

OVERVIEW OF UNPUBLISHED RESEARCH IMPACT/MODEL MUGGING, 1993-2011¹

Martha Thompson, IMPACT Chicago, 5/9/2012²

IMPACT participants

- Most have never taken self-defense or martial arts (Cox 1993; Holzman 2011).
- More than half have experienced some form of verbal, physical, or sexual abuse (Cox 1993; Holzman 2011).

Survivors

- Self-defense training provides survivors with an opportunity to reconnect with their bodies and increases healing, confidence, self-esteems, and self-care (Anderson 1999).
- Survivors, in contrast to those who have not experienced abuse, find the simulated scenarios in IMPACT as more realistic (Cox et al 1994; Holzman 2011).
- A positive experience for survivors comes through instructor awareness of practices to maintain students' window of tolerance and instructor behavior that creates a safe and respectful classroom space (Rosenblum and Taska 2008).

Self-assessments

- Participants' confidence increases after taking IMPACT (Cox 1993; Cox et al 1994; Holzman 2011).
- Participants' confidence, self-efficacy, and self-esteem last for a considerable period of time (Chipping 2002; Cox et al 1994).
- Though no difference in skill level, recent graduates have a higher level of confidence than those who have not participated in a course for a while (Cox et al 1994).
- Participants report improved assertiveness, personal safety and self-perceptions (IMPACT Safety 2004).
- Participants report increased physical safety and a reduction in fear-motivated avoidance behavior and these assessments remain after the course (Shim 1998).
- Women learned to use the strengths they already had (Holzman 2011).

Self-defense skills

- Women who practice with a padded mock assailant develop stronger self-defense skills than those who practice only against inanimate targets (Cox 1997).
- Women's ratings of self-confidence in their skills are supported by independent observers' assessment of their skill level (Cox et al 1994).
- Participants' skills last for a long period of time (Cox et al 1994).

Beyond Self-Defense

- Most participants report positive effects of the Basics course on other areas of their lives (Cox 1993).
- Participants develop more positive body images (Shim 1998).
- Participation increases healing for those who have experienced sexual assault (Anderson 1999).

¹ This does not include dissertations completed prior to 1997 because they are not available through Dissertation Abstracts online.

² Thanks to Richard Chipping, Julie Harmon, Meg Stone, and Erica Neuman who provided references and research on IMPACT/Model Mugging.

- IMPACT youth violence prevention programs produce desired changes in participants allowing them alternatives to make safe choices and to live with greater confidence in the world (IMPACT Safety 2004).
- Symptoms of anxiety and depression are significantly reduced after participation in self-defense training and these observed changes are maintained (Shim 1998).

Marketing

- Photos of physical technique stimulate the most interest but also the most anxiety (Amoroso and Thompson 2006).
- Photos should tell a story from the defender's point-of-view and accompanying text should say how the course will help address real-life problems (Amoroso and Thompson 2006).

ABSTRACTS

Amoroso, Lisa and Martha E. Thompson. 2006. Photo Experiment. Chicago: IMPACT Chicago

The purpose was to assess people's reactions to photos that could be used to promote IMPACT. A group of 68 racially, ethnically, and age diverse female and male students were randomly assigned to four different groups, each viewing a different type of photo: an "in-your face" physical strike, boundary setting, a subtle message about the need to practice self-defense in a realistic setting, and a really subtle message about how happy you will be once you have these tools (photos were provided by Karen Chasen, Julie Harmon, Erica Neuman, and Martha Thompson). The physical strike provoked more interest and more anxiety. Other feedback: the photo should tell a story from a woman's point-of-view (suggesting using more than 1 photo) and accompanying text should tell how the course will help women address real-life problems. Effective design features: racial and ethnic diversity, high quality photo, provocative caption.

Anderson, K. M. 1999. Healing the fighting spirit: Combining self-defense training and group therapy for women who have experienced incest. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. (University of Minnesota).

Psychotherapy groups have been found to be an effective form of treatment for the long-term symptoms resulting from a history of childhood incest. However, these groups do not deal with the physical aspects of healing from such a trauma nor do they directly address prevention of further abuse. To address these points, self-defense training was added to a psychoeducational therapy group for women survivors of childhood incest. Upon termination of the group, the participants were asked to describe their experience of this group during two-hour, semi-structured, individual interviews. The findings suggest that the experience was empowering and promoted healing. The self-defense training added an emotional intensity to the experience through eliciting anger and fear, and provided an opportunity for memories to resurface. In general, the group provided participants an opportunity to reconnect with their bodies and increased their self-protection confidence, self-esteem, and self-care.

