

EFFICACY OF RATIONAL EMOTIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY AND COGNITIVE BEHAVIOUR THERAPY IN REDUCING AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The study x-rayed the efficacy of rational emotive behavioural therapy and cognitive behaviour therapy in reducing aggressive behaviour of students at the secondary school level. The design used in the study is quasi-experimental design. A sample of 140 respondents was drawn from the population through a non-probability purposive sampling technique. The assignment of subjects into either experimental groups or control group was through ballot. A standardized instrument tagged "Buss-Perry Scale for Aggressive Behaviour (BSAB) was made use of to collect data for this study. The instrument's reliability coefficient was 0.83. Three hypotheses were made use of in the study. The data collected were analyzed with a t-test statistics. The data analysis showed that, REBT and CBT were significant in ameliorating behavior aggressiveness among students of secondary schools. Sequel to the results of this study, the researchers recommended that, School guidance and counselors should make use of REBT and CBT to correct students' aggressive behavior whenever it is noticed.

Keywords: Rational emotive behavioural therapy (REBT), Cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) and Aggressive Behaviour

INTRODUCTION

Behaviours that are aggressive among students are considered behavioural disorder; such behaviours are characterized by physical violence against students and teachers. It includes the use of abusive language, bossiness, tantrums and emotional outbursts. Behaviours that are aggressive do not only impede instructions in the classroom, but also interferes with the professional and physical well-being of a teacher. Paul-Cookey and Iwuama (2011) observed that behavioural aggressiveness is a major worldwide concern in all facets of the society. People regularly read or hear about battles between or among gangs or cult groups, shootings, bombings or actually being victims of such vices. These happenings are some of the extreme cases of the aggression that take place every day.

Aggressiveness in this study refers to any behaviour which is intended to harm other people. It is characterized by the application of physical force with the intention to damage or injure. It involves acts which are intended to destroy or kill. Cookey and Iwuama (2011) see aggression among students in secondary schools as all shapes of violent acts by youth perpetrated in the school environment affect the process of schooling. The state of aggressiveness in Nigeria and in Abia State in particular has reached alarming state that it has become a matter of worry to all stakeholders in the educational sector. Poju (2002) maintained that, violent adolescents send a signal of a pattern of childhood behaviour that is

aggressive, which is missed often, disregarded or neglected as a passing phase in their developmental stage. Bono, and Judge (2004) found that adolescents from father-absent households usually harbor feelings of hostility, associate with deviant peers and get involved in negative activities. The increased risks of grievous outcomes for adolescent who live apart from their biological fathers appear to occur regardless of race, and educational background.

Carver and Scheier (2000) revealed that, by a year and half, children are aggressive physically toward siblings, adults and peers, but the majority are to unlearn this attitude as a result of the cues they accept from their environment. This fact is important because it establishes the possibility of transferring behavioural patterns from generation to generation, which positions the quality of care of parents at the heart of aggressive behaviour. This behavioural aggressiveness has reduced as the family disintegrates from the dissembling forcefulness of modern society that positions personal rights and privileges above the family's collective wellbeing. Research has clearly shown that mothers' high level of antisocial behaviour before the end of high school tends to be followed by their children's high levels of early childhood physical aggressiveness (Anderson, 2004). A child that has low intelligence quotient may adopt aggressive behaviour to resolve conflict that naturally would have been amenable to mental manipulation (Kotch, Lewis, Hussey, English, Thompson, Litrownik, Runyan, Bangdiwala, Margolis and Dubowitz, 2008). Even, the child's emotional qualities are early pointers to poor behaviour.

Children that exhibit empathy lack and are fearless are more prone to aggressive behaviour. Researchers have concluded that adolescents that are aggressive at school exhibit a very forceful need for recognition socially; they would like to be considered as energetic, socially welcomed, distinguished, and stubborn by their peers or classmates. Being expressed differently, some authorities suggest that the quest for being demotic, rulership and power results in the engagement of numerous adolescents in unwholesome behaviours, giving them the chance to develop the social values they desire. Indeed, it has been recorded that adolescents that are aggressive usually showcase attitudes that are negative and opposed to authorities in instituted such as the police, the constitution, the law, the school and teachers (Amanda and Monica, 2004). Nevertheless, aggressive behaviour can be treated considering the fact that it is not inherited but learnt. Researchers in the past have searched for strategies that can be utilized to help adolescents who have aggressive behaviour tendencies. Some or not many of them know much about psychotherapies that are found to be effective to some extent in helping the adolescents. Furthermore, aggression has emotional signs which are likely to be controlled by REBT. REBT may be utilized to reduce aggression, depression and other emotional maladjustment problems.

