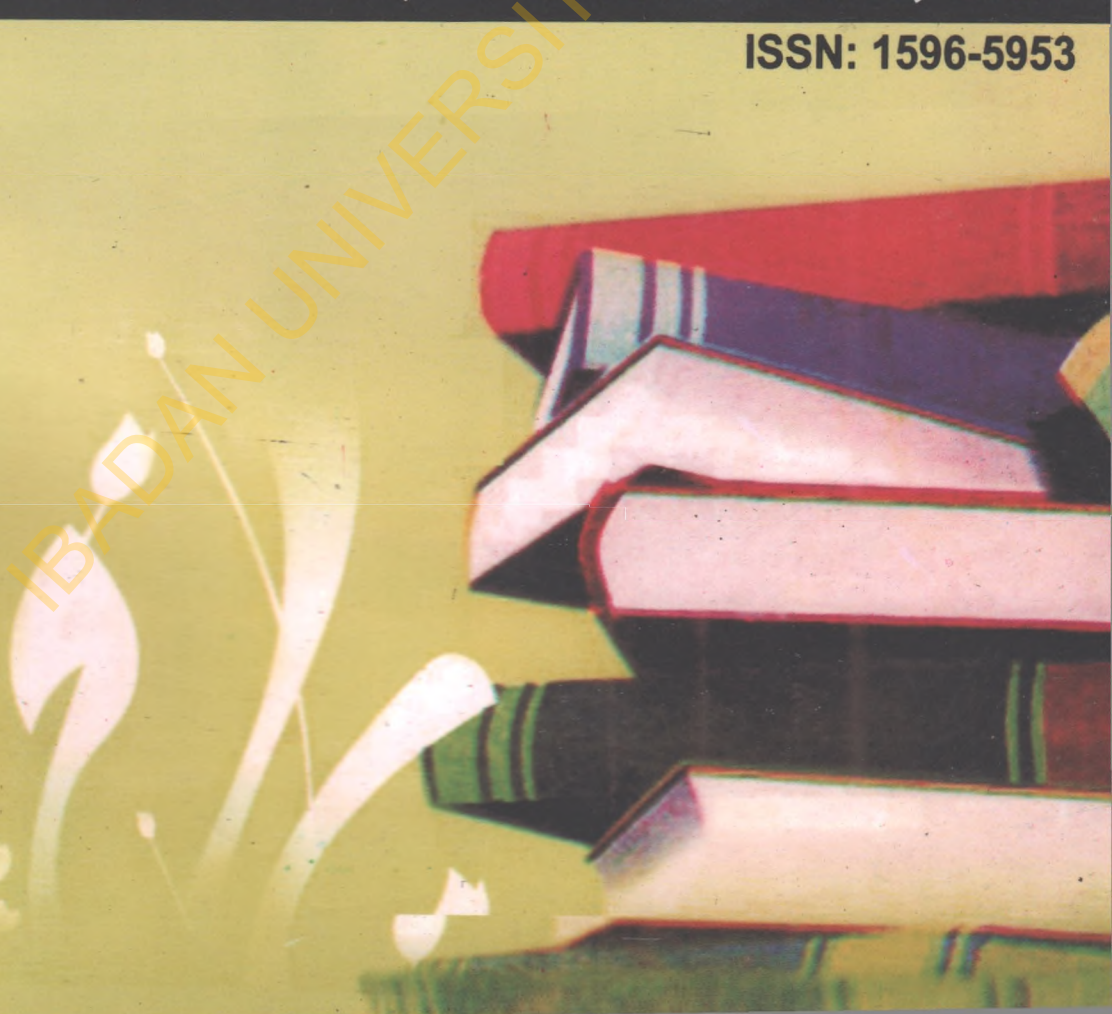


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Effect of Problem-solving Skills and Gender on Emotional Stability among Students with Hearing Impairment in Ibadan Oyo State

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of problem-solving strategy and gender on the emotional stability among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan, Oyo state. The Pretest-posttest control group, quasi experimental design was adopted for the study. Two secondary schools were purposively selected from Ibadan. Thirty-two students with hearing impairment hearing loss were selected for the study. The participants were assigned to experimental and control groups. Those in the treatment group were exposed to problem-solving strategy while those in the control group were not. The treatment lasted eight weeks. The instrument used for data collection was Cattell's Jr. High School Personality Questionnaire (HSPQ) ($r=0.80$). Data were analysed using Analysis of Covariance. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The finding revealed a significant main effect of treatment on emotional stability of the participants ($F(1.58=7.532, p<0.05)$). Gender has no significant main effect on the emotional stability of the participants. There was no interaction effect of treatment and gender on emotional stability of the participants.

