

The Effectiveness of Assertiveness Skills Training on Depression and Aggression in Female Students

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of assertiveness skills training on depression in female high school students in district 4 of Tehran. The present study was a quasi-experimental research and the research design was pre-test and post-test with non-randomized control group. The sample consisted of two groups of 20 persons randomly assigned to the experimental and control groups. The tools used included Beck Depression Inventory (1987) and Buss and Vary Aggression Scale (1999), respectively, for measuring depression and aggression. The present study is a quasi-experimental study that was performed on students of both groups in the pre-test and then in the experimental group for 12 sessions of assertiveness skills training. Multivariate analysis of covariance was used to analyze the data: The results showed that assertiveness skills training led to a decrease in depression and aggression in high school girl students in district 4 of Tehran. Assertive skills increasing students' social skills increases their interest in studying and gaining appropriate educational skills and experiences that finally reduce depression and aggression of girl's high school district 4 in Tehran.

Key word: Assertiveness skills, depression, aggression, students.

INTRODUCTION

In the psychological community, aggression refers to behaviors in which the individual inflicts harm on others or on himself or herself. Aggression: Behavior that causes or potentially damages others. This injury can be physical, such as beating, kicking and biting, or rhetoric such as taunting and yelling, or being forced to do something (Massen, 1998; Yassai, 2008).

Depression is also an unhealthy mental state characterized by lust, lust, and fatigue, and is often accompanied by more or less severe anxiety (Prosecutor, 2009). Uncertainty is one of the problems that plagues many people in a society. Many people are deliberately or unintentionally left out of duplicity, complacency, and ambiguity. Cultures in which the vote is more important than the vote are punished or ignored if the person has a dissenting opinion. In such cultures, there is no training ground for expressing emotions and feelings (Khodayari Fard, 2013).

One of the major problems that has a deterrent effect on adolescent efficacy and dynamics and impedes the healthy formation of identity and the development of their talents and intellectual and emotional strengths is the difficulty of social communication and lack of necessary social skills. One of the problems is not having the courage to express personal feelings, thoughts and opinions. The courageous people have repeatedly stated that they cannot defend their tricks and are often exploited by dominant people.

They have low self-esteem. And they are anxious and upset at the masses. Failure to express personal rights leads to suffocating hatred and ultimately leads to guilt and regret and sometimes to anger on an irrational level. They cannot express their true feelings and cannot fulfill unreasonable wishes (Nasheh, 2008).

Daring is one of the most important social skills in which a person expresses his / her thoughts and feelings in a positive and respectful manner. And so it gains its rights in interpersonal relationships by taking into account the rights of others. In general, this deficiency in children and adolescents leads to poor academic performance on psychological problems such as anxiety depression and substance abuse. In addition, low-risk adolescents are at risk of social immaturity, a disorder that results in helplessness and avoidance of social relationships that can lead to social and psychological dysfunction and even avoidant personality in adulthood. Failure in social skills and lack of assertiveness can damage one's mental health. In addition, feelings of anxiety and helplessness and reduced self-esteem, depression, and mental illness can also be the consequences of passive behavior (Mehrabi Born, Artist, 2011).

The courageous person uses communication techniques that enable him to maintain his self-esteem, pursue the pleasures and pleasures of his desires (Bolton, Sohrabi's translation and Lighting Life, 2007). One of the ways in which this research is used to improve and reinforce the reduction of aggression and depression is one of the ways in which this research is conducted. Anti-assertive behaviors disrupt individuals' social relationships and lead them to adopt passive behaviors, such as shyness, depression, and anxiety, or to lead to aggression and delinquency (Bishop, 2006).

Just as courage is learned, courageous behavior can be learned, and this is accomplished by new skills and, in fact, courage is replaced. Drug abuse, alcohol, smoking, and sexual activity are high-risk activities and behaviors in adolescence. Essential traits, such as caring for others' feelings, as much as we care about our feelings, confidence, and the ability to build positive relationships with adolescent's help attract and support other adolescents and prevent their social rejection. On the one hand, it is important to note that the role and importance of assertiveness in adolescence is more prominent. This role goes back to the features and necessities of this era. Adolescence is a time of crisis and a period of emotional, social, and cognitive transition. Adolescence is associated with the process of transition to adulthood and increasing stress and depression (Cali Shu, 2014).