REBT sees humans as responsible hedonistic, as they strive to sustain their lives and to have some level of happiness. REBT is based on the ground that any time we become angry, it is not as a result of events taking place in our life endeavours, but beliefs that we hold that make us to become angry, depressed, anxious and enraged. REBT is of the view that humans are given to adopting beliefs that are irrational and behaviours which impede the achievement of their aim and objectives. Most importantly, REBT maintains that, individuals are capable of changing their philosophies and beliefs deeply, thereby being able to change radically their state of psychological health. In addition, psychological health, thought of inadequacy, worthlessness, hopelessness, self-blame and pessimism are symptoms of anger that interrupt normal functioning, making individuals to have trouble concentrating and making decisions. These then lead to cognitive, emotional and behavioural consequences. Although, we may seldom be aware of our thinking, nevertheless, they can have a long term effect on our feeling and behaviour in responding to a particular situation or event.

From cognitive behaviour therapists' point of view, people have the capacity to be rational or irrational, erroneous or realistic in their thinking. In fact, how we think about their experiences determines the way they feel about those experiences and what they are likely going to do. According to cognitive behaviour therapy, what determines individuals' moods and subsequent behaviours is how they structure and interpret experiences. Seeing and perceiving negatively are purported to cause feelings that are negative and debilitating behaviours. A characteristic of cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) is that it looks for errors in thinking and events that are misinterpreted leading to negative thoughts that lead to outburst of anger. CBT tries to change how we think, so that things which clients found to be what causes anger may no longer be. Therapeutic goals are to assist people in reducing disturbances that are associated with with emotion, reducing behaviours of self-defeat, and attaining more self-actualization in order to lead a happier existence (Ellis, 2003a). Major sub-goals are to assist people think clearly and be more rational, feel better, and function in a more effective way in achieving goals of living happily.

They deal with unhealthy negative feeling such as anger, depression, anxiety, and worthlessness by using an effective REB philosophy. It is in the light of these that the researchers found it very necessary to investigate into the effectiveness of REBT and CBT techniques in ameliorating behaviours that are aggressive among adolescents in secondary schools.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study's objective is to examine the effectiveness of REBT and CBT in the reduction of behaviours that are aggressive among students in secondary schools. Distinctly, the study will achieve the following objectives: to

1. Determine the effectiveness of REBT for aggressive behaviour reduction among students in secondary schools as indicated by their mean scores before and after treatment.
2. Examine the effectiveness of CBT for reducing behaviours that are aggressive among students in secondary schools as indicated by their mean scores before and after treatment.
3. Find out the joint effectiveness of the REBT and CBT for reducing aggression among students in secondary schools based on parental socioeconomic status.

HYPOTHESES

1. No significant difference exists between the mean scores before and after treatment of aggressive students with REBT.
2. There is no reasonable difference between the mean scores before and after treatment of aggressive students with CBT.
3. No significant distinction exists in the effectiveness of REBT and CBT for reducing behaviours that are aggressive among students on the basis of the socioeconomic status of their parents

RESEARCH METHOD AND PROCEDURES

The study made use of quasi-experimental research design. A sample of 140 respondents was drawn from the focused population through a non-probability purposive sampling technique. Ballot system was utilized to assign subjects into either experimental groups or control group.

A standardized instrument tagged “Buss-Perry Scale for Aggressive Behaviour (BSAB) was used to collect data for this study. The test re-test method was applied to establish reliability of the instrument, and the score obtained was 0.83

DATA ANALYSIS

Data collected was analyzed using t-test statistics.

Hypothesis 1: No significant difference exists between the mean scores before and after treatment of aggressive students with REBT.

