



Effect of Guided Imagery on Self Esteem and Examination Anxiety among First Year College Students

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to evaluate the effect of Guided Imagery on self-esteem and examination anxiety among first year college students. A quasi experimental design with a convenience sample of 30 students aged between 17 to 20 yrs. who were pursuing their first-year bachelor degree in Saveetha College of Occupational therapy were included in this study. The participants were segregated into two groups as experimental and control groups with 15 participants in each which includes both male and female students. The self-esteem and examination anxiety for both the groups were assessment for pretest and posttest scores using Rosenberg's self-esteem scale and Westside Test anxiety scale respectively. The guided imagery intervention using audio clips and verbal commands were provided to the students in experimental group for 12 weeks which included 3 sessions per week for about 30 minutes. Meanwhile on the other side the control group received their mentorship program in the college which mainly focused on improving their academic, extra curriculum and personality development performance. Mentorship program was conducted twice per week during the intervention period by the staffs in the college. After the intervention, the posttest scores were assessed using the same scales for both the groups and were compared with the pretest scores. From the findings of this study, it was found that there was a significant difference seen between posttest scores of control group and experimental group for self-esteem and examination anxiety after teaching the imagery techniques over the mentorship program. Thus, is concluded that Guided imagery techniques has proved to be effective to improve self-esteem and to reduce examination anxiety among first year college students.

Keywords:-First year college students, Examination anxiety, Self-esteem, Guided imagery.

INTRODUCTION

A college is an educational institution that awards degree to students. After completing school students look forward to continue their further studies in college. College is a place that offers many courses out of which students can make his/her own choice. It is very important to attain education from college because college studies open wide horizons of knowledge in the life of students. They get to know much more about life and students who graduate and post graduate from college are offered greater and better job opportunities than those who do not seek college studies. College life is a big transition from school life. We go through a lot of changes when we enter college. Our schools were a safe place where we had grown up and spent half our lives. The transition to college is so sudden that you're no longer protected by your teachers and friends of your school time. College life poses a lot of challenges in front of you. You are now in a place full of unfamiliar faces where you need to mingle in. It teaches us to socialize and form opinions of our own. In college, students learn their free will and they go on to become more confident and composed. College life teaches us to be independent. It makes us stronger and teaches us to fight our own battles. It also makes us serious about our careers. We make decisions that will affect our future all by ourselves, as in school life our parents did it for us.

Some Of The Issues College Students Experience In Their First Year Of College

1. Feeling disconnected,
2. Struggling to develop habits such as time management, prioritization, and staying healthy,
3. Acclimating to academic expectations that may be more challenging than anticipated
4. Managing a level of social and cultural diversity that may be different from the communities with which they are most familiar



5. Comparing oneself to others and becoming discouraged
6. Having difficulty managing relationships, both at home and at College.

Guided Imagery is a technique (as a series of verbal suggestions) used to guide another person or oneself in imagining sensations and especially in visualizing an image in the mind to bring about a desired physical response (as a reduction in stress, anxiety, or pain)- (Merriam Webster). Guided imagery is a safe, effective way to find freedom from tension and stress. It focuses on the connection between mind and body, using the imagination to achieve a state of calm or relaxation. Although it is not a substitute for medical treatment, you may use it effectively in conjunction with treatments for many different illnesses.

Elements of Guided Imagery include Relaxation, Realism, Regularity, Reinforcement. There are generally three steps to guided imagery i.e. relaxation, visualization and positive suggestion.

One of the most basic ways to use imagery to relax is to close your eyes and imagine being in a place that is peaceful and relaxing to you. It may be a place you have actually been in the past, or it may be a place created in your imagination. It might be a quiet beach; a cool, shady spot in the woods; snuggled in front of a fireplace; fishing; or any place else that is peaceful and soothing to you. Use all of your senses in your imagination. Feel that you are actually there. Smile and let your body relax. Enjoy being there for a few minutes. You can use this as a regular relaxation exercise or in times of stress when you need to relax. With guided imagery, you utilize all of your senses -vision, taste, sound, smell, and touch — to build images in the mind that your body feels are as real as external events.

Examination anxiety is a psychological condition in which people experience extreme distress and anxiety in testing situations. While many people experience some degree of stress and anxiety before and during exams, test anxiety can actually impair learning and hurt test performance.

