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Mode Deactivation Therapy on Attitude Towards Psychological Help-Seeking among Students with low Achievement Motivation in Secondary Schools in Idemili North, Nigeria

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I. Introduction

Motivation is an important foundation of academic achievement. It is a fundamental human need and essential to the students learning process. While some students are motivated to achieve many others for various reasons, have minimal motivation for academic activities evidenced by little persistence and effort expended at school which culminates to underachievement. Nooe and Dipane (2014) describe academic achievement as the score obtained by a student from an examinations or continuous assessment. When the score is below stated standard, the student is said to underperform. The concept of academic underachievement is extremely complex, and for parents and students, extremely frustrating. Mandel and Marcus (1995, p. 4) classified underachievers on the basis of their level of motivation namely;1) Coasters, those who are the ultimate procrastinators-easy-going and unmotivated; 2) Anxious Underachievers, those who want to do better but are too tense and uptight to work effectively; 3) Identity-Searchers, those who are so wrapped up in figuring out who they are that they become distracted from schoolwork; 4) Wheeler-Dealers, those who are impulsive, manipulative, and so intent on instant gratification that they see no point in doing well in school; 5) Sad Underachievers, those who lack the energy needed for schoolwork because of their depression and low self-esteem; and 6) Defiant Underachievers, those who underachieve as an act of rebellion.

Academic underachievement can have a number of underlying causes primarily categorized into two clusters, namely; personal or individual-related factors and environmental factors. Motivation is one of the personal factors which could undermine achievement. Students without motivation do not love learning, they are also not excited about learning or adventure into exploration and discovery that leads to achieving one's goals and a sense of fulfillment. Academic underachievement is associated with numerous negative outcome such as low self-esteem, Anxiety and attention deficit hyperactive disorder, social withdrawal and depression (Nooe & Dipane, 2014; Ofole & Okopi, 2012). Learners who are not motivated to learn lack the drive to achieve. Such category of learner therefore requires seeking psychological support. Psychological Help seeking behaviour is defined in this study as an individual's effort at seeking and obtaining psychological related supports from a professional counsellor (Ofole & Falaye, 2011). Psychologist can significantly contribute in helping students overcome challenging learning tasks with a sense of confidence and self-efficacy. Put differently, students who obtain

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psychological support can learn the importance of setting goals and achieving them successfully.

A concern is that despite the evidence that through counselling or psychological help individuals can get remedial interventions for academic underachievement (such as study skills training, time management, test taking skills, self-esteem boosting etc) yet students who have low achievement motivation do not seek for psychological or counselling help due to negative attitude (Perenc, Mieczyslaw & Radochonski, 2016; Adeosun, Adegbohu, Jeje, Bello & Manuwa, 2015; Oladipo & Oyenuga; Kumcagiz, 2013). According to Eagly, and Chaiken, (1993), attitudes can positively or negatively affect a person's behaviour, regardless of whether the individual is aware of the effects. Hogg, and Vaughan (2005) defined attitude as "a relatively enduring organization of beliefs, feelings, and behavioural tendencies towards socially significant objects, groups, events or symbols" (Hogg, & Vaughan, 2005, p. 150) ".a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor", p. 1).

Reluctance to seek help from formal mental health professionals provides a major obstacle for achieving psychological health among in-school adolescents in Anambra state. Gulliver, Griffiths, & Christensen, 2010) provided evidence that students who avoided challenges and exhibited little persistence when presented with difficult tasks and do not seek support are considered to be exhibiting a maladaptive behaviour pattern. The most frequently reported of all the barriers to seeking psychological help is negative attitude and personal *characteristics* such as gender, low emotional competence belief that the problem would go away or could be solved without help, lack of confidence, general concern about what others, including the source of help, might think of them if they were to seek help (Czyz Horwitz, Eisenberg, Li, Dorstyn & Denson, 2014; Topkaya, 2015) .

