

Effects of Vicarious Extinction Therapy on Behaviour of Pupils with Undesirable Behaviours in Pankshin Local Government Area of Plateau State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This investigation seeks to find the effects of Vicarious Extinction Therapy (VET) on Behaviour of Pupils with Undesirable Behaviours (PWUB) in Pankshin Local Government Area, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to examine the extent to which VET can be used to change the actions and manners of PWUB. The study adopted true experimental research design (Pretest-Posttest, Control Group Design). The population was thirteen (13) PWUB, while the sample size is ten (10). Behaviour Scale (BS) was used to obtain data in this research. The reliability of BS was obtained using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient formula. The reliability Coefficient index was 0.722. Interventions were given and data were collected and analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics comprising of simple percentages, frequencies and tables to answer the two research questions. Analysis of Covariance was used to test the two hypotheses. The results revealed that VET changed the behaviour of PWUB: majority of the PWUB in the experimental group had moderate actions and manners scores. This study recommended that VET should be encouraged in primary schools to meet the behavioural needs of PWUB and should also be restructured to meet the special needs of other pupils with behaviour related problems.

Keywords: vicarious, extinction, therapy, undesirable, behaviours

Introduction

Behaviour is a way of conduct, action/inaction and/or manner which can be good or bad. Okwudire (2012) and American Academy of Pediatrics (2015) accentuated that behaviour is human acts that are observable and measurable. It is in every Pupil with Undesirable Behaviours (PWUB), portrayed by actions or activities; revealing the qualities and attributes of the PWUB. Behaviour also implies actions or reactions towards other persons or an object; it is the act of throwing away persons, leaving behind decent relationships or abandoning friends. Onyeonu (2003) held that behaviours of PWUB could be positive or negative; it could be appropriate or inappropriate; desirable and undesirable demeanors of shouting, yelling, noise making, banging tables, jumping up and down in protest and so forth, for attention. The researchers believed that behaviour change therapies (such as Vicarious Extinction Therapy (VET)), most often than not are treatments that focus on changing unwanted or unhealthy behaviours.

Actions are activities, deeds and goings-on. Shouting for teachers' attention is inappropriate and undesirable action. Pocketing schools' materials is bad and calls for therapy. Okwudire (2012) heightened that understanding the actions of Pupil with Undesirable Behaviours (PWUB) is beyond comprehension; this is because they exhibit actions that vary in nature, degree and severity. PWUB's actions are strange and bizarre: hyperactive, impulsive and do not pay attention to instructions in all teaching and learning processes; they also have attention deficits. Okwudire (2012) further reiterated that PWUB ugly actions included: cruelty and bullying, showing excessive anger, dodging school works and extra-curricular activities, destroying school materials, acting before thinking and always making terrible mistakes and many more.

Manner is simply a way of life, philosophy, a way of doing things, style and fashion in which a person goes around with self and relates with other persons. Good manner is a conduct that is socially accepted and cherished. Ekoja and Amail (2002) highlighted that abnormal manners may be seen as irregularity which includes: socially disapproved manner, 'acting out' against people, lives or property. Okwudire (2012) painted that problematic manners can be said to be consistent ways of manners that are detrimental to other persons, the society and the person involved. Thus, manners become problem only when it interferes with the productivity and learning processes of an individual. Okwudire further reiterated that problematic manner manifests itself in two ways mainly: intra-personal (disturbs oneself), and inter-personal (disturbing other people). Finally, for a manner to be termed abnormal, aberrant, undesirable and detrimental, the researchers feel that the age, socialization level, setting or situation, the frequency of occurrence, and degree of severity must be considered. Ekoja and Amail (2002) and Strydom (2008) stressed that abnormal manners can only be improved or changed to a certain extent, once there is a viable treatment. Human behaviour changes once the treatment is a stratified process and based on didactic principle.

