

Impact of Feeling Minds® Experiential Emotional Education program on school children

Dr. Chinu Agrawal

Ph.D, Psychologist & Psychotherapist,
Gurukul Kangri University, Haridwar

Acknowledgement

Acknowledgments are due to Mr Amitava Ghosh Principal Bhavan's R K Sarda Vidya Mandir, who gave us the opportunity to conduct Feeling Minds ® Experiential Emotional Education program for the students of his esteemed school.

Abstract

A scientific study of the impact of Feeling Minds® Experiential Emotional Education (EEE) on school children was conducted. The sample of this study was 180 students of 6th grade studying in Bhawan's R.K. Sarda Vidya Mandir, Raipur. It was hypothesised that Experiential Emotional Education intervention will not have any significant impact on converting the emotional thinking patterns of children to rational thinking pattern. Children's Rational Belief Inventory (CRBI) was used to collect data before the EEE intervention. After the program was conducted the test was administered again. Paired sample t-test was used to analyse the pre-post data. It was found that the EEE program had a significant impact on improving the irrational belief systems of children and helping them develop rational thinking and belief systems.

Keywords: Experiential emotional education, Feeling Minds, rational thinking

Introduction

The student life is getting complex day by day. The changing family structure and the evolving social trends with a breakdown in the traditional support system has created a gap for fulfilling the physical , psychological and social needs of the child stressing the need for an alternative support system to meet the needs of the child. Many programs are dedicated to improve students' social and emotional skills. Schools generally try to support the development of students as responsible citizens after graduating. Students are expected to have learnt to deal responsibly with their own lives and those of others and at least to have basic social skills, “an awareness of, and ability to manage emotions in an age- and context-appropriate manner”. It is necessary to devise and implement such a program which not only solves the present issues affecting the child's mental, social and intellectual well being but also makes the child aware of

the method of conducting ones thoughts in the right way. The involvement of schools in bring about this change needs to be optimal along with the parents as schools are the places where the child builds not only the intellectual but also the psychological framework for his future. Designing, developing and testing the feasibility of a program to help children develop rational responses based on rational belief systems was felt to be the need of the hour.

1.1 What is Experiential Emotional Education?

The EEE psychological education program provides a framework for teaching students reasoning skills and for applying scientific ways of knowing and doing to ordinary and extraordinary life challenges, and opportunities for students to refine and improve their sense of perspective, self-concept, frustration tolerance, and personal problem-solving abilities. The ability to reflect, reason, and scientifically test propositions, is a mark of an educated person.

Experiential Emotional Education (EEE) is a positive, preventive, interventionist psychological educational program. The system teaches rational critical thinking skills and effective psychological problem-solving methods. These are skills that students can apply throughout their lives to cope effectively with the inevitable changes and challenges they will meet. The EEE program aids the student boost resiliency, build critical thinking resources, develop coping competencies, advance general reasoning skills, tolerate frustration, and maintain a realistic perspective.

Experiential Emotional Education is an economical approach for helping students develop cognitive and behavioral mental health skills so that they might avoid becoming part of the disability statistics, and boost their chances of leading meaningful and purposeful lives. The EEE delivery system provides mental health providers with a problem prevention and intervention system to improve students' mental health and personal problem-solving capabilities.

Students, who believe that they can organize and direct their actions to achieve positive results, using the tools they learn in school and elsewhere, are likely to capably manage the frustrations they daily face, see opportunities that they can pursue, and meet positive challenges that others might view as threats. EEE methods provide a platform for students to organize and regulate their thinking and actions around rational beliefs that are consistent with self-efficacy theory.

In support of that philosophy, EEE has four core assumptions:

1. Students learn best through actively participating in educational experiences that involve constructive problem-solving activities.

2. Attitudes, beliefs, and emotions play a significant role in the teaching and learning process. Students can harness fact-based personal constructs and emotive motivations to shape productive directions in their lives.

