action research, case studies, and so forth, need to mention the researcher attendance, research subject, and participated informants, as well as the methods used to explore the data, research location, research duration, and the description of research results validation.

It is suggested that the authors avoid organizing the article content into the smaller parts than second subheading in this section. However, in case of unavoidable factors, the writing style must follow the "Results and Discussion" section.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test bullying tendencies scores of pupils exposed to Self-control technique.

Table 1:

Table Head: Paired Sample t-test of pre-test and post-test bullying tendencies scores of pupils exposed to self-control technique (Experimental group)

Mean	Standard deviation	t	Sig (2-tailed)
25.3095	2.04	-27.51	0.000
48.3810	5-41		
48.3810	5-41 N=42: a= 0.05		

Table 1 shows a paired sample t-test of -27.51, testing at an alpha level of 0.05, with a p-value of 0.00. Since the p-value is less than the alpha level, the null hypothesis which states "there is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test bullying tendencies scores of pupils exposed to self-control technique" is rejected. Meaning there was a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test scores in bullying tendencies. The mean at post-test is higher than the mean at pre-test, implying that the treatment (self-control technique) was effective in reducing bully tendencies.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test bullying tendencies scores of pupils exposed to Self-control technique and those in the Control group.

Table 2:

Table Head: Fisher *Z-test* of pre-test and post-test bullying tendency scores of pupils exposed to self-control technique and those in the Control group

Test	Control N	Mean score	R	Experimental Group N	Mean score	R	Z-cal	Z-tab
Pre-test	45	24.80	0.85	42	25.31	0.18	4.83	1.96
Post-test	45	24.47		42	48.38			
α = 0.05								

Table 2 shows a Fisher *Z-test* calculated value of 4.83, testing at an alpha level of 0.05, with a table value of 1.96. Since the calculated value of 4.83 is greater than the table value of 1.96, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test bullying tendencies scores of pupils exposed to self-control technique and those in the Control group is rejected. Consequently, there is a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test scores of pupils exposed to self-control technique and those in the Control group. Since the mean difference of those exposed to

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Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test bullying tendencies scores of pupils exposed to Self-control.

control technique) is effective in reducing bullying tendencies.

the therapy is higher than the mean difference of the Control group, it implied that the treatment (self-

 Table 3:

 Table Head: Fisher Z-test of pre-test and post-test scores of male and female pupils exposed to self

<u>control technique</u>										
Test	Male	Mean	Mean diff.	R	Female	Mean	Mean	R	Z-cal	Z-tab
	N	score			N	score	diff.			_
Pre-test	22	25.68	23.32	0.15	20	24.90	24.95	0.034	0.33	1.96
Post-test	22	49.00	_		20	49.85				

r= Pearson's correlation, α = 0.05

Table 3 shows a Fisher *Z-test* calculated value of 0.33, testing at alpha level of 0.05, with a table value of 1.96. since the table value is less than the calculated value, the null-hypothesis which states that "there is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test bullying tendency scores of pupils exposed to self-control technique by sex" is accepted. Since the mean of the group at post-test is higher than the mean at pre-test, it implies that the treatment (self-control technique) is effective in reducing bully tendencies regardless of the sex of the pupils.

Discussion

The findings showed a significant effect of self-control technique in reducing bully tendencies among pupils. Since the p-value (0.00) is less than the alpha level (0.05), 'the null hypothesis which states "there is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test bullying tendencies scores of pupils exposed to self-control technique" is rejected. Therefore, SCT seems to prove effective in reducing bullying tendencies among pupils in the primary schools. The reasons for the effectiveness of the post-test treatment group could be that the children were exposed to the skills of directing, regulating and guiding their behaviours toward cooperation, peaceful coexistence and desired positive consequences. The training further exposed the pupils to skills that enable them take control of their activities and acquire self-regulatory capacity. These skills or strategies which serve as the basis for change and self-regulation include self-study and analysis, self-monitoring, self-reinforcement and self-punishment. The finding of this study is in line with earlier studies of Adeoye, 2012; Caldwell, 2010; Aderanti, 2006; Dignath, et al 2008; Gureasko-Moore, et al 2006 who have established that self-control training

techniques was used successfully in managing behaviour challenges like bullying and other negative behaviours in children'.

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The findings also showed a significant difference existed between SCT and the Control'. The reason for the aforementioned difference could be pupils' exposure to six weeks of treatment with SCT programme, while the control group was not. In the course of the programme, the pupils acquired self-regulating techniques that make the delinquent pupils participate in the treatment of their behaviour. Self-control techniques might have assisted the pupils control their cognitions, behaviours, and invariable influence their coping tendencies, problem solving and decision-making. The acquisition of these skills seems to have helped the children to change from their anti-social behaviour (bullying) to socially accepted behaviour. This finding is in 'agreement with the findings of Mirnasab, 2016; Rehman, et al 2015; Griffin, et al 2009; Adebusuyi et al 2018; Magar et al 2008, opined that Self-control technique is scientifically supported and has displayed its effectiveness in helping students supers a wide array of delinquent behaviours such as bullying and aggressiveness'.

Findings from hypothesis three showed no significant sex effects on self-control technique in reducing bullying tendencies among pupils. The aforementioned finding lends credence with ample research findings of Akpochafo, 2011; Aremu & Tejumola, 2008; Asamu, 2006; which revealed that sex would not interact with treatment to influence behaviour. Thus, SCT treatment was effective in reducing bullying tendencies regardless of sex of pupils'.

CONCLUSION

The study has validated the efficacy of self-control therapy in reducing bullying tendencies among primary school pupils and also showed the potency of the therapy in reducing bullying among children, irrespective of their sex. It could therefore be concluded that recipients' social relationship techniques improved significantly due to the treatment. The researchers are of the opinion that the treatment might have boosted its recipients' self-control skills and drastically reduced the tendencies for bullying and violence in pupils. However, this research is limited to Edo state in Nigeria, and the results of the findings are those of the independent and dependent variables of this study. Thus, this study could be replicated in other geo-political zones of the country, which the researcher could not cover, to ensure effective generalization of findings. Further studies can also include more variables such as parental socio-economy status of pupils and several other variables that may be perceived to affect bullying behaviours among pupils.

Recommendations

The study had the following recommendations:

- That therapeutic interventions such Self-control technique be used in managing bullies.
- The authorities in public or private schools encourage the use of therapeutic interventions in managing children with social challenges in schools

 Schools should encourage pupils perceived to have bullying behaviour to visit the Guidance Counsellors unit who in turn make use of techniques such as Self-control in managing such pupils'.

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 Regular workshops and seminar should be organized to train and update primary school counsellors on techniques such as Self-control technique in managing pupils to overcome their bullying behaviour'

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