There are plethora of studies on psychological health seeking behaviour of students in Nigeria and elsewhere (Perenc, *et. al.* 2016; Adeosun, Adegbohu, Jeje, Bello & Manuwa, 2015; Oladipo *et. al.,* 2013). However, There is a paucity of intervention designed to change students negative attitude towards psychological help seeking as most of the available studies are descriptive which merely highlighted the complexity of influences on an individual's health seeking behaviour at a given time and place. There is growing acknowledgement that there is need for interventions to promote health seeking behaviour in a variety of contexts and for diverse population (Price, 2001; Runganga, Sundby & Aggleton, 2001). Given the dearth of research that attempted to alter negative attitude towards psychological health the current study is designed to add to existing literature on psychological help seeking by investigating the therapeutic effectiveness of Mode Deactivation Therapy on Attitude toward psychological help seeking of students with low achievement motivation in secondary schools students in Idemili North, Nigeria. Ofole and Falaye (2011) provided empirical evidence that fear and anxiety which culminates to negative attitude towards health services are amenable to treatments. Mode deactivation therapy (MDT) has the potential to modify attitude towards help seeking behaviours because it has a network of cognitive, affective, motivational, and "modes" which inhibits positive attitude towards health services.

II. Theoretical Underpinning

Beck's Mode Model (1975) provided the theoretical framework upon which Mode Deactivation Therapy is anchored upon. Apsche (2003) developed Mode deactivation therapy (MDT) as reaction to his claim that cognitive and behavioural therapies alone were ineffectiveness in handling complex psychological problems coupled with his decision to expand the tenets of cognitive behavioural therapy into a more global constructs called 'modes'. As a result of the fact that attitude is hard to form an adaptation of therapies becomes expedient. Mode deactivation therapy (MDT) addresses dysfunctional emotions, maladaptive behaviours and cognitive processes and contents through a number of goal-oriented, explicit systematic procedures .Mode Deactivation Therapy is an adaptation derivatives of Cognitive Behaviour Therapies such as, Dialectical behaviour therapy (DBT), mindfulness, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), Functional Analytic Psychotherapy Therapy (FAT).Problem Solving Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Schema Mode Therapy (Apsche, Bass, & Backlund, 2012; Bass, & Apsche, 2013). MDT is a methodology that addresses dysfunctional schemas through systematically assessing and restructuring underlying compound core beliefs - beliefs that often found their genesis in trauma experiences.

Unlike the CBT approaches which focus primarily on the present rather than the past, the focus of therapy is the current processes that are maintaining the problem rather than the root causes. CBT views clients' problem as the manifestation of dysfunctional thinking, which is replaced with the use of logical arguments. MDT agreed in general with this principle, but also believed that there is need to explore the origins of maladaptive thought processes in addition to validating their existence as reasonable given an individual's past experiences upon which his or her core beliefs are based. Beck (1975) asserted that how people feel and behave is largely determined by their thought processes or cognitions, which may make them vulnerable to psychological distress. In MDT these modes and their associated core beliefs are validated

and normalized in the client's perspective by cultivating awareness and acceptance rather than disputing any belief as irrational or "bad". The proposition is that awareness and acceptance improves the therapist-client bond, client cooperation, commitment and motivation, which enables an effective and durable therapeutic change process. In MDT the core beliefs (or schemas) of the individual are not perceived or challenged as dysfunctional because this action invalidates the person's life experience. The client's Functional Alternative Beliefs (FAB) is accepted as truths in the client's life by the therapist and the client. Functional Alternative Beliefs are consistently validated as legitimate and are seen as developing as a result of the person's life experiences - no matter how irrational, and even if the reality of the belief is imperceptible to observers.

MDT has support as an efficacious intervention across a wide variety of behavioural outcomes for adolescents including juvenile offenders (Thoder & Cautilli, (2011); Oppositional Disorders (Bass & Apsche, 2013; Murphy & Siv, 2011) as well as sexual and offending behaviour (Jennings, Blossom, & Bayles, 2013). Although research studies to date have not utilized MODE on Nigerian population to the best of the researchers' knowledge, there is no apparent reason why MDT treatment would not be equally effective for modifying attitude towards help seeking behaviours among Nigerian populations.

