

Employing Psychodrama as a therapeutic method to reduce aggressive behavior among adolescents (Experimental Study)

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Abstract:

The study aims to employ psychodrama as a therapeutic method to reduce aggressive behavior among adolescent. To achieve this, we relied on the quasi-experimental approach, we applied a therapeutic program based on psychodrama on some secondary school students, and by conducting a pre- and post-test on the experimental group (08) students aged between (16-20). They were chosen intentionally, relying on a scale of aggressive and hostile behavior for adolescents prepared by Amal Baza, the Egyptian version, codified by Dr. Samia Abraem in 2017 on the Algerian environment, Oum El Bouaqi University, Algeria, and the psychodrama therapeutic program. The results of the study showed that there were statistically significant differences when Level (0.001) between the means of the pre-measurement and the post-measurement in the aggressive behavior of the adolescent schoolteacher.

Keywords:

Psychodrama; Aggressive Behavior; Adolescence; Violence; Anger.

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Introduction:

Aggressive behavior is considered one of the behavioral problems that have become widespread among children, adolescents, and even adults in various social circles, resulting from many different factors, including those related to the individual himself, and some due to family, school, or social factors. The problem of aggressive behavior takes various forms. It takes different forms due to the nature of the situations and circumstances that provoke this behavior in the individual. It may be physical, verbal, or symbolic. It may also be directed toward the individual, others, or public property. The negative effects of this phenomenon vary from one individual to another and from one situation to another within the same individual as well as from one environment to another.

Accordingly, aggressive behavior is a social phenomenon that is generally widespread at all age phases, but it is more widespread among individuals, especially in the stage of adolescence, due to the progressive characteristics that result from this period, which constitute in themselves a context that may facilitate the emergence of aggressive responses. The emotional characteristics of the adolescent make him more emotional and less capable to hide his anger. "Health Organization definition of adolescence as the age range from (10) to (19) years".(Nedjla & Esma,2024,p876)

Accordingly, aggressive behavior is considered one of the manifestations of behavioral disorders in the adolescent, which makes his relationship with others in constant conflict, as aggression against others, whether verbal, physical, or moral, is considered disturbed behavior. "Aggressive behavior is the most important feature that distinguishes the individual's behavior, as this phase is characterized by the adolescent's desire in proving himself, being independent from others, and forming an independent personality, just as the adolescent shows signs of shyness and introversion, he also shows the emergence of instincts, violence, aggressive behaviors, and excessive emotion, and according to what was counted by the National Economic and Social Council (CNES) in a report, it has (2,300) cases of moral aggression and (2,273) cases of physical aggression between students and (1786) against teachers in the period between (1999-2001)(Soleimani & Anuwa, 2017, p. 277)

During this stage of education, the learner encounters an important phase of development, which is adolescence. This latter carries in its essence a set of changes that affect the course of his intellectual and behavioral life, which may push him to engage in violent behaviors that are psychologically, socially, and materially inappropriate. This is what prompted researchers and specialists to search for methods that address this phenomenon due to its effects on people who are victims of such practices, property, or the public system that represents the environment in which these behaviors are widespread, especially if this environment is represented by educational institutions that require stability, calm, and security to prevail in order for them to carry out the role assigned to it, which is education and learning, this goal is not achieved in the presence of widespread aggressive behavior among students, or it may even sometimes come to the point that these attacks affect a segment of teachers, such that they become victims by virtue of the direct relationship and continuous interaction between the professor and the teenage student, which may create a kind of conflict between them. All of these and other consequences of aggressive behavior in the educational environment in particular, and the environment in general, have made researchers and specialists search for suggestions for some therapeutic methods and styles that can reduce the severity of aggressive behavior, and thus reduce its effects.

These therapeutic methods vary depending on the behavioral, psychological and social problems and disorders that confront the examiner, which always prompts him to choose the

optimal therapeutic method that is compatible with what the cases presented before him require. Among these methods we find psychodrama or psychological theatrical acting, which is a type of group therapy discovered by Moreno (1945), which, as its name suggests, depends on the patient taking on significant roles (such that of a father or son) in order to disclose his personal issues and errors in his interactions with other people..

