The Development of Self Mastery through Neuro-Linguistic Programming Group Counseling

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Abstract: *The purposes of this research were: 1) to develop the Self Mastery Inventory (SMI) by integration of Adversity Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence; and 2) to study the effect of the Neuro-Linguistic Programming group counseling on the developed self mastery of the college students. The study was done in two stages. The first stage; on the development of the Self Mastery Inventory, the participants were 917 students studying at Burapha University. The second stage; The SMI developed by the researcher was implemented to 550 students. Students who scored lower than the 25 percentile was randomly selected to participate in group counseling. The 20 students were equally divided and randomly assigned into an experimental group and a control group. The two techniques of Neuro-Linguistic Programming, Global Unconscious Reframing (GUR) and Personal Power Radiator (PPR), were implemented in the group counseling intervention. Data were collected in three phases; the pretest, the posttest and the follow- up phases. Statistics for data analysis were a repeated measures ANOVA of one factor between the groups and one factor within the group, the Newman-Keuls procedure for the paired-different test. The main research findings were: 1) The Self Mastery Inventory comprised of 40 questions, which the combination of 10 factors, including achievement drive, empathy, ownership, self-awareness, stress tolerance, continuous learning, assertiveness, problem solving skill, adaptability, and optimism; and 2) The statistics significance at the .05 level were found on the college students who attended the Neuro-Linguistic Programming group counseling, they had higher self mastery scores at the posttest and the follow-up phase than at the pretest phase. There was an interaction effect between experiment method and the duration of time at the .05 level of significance.*

Keywords: Group Counseling, Neuro-Linguistic Programming, Self Mastery, Adversity Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence, College Students

Introduction

College students aged between 17 and 21 are classified as late adolescence (Spano, 2004) which is the changing time that young people grow and develop. There are numbers of changes, including physical, mental, emotional, conceptual and social changes. Such changes result in personal impacts and stress then personal adaptation is needed. With high adversity intelligence possession, a person is perhaps more likely to adjust in a healthy life. If not, it may lead to other problems. Stoltz's (2000) stated that adversity intelligence is a person's expression in facing difficulties and challenges which are in various forms, ranging from annoying ones to disastrous ones. High adversity intelligence person is the one who is

welled-prepared with changes, quick, optimistic, patient, motivated, and responsible with problems and obstacles. Such a person feels that problems are limited and can quickly and efficiently cope with difficulties. Such a person is self leading as well as possibly leading others who cannot handle their problems (Stolz, 2000, pp. 1-2).

Goleman (1995) found that intelligence is the variable that forecasts only 20% of a person's success. The rest 80% is emotional intelligence. Awareness of emotions and express them properly is a key for a person success. In other words, a person must possess emotional intelligence in order to overcome obstacles and win over others (Dechkong, 2002). Undergraduate students must learn to adjust to a new environment. Changes in a student's life can cause stress (Panpreecha, 1992). A person with high emotional intelligence understands self and others' feelings, knows strengths and weaknesses, as well as controls and expresses feelings properly. A highly emotional intelligence person is optimistic, thoughtful, friendly and able to manage stress well (Dechkong, 2000). Goleman's (1995) confirmed that emotional intelligence truly makes a person successful in family, social and work life.

Many researchers found that adversity intelligence and emotional intelligence are both important and are related to successes. Several studies found that adversity intelligence is correlated with emotional intelligence which conforms to Salovey& Mayer (1990), Bar – On (1992), Goleman (1995), and Cooper &Sawaf (1998) concepts. This research, therefore, studied the factors of emotional intelligence and adversity intelligence by integrating them together. The factors from integrating emotional intelligence and adversity intelligence is called"Self Mastery" which means the ability to manage emotions and behaviors, to motivate oneself, to adjust to the environment and to handle obstacles and challenges. Self-mastery of college students is then designed for further development by group counseling intervention.