III. Purpose of Study

In view of the stated problem, this study explored the effectiveness of Mode Deactivation Therapy (MDT) in modifying attitude towards psychological health seeking behaviour of students studying in secondary schools in Idemili North, Anambra state. The moderating effect of gender on psychological help seeking behaviour of participants was also examined.

IV. Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. What is the difference between the mean attitude scores of students exposed to MDT and those in the control group?
2. What is the difference between the mean attitude score of male and female exposed to treatment?

V. Hypotheses

The two under listed null hypotheses were tested at 0.05

1. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of attitude towards psychological help of students exposed to MDT and those in the control group?
2. There is no significant difference between the mean score of attitude towards psychological help of male and female students exposed to MDT?

VI. Methodology

Pretest-post-test control group design was adopted for this study. The intact classes were randomly assigned to two treatment conditions namely; experimental and control group. The school principal discouraged randomly assigning participants into the groups in order to avoid interruption to other school activities. The factorial matrix was "two by two" denoted by 2x 2. The independent variables (MDT Group and control Group) constitute the row while the participants gender (male and female) were also at two levels.

Eighty-five (85) senior secondary school one (SS1) students who scored between 1-30 out of 60 obtainable scores in Schuler, Thornton, Frintrup and Mueller-Hanson (2002) achievement motivation inventory were purposively used for the study. The population for the study constitutes approximately14, 388 Senior Secondary School one (SS1) students spread across sixteen schools located Idemili North Local Government of Anambra state. Simple random sampling technique was utilized to draw out the two schools out of the sixteen schools. Fifty-four students constituting 63.5% of the study population were female while thirty –one (36.5%) were male. Their age ranged from 13-19 years with mean age of 13.3 (SD=3.7). The treatment and the control groups are comparable in many aspects i.e. age, gender, type of school, management of schools. The two towns are far from each other thereby eliminating any infiltration of information to the control group. Idemili North was purposively selected for the study due to the repetition and high rate of school dropout rates reported among the students by researchers (Eboatu, 2014; Achufusi & Mgbemena, 2012). Idemili North is one of the Local Government Areas in Anambra State which is located in South-central Nigeria (Wikipedia, 2016). Eziowelle and Obosi were randomly drawn out of the ten towns that made up Idemili North. Other towns in Idemili North includes; Abacha, Abatete, Nkpor, Ogidi, Oraukwu, Uke, Ideani and Umuoji.

VII. Instrumentation

The instrument used for data collection has two sections. Section one obtained the respondents information regarding the participants age and gender, while section two elicited information on the criterion variable (attitude towards psychological help). The detail description of the two instruments is presented as follows;

a) Attitude towards seeking psychological help

The participants' attitude towards seeking psychological help was assessed with ten items adapted from Fischer and Turner's (1970) Attitudes toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale (ATSPPHS). The items are designed in a 4-point Likert-type scale with response options ranging from 1 (Agree) to 4 (Disagree). Higher scores indicate positive attitudes toward seeking professional assistance. The authors reported good internal consistency estimates (Cronbach = .84, and test-retest reliability r = .80). The psycho - metric properties of the instrument were adequately established. Measurement and test experts in the Department of Counselling and Human Development certified that the instrument has face validity while construct validity internal reliability estimates of (α=.72) was obtained for this study using samples different from the target population

b) The Achievement Motivation Inventory (AMI)