Paired t-test analysis on the difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of aggressive students treated with rational emotive behavioural therapy

REBT	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	t-cal	Sig
Pre-test	50	29.44	3.41	49	33.88	.000
Post test	50	9.86	2.99			

The result showed that, the mean scores of the group treated with REBT during their pretest and post test scores on aggression indicated that they scored higher on behavioural aggression scale during their pre-test than in their post-test. When this mean score was subjected to paired t-test, it was found that, the t-value of 33.88 obtained was significant at $P \leq .05$ level of significance. Hence, REBT had significant influence in ameliorating behaviours that are aggressive among students. Based the result, the null hypothesis of no significant effect of is rejected, while the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis 2: There is no reasonable difference between the mean scores before and after treatment of aggressive students with CBT.

Paired t-test analysis on the difference between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of aggressive students treated with cognitive behaviour therapy

CBT	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	t-cal	Sig
Pre-test	50	29.98	2.48	49	47.40	.000
Post test	50	10.78	1.82			

The result showed the mean scores before and after treatment of aggressive students with CBT; $\bar{X} = 29.98$ and $SD = 2.48$, $\bar{X} = 10.78$, and $SD = 1.82$ respectively. When these mean scores were subjected to paired samples t-test, it was found that a calculated t-value 47.40 was significant at $P \leq .05$ level of significance. Thus, a significant influence of CBT on the amelioration of aggression among adolescents in secondary schools was found. Hence, the null hypothesis of no reasonable difference between the mean scores before and after treatment of aggressive students with CBT was rejected, while the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis 3: No significant distinction exists in the effectiveness of REBT and CBT for reducing behaviours that are aggressive among students on the basis of the socioeconomic status of their parents.

One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Aggression reduction level by group and Socio-economic status

Variance	SS	DF	MS	F-RATIO	P
Between groups	559.377	3	186.459	2.632	.059
Within groups	3967.607	56	70.850		
Total	4526.983	59			

A one way ANOVA was conducted to test the effectiveness of REBT and CBT in ameliorating behaviours that are aggressive among students on the basis of socio-economic status. The result yielded $F(3, 56) = 2.632, p = 0.059$, which was greater than 0.05 chosen Alpha level. This implies that no significant distinction exists in the effectiveness of REBT and CBT for reducing behaviours that are aggressive among students on the basis of the socioeconomic status of their parents..

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Efficacy of Rational Emotive Behavioural Therapy in reducing the level of Aggression among Students

The results indicated that the mean scores before and after students treated with REBT were 29.44 and 9.86 respectively. This is to show that the students had higher score in their pretest mean score than in their posttest mean score. This is an indication that their behavioural aggression level reduced after their treatment. When these mean differences were subjected to a paired t-test, it was found that REBT had significant efficacy in ameliorating behaviours that show aggression among students in secondary schools .This finding did not appear as a surprise because; REBT is a treatment consisting a combination of three distinct types of technique i.e. cognitive, behavioural and emotive. It is used to help an individual feel better physically, emotionally and to take to behaviours that are healthier. And it is an active treatment for coping with life’s difficulties.

This result supported that of Moore (1999) who found that REBT has the efficacy on the improvement of at-risk adolescents as relates to their thinking irrationally, attitude to schooling, anti-social behaviours and social competence. To some extent, the finding from this present study differs somehow from that of Moore because he did not carry out his study on the effectiveness of REBT on aggressive behavior rather; his work was on the respondents’ irrational thinking, attitude to schooling, anti-social behaviours and social competence.

In another aspect, the finding from this study supported the findings from the work of Morris (1993) who found that REBT had the effectiveness of changing conduct disorder among adolescents. However, the finding of the current study, which revealed that REBT had the efficacy of ameliorating behaviours that are aggressive among students may be own to the fact that aggression is a learned response to a particular circumstance and so can be modified with the help of psychotherapeutic strategy in which REBT is one.

