



The effect of training communicative skills on 15-20 year-old deaf and partially deaf teen-ager's assertiveness

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ABSTRACT

Since assertiveness and communicative skills and their effects on a teen-ager's everyday life is of importance, a detailed study of the concepts can be useful in educating children with hearing impairments. This study aims to find out the effect of training communicative skills on deaf and partially deaf teen-agers' assertiveness. the method is pre-test, post test with a control group. the subjects are 65 female deaf and partially deaf students in Amol city 2012-2013 with ages ranging 15-20. From the subjects, 30 were randomly selected and divided into two groups i.e. experimental and control groups with 15 subjects in each. Alberti and Emmons assertiveness test was used to collect data. The experimental group underwent communicative skill training for 6 sessions; each taking on hour in one and a half month, held once a week. The results showed that the training had a positive (at: $P=0.000$ level) on the student' assertiveness.

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Introduction

Because of importance of hearing, the effects of the impairments are evident on the deaf 's every day lives. However, despite of the mental effect of the impairments, they have been given less care that sight impairments; something that can be observed in people's behaviors, as they try to help the blind but they do not have a good communication with the deaf and sometimes even mock at them [1].

Any hearing impairment will surely limit the person's intellectual abilities, and as a result, their social interactions leading to limitations in their social growth. Deafness and hearing impairments have special mental, emotional, cognitive and social consequences whose knowledge can let teachers help the students [2].

Deaf students always face problems growing social skills, many of which need an efficient correlation with hearing peers. Deaf children have less verbal chances, so they obtain less complete spectrum of practical skills needing successful communications. Hearing impairments influences language and communication growth, and can dramatically change the obtain of social skills [3].

Trife suggests that people with impairments in sight and hearing, show disorders in social and communicative skills which limit their correlations [4].

Eron's study shows that many children with hearing impairments who have social relation problems or are not accepted by their peers are faced by behavioral, emotional and academic disorders [5].

A part from whether deaf or non-deaf children have deaf or non-deaf families, all experience similar lives, they try to find their way through a larger community. They probably face shameful failures, and misunderstandings [6].

People born deaf, whether they communicate verbally or use a sign language, they experience more discrimination and misunderstanding. These factors lead to more significant

problems in the deaf. This misconception has consequences in communicating with others [7].

Statistics show that most people with hearing impairments do not have the chance to study in a university and are not hired and mostly have unprofessional or less professional jobs. All these problems can influence the deaf 's lives and limit their efficient presence in the society [8].

The deaf 's safe academic opportunities, an their average education degree is lower than those of a hearing person, and this necessary for a patient to get care and information services. Moreover, lack of information deeply influences a person's assertiveness and initiative [9].

One problem that many people face is lock of frankness. Some people are consciously or unconsciously stuck in formalities, offerings and hypocrisy and are away from the truthfulness [10]. Assertiveness means respecting one's needs and interests [11].

Assertiveness reflects a person's true feelings, insist on one's lawful right and rejection of illogical requests [12].

Assertiveness is an important social skill which plays a unique role in education. There are many successes in school in which little or too much assertiveness creates a lot of problems for students or teachers. In the frame of social skill structure, assertiveness is defined as an interpersonal behavior that lets people defend their rights and lead their feelings with no covers [13].

Assertiveness includes various human features such as behavior, cognition and emotions. Behaviorally, assertive people are capable to express themselves, defend their goals, and build up suitable interpersonal relations, while cognitively, assertive people can properly manage both positive and negative feelings. People assert positively, can express themselves obtain their goals and experience happiness and comfort in their every day lives. However, unassertive people are stressed out in interpersonal correlations and fail in obtaining their logical goals [12].

Generally, it looks like that a society whose members have desirable social skills and having the skills, assert themselves, express themselves frankly and observing other people's rights, try to obtain their own rights, and defend various life problems, stresses, threats and tragic events better [10].

