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The effect of training self-awareness and anger management on aggression level in Iranian middle school students

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of self-awareness skills and Anger Management on Teenagers Aggression. The research method was quasi experimental with pre test-post test design and control group. The experimental groups received training program in 6 sessions (each one hour), all participants answered the questionnaire in post test. Finally, questionnaires data and Demographic information have been used for analysis and Hypotheses were tested by co-variance (ANCOVA) analysis. Results indicated that the post-test values have been affected by the independent variables ($F=154/662$, $P<0.05$). Results showed that self-awareness skills and Anger Management had a positive effect on Teenagers Aggression.

Keywords: Self-awareness skills, anger management, aggression, teenagers;

1. Introduction

Depression In the most general sense, anger is a feeling or emotion that ranges from mild irritation to intense fury and rage. Many people often confuse anger with aggression. Aggression is behavior that is intended to cause harm or injury to another person or damage to property. Hostility, on the other hand, refers to a set of attitudes and judgments that motivate aggressive behaviors.(anger management, (Reilly et al., 2002). Instances of students with anger problems have increased in recent years, which affect the equity of educational achievement and social-behavioral adjustment for these students (Twemlow, Sacco, & Fonagy, 2008).

The management of anger is a crucial issue in the prevention of violent crime. Programs that aim at anger management can be highly cost-effective. The 1990s and early 2000s have witnessed a renaissance of interest in the rehabilitation of offenders in many criminal justice systems throughout the world. The causes of this re-awakening of interest are many, but include the increasing evidence that rehabilitation programs have a significant impact on rates of recidivism (Howells et al., 2002). Dangerous or continuous aggressive behaviors require immediate evaluation and management. Behaviors that jeopardize the safety of the patient, staff, family or other individuals

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may warrant hospitalization until the cause is identified and treatment reduces the level of risk. The previous studies correlated with studies were conducted by different researchers, variables, and participants; they were all performed to test the differential self-awareness theory and its influence on aggression. Their findings indicated that private and public self-awareness have influence on aggressive behaviors by Prentice-Dunn & Rogers' differential self-awareness theory (1983, 1989). Private self-awareness refers to a person who is looking within himself or is thinking about himself, and being aware of the hidden aspects of himself (Scheier & Carver, 1977).

The present research aims to investigate and assess the effect of training self-awareness skill in reducing aggression in male students of grade 2, middle school.

1.1. Research Premises

1.1.1. Hypotheses No. 1

The effectiveness of training self-awareness skill and anger management affects reducing aggression.

2. Method

2.1. Universe and sample

Statistical sample of this research is composed of all of male students of grade 2, middle school of 5 middle schools; the number of them is 395 persons. Conforming to Morgan and Krejcie table (1970), 196 from 395 persons were selected randomly as the sample and after giving AGQ test, 45 persons who had the highest levels of aggression were randomly chosen. From these 45 persons, 30 persons were accidentally assigned into two experimental groups (15 persons as anger management experimental group and 15 persons as self-awareness experimental group) and the rest 15 persons were assigned to control group (table 1).

Table 1- Demographic features of the participants

Groups	Number	Gender	Age(Mean± SD)	Grades
Intervention (anger management)	15	All male	13±0.5	Second middle school
Intervention(Self-awareness)	15	All male	13±0.5	Second middle school
Control	15	All male	13±0.5	Second middle school
Total	45	All male	13±0.5	Second middle school

2.2. Measures

Aggression questionnaire (AGQ)

The applied tool for the research is aggression questionnaire (AGQ) which includes 30 items that fourteen of them appraise anger factor, eight of them evaluate aggression factor and the rest eight of them measure hostility factor. AGQ is a self-reporting scale using paper and pencil and the participant should select one of the four following options: never, seldom, sometimes and always and scores 0, 1, 2 and 3 are devoted to them, respectively, except for item 18 which has a negative factor loading and scoring was done reversely. Total score of this questionnaire ranges from 0 to 90 and participants who get scores higher than mean are assumed as highly aggressive persons and vice versa.

2.3. Procedure

After determining sample groups and performing pre-test, experimental groups received 6 training sessions lasting 90 minutes for 2 months. During these sessions, self-awareness and anger management skills were trained. Summary of sessions is as following:

2.3.1. Self-awareness training

This skill has been developed during 6 sessions (4 sessions for introduction and doing class activities and 2 sessions for discussing and reviewing student's opinions)

Session 1- Presentation and introduction: Describing training objectives, explaining self-awareness skill, expressing necessities of training and learning self-awareness, elucidating training and learning methods and grouping students.

Session 2- Ability of visual imagination of aptitudes and interests: The purpose was to help students to recognize their abilities and deficiencies in an abstract and creative way.