This type of group therapy requires helping the patient to express his feelings and vent his repressed emotions by acting out the different roles he wants to play. Psychodrama has many contributions to the process of group psychotherapy, as it is used as a therapeutic, educational, and training method, as well as an educational method that helps the individual to relax and entertain, because it is a method of group psychotherapy, because it views the patient as a psychologically disturbed person who lives in isolation far from the surrounding society which causes psychological disorders and thus worsens his disease. It can also be said that this technique of group therapy is characterized by the freedom of members to choose and act out roles, training in association, spontaneity, and displaying targeted emotions in front of viewers.(Hamed Al-Amin, 2009, p. 43)

Moreno invented psychodrama as a therapeutic method, aiming to enrich the field of human relations, by embodying real-life problems through the free expression of conflicts and analysis between the patient and the therapist in psycho dramatic sessions, where the person examined expresses the internal conflicts he is experiencing and the emotions that he cannot express, and guide them directly to the true source, relying on the opportunity for acting or drama given to him by the therapist, the latter depends on what he observes in terms of non-verbal expression on the one hand, and what he hears in speech from the participant in the psychodrama session on the other hand, in order to be able to understand him and realize the problems that he suffers from, which may be the main source of his aggressive behaviors, therefore, helping him deal with these pressures positively through the ability to self-insight and confronting the difficulties and problems we are experiencing, and strive to search for possible and realistic solutions instead of resorting to aggressive behaviors as a way of unloading.

Moreno sees psychodrama as using theater as therapy in group sessions, and that the acting movements in which individuals participate by performing real or imaginary representative roles based on their daily problems helps those in charge of the process in the analysis process, and they are asked to repeat the situation several times so that they can measure the degree of Their progress in the stage of psycho dramatic treatment and overcoming the psychological crisis they are suffering from.(Abdel Qader, 2019, p. 124)

The collective position itself also raises expressions of fear, hatred, love, the need for acceptance, etc, among the group members, and from here this collective position helps the silent patient who suffers from repression to bring out what is inside him, whether through body language or behavior (performance), outside his depths. Through this performance, he eventually becomes, at an advanced stage of psychodrama therapy, able to speak with the same degree of performance and acting, and acquire a more mature method of communication. Through the patient's initial relationship with the members of the therapeutic group, he is gradually able to confront the barrier of silence, as the patient discovers his independence and identity.(Shehata, 1999, pp. 38-39)

Within the framework of this emotional release, psychodrama creates the opportunity for the patient to open up to his colleagues, sympathize with their problems, escape from his loneliness, and have actual contact with others, therefore, it allows him an active internal

focus that leads to discovering and experimenting with alternative behaviors. (Magarius, no year, pp. 176,177)

From there, Maréchal and Dawish pointed out that dramatic activity is important as a pedagogical method that can be employed by the examiner in several places, including various activities, through the subjects assuming the roles of different characters and behavioral patterns as perceived by their senses, interacting with them, and through which they express their feelings and inner thoughts in an automatic and comfortable way, and this motivates them to build their sensory and mental development and their social and psychological awareness.(Al-Rifai & Al-Momani, 2018, p. 529)

Many studies have proven the importance of psychodrama in reducing aggressive behavior, including the study by Michela Get All (2010), which dealt with analytic psychodrama with adolescents who suffer from a behavioral disorder, where the results indicated the effectiveness of the treatment in terms of reducing symptoms, with statistically significant differences compared to the control group.(Michela, 2010)

As well as the study of Soleimani and Anwa (2017) on group counseling using the psychological theatrical acting method and its role in reducing violent behavior among students. The results showed that there were statistically significant differences between the means of the experimental group and the control group in the dimensions of violent behavior after applying the counseling program in favor of the experimental group, which it indicates the effectiveness of the therapeutic program in reducing violent behavior among students.(Soleimani & Anuwa, 2017, p. 277)

Psychodrama provides the opportunity to use projection as a defense mechanism. The latter has a major role in the therapeutic process, in addition to being rich in techniques which are appropriate for all educational and cultural levels and its suitability for treating many disorders, in addition to being unique to the process of preparation. Thus, roles can be played through its techniques in a silent, embodied way for others. It also contributes to offering many realistic solutions to the students' problems.

