

## Original Research Article

**Effect of Self Instruction Technique on Generalized Anxiety among Secondary School Adolescents in Enugu State****ABSTRACT**

The study is on the effect of Self Instruction Technique on generalized anxiety among secondary school adolescents in Enugu East Local Government of Enugu State. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The research design is quasi experimental design. The target population for this study was made up of 203 students with generalized anxiety in all the secondary schools in Enugu East L.G.A. The sample for the study was 61 secondary school students with generalized anxiety in the two purposively selected secondary schools. The Beck anxiety inventory (1990) (BAI) with 21 items was adopted for this study for data collection. The data collected were analyzed using mean scores for research questions and ANCOVA in testing the null hypotheses. The findings of the study showed that Self Instruction Technique was effective in reducing generalized anxiety of secondary school students. Findings of the study also indicated that Self Instruction Technique was retained twelve weeks after treatment. It is recommended among others that guidance counsellors should use Self Instruction Technique in reducing generalized anxiety among secondary school students. Furthermore workshops and seminars should be organized for teachers by guidance counsellors, to enable them imbibe such technique like Self Instruction Technique in modifying behavioural problems like generalized anxiety.

Keywords: Self Instruction Technique, Effects, Generalized Anxiety, Adolescents.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Adolescents in carrying out their tasks require an optimal level of anxiety but in a situation where the level of anxiety is above the optimal level there is usually a decline in performance, especially academic performance. In other words, learning is more effective in an environment devoid of anxiety or apprehension. This therefore makes generalized anxiety to be dysfunctional to the academic progress of the victims, who suffer from fear of the unknown, nervousness, lightheadedness, heart pounding, shaking, restlessness and panicking (Becks 1990).

However, one will not ignore the obvious that, adolescents in their transition to adulthood, learn adaptive and maladaptive modes of reacting to experiences in their environment. Observations made by most counsellors show that in secondary schools, generalized anxiety appears to be on

the increase among adolescents and may become a threat to effective teaching and learning if not checked. It is worthy to point out that based on some anxiety inventories like the one used in this work, adolescents who are victims of generalized anxiety report fear of going to school, physical symptoms of illness, some level of depression, nervousness, progressive lower level of self-esteem and diminished ability to learn in school.

Previous observations show that School teachers and administrators have tried to solve the problem of generalized anxiety among adolescents in schools by employing various measures such as scolding, sending students away during lessons, and even sending the students for medical treatment whereas the signs posited may not be of medical case (Mirealt & Trahan 2007). Furthermore, school counsellors have been adopting the routine conventional counselling, emphasizing on the need to study, organizing orientation for students and seminars stressing study skills, study habits among others, with the view that most students are exposed to anxiety because they do not have study skills. These measures have not solved the problem of generalized anxiety among adolescents. These measures are impositions and external to the victims of generalized anxiety. . However, Smith (2006), pointed out that whether an individual experiences, phobia, panic disorder, specific phobia or generalized anxiety, the person has an anxiety and one can do something to overcome it. The scenario therefore, underscores the need for appropriate long term /permanent solution to the devastating effect of generalized anxiety on the future generation. It is undisputable that some of the adolescents who are victims may end up not completing their studies, while those who manage to complete their secondary education may not have good grades due to instability, as a result of the anxiety, (Zashow, 2008). Similarly, those who resort to taking of drugs to resolve the anxiety may not get a lasting solution, (Drowetzky, 2007). These ugly developments should not be allowed to continue. In the bid to curb the harmful effects of generalized anxiety especially on learning Thompson (2007), also posited that teachers have applied different forms of punishment and other measures to control generalized anxiety such as scolding, standing up in class, making the students to go to hospitals, yet these measures could not control the problem because these are external impositions on the victims of generalized anxiety. Similar explanation was given earlier by Okoye (2001), who pointed out in her research findings, that teachers, administrators, counsellors and the general school authorities have applied various forms of measures to control and reduce anxiety such as referral to hospitals, use of negative language on the students among others. Yet these measures may not give permanent control of anxiety. The

failure of these measures to permanently control the problem, have agitated the minds of the researchers to seek behaviour modification techniques appropriate to the problem. This is necessary because anxiety is acquired as learned behaviour and therefore it can be unlearned (Okoye 2001, Onwuka 2008). In the western world much attention has been devoted to stemming generalized anxiety but in Nigeria this behavioural problem goes on among many students in school unnoticed (Obi, Nwankwo & Obi, 2013).