The Achievement Motivation Inventory (AMI) by Schuler, Thornton, Frintrup and Mueller-Hanson (2002) was adapted to screen students with low achievement motivation. The instrument was originally designed to measure a broad construct of work-related achievement motivation. The AMI is based on a trait-oriented concept of achievement motivation (Schuler & Prochaska, 2000, 2001). The AMI profile gives insight into an individual's achievement motivation structure and enables a precise and reliable evaluation of all major aspects of achievement motivation. It provides a psychological instrument of high scientific and practical impact for the study of AMI. The original scales consist of 17 sub topic spread across 170items designed in a 7-point Likert format. For the purpose of this study only 15 items drawn from five sub-sections were used; namely; Confidence in Success; Eagerness to Learn, Fearlessness, flexibility and Persistence. The items were positively worded. Typical items include; '*I enjoy situations, in which I can make use of my abilities'. 'I am appealed by situations allowing me to test my abilities'. 'I am attracted by tasks, in which I can test my abilities'.* The highest obtainable score was 60 while the lowest obtainable score was 15. Students who scored 1-30 were considered to have low achievement motivation and therefore eligible to participate in the study. While those with 31 and above were excluded from the study because they were assumed to have high achievement motivation. The authors reported a reliability (Cronbach's alpha) for the total score to ranges from a = .66 to a = .83. However, for the purpose of this study,

VIII. Procedure

The treatments were in three phases namely; pretreatment phase, treatment and evaluation. At the pretreatment phase written approval was obtained from the two school principals' of the randomly selected schools, the students brought their filled parental consent form. At the treatment phase the participants who met the inclusion criteria were randomly assigned into treatment group to avoid the error of non randomization which could have confounding effect on the study outcome. The two groups (Experimental and Control group) were administered with the study questionnaires. The control group was an equivalent group with the experimental group but they did not receive therapy they served as a comparison group used to evaluate the study outcome. The experimental group was thereafter exposed to eight sessions of MDT therapy. Each session has specific measurable objectives and it lasted for two hours. In all the participants were exposed to fourteen (14) hours of treatment which spanned for a period of seven weeks. The summary of each session is as follows;

In the first session, the researcher and the research assistants familiarized themselves with the participants. The objectives of the study were discussed in details. Rules guiding the training were established, among which includes punctuality, active participation, phones on silence and, respect for others opinion etc. Their questions were answered, while myths and misconceptions concerning the treatment were clarified. Attitudes towards Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale (ATSPPHS)was used to collect baseline data. The second session involved systematic assessment that was aimed at identifying, clarifying, and formulating participants' core beliefs, thoughts, feelings and behaviour sequence. The researcher explored the reasons why the students developed negative attitude towards counselling services. Detailed family information, academic history was also obtained. In the third session fear assessment and Compound Core Beliefs Questionnaire (CCBQ) were utilized to compile the participants' triggers and fears regarding seeking psychological help. A situational analysis which associated their problem of beliefs, fears, and behaviours was done in order to identify the mode activation processes that have to be deactivated. In the fourth session in order to consciously affect change in the participants' attitude the researcher stimulated their awareness and acceptance of distressful thoughts and feelings in the present. This state facilitated mindfulness, meditation and imagery centering, imagery to facilitate cognition. The fifth session focused on identifying functional alternative beliefs, healthy alternative thoughts and compensatory strategies which is developed and reinforced through the validation–clarification–redirection (VCR) process. The researcher utilized the sixth session to advance the participants' towards accepting a functional alternative belief through commitment and motivation to work towards positive alternatives that are more supportive of their life goals and aspirations. The

participants were taught Problem solving skills (D'Zurrila & Nezu, 1999) in the seventh session. Problem solving skill enabled the participants to navigate academic problems which are described as ill-*structured with unclear goals, have incomplete* information and several possible solutions and multiple paths to obtain them (Jonassen, 2007). This session was concluded by teaching the participants how to monitors their progress and prevent treatment relapse. The treatment was concluded at the eight sessions. Attitudes toward Seeking Professional Psychological Help Scale (ATSPPHS) earlier used for baseline data collection was re-administered though this version was reshuffled in order to prevent the participants from getting habituated or to the instrument after repeated presentations.

In addition to the descriptive statistics which was used to describe the properties of the sample, Z-test was to compare the means of the two groups to know if there's a significant difference between the experimental and control group. This statistical tool was considered most appropriate since the distribution was a normal one and the standard deviation was known.

