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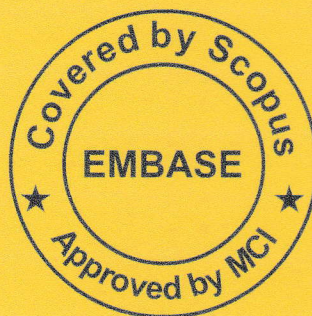


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Influence of Self-Monitoring in Preventing Bullying Behaviour as expressed by In-School Adolescents in Ilorin, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Bullying behaviour among in-school adolescents is generating concerns among researchers in recent times. This issue can be addressed through self-monitoring. This study examined the influence of self-monitoring in preventing bullying behaviours among in-school adolescents with samples drawn from 10 purposively selected secondary schools. Three research questions were raised while four hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level. Survey was employed for the field work. A total of 200 secondary school students participated in the study. Researcher-designed questionnaire entitled "Influence of Self-Monitoring on Bullying Behaviour Inventory (ISBBI) was used to elicit information from respondents. Mean, t-test and analysis of variance were used to analysis the data. Respondents appreciated the effectiveness of self-monitoring in preventing bullying behavior. Results also indicated that respondents appreciated self-monitoring exercise as a veritable strategy for reducing incidence of bullying behaviours. Recommendation include integration of behaviour modification technique with particular emphasis on the principles of self-monitoring as this could reduce incidence of bullying.

Keywords: Self-monitoring, preventing, bullying, in-school adolescents.

INTRODUCTION

Every human being engages in one form of behaviour or the other at different times and situation. Behaviour could either be overt or covert. It could also tilt towards the positive or negative end. While positive behaviour refers to one that conforms to acceptable societal values, norms and standards which is often described in terms of good manners, esteemed values, trustworthiness, respect, obedience cum humility; negative behaviour on the other hand is that behaviour that is counter-productive to the society, thus, it does not conform to acceptable standards of the society¹. Such negative behaviour includes bullying, violent conflicts, aggression, disobedience, drug abuse and misuse, rape, theft, etc. Bullying behaviour is therefore the central focus of this study as it affects in-school adolescents and ultimately the influence exerted by self-monitoring in preventing bullying behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria.

Bullying is any of the many disordered behaviour manifested by a child of school-going age towards his or her peers or those below his/ her age group, the aim of which is to intimidate, frighten, oppress and harass with a view to obtaining undue advantage over others². Researchers also concluded that bullying is an act of using one's strength, power and position to frighten or hurt another individual for no justifiable cause^{2,3}.

Self-monitoring on the other hand refers to the individual feature that makes a person to concentrate on happenings around his/her environment at a particular time in order to be able to effect some change in his or her behaviours and ultimately compete favourably in the society^{4,5}. Individuals with high self-monitors easily blend into social situations, knowing what to do or say particularly when dealing with other members of the society or school community. Such persons have a great sense of humor and they are less suspicious of others around them. They are equally careful in order

not to be caught in acts that are nonconforming to the norms and values held by the society⁴. People with characteristics of high self-monitors understand non-verbal cues and behaviours better, and will most likely change their behaviours in order to suit each situation they find themselves. They are more concerned with acting appropriately than being true to themselves. In situations that demand outcomes on another person, high self-monitors will recall more information about the other person, and make more confident judgments as well as extreme inferences about the other person. High self-monitors (HSMs) often describe themselves as being flexible, adaptive and shrewd. Such tend to use situational factors to explain behaviour. They have many friends, but are not very close with most of them. They tend to have different friends for different activities and situations. Friendship loss is not a difficulty, as there are other friends to take the place of any that are lost⁸⁻¹³.

However, persons with features of low self-monitors (LSMs) often bare their thoughts irrespective of whatever the situation is; and they do not respect or conform to societal norms, values, rules or traditions. Usually, people with features of LSMs do not take cognizance of values or beliefs held as norms in the society and changing their lifestyles to conform to societal norms and practices often become an impossible task for them, unlike persons with the features of high self-monitors, who can easily adjust in order to accommodate societal tenets, beliefs and practices. LSMs prefer to be seen as they really are; they behave so as to express their internal attitudes and dispositions. Their attitudes are more accessible, thus, they have a greater consistency between their attitudes and their behaviour. LSMs are more likely to show effects of fatigue and moods than HSMs. In contrast to HSMs, LSMs have few friends, but are quite close to them; same friends for every of their activities and friendship is difficult. For the purpose of this study therefore the influence of both high and low self-monitoring styles in preventing bullying behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria is examined in order to help reduce or totally eradicate incidence of bullying among in-school adolescents in Ilorin metropolis.

