Effectiveness of Morita Therapy on Reduction of Shyness among Adolescents

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This study examined the effectiveness of Morita Therapy on shyness among adolescents in Gachsaran (Iran). The sample included 83 students who were selected through the multi-stage random sampling and were assigned into experimental and control groups. They were administered D’Souza’s Shyness Assessment Test (SAT). Shyness of the adolescents was measured through 3 domains - cognitive/affective, physiological and action oriented. After initial scrutiny, those with high levels of shyness were selected and divided into experimental and control groups. For the experimental group Morita therapy was applied in 4 sessions for time duration of 4-6 weeks. Again a post test was conducted for both the groups to see the effectiveness of Morita therapy in reducing shyness. Paired samples t tests were applied to see the effectiveness of Morita therapy. The results showed that Morita therapy decreased shyness significantly among adolescents of experimental group in all the domains including total shyness, than the control group.

Keywords: Shyness, Morita therapy, Adolescents

Studies in general have shown that the prevalence of shyness is seen more among teenagers, more so in early adolescence. Most of the adolescents found to overcome the shyness at about late adolescence or at early adulthood. There is no link between shyness experienced in early childhood to adolescence. However, for few of the individuals, childhood shyness can create severe problems in the form of extreme shyness. It is said that those adolescents suffering from social anxiety disorder/social phobia may have experienced shyness in their early years of life. According to Zimbardo and Henderson (1996), shyness may be defined experientially as discomfort and/or inhibition in interpersonal situations that interferes with pursuing ones interpersonal or professional goals. Shyness is a form of heightened self-focus, obsessed with one’s thoughts, feelings and physical reactions. It may vary from mild social awkwardness to totally inhibiting social phobia. Shyness may be chronic and dispositional, serving as a personality trait that is central to one’s self definition. The experience of shyness can occur at cognitive, affective, physiological and behavioral levels-one at a time or in combination. The prompting of shyness can occur from a variety of clues like one interaction, dealing with authorities, interaction with opposite sex, and so on. In other words shyness can be generally understood as doubts about oneself in effective encounter in social situations.

Shyness in and itself is not a psychological disorder, and therefore doesn’t warrant medication. But, if bashfulness prevents a person from functioning, or depression or anxiety accompanies it, then medication can be helpful. A common observation in most of the shyness research is that the consequences of shyness are deeply troubling. Shyness leads to higher level of anxiety (D’Souza, 2003), decreased level of happiness (Sreeshakumar, D’Souza