

CAN THE COUNSELLING IMPROVE THE SELF-ESTEEM OF INSTITUTIONALISED CHILDREN? A STUDY.

DR. JYOTI VERMA

(CLINICAL-PSYCHOLOGIST)

INDIRA GANDHI MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL, SHIMLA-1,H.P.

ABSTRACT:

Orphans are highly deprived class of our society. It was found that institutionalised children have low self-esteem Aims of Study. In this study we have taken initiative to improve their Self Esteem through a specially prepared comprehensive Counselling Programme sessions given individually to each child of the Counselling Group. In this study, a sample of 40 high school, institutionalised children (20 girls, 20 boys) having problems, needed special attention between the age of 14-17 years of two orphanages of Shimla,(H.P.). Out of these 40 students, 20 students (10 girls, 10 boys) were considered for the Counselling Group and rest 20 were assigned to the Control Group. The effect of counselling on the changes on the Self Esteem has been analysed by Repeated Measures Analysis of variance RPMANOVA three factor mixed design. All the post hoc comparisons have been made by Newman Keul's Multiple Range Test. The main finding of the present study is: "Counselling Programme is significantly effective in enhancing the Socially perceived self esteem score from pre to post assessment trials and these changes have been maintained till the follow-up for the boys as well as the girls but not for Self perceived self esteem expectancies".

Keywords: *Comprehensive Counselling Programme, Counselling Group, Control Group Institutionalised, self-esteem.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Orphans are highly deprived class of our society Greekward, Nantial, Pal and Perenue (1994) have indicated that an under-nourished social and emotional environment diminishes self-esteem and de-humanise children. Somen (1986) observed that one third of institutionalised children manifest behavioural problems. Nautiyal (1988a) found that the destitute home children have low self-concept as compared to parent home children. The single parent destitute were found to perceive themselves more happy and satisfied in comparison to orphan destitute and children.

Self-esteem promotes positive effect by buffering the person against them and other negative emotions and by enhancing personal adjustment, whereas low self-esteem is associated with depression, anxiety, and maladjustment.



Research findings attest that people with low self-esteem experience virtually very negative emotions more commonly than those with high self-esteem (e.g. Goswick & Jomes, 1981; Leary 1983; Taylor & Brown 1988 and White, 1981).

Monteya (2000) (reported in Mankotia 2002) explains that aggressive behaviour is often a cover for low self-esteem, children with learning disabilities have higher level of aggression and low self-esteem. A child who does not feel good about himself may derive satisfaction from exhorting power over others. Such a child may get into fights, bully other children or engage in arguments and make critical remarks about his siblings and others.

Thresiamma and Gon(1980) reported more behaviour problems like quarrelling, theft, aggressive behaviour absenteeism, arrogant behaviour (Rutter 1973, Singh 1988 Wolff, 1976) lying, stealing, taunting, bed wetting , thumb sucking and nightmares, disobedience etc. among, institutionalised children (Herbert 1975, Narayan, 1987).

Visuki and Reddy (1997), explored the self-esteem of single children using an export facto design, on a sample of 40 (20 boys and 20 girls) in the age group of 9-15 years. The result reveals that most of the children of 12/15 years old were found to have self-Esteem. However, overall boys showed higher self-esteem. Result also indicate significant differences in the self-esteem of boys of the two age groups where as the same was not observed in the case of girls.

Zuckerman (1980) found that men and woman did not differ significantly in terms of self-esteem. It was also found that the interaction between self-esteem and socio-economic status influenced educational goals and sex roles attitudes.Stones (1981) found that the hypothesis that the males would have significantly greater self-esteem than females was not supplied. Lammers (1982) found that there were no sex differences and no self-esteem differences on volunteering behaviour.

2. METHOD:

Present study is the pioneer attempt in India to help the institutionalised children (staying in orphanages) to enhance their Self Esteem through a specially prepared comprehensive Counselling Programme sessions given individually to each child of the Counselling Group.

The present study is the pioneer attempt in India to help institutionalised children (staying in Orphanages) to regain /maintain (self esteem) psychological health . As both boys and girls have similar problems, equal numbers of both boys and girls were included in the present study. In each group, there were two groups, one group was given counselling and the other group was not given any counselling and was regarded as control group.Counselling was given by the researcher herself. Who prior to this research work had done Post-GraduateDiploma in Guidance and Counselling and was well versed with the procedure. The goal of this present chapter is to clarify;



- i) Design of the study.
- ii) Instruments used
- iii) Sample selection.
- iv) Instructions.
- v) Procedure.
- vi) Statistical Analysis.

