The effectiveness of communication skills training on self-concept, self-esteem and assertiveness of female students in guidance school in Rasht

Hamidreza Vatankhah a *, Darya Daryabari b, Vida Ghadami c, Nasrin Naderifar d

a Lecturer of Azad University of Tonekabon, Iran
b MA graduate of Azad University of Tonekabon, Iran
c MA student of Azad University of Tonekabon, Iran
d Department of Psychology, Islamic Azad University of Tonekabon, Iran

Abstract

The present research was accomplished to investigate efficacy of communication skills on self-concept, self-esteem and assertiveness on students at the city of Rasht. The statistical society consisted of all girl students from Shahed secondary schools in Rasht (2008-2009). After monitoring the sample group, consists of 40 students, they were divided into two groups randomly. The type of design was before-after test design with control group. In order to gather the data Rogers self-concept questionnaire (1961), Cooper Smith self-esteem questionnaire (1967) and Alberti & Emmons assertiveness questionnaire (1993) was used. The communication skill training was done in the experimental group of 8 sessions each session 90 minutes once a week. After the ending of training programs, all the groups participate in the post test. Finally Data were analyzed using descriptive methods as well as inferential statistics methods (Anova covariance analysis). The result showed that there is a significant difference between experimental and control groups.

Keywords: Communication skills, Self-concept, Self-Esteem, Assertiveness;

1. Introduction

The human is a social and dynamic creature who tries to keep the balance with his fellows due to secure his physical, mental and emotional needs and without communication with others he is not able to develop his capabilities in order to manage his public and social duties (Nasaji, Zavareh, 2010). Preparing for social life mainly happens in adolescence period and learns proper social adjustment. Communication skills training programs in schools can have positive effects on the future lives of adolescents and youths. Communication skills lead
individuals to express their needs more and efficiently and help them to understand the needs of others and also benefit more of mental health (Fooladi, 1982).

In reforms and programs of some countries in current century communication skills are among the main priorities. And the opposite side of verbal and communication skills is shyness; this caused a decline in academic and noun participation of students in the training process. Shyness and isolation are relatively common behaviours causing of individuals severely disturbing which if not treated will lead adolescents to other problems such as lack of a sense of empowerment, low self-esteem and inability of facing with feelings and the separation of group activities (Jamali et al, 2004). Noori and Mohammadkhani’s (2008) research depicted life skills training to increase appropriate social behavior and reduce negative and self destructive behaviours. Social skills includes broad verbal behavior (Semantic content of speech, words, sentences) and nonverbal or ultra verbal behaviours (Body language, eye contact, tone of voice and facial expressions) And it is under influences of the culture and social level of individual which he makes a sense of belonging to. In general point of view social skills helps people to express their ideas, beliefs, desires and emotions and also helps them to ask others for help when are in need (Fooladi, 2003).

In a research, Behpajoh (2007) assessed the effects of social skills training on self-esteem of blind students and found social skills training to increase their self-esteem. Moss and colleagues (2001) noted that social skills training programs are associated with reductions of anger, anxiety, depression and shyness and increase of low self-esteem.

In other research, Shover (2003) depicted that learning these skills courses of increasing in self-esteem, improvement of interpersonal relationships and communication, and increasing of positive behavior and social adjustment and in the results they increase the coping skills abilities noticeably.

Self-esteem is a Continuous background and self seeing in adolescents is involved in their demonstration of abilities and development of their creativity. Children with poor self confidence about their jobs are always waiting for others judgment. Since they believe that they are not capable of proper judgments and making decisions.

Haghighi and colleagues (2006) examined the impact of life skills trainings on mental health and self-esteem of the first year of high school students in the city of Ilam. Research results showed that life skills training increased mental health and self-esteem of girl students in the experimental group compared with the control group. Mostalemy et al. (2002) research investigated the impact of social skills training on boosting self confidence of blind female students of Narjes high school in Tehran. Results indicated that social skills’ training was effective in increasing girls self confidence.

Self-concept means imaginary and belief that any individual has got about him. The idea is concerned with all aspects of its physical, social, intellectual and mental self.

People imagine about any of the above factors creates a specific and certain behavior (Moghtader, 2009). In fact self-concept is a description that persons comment about themselves (Biabangard, 2005)

Taraghijah (1996) studied with students of middle school in the city of Tehran to examine the relationship between self-concept and social behavior and concluded that there is a significant correlation between real self -concepts and the subject social behavior.

Silvester and colleagues (2006) in a study called verbal skills in semi-structured interviews and self-concept of deaf students clarified the relation between positive self-concept and verbal conversation.

Pope and Mchale (1998) study concluded that the self efficacy of individuals which systematically related to their performance has strengthened by social skills training. Those who know themselves competent, in addition to success in performance benefit from greater life satisfaction feelings.

