

The Significance of Verbal Self-disclosure in Coping with Transitional Homesickness: a Case Study of Chinese Postgraduate Students at the Bournemouth University (Britain)

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Abstract

This study aims to examine how verbal self-disclosure is perceived and adopted by Chinese students in coping with transitional homesickness in the first eight weeks after arrival in Britain. It is a small research involving ten Chinese postgraduate (taught programmes) students who studied in the Bournemouth University during 2004-05. This study can hopefully provide insights for Chinese students to overcome homesickness effectively and also allow the host country, especially universities and social support organisations, to understand more about how to help Chinese students adjust to the new environment.

摘 要

本稿は英国ボーンマス大学大学院に在籍する中国人留学生へのグループ・インタビューをもとに、ホームシックとその対処法についてまとめた文字通りの小論である。ホームシックの対処法として、言葉による自己の心情の吐露はどの程度有効なのか。また、留学生は、誰に対して、いかなる状況の下で心情を吐露するのか。さらに、女性ないしは男性のうち、どちらが心情を吐露する傾向が強いのか。これらの問題関心にもとづき、中国人留学生らが、ホームシックの対処法として言葉による“自己開示”^{セルフ・ディスクロジャ}（自己の心情吐露）をどのようにとらえ、採用しているかをさぐる。中国人留学生は、いかにして効果的にホームシックを解消しようとしているのであろうか。その実態を把握することは、受け入れ国の大学や支援組織が、新しい環境に適応しようとする留学生の支援方法をさぐる際の一助ともなろう。

1. Introduction

Going to university is one of the most challenging life experiences for many people. Fisher and Hood (1987, p.425) described transition to university as stressful because students are exposed to "the demands of a new environment including the need to adapt to the new intellectual and social challenges". Indeed, the transition can be even more stressful for international students as a result of geographical relocation, cultural adaptation and linguistic differences (Fisher 1988). Facing all these changes, many students experience homesickness regardless of their cultural background, age or gender (Stroebe, Van Vliet, Hewstone and Willis 2002). As Luo (1990) found in a previous study, homesickness is rather common to Chinese students in British universities.

In general, homesick students tend to think about people or environment at home frequently, which brings them greater difficulties in adjusting to the new environment (Bell and Bromnick 1998). Therefore, it is important to find out effective ways to cope with transitional homesickness for better adjustment. Although homesickness is not a new topic, previous studies tended to put the focus on its causes and effects but seldom examined the coping strategies, especially for international students. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the significance of verbal self-disclosure in coping with transitional homesickness from the perspectives of Chinese students studying in Britain.

DeVito (1986) defined self-disclosure as "a type of communication in which information about the self that is normally kept hidden is communicated to another person". Egan (1977) classified self-disclosure into four types, including verbal, body language, tone-of-voice and actions. Verbal self-disclosure, as the focus of this study, is an interpersonal communication process which involves at least two people, in which the speaker talks about his or her innermost feelings while the listener receives, understands and responds, in the form of language and words.

2. Literature Review

Fisher and Hood (1987) defined homesickness as "a complex cognitive-motivational-emotional state concerned with grieving for, yearning for and being pre-occupied with thoughts of home". By constructing the Adult Homesickness Coping Questionnaire (AHCQ), Van Tilburg, Vingerhoets and Van Heck (1997) found that long-term homesickness is more often coped with by positive thinking or distraction while short-term homesickness by mental escape. Besides, mental escape is more used by those disliking the new environment while social support is more sought by those missing the old environment. However, there is a problem to generalise the results to a larger population because the participants were all females and their nationalities and occupations were not mentioned.

Among the limited research on students' homesickness experiences, Stroebe *et al.*, (2002) conducted a study using questionnaires on British and Dutch students. It was found that British students had experienced more serious homesickness than Dutch students when they lived away from home to study in universities in their own respective countries. Apart from cultural differences, the effects of geographic distance from home and accessibility to home were prominent. Firstly, British students lived relatively more distant from home and could not go home often. Secondly, Dutch students were provided with free public transportation nationwide, which made access to home easier. The results seemed to suggest that homesickness can be reduced by going home regularly.