Efficacy of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy on Aggression reduction among Students

The result revealed that the pre-test mean scores of the students treated with CBT was higher than their posttest mean score on aggressive behavior scale. The mean scores are 29.98 and 10.78 respectively for pretest and posttest scores. This implies that CBT was efficacious in the amelioration of aggression among students. When this mean difference was subjected to paired t-test, a significant mean difference was obtained. This is as a result of the t-cal value 47.40 being significant at level 0.000 which is lower than the chosen 0.05 level of probability.

The outcome of this finding was expected because; CBT is a technique that is therapeutic and aimed at helping people to be conscious of when they act, interpreted action, or behave in a manner that could distort their thinking. As a result, may help individuals to develop an alternative positive way of behaving and thinking, which will in one way or the other help to reduce behavioural aggressive among individuals.

The study's finding is in agreement with what was revealed in the study carried out by Mclead (2008), who explained that; CBT was empirically supported and had been seen to effectively help patients overcome a wide range of maladaptive behaviours which aggression is all-encompassing. The effectiveness of CBT on the amelioration of behaviours that are aggressive among students in secondary schools was possible due to the fact that aggressive individuals are seen to have faulty and disrupted thinking pattern. They may also think that they do not have other ways of showing how powerful and angry they can get whenever they are infuriated so in order to earn acceptance among their friends they tend to display their aggressive tendencies. Aggression could be a learned behaviour from their families or immediate environment. These thinking patterns and feelings can be modified through psychotherapeutic method such as CBT, reason being that, CBT aims at aiding individuals become conscious of when they making interpretations that are egative and patterns of behaviour which encourage distrusted thoughts. CBT helps to develop alternative ways of thinking and behaving which reduces the individual's level of aggressive behavior.

Influence of Socioeconomic Status on the reduction of Aggressive behaviour among Students in REBT and CBT group.

The results revealed that, aggressive students treated with REBT, those who are from high SES parents had the mean score of 64.16 in their post-test while those who are from low SES parents had mean score of 61.53. Their standard deviations are 9.37 and 7.34 respectively. Based on the result so far gathered, it is deduced that students from high SES homes have a higher tendency to become aggressive than their fellows from low SES family.

As for CBT group, the table showed that, students who are from high SES families had a mean score 65.35 and a standard deviation of 7.53 while those that are from low SES had a mean score of 57.23 and a standard deviation of 9.00. From the foregoing, it can be said that, students from high SES families had a lower aggressive behaviour as compared to their counterparts.

In considering the mean score for each group, it is shown in table 4.3 that the students treated with REBT had mean scores of 65.35 and 57.23 for high and low SES family while those treated with CBT had mean scores of 64.16 and 61.53 respectively. From the foregoing therefore, it is possible to conclude that, aggressive students treated with REBT had the lowest level of aggressive behaviours followed by those treated with CBT.

The study's finding may be own to the fact that students from high socioeconomic status families may have access to therapeutic help in helping them to reduce their behavioural

aggression compared to their counterparts who could barely feed well not to talk of employing the services of a therapist. The present study's result is in line with Eweniyi *et al* (2003) who maintained that, there was no significant effect of home background (i.e. SES) on aggressive behavior among students in secondary schools in the South-Western part of Nigeria. This result is expected because irrespective of how or where an individual acquires aggressive behavior, REBT and CBT has adequate technique and skills and has been significantly proven to be efficacious in reducing it.

CONCLUSION

Aggressiveness is a major concern of the world and in all facets of societies. People regularly read or hear about gang conflicts or battles, shootings, bombings or actually become victims of such action. Behaviours that are aggressive among students may result in destruction of school property, fighting, students can injure themselves in the process of carrying this aggressiveness; it also results in rioting and closure of schools. This study has shown how aggressive behaviour can be treated considering the fact that it is not inherited but learnt, using REBT and CBT. It was found that REBT and CBT were significantly effective in ameliorating behaviours that are aggressive among students in secondary schools. This study thus suggests that REBT and CBT should be used to help an individual feel better physically, emotionally and to engage in healthier behaviours.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, it is recommended that:

1. School guidance and counselors should make use of REBT and CBT to correct students' aggressive behavior whenever it is noticed.
2. They should also use expressive therapies such as arts, design and music to keep students busy and equally improve their interpersonal skills as well as their social and emotional intelligence.

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