Until the 1980s, assertiveness and social skills were used in a sense but today assertiveness is more an Interpersonal ability that during the past two decades has attracted lots of attention. Assertiveness includes behaviours that enable a person to act on their own interests and to stand up to adjudicate its rights without irrelevant anxious feeling and express their legitimate feelings comfortably or try his best to adjudication of his rights without harming others rights. Bahrini (1997) study aimed to examine the impact of Assertiveness training on self-determination and self-confidence of female nursing students indicated that the Assertiveness training has increased self-confidence and decisiveness.
Rezan Cecen et al. (2009) in a research assessed the effectiveness of audacity program on Assertiveness in a group of adolescents. Assertiveness as an independent variable was trained by the school counselor for 50 to 70 minutes over 12 sessions. The results of covariance analysis showed that assertiveness training help students express themselves.

Ghobaribonab and Hejazi (2004) studied the impacts of assertiveness and self-esteem on the academic achievement of intelligent and ordinary on the first year high school students in Zanjan. Results showed that the intelligent students benefit more of the variables assertiveness, self-esteem and academic achievement and these three variables are correlated. Research Hypothesis

1. Communication skills training is effective in improving student’s self-concept.
2. Communication skills training is effective in improving the self esteem of students.
3. Communication skills are effective in improving the students' level of assertiveness.

Research Method

Statistical populations of the study are all girl students. They were located in regions 1 and 2 and among the areas the region 2 was selected randomly. From 389 students who scored between 7.01 to 10 in Rogers self-concept test and scored lower than 25.4 in Cooper Smith test and below 100 in the Alberti -Emmons assertiveness test 40 students randomly selected and grouped to experimental and control groups. In order to train the components of communication skills, 8 weekly 90-minute training sessions were set up and the Experimental group attended classes for 2 months. Questionnaires of self-concept, self-esteem and assertiveness have been given to each test and control groups of students a week before classes were begun and both groups answered to the questionnaires in the same terms. An experimental group were being trained, and after 8 sessions both groups were post tested. And the data were analyzed by Statistical indicators of (Ancova) Measuring instruments self-concept.

In this study, measuring instruments of self-concept is the Rogers (1961) self-concept questionnaire, the test includes two forms, form A that contains 25 pairs of adjectives have been distributed to subjects and they mark forms according to their own ideas and determined and then form B were given and subjects marked the ideal choices then the number sign form A will be transferred to form an X and from form B to form you. The difference of X and Y called D and then the square root of $4D^2$ will be the final result. Result range of 0 to 7 represents normal and positive self-concept between 7.01 to 10 represent weak and negative self-concept and over 10 means neurotic self-concept. The correlation coefficient in the form A and B were 0.82, which proves the stability and reliability of 0.57 has been reported.

The second measuring instrument is the Smith self-esteem scale (1997) that has 58 articles, which 8 of them are Lie Detectors and 50 articles are divided into 4 subscales of general self-esteem, social, family and analytical self-esteem. Single reliability grading method of marking this questionnaire was reported 0.82 by Purshafeyee (1991).

The third research measuring instrument has been developed based on Albert and Emmons (1993) assertiveness questioner. This scale has 35 items. This is being answered in 5 degrees. For grading, the option not to never score a zero, low or sometimes score 1, the average score of 2, more often times a score three and always options score four and then we calculate the sum of scores. If the resulting score is greater than 100 indicate high assertiveness, if the resulting score is between numbers 80 and 99, showed low assertiveness (Darabi 1384). This experiment in a study by Darabi in Iran (1997) was carried out, and Cronbach's alpha creditability coefficient of 0.84 with internal consistency has been reported (Abdi 2007).

Results

Data obtained from the study has been analyzed using inferential statistics (covariance ANCOVA) and SPSS software. After presenting the data and performing results, tables and graphs below were obtained respectively.
To assess the first hypothesis that was the "communication skills training is effective in improving students' self-concept" the test of covariance using SPSS was used.

Table (1) summarizes the information in the covariance analysis of self-concept, communication skills training program in experimental and control groups.

Table 1 Information in Analysis of Self-Concept

| Test Power | Significant Level | F     | Average of Squares | Degree of Freedom | Sum of squares | Source of Variation |
|------------|-------------------|-------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1.000      | 0.000             | 51.224| 16.121             | 2                 | 32.242        | Co Variation       |
| 1.000      | 0.000             | 97.221| 30.159             | 1                 | 30.1597       | Between Groups     |
| 0.998      | 0.000             | 24.675| 7.766              | 1                 | 7.766         | Inter Group        |
|            |                   |       |                    | 39                | 70.1677       | Total              |

Given the above table the Co variation effect F (ob) of 51.224 is being observed and considered the degree of freedom 2 and 37 is strongly statistically significant and therefore associated with the criterion. For the comparison of groups according to degrees of freedom 1 and 37, fob of 97.221 is statistically significant.

To assess the second hypothesis that was the "communication skills training is effective in improving students' self-esteem" the test of covariance using SPSS was used. Considering the significant difference between the averages with 0.99 per cent confidence we can say that communication skills training are effective on students’ self-concept and so the research hypothesis was confirmed.

Table (2) summarizes the information in the covariance analysis of self-esteem, communication skills training program in experimental and control groups.