Bell and Bromnick (1998) also used questionnaires to examine experiences of British first-year students living in hall of residences and found that they experienced less homesickness after disclosing homesick feelings to others. The results suggested that self-disclosure provides a useful channel of social support which helps homesick students restore and transit to university life. Similarly, Egan (1977) supported that people who disclose about themselves at an appropriate amount are less vulnerable

to mental problems and more likely to adjust better.

Self-disclosure has a close relationship with human innermost feelings. As Fisher and Adams (1994) suggested, interpersonal communication can serve as a support system which allows individuals to talk about their problems. Cameron (2000, p.157) also advised that "feelings should not merely be felt, but actively verbalised". However, self-disclosure seems to have downsides as well. As DeVito (1986) argued, self-disclosing individuals are vulnerable if the listeners are not empathetic or supportive. Similarly, Canary and Dindia (1998) also emphasised that talking about problems can only make people think about their negative feelings.

Despite these possible drawbacks, Stewart (2002) described trust as a pre-requisite of self-disclosure and suggested that people tend to self-disclose to family members or close friends. Fisher and Adams (1994) also noted that people who have similar encounters are more often selected to be listeners for self-disclosure. Interestingly, Lippa (2002) suggested that people prefer to self-disclose to females because they seem more emphatic and willing to listen to others' problems (Brody 1999).

However, Bell and Bromnick (1998) found that self-disclosure is employed, interpreted and appraised differently as a result of personality, cultural norms and personal values. According to Gao (1996), self-disclosure is governed by the concern for face in Chinese culture. To avoid disgracing themselves and their families, Chinese tend to hide their failures or negative feelings. Studies of Lin and Yi (1997) and Carr, Koyama and Thiagarajan (2003) also showed that Asian students perceive disclosing negative emotions as losing face or shameful. In addition, Carr *et al.*, (2003) noted that Chinese students feel less comfortable to self-disclose in a foreign language because sometimes they have difficulties in finding the equivalent words or idioms to express their feelings clearly.

Gender difference also influences the extent of self-disclosure. Men are found to

disclose their emotions and problems less often than women do (Fivush and Buckner 2000) because men are seen as powerful, assertive and independent while women are seen as powerless, vulnerable and dependent (Trew and Kremer 1998). However, DeVito (1986, p.279) had a different view and argued that "both men and women make negative disclosures about equally".

3. Objectives

Since there are limited research on how Chinese students cope with homesickness and the relationship between self-disclosure and homesickness, the researcher is interested in finding out: (i) how verbal self-disclosure can help in coping with homesickness; (ii) to whom and under what circumstances do students self-disclose; and (iii) whether females or males are more willing to self-disclose. This study aimed at examining how verbal self-disclosure is perceived and adopted by Chinese students in coping with transitional homesickness by looking at the above areas.

4. Methodology

This study adopted both quantitative and qualitative approaches, started with a questionnaire and followed by a focus group interview. As Bryman (1992) suggested, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches can provide "a means of bridging the macro-micro gulf". In this study, the questionnaire served two purposes. Firstly, it provided an overview of homesickness felt among participants, namely the macro level. Secondly, the questionnaires were used as a tool to identify homesick participants for a more in-depth investigation in the focus group interview. As Crabtree and Miller (1992) mentioned, qualitative studies tend to have purposive sampling which aims at providing rich but not representative information. This purposive sampling, as Punch (1998) suggested, can be facilitated by quantitative research, in the form of a questionnaire in this study. The micro level, which Bryman (1992) described as the small-scale and behavioural aspects, was examined by a focus group

because it could allow hidden meanings and emotions to surface (Daymon and Holloway 2002).

Chinese postgraduate (taught programmes) students of the Bournemouth University were the participants for both parts. Bournemouth University was chosen because of two reasons. Firstly, it has a large population of Chinese students. According to the International Office of the university, for the academic year of 2004-05, there were altogether 249 students coming from the mainland China, including 145 undergraduates and 104 postgraduates. Due to the constraints of time and the research scale, only postgraduate students were invited to participate in this study. Secondly, access to participants was easier because the researcher herself is a postgraduate student in the university.

