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## **EFFECT OF SELF-INSTRUCTION TECHNIQUE ON SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' LOW SELF-ESTEEM IN ORLU EDUCATION ZONE, IMO STATE**

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**ABSTRACT:** *Self-esteem is the basis for all motivated behaviour through interaction with the environment for students, especially those in the secondary schools. This study investigated the effect of self-instruction technique on secondary school students' low self-esteem in Orlu Education Zone, Imo state. The study is a quasi-experimental research which adopted a pre-test, post-test, control research design. One research question guided the study while one null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. A sample size of 110 SS 1 secondary school students were purposively sampled from two highest determined schools with students identified with low self-esteem. The instrument for data collection was Index of Self-esteem which was developed by Hudson in 1982 but revalidated and used in Nigeria by Onighaiye (1996). The data collected was analyzed using mean scores for the research question while ANCOVA was used in testing the null hypothesis. The mean score norm of 31.47 for students provided in the instrument's manual guided the decision. The findings of the study revealed among others that self-instruction technique was effective in enhancing the students' low self-esteem. Based on the findings and implications of the study, the researcher recommends that programmes on self-instruction technique and self-esteem enhancement designed by counselling psychologists and sponsored by non-governmental organizations and the government should be encouraged to enhance students' low self-esteem.*

**KEYWORDS:** self-instruction technique, secondary school students, low self-esteem

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Low self-esteem has awakened growing interest in psychological research in recent years. Indeed, there is a growing awareness that of all the perceptions experienced in the course of living, none seem to have more profound significance than the negative perceptions held regarding personal existence, concept of self and how the individual fits into the world. Low self-esteem is a problem to many people, especially secondary school students with much implication for their cognitive, affective and psychomotor domain. It has also posed a serious challenge to school counsellors and other stakeholders in education whose efforts in ameliorating the challenge through conventional approaches have not yielded the expected result. Self-esteem is the negative or positive attitude that individuals have of themselves. It is an assessment in which individuals express their acceptance or refusal for themselves, as this is an image that the individuals realizes themselves (Guillon, M, Crocq, M. A., & Bailey, P. E. , 2007). Self-esteem influences how people cope with negative, self-relevant feedback (such as failure in the classroom or interpersonal rejection). The term "self-esteem" is used to refer to a personality variable that captures the way people generally

feel about themselves. Low self-esteem is the self-pessimistic estimate of an individual. High self-esteem people believe they have many more positive qualities than do low self-esteem people, but even low self-esteem people think of themselves in generally negative terms.

The upbringing, experiences and maltreatments received at childhood tend to move students into becoming victims of low self-esteem. Events of this nature lead low self-esteem people to feel humiliated and ashamed of themselves and to believe that they are globally inadequate. Failure does not have this effect on high self-esteem people. High self-esteem people feel disappointed when they fail, and they may accept that failure means they lack a specific ability; however, they do not treat failure as a global indictment of their character, and failure does not make them feel humiliated and ashamed of themselves. Low self-esteem people adopt a self-protective orientation. In a variety of situations, they refrain from taking risks and pursue safe, but often less rewarding, options. High self-esteem people are oriented toward self-enhancement. They are willing to take risks, a factor that often leads to more positive outcomes. Low Self-esteem according to Weisten, Dunn and Harmer (2012) is defined as negative mental picture of oneself, or a collection of self perceptions. According to Pastorino and Portillo (2013), low self-esteem is seen as ones negative perception or image of one's abilities and ones uniqueness. From the above definitions, this implies that one's negative view of self would likely influence his or her abilities and the totality of his wellbeing. However, in the context of this study, low self-esteem is perceived as the negative perception an individual have of his or her self about the strength, weakness, value, belief and attitude derived from environment or social interaction.

