



De La Salle University – Dasmariñas

Masking Negative Emotion and Externalizing Behaviors among Preschoolers

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ABSTRACT

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In this study the researchers opted to focus only on masking negative emotion. Under masking negative emotions, the focus was on the three externalizing behaviors namely facial expressions, verbal expressions, and gestures/movement. The research was limited to preschoolers aged two, three and four years old and enrolled in a public school. The researchers crafted a validated checklist which contained list of different kinds of externalizing behaviors categorized as positive and negative behaviors. These behaviors were observed during the experiment. This study was limited to identifying the commonly used externalizing behavior. The effect of the externalizing behavior was not included in the study. The participation of the school and the students was very important factor in developing this research. The researchers had to have 24 respondents who were 12 males and 12 females in



able to accomplish the experiment. In the procedure of convenient sampling, children who were not allowed by their parents were not included participants as an ethical consideration because of their age. Also, the researchers had to orient the parents and the teachers of the participants on how the experiment would be done, and let them know that the children would experience negative emotion/s while the experiment was ongoing. After the experiment, the researchers had to de-brief the children to avoid such negative effect on their behaviors.

Methodology:

The study used the Convenient Sampling in selecting the participants and employed the Quasi-experimental Research Design particularly in the follow-up explanations model. The quantitative data collected were analyzed using the One-Way ANOVA while the qualitative data collected was analyzed using the content analysis.

Major Findings:

1.a. In gender, the respondents are categorized equally (50%), 12 Female and 12 males, which are selected by convenient sampling, discussed in chapter 3. The researchers choose to categorize the gender of the respondents equally to have a contradiction of each gender group.



1.b. While in age it was categorized equally into three, with 33.33 % percent each age. Each age group will have 4 females and 4 males to have reliable results and to have equal chances for age.

2.a. In the pre-assessment of the experiment, the mean of the observed positive emotions was 1.79. 9 out of 24 participants were observed smiling and 5 participants were observed doing the activity properly.

2.b. In the pre-assessment of our experiment, the mean of the observed negative emotions are 4.78. The top two observed emotions are not sitting properly and not listening to the task instruction. The first item, which is not sitting properly, got the most number of participants and the second category got the second highest number of participants, is the category of not listening to the instructions. Participants who were observed not sitting properly were slouching and their foot/feet were on somebody's chair.

3.a. Item number 1 in the facial expression category or the “eyebrows pushed up” got the most number of participants. Participants, as observance of the researchers, used their eyebrows to answer yes to each close-ended question.

3.b. Item no.1 in the verbal expression category (I don't like it!) got the most number of participant/s. Almost all participants didn't say anything while the interview for the experiment was on going. Participants only used their eyebrows and their head to answer the following items on the interview.



3.c. Item for head bent got the most number of participants. Participants were also observed using their head to answer ten questions. Head bent that included nodding to answer yes was very observable to 9 participants.

4. a. There was a significant difference between the three externalizing behaviors with the age of the respondents. It means that the age really does matter. Participants who were 2 years old were the ones who showed negative emotions. Two participants on the age group 2 years cried during the interview and gift giving.

4.b. There was a significant difference between the three externalizing behaviors and the respondents' gender. The two participants who cried while being interviewed were both females. Males who were in the same age group of two years also chose to keep silent while being asked.

Conclusions:

The following conclusions are made in light of the above-mentioned findings:

1. Positive emotion is present in the first activity; therefore before the negative reinforcement is reinforced children display positive emotion.
2. In getting the mean score of the three externalizing behaviors, facial expression is the most frequent among the three behaviors. This shows that children use their facial expression in masking their negative emotion.
3. The reward or the *loofah* is not the effective reward for the research because most of the participants don't know the use of the *loofah*.



4. The results show that most of the children do not express their emotions through externalizing behaviors. Some of the participants have no reaction and just look at the reward and they look confused by looking at it.
5. The significant difference between the age of the respondents and the externalizing behaviors means that the age of a person does really matter in expressing their emotion. Mature people can control their emotions and can mask it whenever they feel negative emotions in a situation.
6. The significant difference between the gender of the respondents and the externalizing behaviors means that gender of a person does really matter in expressing their emotion. Males can control their emotions with those externalizing behaviors but there are inconsistencies with their behaviors. Females can also control their emotions by the use of the three externalizing behaviors, but not the way males can control their emotions.
7. The children who use externalizing behaviors use them to protect their emotions. It means that the children don't want to show their emotions to have a good social interaction with the other people.

Recommendations:

The following recommendations are based on the above mentioned findings and conclusions. Review of the related literature and studies, as well as observations made during the course of this research, also contributed to the formulation of the following recommendations:



1. It is highly recommended that next experiment should do the experimental, unlike the researcher who used a quasi-experimental method; there should be a control and non-control for comparison.
2. Future researchers need to produce or design a program that will release the negative emotions of the children and express them with the three externalizing behaviors.
3. Future researchers must find more related researches to support the research findings.
4. Also, future researchers should need to use an ugly reward that will release the negative emotions of the children.
5. And based on observation to the preschoolers now a day, they are on the stage of swinging to the demands of their external. Such demands of the external then change their responses internally. Understanding their internal feelings is very imperative especially to parents and teachers so that proper intervention to prevent masking can be properly applied. The researchers recommended measuring not only the external responses but also the internal.
6. Since the findings of this study are very limited, it is also better if future researcher will focus not only in the preschoolers but also in the higher level such as elementary and high school students.
7. For future researchers, it is highly recommended that they test the effectiveness of the Likert scale checklist for better results and improvement.



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