The questionnaire (Appendix 1) listed a wide range of homesickness symptoms. By using a five-point scale (e.g. never, seldom, sometimes, often and very often), participants could indicate their degree of homesickness experienced during the transitional period (Questions 1-7) and their self-disclosure tendency (Questions 8-10). The definition of transitional in this study was the first eight weeks since first arrival, with reference to Bell and Bromnick (1998), Fisher and Hood (1987), Luo (1990) and Stroebe *et al.*, (2002), who defined transitional as the first six to eight weeks in the first term. Attributions and features of homesickness described by Fisher and Hood (1987), Stroebe *et al.*, (2002) and Van Tilburg *et al.*, (1997), served as blueprints for the questionnaire. Plain English was used to ensure easy understanding of the questions by the participants.

As Van Tilburg *et al.*, (1997) commented, existing studies on homesickness are mostly based on questionnaires and seem insufficient in providing a thorough picture of how coping strategies link with different homesickness situations. Therefore, it was worthwhile to carry out a focus group interview because a qualitative approach could allow participants to describe holistically and richly about how things are seen

and experienced from their own perspectives (Bryman 2001). As a result, it encouraged an in-depth investigation about the complexities of problems being examined and sometimes emergence of unexpected findings (Gillham 2000).

Morgan (1997) also noted that interactivity and group dynamics can drive a focus group interview to generate more insights than an individual interview does. Similarly, Daymon and Holloway (2002) suggested that a focus group interview can allow researchers to see people interact when discussing a topic and how they react when disagreeing with others. Therefore, researchers can get closer to the participants and explore a wide range of views on a particular problem under different contexts and their meanings (Punch 1998). A qualitative approach is concerned with greater subjectivity and attempts to reveal human personal experiences and realities (Gubrium and Holstein 1997 cited in Bryman 2001, p.265). By using a focus group interview, the researcher hoped to achieve the aim of this study to investigate the relationship between subjective realities of human emotion (homesickness) and communicating innermost emotions (self-disclosure).

Language was a concern for the focus group interview. Hartley (1999) suggested that the complexity of language can become a communication barrier. In order to facilitate more accurate expression of in-depth emotions and to encourage dialogues, the focus group was conducted in Mandarin. Conversation of the focus group was taped and transcribed. The transcript was then translated into English for further analysis. To minimise discrepancy caused by translation, participants were asked to check if their ideas were fully and accurately translated. As Bryman (2001) suggested, member validation is an effective way for the researcher to indicate that he or she has fully understood and accurately presented the points of view of the participants. Therefore, ambiguity or misunderstanding could be avoided and clarified in order to enhance credibility.

5. Data Collection

This study adopted both quantitative and qualitative approaches. A convenience sample was chosen for both parts because of limited time and resources. A total of ten questionnaires were distributed and returned within three days. Demographic information such as name, age, gender, marital status, number of children and contact details were collected for administration of focus groups. The questionnaire also asked participants how long they intended to stay in Britain and whether they studied in Britain for the first time because these two factors might have a close relationship with homesickness.

Seven out of ten participants showed interests in the focus group interview and they were sent a formal email invitation. However, only three participants replied that they could attend and the other four did not reply at all although a reminder was sent two days after the invitation. Finally, one focus group interview with three participants was conducted. This study, while useful, did not claim to be representative because the data were collected from only a few participants in the total population who were available to take part at the time of research (Bell 1993).

Response rate for questionnaires was 100% because of personal relationship between participants and the researcher. However, for the focus group interview, only three participants were able to attend because many others were busy with their assignments. Participants who have personal relationship with each other tend to be more open and honest in discussion (Daymon and Holloway 2002). As the participants in the pilot focus group interview had already known each other for few months, they were relaxed and willing to share their views. However, it is also worth noting that people sometimes may also be reluctant to talk about sensitive or private matters in others' company (Denscombe 1998). In other words, researchers should be flexible in moderating participants in the same focus group interview because they may or may not know each other. For example, ice-breaking and warming up exer-

cises may be necessary to facilitate dialogues and interaction in some cases (Daymon and Holloway 2002). But it was not the case in this research because the participants were quite familiar with each other and with the researcher herself.