Keywords: Emotional stability, Gender, Problem solving skills, Students with hearing impairment

Introduction

The emotional problem of students often leads to trouble staying on task or staying focused, which causes disruption at home and in school. It is unfortunate that there is an increase in the number of students with emotional behaviour disorders among which include those with hearing impairment. Students with hearing impairment are faced with various pressures that require effective and assertive skills that will enable them to boldly confront peer pressures and adjust favourably to their environment. Emotional stability is an important feature of healthy child development. Tat'yana, Serebryakovaa, Morozovaa, Kochnevaa, Zharovaa, Kostylevab and Kolarkovaa (2016) submitted that emotional stability is one of the main psychological characteristics that determine an individual's ability to cope with difficult life situations. Most students with hearing impairment experience communication difficulties, which may pose additional barriers to emotional stability. Both male and female students with hearing impairment experience emotional instability.

There are various empirical findings on gender and emotional stability of students with hearing impairment. Kumar, (2013); Smita, Mamta, and Seema, (2017) found that there was no significant effect of gender on emotional stability of students. Gandhi, (2017) found that there was no significant difference in emotional stability of

participants in relation to gender. Tarannum and Khatoon (2009) found that gender had significant effect on emotional stability of high school students. Tarannum, and Khatoon (2009) found emerging gender difference as an important predictor of emotional stability as female students had higher emotional stability than male students. Rieffe, (2015) found a significant, but very small gender differences, with girls showing more positive emotions and internalizing emotions, such as, sadness, anxiety, sympathy; than boys, and boys show more externalizing emotions such as, anger; than girls. Notably, gender differences were moderated by age, interpersonal context, and task valence. Gender differences in positive emotions were more pronounced with increasing age, with girls showing more positive emotions than boys in middle childhood and adolescence. Boys showed more externalizing emotions than girls at toddler/preschool age and middle childhood and fewer externalizing emotions than girls in adolescence.

In childhood, boys are more likely to have conduct problems such as defiance and aggression, which are often associated with high levels of anger (Cole, Michel and Teti, 1994). Whereas by adolescence girls are more likely than boys to have symptoms of depression and anxiety (Hankin, Abramson, Moffitt, Silva, McGee and Angell, 1998; Ollendick and Yule, 1990). Both of which are

associated with sadness and fear. Brody and Hall (2008) submitted that girls are expected to display greater levels of most emotions than boys, particularly happiness and internalizing (or "intropunitive") negative emotions, such as sadness, fear, anxiety, shame, and guilt. Girls are likely to show more empathy and sympathy both in form of facial emotional displays and empathic behaviours (Zahn-Waxler, Cole and Barrett, 1991; Zahn-Waxler, 2001).

Critical to an individual's success in life is ability to solve problems. Problem-solving refers to the ability to effectively respond to and generate solutions for challenging situation that arise. Problems that are left unsolved can lead to mental and emotional stress and give rise to physical strain. Problem-solving skills involve using available information to identify and design solutions to problems. It is not guess work, but a systematic information processing strategy in which the student is taught to define and analyse a situation to identify potential problems and then identify and execute a solution to those problems (Ahghar, 2012). Adekunle (2005) stated that problem-solving is an investigative approach whereby learners are given tasks or problems to solve. This approach encourages participatory learning with the teacher acting as catalyst and the team members. It also encourages topics to be introduced in the context of the learner's environmental problems and processes of solving them. Problem-solving skills enable students to take on some of the responsibilities for their own learning, take personal action to solve problems, resolve conflicts, discuss alternatives, and focus on thinking. Problem-solving skills provide students with opportunities to use their newly acquired knowledge in meaningful, real life activities and assists them in working at higher levels of thinking (Fredericks, 2005).

Problem-solving strategy is very important for reasoning out solutions through everyday situations, and underlie social competence. Thus, lack of problem-solving skills may lead to social difficulties. Moeller and Schick, (2006) stated that deficit in problem-solving can lead to poor social interactions and emotional problems. Students with hearing impairment according to Okuoyibo, (2006) face many problems including staying stable emotionally in terms of stressful situations. Quite a lot of them lack the skills to solve their problems. Lückner and McNeil (2004) however, explained

that adolescents with hearing impairment may benefit from problem-solving skills.