The secondary school age is a stressful and critical transitional stage, from childhood to adulthood which ranges between ages 11 and 25 years (Meyer, Schwartz, & Frost, 2008) It is equally regarded as a total change in quantity and quality of the child's development (Eissa, 2010; Schmied & Tully, 2009; Wan, 2012). The way students think, feel, believe, value themselves as well as how they respond to one another, affects their self-esteem and learning outcome in the secondary school. In the same vein, Makinde and Akinteye (2014) asserts that due to rapid physiological changes in the secondary school students, particularly when they are unable to transit successfully, they tend to manifest some unhelpful psychological, emotional and behavioural tendencies which tend to becloud their self-esteem. Socially, students with low self-esteem can be withdrawn or shy, and find it difficult to have fun. Although they may have a wide circle of friends, still they are more likely to yield to group pressure and more vulnerable to being bullied. At school they avoid trying new things for fear of failure and will give up easily (McLeod, 2012). This in turn makes social interaction with others difficult as they feel awkward, shy, conspicuous, and unable to adequately express themselves when interacting with others. Low self-esteem can leave a student feeling insecure and unmotivated. Such students often interpret non critical comments as critical.

Self-instruction technique is an approach that has proved to be effective interventions in modifying maladaptive behaviours and is likely to be effective on students with low self-esteem. Establishing the effectiveness of the techniques will provide guidance counsellors with the best approach to handling low self-esteem among secondary school students in Orlu Education Zone in Imo State and beyond, hence this study, self-instruction technique is a cognitive-behavioural technique which aims to give clients control over their behaviour through guided self-talk. In this technique, by using "self-talk" or stating the instruction out loud, responsibility for the instruction

moves from the facilitator to the student. Self-instruction technique according to Anyichie and Onyedike (2012) is a cognitive and metacognitive learning/ instructional strategy and students generally lack metacognitive or self-regulation strategies that will help successful students understand, analyze, solve and evaluate problems. In line with the above definition, Goldstein, Levin and Goldman (2009), concurs that self-Instruction technique is a cognitive technique that uses self-talk to give clients control over their behaviour, these self-talks according to them gradually become covert and self-generated. From the above definitions, this implies that the technique of self-instruction involves a process of learning by self-regulation strategy and is anchored on the fact that human feelings, thoughts and beliefs influence the way individuals manipulate and handle certain things in real life situation. However, in the context of this study, self-instruction technique is a cognitive-behavioural approach that has the ability to make an individual discover his/her learning gaps, adjust, regulate, cognitively plan, organize, pilot, reinforce, and evaluate oneself own independent learning without a teacher's prompting.

Self-instruction technique is helpful where there are initial cognitive deficits. For example, problem solving or verbal mediation contribute to the difficulty. Self-instruction technique is based on the Studies conducted by Zimmerman and Schunk (2011) on the use of self-instruction strategy to transform learners' mental abilities. They revealed that self-instruction technique involves self-regulation, which is necessary for students to be motivated and actively participate in their own learning process. This transforms the learners' mental abilities. Many scholars (example, Ley, 2010; Mkpa, 2009) have provided evidence that self-instruction technique can enhance performance of distractible students directly in the context of an academic task. They had the support that self-instruction technique is effective in teaching and learning and that it is an easy procedure to develop, learn, and use. Ikwumelu and Oyibe (2011) advocate the application of self-instruction technique in teaching and learning. This is based on its efficacy in managing behavioural problems as suggested by Nwankwo, Obi, Anike and Aboh (2013), Walchelka and Katz (2009). On his own part, Borich (2011) opines that self-instruction technique is the method used in teaching and learning situations which involves getting students to unleash their imaginative and intuitive capacities through learning. Furthermore, self-instruction technique can be practiced inside and outside of a classroom or training room.

The goal of self-instruction technique is to support a person to independently complete a task. It is an un-obtrusive self-management tool. Since actions are not always under the control of verbal behaviour, self-instruction technique may require some initial training. It has some advantages to traditional instruction because it focuses upon giving the student responsibility for instruction rather than relying upon a teacher or facilitator. It also involves a person telling him or herself to do something and then doing it. To the best of the researcher's knowledge self-instruction technique have not been applied as packages to improve self-esteem among secondary school male and female students in this study's geographical setting by other researchers but have been found to be effective. It is on this note that this present study deemed it necessary to fill the existing gap by embarking on self-instruction technique as treatment models in enhancing secondary school students' low self-esteem in Orlu Education Zone, Imo State.