3. Students, who build upon realistic self-knowledge, are better able to translate this knowledge into purposeful and productive activities.

4. The development of realistic self-knowledge, coupled with psychological problem-solving skills, increases the likelihood of positive school progress, career satisfaction, and a fulfilling life.

2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The aim of this article is to present a scientific study of the impact of Feeling Minds[®] Experiential Emotional Education (EEE) on school children. The way this generation of students learns to manage their emotions is an important subject of study because of the simple reason that the future of the nation depends on that. Children think, feel and behave differently – this is a fact which is being increasingly established by research the world over. Most of the times they learn to react by observing people around them. These reactions may be detrimental in many ways and may be based on understanding irrational beliefs. We designed and conducted a program called as Feeling Minds[®] Experiential Emotional Education to help children develop rational responses based on rational belief systems. The purpose of this study was to find out whether the Experiential Emotional Education intervention is having any significant impact on the participating students.

2.1 Objective of the study:

Study the impact of Experiential Emotional Education intervention on participating children

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Target Population

The focus of this study was mainly on students of 6th Grade of Bhawan's R.K. Sarda Vidya Mandir, Raipur, India. The entire population of 180 students of the 6th Grade was considered as a sample for the present study. The gender ratio of boys to girls was 2:1 in the sample size of 180 students.

3.2 Hypothesis

Experiential Emotional Education intervention will not have any significant impact on converting the emotional thinking patterns of children to rational thinking pattern

Null Hypothesis, H_0 : Mean (Pre-test)=Mean (Post-test)

3.3 Sample of the study

The sample consisted of 180 students of 6th Grade of Bhawan's R.K. Sarda Vidya Mandir, Raipur, India. The sample was collected using Stratified Random Sampling method.

Table 1: Sample Distribution

| Section | Boys (120) | Girls (60) | Total |
|--------------|------------|------------|------------|
| A | 25 | 15 | 40 |
| B | 24 | 11 | 35 |
| C | 22 | 13 | 35 |
| D | 28 | 10 | 38 |
| E | 21 | 11 | 32 |
| Total | | | 180 |

From the Table 1 above it is observed that the 180 students of Grade 6 is a cumulative sum of the students studying in five sections A, B, C, D, E with 40 students in Section A, 35 each in Section B and C, 38 students in Section D and 32 students in Section E. The number of Boys is 120 which makes it 2/3rd if the total sample size while girls form 1/3rd part of the remaining sample.

3.4 Tool Used for Data Collection

Children's Rational Belief Inventory (CRBI) was used to collect the data .

3.5 Data Collection

The Feeling Minds team met the students of 6th Grade section wise. After introducing themselves, they distributed the answer sheets first. The students were instructed to fill their personal details like name, age class, section etc in the column provided in the answer sheet. The answer sheet was marked as sheet-no. 1. Then the question paper was distributed. They were instructed not to mark anything on the question paper. They were asked to read each question carefully and mark the appropriate response in the answer sheet. They were allowed to clarify their doubts if they were unable to comprehend any word or statement in the question paper. They were also told that there were no right or wrong answers. They were asked to simply mark whatever they felt was right. The sheets were then collected back. Then in the following days the Experiential Emotional Education program was conducted for these children. After this program was complete, the same test was conducted again. The data thus obtained was analysed using Paired sample t-test used for Pre-post test analysis.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data collected was analysed using Paired sample t-test for means. This test is used when each subject under study (every member of the sample) is tested twice on the same variable. It is also named as before and after design. This test is applied when the sampling distributions of the mean is normally distributed. The data was analysed using the MS-Excel data analysis tool pack add in. The results are shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Paired sample t-test for means

| | Pre-Test | Post-Test |
|--|----------|-----------|
| Mean | 10.000 | 11.563 |
| Variance | 10.403 | 13.752 |
| Observations | 180 | 180 |
| Hypothesized Mean Difference | 0 | |
| Degree of freedom df | 179 | |
| t Stat (t calculated statistically) | 4.117 | |
| P(T<=t) two-tail | 0.000 | |
| t Critical two-tail (t from statistical table) | 1.982 | |

As the null hypothesis was framed for the study, the hypothesised mean difference was taken to be 0.