Self-esteem refers to a person's overall sense of his or her value or worth. It can be considered a sort of measure of how much a person "values, approves of, appreciates, prizes, or likes him or herself" (Adler & Stewart, 2004). Self-esteem impacts your decision-making process, your relationships, your emotional health, and your overall well-being. It also influences motivation, as people with a healthy, positive view of themselves understand their potential and may feel inspired to take on new challenges.

Aim of the Study:

A study to evaluate the effect of guided imagery on "Self Esteem" and "examination anxiety" among first year college students.

Objectives:-

- To investigate the effect of mentorship program in control group to reduce examination anxiety and to improve self-esteem.
- To investigate the effect of guided imagery in experimental group to reduce examination anxiety and to improve self-esteem.
- To evaluate the effect of guided imagery over mentorship program on examination anxiety and self-esteem among college students in experimental group.
- To find out the correlation between Westside Test Anxiety scale and Rosenberg Self-esteem scale.

Hypothesis:-

Null Hypothesis: There will be significant improvement in self-esteem and reduction in examination anxiety among first year college students by using Guided imagery.

Alternate Hypothesis: There will not be any significant improvement in self-esteem and reduction in examination anxiety among first year college students by using guided imagery.

Procedure For Data Collection

In this study, quantitative research and quasi-experimental design was used. A total of The samples for the study were taken by using convenience method. This study was conducted in the Saveetha College of occupational therapy-SIMATS, Thandalam. 50 Samples were screened to identify examination anxiety using Westside Test Anxiety Scale and low self-esteem using Rosenberg's Self Esteem Scale, it was found 30 samples had high examination anxiety and low self-esteem. Both the scales have good reliability and validity values. And then those 30 participants were divided into two groups, a group of 15 participants as experimental group that received Guided Imagery Training and other 15 participants were chosen as control group.

The Inclusion criteria for the samples were,

1. Students who are pursuing their first year in bachelor degree.
2. Students who have examination anxiety and low self-esteem.
3. Students who are willing to participate in this study.
- 4-.Both male and female students were included.

The Exclusion criteria for the samples were,

1. The students who are not available at the time of data collection.
2. Students who are practicing any other relaxation techniques.
3. Students who have been already diagnosed and already in treatment asthma attacks triggered by stress (or) any other environmental conditions.

The duration of the study was for about 3 months which includes a total of 36 sessions for 30 mins in each sessions, 3 days per week.

Procedure For Intervention

Before the beginning of each guided imagery session, few warm up exercises and at the end of the session few recreational fun activities were performed by the students The entire session, may take 30 minutes. Once they feel relax, they were asked to open they eyes. After the end of guided imagery process, the participants were asked to open their eyes and stay in same comfortable position and they were advised to continue to breathe smoothly and rhythmically and take a few movements to experience and enjoy the relaxation. This guided imagery was administered to experimental group for 20 minutes for three days per week.

Meanwhile on the other side the control group received their mentorship program in the college which mainly focused on improving their academic, extra curriculum and personality development performance. Mentorship program was conducted twice per week during the intervention period by the staffs in the college. After the intervention, the posttest scores were assessed using the same scales for both the groups and were compared with the pretest scores.

Data Analysis And Result

Wilcoxon signed rank test was performed to find the significant difference between Pretest and post test scores. 5% level of significance was observed.

Table No:1 Statistical Analysis for Pre-test and Post-test scores of Control Group.

Scale	Control Group	N(30)	Mean	Std.Dev.	Z value	p value
WTAS	Pre- test	15	3.88	0.4586	-2.611	0.009*
	Post-test	15	3.7333	0.4821		
RSE	Pre- test	15	12.8667	1.6847	-2.309	0.021*
	Post-test	15	14	2.1712		

*Significant at 5% alpha level

Since the p values of WTAS scale (0.009) and RSE scale (0.021) are less than 0.05, alternate hypothesis is accepted. Hence, there is statistically slight significant difference in control group between pre-test and post test scores as because of mentorship program.