A daring program is needed to tackle inappropriate behavioral styles and build healthy relationships. Various studies have shown that there is a relationship between social skills deficits and future behavioral disorders. These problems associated with poor performance of Kurdish social skills include: delinquency, educational and cognitive impairment, school-leaving in childhood and alcoholism, antisocial behaviors, and mental disorders (Fixed and Urban Villages, 2008).

Self-education is a structured intervention method and is used to treat anxiety disorders and morbid fears in children, adolescents, and adults to improve the effectiveness of social relationships. This approach is not only applicable to people with clinical problems but also widely used in the business world, especially in the areas of sales and management. In assertiveness training, one learns how to display assertiveness-based behavior. By trying to identify and define the problem, pursue the intended goals (always with courageous behavior), repeat the role, subvert the role, and provide gradual and gradual presentation of the desired behaviors, learn the appropriate methods based on the courage to express one's desires. Assertive behavior is associated with positive self-esteem, self-esteem, mastery, self-esteem and self-esteem, and non-aggressive

behaviors are deterrent, avoidant, and highly correlated with fears, anxieties, and social anxiety.2008). In a study conducted by Mehrabi Zadeh et al (2011), the effect of assertiveness skills training on social skills, social anxiety and academic performance of female high school students was studied. The results of this study showed that assertiveness skills training significantly increased students' social skills, social anxiety and academic performance.

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of assertiveness skills training on assertiveness and self-esteem in third grade male students. This study was quasi-experimental. That was pre-test and post-test with control group. The sample consisted of 30 third grade male students of Khorramabad guidance school who were selected by random cluster sampling and were divided into intervention and control groups. The research instruments were Cooper Smith Self-esteem Questionnaire and Expression Questionnaire. The experimental group received 8 sessions of assertiveness skills training weekly. Data were analyzed by SPSS v.16 software using t-student test and covariance test (ANCOVA). The results of hypothesis analysis using covariance showed that group training of assertiveness skills increased students' self-esteem and self-esteem.

In a study by Eliot (2008), students receiving assertiveness training have a higher social support capacity in stressful situations. In their study, Elderman et al. (2010) examined the correlates of assertiveness in clinical and nonclinical samples. In eight studies, they found that there was an association between maladaptive behavior with social fears, social anxiety, internal aggression, shyness. There was a negative relationship between lack of self-esteem and low self-esteem. They also found that there was a negative relationship between non-aggressive behavior with independent behaviors, self-esteem, self-esteem, and high self-esteem.

In developing countries, the share of the population is almost 50%. In our country, the majority of the population is teenagers and youth. Therefore, to properly understand this huge stratum and strive to provide the necessary material and spiritual conditions. This study should aim to improve their physical, emotional and intellectual development. Considering the importance of this period of maturity and its sensitivity to the acquisition of tool skills of existence and its role in community health through prevention of high risk behaviors, addiction and smoking, this study aimed to Determining the Effectiveness of Assertive Skills Group Training on Evidence Based on Problems in Many Iranian Adolescents

The present study was a quasi-experimental research and the research design was pre-test post-test with control group with non-random selection. The statistical population consisted of all secondary school students (4100 students) in the 4 districts of Tehran who were enrolled in the academic year 1397-98. The sample of this study is 40 students who will be voluntarily selected and randomly assigned to the experimental and control groups. After replacing the students in the experimental and control groups, the experimental group was trained with daring skills and the control group was not trained. The instruments included Beck Depression Inventory (1987) and Buss and Perry Aggression Scale (1999) were used to measure depression and aggression, respectively.

Beck Depression Inventory (1987): This questionnaire consists of 21 items that measure the severity of depression in adults and adolescents over 13 years old in three dimensions, namely physical, cognitive, behavioral and emotional symptoms. Questionnaire questions measure the severity of depression on a Likert Scale, it ranges from zero to three, thus making the total score of the questionnaire range from 0-63 (Dobson, 2007 (psychometric studies performed on this questionnaire by Dozois, 1998)).

Has reported the validity and construct of a desirable factor, and in general it is a good substitute for the first version of the Beck questionnaire. From Khademi, 2011, Beck et al. calculated the internal consistency of this questionnaire with Cronbach's alpha coefficient $\alpha = 0.91$ and test-retest coefficient $r = 0.94$ (quoted Khademi, 2011, 1993). Correlation coefficient of two parts with total score of 0.23 to 0.68 and internal consistency of 0.85 estimated (Nemati Sogli Tapeh et al., 2008).