It becomes necessary therefore to determine approaches on how best to eliminate or reduce generalized anxiety among adolescents through measures applied by the clients themselves, in order to ensure that this group would not only achieve their set educational goals but also develop into socially and emotionally balanced personalities. Thus this research work sought behavioural technique that mobilize the will power on the generalized anxiety victims with the bid to overcome it. It is pertinent to buttress Nutt-Williams & Hill (2010), who pointed out the views of Aristotle; the philosopher and the founder of psychology as a separate study, when he, Aristotle said that, he count himself braver, when he overcomes his desires, than when he overcomes his enemies, for the best victory is the victory over self. However, the use of any counselling technique can be seen as remedial measure towards balancing individual's behaviour and interest. When knowledge acquisition is put in place the individual acquires better coping skill and better ways of relating to events in his or her life. According to Baker & Baker (2007) in real life situations and in carrying out ones duty as a counsellor, observations have shown that human beings experience debilitating anxiety at one time or the other and knowing how awful anxiety could be, one tries to assist in overcoming it. Besides, individuals are capable of controlling their behaviour when taught how to and hence the result will be more lasting than when the control measures are applied by someone else. One fundamental basis of this technique is the mobilization of the will power of the victims to control oneself.

Hence, to reduce generalized anxiety and other emotional maladjustment problems series of psychological theories have been propounded and used, these theories as pointed out by Smith (2006), have embedded in them counselling techniques which can be used in treating of emotional, social maladjustments, phobia, generalized anxiety, and among others. Among these techniques is Self Instruction. Following Meichembaum's Cognitive Behavioural theory (1995), Self Instruction Technique, was posited as a behaviour modification technique based on the idea of self monitoring,

thought stopping and self verbal mediators. It is directed at influencing and reversing what one says to oneself. The proponent is of the view that when thoughts are negative it could influence behaviour and these negative thoughts could be reversed to positive thoughts. Hence, Self Instruction technique is aimed at reversing what one says to oneself. Therefore in using Self Instruction technique to modify a client's behaviour, the counsellor assists the client to adopt the concept of talking to oneself. In a counselling process the counsellor assists the students to build repertoire of self statements to be used after self monitoring and thought stopping. According to Thompson (2006), since students perpetuate their fear by their own thoughts, Self Instruction technique is therefore, used to directly influence the students to reverse what they say to themselves.

Obviously it is the duty of counsellors to carry out behaviour modification in their schools. This has been observed as being done by school counsellors but may not specifically use this technique. It was also observed that the area of study of this research work is not excluded in the practice of behaviour modification as it has well trained counsellors in its schools. These counsellors have in their duty; observation and counselling of students with behavioural problems. These duties of theirs do not restrict them to any technique and they are seen as carrying out conventional counselling. It is therefore pertinent to point out that for this research work the control group are those students with generalized anxiety, who were exposed to conventional counselling. During the training of the research assistants in the two schools used for this study, the counsellors in the control group were instructed to use the most common method of counselling, which buttressed more on study skills and void of the technique in this work.

Furthermore, no matter the procedure adopted, a number of experiments as compiled by Corey (1996), Ventis, (2001), Wine (2002), Beck (2006), and many more, before an individual can be taught to change his behavioural pattern, he should learn to identify his self- defeating thoughts, evaluate his behaviour and what precipitates his actions. Bearing in mind that in counselling psychology every behavioural problem has specific techniques that have effect on it, for instance, there is this assertion in behaviour modification that some techniques increase the occurrence of desirable behaviours, some techniques decrease the occurrence of undesirable behaviours while some techniques maintain the occurrence of desirable behaviours. The researchers were therefore motivated to carry out this research to determine the effect of Self Instruction Technique on the

Generalized Anxiety of adolescents. Furthermore, the retention effect of the technique was determined.