Vicarious Extinction Therapy (VET) is a treatment, rehabilitation, social-psychoanalysis and counselling parameters to be administered to PWUB. Okwudire (2012) believed that extinction is a method and process that involves bringing to an end a reinforcing stimulus that follows a response to weaken or decrease the rate of that response. VET also prevents a behaviour from being reinforced. It means that a behaviour: action and manner that are not reinforced will decrease in strength and eventually cease. Okwudire further gave example of VET as when a classroom teacher/researcher does not call on pupils who raise hands and call the teacher's attention by shouting 'me teacher' or 'I, sir'. Consequently, shouting for attention is decreased or goes completely extinct.

Weisman et al. (2007) reinforced that psychoanalysis is a kind of treatment or action that counsels and encourages Pupils with Undesirable Behaviours (PWUB) to avoid aberrant behaviours or style of life such as irregular manners, abnormal actions and unusual actions. The researchers believed that if a PWUB observes the non-reinforcement of undesirable manners (shouting for attention), such a pupil will choose to drop a similar response from his compartment repertoire as a result of the kind of treatment the PWUB received.

Okwudire (2012) believed that a model that is not reinforced for exhibiting socially inappropriate manners like 'bad manners', may signal the message that undesirable

manners are unacceptable. This would then lead to a subsequent decrease in unwanted manners. When using extinction therapy, it is necessary to make sure that all reinforcers are consistently withheld from the undesirable response so that there is no reinforcement.

There are a few purposes of VET. It is a corrective behavioural (temper tantrum) experience in general. Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT, 2001) promoted the assertion that extinction therapy is usually designed to encourage, persuade, egg on, sway and convince rather than reopen old wounds in the lives of clients such as PWUB that are living with behavioural issues. Weisman et al. (2007) harangued that therapies such as VET are often time-limited treatments designed to encourage clients to regain temper/tantrum, mood/behaviour, frame/state of mind and function, often lasting for few weeks. The therapist on any occasion empathically engages the PWUB; it helps the pupils to feel loved, cared for and understood; it also arouses actions, stimulates state of mind and mental state of PWUB.

VET is both a method of counselling and therapy which improves PWUB's mental well-being. This treatment can help PWUB who are experiencing affect or actions and manners or behavioural problems. As a counselling and therapy programme, it improves the ugly actions, bad affect and ruthless behavioural problems the PWUB are living with (Yakwal, 2014). Strydom (2008) accentuated that all PWUB can have behaviour change, provided these pupils are taught through viable learning principles. VET also gives PWUB assistance to battle low self-esteem, undesirable Behaviour behavioural problems, adverse depression and harmful psychological problems.

The researchers noted with great delight that VET encourages self-correction; it is practical because its effect is immediate; and very importantly, reinforcement is an important element of this therapy. The researchers are also quick to admit that VET encourages "ignoring the PWUB"; but in some cases, ignoring the pupil increases instead of decreasing the negative manners; secondly, the pupil may decide not to learn a desirable manner or behaviour; and finally, as Okwudire (2012) claimed, it does not work for all clients, due to individual differences.

Pupils with Undesirable Behaviours (PWUB) are learners who have detrimental manners and actions, and are also faced with hitches in the societies and with self for their unacceptable behaviours. Bala (2004) said that PWUB are normally faced with great difficulties and ugly problems as a result of their bad manners and ugly actions; due to the difficulties and problems that usually confront PWUB, such are usually severely unable to make any meaningful learning in schools and so on, PWUB habitually finish primary school without basic skills required for learning or mastery of literacy skills. Once VET is provided by well-trained therapists or teachers, it can change PWUB to become good mannered and with desirable actions.

Pede (2022) stressed that primary three (3) is an important level of gaining acceptable behaviour, especially good manners and desirable actions. Primary three school level is that vital stage for inculcating and acquiring rudimentary behavioural skills by PWUB. Primary three is a stage where VET can be administered to PWUB and these pupils can obtain good manners and acceptable actions efficiently. It is in the light of this that the

researchers finds it necessary to investigate the effects of VET on behaviour of PWUB in primary three (3) in Pankshin LGA of Plateau state, Nigeria.