(2.1)-Design:

2 x 2 x 3 (A x B x C) Factorial designs have been used with repeated measures on the third factors, factor A (Gender) consists of two level with equal number of (A 1) Boys and (A 2) Girls, factors B (condition) consists of two levels, (B 1) counselling and (B 2) control group (no counselling has been given to the Control Group) Factor (C) trials of assessment consists of three levels (C1) pre-counselling, (C2) post-counselling and (C 3) follow-up assessment trials, taken after one month of counselling.

The purpose of the study is to see the effects of counselling (Independent Variables) on Self Esteem scores of the students that served as dependant variables of the study.

In the above mentioned design factors like type of housing conditions, examination system and course syllabus were controlled. All the subjects were taken from Government run Orphanagesat Mashobra for girls and tutikandi for boys of Shimla

distt. Himachal Pradesh

(2.1.1.)-Counselling:

Counselling program was prepared for the institutionalised children to deal with the psychological The main focus of this program was to help the children to understand and deal with their problems mood of themselves. It was believed that mode of their thinking and behaving creates problems for them leading to lowering of their self

-esteem and self confidence and enhancing anger, negative mood and loneliness. Through this counselling program, an effort has been made to spend a quality time with the institutionalised children. In this attempt children were encouraged to talk about their day to day life, their problems, sharing their past experiences and their future plans with the counsellor. It was hoped that this effect will help them to grow as a more responsible and self-confident persons. The effort was made to help them to recognise the negative aspects of their behaviour and they were taught better modes of behaviour that were appreciated in society so that they are able to deal with their future by making wise and thoughtful decisions for themselves. The counselling was given in a period of 3 days for one hour per day individually in the order. To make this counselling program, interesting small storiesand samples of successful people were included

(2.2)- Instruments Used:

(2.2.1)-Self-Esteem Inventory (M.S.Prasad and G.P.Thakur, 1977): This inventory has been developed by M.S.Prasad and G.P.Thakur (1977). Self-Esteem is a concept that person has for his own self which consists of any evaluation that the person makes of himself herself or what feelings he/she has about himself/herself. Self evaluation of the individual is heavily dependant upon the way he thinks other view him. In this questionnaire two sets of questionnaires having 30 same questions in each set, but instructions to fill these questionnaires were different. In the first questionnaire responses were given accordingly what he/she thinks of herself/himself and for the other set responses were given according to the idea about what others think of him/her. The test is in Hindi. The subjects were asked to rate himself on a seven point scale for each statement. **Reliability of Self Esteem Inventory:** Reliability Coefficient was found to be .69 (Prasad & Thakur, 1977).

In this scale out of 30 items, seventeen are socially desirable and thirteen are socially undesirable. The item No. 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 20, 23,24,26,27 and 30 are socially desirable and seven score if answered absolutely incorrect. The socially undesirable items which are 2,6,9,10,11,14,18,19,21,22,25,28 and 29 are scored in the opposite manner. Completely incorrect answer would get seven score and complete correct answer would get one score. Add all the total responses. Higher the score, the higher would be the. Self-esteem.

(2.3.) Sample Selection:

In the present purpose a sample of 40 high school, institutionalised children (20 girls, 20 boys) having problems, needed special attention between the age of 14 -17 years of two orphanages at Shimla district (H.P. were selected with the help of caretakers. Out of these 40 students, 20 students (10 girls, 10boys) were considered for the counselling and rest 20 were assigned to no treatment control condition. It was assumed that since these supervisors are in close contact with these children.They are in a better position

to accurately identifying those who need help. The children were selected from similar socio-economical and educational background, having no parent or one parent.

(2.4.) Instructions:

The instructions given on each of the questionnaire were read loudly to the subjects according to their choice 'of language. Researcher assisted them in their task. Efforts were made to answer all the questions raised by them.

(2.5.)-Procedure:

After Selecting theSample:Subjects were called individually for counselling for 3days with the gap of 2 days in between each session. Prior to the counselling, in the first session, after establishing rapport, the information on all

the questionnaires was collected from the participants. Counselling sessions given after that After the completion of all the sessions, all the questionnaires were again filled by the participants. During the counselling sessions, the staff supervisors of the orphanages were requested to notice effect of counselling on the subjects. Follow up assessment was again carried out on all the dependant variable measures

after one month. The subjects of control group were treated like the treatment group with the only difference that they were not exposed to the counselling program. On the first day pre-assessment questionnaires were filled. The control group was met only in one month. After one month subjects were met to fill past assessment questionnaires and

after another month follow-up assessment questionnaires were filled by them.