However, Literature have revealed abundant evidence of the effectiveness of Self Instruction Technique in reducing maladaptive behaviours such as test anxiety, phobia and aggression, (Burns, 2008, Bistline & Friedon, 2004, Birenbaum & Nassar, 2004, and Boume, 2000,). It becomes reasonable, therefore to ascertain the effect of Self Instruction Technique on Generalized Anxiety of Adolescents. Hence, the study is delimited to the effect of Self Instruction Technique on secondary school adolescents with Generalized Anxiety in Enugu East Local Government Area of Enugu State. Being a quasi- experimental research, only one Local Government Area; Enugu East Local Government Area of Enugu State was used as the Area of study. Specifically, the study covered senior secondary school adolescents, excluding the examination class (SSS3) students. The SSS3 students being examination class were exempted owing to the fact that they are busy with examinations and no school management will allow such a class to be used for research at such periods.

## **2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Learning is more effective in an environment devoid of anxiety or apprehension. However, it is pertinent to point out that adolescents in carrying out their tasks require an optimal level of anxiety but in a situation where the level of anxiety is above the optimal level there is usually a decline in performance, especially academic performance. Adolescents in their transition to adulthood, learn adaptive and maladaptive modes of reacting to experiences in their environment, but observations made by most counsellors show that in secondary schools, generalized anxiety appears to be on the increase among adolescents and may become a threat to effective teaching and learning if not checked. It is worthy to point out that based on some anxiety inventories like the one used in this work, adolescents who are victims of generalized anxiety report fear of going to school, physical symptoms of illness, some level of depression, nervousness, progressive lower level of self-esteem and diminished ability to learn in school.

Previous observations show that School teachers and administrators have tried to solve the problem of generalized anxiety among adolescents in schools by employing various measures such as scolding, sending students away during lessons, and even sending the students for medical

treatment whereas the signs posited may not be of medical case. Furthermore, school counsellors have been adopting the routine conventional counselling, emphasizing on the need to study, organizing orientation for students and seminars stressing study skills, study habits among others, with the view that most students are exposed to anxiety because they do not have study skills. These measures have not solved the problem of generalized anxiety among adolescents. These measures are impositions and external to the victims of generalized anxiety.

It becomes necessary therefore to determine approaches on how best to eliminate or reduce generalized anxiety among adolescents through measures applied by the clients themselves, in order to ensure that this group would not only achieve their set educational goals but also develop into socially and emotionally balanced personalities. Thus this research work sought behavioural technique that mobilize the will power on the generalized anxiety victims with the bid to overcome it. It becomes reasonable to ascertain the effect of Self Instruction Technique on Generalized Anxiety of Adolescents in Enugu East local government of Enugu State.

## **2.1 Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to ascertain the effect of Self Instruction Technique on Generalized Anxiety among Adolescents in Secondary Schools in Enugu East Local Government Area of Enugu state. Specifically, the study determined the;

1. effect of Self Instruction Technique on secondary school adolescents with generalized anxiety using pre test post test mean scores.
2. retention mean scores of secondary school Adolescents with generalized anxiety exposed to Self Instruction Technique and the retention mean scores of secondary school adolescents with generalized anxiety in the control group.

## **2.2 Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What is the difference in the pretest posttest generalized anxiety mean scores of students treated with Self Instruction Technique and those in the control group?

2. What is the difference in the post test and retention generalized anxiety mean scores of students treated with Self Instruction Technique and those in the control group?

### **2.3 Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the effect of Self Instruction Technique in reducing students' generalized anxiety when compared with those in the control group using their mean scores.
2. There is no significant difference in the effect of Self Instruction technique in the retention of reduced student's generalized anxiety when compared with those in the control group using their mean scores.