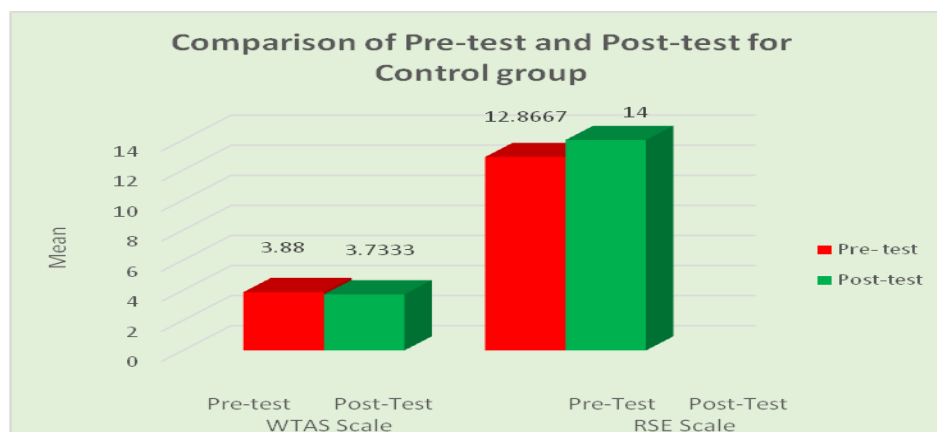


Table No:2 Statistical Analysis for Pre-test and Post-test of Experimental Group

Test	Experimental Group	N(30)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Z value	p value
WTAS	Pre- test	15	3.42	0.4195	-3.418	0.001*
	Post-test	15	2.0667	0.4609		
RSE	Pre- test	15	13.8667	1.3558	-3.42	0.001*
	Post-test	15	19.8667	2.0656		

*Significant at 5% alpha level

In the Experimental group, since the p values of WTAS scale (0.001) and RSE scale (0.001) are less than 0.05, alternate hypothesis is accepted. Hence, there is statistically greater significant difference in Experimental Group between pre-test and post test scores because of the guided imagery intervention.

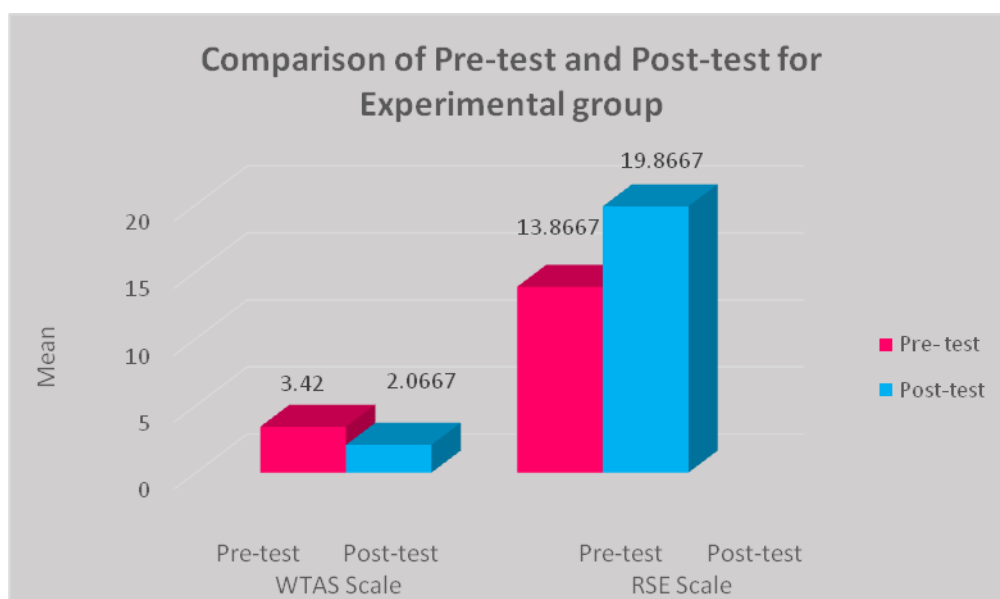


Table No:3 Statistical Analysis between Experimental and Control group

Scale	Post test	N(30)	Mean	Std.Dev.	Z value	p value
WTAS	Control	15	3.7333	0.4821	4.6455	0.0000*
	Experimental	15	2.0667	0.4609		
RSE	Control	15	14	2.1712	-4.43815	0.0000*
	Experimental	15	19.8667	2.0656		

*Significant at 5% alpha level

Since the p values of WTAS scale (0.0000) and RSE scale (0.0000) are less than 0.05, alternate hypothesis is accepted. Hence, there is statistically highly significant difference in post test scores between Experimental and Control Group through the Guided imagery intervention.