(2.6.)- Statistical Analysis:

Following statistical procedure are employed to analyse the data.

- (i) test: test was carried out on the pre-treatment data of the dependant variable Self Esteem separately for boys and girls in counselling as well as in control conditions. This analysis was performed to see if any group differences existed prior to treatment.
- (ii) (ii) Repeated Measure Analysis of Variance: From the findings of test it was apparent that treatment as well as control groups were comparable on all the dependant variables prior to treatment. Therefore, treatment related changes from pre to post and post to followup trials were further analysed by three factors repeated measures analysis of variance (Mixed) design for the dependant variable, (Bruning & Kintz, 1987) with repeated measures taken over trials.
- (iii) Newman Keul's Multiple Range Test: The post-hoc comparisons among all means were made by Newman Keul's Multiple Range Test Bruning & Kintz, 1987).

3. RESULTS:

The effectiveness of counselling has been analysed on the dependent variables self esteem. Treatment related changes have been analysed by comparing pre-counselling, post-counselling and follow-up scores of self-esteem .

First of all, t-test was performed on the pre-intervention data of all the dependent variables score , separately for males as well as females of both counselling and control-group to see if between any group differences existed prior to the counselling on these measures so that (i) effective measures could be taken to control such effects and (ii) one could state with confidence that pre to post and post to follow-up changes on these scores were solely due to the manipulation of independent variables and not due to any other relevant variable existing prior to the intervention.

TABLE of t test on pre-counseling scores of all the dependent variable for the female institutionalised children:

	t-value	SE of difference	P
Self-esteem (Self perceived)	.53	5.58	NS
Self-esteem (Socially Perceived)	1.89	6.02	NS

TABLE of t test on pre counseling scores of all the dependent variable for the female institutionalised children:

	t-value	SE of difference	P
Self-esteem (Self perceived)	-.43	6.21	NS
Self-esteem (Socially Perceived)	-.06	7.63	NS

The findings of the t-test revealed that the mean scores of both counselled as well as control-group were comparable on all the dependent variables prior to the intervention, for both males as well as females.

The Effectiveness of Counselling on the Socially Perceived Self-esteem among Institutionalised Children:

The treatment related changes on social perceived self-esteem have been analysed by Repeated Measure Analysis of Variance RPMANOVA three factors mixed design. All the post-hoc comparisons have been made by Newman Keul’s Multiple Range Test.

(A) Between Group Differences:

Neither the main effects of condition or of gender nor their interaction with each other (condition x gender) has turned out to be significant.

(B) Within Group Change:

Treatment related changes over time have been measured by taking repeated measures over trials. The main effect of trials has turned out to be significant. The mean scores of socially perceived self-esteem taken at pre assessment, post assessment and follow-up trials have been reported in Table.



TABLE-1:

Pre Counselling, Post Counselling and Follow-up Means of Score of Socially Perceived Self-esteem.

Grouping	Mean	N	Trials
	139.63	40	Pre Assessment
	142.72	40	Post Assessment
	142.32	40	Follow-up

Within group changes based on Newman Keul’s Multiple Range test shows a significant enhancement ($p < .05$) in socially perceived self-esteem scores from pre to post counselling trials, which has been maintained till the follow-up.

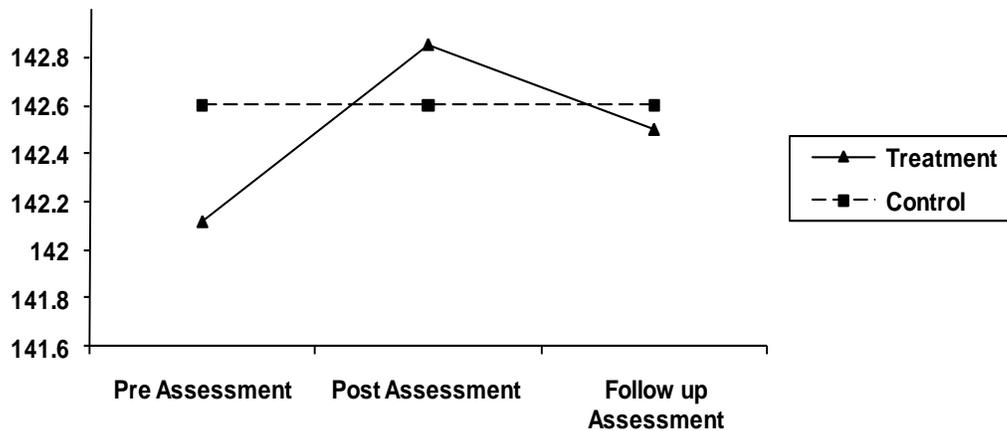
Further a trial x condition interaction has also turned out to be significant . In order to observe the direction of significant interactions differences among the mean scores of (trial x condition) interaction effect. The post-hoc comparisons have been made by applying Newman & Keul’s Range test. The means of socially perceived self-esteem scores at two levels of condition and three assessments trials have been reported in Table -2 and Fig. -1.