Jatau (2021) alleged that in many urban and rural schools and communities, there have not been therapies, to impart basic behavioural skills to PWUB and especially pupils with ugly actions and bad manners; as a result, so many PWUB had dropped out of school prematurely. Many PWUB experiencing behavioural difficulties often feel different and may be emotionally worried or disturbed for being different. PWUB also have difficulties in other areas such as actions, belief and most importantly decent behaviour. Jatau further held that many homes, parents and guardians had never obtain VET nor known the importance of behavioural skills to primary school pupils; as such, they never enrolled PWUB for trainings that have direct bearing with literacy skills acquisition. Many parents and guardians never see the need to get PWUB engaged in great amount of therapy to change undesirable behaviours.

The researchers are of the view that in Pankshin LGA, there are differences among school PWUB. Many PWUB are never properly trained in terms of behavioural skills; many other ones do not possess any good manners nor desirable actions and the ripple effect is that those PWUB face life and their communities with great difficulties. Other problems are, can VET be used to: change the behaviours of PWUB to behaviours of peace and tranquility? Change behavioural disorders of rage and outburst of PWUB to affect, joy and peace with self and others? Enhance the attitude of behavioural trauma, fear of stigmatization and discrimination experienced by PWUB?

This study is anchored significantly on Watson's Behaviourism Learning Theory. The theory stated that behaviours are learned from the environment; innate or inherited factors have very little influence on behaviour; all behaviours are learned through interaction with the environment. This theory was propounded in 1913 by John B. Watson (Brazier, 2021). The theory focuses on the fact that humans are born with the ability to develop behaviour: manners and actions. This theory focused on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Maudsley Method (MM) and Interpersonal Therapy (IT). CBT addresses the behaviour of unhealthful eating actions; MM then focuses on how family members can support the child in establishing healthy eating manners and actions; while IT addresses underlying issues such as interpersonal conflicts that concerns manners and actions (behaviour).

Watson's Behaviourism Learning Theory is related to this study based on the fact that it involves giving training, counsel, suggestions, directives, persuasions, activities and psycho-social counselling on manners and actions of PWUB to enable them acquire good manners and obtain desirable actions. The motivation here is the ability to develop desirable manners and actions by PWUB (Barrett, 2006; Liberante, 2012).

The aim of this investigation is to examine the influences of Vicarious Extinction Therapy (VET) on behaviours of Pupils with Undesirable Behaviours (PWUB). The specific objectives of this study are to:

1. Examine the extent to which VET can be used to change the actions of PWUB.
2. Determine the extent to which VET can be used to change the manners of PWUB.

Research questions

The following questions are posed for investigation:

1. What is the extent to which VET can improve actions of PWUB?
2. To what extent can VET improve manners of PWUB?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Ho1: There is no significant difference between the actions mean scores of PWUB in experimental and control groups after treatment.

Ho2: There is no significant difference between the manners mean scores of PWUB in experimental and control groups after treatment.

Methodology

The population of this research is thirteen PWUB in the classes under study. This population is found to be suitable for this study because it depicts the same characteristics (PWUB subjects: manners and actions issues) used in this study. The sample size of this study comprised of ten (10) primary three PWUB. Out of the said ten (10) PWUB, 5 were assigned to the experimental group and exposed to VET while the other 5 were assigned to the control group but were not exposed to VET. The treatment (VET) combines psycho-social therapy whose content include: discussions, counselling, games and audio-dance sections; then psychoanalysis; basically on actions and manners for the edification and personal development of PWUB. Pre and post-tests lasted for 60 minutes and each treatment session lasted for 45 minutes; the control group was occupied meaningfully, throughout the treatment period, in normal counselling sessions they are used to.