Chinese students tend to feel more comfortable to express ideas and feelings in their own language because it is easier for them to find the right words or idioms to express clearly (Carr, Koyama and Thiagarajan 2003). Participants were consulted whether they would prefer Mandarin as the medium of language. All participants strongly agreed that they could express themselves better in Mandarin. As a result, Mandarin was used instead of English to encourage more dialogues and interaction between the participants.

As Daymon and Holloway (2002) suggested, a neutral site is important to help participants minimise feelings of bias and alienation. The focus group interview was held in a discussion room at the Bournemouth University library, where all participants were familiar with. The room allowed them to sit comfortably and they were arranged to sit in a semi circle with the tape recorder placed in the middle. Consent for recording was obtained from the participants after the researcher had introduced the discussion topic, the objectives of the interview and the roles of participants.

6. Data Analysis

Quantitative data collected by the questionnaire were used in three ways. Firstly, the data collected in Part A of the questionnaire provides background information and composition of participants (see Appendix 2). Secondly, the data collected in Part B provides an overview of homesickness situation among the participants by showing the distribution of frequencies for different homesickness syndromes (see Appendix 2). The most common frequency for each syndrome can also be shown by the mode (see Appendix 2). However, the number of participants for this study was too small to indicate the contrast between different frequencies. A bigger research

with more participants will be more able to show the contrast in order to indicate the most and the least common syndromes.

Thirdly, homesickness intensity score can be used to roughly distinguish more homesick participants from less homesick ones. For example, the opinions given by a participant with a higher homesickness intensity score (i.e. more homesick) may be different from that of a participant with a lower score (i.e. less homesick). However, this study found that participants in general were not very homesick because seven out of ten participants scored less than 14 points (out of 28) for homesickness intensity. And they tended to disclose quite often because they scored 6 points (out of 12) or more for self-disclosure tendency.

For qualitative data, the pilot focus group interview was transcribed in Chinese and translated into English. The findings of the study showed a number of possible themes emerged from the focus group interview. They include (i) problems in transition period; (ii) targets for disclosure; (iii) means of disclosure; (iv) language for disclosure; (v) reasons for disclosure; and (vi) gender differences.

During the transitional period, participants did not miss particular people or things in their home country but they had some difficulties in adjusting to the new living environment and their studies. They tended to disclose their problems to their friends and classmates rather than their families. Trying not to make their families worried, participants only shared happy experiences with their families, leaving their problems for discussion with close or trustworthy friends. The problems they disclosed were mostly related to their studies rather than missing home. Besides, verbal disclosure was not particularly preferred but online instant messengers were often used. Emails and letters were considered as too serious and not preferred by some participants. In terms of language, Chinese was mostly used for both verbal and non-verbal disclosure. Participants disclosed in order to obtain encouragement, comfort and support. Females appeared to disclose more because males concerned more

about face saving, self-esteem and sense of security. More details of the emerging themes are summarised in Appendix 3.

Quantitative data and qualitative data were also used for triangulation in this study. For example, the possible theme that females disclose more than males was also reflected from the questionnaires which indicate that the two female participants had higher scores (8 and 9 respectively out of 12) than the only male participant (6 out of 12).

7. Reflexivity

Although qualitative research has long been criticised as too subjective, researchers like Bryman (2001) and Morse (1998) suggested that an audit trail can promote dependability. Therefore, records and documentations generated in all stages of this study were kept systematically for future access. Moreover, explanations of how decisions and conclusions were reached would be made transparent by detailed descriptions. Like many other qualitative research, this study did not claim to generate results for generalisation. However, the rich description will allow other researchers or readers to decide whether the results can be transferred to any other contexts (Bryman 2001).