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**Statement of the Problem**

Secondary school students are expected to imbibe skills for goal accomplishment and problem solving. On the contrary, most students with low self-esteem in Imo state have inferior perception of themselves. They lack self-confidence, concentration, positive achievement in classroom, stable emotion and acceptable behaviour in social situations. The unfortunate treatments the students with low self-esteem face daily have been known to affect the way others perceive and relate with them, increase their emotional inability, and give them the feeling of guilt, shame and the tendency to make them feel withdrawn from the society. Consequently, the student with low self-esteem could have negative self- image, perceiving his/her self as failure, never do-well or non-achiever. Thus, this may become a very big impediment to good peer relations or interpersonal relation, thereby slowing down their wholesome development in general. Teachers have hitherto been saddled with too much of pedagogy at the expense of psychotherapy. Apart from this, the school administrators lack the essential tools for handling psychotherapeutic problems in schools so they rely on punishments in form of caning, cutting of grass, washing of toilets, suspension, referral and expulsion to no avail. The parents have equally tried screaming over their children's heads, starving them of love and food without much effect but have rather led to dropping out of school to roam the streets, run away from homes to tout in motor parks engaging in kidnapping and in arm-robbery. The school counsellors have also been grappling with referral cases of student misbehaviours due to clouded self-esteem through different behaviour modification techniques like reinforcement; conventional counselling, conversation skills; play interaction skills, interview skills yet the situation still remain unabated.

Literature have revealed abundant evidence of the effectiveness and positive outcomes of some behavioural techniques like self-instruction techniques in reducing maladaptive behaviour and developing acceptable behaviours such as self-esteem, conflict resolution, realistic goal-setting, self-determination, stress management, (Aremu, Adeyemi & Oke, 2016; Vatankhah, Daryabari, Ghadami & Naderifar, 2013). It becomes very imperative for the researcher as a school guidance counsellor to involve scientifically tested behavioural and cognitive strategies to modify deficiency in behaviour as may be associated with low self-esteem. Wholesome development of this population is as germane as the need to help them become happy and develop positive self-esteem to enhance interpersonal encounters and effective learning. It is against this background that this study explored the effect self-instruction techniques to enhance secondary school students' low self-esteem in Orlu Education Zone, Imo State.

**Purpose of the Study**

This study investigated the effects of self-instruction technique on secondary school students' low self-esteem in Orlu Education Zone, Imo State. It specifically determined the difference in the pretest posttest mean score of low self-esteem secondary school students exposed to self-instruction technique and that of those exposed to conventional counselling.

**Research Questions**

The following research question was formulated to guide this study:

What is the difference in the pretest, post-test mean scores of low self-esteem of students exposed to self-instruction technique and that of those exposed to conventional counselling?

### Research Hypothesis

To actualize the main objective of the study, the following null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significant:

There is no significant difference in the effect of self-instruction technique on low self-esteem secondary school students when compared to those in conventional counselling.

### Research Design

The researcher adopted a non-randomized pre-test, post-test, control group quasi experimental research design. This was because the study estimated the causal impact of the training on the target population. This quasi experimental research was conducted in a school setting where it was not possible to use pure experimental design which was considered a disruption of school activities.

**Table 1: Non Randomized Pre-test - Post-test - Control Group Design**

Group	Pre-test	research condition	Post-test
Experimental (1)	O1	X1(Treatment)	O2
Control (2)	O1	X (Conventional counselling)	O2
Where O1 stands for pretest that was given to the students			
X 1 - stands for training given to the experimental group			
X - stands for the conventional or normal counselling had with the control group			

### Sample and Sampling Technique

The researcher adopted purposive sampling technique to select participants for the study. The participants were 110 SS 1 secondary school students in Orlu education zone of Imo state. Their ages ranged between 12 and 14 with a mean age of 13.