Behaviour Scale (BS) was the instrument used to obtain data in this research. The reliability of BS was obtained using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient formula. The reliability Coefficient index was 0.722. BS was basically divided into Sections A and B. Section A was for the bio-data of the respondents while Section B has fifteen items which the respondents responded to. Those are list of items that sought to collect the actions and manners of the respondents. The respondents' responses were collected and used at both pre-test and post-test. Actions were measured with eight items: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 15 on the BS; while manners was measured with seven items: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 14 on the BS. Respondents were asked to tick (✓) items from the options that best expressed their minds. The scale used for scoring each of the items on actions and manners, used during the pre-test and post-test was the five points Likert Scale rated: Strongly Agreed (SA = 5 points), Agreed (A = 4), Undecided (U = 3), Disagreed (D = 2) and Strongly Disagreed (SD = 1 point).

Three experts were used to establish the validity of BS. This is to ensure that, the contents of the instrument are applicable and effective for use with the sample; these experts guided the researchers in making revision of the items for content validity. The items on the instrument were judged for the instrument's comprehensiveness, adequacy and relevance by the experts. The validity index of the instrument was generated to be 0.712. The two

research questions were answered using simple mean, frequencies, and percentages, while the two hypotheses were tested using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA).

Presentation of results

Research question one: What is the extent to which VET can improve actions of PWUB?

Table 1: Extent to which VET improves actions of PWUB

Extent	Experimental Group		Control Group	
	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Low	5(100)	0	5(100)	4(80.00)
Moderate	0	4(80.00)	0	1(20.00)
High	0	1(20.00)	0	0
TOTAL	5(100)	5(100)	5(100)	5(100)

Note: Percentages in parenthesis (%)

Table 1 shows the extent to which Vicarious Extinction Therapy (VET) can improve actions of Pupils with Undesirable Behaviours (PWUB). Before intervention, both PWUB in experimental and control groups had low scores. After intervention, PWUB in the experimental group had 80% moderate and 20% high marks, while the PWUB in control group had 80% low and 20% moderate scores. This implies that VET improves actions of PWUB to a moderate extent.

Ho1: There is no significant difference between the actions mean scores of PWUB in experimental and control groups after treatment.

Table 2: Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) of actions mean scores of PWUB in experimental and control groups before and after treatment

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	53.188 ^a	3	17.729	15.746	.000	.724
Intercept	664.006	1	664.006	589.742	.000	.970
GROUP	10.188	1	10.188	9.048	.008	.335
TEST	34.091	1	34.091	30.278	.000	.627
GROUP * TEST	12.273	1	12.273	10.900	.004	.377
Error	20.267	18	1.126			
Total	728.000	22				
Corrected Total	73.455	21				

R Squared = .724 (Adjusted R Squared = .678)

Table 2 shows the ANCOVA of actions mean scores of PWUB in experimental and control groups before and after treatment. PWUB in the experimental group had a pretest mean and standard deviation scores of 4.20 ± 0.84 , and a post-test mean scores of 8.20 ± 1.30 ; while PWUB in control group had a pretest mean and standard deviation scores of 4.33 ± 0.82 , and a post-test mean scores of 5.33 ± 1.21 . Groups results show $F_{1,18} = 9.05$ and a p-value of 0.008. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, therefore, the researchers reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. There is a significant difference between the actions mean scores of PWUB in experimental and control groups after treatment.

Research question two: To what extent can VET improve manners of PWUB?

Table 3: Extent to which VET improves manners of PWUB

Extent	Experimental Group		Control Group	
	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Low	5(100)	0	5(100)	4(80.00)
Moderate	0	4(80.00)	0	1(20.00)
High	0	1(20.00)	0	0
TOTAL	5(100)	5(100)	5(100)	5(100)

Note: Percentages in parenthesis (%)

Table 3 shows the extent to which VET can improve manners of PWUB. Before intervention, both PWUB in experimental and control groups had low scores. But after intervention, PWUB in the experimental group had 80% moderate and 20% high marks, while the PWUB in control group had 80% low and 20% moderate scores. This implies that VET improves manners of PWUB to a moderate extent.