### **3. LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section presents the review of related literature for the study under the following sub headings

#### **3.1 Self Instruction Technique**

Self Instruction technique is a tool intended to help students develop the necessary skills to be self-regulated learners. The technique is based on the premix that human feelings and thoughts influence the way they handle certain things in real life situation. However, Self Instruction as a technique according to Dwecky (2002), is a process of learning that is guided by one thinking, planning, monitoring and evaluating personal progress against a standard. Paris and Paris (2001), concurred that Self Instruction involves the individual monitoring, directing and regulating actions towards goals for self-improvement. Dwecky (2002), expatiated that individuals who are aware of their thoughts influence on their behaviour and attitude apply these Self Instruction strategies to tackle daily life challenges. The advocates of Self Instruction like Perry, Phillips & Hutchinson (2006), posited that students who imbibe the process of Self Instruction, belief that opportunities to take on challenges, help them to develop a deep understanding of self and efforts will aid them face the challenges of life without fear of failure. Pintrich and Schunk (2002), asserted that development of self-regulated attitude usually aid the individual's self efficacy. Thus, Halderman and Baker (2002), pointed out that the Counsellor hears comments from adolescents such as: - I cannot do that, I will not be able to meet up with school activities, which according to him indicate

self-defeating thoughts. In line with this, Richard (2005), noted that Self Instruction technique was designed to help individuals with anxiety in becoming aware of their self-defeating and irrelevant thoughts, which interfere with their preparation and effective functioning in the society. Goldstein, Levin and Goldman (2009), opined that Self Instruction 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.

A lot of studies have been conducted using Self Instruction technique as a self control strategy. For instance, Wild & Duinn (2008), carried out a study on the effect of corporative competitive and individual use of self instruction method on learner's Achievement in library skills. In the study a self-instructional mode is combined with cooperative, competitive and individualized techniques in the teaching of library skills. The result showed that self instruction is effective in the learning of library skills. The researchers therefore concluded that students should be taught how to adopt library skills using self instruction techniques.

Haddadian, Alipourb, Majidi and Maleki (2007), carried out a study on the effectiveness of Self Instruction technique on improvement of reading performance and reduction of anxiety in primary school students with Dyslexia. The purpose of the study was to examine the effect of Self Instruction technique on improvement of reading performance and reduction of anxiety symptoms in primary school students with dyslexia. The data was analyzed and the result showed that Self Instruction technique has significant effect on improvement of reading performance and on reduction of anxiety symptoms in students. At the end of five months, a follow up tests given, showed the effect was retained. The researchers therefore concluded that Self Instruction is effective in reduction of anxiety among students with dyslexia. From the numerous literatures, one will see that Self instruction therapy aims to give clients control over their behaviour through guided self-talk that gradually becomes self-generated. Several studies have been conducted using Self instruction technique and most of the results show that it is effective while some show ineffective results.

### **3.2 Generalized Anxiety**

It is normal to feel anxious from time to time, especially if one's life is stressful. However, excessive ongoing anxiety and worry that interfere with daily activities may be a sign of

generalized anxiety. It is possible to develop generalized anxiety as a child, adolescent, or adult. Mitchel (2009), pointed out, that the tendency of having difficulty in the learning and teaching process can aggravate nervousness, having difficulty organising thoughts, restlessness, among others. These go to say that the clients do not feel normal, once the learning process is presented before them, and the tendency will be to avoid the situation and its circumstances, which make the academic environment uncomfortable for them.

Generalized anxiety has symptoms that are similar to phobia, panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and other types of anxiety but they are all different conditions. This Bower (2009), concurred by enumerating the physical signs of generalized anxiety as, sweaty palms, stomach upset, headache, rapid heartbeat, mental block, going blank on questions and many more. Goliath (2004), described individuals with generalized anxiety as being characterized by acquired habits and attitudes that involve negative self perceptions and expectations and these self-deprecating habits and attitudes dispose them to experience fear.

