



**International Journal of Biology, Pharmacy
and Allied Sciences (IJBPAS)**

'A Bridge Between Laboratory and Reader'

www.ijbpas.com

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MORAL INTELLIGENCE ON COMMUNICATION
INHIBITION AND SELF-EFFICACY AMONG PRE-UNIVERSITY COURSE
STUDENTS**

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ABSTRACT

This research is conducted with the purpose of studying the effect of teaching moral intelligence on relationship inhibition and self-efficiency among female students of pre-university course in region 4 of Tehran in academic year of 2013-14. The research method was semi-experimental method (pre-test and post-test) with control group and cluster sampling was applied, and 60 people were selected as sample size in control group and experiment group (30 people in each group). In order to collect data, two scales were used: Cheek and Buss shyness scale (2001), and Sherer et al. self-efficacy scale (1982). The data gathered from the questionnaires were analyzed by regression method using SPSS software. The results indicated that teaching moral intelligence will reduce relationship inhibition and increase the self-efficacy in students.

Keywords: Moral intelligence- relationship inhibition- self-efficacy

INTRODUCTION

In scientific texts, intelligence is defined as a comprehensive and global concept which is related to perception ability. In its general meaning, intelligence is perceived as the

ability of thinking, learning and the capacity of compatibility with new situation which has different rational, emotional, spiritual and moral aspects. Today, moral intelligence is in the center of researchers' attention due to its wide and vital effect on various arenas (Borba, 2012). [1] It has been revealed that some of adolescents are under serious threat because they have never acquired moral intelligence. Such individuals suffer from some kind of spiritual retardation due to sense of conscience, weakness in controlling their desires, the prevalence of moral sensitivity, and having been misled in choosing their beliefs (Lennick, 2007). [2] Moral intelligence indicates that moral principles are not hereditary, but people acquire how to be good. Moral intelligence acts as a guide for human's deeds and contributes to behave intelligently (Thornhauer, 2009). [3] Many human's behaviors and actions have their roots in moral principles and values and are derived by them. Moral intelligence has a positive relationship with individuals' behaviors and generates a system composed of principles and rules which guide people in deciding what is wrong and what is right. Individuals with high rate of moral intelligence always connect their deeds with moral principles,

which in turn results in increasing their responsibility and commitment and improving their personal and social efficiency. considering moral principles brings significant outcomes such as the ability to recognize others' pain and suffering, the capability of controlling one's cruelty and temptations, delaying the gratification, listening to other people's problems in an impartial manner before making any judgment, accepting the differences and realizing various values, rejecting all immoral options, being sympathetic, opposing injustice, understanding other people and respect them (Muhammadi, 2012). [4] Generally, moral intelligence suggests that we have to consider the moral-based values and learn how to solve the social problems which are led by intelligent scientific principles. Any of these moral values express a mutual and positive effect in the form of useful social interaction or exchange (Mokhtari pour, 2009). [5] Human being is inherently social and need to communicate with others. Many of human's needs and talents can only be fulfilled and bloomed via inter-personal and social relationship. In fact, self-awareness, making effective and mutual relationship with other individuals, accepting social responsibility,

and achieving economic efficacy are the fundamental aims of all educational systems. In contemporary complicated world, which is known as the age of communication and the necessity of scientific collaboration and dominating different branches of superior science and technology, the shyness is undoubtedly considered as a social impairment (Afrooz, 2010). [6] In any society, a considerable part of children, adolescents and adults unintentionally imprison themselves in shyness. Therefore, their real personality and valuable capabilities will be unrecognized. There are numerous intelligent and creative pupils and students which obtain lower scores in their courses only due to their shyness, because shyness is a barrier to growing personal capabilities and creativities. Such psychological complication may seriously affect and alter the internal needs, desires, motivation, capabilities, opportunities, professional and social aims and programs (Afrooz, 2010) (same reference). The course of social transformations indicated that shyness problems typically is intensified over time and due to the complicatedness of interpersonal relationships, competitiveness, individualism and cover a higher percentage of youth and adults, unless it can be

prevented by recognizing it and using educational methods and proper treatment techniques (Belohlavek, 2007). [7] Thus, one of the most important aspects is social education. Family, school and community should provide the necessary context in order to contribute to the individuals' social development so that the person makes a proper reaction when facing future problems and finds the capability of solving his/her and others' problems. Therefore, shyness and loneliness is considered as the most important subject in psychological health (Afrooz, 2010) (same reference). It has been stated that many of human's behaviors are stimulated and controlled with self-influence strategies and among these strategies, the belief in one's self-efficacy is the most effective one (Bandura, 1986). [8] If one believes that he/she is not able to achieve the desired results or obtains the idea that he/she cannot hinder unacceptable behaviors, his/her motivation for doing that deed will significantly diminish, making him/her unable to do it. Self-efficacy beliefs are seen as the foundation of human activity (Golchin, 2012). [9] The feeling of self-efficacy is related to one's beliefs in his/her competency in performing special actions and derived from various sources such as one's successes