Group counseling (Corey, 2012, pp. 28-30) emphasized interpersonal communication of conscious thoughts, feelings, and behavior within a here- and-now time frame. Group counseling tends to be growth oriented in that the emphasis is on discovering internal resources of strength. The group provideds the empathy and support necessary to created the atmosphere of trust that leads to sharing and exploring their concerns. Group members are assisted to developing their existing skills in dealing with interpersonal problems so that they will be able to handle future problems.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) claims that everyone has personal experience with their surrounding environment. Everyone creates a distorted world map (Wisessuwan, 2007, p.2). A human's problem, hardship or inefficiency occurs from perception limitation created by the nervous system; personal, social and cultural limitations.The problem can come from an individual world map creation process by deletion, distortion and generalization (Mattakottil, 1983 cited in Villar, 1997a, pp. 27-29). Counseling with Neuro-Linguistic Programming aims to help suffering persons increase levels of recognition in life and discover hidden potentiality and positive thinking. The person can, therefore, have learning and communicating skill to increase choices and methods to respond to stimuli. The person can solve a problem by considering from possibility rather than necessity, and more flexible to choose different methods and ready to change and live a life with fully developed potential in every way (O'Connor & Seymour, 1993, pp. 3-9). There are many techniques of Neuro-Linguistic Programming. Two techniques; Global Unconscious Reframing (GUR) and Personal Power Radiator (PPR) were selected to implement in the group counseling intervention.

This research aimed to study and develop student's Self Mastery Inventory by integrating factors of adversity intelligence and emotional intelligence and developing the Self Mastery Inventory. Neuro-Linguistic Programming group counseling was implemented by using 2 techniques, GUR and PPR.

Research Framework

This study was divided into two stages: Stage one: Development of Self-Mastery Inventory and Stage two: Effect of Neuro-Linguistic Programming Group Counseling on Self-Mastery of the College Students, as shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