Numerous case studies have been reported of people suffering from generalized anxiety and reports show that the study of anxiety started as far back as 1920's. But the latest research on anxiety according to Hendrick (2008), in the National Institute of Mental Health, is on the cause, prevention and treatment of anxiety. However, Goberman, Hughess, and Haydock, (2011), in their study; the acoustic characteristics of public speaking anxiety and practice effects, the main purpose of the study was to examine the effects of anxiety and practice of speech and voice during public speaking. Self rating and acoustic speech data were reported on two separate speech produced by 16 college aged individuals completing course work in interpersonal communication. However, the results showed that there were significant relationships between acoustic characteristics of speech and both self and listener ratings of anxiety in public speaking. Furthermore, Fitzpatrick (2009), reported that in a study conducted by the National Institute of mental health 5.1% - 12.5% of Americans are hit with different forms of anxiety and phobias, the design was a survey type using both men and women of about 250; 125 each, in number, using percentages. According to the report, they are the most common behavioural problem among women of all ages and are the second most common problem among men older than 25.

### **3.3 Adolescents**

Adolescents are faced with the task of biological, sexual and physical developments. Adolescents according to Atwell (2008), is the period between the age 12 and 20, a time of rapid psychological and neurological development, during which children develop morally, cognitively and socially. To this Uwakwe (2008), concurred that Adolescence is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood, that it is probably the most challenging and tasking phase in the developmental process of human beings. Thus, Ahmed and Bower (2008) asserted that adolescents struggle to cope with these changes and may develop emotional disorders, such as phobia, depression and anxiety. The adolescent years are periods when individuals can be helped to identify their self-defeating irrational ideas and learn how to cope with such thoughts.

## **4. METHODS**

The population of this study was 203 adolescent students with generalized anxiety in all the Public Senior Secondary Schools in Enugu East local Government Area. This population was gotten from the result of the pre test administered to the students in the senior secondary schools of all the government owned secondary schools in the local government Area. These students were identified using Becks Anxiety Inventory, (BAI). The pre test administered had a score of 36 as the base line. Thus, students who scored 36 and above, were selected as clients for concern as per this research and formed the norm of the study.

The sample for this study was 61 senior secondary school students who exhibited generalized anxiety in the two purposively selected Secondary Schools in Enugu East Local Government Area. This was achieved using the pre test results of each of the public senior secondary schools in the Local Government Area. The numbers of students with generalized Anxiety in each of the schools were recorded, and then the schools were arranged hierarchically from the school with the highest number of students with generalized anxiety to the least. The students in the two schools that have the highest number of students with generalized anxiety were purposively selected and formed the sample for this work. This sample size was therefore, gotten using purposive sampling. The two schools were referred in this work as school B and school C.

Furthermore, non random sampling was used in assigning treatment models to the two groups, to which students with generalized anxiety in School B as group one and were treated with Self Instruction Technique, while students with generalized anxiety in School C served as the control group and were given conventional counselling.

The instrument used in this study is Beck anxiety Inventory (BAI) originally developed by Beck (1990) The instrument was designed to measure generalized anxiety and was adopted by the researchers. The inventory was specifically used in this work to measure the generalized anxiety levels of secondary school adolescents.

The Beck anxiety inventory is a psychological inventory and consists of 21 items and each item is scored on a 4 point scale ranging from 0- (not at all), 1- ( mildly but it didn't bother me), 2- (moderately- it wasn't pleasant at times), 3- ( Severely – it bothered me a lot). The total scale comprising the 21 items were used in this study. For scoring purposes the BAI manual according to Beck (1990) indicates direct scoring of all the items. The inventory for this work was used as the pretest, post test and retention test. However the decision rule for the inventory is a grand total score of 36 and above. The instrument has been validated in numerous studies for use in Nigeria for instance Elliegwu, (2002), in his validation of BAI in adolescents found the Beck Anxiety inventory to be an accurate measure of anxiety symptoms in adolescents. However, the inventory was further content validated and approved by experts in the Department of Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Nigeria. The internal consistence for the inventory according to Beck (1990), ranged from .86 to .95 and the test retest reliability coefficient ranged from .70 to .75 as indicated in the instrument.