Session 3- My now and future life in pictures and words: The purpose was to help students to recognize their interests and specialty and future goals.

Session 4- Me in others' look: The target is to provide an opportunity for students to understand what positive points other people see in them.

Session 5 & 6- The two last sessions devoted to debate on and revision of students' ideas and assessment of homework and class exercises.

2.3.2. Anger management training

Session 1- Introducing group members, describing objective of training, presenting programs, articulating necessities of anger management training and grouping students.

Session 2- Anger and its consequences, anger stimulus and frequent answers: The aim is that group members become able to define concept of anger and its related concepts and elucidate its distinctiveness and relation between anger and aggression, violence and hostility.

Session 3- Personal patterns of anger experiences and behavior and surveying anger alerting symptoms: the purpose was that students become able of reporting events and their experience, impart their reactions while experiencing anger, surveying anger alerting symptoms.

Session 4- Relaxation and stress relief: The target was to draw comparison between conditions of relaxation and stress and talk about their differences.

Session 5- Training communicational skills and assertiveness: Students proposed to define the concept of assertiveness, draw analogy between assertiveness, passiveness and aggression and clarify role of effective communicational skills especially assertiveness in anger management.

Session 6- All students should be able to give a summary of previous sessions and to explain the use of anger management method from their own point of view.

2.4. Data analysis

In this Analysis for data, analysis of variance (ANOVA) has been applied which was performed by spss 16 pack.

3. Result

According to Premise: The effectiveness of training self-awareness skill and anger management affects reducing aggression.

Table 2- Distribution of means and standard deviation of experimental and control groups deviation for evaluation of aggression

Variable	Test	Mean	SD
Aggressive	Pre test	49.40	8.68
Self-awareness training skill	Post-test	38.53	7.17
	Pre-test	46.06	4.11
Anger management training	Post-test	27.13	3.92
	Pre-test	49.06	5.67
Control group	Post-test	48.40	5.46

In accordance with mentioned results in table 3, regarding Eta effect (0.926) which is more than 0.14, calculated F indicator (F=258.338, P<0.005) is the demonstrator of major effect of self-awareness and anger management training on relieving aggression. Since, significance level is lower than P=0.05, it could be concluded that there is a significant difference between post-test aggression scores for experimental and control groups.

Table 3- covariance analysis of training self-awareness and anger management for aggression

Variation source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Eta effect	Test power
Corrected model	4564.760	3	1515.587	304.278	0.000	0.957	1.000
Intercept	0.872	1	0.872	0.175	0.678	0.004	0.069
Pre-test	1148.849	1	1148.849	230.650	0.000	0.849	1.000
Groups	2573.525	2	1286.762	258.338	0.000	0.926	1.000
Error	204.218	41	4.981				
Summation	69807	45					
Corrected summation	4750.978	44					

Conforming to significant difference between mean scores, the differences between means scores of self-awareness, anger management and control groups were estimated to clarify which group has stronger influence on aggression.

Table 4- Statistical analysis of mean scores related to self-awareness and anger management skills training

source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Aggression variable	541.51	1	541.51	108.625	0.000
Error	204.218	41	4.981		

Table 5- Difference between mean scores of related to self-awareness and anger management skills training

Groups	Mean difference	SD	Sig.
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Self-awareness training	8.693	0.834	0.000
Anger management training			

Provided data in tables 4 and 5 shows that considering calculated F indicator ($F=108.625$), because significance level is $P<0.005$, so obtained F is meaningful from statistical view and calculated difference (8.693) between mean scores of self-awareness and anger management groups is significant statistically. This difference shows that anger management training has more effectiveness to reduce aggression in analogy to self-awareness training.

4. Discussion

Image or imagination that each person has in mind about himself/ herself in the present time or future is vitally important while making decisions and person's behavior is in pledge of that image or imagination. Persons having sufficient self-awareness promote relaxation and awareness about themselves and when going angry, at the first step they become aware of anger in their inside and accept it, then try to handle it. Anger management signifies distinguishing anger excitation in oneself and others and recognizing influential methods of this excitation on person's behavior and methods of preventing it. It seems that aggressive persons chose and use lesser solutions to cope with difficult conditions and their applied solutions are less effective and more aggressive compared to nonaggressive persons. A reason of why people usually react aggressively and their adopted solutions are less practical is that they do not have the power to manage anger and are not aware of right methods of venting anger, relaxation, and self-expression and predomination.

Considering achieved results it could be concluded confidently that effectiveness of training self-awareness skill and anger management affects reducing aggression. This is also supported by studies conducted by Trauer, Duckmanton & Chiu (1997), Dodge, McClaskey & Feldman (1985) and Ross & Fontao (2008).

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