This was supported by a 2017 study by Sabry and Hamed that looked at how well a psychodrama-based programme may change specific characteristics of violent behaviour in teenage girls. The study's findings indicated that teenage girls' aggressive behaviour after applying the psycho dramatic programme showed statistically significant differences between the pre- and post-application, favouring the post-application, and between the post-measurement and the follow-up measurement, favouring the follow-up application. The theatrical acting method was found to be the most effective psychodrama technique that the girls accepted .

The results of the study by Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Rifai and FawazAyoub Al-Momani (2018) also showed the effectiveness of recreational activities and psychodrama in reducing the level of aggression among a sample of Syrian students. The results indicated the effectiveness of the counseling program based on recreational activities and psychodrama in reducing the level of aggressive behavior in the post-measurement and the delayed measurement in favor of Members of the experimental group who received the counseling program. The researcher recommended improving the counseling services provided to Syrian refugee students in schools and employing counseling programs based on psychodramatic recreational activities to help Syrian refugee students with high aggressive behavior. (Al-Rifai & Al-Momani, 2018, p. 589)

Psychodrama was found to be an effective adjunctive treatment for reducing symptoms of high-risk behaviours in unsupervised adolescent boys. Counsellors are advised to use psychodrama to prevent psychological harm in schools. In a similar vein, Hamidi F; & Khodakarami Z (2020) conducted a study in Iran on the effect of psychodrama on reducing high-risk behaviours in adolescence. The results indicated a significant difference between the two groups, with psychodrama reducing high-risk behaviours in the experimental group.(Hamidi F, 2020)

Study's problem:

Psychodrama expresses a type of psychotherapy without medications, as it uses methods that rely on the creative energy within the group to achieve the process of healing and change. The group atmosphere depends on support, encouragement, and dynamism (perpetual movement), where freedom is achieved from the mere process of examination and traditional treatment, and the process provides a creative flow away from routines, theories, and ready-made beliefs, focusing on the subconscious connections with the past and the conscious sense of the answers that appear with life in all its creative power.(Khalil, 2006, p. 32), psychodrama is a research technique that helps participants relive and evaluate events in their lives.(Zeynep KARATAŞ M. A., 2011, p. 609)

Moreno (1956) also sees that psychodrama reveals the truth through dramatic methods, as it is the deepest form of group therapy. Group therapy aims to create a world in which individuals can adapt to society and to themselves. Within the framework of interactive group sessions, any member of the group may mention a problem. The group allows him a degree of spontaneous freedom, as this freedom is the first thing he needs, and by moving to the theater he communicates with everyone, and one person or another may participate with him, and this is the simplest form of transition from a group psychotherapy session to a psychodrama session.

Among the goals of psycho dramatic treatment is catharsis or emotional release, leading to insight into the problem so that it can be solved and treated. Catharsis, which leads to purification, is the goal of drama in general. Purification occurs through theater through emotional release. Moreno believes that during psychodrama, repressed feelings are released in the subconscious mind .

Accordingly, the researcher believes that psychodrama or psychological theater is considered a type of group psychological treatment that relies primarily on the projective method, where the individual embodies some roles or life situations in an improvised manner, whether in the past, present, or future, in the presence of the mentor, the supporting egos, and the audience. This allows the individual to express his emotions and conflicts that cause him psychological pressure in a protected environment, achieve insight into his social behavior, and help him gain experience through his role, as well as modify his undesirable behaviors such as aggression or hostility. Through the above, we arrived at the following question:

Are there statistically significant differences between the pre-measurement and the post-measurement in adolescent aggressive behavior after applying the psychodrama therapeutic program ?

Hypothesis's Study: There are statistically significant differences between the pre-measurement and the post-measurement in adolescent aggressive behavior after applying the psychodrama therapeutic program.

Importance's Study : The importance of the study appears through the topic it addresses, which is aggressive behavior, due to the negative effects it has on the individual practitioner or the victims .