Chipping, Richard. 2002. The longer terms effects of a self-defence training programme: The findings of a three-year follow-up study. London: Middlesex University.

This study triangulates a replication of Ozer & Bandura's original research with additional qualitative strands, and an extended three-year follow-up measure of a community women's safety training programme with a UK sample (N=20). The research shows that at three-year follow-up powerful improvements to participants coping self-efficacies; cognitive and affective control; and participant and avoidant behaviours remained highly significant. These findings were supported by qualitative analysis additionally detailing the diverse positive life impact of the training intervention, including benefits to social cohesion. The findings provide evidence to challenge reservations about the validity of US research into violence against women with UK populations. Shortcomings of the study are identified and recommendations for further research made.

Cox Henderson, Margit. 1997. Women's self-defense training: An applied analysis of self-efficacy theory. Unpublished dissertation, Loyola University.

The purpose of this study was to examine women's self-defense training within the context of Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory. The study was conducted during four women's self-defense workshops. Forty-two women from diverse backgrounds volunteered to participate. One independent variable was type of practice experience. Participants in the control workshops practiced against inanimate targets only, while those in the intervention workshops practiced against inanimate targets and a padded mock assailant. The dependent variables were participants' ratings of their self-defense efficacy expectations and objective ratings of their self-defense performance. Performance experiences with either type of practice experience resulted in increased self-defense efficacy expectations. Analyses of the type of practice manipulation revealed a difference between conditions in skill performance. Those who practiced with a padded mock assailant developed stronger self-defense skills than those who practiced only against inanimate targets. The findings of this study offered further support for Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory. In addition, the results supported the effectiveness of women's self-defense training which (1) offers practice opportunities, especially with a padded mock assailant, (2) facilitates successful practice experiences, (3) fosters internal attributions for successful performance during practice, and (4) facilitates generalization of efficacy expectations from practice to real attack situations. Programs with these components are likely to result in increased self-defense confidence and skills among women seeking self-defense training.

Cox Henderson, Margit. 1993. The basics course: Results from the intake, evaluation, and demographic questionnaires. Report to the Board. Chicago: IMPACT Self-Defense.

The study sought to gain a better understanding of who is utilizing the IMPACT basics course and to assess participants' perceptions of the course and its effectiveness. Most participants are highly educated, middle-class, Caucasian women. Most are moderately active and have never taken self-defense or martial arts. More than half indicated they had experience some form of verbal, physical, or sexual abuse. Most heard about the course by word of mouth. After the Course, participants were more confident in their ability to handle both verbal and physical attacks. Most reported that their experiences in IMPACT positively affected their lives in other areas. The majority of participants believed that the simulated assault scenarios were realistic and that the techniques would work in a real situation.

Cox Henderson, Margit, Jeanne Albright, Martha Thompson, Lisa Amoroso, and Theo Pintzuk. 1994. Women's self-defense training: Do the effects last? Paper presented at the Midwestern Psychological Association Meetings, May, Chicago. Illinois

The results of 4 interrelated studies were reported: (1) comparison of confidence scores pre and post IMPACT women's basics self-defense course (51 participants). Major finding: Women's confidence increases after participation in an IMPACT basics course; (2) confidence questionnaire completed by 49 graduates prior to engaging in additional training and coded on a point scale (0=no confidence and 4=totally confident. Major finding: A moderate level of confidence (2.46) was maintained over a considerable period of time (up to 5 years); (3) comparison of confidence and skills of 30 women (23 at the end of a basics course and 7 in a follow-up event). Skills were coded by independent observers on a scale of 0 (totally inadequate) to 4 (excellent use of technique) and were compared to self-ratings of confidence. There was a trend toward a significant relationship between confidence and skill level. There were no skill differences between women at the end of the basics course and those attending a follow-up event, but women who had not recently participated in a course were less confident than those at the end of a course; (4) comparison of survivors and those with no previous abuse history. Survivors found the simulated assault scenarios to be more realistic than their classmates.

Holzman, Jessi. 2011. Preliminary results for 2010 IMPACT participants. Chicago: IMPACT Chicago. www.impactchicago.org/Core_Program_Research.pdf

Most participants are white women from a range of ages (15-60) and annual income (under \$20,000-over \$140,000). Most have never taken self-defense or martial arts. Over half indicated they had experience some form of emotional, physical, or sexual abuse. After the Course, participants were more confident in their ability to handle both verbal and physical attacks. Participants indicated the simulated scenarios were very realistic. Participants indicated that they left the course with a new knowledge and skill set and they learned how to use the strengths they already had. Women reported that after the course they had less fear, more confidence, and felt empowered.