Mangrullkar et al (2001) suggest that according to WHO's report in 2001, few people can have a satisfactory life without obtaining social skills and assertiveness. Training these skills is probably effective in succeeding in life, so training them increases mental- social capacity in people and enables them to handle problems well [14].

Accomplishing the social skill training program in schools can impress teen-agers' lives. Communicative skills enable you to express your needs better, and realize others' needs and have your mental well being [15].

Naderi, Broumand Nasab and varznade (2009) studied the effect of life skills on anxiety and assertiveness of male high school students in Behbahan. The study showed could decrease anxiety and increase assertiveness [16]. Moreover, Naderifar (2010) studied the effect of communicative skills on the self-respect, self- concept and self-esteem of female high school students in Rasht. The result showed the effective of training communicative skills on self-concept, self- respect and assertiveness [17].

In an other study, Sajedi, Atashpour, Kamkar and semsami shariat(2010) investigated the effect of training life skills on interpersonal relations, self-esteem and assertiveness of blind females in Zahra (P.B.U.H), Isfahan in 2008. the results showed that life skills had positive effects on the experimental group's self- esteem and assertiveness, but had no effects on their interpersonal relations [18].

In a study, Suarez(2000) investigates the effect of social skill training on social skills and social behavior of deaf children and found that the program was impressive in deaf students and excitement adjustment, social adjustment and self- concept observed by the teachers increased [19].

In a study, Smith and Garrie (2005) showed that training life skills affects a learner's feeling about themselves and others and this has a positive effect on leadership ability and management and assertiveness in students [20]. Also Chimenti and Trilivas (1995) showed that training social skills, verbal techniques, interpersonal relations, making friends, anger control, problem solving and assertiveness has a positive effect on increasing sociable behaviors, self sufficiency, self-esteem and self-confidence [21].

The present study on training communicative skills on the basis of the feedbacks emphasizes on every human's rights and the members' belief that as a human, they have rights, they are supposed to observe each other's right to express their feelings, and make lawful and logical requests, or accept or reject us, and expressing their undesirable feelings does not negate their humanity. Assertiveness, and boldness gives you the feelings self-efficiency and inner control and these feelings give you the feelings of self- confidence and self-esteem. These kind of people respect themselves and others, they are not passive and do not let others manipulate them, while they respect other people's requests and needs and make selective relations.

Because of the importance of assertiveness and communicative skills and effects on the daily correlation of deaf teen-agers with each other, a detailed study of the concepts can be useful in educating students with hearing impairments. Because of the handicap they have, students with hearing impairments may have disorders and problems in these concepts

i.e. assertiveness and communicative skills. That is why the present study tried to investigate the effects training communicative skills on deaf and partially deaf teenagers' assertiveness and answer the question: "Does training communicative skills affect assertiveness in deaf and partially deaf students?"

Materials and Methods

The method was experimental, and the plot was pre-test, post-test with a control group.

Sample collection

The community included 65 female high school students in Amol city in 2012-2013, with 15-20 ages. As all the subjects scored lower than Alberti and Emmons' cut-off point i.e. 100, 30 subjects were randomly selected and divided into 15 subject groups i.e. the experimental group and the control group.

Research instruments:

The study used Alberti and Emmons' assertiveness test. Alberti and Emmons' developed the questionnaire with 15 items answered as 5 degrees (No or Never, A little or Sometimes, So-So, Usually, Always or Completely).

To score, No or Never gets zero, A little or sometimes gets 1, So-So gets 2, Usually gets 3, Always or completely gets 4 and then the scores are summed up. If the score is higher than 100, it shows assertiveness. If the score is between 80 and 99, it shows low assertiveness [16].

The test was conducted in Iran by Darabi(2008) and having credit coefficient with Krunbakh's Alfa(0.84). it was reported having an internal consistency [17]. The questionnaire was also accomplished in Iran by Malek pour(2008) on 27 children and teen-agers, and a 0.74 consistency coefficient was obtained [18].