Buss and Perry Aggression Questionnaire: The new version of the Aggression Questionnaire, the previous version of which was called the Hostility Questionnaire, was reviewed by Bass and Perry (1992). The questionnaire is a self-report tool consisting of 29 items and four subscales, namely physical aggression (PA), verbal aggression (VA), anger (A), and hostility (H), to each subject. Expressions in a 5-degree range from: quite similar to me (5), somewhat resembling me (4), not resembling me not resembling me (3), somewhat resembling me (2), to strongly Not like me (1). The two terms 9 and 16 are reversed. The total score for aggression is obtained by summing the scores on the subscales.

In this research, in order to analyze the data from descriptive statistics topics including minimum and maximum scores, mean and standard deviation and to respond to research hypotheses, first, parametric test hypotheses such as Kalmogorov-Smirnov test to check for normal distribution of variables, check hypothesis Homogeneity of variances and homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, homogeneity of regression slopes and correlation between dependent variables were used and then the research hypotheses were answered using t-test and multivariate analysis of covariance.

RESULTS

In this section we first study the descriptive variables and their sub-components and then the hypotheses of using parametric statistical tests such as Kalmogorov-Smirnov test to check for normal distribution of variables, to consider the homogeneity of variances and homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, homogeneity. The regression and correlation slopes between the dependent variables were used and then the research hypotheses were answered using multivariate analysis of covariance.

The results shown in Table (1) indicate that in the pre-test, mean depression and aggression did not differ significantly between the experimental and control groups. But in the post-test stage, the scores of the experimental group on all variables and sub-variables were more aggression and depression than the control group. Several assumptions are necessary to perform multivariate analysis of covariance. The normality of the distribution of variables in the population is the assumption of homogeneity of variance-covariance matrix, correlation between dependent variables and homogeneity of regression slopes. Each of these assumptions is discussed below: 1 - normal distribution of variables in society 2 - assumption of variance homogeneity and homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices 3 -assumption of homogeneity of regression slopes for performing covariance analysis 4 - correlation between dependent variables: to test assumption of normal distribution of variables in community Smirnov is one way. The results of this analysis are presented in Table (2).

Table 1. Descriptive indices of depression, aggression and their subscales in pretest and posttest.

Group	test	Physical aggression	Verbal aggression	anger	hostility	aggression	depression	
Control	pre-exam	Average	20/87	7/10	10/26	11/19	85/23	42/10
		The standard deviation	1/18	0/28	0/56	0/18	4/31	2/08
	Post-test	Average	20/36	7/14	10/59	10/88	85/59	42/17
		The standard deviation	1/22	0/31	0/76	0/13	4/04	2/18
the experiment	pre-exam	Average	20/44	7/21	10/29	10/92	84/28	42/43
		The standard deviation	1/33	0/29	0/28	0/14	4/12	2/21
	Post-test	Average	24/13	9/77	13/22	14/01	89/11	44/02
		The standard deviation	2/01	0/87	1/08	0/96	5/05	2/03

Table 2. Results of the Kalmogorov-Smirnov test to test the assumption that the distribution of variables is normal.

	Physical aggression	Verbal aggression	anger	hostility	aggression	depression
number	20	20	20	20	20	20
Z	1/22	0/44	0/37	0/73	0/82	1/11
sig	0/17	0/67	0/72	0/42	0/36	0/13

Based on the results in Table 2 and the Z-score of 1.96 and the significance level above 0.5 it can be deduced that the distribution of variables (aggression ($p = 0.36$, $Z = 0.82$) and depression ($P = 0.13$ ($Z = 1.11$)) and their sub-variables (physical aggression (PA), verbal aggression (VA), anger (A), and hostility (H),) in normal society. Assuming homogeneity of variances and homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices: The results of investigating the assumption of homogeneity of variances and homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices for depression and aggression are presented in Table (3).

Table 3. Assessment of homogeneity of variance – covariance matrices for depression and aggression.

Variables	Box's M	F	df	sig
Physical aggression	22/11	1/02	18	0/31
Verbal aggression	11/10	1/11	18	0/66
Anger	36/32	1/55	18	0/22
Hostility	44/12	1/10	18	0/41
Violence	30/14	1/22	18	0/36
Depression	27/43	1/54	18	0/21

The results shown in Table (3) show that the assumption of homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices for aggression is Box's $M = 30.14$, $F = 1.22$, $P = 0.41$.) And its components as well as this assumption regarding depression (Box's $M = 27.43$, $F = 1.54$, $P = 0.36$). In the following we consider the assumption of homogeneity of regression slopes for performing covariance analysis.