The treatment was administered using Self Instruction technique in their group counselling process by the research assistants who are counsellors in the experimental school, while the control group received conventional counselling by their school counsellor. The Counselling period for the SIT was one session per week respectively, each session lasting at least 45 minutes, for 6 weeks and was done during the class counselling period as was agreed with the school guidance counsellors.

At the end of the counselling period, a post test was administered to the two groups. Three months later a retention test was given to the treatment group to verify if the effect of the treatment was

retained. This enabled the researchers to answer and test the Research questions 1 and 2 and the hypotheses of this study respectively.

## 5. RESULTS

The Data collected for the study were organized in tables 1 to 4 and analysed. In answering the research questions mean scores were used. Then Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

### Research Question 1

What is the difference in the Pretest and Posttest generalized anxiety mean scores of students treated with self-instruction and those who received conventional counselling?

The answer to this research question is provided with data presented in Table 1

**Table 1:**

**Pretest and Posttest generalized anxiety mean scores of students treated with self-instruction and those in the control group**

Source of Variation	N	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean	Lost Mean	Remark
Self-instruction Effective	33	33.97	12.81	21.16	More
Control	28	33.00	27.68	5.32	

Table 1 indicates that the students treated with self-instruction technique had pretest mean score of 33.97 and posttest mean score of 12.81 with lost mean 21.16 in their generalized anxiety, while the students in the control group who received conventional counselling had pretest mean score of 33.00 and posttest mean score of 27.68 with lost mean 5.32. Therefore self-instruction technique is effective in reducing the students' generalized anxiety.

### Research Question 2

What is the difference in the Posttest and retention generalized anxiety mean scores of students treated with Self-instruction technique and those in the conventional counselling?

The answer to this research question is provided with data presented in Table 2

**Table 2:**

**Posttest and retention generalized anxiety mean scores of students treated with Self Instruction Technique and those in the Control group**

Source of Variation	N	Posttest Mean	Retention Mean	Lost Mean	
Remark					
Self-instruction Tech.	33	12.81	10.74	2.07	Retained better
Control	28	27.68	26.50	-1.18	

Table 2 shows that the students treated with Self Instruction Technique had posttest mean score of 12.81 and retention mean score of 10.74 with lost mean  $-2.07$  in their generalized anxiety, while the students in the control group who received conventional counselling had posttest mean score of 27.68 and retention mean score of 26.50 with lost mean of  $-1.18$ . Therefore the students who were treated with Self Instruction Technique retained better than those in the control who remained in moderate generalized anxiety.

**Hypothesis 1**

There is no significant difference in the effect of self Instruction technique in reducing secondary school students' generalized anxiety when compared with those in the control group who received conventional counselling using their mean scores.

**Table 3: ANCOVA Summary of the posttest generalized anxiety mean scores of students treated with self Instruction technique and those who received conventional counselling**

Source of variation	SS	df	MS	sCal. F	Crit. F
Corrected Model	3992.716	2	1996.358		
Intercept	127.278	1	127.278		

Pretest	738.746		1	738.746			
Treatment Model	3424.290		1	3424.290	173.98	4.01	P<.05
Error	1102.200	56		19.682			
Total	28376.000		59				
Corrected Total	5094.915		58				

In table 3 it was observed that at 0.05 level of significance, 1df numerator and 59df denominator, the calculated F 173.98 is greater than the critical F 4.01. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. So, the effect of self instruction technique in reducing secondary school students' generalized anxiety is significant when compared with those in the control group.

### Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the effect of self instruction technique in the retention of the reduced secondary school students' generalized anxiety when compared with those in the control group who received conventional counselling using their mean scores.

**Table 4: ANCOVA Summary of the retention generalized anxiety mean scores of students treated with self instruction technique and those who received conventional counselling**

Source of variation	SS	df	MS	Cal. F	Crit. F	Remarks
Corrected Model	5155.367	2	2577.684			
Intercept	0.470	1	0.470			
Posttest	1502.167	1	1502.167			
Treatment Model	28.708	1	28.708	5.57	4.01	P<.05
Error	450.769	56	8.049			
Total	25193.000	59				

Corrected Total            5606.136            58

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In table 4 it was observed that at 0.05 level of significance, 1df numerator and 59df denominator, the calculated F 5.57 is greater than the critical F 4.01. Therefore, the second null hypothesis is rejected. So, the effect of self instruction technique in the retention of the reduced secondary school students' generalized anxiety is significant when compared with those in the control group.

