Effect of psychological counseling on self confidence of low academic achievers

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ABSTRACT

A School is an institution which is designed to provide learning experiences and environment to the students. Inside a classroom, there is a mixed cluster of learners based on their level of intelligence and potentiality. High achievers can achieve high grades by their own with the little efforts of the teachers, but low achievers are students who can, but simply don't (or won't) achieve. Student underachievement is a complex problem that defies "one size fit for all" solution. Although Low academic performance of these students is a serious problem, but at the same time decline in self-confidence and emotional immaturity is a matter of severe concern, which leads to develop various behavioral problems. There is a strong requisite for research in this area. So, present research is focused on handling these issues by the intervention of psychological counseling. The research sample consisted of 30 low academic achievers of secondary schools of Raipur city that were selected via purposive random sampling method. At first the students completed the Self Confidence Test ASCI (by Dr. R. Agnihotri, 1987). This sample of 30 low academic achievers were given counseling for one month in various different sessions. The counseling process included the combination of behavior and cognitive intervention. Immediately after the counseling its effect was tested by administrating the above mentioned tests again to the experimental group. Data was analyzed using mean, SD and t-test. The finding (t-test) showed that there was significant difference between two results *i.e.* of Pre and Post Tests of experimental group, in terms of the selected variables which were affected by the intervention of counseling.

Key Words : Psychological counseling, Self confidence, Academic achivers

INTRODUCTION

The word "Low Academic Achievers" is given to a learner who has the achieve low scholastically, but, tends to work below the grade level average. This type of learner will typically score lower on IQ tests or national achievement tests, but not so low that a "special education" diagnosis is given. High achievers can achieve high grades by their own with the little efforts of the teachers, but low achievers are students who can, but simply don't (or won't) achieve. Student underachievement is a complex problem that defies a "one size fits all" solution. Low academic performance of students is a serious problem, but at the same time decline in self-confidence is a matter of severe concern, which leads to develop various behavioral problems. Present research is

focused on handling these issues by the intervention of psychological counseling. The psychological problems are a gamut problem associated with the low academic achievers. They have the major problems in academic, interpersonal, emotional and mental health areas. Basing on the review of literature these problems having associated with the certain characteristics of the students like poor self confidence, lack of leadership quality, emotionally weak, poor decision making etc. There is a strong requisite for research in this area. In this regard in 2010 Naimi has studied about the poor academic achievement at the United Arab Emirates schools and the results reveled that the percentage of students in academic achievement is weak; ranged from 15 to 30%. Thus, this can be attributed to the educational and economical levels of the students. In 2010 Barakat and Harz Allah also addressed the reasons for the low level of academic achievement in mathematics at Tulkarem schools, and the study suggested to give more attention to students' health so that they can focus on their studying and to provide a relaxing school environment in order to increase the motivation of students and increase the level of belonging to the school. Moreover, parents should be responsive to their children's problems and pursue their academic achievement step by step. In the present study it was point towards the therapeutic efforts that was being made to resolve their problems by understanding and tried to encourage them to boost their self confidence because self confidence will enhance their concentration in every aspects of life. Self-confidence is considered one of the most influential motivators and regulators of behavior in people's everyday lives (Bandura, 1986). The concept of self-confidence is commonly used as self-assurance in one's personal judgment, ability, power, etc. One increases self-confidence from experiences of having mastered particular activities. In general, students who perform well have increased confidence which likely in turn encourages students to take greater responsibility to successfully complete tasks. Low achieving students report less confidence and high performing students report higher self-confidence. In the various experiments done by Bandura, 1977; Ericsson *et al*., 1993; Harter, 1978; Kuhl, 1992; Nicholls, 1984) "A growing body of evidence suggests that one's perception of ability or self-confidence is the central mediating construct of achievement strivings". With greater anxiety, shyness and depression, emotionally vulnerable students feel lonelier due to lack of general self-confidence. The route to higher self- confidence and thinking more positively about oneself includes:

– Acceptance – of their true strengths and weaknesses
– Help – with realistic goals to allow to develop abilities
– Encouragement –with realistic planning and timetabling
– Praise – for their achievements so they can enjoy them
– Respect – to be proud of who they are
– Trust – feel more confident in their own thoughts and feelings
– Time – learn to know themselves and enjoy their own thoughts.

Objective of the study :

The main objective of the study was to determine the Effect of Psychological Counseling on Self Confidence of selected Low Academic Achievers of secondary schools of Raipur city.

Hypotheses :

It was hypothesized that

H_1 There shall be a significant difference between pre and post test scores on Self Confidence of the selected Low Academic Achievers of secondary schools.

METHODOLOGY

Sample :

The subjects for this study were selected from the secondary schools of Raipur city. The research sample consisted of 30 low academic achievers of secondary schools of Raipur city that were selected via purposive random sampling method.

Variables :

Independent Variable - Psychological Counseling
Dependent Variable - Self Confidence

Tools :

Agnihotri's Self Confidence Inventory :

The scale was developed by Dr. Rekha Agnihotri in 1987. The Agnihotri's self confidence inventory (ASCI) has been designed in Hindi to assess the level of self confidence among adolescents and adults. It consists of 56 items. There are two response categories *i.e.* 'right' and 'wrong'. A score of one is awarded for a response as 'wrong' to negative items. For making cross to 'right' response for positive items to be awarded a score of one. Hence, the lower the score, the higher would be the level of self confidence and vice versa. The test-retest reliability of ASCI was found to be 0.78 and spilt half reliability was 0.91. The validity of the inventory with Basavanna's self confidence inventory obtained was 0.82 (Appendix B).