The age group that the study focused on, which represents an important age group in society due to the nature of the developmental stage it represents, which is adolescence. Whose specialists agree on its sensitivity and danger if it does not receive attention, care and follow-up.

Providing an addition to those interested in the field of counseling in educational institutions on the importance of relying on psychodrama as a method to reduce aggressive behavior among students.

Objectives'sStudy :

Identify the differences between the pre-measurement and the post-measurement in aggressive behavior after applying psychodrama sessions, and thus determine the role of psychodrama therapy in reducing aggressive behavior in adolescents.

1. Defining the concepts of the study:

The procedural definition of psychodrama: We mean by it that the trained adolescent performs representative roles for several behavioral, psychological, or social problems in front of the examiner and the therapeutic group, which allows him to emotionally express his feelings and emotions, and to identify himself and his violent behavioral mistakes, with the aim of correcting and modifying them from abnormal behavior to normal behavior and reaching to psychological compatibility.

The operational definition of aggressive behavior: It is behavior intended to offend and harm people and destroy property. The harm may be psychological or physical.

The operational definition of the adolescent: every individual whose age ranges between (15-20) years, according to the study sample.

2. Method and tools:

-Study approach: In our study, we relied on the experimental method using one group of secondary school students, that is, one experimental group with a pre- and post-measurement. We subjected the experimental group to the psychodrama therapeutic program after we identified the presence of aggressive behavior in it (the pre-measurement then we measured the aggressive behavior again (post-measurement)).

-Study sample: The study sample was chosen in a purposive manner, and its number was (08) students, aged between (16-20) years, by consulting the institution's guidance and counseling advisor, and teachers' reports. A number of files were withdrawn from students who were found to be suffering from aggressive and hostile behavior towards each other, themselves or property. After studying the files and revealing the type of aggressive behavior that was repeated during their academic track, we applied the scale of aggressive behavior and hostility for teenagers, prepared by Amal Baza, the Egyptian version codified by Dr. Samia Abraem in 2017 in the Algerian environment.

3. Study tools :

a. Aggressive behavior scale: A scale of aggressive behavior and hostility for adolescents, prepared by Amal Baza, the Egyptian version, codified by Dr. Samia Abraem in 2017 in the

Algerian environment. The scale includes four basic dimensions: physical aggressive behavior, aggressive behavior, hostility, and finally the anger dimension. Each subscale (dimension) includes (14) items. The scale as a whole consists of (56) statements. The items of the scale are answered through five alternatives and are determined by the specific expressions for the degree of frequency of behavior represented in (very often, a lot, sometimes, rarely, not at all). It is estimated in degrees (4, 3, 2, 1, 0). A high score indicates a level of aggression, a level of hostility, or a high level of anger, while a low score indicates a low level of aggressive behavior. Scores can be calculated for each dimension separately or a total score. The following is a table showing the score levels on the scale of aggressive behavior and hostility for each dimension:

Table 1: Shows the score levels on the scale for each dimension

Levels	Degrees
Level one	43-56
Level two	39-42
Level three	15-28
Level four	0-14

(Samia,2017,388)

Table 1: represents, in order, the first level has the highest score, followed by the second level, then the third level, then the fourth level is low for each of the four dimensions separately.

b. The psychometric properties of the scale :

Validity: The validity and reliability of the measure of aggressive behavior of adolescents and its suitability for the Algerian environment were calculated by Dr. Samia Abraim in 2017 using the system (Spss, 20), where she concluded the following:

Honesty: The measure of the aggressive behavior of the weary Amal Baza codified on the Algerian environment by Dr. Samia Abraim in 2017 has a high degree of apparent honesty, where the statements were clear and understandable and measured the purpose for which they were prepared, and discriminatory honesty, where the values of "T" for the four sub-measures ranged from (8.39 -7.23), which are statistically significant values at the level of significance(0.01).