## **6. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The study revealed that Self Instruction is effective in reducing generalized anxiety of adolescent secondary school students as shown in table 5. Self Instruction Technique is effective in modifying generalized anxiety of secondary school adolescents because of its uniqueness of aiming at giving the clients control over their behaviour through guided self talk that gradually becomes self-generated. It comprises of numerous therapeutic elements within one therapy intervention whereby 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 the students with generalized anxiety were able to understand the consequences of their anxiety towards daily life challenges and what perpetuates the anxiety with the help of the research assistants in a group counselling process. The result is in line with Wild & Duinn (2008), who carried out a study on the effects of Corporative competitive and individual use of Self Instruction on learner's achievements in library skills. In the study a self-instructional mode is combined with cooperative, competitive and individualized techniques in the teaching of library skills. The result showed that self instruction is effective in the learning 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 can be applied in a group counseling setting in carrying out daily life challenges, which library skills is inclusive.

Self Instruction is effective on generalized anxiety of secondary school students because of its involvement in replacing dysfunctional thoughts by self talk, which guides the clients to adaptive responses to anxiety. It is an obligatory exercise programme, where self-monitoring, thought stopping, self-verbal mediators come to play. The clients build up positive thoughts through statements and commands to replace the negative thoughts that were monitored and stopped using

self-monitoring and thought stopping respectively this result is in line with Thompson (2006), who carried out a research on the verbal self guidance on the self efficiency and performance of selective interview. He found out that clients who received training on verbal self guidance had higher self efficacy than the clients in the control group.

Self Instruction Technique is effective because it is carried out in a therapeutic session with the school counsellor as the research assistant being involved directly with the clients. This involves the counsellor and the clients in group counselling process in a period, where the clients start by performing the task while the counsellor instructs around. Then the client performs the tasks talking aloud, later whispering, and lastly performing the task with covert self instruction.

Self Instruction is effective because it is a cognitive behavioural treatment, involving self - regulation of behaviour by means of language, recognizing the importance of cognitive processes, especially self-belief and other internal self -referential thought patterns in generation and maintenance of psychological problems and their remedy. The result is in line with Wachella and Katz (2009), who examined the effectiveness of cognitive behavioural treatment for reducing test anxiety and improving academic self-esteem in a high school and college students with learning disabilities. The result showed significant improvement in the treated group. According to Becks (2005), cognitive behaviour theory works by changing peoples' attitude and their behaviour focusing on thoughts and attitude of people and how they relate to their behaviour.

Furthermore, the result of the study is in line with Meichenbaum (1986), in his theory where he emphasized cognitive behaviour change where clients are encouraged to change the scripted nature of their behaviour. However, through Self Instruction the students with generalized anxiety realized the consequences and implication of their anxiety towards daily life challenges, which academic performance; social skills among others are inclusive and decided to reduce it. By learning to evaluate their behaviour towards daily activities as adolescents, using self- monitoring, thought stopping, and building positive thoughts to replace the negative ones. Thus rather than avoid their obligations as students such as any evaluative process as result of anxiety, there is need according to Meichenbaum (1986) theory to successfully use Self Instruction to reduce students generalized anxiety, by aiding them to be aware of their self- defeating and irrelevant thoughts, which according to Richard (2005), interferes with their preparation and effective participation on

take home assignments, tests, social activities, which Halderman and Baker (2002), earlier pointed out that it can lead to maladaptive responses to a variety of challenging situations in their lives. Thus it becomes apparent for these adolescents to be helped to identify their self defeating irrational ideas and learn how to cope and replace such thoughts.