Experimental design :

The Repeated Measures Design was used for this study. Only one group of 30 participants, who were low academic achievers of secondary schools, was created. Tests were administered twice at interval of one month. After administering both tests- Self Confidence Test, Psychological counseling was given once in a week and thus four times in the month. Thereafter, both tests took place again later the treatment at the completion of one month.

Experimental treatment :

The research sample consisted of 30 selected low academic achievers of secondary schools of Raipur city that were selected via purposive random sampling method. At first the students completed the Self Confidence Test ASCI (by Dr. R. Agnihotri, 1987). This sample of 30 low academic achievers was given counseling for one month in various different sessions. The counseling process included the combination of behavior and cognitive intervention. Immediately after the counseling its effect was tested by administrating the above mentioned tests again to the experimental group. Data was analyzed using mean, SD and t-test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

At 28 degree of freedom, table value of t-test at 0.01, significance level is 2.47. Value of t-test calculated is 2.51, which is greater than the table values of t-test at 0.01, significance level. Therefore the Null Hypothesis is rejected. Since statistically significant difference is observed in the scores of self confidence of pre-test and post-test of Low academic achievers of secondary school students, the differential hypothesis H_1 is accepted (Table 1 and Fig. 1).

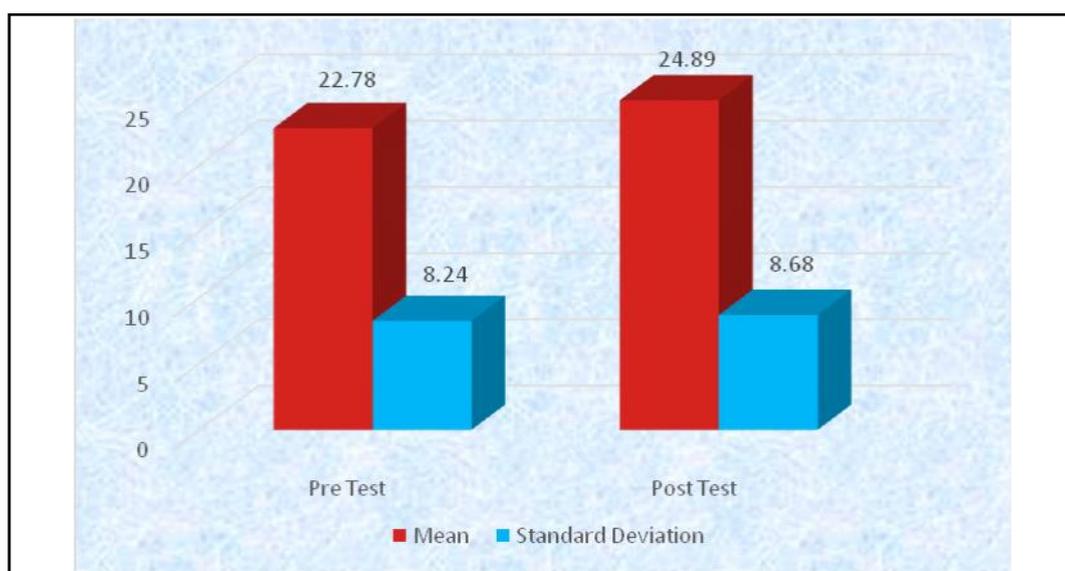| Table 1 : Table of pre and post test scores of self- confidence					
Sr. No.	Group	No. of students (N)	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (S.D.)	Degree of freedom (df)	t-test
1.	Pre Test	30	22.78	8.24	28	2.51
2.	Post Test	30	24.89	8.68		

Fig. 1 : Graph of pre and post test scores of self- confidence

Discussion and Interpretation of Result:

According to a number of psychologists from the study of review of literature it is known that the self confidence of an individual can be improved. Bandura (1986) asserts that, "in a responsive environment that rewards performance achievements, the outcomes people expect depend heavily on their self-confidence that they can perform the skill". In the period of counseling an individual becomes attentive of what is preventing him from become confident and focus on the best attributes of him, once s/he becomes conscious of it and required guidance is given in counseling the individual finds new ways of feelings, expressing and experiencing so that he can adapt and change. In present study statistically significant difference is observed in the scores of self confidence of pre-test and post-test of Low academic achievers of secondary school students, In the present research study based upon theoretical perspective of self-confidence that fits well in Kanfer's (1990b) framework of motivation and has particular relevance to enhancing self-confidence in a variety of domains of psychosocial functioning is self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1977, 1986). Self-efficacy theory is also useful in guiding the development of motivational programs because self-beliefs of confidence operate in most of the approaches to cognitive theories of motivation, particularly goal-setting theory and attribution theory (Bandura, 1990). Leon Festinger found that self-confidence in an individual's ability may only rise or fall where that individual is able to compare themselves to others who are roughly similar in a competitive environment. Furthermore, when individuals with low self-confidence receive feedback from others, they are averse to receiving information about

their relative ability and negative informative feedback, and not averse to receiving positive feedback.

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