TABLE –2:

Mean Scores of Socially Perceived Self-esteem at Two Levels of Condition and three Assessment Trials (N. 20)

Trials	Condition	
	Treatment	Control
Pre Assessment	142.12	142.6
Post Assessment	142.85	142.6
Follow-up	142.50	142.6

Figure 1
Interaction between two condition and three assessment trials.



Between group row wise comparisons in Table 5.9 as well as figure 5.2 demonstrates that:

- 1) Institutionalised children under counselling show significant increase in pre to post-scores. While a non-significant reduction in the scores from post to follow-up is evident. The follow-up scores remain significantly higher ($p < .01$) from pre- counselling scores.
- 2) Institutionalised children under control conditions show no significant reduction in pre to post and follow-up level.

Further the column wise comparisons of this interaction show that at pre-assessment trial the mean score of group at follow-up levels are not significantly different from each other. However, the up scores of institutionalised children under control condition are towards the higher side.

Further, neither the two factor interaction between trial x gender nor three factor interaction trial x condition x gender have turned out to be significant. This further testifies that the observed differences in socially perceived self-esteem scores as well as trial x condition interaction are independent of gender. Thus it can be concluded that:



- i) Regardless of gender counselling is significantly effective in increasing the socially perceived self-esteem from pre to post- assessment trials, these changes have been maintained till the follow-up.
- ii) As expected no changes in the socially perceived self-esteem was seen from pre to post and follow-up assessment trials of control-group. Thus hypothesis 3 b with regard to socially perceived self-esteem has been confirmed.

The Effectiveness of Counselling on Self Perceived Self-esteem of Institutionalised Children:

The treatment related changes on self-perceived self-esteem scores have analysed by Repeated Measure Analysis of Variance RPMANOVA with 3 factor mixed design. All the post-hoc comparisons have been made by Newman and Keul's Multiple Range Test.

(A) Between Group Differences: neither the main effect of condition and of gender nor their interaction with each other (condition x gender) has turned out to be significant.

(B) Within Group Change: neither the main effect of trials, nor its interaction with condition (trial x condition), gender (trial x gender) and with both condition and gender (trial x condition x gender) has turned out to be significant.

Thus, it is concluded that intervention is not efficacious in improving self-perceived, self-esteem of the institutionalised children. Thus it is concluded:

- i) Counselling is not effective in improving self-esteem from pre to post till the follow-up for both male as well as females
- ii) As expected changes in the self-esteem scores are not evident from pre to post and follow-up assessment trials for both boys and girls of the control-group.

In the present study attempt has been made to measure the effect of counselling in terms of both socially perceived self-esteem and self perceived self-esteem.

Brown (1993) persuasively argued that self-esteem is fundamentally based on positive and negative feeling about oneself. People do not simply think favourable and unfavourable self-relevant thoughts. They also feel good and bad about themselves; rather they fiercely desire to feel good.

Moran Benjamin and David (2002) and Dobson (1996) explored the effectiveness of social skill training program in promoting self-esteem in students. Result indicated that the self-esteem and desired behaviour increased significantly during the course of study. Finding suggests that social skill training may be of assistance in



a treatment program to increase self-esteem and appropriate behaviour in children who are emotionally disturbed.

Thus in the present study, through the counselling programme effort has been made to enhance their social skills of the subjects by helping them to reflect on the ways in which they think others view them and were taught to take the responsibility and changing their perception of self by indulging in more positive interaction with others.