Table 4. Assumption of homogeneity of regression slopes for performing covariance analysis.

Source of change	Mean of squares	Df	Mean of squares	F	Probability
Violence	10/88	1	10/88	1/35	0/56
Depression	0/33	1	0/33	1/33	0/49

As the values of probability and covariance analysis test on aggression ($F = 0.556/1$, $p = 0.49$) and depression ($F = 1.33$, $df = 49$, $p = 0.49$) show homogeneity of regression slope assumption for variables. There is some research available, so the covariance analysis test can be used to test research hypotheses.

Correlation between dependent variables: The correlation coefficients between depression and aggression at posttest are presented in Table 4-6.

Table 5. Correlation Matrix of Depression, Aggression, and Aggregate Components at Posttest.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Physical aggression	1					
Verbal aggression	0/46*	1				
Anger	0/41**	0/37	1			
Hostility	0/52**	0/30**	0/41**	1		
Violence	0/31**	0/49**	0/21**	0/57**	1	
Depression	0/54**	0/43**	0/58**	0/41**	0/37**	1

The results of correlations between depression and aggression and minor components of the post-test showed that there were significant correlation coefficients between two variables and all sub-components. Therefore, given the assumptions of using covariance analysis, we will test the research hypotheses. The present study uses covariance analysis to answer research hypotheses. But at first, independent t-test was used to investigate the presence or absence of difference between experimental and control groups before assertiveness training. Performing this test allows the researcher to more firmly attribute the observed differences in post-test between the experimental and control groups to the training course. The results of the independent t-test at the pre-test stage are presented in Table 6.

The results presented in Table 6 indicate that there was no significant difference between the experimental and control groups in the pre-test in any of the research variables. Following are the research hypotheses and the results of the analysis of covariance for each of them. Hypothesis 1: Assertiveness Skills Training Reduces Depression in Secondary School Girl Students. To meet this hypothesis, the data were analyzed by covariance analysis on depression. This analysis first compares the difference between the two groups in the post-test with the control of the pre-test effect. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 7.

Table 6. Independent t-test results to compare the means of the two experimental and control groups in the pre-test.

Variables	t	df	sig
Physical aggression	0/44	18	0/66
Verbal aggression	0/54	18	0/56
Anger	0/71	18	0/34
Hostility	0/32	18	0/76
Depression	0/31	18	0/80
Violence	0/51	18	0/49

Table 7. Results of analysis of covariance between the two experimental and control groups in post-test depression.

Source of Changes	Wilks` Lambda	F	sig	Partial η^2	Test potential
Depression	0/49	8/21	0/03	0/46	1

As shown in Table (7), the difference in the adjusted mean of depression between the two groups was statistically significant ($P = 0.03$, $F = 8.21$). The difference between the experimental and control group scores or the effect size of the training method was also ($\eta^2 = 0.46$), which means that 46% of the variance in the total scores remained affected by assertiveness skills training. The statistical power is also the same, which means that the accuracy of this analysis is high at detecting significant differences and also indicates that the sample size is sufficient for this test. Hypothesis 2: Assertive Skills Training Reduces Aggression in Secondary School Girl Students The results of covariance analysis for controlling the effect of pre-test on post-test of aggression are presented in Table (9).

Table 8. Results of Covariance Analysis of Aggression Difference between Experimental and Control Groups.

Source of Changes	Sum of squares	Df	Mean of squares	F	P	Partial η^2	Test potential
violence	227/51	1	227/51	51/20	0/003	0/44	1

Results of the above table show that aggression post-test scores in the experimental and control groups were significantly different from those in the pre-test scores ($F = 51.20$, $P = 0.003$) and the effect of assertiveness skills training group. The increase in aggression was 0.44. That is, 44% of the total variance of the remaining scores is due to aggression training. The statistical power is also 1, which means that the accuracy of this analysis is high at detecting significant differences and the sample size is sufficient for this test. Accordingly, the second hypothesis is confirmed in the present study. This means that assertiveness training leads to a decrease in aggression in secondary school girls. Multivariate covariance analysis results were used to investigate the difference between the experimental and control groups in the covariance analysis output. The modified averages for these variables are presented in Table (9). Multivariate covariance analysis results were used to investigate the difference between the experimental and control groups in the covariance analysis outputs.