Laurent (2014) submitted that socially, students with weak problem-solving abilities may not recognize that their behaviours are inappropriate and may repeat mistakes. He further found that problem-solving abilities amongs students who are deaf or hard of hearing tend to fall on the lower end of the average range, where the average range is standardized by the typical population. This may be the reason why many students with hearing impairment experience emotional instability. This study therefore examined the effect of problem-solving skills and gender on emotional stability among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

There are few studies examining the problem-solving skills of students with hearing impairment with respect to emotional stability. This is because of the assumption that students with hearing impairment may not benefit from instruction to promote their emotional stability irrespective of their gender. Several researchers reported that students with hearing impairment have poor problem-solving skills and were delayed in their ability to solve problems when compared to their hearing peers, hence they exhibit poor emotional stability. This study therefore, examined the effect of problem-solving skills and gender on emotional stability among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria.

Hypotheses

The following nullhypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant main effect of treatment on emotional stability among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan.
2. There is no significant main effect of gender on emotional stability among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan.
3. There is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on emotional stability among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan.

Methodology

The study adopted a pretest-posttest control group quasi-experimental design. The participants were randomly assigned into experimental and control groups. The population comprised all students with hearing impairment in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Two schools for students with hearing impairment were purposively selected for the study. Thirty two (32) students with hearing impairment were purposively selected for the study. Cattell's Jr. High School Personality scale (HSPS) was used to gather data for the study. A letter of introduction to carryout this research was received from the ministry of education and it was presented to the principals of the schools where this study was carried out. Preliminary visits were

equally paid to the schools by the researcher for familiarisation with the teachers and students. Some of the teachers were trained as research assistants. The participants in the experimental group were exposed to Problem-solving Strategy for a period of eight (8) weeks. The treatment lasted for eight weeks. Participants in the control group were not exposed to treatment.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics of frequency count and percentage were used to analyse the participants' demographic data while inferential statistics of Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Table 1 Frequency Distribution of Schools

Name of Schools	Frequency	Percentage
Methodist Grammar School (Experiment Group)	22	68.8
Ijokodo High School (Control group)	10	31.2
Total	32	100.0%

Table 1 revealed frequency distribution according to the Schools of the participants with high percentage of students from Methodist Grammar

School (Experiment Group) were 22 (68.8%) and Ijokodo High School (Control group) were 10 (31.2%) of the total of the participants.

Table 2: Frequency Distribution Of Participants by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	17	53.1
Female	15	46.9
Total	32	100.0%

Table 2 revealed frequency distribution according to gender with high percentage of male which is 17(53.1%) and female 15 (46.9%) This implies that

male have higher percentage of the participants used for the study.

Table 3: Frequency Distribution of Participants by Treatment

Treatments	Frequency	Percentage
Experimental Group	22	68.8
Control Group	10	31.2
Total	32	100.0%

Table 3 revealed frequency distribution according to treatment with high percentage of Experimental Group which is 22 with a (68.8%) and Control

Group which is 10with (31.2%) respectively. This implies that majority of the participants were in the Experimental Group.

Table 4: Estimated Marginal Means for the Treatment and Control Group

Treatment Group	Gender	Mean	Std. Error
Experimental Group	Female	8.486	30.281
Control group	Male	7.457	.275
	Female	6.888	0.458
	Male	6.560	0.386

Results on Table 4 showed that the Experimental Group has the higher mean score ($\bar{x} = 15.943$) while the Control group had mean of ($\bar{x} = 13.448$). This implies that Experimental Group performed better than those of the Control group respectively.

5 ANCOVA: Main effect of treatment on emotional stability and control group on Pre and Post Test

	Square	df	Experimental Sum of Square	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta
Main Effect (Combined)	272297.960	1	272297.960	1622.151	0.000*	.986	
Treatment	2722.380	2	1361.190	8.109	0.002*	.414	
Gender	24.388	1	24.388	.145	0.707	.006	
Emotional Stability	215.948	2	707.974	6.616	0.042*	.531	
2.Way Interaction (Combined)							
Treatment*Gender	248.980	2	142.490	.849	0.441	.069	
Gender*Emotional Stability	155.884	2	1177.942	17.464	0.000*	.521	
Model	6829.877	13	525.383	3.130	0.008*	.639	
Residual	3860.833	23	167.862				
Total	401372.000	37					

* Significant at 0.05

The following observations were made on Table 5 based on the Analysis of Covariant (ANCOVA)

Ho₁:-There is no significant main effect of treatment on Emotional stability among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan.