H_0 :Mean (Pre-test)=Mean (Post-test)

Hence, Mean(Pre-test)-Mean (Post-test)=0

As the present study is that of pre testing and post testing of the same sample, the degree of freedom for the test was taken to be

$$df= n-1=180-1=179$$

where,

df=degree of freedom

n=sample size.

As null hypothesis is a non-directional hypothesis, with two tails, the t-statistical values have been calculated using the two-tailed t-test.

For calculating t-critical, df=179 and error assumed=0.05 (significance level).

It is observed that the t-critical two tailed value (1.982) is lesser than the t calculated value (4.117) which means that there is a significant difference in the pre and post test means. The null hypothesis thereby stands rejected. Also the p value (0.000) is lesser than 0.05 which again affirms the result that the null hypothesis of equal means is rejected thus proving that Experiential Emotional Education intervention has a significant impact on converting the emotional thinking patterns of children to rational thinking pattern.

5. CONCLUSION

It has been thus scientifically proved with the help of statistical analysis that Feeling Minds[®] Experiential Emotional Education program has a significant impact on improving the irrational belief systems of children and helping them develop rational thinking and belief systems. This will go a long way in helping them to meet present and future personal and professional challenges. They will be able to cope with stress in a more effective manner. They will be able to deal with their negative emotions effectively. They will be able to establish harmonious relationship with peers and elders.

6. RECOMMENDATION

Those who believe it is the responsibility of educational agencies to provide formal opportunities for children to learn psychological coping and critical thinking skills, will find the Feeling Minds[®] Experiential Emotional Education model compatible with that value. The Feeling Minds[®] Experiential Emotional Education school-based psychological education program, has a low per-student cost. Schools can economically adopt the Feeling Minds[®] Experiential Emotional Education approach to help students develop critical thinking and psychological problem-solving skills that help prepare them to meet present and future personal challenges.

References

1. Caulfield J, What motivates students to provide feedback to teachers about teaching and learning? An expectancy theory perspective, *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 1 (2007),1 – 19
2. Caulfield J, Woods T, Experiential learning: Exploring its long-term impact on socially responsible behavior, *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 13(2013), 31 – 48
3. Elias M J, Schwab Y, From compliance to responsibility: Social and emotional learning and classroom management. In C. M. Evertson, & C. S. Weinstein (Eds.), *Handbook of classroom management: Research, practice, and contemporary issues* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates (2006) 309–341
4. Fenwick T J, Expanding conceptions of experiential learning: A review of the five contemporary perspectives on cognition, *Adult Education Quarterly*, 50 (2000), 231-243
5. Laevers F, Forward to Basics! Deep-Level-Learning and the Experiential Approach, *Early years-an International Research Journal*, 20 (2000) 20-29

5. Mittlestaedt R, Sanker L, VanderVeer B, Impact of a Week-Long Experiential Education Program on Environmental Attitude and Awareness, *Journal of Experiential Education*, 22 (1999) 138-148
6. Parahakaran S, An Analysis of Theories Related to Experiential Learning for Practical Ethics in Science and Technology, *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 5(2017), 1014-1020
7. Purdie N, Hattie J, Assessing students' conceptions of learning, *Australian Journal of Educational and developmental Psychology*, 2 (2002), 17-32
8. Solomon D, Battistich V, Watson M, Schaps E, Lewis C, A six-district study of educational change: direct and mediated effects of the child development project, *Social Psychology of Education*, 4 (2000) 3-51
9. Tsevreni I, Towards an environmental education without scientific knowledge: an attempt to create an action model based on children's experiences, emotions and perceptions about their environment, *Environmental Education Research*, 17 (2011) 53-67

■ ■ ■