### Instrumentation

Index of Self-Esteem (ISE) of Walter W. Hudson (1982) and re-standardized for Nigerian use by Onighaiye (1996) was adopted for the study. The test is a 25-item self report instrument designed on a five scale-point scale to measure the degree, severity or magnitude of problems with self-esteem. The instrument has thirteen directly worded statements while twelve items were reversely worded. According to Onighaiye (1996), the bench mark norms for the scale are 30.89 for male and 32.04 for female are considered to imply that the student has low self-esteem.

### Validation of the Instrument

The instrument (Index of Self-Esteem) (ISE) is an adopted instrument which has already been standardized. It is developed by Walter W. Hudson (1982) and revalidated by Onighaiye (1996) for Nigerian use. This current researcher therefore adopted the Index of Self-Esteem (ISE) and did not have need to do any further validation. It had reliability co-efficient value of 0.92).

### Procedure for Data Collection

The researcher collected data on the study by administering the questionnaire personally. The researcher ensured that the participants did not have influence over one another in responding to questionnaire by approaching them separately. Moreover, the researcher explained verbally the main purpose of the test to the participants assuring them of confidentiality. Questions were entertained before they started reacting to the test. The researcher was available for further clarification during the process of responding to the test.

### Data Analysis

Mean score was used to analyse the research question while Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was employed to test the null hypothesis raised in the study.

**Table 4. Pre-test and Post-test Low Self-esteem Mean scores of Students who received Self-instruction Technique and those in the Control Group**

Source of variation	N	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Lost Mean	Remark
Self-instruction Effective	34	41.77	30.19		11.58
Control	68	42.74	38.71		4.03
Norm		31.47			

Table 4 reveals that the students exposed to self-instruction technique had pre-test mean score of 41.77 and post-test score of 30.19 with lost mean of 11.58 in their low self-esteem, while their counterparts in the control group who received conventional counselling had pre-test mean score of 42.74 and post-test score of 38.71 with lost mean of 4.03. With post-test mean score of 30.19 for students which is below the norm of 31.47, self-instruction technique is effective in enhancing secondary school students' low self-esteem.

### Null Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean low self-esteem scores of secondary school students exposed to self-instruction technique and those that received conventional counselling.

**Table 9: ANCOVA summary of the Low Self-esteem Scores of Secondary School Students Exposed to Self-Instruction Technique and those in Control Group**

Source of variation	SS	df	MS	Cal. F	P value	$P \leq 0.05$
Corrected Model	2308.270 <sup>a</sup>	2	1154.135			
Intercept	654.563	1	654.563			
Pre_test	945.805	1	945.805			
Treatment model	1223.924	1	1223.924	24.55	.000	S
Error	3639.730	73	37.752			
Total	93804.000102	76	49.859			
Corrected Total	5948.000	75				

In table 9, it was observed that at 0.05 level of significance, 1 df numerator and 75 denominator, the calculated F is 24.55 with P value of .000 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. So, the effect the effect of the self-instruction technique on the secondary school students' low self-esteem is significant.

### **Hypothesis 2**

There is no significant difference in the mean low self-esteem scores of male and female secondary school students exposed to self-instruction technique.

**Table 12: ANCOVA summary of the Low Self-esteem Scores of Male and Female Secondary School Students Exposed to Self-Instruction Technique and Those That Received Conventional Counselling**

Source of variation	SS	df	MS	Cal. F	P value	P ≤ 0.05
Corrected Model	119.371 <sup>a</sup>	2	59.685			
Intercept	745.216	1	745.216			
Pre-test	106.922	1	106.922			
Treatment model	31.070	1	31.070	1.861	.180	S
Error	651.106	39	8.440			
Total	39052.0007	42	16.695			
Corrected Total	770.476	41				

In table 12, it was observed that at 0.05 level of significance, 1 df numerator and 67 denominator, the calculated F is 1.861 with P value of .180 which is lesser than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. There is a significant difference in the effect of the self-instruction technique on the low self-esteem of male and female secondary school students.