The results presented on (Table 5) showed that there was a significant main effect of treatment on emotional stability among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan. ($F_{(2,23)} = 8.109$, $p = 0.002 < 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.41$) Premised on this, the null hypothesis was rejected. It is therefore concluded that there

was a significant main effect of treatment on emotional stability among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan.

Ho₂:-There is no significant main effect of gender on emotional stability among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan.

The results presented on (Table 5) showed that there was no significant main effect of gender on emotional stability among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan ($F_{(1,23)} = 0.145$, $p = 0.707 > 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.01$) Premised on this, the null

hypothesis was accepted. It is therefore concluded that there was no significant main effect of gender on emotional stability among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan.

H₀₃:-There is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on emotional stability among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan.

The results presented on (Table 5) showed that there was no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on emotional stability among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan ($F_{(2,23)} = 0.849$, $p = 0.441 > 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.06$). Premised on this, the null hypothesis was accepted. It is therefore concluded that there was no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on emotional stability among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan.

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis one stated that there is no significant main effect of treatment on emotional stability among students with hearing impairment. The result showed that there was significant main effect of treatment on emotional stability of the participants. This finding corroborates Moeller and Schick. (2006) who reported that deficit in problem-solving can lead to poor social interactions and emotional problems. Also, Van Heuvelen, (1991) found that inexperienced problem solvers carry out problem solving techniques that include haphazard formula-seeking and solution pattern matching. While the finding of Spering, Wagener and Funke (2005) negates the finding of this study that emotions do not influence complex problem-solving abilities and that individual with negative emotions are well-informed problem-solvers. Also, Isen, (2001) reported that problem-solving skills do not influence emotion either positively or negatively. This is not in line with the finding of this study. Also the finding of this study is not consistent with that of Smiley.

Hypothesis two stated that, there is no significant main effect of gender on emotional stability among students with hearing impairment. The result showed that there was no significant main effect of gender on emotional stability among students with hearing impairment. This finding is not in line with the study of Tarannum, and Khatoon (2009), who found that gender had significant effect on emotional stability as female students had higher emotional stability than male students. The assertion of Zahn-Waxler, Cole and

Barrett, 1991; Zahn-Waxler, (2001) reported that girls showed more empathy and sympathy both in the form of facial emotional displays and empathic behaviours is also inline with the finding of this study. Studies conducted by Wani, Sankar, Angel, Dhivya, Rajeswari, and Athirai, (2016), Shaikh, and Wahed (2016) contradict the finding of this study in that male and female students never differ in the mean scores of emotional stability. Budaev (1999) also found that females have lower emotional stability than males and that male are emotionally stable than female. Aleem, (2005), Gramer and Imaike (2002), Khurshid and Khurshid (2018) found that female students are less emotionally stable as compared to their male counterparts.

Hypothesis three stated that there is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on emotional stability among students with hearing impairment in Ibadan. The result showed that there was no interaction effect of treatment and gender on the emotional stability of the participants. This study corroborates the finding by Kumar, (2013); Smita, Mamta, and Seema, (2017) who found that there was no significant effect of gender on emotional stability of students. Also the finding of the study in consonant with the finding of Gandhi (2017) who found out that there was no significant effect of emotional stability of participants with regard to gender.

Conclusion

This study has been able to establish the effectiveness of problem-solving skills on emotional stability of students with hearing impairment. This means that problem-solving strategy made significant contribution in fostering emotional stability of the participants. In this study it was revealed that gender had effect on emotional stability of the participants.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made, based on the findings in this study:-

1. Teachers of the students with hearing impairment should create friendly atmosphere so that they can become emotionally stable.
2. Problem-solving strategy should be adopted by the teachers of students with hearing impairment in the classroom, schools and centres in order to boost their emotional stability.

3. Special educators, therapists and caregivers should take cognizance of boosting emotional stability of students with hearing impairment.
4. Deliberate instructions on emotional stability should be given to the students with hearing impairment.
5. Measures should be taken by Parents and caregivers to identify the emotionally less stable students and provide them with appropriate intervention.
6. The government should formulate policies that will aid smooth implementation and thorough monitoring of problem-solving interventions among students with hearing impairment.

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