IX. Result

a) Research Question One

What is the difference between the mean attitude scores of students exposed to MDT and those in the control group? Table 1 was used to compare the means of the experimental and control group as follows; The result of research question 2 is presented on table 2. It reveals that the mean of male exposed to treatment is less than their female counterpart; i.e. $\bar{X}$ =442.48< $\bar{X}$ =44.63. It shows that both groups gained in the therapy. This result provides additional evidence that the therapy was effective in enhancing attitude towards help seeking , however, the female exposed to MDT has superior mean gain (= $\bar{X}$ 44.63) when compared with their male counterpart with ($\bar{X}$ =42.48).

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the attitude towards psychological help of students exposed to MDT and those in the control group? This hypothesis was tested with a Z-test and the decision was reached at 0.05 level of significance. The result is presented on table 3.

Table 1: Means of Pre-Test and Post Test Scores of participants in Experimental and Control groups

	Experimental group			Control group		
	Pretest (X^1)	Post test (X^1)	Mean Difference	Pretest (Y^2)	Post test (Y^2)	Mean Difference
Mean	34.7	67.11	32.41	34.4	52.3	17.9
Total	1202	2430	1187	1212	1663	898

The mean score obtained by the experimental and control group at pre-test and post test is presented on table 1. The difference in pretest and post test mean score for the experimental group is $\bar{X}$ =32.41 while that of the Control group is $\bar{X}$ =17.9. It is evident from this result that the experimental group has higher ($\bar{X}$ 67.11) mean score than the control ($\bar{X}$ =52.3) which suggests that the therapy was efficient in enhancing positive attitude towards psychological help seeking.

b) Research Question Two

What is the difference between the mean Descriptive statistic was employed to find the mean attitude score of male and female exposed to treatment? difference between the two groups (male and female) the result is presented on table 2.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores for Male and Females exposed MDT

	Male	Female
Total	1742	1964
Mean ($\bar{X}$)	42.48	44.63
Standard deviation (SD)	9.27	10.31
Number	41	44

Hypothesis 1: Z-test for difference between mean attitude score for students in experimental and control for Hypothesis 1

Group	No.	$\bar{X}$	Df	SD	Z-Cal	Z-critical	Decision
Exp (A)	42	67.11	83	9.55	4.01	1.96	Reject Ho
Control Group (B)	43	52.3		12.62			

Note: Significant at P = 0.05

Result of hypothesis two showed there is a significant difference in the attitude of the group exposed to therapy as the result showed that Z-test calculated is 4.01 which is greater than Z critical of 1.96. Thus, since Z- cal (4.01) is> than Z-critical, the decision is that the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that the treatment was effective in improving attitude towards psychological help of the experimental group.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference between the mean score of attitude towards psychological help of male and female students exposed to MDT? In order to determine if there is significant difference between the attitude of males and female exposed to therapy Z-test was utilized. The result presented on table 4 showed significant difference between the male and female. This confirm the result of research question two which shows that the female has superior treatment gain compared to their male counterpart. Since Z-cal (3.37) is greater than Z-critical (1.96) the null hypotheses is therefore rejected. The result showed a significant difference between the male and females treated with MDT.

Table 4: Z-test for difference between the mean score of attitude towards psychological help of male and female students exposed to MDT?

Sex	Std. No	$\bar{x}$	Df	SD	Z-Cal	Z-critical	Decision
Male	41	42.48	83	9.27	3.37	1.96	Reject Ho
Female	44	44.63		10.31			