4. CONCLUSION:

As Clear from the result Counselling has been found to be significantly effective in enhancing the socially perceived self-esteem from pre to post-assessment trials. The changes have been maintained till the follow-up for both boys and girls. And there is no changes in the socially perceived self- esteem was seen from pre to post and follow-up assessment trials of control groups of boys as well as girls. The sample of the present study appears to be high on self perceived self-esteem than on socially perceived self-esteem. Their means being 143.8 and 139.4 respectively, prior to the intervention. This highlights that subjects of the present group are having higher positive self, hence a need exhausted to enhance their perception of self by others which appears to be quite low. In the present study the positive effect of counselling was evident for the treatment group, while the difference between treatment and control group is not quite significant. Since such effects have not been observed in earlier studies. The supportive evidence of earlier research is not available in this regard. Much future research is recommended before firm conclusion can be arrived at. Counselling is not effective in improving self perceived self-esteem from pre to post till follow-up for both boys as well as girls. And there is no changes in the self perceived self- esteem was seen from pre to post and follow-up assessment trials of control groups of boys as well as girls. In view of above in the present study, an effort was made to enhance the self perceived self-esteem of children through the counselling process. In such children were taught to reflect on their perception of the self and effort was made to help them change their negative attitude about the self. However as observed earlier, the sample of the present study was having relatively higher self perceived self-esteem as compared to their socially perceived self-esteem. It appears that, the counselling was not enough to further enhance their existing perception of the self-esteem. Perhaps an effort is required to create an atmosphere that actually makes them feel good. Enhancing self-perceived self-esteem is not only a matter of changing attitude / thought. Without changing the self-perceived changes in the relevant environment of such children it is not only difficult to change self –esteem but also to achieve it, even if it is achieved, it will be superficial. Perhaps a need also exists to change the attitude of the caretakers and improve the facilities of the existing orphanages of Shimla. However due to some limitations, such efforts could not be carried out in the present study. Therefore, much further research is recommended, that demands counselling of both children and the caretakers. Efforts to bring positive changes in the environment also required. Perhaps a need exists to provide these children with good foster homes with parents who do not have their



own children. It is the change in the real life situation which can actually make them feel good, satisfied and happy and may thus enhance their self perceived self-esteem.

5. REFERENCES:

JOURNAL PAPERS:

- [1] Gacklward, A.; Nautial, S. and Paremu, B. (1994). The effect of Brain storming on the creativity scores of institutionalised and non institutionalised girls. *Indian Journal of Psychology, Vol. 69 (1&2) 51-56.*
- [2]Goswich, R.A. and Jones, W.H. (1981) Loneliness, self concept and adjustment. *Journal of psychology, 107, 2*
- [3] White, G.L., (1981) Some correlates of romantic Jealousy. *Journal of Personality, 49, 129-147.*
- [4]Vishki, R., and Reddy. V. (1997) self esteem of single children. *Journal of Community Guidance and Research, 14 (2) 181-188.*
- [5]Zukerman, Diana M. (1980) self esteem, self concept and the life goals and sex role attitudes of college students. *Journal of Personality (Jan.) Vol. 48 (2), 149-162.*
- [6]Lammers, H. Bruce (1982) effects of self esteem and sex on participating in psychology experiment. *Journal of Social Psychology, Feb., Vol. 116 (1) 145-146.*
- [7]Moran, Beujamin L. and Dubois, David L. (2002) Relation of Social support and self esteem to problem behaviour: Investigation of differing models. *Journal of Early Adolescence, Vol. 22 (4) 407-435.*

BOOKS:

- [8]Leary, M.R. (1983) *Understanding social anxiety: social personality and clinical perspectives.* Newbury Park, C.A. Sage.
- [9]Narayan, S. R. (1987) *Mental health Problems of Children in Orphanages in Reddy, G.N. and Reddy, S.N. Women and child development: Some contemporary issues Allahabad: Chugh Publications.*

THESIS:

[10]Nautial, Sudha (1988a) “A study of the self concept of students living in different types of Home Environment”. M. Ed. Dissertation, Shimla: H.P. University.

[11]Tresiamma, J.T. Gon, A. (1980). *A comparative study of the feeling of uinferiority and aggression in Orphans and children under proper parental care. Proceeding of the 5th International conference of international association for cross cultural psychology Bhubneshwar 91980*, in Naidu et al (Eds.) 1983, *ibid*.

[12]Mankotia, Anupama (2002) *A study of anger, anxiety and self esteem among sheet biased non school going and home based school going boys and girls. Unpublished M. Phill, Dissertation. Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla.*

PROCEEDINGS& PAPERS:

[13]Taylor, S.E. and Brown, J.D. 91988) Illusion and Wellbeing: A social psychological perspective on mental health. *Psychological Bulletin*, 103, 193-210.

[14]Sing, S. (1985) *Guidance needs of children living in destitute homes in Uttar Pradesh; B.H.U. (NCERT financed). In M.B. Buch (Ed). Fourth Survey of Research in Education (1983-80), Vol. 1, new Delhi: NCERT, pp. 539-540.*