and failures, witnessing the successes or failures of similar people, or being encouraged by others' statements (Bandura, 2001). (ibid) Observing the success of the ones which the child considers them similar to himself, augments the observer's motivation and self-efficacy and makes them believe they also can enjoy successful performance. Conversely, observing the failure of the ones who are similar to the child will make them believe he/she is not capable to perform and discourages them. This issue specially affects the students which are not confident in their performance. The influence of friends is also highlighted via friend network or the large group of peers and friends with which the student communicates (Abed, 2012) [10]. The development of self-efficacy occurs due to the experience of passing through the adolescence stage, although each stage of life has its own crises and problems and adolescence is not an exception, as it is named as a period full of anxiety and sociological and psychological confusion. The experience of transition period of adolescence include conforming to tensions and desires, puberty-based challenges, sexual changes and the excitement for having someone as a life partner, selecting the

university and choosing a job. In each situation which requires compatibility, the adolescents should acquire new capabilities and skills and develop their new evaluations of their abilities (Abed, 2012) (same reference). Efficient people are the ones who are more successful in the process of socializing, while inefficiency intensifies and augments the social isolation (Asghari, 2007) [11]. Thus, it can be concluded that shyness can play a significant role in individuals' self-efficacy, while it may be effective in diminishing this trait. Considering the aforementioned items, this research aims to study the "effectiveness of teaching moral intelligence on communication inhibition and self-efficacy of students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mahdi Najafian (2013) [12] in M.A dissertation with the title "evaluating the relationship between moral intelligence and employees' occupational involvement in Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman" concluded that:

- The moral intelligence of the majority of employees is high.
- The occupational involvement of most employees is low.
- There is not a relationship between these two variables, so the occupational

involvement does not increase by augmenting the employees' moral intelligence, indicating a weak relationship between the two variables.

Bahrami et al. (2013) [13] discussed the "level of moral intelligence among the staff of University of Medical Sciences in Yazd" and reported their level of moral intelligence as desired. The desired level of moral intelligence of scientific board and staff can lead to the effective role of university in students' moral developments. Meanwhile, it is possible to promote the current situation via methods such as moral-based encouragement.

Chang et al. (2012) [14] studied "the role of intelligence and self-efficacy in academic progress of students in first year of high school". The findings of simultaneous multiple regression analysis showed that intelligence has the most significant share in predicting academic progress ($\beta=0.51$) and self-efficacy ($\beta=0.16$) and meta-cognition ($\beta=0.19$) are in the next ranks. Also, only two components of meta-cognition have a significant effect on predicting academic progress: situational knowledge ($\beta=0.19$) and information management strategy ($\beta=0.23$).

Sanjari et al. (2012) [15] examined "the relationship between spiritual intelligence

and self-efficacy of Ministry of Education staff". The findings revealed that correlation rate between two variable of spiritual intelligence and self-efficacy is 0.08 and there is a positive relationship between spiritual intelligence and self-efficacy. Among the spiritual intelligence aspects, high awareness (0.78) has had the highest rate of correlation with self-efficacy variable. Moreover, the research findings indicated that both variable can be developed and promoted and organization can significantly affect the increase of spiritual intelligence and self-efficacy of staff.

Buss (2010) [16] studied "the relationship between shyness and the loneliness of elementary school students" and revealed that shyness is one of important personal traits that lead to loneliness. Research works discovered a positive relationship between shyness and loneliness.

In a research conducted by Smith (2012) [17] with the subject of "The Effects of Self-Efficacy and Spirituality on the Job Satisfaction and Motivation to Lead Among Redeploying Soldiers as Moderated by Transformational Leadership" showed a positive relationship between spirituality and self-efficacy.

In their research on “shyness and sociability”, Cheek and Buss (2006) [18] revealed that shyness is not the same as “low sociability”; but most people see the sociability as an advantage in comparison with loneliness. Cheek and Buss consider the shyness as the self-awareness of tension before other people, and one of its most important symptoms is mental anxiety and avoidance from social behavior.