Table 2 Information of Analysis of Self-Esteem

| Test Power | Significant Level | F     | Average of Squares | Degree of Freedom | Sum of squares | Source of Variation |
|------------|-------------------|-------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1.000      | 0.000             | 68.683| 642.683            | 2                 | 1285.366      | Co Variation       |
| 1.000      | 0.000             | 125.33| 1174.219           | 1                 | 1174.219      | Between Groups     |
| 0.999      | 0.000             | 26.143| 244.966            | 1                 | 244.966       | Inter Group        |
|            |                   |       |                    | 39                | 2704.551      | Total              |

Given the above table the Co variation effect F (ob) of 68.60 is being observed and considered the degree of freedom 2 and 37 is strongly statistically significant and therefore associated with the criterion. For the comparison of groups according to degrees of freedom 1 and 37, fob of 125.337 is statistically significant. To assess the third hypothesis was that the "communication skills training is effective in improving student assertiveness" the test of covariance using SPSS was used. Table (3) summarizes the information in the covariance analysis of assertiveness, communication skills training program in experimental and control groups.

Table 3 Information in Analysis of Assertiveness

| Test Power | Significant Level | F     | Average of Squares | Degree of Freedom | Sum of squares | Source of Variation |
|------------|-------------------|-------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1.000      | 0.000             | 101.553| 2567.135           | 2                 | 5314.270      | Co Variation       |
| 1.000      | 0.000             | 157.039| 4108.933           | 1                 | 4108.933      | Between Groups     |
| 0.999      | 0.000             | 49.465| 1294.245           | 1                 | 1294.245      | Inter Group        |
|            |                   |       |                    | 39                | 10717.448     | Total              |
Given the above table the Co variation effect F (ob) of 101.553 is being observed and considered the degree of freedom 2 and 37 is strongly statistically significant and therefore associated with the criterion. For the comparison of groups according to degrees of freedom 1 and 37, fob of 157.039 is statistically significant.

Discussion and Conclusion

Self-concept for mental health professionals is particularly important because the opinion of any individual about his own character so much determines his imagination about his environment and society. If self- imagination of someone were positive and relatively well-balanced the person is known mentally healthy, conversely a person with an unbalanced and negative self-concept was known mentally unhealthy person.

Adolescents’s self-esteem is related to their cultural and social life background. The main reason for establishing self confidence in individuals should be searched in their relationship with its community, especially during an important period of childhood and adolescence. Warm and supportive family environment, parents and other adults with reasonable expectations of the ability and capability of youth and also respect and giving importance to them could increase self-esteem in adolescence.

One of the important factors of an effective relationship between the individuals is the ability or inability of a person’s assertiveness. Assertion or assertiveness enables a person to operate effectively in dealing with stressors factors. This increases the self-confidence, the logical expression of ideas and emotions, reduce anxiety, improve community relations, respect for others’ rights and eventually increase the ability of coping with stress. In all above mentioned methods, to evaluate the effects of communication skill trainings on improving the students’ assertiveness covariance test has been used, the null hypothesis rejected and contrary hypothesis is confirmed. This means that communication skills would greatly enhance students’ self-esteem.

References

Nasaji Zavareh, E. (2009). Children development under social skills. Journal of Nature , 356, 20-24.
Moghtaderi, L. (2009). Essay in comparative effectiveness of CBT and assertiveness training on job satisfaction burnout in Rasht health center
Tonekabon Azad university
Biabangard , E. (2005). Essay in The relationship between self esteem , achievement motivation and academic achievement in Third grade of high school students in Tehran, psychology centre ,allameh tabatabaie
Haghighi J., Mosavi,m. et al .(2006).effect of life skill training on mental health and self-esteeem’s in first-year students in secondary school a Alarm , journal of psychology and nurture of Cameroon university , 1,61-78.
Mostalimi,F.hosseini,S.et al .(2002). the effect of social training in a self - team of blind girl in Tehran , journal of research in exceptional children , 18,437-445.
Taraghijah, s. (1996). Essay in the relation between self-concept and social behavior of students of secondary school in Tehran , tarbiat modaare university
Bahreinin ,m.(1997).Essay in effect of assertiveness training on self-esteem and decisiveness in female nursing students ,allameh tabatabaie university
Ghobaribanana,b.hejazi,m.(2008). The Relationship between assertiveness and self-esteem in academic achievement of gifted and normal students .journal of school conselling,2
Jamali .a. roshanfekr, j. et al .(2004). Restoring the role of guidance and counselling teachers, Tehran: tazkieh
Silvester,N.Anna,R&Iranka.D.Pardeo.(2006).conversational skills in semi structured interview and self-concept in deaf students universities autonoma de barcelone
Pope,w.Alice,mchale.m.s.&Edward,w.(1998).self-esteem enhancement with children and adolescent, new York pergamon press
Rezan.a.cecen-Erojuri&mustofo zengal.(2009).the effectiveness of assertiveness training program on adolescents assertiveness level-elementry education online,8(2),485-492,http://ilkoyrim-online.org.tv
Shover.F.(2003).seasonal fluctuation of suicide in hungary between 1970-2000.arch suicide res;9(1),77-85.