Table 9. Multivariate analysis of covariance between the experimental and control groups in the aggression dimensions at posttest.

Source of Changes	SS	df	MS	F	sig	Partial η^2	Test potential
Physical aggression	0/02	1	0/02	1/40	0/11	0/03	0/09
Verbal aggression	0/18	1	0/18	9/22	0/003	0/18	0/81
Anger	0/20	1	0/20	17/11	0/004	0/31	0/72
Hostility	0/19	1	0/20	16/13	0/005	0/33	0/67

The results in Table 9 show that only in aggression test the difference between the control and experimental groups was not statistically significant ($F = 1.40$, $P = 0.11$, respectively). Physical aggression is not secondary school girl students. The results of Table 9 on the subtest of verbal aggression, anger, and hostility are statistically significant between the two control and experimental groups, meaning that assertiveness training leads to the reduction of verbal aggression, anger, and hostility in female secondary school students results in the second hypothesis of the present study that affects teacher education. Assertiveness skills are confirmed to reduce aggression in middle school girl students.

The needs of aggressive and depressed people are similar to those of ordinary people. That is, aggressive and depressed people also need psychological, physical, and emotional stimuli to exercise their abilities and become an active and acceptable member of their community. However, aggressive and depressed individuals need more opportunities and specific training methods to achieve this goal. On the other hand, communication problems of these children, along with their other problems, play an important role in the use of educational methods. Therefore, one of the main goals of education is to achieve a level of ability to communicate effectively with others and with their environment. In fact, it can be said that other goals, such as social and personal responsibility and economic adequacy, are also fully achievable. The realization of this goal depends. That is, if one is unable to communicate well with others and the environment, he or she will not be able to pursue an economic career and, on the other hand, will gradually discontinue communication activities due to communication deficits and lose the ability to accept social and personal responsibilities (Alberti & Ammons, 2007).

Hypothesis 1: Assertive Skills Training reduces depression in Secondary School Girl Students. According to the results, the mean of depression in the two experimental and control groups in the post-test was statistically significant, but the results also showed that in the sum of the first hypothesis of research on the effectiveness of assertiveness skills training leads to reduction of depression in second grade female students. This is in line with the results of Abbassinia (2008), Shirazi Nazem (2010), Harji and Dixon (2008). Eliot (2008) is in line.

Abbassinia (2008) believes that life skills training can enhance adolescents' level of assertiveness and provide them with psychological satisfaction. In fact, psychological happiness prevents depression. Shirazi Nazem (2010), says that since daring training affects happiness and academic achievement, these individuals become less depressed. Harjee and Dixon (2008) Assertiveness skills training enhances assertive behaviors in interpersonal and interpersonal relationships. Eliot (2008) Assertiveness training skills have a higher social support capacity under stressful conditions. In these situations, with high social support, the person becomes less depressed. On the other hand, it seems that cognitive, situational, environmental, and social factors are, for example, school equipment and facilities, teachers' level of knowledge and teachers' mastery of their concepts and methods of teaching, parenting practices and their own academic background. Students can be effective factors in reducing depression in depressed students (Yavaran, Mehrabi et al., 2011).

Hypothesis 2: Assertiveness training leads to reduced aggression in female secondary school students. According to the results, the mean of aggression in the experimental and control groups in the post-test was statistically significant. But as the results of the table show, the second hypothesis of the research on the effect of

assertiveness skills training on aggression reduction in second grade female students was confirmed. The results of Rahimi et al. (2006) on knowledge. Mehrabi Zadeh et al (1390) and Hejazi (1382) also showed significant impact of assertiveness training on social skills of their samples, which confirms the results of the present study.

CONCLUSION

Considering the above and since assertiveness is one of the most general social skills and between its various components and social skills including initiating dialogue, thanking, introducing yourself (beginner social skills). Applying for cooperation, apologizing (advanced social skills), understanding others' feelings, being aware of their feelings (social skills related to aggression), asserting their rights (alternative social skills for aggression) and complaining (social skills related to aggression). Exposure to Stress can be concluded that increasing the social skills of the experimental group after assertiveness training in the present study has been able to enhance other components of social skills and ultimately improve students' social skills (Khodayari Fard, 2013).

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