Being a Chinese postgraduate student herself, the researcher could comprehend participants' feelings and experiences more easily. However, as Bird (1992) suggested, there is a risk of greater subjectivity resulting from common interests. Hammersley (1992) also argued that the tendency for insiders to make assumptions about the participants' behaviours can bring misleading conclusions. The researcher was well aware of the possible bias and tended to keep an open mind in interpreting the data (Gillham 2000).

8. Conclusion

This study showed that transitional homesickness among Chinese postgraduate students at the Bournemouth University was not serious in general. They tended to disclose their problems to friends rather than family when necessary. Internet became a popular way for disclosure and online communication tools (e.g. messenger) were often used by students to discuss their problems with friends. Future research can focus on another nationality, such as Japanese, in order to compare the findings with this study. Similarities and differences of the findings may indicate if nationality or culture plays a role in self-disclosure among students studying in a foreign country.

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Questionnaire

Background:

This questionnaire is the first part of a research project which aims to look at overseas living experience of **Chinese postgraduate (taught programmes) students** of the Bournemouth University. The questions below will ask about your experience in the **first 8 weeks after arriving Britain**.

The second part of the research will take place on a later date in the form of group interview (3-4 participants). All information received in both parts will only be used for research purpose and will be kept **strictly confidential**.

(A) Personal Information

Please circle **ONE** answer for each question:

Gender	:	Female	Male			
Age	:	20 or below	21-25	26-30	31-35	36 or above
Marital status	:	Single	Married	Divorced	Widow	
Do you have child(ren) in your home country ?	:	Yes	No			
Year(s) of work experience in your home country <i>(Please ignore any work experience less than one year)</i>	:	0	1-2	3-4	5-10	More than 10
Have you ever studied in any foreign country before coming to Britain?	:	Yes	No			
How long are you going to stay in Britain? (since your first arrival)	:	About 1 years	About 2 years	About 3 years	More than 3 years	
Are you willing to share more experience of living in Britain with a small group of Chinese students?	:	Yes	No			
If your answer for the last question is YES , please state your contact no./email address for an appointment for group interview	:					

Appendix 1

(B) Homesickness Experience/Feeling

*Please tick **ONE** answer which best describes your experience/feeling in the first 8 weeks after arriving Britain:*

		<u>Never</u>	<u>Seldom</u>	<u>Some- times</u>	<u>Often</u>	<u>Very Often</u>
		<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
1.	Did you miss your home environment? (e.g. weather/lifestyle/food/ atmosphere)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Did you miss anyone in your home country? (e.g.family/friends/boyfriend/girlfriend)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Did you face problem(s) in adjusting to the new living condition/lifestyle in Britain?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Did you face any problem in making friends in the new environment? (e.g. language/culture/communication)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Did you think that your home situation was better than that in Britain? (e.g. weather/lifestyle/food/atmosphere)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Did you give up old habits in order to adjust to the new environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Did you wish to return home immediately?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Did you feel that you had anyone to talk to when you wanted to share your feelings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Did you communicate with your family and/or friends in your home country? (e.g.phone/email/letter/web cam)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	Did you share feelings about your life in Britain with anyone in your home country and/or in Britain?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please make sure the above answers best describe your experience/feeling in the first 8 weeks after arriving Britain

Thank you very much for your co-operation!!

Quantitative Data Summary

(A) Personal Information

Gender	:	Female (9)	Male (1)			
Age	:	20 or below (0)	21-25 (7)	26-30 (3)	31-35 (0)	36 or above (0)
Marital status	:	Single (9)	Married (1)	Divorced (0)	Widow (0)	
Do you have child(ren) in your home country?	:	Yes (0)	No (10)			
Year(s) of work experience in your home country	:	0 (4)	1-2 (3)	3-4 (2)	5-10 (1)	More than 10 (0)
Have you ever studied in any foreign country before coming to Britain?	:	Yes (0)	No (10)			
How long are you going to stay in Britain? (since your first arrival)	:	About 1 year (3)	About 2 years (3)	About 3 years (2)	More than 3 years (2)	
Are you willing to share more experience of living in Britain with a small group of Chinese students?	:	Yes (7)	No (3)			
If your answer for the last question is <u>YES</u> , please state your contact no./email address for an appointment for group interview	:	N/A				
	:					