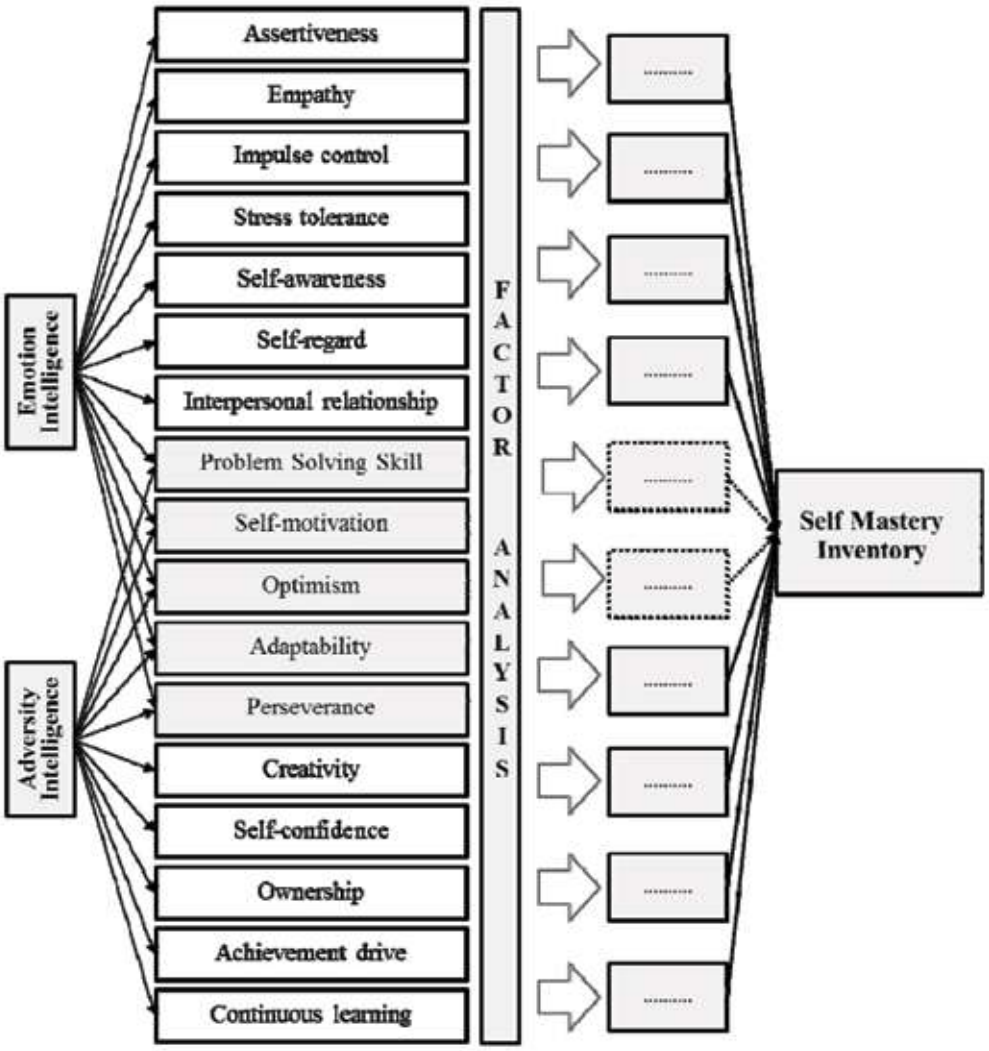

Figure 1. Stage one framework: Development of Self Mastery Inventory

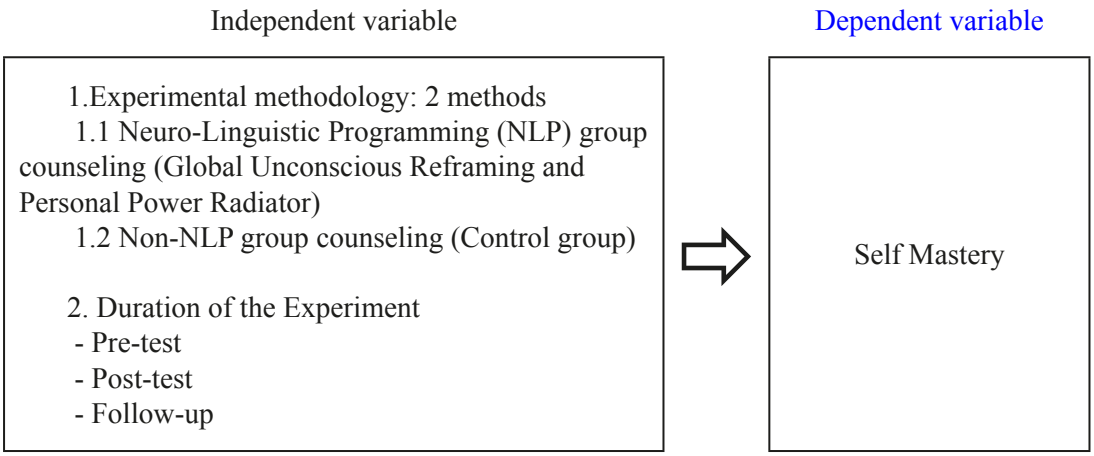

Figure 2. Stage two frameworks: Effect of Neuro-Linguistic Programming group counseling on Self-Mastery of college students

Research Objectives

The three objectives of this research were: (1) to develop the Self Mastery Inventory(SMI) by integrating the factors of adversity intelligence and emotional intelligence of college students; (2) to develop the process of Neuro-Linguistic Programming group counseling by using Global Unconscious Reframing (GUR) and Personal Power Radiator (PPR) techniques to improve and strengthen college student's self mastery; and (3) to compare the results of college student's self mastery before and after the experiment and during the follow-up period.

Research Questions

The two research questions addresses in this study were:

1. What are the factors of college student's self mastery?
2. What are the effects of the Neuro-Linguistic Programming group counseling on college students' self mastery?

Research Method

Stage one: Development of Self-Mastery Inventory

Participants:

Sample consisted of 917 first year students who registered in the General education classes offered by the Faculty of Education Burapha University. They were cluster randomly selected and assigned into 2 groups. One was for exploratory factor analysis. The sample in the first group included 407 college students. The second group was for confirmatory factor analysis, including 510 college students.

Instrument:

The research instrument was an 85-items test, which was administered to explore the factors of self mastery.

Procedure

A total of 85 questions were created to explore the factors of self mastery. These questions were reviewed by four experts and analyzed by using the index of discrimination. The revision of the Self Mastery Inventory comprised of 40 questions was selected for exploratory factor analysis with 407 college students. Confirmatory factor analysis with 510 college students was conducted to confirm the test's construct validity.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was comprised of two parts which were exploratory factor analysis (EFA) by SPSS and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) by LISREL.

Stage two: Effect of Neuro-Linguistic Programming Group Counseling on Self-Mastery of the College Students

Participants

The 550 students from various faculties who registered for General Education classes were administerd to the SMI. The 20 students who scored lower than the 25 percientile and agreed to participate in the study were randomly selected. They were divided equally and randomly assigned into a control group and an experimental group.

Instrument

1. The Self Mastery Inventory, a completed edition, which was developed at stage one.
2. Neuro-linguistic programming group counseling, Global Unconscious Reframing (GUR) and Personal Power Radiator (PPR) techniques. The counseling program was reviewed by three experts.

Procedure

The Self Mastery Inventory was administerd to collect data from 10 students who participated in NLP group counseling and 10 students who did not participate. The data was collected at 3 phases: the pretest, the posttest and the follow-up phases.

Data Analysis

The self mastery' score differences were compared between the experimental group and the control group with repeated measures of ANOVA, one variable between the groups and one variable within group (Howell, 2007), and paired-difference test by the Newman-Kuels method.