Note: Significant at P = 0.05

X. Discussion

This study was designed to primarily investigate the effectiveness of MODE deactivation Therapy (MDT) on modifying attitude towards psychological help of cohorts of senior secondary school students. The results emanating from the data analyzed as presented on tables 1 & 3 provides evidence that MDT is an effective therapy for changing negative attitude towards help psychological help seeking. This outcome is probably due to the fact that MDT blended elements from proven treatment models which includes Beck's theory of "modes" (Beck, 1996); traditional Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Schema Therapy (Alford & Beck, 1997; Beck and Freeman, 1990); Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (Linehan, 1993); and Functional Analytic Behaviour Therapy (Kohlenberg and Tsai, 1993; Nezu, Nezu, Friedman and Haynes, 1998. The treatment was able to handle instantaneous, primal and extremely powerful effects of maladaptive "modes" of the participants who were adolescents unlike the traditional therapies which were considered unresponsive because of its inflexibility. Further, the researcher incorporated psychodynamic element which is a major tool of MDT to explore the participants early childhood experiences and deterministic of their behaviours. By restructuring the participants beliefs, the treatment was able to adequately address the underlying perceptions that may have set in motion the mode related change of aberrant schemas, that enabled the behaviour integration of dialectical behaviour therapy (DBT) principles, (Linehan, 1993). This outcome corroborates previous studies that reported the effectiveness of MDT on adolescent studies (Swart & Apsche, 2014; Bass & Apsche, 2014; Jennings, Blossom, & Bayles, 2013; Thoder & Cautilli, 2011). Results of a meta-analysis also provided evidence that MDT is effective for both family-based and group treatment. On the contrary, this outcome negative Callejia (2014) who argue that due to the type of theoretical eclecticism in MDT it may be difficult to find coherence in the model.

The result of the second hypothesis shows a significant gender difference in treatment outcome. The female treated had superior treatment gain as shown on tables 2 & 4. This implies that with the intervention the treated females will likely uptake psychological help more than their male counterpart. Studies focusing on health seeking behaviour have shown inconsistent findings with regards to gender. Some have reported gender differences in the likelihood of seeking health care (Thompson, Anisimowicz, Miedema, Hogg, Wodch & Aubrey-Bassler, 2016; Addis & Mahalik, 2003; Rasmussen, Jensen & Olesen, 1992) whereas others have not (Galdas, Cheater & Marshall, 2005; Dixon-Woods & Kirk, Agarwal, 2005). The possible reason for this outcome is that though men and women are alike in many ways, there are important biological and behavioural differences between the two genders, these differences is associated with behaviour, lifestyle and life experience. It determines access to health care, use of the health care system and the behavioural attitudes of medical personnel.

Another possible explanation for the gender difference in treatment outcome is due to gender-role socialization which makes men and women learn gendered attitudes and behaviours from cultural values, norms, and ideologies about what it means to be men and women. For example, many of the tasks associated with seeking help from a health professional, conflict with the messages men receive about the importance of self-reliance, physical toughness, and emotional control (Good, Dell, & Mintz, 1989; Levant & Pollack, 1995; Pleck, 1981; Pollack, 1998; Real, 1997). On the contrary, Courtenay (2000) has reported a direct link between denial of weakness and rejecting help as key practices of masculinity and help seeking behaviour. He argues

that by dismissing their health care needs, men are constructing gender. According to the researcher, when a man brags, 'I haven't been to a doctor in years'; he is simultaneously describing a health practice and situating himself in a masculine arena. Men's negative attitude to health services has been cited as 'an important obstacle to improving men's health' (Hunt, Adamson, Hewitt, & Nazareth, 2011). There is thus a concern that when men delay their visits to the counselling psychologist or other health care providers it may decrease men's chances for early detection, treatment, and prevention of disease (Addis & Mahalik, 2003).

XI. Counselling Implications

This study has both theoretical and Practical implications on the field of counselling and psychology. First, it has given credence to claims that MDT is an empirically grounded theory that is effective in treating diversities of problems especially with adolescents. In practical terms also it has shown that counselling practices can be guided on the synergy in treatment practices. Stated differently, this study has shown that elements of different theories can be well blended successfully without confusion that arises in eclecticism counselling. Another counselling implication is that when treatment is designed according to clients or groups need it tends to be more effective than "one size fits all" approach adopted in some interventions.

XII. Conclusion

This Research has clearly established the efficacy of MDT in modifying attitude towards psychological help seeking behaviour of adolescents in secondary schools. It has provided evidence that MODE Deactivation Therapy is gender sensitive. The implication is that in using MDT, the treatment package should reflect gender differences in socialization, norms and stereotypes.

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