Persistence: The measure of the aggressive behavior of the weary Amal Baza codified on the Algerian environment by Dr. Samia Abriem in 2017 has a high degree of stability, as the results indicated that the four measures have a high degree of stability, which was calculated according to two methods. When calculating the stability coefficient (Alpha Cronbach), we obtained statistically significant coefficients, whose values are between (0.781-0.668), which is statistically significant at the level of significance(0.01), and when the scale was reapplied to various sub-measures, the values of the correlation coefficient (Pearson) were statistically significant, as they were between (0.789-0.669), which is statistically significant at the level of significance(0.01). (Abriam, 2017, p. 388)

c. The psychodrama therapeutic program: After reviewing the research and studies related to the subject of the study and examining some of the therapeutic programs directed at reducing aggressive behavior, specifically those that rely on the psychodrama method, we prepared a therapeutic program that includes the psychodrama technique to be the main tool in the study by using the method of integrating several programs therapy using the psychodrama technique, and then we subjected the tool to arbitration. The total size of the therapeutic program sessions was estimated at 12 sessions, the duration of each session being

45 minutes. The therapeutic program sessions were estimated at 10 actual therapeutic sessions, while the first two sessions were allocated to the following:

The first session was devoted to studying the files and consulting with the guidance counselor and the education counselor to study the reports and complaints directed against this sample of students .

-The second session was devoted to collecting information through an individual clinical interview, through which case study information was collected about the subjects through a psychological examination form prepared by the researcher, with confirmation of their consent to participate in the therapeutic program using the psychodrama technique.

-The students were called by The guidance counselor asked for their cooperation in order to improve and reduce their violent behavior within the psychodrama therapeutic program, and the researcher explained the program to the students and clarified its objectives.

-After actually confirming the students' approval, a timing was agreed upon to meet with the members of the experimental group and begin the therapeutic program sessions.

d. Program Content: We have prepared a summary that includes the objectives of the group therapy program based on psychodrama technology to reduce aggressive behavior in the school-aged adolescent, where the duration of each session was estimated at (45minutes), and this is what we will present in the following:

Session 1: This session aimed to prepare the members of the experimental group and introduce the group treatment program based on psychodrama technology to reduce aggressive behavior in the school adolescent.

Session 2: This session aimed to address the harms of aggressive behavior and the benefits of getting rid of it.

Session 3: This session aimed to help members to emotionally vent through breathing and relaxation exercises.

Session 4: This session aimed to have the members of the experimental group exchange honest and free talk about whether they have been subjected to aggressive behavior or have done it towards themselves, others, or property.

Session 5: This session aimed to make every adolescent express a situation they have experienced and have to represent the situation. One of their most prominent goals is to represent ideas, attitudes and emotions in a kinesthetic and public manner.

Session 6: This session aimed to acquire the skills of control and self-control in situations that cause stress, tension, emotion, violence, anger, and self-control.

Session 7: This session aimed to acquire the skills of control and self-control in situations that cause stress, tension, emotion, violence, anger, and self-control of others.

Session 8: This session aimed to acquire the skills of control and self-control in situations that cause stress, tension, emotion, violence, anger, and property self-control.

Session 9: This session aimed at emotional ventilation through drawing and playing.

Session 10: This session aimed to end the group treatment program based on psychodrama technology to reduce aggressive behavior in the school adolescent and re-apply the aggressive behavior scale.

4. Present and discuss the results:

To verify the validity of the hypothesis, which states that " **there are statistically significant differences between the pre- and post-measurement in the adolescent's aggressive behavior after the application of the psychodrama treatment program,**" the

"T" test was used for two related samples to detect the significance of the differences between the average pre-measurement and the post-measurement in the aggressive behavior in its dimensions (physical aggression, verbal aggression, hostility, anger) in the adolescent after the application of the psychodrama treatment program, in addition to estimating the magnitude of the effect "Cohen" (1988) to determine the effectiveness of the psychodrama treatment program in reducing the aggressive behavior in the adolescent.