## **DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS**

The discussion of the results is presented under the following major headings: Effect of self-instruction technique in enhancing the low self-esteem of secondary school students.

### **The Effect of Self-Instruction Technique in Enhancing the Low Self-esteem of Secondary School Students**

The results showed existence of statistical significant differences at the level ( $\alpha \geq 0.05$ ), in performance between the experimental and control groups. This shows that students exposed to self-instruction technique had higher post-test mean self-esteem score and greater mean gain score than students that received conventional counselling. Self-instruction technique is very effective in enhancing the self-esteem of secondary students because of its peculiarity at modifying behaviour and rendering cognitive restructuring. This technique involves guided self-talk, self-monitoring and thought stopping of the student's mindset or schema through information inculcated. It comprises of numerous therapeutic elements within one therapy intervention whereby the clients receive information that gear them to understand and monitor their behaviours

or attributes that precipitates their distress before, during and after carrying out daily activities. Through self-instruction technique, the students were able to recognize the consequences of their low self-esteem towards daily life challenges and the need for mind repositioning.

The result of the finding is in line with Adani, Eskay and Onu (2012) which indicated that self-instruction technique was effective in improving the achievement in algebra of students with learning difficulty in mathematics. Ley (2010) also corroborated that proper application of self-instruction method in teaching and learning encourages skills acquisition and development of values. On his own part, Borich (2011) revealed that self-instruction technique is an effective method used in teaching and learning situations which involves getting students to unleash their imaginative and intuitive capacities through learning. The result of the finding also agrees with Wild and Duinn (2008), who carried out a study on the effects of corporative competitive and individual use of self-instruction technique on learner's achievements in library skills. In the study, a self-instructional mode is combined with cooperative, competitive and individualized technique in the teaching of library skills. The researchers therefore concluded that students should be taught how to adopt library skills using self-instruction techniques. The result showed that self-instruction technique can be applied in a group counselling setting in carrying out daily life challenges, which library skills is inclusive.

Furthermore, the result corresponds with (Mkpa, 2009 and Borich, 2011) who were in support that self-instruction technique was effective in teaching and learning. Self-instruction technique is effective because it is a cognitive behavioural treatment, involving self-regulation of behaviour by means of restructuring, recognizing the importance of cognitive processes and maintenance of psychological problems and their remedy. The result is in line with Wachella and Katz (2009), who examined the effectiveness of self-instruction technique for reducing test anxiety and improving academic self-esteem in a high school and college students with disabilities. The result showed significant improvement in the treated people. The result also confirms the study of Halderman, Alipourb, Majidi and Maleki (2012) on the effectiveness of self-instruction technique on improvement of reading performance and reduction of anxiety in primary school pupils with Dyslexia. The result showed that self-instruction technique has significant effect on improvement of reading performance and on reduction of anxiety symptoms in pupils. At the end of five months, a follow up tests given, showed the effect was retained. The researchers therefore conclude that self-instruction technique is effective in the reduction of anxiety among primary school pupils with Dyslexia. From the numerous literatures, it is clearly proven that self-instruction technique aims to give clients control over their behaviour through guided self-talk that gradually becomes self-generated.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

From the results of the findings, evidence abounds that low self-esteem can be enhanced effectively among secondary school students using appropriate intervention tool like self-instruction technique. This would guide students' thinking and actions, making them depend solely on themselves as they develop problem solving skills to accomplish set goal without the teacher's prompting. Therefore, the researcher recommends that programmes of self-instruction technique



could be designed by counselling psychologists and secondary school board funded by the government to enhance students' low self-esteem. Perhaps, it is on the basis of this that Daodu, Adedotun & Elegbede (2016) and advocated that students' with maladaptive behaviours need training in self-instruction technique to have proper adjustment. In conclusion, the study specifically concludes that self-instruction technique was effectively used to enhance students' low self-esteem.

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