The main focus of this study is to determine the influence of self-monitoring in preventing bullying behaviours among in-school adolescents in Ilorin, Nigeria.

Research Questions

These research questions were drawn to provide a guide for the study;

1. What major influence does self-monitoring have in preventing bullying behaviour?
2. Is there any difference in the influence of self-monitoring in preventing bullying behaviour as expressed by in-school adolescents based on gender?
3. Is there any difference in the influence of self-monitoring in preventing bullying behaviour as expressed by in-school adolescents based on school ownership?

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted quantitative approach for gathering the required information. An inventory titled "Influence of Self-Monitoring in Preventing Bullying Behaviour Inventory (ISBBI) was used. The inventory had two sections, A and B. Section A sought the demographic information, while section B had 20 items on influence of self-monitoring in preventing bullying behaviour.

The instrument had a reliability co-efficient of 0.86 which was established through a split-half method. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 200 in-school adolescents that participated in the study; the respondents were secondary school students only. The researchers directly administered the inventory on the respondents. Data analysis tools used were both the descriptive statistics, t-test and Analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical tools. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

RESULTS

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender, School Type and Class

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	120	60.0
Female	80	40.0
School Ownership		
Private	90	45.0
Public	110	55.0

Conted...

Class		
JSS	105	52.5
SSS	95	47.5
Age		
8-12 Years	36	18.0
13-17 Years	111	55.5
18 Years and above	53	26.5

The results in Table 1 revealed that more males participated in the study than females. Those in public-controlled schools were more than those in private schools, while in-school adolescents at the junior secondary school levels outnumbered their counterparts at senior secondary classes and those within the age bracket of 13 to 17 years were more than in-school adolescents whose ages range from 8-12years as well as 18years and above.

Research questions one to three:

Table 2: Rank Order of Items on Perception of In-school Adolescents on Influence of Self-Monitoring in Preventing Bullying Behaviour

Item No.	Item In my opinion, bullying behavior can be prevented if one:	Mean Scores	Rank
15	would not change his opinions (or the way he does things) in order to please someone else or win people's favours	3.26	1 st
2	ensures one's behaviour truly reflects his inner feelings	3.21	2 nd
1	finds it hard imitating the behaviour of others	3.21	2 nd
19	does not change one's behaviour to suit different people and different situations	3.21	2 nd
3	does not attempt to do things to please people	3.17	5 th
12	does not attempt to make other people like himself	3.15	6 th
9	laughs more when with others than alone	3.12	7 th
7	rarely seeks friends' advice in choosing movies, books or music	3.11	8 th
4	argues on issues which he already has believe in	3.10	9 th
8	sometimes appear to others as experiencing deeper emotions than what he/she actually experiences	3.08	10 th
13	often pretends that all is well even when he/she is not enjoying himself/herself	3.06	11 th
14	does appear to be who he/she really is	2.97	12 th
16	tends to be what people expect him to be rather than anything else in order to get along or be liked	2.96	13 th
20	feels a bit awkward in company of others and do not show up quite as well as he should	2.92	14 th
18	can look anyone in the eye and tell a lie with a straight face (if for a right end)	2.90	15 th
17	deceives people by being friendly when he actually dislikes them	2.89	16 th
11	rarely assumes the center of attention amidst people	2.78	17 th
6	sometimes put on impressive looks	2.70	18 th
10	often assumes different personality when with different people and situations	2.40	19 th
5	imitates others' behaviour when confused	2.30	20 th

The results presented in Table 2 revealed that respondents were high self-monitors (HSM). However, since all but two of the items on the inventory administered (items 10 and 5) which ranked 19th and 20th respectively had mean scores below 2.50 which was the cut-off (decision) point for the 4-point scale that the

instrument represented, self-monitoring is considered an effective strategy (if adopted) in preventing bullying behaviour among in-school adolescents.

The highest rated item was "would not change my opinions (or the way I do things) in order to please someone or win their favours".

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the influence of self-monitoring in preventing bullying behaviour as expressed by in-school adolescents based on gender.