IMPACT Safety Programs. 2004. Report on violence prevention programming: Columbus Youth/Teens, 2000-2004. Columbus OH: IMPACT Safety.

Self-efficacy, self-esteem and the ability to prevent hostile situations are a direct result of training with IMPACT Safety Programs. The violence prevention training provided by IMPACT Safety Programs Columbus, Ohio appears to significantly affect participants by improving their assertiveness, personal safety and improving their perceptions of the self. Six (6) of the ten (10) survey questions posed are statistically significant and in the expected direction. Finally, IMPACT youth violence prevention programs produce desired changes in participants allowing them alternatives to make safe choices and to live with greater confidence in the world.

Rosenblum, Gianine D. and Lynn S. Taska. 2008. Best practices for IMPACT basics: Essential strategies for teaching survivors of trauma. Metuchen NJ. Available on yahoo groups in files.

Outlines therapeutic goals that are frequently set for trauma-focused therapy and they intersect with the strategies and goals of IMPACT basics courses. Offers strategies for maintaining students within their window of tolerance: grounding, pacing, control and organization, body awareness, body alignment, kinesthetic feedback, messages to combat "inner mugger," regroup after emotional arousal. Also, offers principles for instructor behavior in six areas: boundaries, instructor personal disclosure, student disclosure, referral not counseling, how an instructor's experiences affect teaching, classrooms of safety and respect.

Shim, David J. 1998. Self-defense training, physical self-efficacy, body image, and avoidant behavior in women. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. (Boston University).

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of a self-defense training program upon physical self-efficacy of women, positive and negative feelings about body image, and fear-motivated avoidance behavior in a group of women who participated in a Model Mugging of Boston course. The design consisted of a comparison of pre-training measures with post-training and six month follow-up measurements. Statistical analyses revealed significant positive changes in women's physical self-efficacy and body image. Participants also reported a reduction in fear-motivated avoidance behavior. Prior history of traumatic assault had no effect upon these dependent variables. Post-hoc analyses revealed unexpected, significant findings regarding pre-existing psychological symptoms. Symptoms of anxiety and depression were significantly reduced after participation in self-defense training and these observed changes were maintained at the six month follow-up period. Results indicated significant reductions in symptoms of anxiety, depression, and phobic behaviors at the end of participation in self-defense training and six months later. The study also replicated Ozer and Bandura's findings regarding positive changes in physical self-efficacy. In addition, the present study revealed that the gains in physical self-efficacy were maintained during a six month follow-up period.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anderson, K. M. (1999). *Healing the fighting spirit: Combining self-defense training and group therapy for women who have experienced incest*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. (University of Minnesota)
- Conlon, Lynne. 1993. *Aggression in women victimized during childhood: The effects of self-defense training*. Unpublished dissertation. San Francisco CA: The Professional School of Psychology.
- Cox, D. S. *An analysis of two forms of self-defense training and their IMPACT on women's sense of personal safety self-efficacy*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. (Old Dominion University)
- Fisher, L. W. (1994). *Facing the demon: Women, Model Mugging, and self-esteem*. Unpublished master's thesis. (Smith College School of Social Work)
- Frost, H. L. (1991). *"Model Mugging": A way to reduce women's victimization*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. (Univ. of Kansas)
- Gaddis, J. W. (1990). *Women's empowerment through Model Mugging: Breaking the cycle of social violence*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. (UC Santa Barbara)
- Lidsker, J. (1991). *Women and self-defense training: A study of psychological changes experienced by participants in relation to assault history*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. (Pacific Graduate School of Psychology).
- Peretz, M. E. 1991. *The effects of psychotherapy and self-defense training on recovery of acquaintance and stranger rape*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. (California School of Professional Psychology).
- Rowe, N. P. 1993. *Self-defense training: An empowerment process for women*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. (California Institute of Integral Studies)
- Schuiteman, J. A. 1990. *Self-defense training and its contributions to the healing process for survivors of sexual assault*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. (Michigan State University).
- Shim, D. J. 1998. *Self-defense training, physical self-efficacy, body image, and avoidant behavior in women*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. (Boston University)
- Vaselakos, W. D. 1999. *The effects of women's self-protection training on the belief of perceived control*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. (Adler School of Professional Psychology).