RESEARCH METHOD

The present research is an applied research and its method is semi-experimental (pre-test and post-test) with control group. Considering the type of data, this research is a quantitative one and the data collection method is field method. Teaching moral intelligence is studied as independent variable and communication inhibition and self-efficacy are examined as dependent variables. The research sample is all female students of pre-university course in region 4 of Tehran in academic year of 2013-14. In this research, 60 people were selected as sample size in control group and experiment group (30 people in each group).

Research tool

A) Shyness questionnaire

The tool applied for evaluating communication inhibition was a 20-item

questionnaire of Cheek and Buss shyness scale (2001) and the respondent reports his/her shyness rate with responding all of questions accordant with respondent's current situation on a 5-degree on Likert scale. Number 1 means “completely agreed” and number 5 represents “completely disagreed” and scoring the questions 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, and 19 is done conversely. In this scale, the score of each testable item is placed in the range of 20 to 100. The researches demonstrate that the aforementioned scale is of high internal consistency in terms of reliability. Also, Cronbach Alpha coefficient for the scale is reported to be 0.94 by Melichior & Cheek (1990) and 0.92 by Cheek & Krasnoperova (1999, quoted by Crozier, 2005). In order to use this scale within Iranian culture, Chaari (2007) used the statistical method of exploratory factor analysis to study the construct validity. To examine the validity, Cronbach Alpha method was applied and the calculated coefficient was 0.89. The index value of KMO is 0.90 (Chaari, 2007).

B) self-efficacy questionnaire

Self-efficacy questionnaire applied in the present research by Sherer et al. (1982) is created with the following objectives:

- A) Providing a tool for next research works
- B) Providing a tool for determining the different levels of individuals' self-efficacy

The main version of the test included 36 items. Based on conducted analyses, the items which had 40% share in each of social and public factors were eliminated and only 13 items which had not this feature were removed, so the test items were reduced to 23. 17 items of these 23 items require public self-efficacy.

- C) Osborn moral intelligence teaching program
- Teaching sessions of moral intelligence components in pre-university course in two high schools of region 4 were held in 10 one-hour sessions.

Statistical analysis method

In order to analyze the research data, descriptive statistic methods such as average, standard deviation for describing central indices and inferential statistic method of covariance analysis.

Research hypotheses

- Teaching moral intelligence is effective on reducing pre-university students' communication inhibition.
- Teaching moral intelligence is effective on increasing pre-university students' self-efficacy.

Testing the hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: teaching moral intelligence is effective on reducing pre-university students' communication inhibition.

Table 1: covariance analysis- communication inhibition

Covariance analysis		Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Average of squares	F	Significance rate	ATA coefficient
Communication inhibition	Experimental conditions	2216.62	1	2216.62	23.11	0.000	28%
	Error	5465.12	57	95.87			

The training program was effective on reducing the communication inhibition with confidence level of 99.99% and the training predicts 28% of variance changes in post-test scores.

Hypothesis 2: teaching moral intelligence is effective on increasing pre-university students' self-efficacy.

Covariance analysis		Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Average of squares	F	Significance rate	ATA coefficient
Self-efficacy	Experimental conditions	1053.96	1	1053.96	24.78	0.000	30%
	Error	2423.46	57	42.51			

The training program was effective on increasing the self-efficacy with confidence level of 99.99% and the training predicts 30% of variance changes in post-test scores.

DISCUSSION

Main hypothesis 1: teaching moral intelligence is effective on reducing pre-university students' communication inhibition.

We concluded that training program has been effective on reducing communication inhibition with confidence level of 99.99% and training predicts 28% of variance changes in post-test scores.

In the present research, this question was under study: "is teaching moral intelligence effective on reducing communication inhibition among pre-university students"? The results demonstrate the effectiveness of this method in reducing the signs of shyness and social isolation in students. So, the research hypothesis (efficiency of moral intelligence in reducing shyness signs) was confirmed which is consistent with the findings of Montazer-e Gheib's research (2009). One of the methods which can contribute to reducing the signs of shyness and social isolation and diminish its negative effect of individuals' lives is teaching moral intelligence. The fundamental theoretical approach of this research is cognitive-behavioral approach. The primary objective of teaching cognitive-behavioral moral intelligence is to identify and change the inconsistent thoughts with individual's