Results

Stage one: Development of Self-Mastery Inventory

The sample of 407 students responded to the 40 revised questions, a measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) was found by analyzing KMO statistics (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) which was .876. This implies that the data was suitable for factor analysis. Alpha coefficient of the whole set of questions was equal to 0.916, with the range of each question alpha coefficient being between 0.912-0.915. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted with principal component analysis and oblique rotation. Totally, there were 10 factors, whose Eigen value was greater than 1. Factor 1, the highest, Eigen value was 9.595 and factor 10 (the lowest) Eigen value was 1.062.

Factor 1, percentage of variance was 23.988 which was the highest value. In other words, factor 1 explains 24% of total fluctuation of Self Mastery Inventory. Factor 10, on

the other hand, with 2.654 percentage of variance explains the least. All 10 factors, with 60 cumulative percentages, explain 60% of total variation of Self Mastery Inventory.

Table 1 Eigenvalue, % of Variance, and Cumulative % of factors in Self Mastery (n = 407)

Factor	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	9.595	23.988	23.988
2	2.472	6.181	30.169
3	1.901	4.753	34.921
4	1.852	4.631	39.552
5	1.715	4.287	43.839
6	1.616	4.040	47.879
7	1.500	3.751	51.630
8	1.275	3.188	54.818
9	1.146	2.864	57.683
10	1.062	2.654	60.337

After collecting data with 510 students using the SMI, 40 questions, the results were used in confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The index of Self Mastery Inventory showed the Chi-square: 2 = 281.45 (p = .071, df=248), 2/df Ratio =1.135, Goodness of Fit Index: GFI =0.97, Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index: AGFI =0.91, Comparative Fit Index: CFI =1.00, Standardized Root Mean Square Residual: SRMR = 0.028, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation: RMSEA =0.016.

The above values indicated that the Self Mastery Inventorywith 40 questions were matched with empirical data by each of the 10 factors and as a whole. It confirmed its structural validity and supported the quality of the questionnaire.

Figure 3. Self Master Inventory chart

Stage two: Effect of Neuro-Linguistic Programming Group Counseling

Results from data collected at the pretest, posttest and follow-up phases, showed that there was an interaction effect between research method and experiment duration with a .05 level of statistical significance. Students who participated in Neuro-Linguistic Programming group counseling gained higher self mastery scores on average at the posttest and the follow-up phase than during the pretest phase and their scores were higher than the control group at the .05 level of statistical significance.

Discussion

Stage one: Development of Self-Mastery Inventory

1. A total of 40 questions were developed as the Self Mastery Inventory (SMI) with 10 factors. The questions were reviewed by four experts for their content validity. Questions with index of item objective congruence (IOC) ≥ 0.50 were selected. Item discrimination was tested with Pearson product moment correlation coefficient and accepted values were between 0.20-1.00 (Phongsri, 2010, Phanpinich, 2004). Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to find the components of self mastery. Eigen values (≥1) of ten factors in descending order were 9.595, 2.472, 1.901, 1.852, 1.715, 1.616, 1.500, 1.275, 1.146 and 1.062. Percentages of variance in descending order were 23.988, 6.181, 4.753, 4.631, 4.287, 4.040, 3.751, 3.188, 2.864, and 2.654. All 10 factors explained total variance of 60.337. Final step, structural validity was confirmed by analyzing the second order confirmatory factor. The index of Self Mastery Inventory showed the conformity, Chi-square: 2 = 281.45 (p = .071, df=248), 2/df Ratio =1.135, Goodness of Fit Index: GFI = 0.97, Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index: AGFI =0.91, Comparative Fit Index: CFI =1.00, Standardized Root Mean Square Residual: SRMR = 0.028, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation: RMSEA = 0.016which was in accordance with Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger and Müller's (2003) index table.

Self Mastery Inventory quality in terms of reliability was conducted by finding Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The reliability coefficient is .91 which is considered high. This falls into Gable's (1986, p. 147) concept that the test is reliable if reliability coefficient is .70 or higher. In conclusion, Self Mastery Inventorywas qualified in terms of validity and reliability and was suitable with college students.

2. "Achievement drive" was the most important factor that 24% explained of the individual variation of Self Mastery Inventory. In exploratory factor analysis, factors were re-organized by combining "Self-motivation", "Self-confidence" and "Preserverance" with "Achievement drive" factor. There were 8 questions in the factor with highest % of variance comparing to other factors. This implies that high "Achievement drive" score student would have a high tendency getting high self mastery score.