The results of the study showed that there are statistically significant differences at the level of 0,001 between the average pre-measurement and the post-measurement in aggressive behavior, as the value of "T" (9,632) at a degree of freedom of (7) is statistically significant at the level of 0,001 because the probability value is smaller than 0,001, because the post-measurement scores decreased after the application of the psychodrama treatment program, where the arithmetic mean of the post-measurement scores (69) was smaller than the arithmetic mean of the pre-measurement score (96) in aggressive behavior, with two standard deviations estimated at (28,08) and (33,43), respectively, which confirms that the psychodrama treatment program is very effective in reducing aggressive behavior in the adolescent, with its dimensions (physical aggression, verbal aggression, aggression, hostility, anger), where the impact sizes of "Cohen" (1988) ranged between (1,19 – 4,18) standard deviation units, so it is large because it exceeds (0,80).

Thus, these results are consistent with the results of Djamila Soleimani study (2017), Amjad Ezzat Jumaa (2016), Ahmed Ibrahim Al -Rifai and Fawaz Ayoub Al -Momani (2018), Soleiman's study (2014), Sabri and Hamed study (2017), Michela Get All (2010) study, Hamidi F. and KHODAKARAMI Z (2020) study, which indicated the effectiveness of the treatment programs in psychodrama in reducing aggressive behavior, violence and hostility to members of the experimental group who applied to them the treatment of psychodrama compared to the control groups that did not receive any treatment program by psychodrama and did not show any improvement at the level of their behavior.

Psychodrama is a therapeutic method aimed at helping aggressive adolescents to achieve venting, gaining insight, testing reality, developing more rational ideas using psychodrama, with a final goal is to change behavior (Zeynep KARATAŞ Z. G., 2009, p. 02)

Moreno also sees that the psychodrama is a revolution on what is existing and this is in addition to using the body in expression, which makes it a large global communication language, as it is a treatment method that suits all people in their different phases. The most important justifications for choosing the psychodrama style to be a therapeutic tool to reduce the severity of behavioral problems is the ability of the psychodrama to emotional venting and collective discussion. There are also some adolescents whose trust is difficult to gain during individual psychotherapy, but in their presence with a group of adolescents (psychodrama), we can gain their confidence as specialists and therapists and thus help them gain insight into themselves and others. (Jumaa, 2005, p. 04)

For instance, psychodrama can help people express and integrate taboo ideas and feelings, practise new skills, heal from losses and traumas, face anxieties, and enhance their intimate and social connections. It can also help people better understand themselves and their past. (Baim, 2010, p. 03). Psychodrama is a group dramatic work that attempts to bring the examined out of his psychological isolation and into the therapeutic group, especially since it provides a practical field for treatment instead of other traditional therapeutic methods, as it helps the examined express his emotions and thus brings out his negative charges, pressures, and pain, or what disturbs his comfort from the inside to the public, where reality is re-enacted and not simulated, and the individual experiences his pain in front of the experimental group, which is characterized by secrecy and honesty, and from it the examiner can

understand, examine and record the most important points missed by the examined or suppressed. For our information, emotional expression helps a lot in understanding why the examined chose this particular behavior over other behaviors.

By discussing the problem raised with the experimental group, we can realize that there are several ways to treat the behavioral problems that the examiner suffers from or caused their appearance, and one of the reasons that led to the effectiveness of the program is the way that was followed in its implementation collectively as it allowed the way for members of the experimental group to express their opinions and feelings freely, to obtain various solutions to the problems that were raised during the collective discussions, and in the group sessions the opportunity is available for interaction and dialogue, as the individual realizes that he is not the only one who suffers from aggressive behavior, but others share in this, and the commitment of the experimental group members to attend the therapeutic program sessions on time and their interaction through group discussions and carrying out homework assignments contributed to their benefit from the therapeutic program and thus reduced their level of aggressive behaviour.

Conclusion:

Finally, through the results we reached, which showed the presence of differences between the pre and post measurement in the level of aggressive behavior, in the sense of alleviating the aggressive behavior of members of the sample after undergoing the psychotherapy program in the psychodrama, and thus the importance and effectiveness of the treatment program approved in this study. Therefore, we can say that the psycho drama is distinguished from the methods of psychotherapy by its ability to deal with the issues of the past, present and future, by enabling the individual to achieve emotional vision, cognitively and emotional in itself and others, create social psychological interaction between people, and provide the group's dynamics, which works to activate support and education and expression in people who are undergo such a therapeutic technique (psychodrama).

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