Methodology:

In the pre-test stage, data were collected using the questionnaire. Then, the training program was accomplished on the experimental students (15 subjects). At the end of the training sessions, all the 30 students were given the post-test. Communicative skill factors were selected to train. The training included sessions, each held 60 minutes twice a week for a month, and the experimental group joined the class for a month the training sessions aimed at:

Session 1: The definition and importance of communication, the barriers, and how to express feeling and transfer messages.

Session 2: After the review of the last session, kinds of communications i.e verbal and non-verbal were discussed.

Session 3: The students were trained how to express their feelings using the first singular pronoun and accept other people's feelings.

Session 4: The importance of being a good listener, and the difference between listening and hearing and active listening barriers and probable reactions from a listener to a speaker were discussed.

Session 5: After a review of the previous sessions, confidence and assertiveness were discussed.

Session 6: After reviewing the previous sessions, the how to express "what you want" and avoid what you do not want" was discussed and practiced with the students.

The researcher trained the students herself; as she did not know sign language, whenever needed, the teachers helped her.

Results

Averages and standard deviations of pre-test and post-test scores on assertiveness variable are presented in table 1

Table 1: the average, and standard deviation of the pre-test, and post-test scores on assertiveness variable

	Group	N	Average	Standard deviation
Experiment	Pre-test assertiveness	15	41.5333	19.72260
	Post-test assertiveness	15	86.4667	14.31217
Control	Pre-test assertiveness	15	40.7333	16.52473
	Post-test assertiveness	15	36.6667	12.42501

As table 1 shows, the average score of the experimental group’s assertiveness increased in compare to the control group. To study the differences, the one-way covariance (Ancova) was used. The analysis findings are presented in table 2.

Tables to shows a positive difference between the regulated average of assertiveness variable in the post-test stage in the two groups (p=0.000). So the hypothesis that training communicative skills is effective in deaf and partially deaf teenagers’ assertiveness is testified. The effectiveness coefficient i.e. 0.931 shows the high efficiency of the method in assertiveness of students with hearing impairments.

Discussion

The present study investigated the effect of training communicative skills on the assertiveness of teen-agers with hearing impairments. The results show that the training program increased assertiveness.

It can be said that teenagers with hearing impairments can not be perfectly assertive because of their handicaps. They are usually unsociable and solitary. The training program taught them how to express themselves and reject other people’s illogical emotions and insist on their behaviors. It increased their assertiveness. Accomplishing the communicative skill program caused them express and realize their needs more and enjoy better mental healthiness.

Assertiveness includes behaviors such as: expressing needs, requesting help, expressing feelings (positive or negative), making an efficient relation, caring people’s ideas, making eye-contact, expressing your own ideas, criticizing others, avoiding their requests, rejecting illogical needs,... . As the factors in communicative skill training program (including: Building an efficient and positive relation, being a good listener, determination in behavior , expressing interests, feelings and ideology, complaining, saying no) are closely related to assertiveness factors, they affected them and dramatically increased assertiveness. Receiving the training, children with hearing impairments achieved desirable communicative skills.

The limitation of the study included: ages (15-20) of the subjects, only female subjects and lack of pursue, so the results can not be generalized. The importance of the subject matter was clarified for every body in any condition, specially for handicaps. Communicative skills not only improves these people’s ability, but also emphasized on their ability for the future life. If teen-agers and adults undergo training in their social every day lives, they will help their family and society’s health, because the training leads to mental and social abilities and provides them for an efficient life.

So including communicative skill training is suggested to be included in candicapt educational programs. Researchers are also suggested to use communicative skill training.

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Table 2: the regulated average, standard deviation, and the covariance analysing results of the dependent variable

Co-variance		The control group			The experimental group		
ETA	P	F(26,1)	standard deviation	average	standard deviation	average	variable
0.931	0.000	353.224	1.879	36.536 a	1.879	86.597	assertiveness

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