3. Most of ten factors correlate in the same direction at .01 level of significance. Only 2 factors that do not correlate were "Assertiveness" and "Empathy". "Assertiveness" means daring to speak what the person thinks, or express how the person feels. "Empathy" means the person pays attention to others and really tries to understand what they face. The person tries to understand why they behave in such a way even though their actions affect others. It was obvious that differences or conflict may occur at any time. However, "Assertiveness" and "Empathy" were the important factors that indicated self mastery. It is challenging for the college students to find an equilibrium point to pay attention and understand others as

well as to speak out about what they think is right at the appropriate time. They should also take consequence of their action into consideration. This is how self mastery is improved.

Stage two: Effect of Neuro-Linguistic Programming Group Counseling

College students who participated Neuro-Linguistic Programming group counseling gained higher self mastery scores at the posttest and follow up phases than during the pretest phase and the scores were higher than the control group. A person could not fully utilize the potential due to unconscious limitation in world map creation, including deletion, distortion and generalization. This seriously causes problems and inefficiency. Counseling with Neuro-Linguistic Programming working with the unconscious is very powerful. When a person is relaxed, the unconscious is strengthened without any limitation (Wisessuwan, 2007, p.7). The counseling process helps create world map that is closer to reality, reducing deletion, distortion and generalization, and the person can fully utilize his potentiality.

Global Unconscious Reframing (GUR) technique changes attitude or adjusts viewpoint to change the perceived meaning. The person's perception and behavior will then changed. Bandler and Grinder (1982, cited in Wisessuwan, 2007, p.90) stated that reframing is an important factor in creation process. It is an ability to take simple event to be reframed or to be viewed in a more advantageous way. Nobody is perfect. There are things to be improved. People tend to stick to own ideas, feelings and actions. This may cause problems. Someone does not realize the needs for improvement and someone does not know how to improve. This technique enhances realization and, moreover, it leads to improvement process (Wisessuwan, 2007, p.93).

Personal Power Radiator (PPR) technique is generated from the concept that most people utilize only little portion of their potentiality because they do not realize they possess so much. Everyone has past experiences, pressures and failures. Someone who has negative experience seen by others and began to draw picture of self as an incompetent person. The person looked over past successes, abilities, strengthes and intelligence, and leaves the opportunity without giving it a try. Finally, the person is shut in, spending the life inefficiently. This technique helps discovering hidden abilities in order to spend a person life at full potentiality (Wisessuwan, 2007, pp.102-103). Realization of self abilities would help increasing the confidence level of handling any difficulties which conform to Bandura's (1977, cited in Wisessuwan, 2007, pp.103) concept of self-efficacy.

The two NLP techniques, UGR and PPR, implemented in group counseling improved college student self mastery in every aspect. It is advantageous for studying and living both at present and in the future.

2. Neuro-Linguistic Programming group counseling did not take much time. The process took only one session of 3 hours. Started by theraputhic relationship building then introduced basic idea about Neuro-Linguistic Programming. Relaxation techniques were practiced. Then Global Unconscious Reframing and Personal Power Radiator techniques were implemented in the group. Neuro-linguistic programming is appropriated with group counseling for the time limited as Villar (1997) stated that other approaches were also effective but NLP was the least time-consuming.

3. Group counseling was applied in this research. There are many advantages of group counseling, for instance, group members can practice new skills at counseling session and at home. Another important advantage of group counseling is that many participants can attend counseling session at a time, saving costs and time (Corey, 2004, p.4 cited in Wisessuwan, 2011, p.2).However, the number of people in a group must be carefully determined as Neuro-

Linguistic Programming group counseling requires two-way communication, on observation of each group member for verbal, non-verbal, and body language. If there are too many members, the counselor might not notice response reaction or communication signal of all the members which affects the efficiency of the process.

Recommendations for future research

1. The self mastery factor study was conducted with first year students at Burapha University only. Research results cannot be generalized to all college students and should be used in future study with nation wide college students. Normalization should be found as a reference.

2. This self mastery factor study emphasized on college students as a target group to enhance their potentiality to achieve efficiency in education and life so that they can overcome obstacles and challenges to their goal. Likewise, in organization, all employees want to be successful. They can be the target group so that the future research can be advantageous to both employees and the organization.

3. This research implemented the group counseling based on Neuro-Linguistic Programming. The two techniques, Global Unconscious Reframing (GUR) and Personal Power Radiator (PPR), were selected to implement in the study. However, there are many other techniques in Neuro-Linguistic Programming that may be used in the future research for a variety of purposes.

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