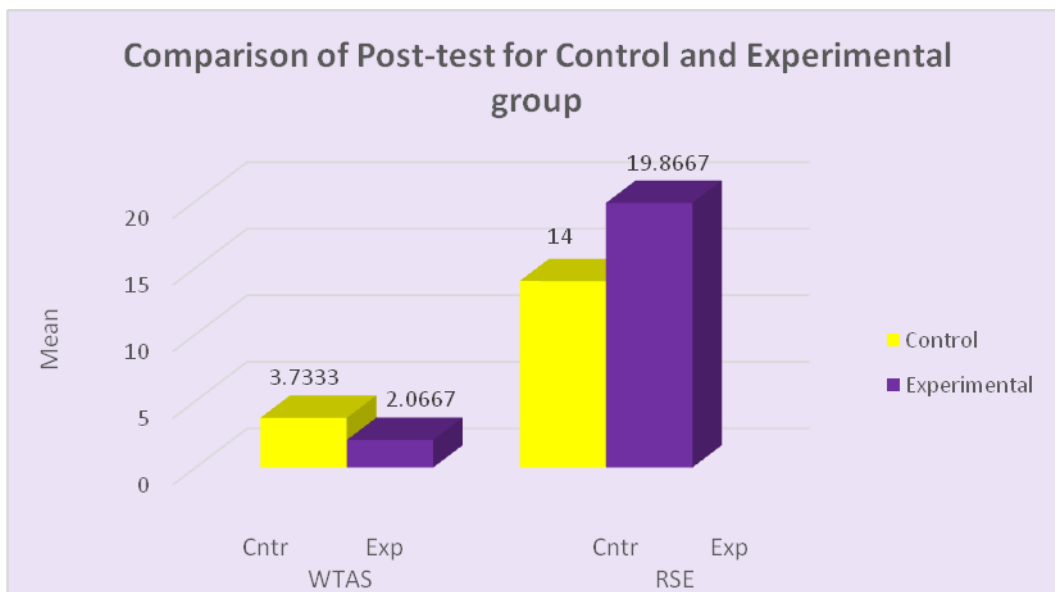


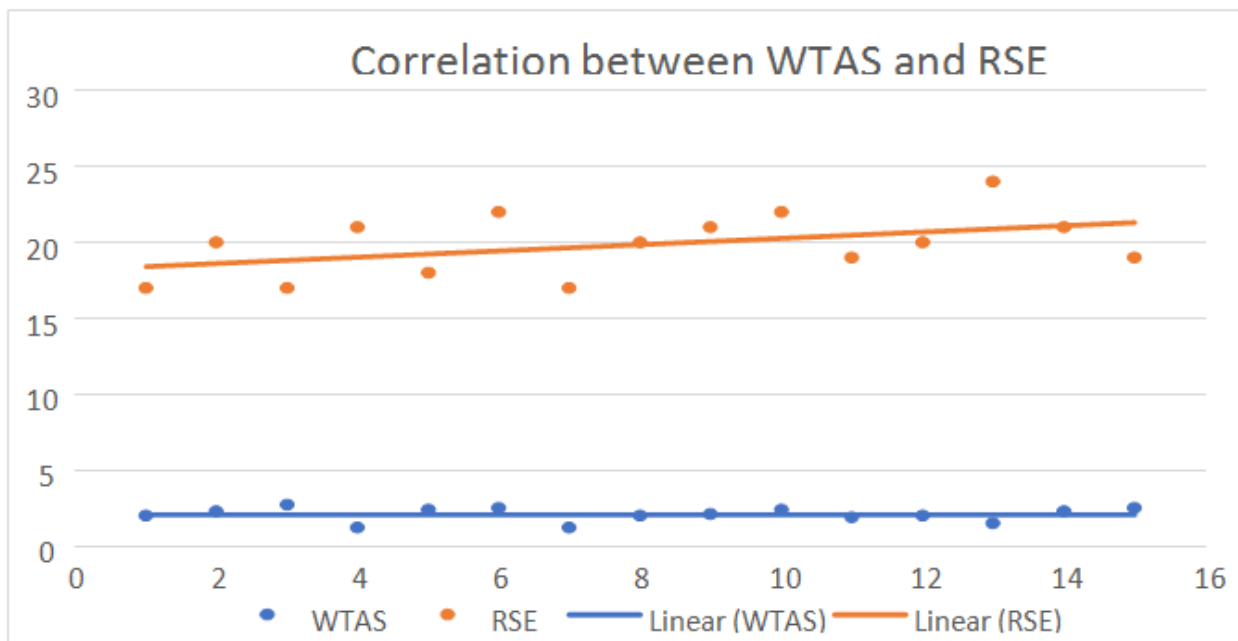
Table No: 4 Correlation between WTAS and RSE for experimental group

