

Gender Sensitization Program with Adolescents: Trainer's Narrative Through a Process Lens

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ABSTRACT

Background: Gender sensitization programs help develop egalitarian gender attitudes. Gender sensitization changes the stereotypical behaviors and attitudes, it helps to generate empathy toward their own, and other genders.

Aim: Taking insights from psychotherapy process literature, this study aims to investigate how participant-related, trainer-related, and program-related variables influence engagement and attitudinal shifts in gender-related beliefs.

Methods: The program was conducted with 54 students from two schools. The students were aged between 13 to 15 years and studying in eighth grade. The program consisted of five participatory, multimodal sessions addressing topics such as gender norms, discrimination, gender-based violence, and inclusivity. Data was collected through the trainer's reflective journal, adolescent feedback, and visual analog scale, and analyzed using content analysis.

Results: Results indicate the significance of program-related factors, including its culturally validated, interactive, multimodal, brief, and participatory program design, which promoted critical thinking rather than didactic instruction. Initially, the male gender of adolescents was a hindering factor. Class cohesiveness and ability to confide were found to be helpful participant-related factors. Trainer-related characteristics, such as sociability, emotional sensitivity, and group facilitation skills, foster strong trainer-participant alliances.

Conclusion: The outcomes achieved through the process variables are positive shifts in attitudes toward masculinity, femininity, and non-cisgender identities, with increased sensitivity toward gender-based discrimination and abuse.

Keywords: Program-related factors, Participant-related factors, trainer-related factors, gender sensitivity, Gender Sensitization Program