Therefore, the result confirms Haddadian, Alipourb, Majidi and Maleki (2012), study on the effectiveness of Self Instruction technique on improvement of reading performance and reduction of anxiety in primary school students with Dyslexia. The result showed that Self Instruction technique has significant effect on improvement of reading performance and on reduction of anxiety symptoms in students. At the end of five months, a follow up tests given, showed the effect was retained. The researchers therefore concluded that Self Instruction is effective in reduction of anxiety among students with dyslexia. From the numerous literatures, one will see that Self instruction treatment aims to give clients control over their behaviour through guided self-talk that gradually becomes self-generated. Several studies have been conducted using Self instruction technique and most of the results show that it is effective while some show ineffective results.

Self Instruction Technique has effect on generalized anxiety because of its emphasis on self - confidence. Knowing that as humans, we are always afraid of the unknown, while familiarity brings contempt. Among the strategies used in the treatment is the enhancement of self -confidence to face daily activities without fear. Available literatures show that clients with anxiety tend to perceive challenging situations as personally threatening and apprehensive. But for Phillips (2000), adequate application of the inner voices enhances confidence in students. Lewis (2000), emphasized on adequate preparation of students in their learning process for enhanced self - confidence. When confidence is built, daily activities because something one should not be having apprehension.

The result of the durability of the treatment using Self Instruction Technique showed that the treatment was retained six weeks after treatment; this is shown in table 6. One can say that this is in line with the natural way of human nature of practice makes perfect. The result confirms Kovel (2011) who pointed out that Self Instruction Technique as a cognitive behavioural therapeutic process aids brings about a real change that goes beyond feeling better, while the client is in therapy. While Becks (2008) pointed out that Self Instruction as a technique empowers people to

grab firm of their own thought process and fix the mental mistakes they make that leads to problems. Thus, in line with Wachella and Katz (2009) who after eight weeks of cognitive behavioural treatment using self instruction the participants demonstrated reduced anxiety levels.

This is also in line with Haddadian, Alipourb, Majidi and Maleki (2007), who carried out a study on the effectiveness of Self Instruction technique on improvement of reading performance and reduction of anxiety in primary school students with Dyslexia. The result showed that Self Instruction technique has significant effect on improvement of reading performance and on reduction of anxiety symptoms in students. At the end of five months, a follow up tests given, showed the effect was retained. The researchers therefore concluded that Self Instruction is effective in reduction of anxiety among students with dyslexia and were retained after treatment.

The difference in the mean scores of the post test and retention test showed that there is not much difference in the retention mean scores of the students, which means that when self instruction is imbibed on a client it becomes part and parcel of the person thus the clients put what they have acquired into practice in their daily activities. This agrees with Lazarus (2007) who posited one of the procedures of self instruction to use with a client who is experiencing anticipatory anxiety to include being focus on what the client need to do among others. Richard (2005) stressed the steps in self instruction therapy to include memorizing the instructions and learning to say them at the required time. Thus Thompson (2006) pointed out that Self Instruction Technique directly influences clients to change what they say to themselves, by breaking chains of negative feelings and sensations such as fear, anger, anxiety and many more.

From the numerous literatures, one will see that Self instruction therapy aims to give clients control over their behaviour through guided self-talk that gradually becomes self-generated.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

From the findings of this study the following conclusions have been made that Self Instruction Technique is effective in modifying generalized anxiety of secondary school adolescents. Self Instruction Technique effect on generalized anxiety of secondary school adolescents could be retained after treatment. There is no significant difference between post test mean scores of the experimental group after treatment with Self Instruction.

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study and the implications of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Every secondary school in the country should have a well-equipped counselling unit to be manned by professional counsellors. The aim is to enable these counsellors effectively diagnose and treat students with generalized anxiety and other maladaptive behaviours in the school.
2. Proper and accurate diagnosis of the circumstances precipitating most behavioural misconducts among the students should be conducted to identify those whose inert problems are generalized anxiety who should be referred to the School Counsellor.
3. Teachers should as much as possible pay close attention to their students' attitude in class before, during and after school hours to identify those who exhibit symptoms of generalized anxiety and refer them for counselling.
4. Counsellors in our Secondary Schools should use Self Instruction Technique in order to reduce generalized anxiety.

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