Test		N(30)	Mean	Std. Deviation	r value	p Value
Scales	WTAS_Expt	15	2.0667	0.4609	-0.1025	0.7175
	RSE_Expt	15	19.8667	2.0656		

*Significant at 5% alpha level

Since the p value of 0.7125 is greater than 0.05, null hypothesis is accepted. Hence, there is no statistically significant difference in correlation between WTAS and RSE scores. Although there is no significant difference, the r value of -0.1025 suggests that there is a negative negligible correlation between the WTAS and RSE scores.

The negative correlation is due to the fact that in RSE scale scoring, the higher value of score indicates better self-esteem; while in WTAS scale scoring, lower scoring indicates less level of test anxiety.



DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of Guided imagery on self-esteem and examination anxiety among college students.

The students in the control group attended the mentorship program in the college which was focused on improving student's academic performance by improving theirself-esteem and reducing their examination anxiety level through the program.

The table 1 and figure 1 ($P = 0.009$, $Z = -2.611$) ($P = 0.021$, $Z = -2.309$) explains a slight difference between pretest and posttest scores of control group. This proves that Mentorship program is less effective in reducing examination anxiety and improving self-esteem than the guided imagery intervention.

The table 2 and figure 2 explains ($P = 0.001$, $Z = -3.418$) ($P = 0.001$, $Z = -3.42$) greater significant difference between pretest and posttest scores of examination anxiety and self-esteem in experimental group. This study showed there was a marked reduction in the level of examination anxiety and improvement in self-esteem among first year college students after the guided imagery, which proves the effectiveness of guided imagery in reducing examination anxiety and improving self-esteem.

The data presented in the table 3 and the figure 3 ($P = 0.0000$, $Z = 4.6455$) ($P = 0.0000$, $Z = 4.43815$) explains greater significant differences between pretest and posttest scores of examination anxiety and self-esteem in experimental group. This may be due to the effect of guided imagery. Thus, this study revealed that the Guided imagery is more effective than the mentorship program in reducing examination anxiety and improving self-esteem among first year college students.

The table 4 and the figure 4 ($P = 0.7175$, $R = 0.1025$) shows there is no statistically significant difference in correlation between examination anxiety and self-esteem scores. Although there is no significant difference, the r value of -0.1025 suggests that there is a negative negligible correlation between the WTAS and RSE scores. The negative correlation is due to the fact that in RSE scale scoring, the higher value of score indicates better self-esteem; while in WTAS scale scoring, lower scoring indicates low level of examination anxiety.

CONCLUSION

The study findings revealed that guided imagery can be administered as an occupational therapy intervention to all the Students to reduce examination anxiety and to improve self-esteem as it was found to be effective on both self-esteem and examination anxiety. Thus, this study concluded that guided imagery has reduced the level of examination anxiety and improved the level of self-esteem among first year college students.

Limitations:-

1. This study was done on a small sample size.
2. This study was conducted for a shorter period of time.
3. This study was done only for the first-year private college students.

Recommendations:-

1. This study can be done for a large sample size.
2. A comparative study can be done with different complementary therapy like guided imagery with art or music therapy.
3. This study can be performed for senior year college students.

Source of Funding: Self.

Conflicting Interest: None

Ethics Clearance: Approval from Institution Scientific Review Board (ISRB) was obtained prior to the study.

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