Table 3: Analysis of t-test showing perception of respondents on influence of self-monitoring in preventing bullying behaviour based on gender

Gender t-value	N t-value	Mean	SD	df	Calculated	Critical	Sig.
Male	120	88.48	8.57	198	1.79	1.96	0.57
Female	80	66.98	7.61				

*Significant, $p \geq 0.05$

The results in Table 3 showed a t-value of 1.79 which was less than the constant t-statistics of 1.96, whereas, the p-value (.57) was greater than 0.05.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the influence of self-monitoring in preventing bullying behaviour as expressed by in-school adolescents based on school ownership.

Table 4: Analysis of t-test showing perception of respondents on influence of self-monitoring in preventing bullying behaviour based on school ownership

School Ownership t-value	N t-value	Mean	SD	df	Calculated	Critical	Sig.
Private	88	83.55	7.35	198	0.13	1.96	0.10
Public	112	83.37	8.01				

* Significant, $p \geq 0.05$

The results in Table 4 revealed a calculated t-value of .13 which was less than the t-statistics of 1.96, and a p-value (.10) which was greater than 0.05.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference in the influence of self-monitoring in preventing bullying behaviour as expressed by in-school adolescents based on class.

Table 5: Analysis of t-test showing perception of respondents on influence of self-monitoring in preventing bullying behaviour based on class level

Class t-value	N t-value	Mean	SD	df	Calculated	Critical	Sig.
JSS 1-3	93	76.81	8.22	198	1.32	1.96	0.62
SSS 1-3	107	93.73	7.44				

The results in Table 5 indicated that the calculated t-value of 1.32 was less than the critical t-statistics of 1.96, and p-value (.62) was greater than 0.05.

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant difference in the influence of self-monitoring in preventing bullying behaviour as expressed by in-school adolescents based on age.

Table 6: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results showing respondents' perception based on age

Source	df	SS	Mean Squares	Cal. F-ratio	Crit. F-ratio	Sig.
Between groups	2	52.1265	22.0657			
Within groups	197	1033.3615	55.0272	0.53	3.00	0.20
Total	199	1085.4880				

The results in Table 6 showed that the calculated F-ratio was less than the critical F-ratio of 3.00, and p-value (.20) was greater than 0.05.

DISCUSSION

The results in Table 2 provided answers to the research questions raised. Question 1 sought to establish the perception of respondents on the influence of self-monitoring in preventing bullying behaviour among in-school adolescents. The mean values of the items in the inventory used revealed that respondents expressed positive perception on the influence of self-monitoring in preventing bullying behaviour among in-school adolescents. This agrees with ^{6, 3} submissions that self-monitoring is useful and very effective when an individual desire to modify his/her socially unacceptable and undesirable behaviours, hence, he/she critically observes his/her overt and covert behaviours, and this assists in establishing the baseline for the self-monitoring exercise, resulting ultimately to evaluation of the entire exercise to establish whether or not the set objectives have been fully, partly or not achieved.

However, respondents were similar in their perception of the influence of self-monitoring in preventing bullying behaviour among in-school adolescents based on gender. This is consistent with the earlier findings of ³ which showed that gender was not a significant factor that influenced bullying behaviour of students in Anambra state; hence, it does not affect the use of self-monitoring in reducing bullying behaviour in both genders.

Since school ownership does not significantly create parity in terms of use of self-monitoring, it could be inferred that in-school adolescents expressed similar perception on issues that relate to them regardless of whether their school is privately owned or public controlled.

However, from the results obtained in the testing of hypotheses 3 and 4, a consistency is achieved with the findings of ³. The researchers found and reported that individuals learn to pay careful and systematic attention to their behaviour through self-monitoring, which according to the researchers enables persons (particularly secondary school students) to regulate their own behaviours. This is regardless of their age or class in school.

Recommendations: Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that:

1. As a matter of policy, self-monitoring should be enshrined by school counsellors into the school system through its various activities to enable students uphold virtues of discipline without being coerced by teachers and other school staff. This would largely promote intrinsic motivation for good behaviours, while ultimately assisting to reduce or at best completely eradicate bullying behaviour from the lifestyles of in-school adolescents.
2. Since in-school adolescents' perception of self-monitoring in preventing bullying behaviour is positive, they should be provided the enabling environment for the integration of self-monitoring in order to reduce school bullying as well as with other forms of deviant behaviours to the barest minimum.
3. Counsellors and other school personnel alike should be sensitized on the need to develop more positive perception of self-monitoring themselves since the teeming Nigerian in-school adolescents pattern their lifestyles after their school counsellor's or teachers' lifestyles. This would help school personnel to checkmate their respective actions and inactions that send wrong messages to students and which have in a way festered bullying behaviour of students.

Ethical Clearance: Obtained from university committee

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