emotional behavior. According to this approach, cognition has a distinctive role in the stresses experienced by people. The concept of cognition in this approach is applied in three meanings: cognitive events, cognitive processes and cognitive structures. "Cognitive events" are applied to the mental images and certain thoughts which are described by a type of internal conversation emerged via disruption of individual's behavior automatic quality. This internal conversation combines one's expectations and evaluations from himself/herself or inconsistent mental images or thoughts (Marnatt, 2010). These conversations are out of individual's control and its uncontrollable trait emerges more significantly in stressful and disturbing situation, increasing its adverse effect. In spite of this, the therapist can help the patient become aware of his/her mental processes and transform them. Cognitive process is the second aspect of application of cognition concept. This process which is of high importance in this subject is self-confirmation bias or "pygmalion process". Based on this approach, individuals search for certain information in the environment with the aid of their previous assumptions, and confirm their assumptions using this information and

behave based on these confirmed assumptions and also affect others' behavior toward themselves (Borba, 2012). (same reference) The third aspect of cognition is cognitive structures which deal with implicative beliefs, commitments and assumptions which an individual typically interprets the environment based on them (Borba, 2012) (same reference). As these researches demonstrate and many theorists focus on the matter, each of the aforementioned cognitive aspects affects person's behavior in some way. Based on cognitive-behavioral approaches for changing behavior and eliminating the negative effects of damaged cognitions on person, they should be modified and corrected. Mikenbaum (quoted by Baggerly and Parker, 2008) believes that it is possible to help people control their behaviors using internal conversations. According to the aforementioned, we tried to reduce the signs of communication inhibition among students with the use of teaching moral intelligence, and analyzing the obtained data proves the effectiveness of this method. In clarifying the findings, it can be stated that shyness and communication inhibition have its roots in anxiety, and these students have not acquired friendship and communication skills or make

improper communications with their peers. That is why their communication is not positively responded and they may be rejected by their peers or classmates, so they may grow doubts on their communication skills and prefer seclusion to proper communication, since they underestimate their communication abilities. Baggerly & Park (2005) stated that teachings such as moral intelligence are effective on expressing the feelings, respect, accepting oneself and others and improving social skills, self-esteem, overcoming shyness and isolation, depression and anxiety.

Main hypothesis 2: teaching moral intelligence is effective on increasing pre-university students' self-efficacy.

We concluded that training program has been effective on increasing self-efficacy with confidence level of 99.99% and training predicts 30% of variance changes in post-test scores.

In the present research, we studied that whether the moral intelligence training is effective on increasing pre-university students' self-efficacy. The findings of the research revealed that the mentioned method is effective on enhancing students' self-efficacy. So, the research hypothesis was confirmed and it is consistent with the

findings of Chang et al. (2012) (same reference), Sanjari et al. (2012) and Sirjani (2007). One of the methods which can enhance students' self-efficacy and results in reducing the negative effects on individuals' lives is teaching moral intelligence. There are some applied principles in the practical principles of moral intelligence which can guide moral intelligence and attract one's attention to moral values, resulting in increasing the individual's self-efficacy. These practical principles are dynamic and involve people in mutual, complicated and changeable social relationships such as a) minimizing the hazards b) problem solving (i.e. analyzing the problems thoroughly) c) conscious selection (the ability of recognition discernment and developing the capability of judgment). d) Finding a level of conventional goodness which affects other people (neither having extremely good behavior which may be abused by others, nor doing wrong and mischievous deeds) and e) acting, observing and improving (considering that moral intelligence is acquirable and it should be reflected in one's behavior. Also, one should observe the positive points of others to help improve his/her moral intelligence level) (Borba, 2005). (same reference) Moreover, it can be stated that when a student attributes

his/her success to his/her perseverance and compatibility, expects himself/herself to act equally perfect in future situations, since teaching moral intelligence can be effective in one's performance on future responsibilities. So, people realize that their fate is in their own control and they are the real engineer of their behavioral models. Thus, they will attention to the teachings and instructions, determine their purposes for having a better destination and develop the feeling of self-efficacy to achieve their goals. The focal point is that the learner's success in achieving his/her goals and realizing successful experiences create the feelings of competency and capability in him/her and strengthen the personal self-efficacy (Reynolds, 2003).

Suggestions

- 1) It is suggested that a similar research be conducted in various academic grades on male students.
- 2) Considering the limitation of research works on the effectiveness of teaching moral intelligence in communication inhibition and self-efficacy of students, it is suggested that the research works be developed on the matter.

- 3) Considering the need of youth and adolescents, it is suggested that the respective authorities including Ministry of Education and Organization of Radio and Television and other effective institutions focus on training and improving moral intelligence in order to promote the recognition and awareness of young generation on this subject.
- 4) In order to promote the self-efficacy and reduce communication inhibition of students, it is suggested that all schools be trained by experts to develop the pertinent useful skills.
- 5) It is suggested that training leaflets be provided to explain the valuable effect of teachings on students in order to inform the society on the significance of the matter.

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