Ho 2: There is no significant difference between the manners mean scores of PWUB in experimental and control groups after treatment.

Table 4: Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) of manners mean scores of PWUB in experimental and control groups before and after treatment

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	79.321 ^a	3	26.440	15.794	.000	.725
Intercept	692.388	1	692.388	413.595	.000	.958
GROUP	20.388	1	20.388	12.179	.003	.404
TEST	40.752	1	40.752	24.343	.000	.575
GROUP * TEST	23.297	1	23.297	13.916	.002	.436
Error	30.133	18	1.674			
Total	786.000	22				
Corrected Total	109.455	21				

R Squared = .725 (Adjusted R Squared = .679)

Table 4 shows the ANCOVA of manners mean scores of PWUB in experimental and control groups before and after treatment. PWUB in the experimental group had a pretest mean and standard deviation scores of 4.20 ± 0.84 , and a post-test mean scores of 9.00 ± 1.87 ; while PWUB in control group had a pretest mean and standard deviation scores of 4.33 ± 0.82 , and a post-test mean scores of 5.00 ± 1.41 . Groups results show $F_{1,18} = 12.18$ and a p-value of 0.003. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, therefore, the researchers reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. There is a significant difference between the manners mean scores of PWUB in experimental and control groups after treatment.

Discussion of the findings

This study was to investigate the effects of Vicarious Extinction Therapy (VET) on behaviours of Pupils with Undesirable Behaviours (PWUB). Findings from research question one summarized on table 1 show the extent to which VET improved actions of PWUB. Before intervention, both PWUB in experimental and control groups had low scores on actions as pre-test. But after intervention, majority of PWUB in the experimental group had moderate scores on actions, while the PWUB in control groups still had low scores on actions at post-test. Hypothesis one in table 2 shows the ANCOVA of actions mean scores of PWUB in experimental and control groups before and after treatment: the p-value was less than 0.05. Therefore, the researchers rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative hypothesis. This implies that VET improved actions of PWUB to a moderate extent. This finding is in agreement with Yakwal (2014) and Strydom (2008) which stated that VET can help change PWUB and are experiencing behavioural problems. As a counselling therapy programme, it improves the ugly actions, bad affect and ruthless behavioural problems PWUB are living with. All PWUB can have behaviour change, provided these pupils are taught through viable learning principles.

Research question two in table 3 shows the extent to which VET improved manners of PWUB. Before intervention, both PWUB in experimental and control groups had low scores on manners. But after intervention, majority of PWUB in the experimental group had moderate scores on manners. The PWUB in control group which had low manners still maintained low manners at post-test. Hypothesis two in table 4 shows the ANCOVA of manners mean scores of PWUB in experimental and control groups, before and after treatment. The p-value was less than 0.05, therefore, the researchers rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative hypothesis. There is a significant difference between the manners mean scores of PWUB in experimental and control groups before and after treatment. This implies that VET improved manners of PWUB to a moderate extent. This also agreed with the findings of Ekoja and Amail (2002) and Strydom (2008) which stressed that abnormal manners can be improved or changed to a certain extent, once there is a viable treatment. Human behaviour changes once the treatment is a stratified process and based on didactic principle.

Conclusion

From the investigations, interpretations and the results that followed from the research questions and hypotheses of this study, use of Vicarious Extinction Therapy (VET) changed the behaviours of Pupils with Undesirable Behaviours (PWUB) in Pankshin Local Government Area. VET was seen as treatment, psychoanalysis, and therapy programme for rehabilitating PWUB who had bad actions and poor manners. VET did change behaviours of PWUB.

Recommendations

Related professionals in the areas of social studies, psycho-social therapy and rehabilitation sciences should sponsor awareness programmes through televisions and radios on treatment strategies such as in VET to boost good behaviours amongst PWUB, and to largely educate parents, guardians, teachers and the general public on PWUB.

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