Appendix 2

(B) Homesickness Experience/Feeling

		<u>Never</u>	<u>Seldom</u>	<u>Some- times</u>	<u>Often</u>	<u>Very Often</u>
1.	Did you miss your home environment? (e.g. weather/lifestyle/food/atmosphere)	(0)	(4)	(4)	(1)	(1)
2.	Did you miss anyone in your home country? (e.g. family/friends/boyfriend/girlfriend)	(0)	(2)	(3)	(3)	(2)
3.	Did you face problem(s) in adjusting to the new living condition/lifestyle in Britain?	(1)	(4)	(4)	(1)	(0)
4.	Did you feel that you had anyone to talk to when you wanted to share your feelings?	(0)	(1)	(3)	(4)	(2)
5.	Did you face any problem in making friends in the new environment? (e.g. language/culture/communication)	(2)	(1)	(6)	(1)	(0)
6.	Did you communicate with your fam- ily and/or friends in your home coun- try? (e.g. phone/email/letter/web cam)	(0)	(0)	(1)	(4)	(5)
7.	Did you think that your home situation was better than that in Britain? (e.g. weather/lifestyle/food/atmosphere)	(0)	(2)	(5)	(1)	(2)
8.	Did you give up old habits in order to adjust to the new environment?	(1)	(2)	(6)	(1)	(0)
9.	Did you wish to return home immedi- ately?	(2)	(4)	(2)	(2)	(0)
10.	Did you share feelings about your life in Britain with anyone in your home country and/or in Britain?	(0)	(1)	(3)	(3)	(3)

Themes Emerged from Focus Group Interview

	Theme	Details
(1)	<i>Problems in Transition Period</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Cultural differences (but adaptation to new living environment not too problematic) b) Language difficulties (causing big obstacles in studies) c) Pressure d) Loneliness (but sometimes cannot distinguish homesickness and loneliness) e) Not miss particular person, place or thing in the home country f) Miss home when feeling unhappy g) Worry about psychological problems/illnesses
(2)	<i>Targets for Disclosure</i>	<p>Family:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Share only happy experiences b) Not share problems in order not to make families worry c) Not share problems because families cannot and are not supposed to offer help from long distance d) Not call home often because of high cost and unavailability of communication equipments <p>Friends/Classmates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e) Share problems with Chinese classmates/friends (no preference for male/female) f) Not disclose to new foreign friends because of language difficulties and unfamiliarity g) Share problems with old friends/classmates because of close relationship, trust or similar experiences they encounter (but trust is not important when discussing unimportant issues) h) Talk to more than one person until obtaining positive responses when necessary <p>Teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Disclose to teachers not intentionally (but encouraging outcome) <p>Social Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> j) Social support for professional advices (more helpful but also too serious)

(3)	<i>Means of Disclosure</i>	Non-verbal: a) Diary b) Letters/emails too serious and not preferred c) Instant messenger most commonly used Verbal: d) Phone calls e) Casual talk
(4)	<i>Language for Disclosure</i>	a) Chinese language preferred b) English insufficiency cause difficulties to disclose to foreigners c) Peer pressure to use Chinese (otherwise may be seen as showing off)
(5)	<i>Reasons for Disclosure</i>	a) Maintain psychological balance b) Feel relieve after disclosure c) Obtain comfort, encouragement, support or recognition d) Obtain suggestions or advices e) Share similar experiences f) Depend on mood and availability of friends/classmates g) Obtain recognition h) Reinforce confidence
(6)	<i>Gender Differences</i>	a) Reluctant to disclose b) Disclose (only when really necessary) to someone without immediate/frequent contact for face-saving/self-esteem/security c) Avoid face to face disclosure d) Prefer email (non verbal)