

The effect of group participation on school bonding among SAP participants

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Abstract

Study Objective

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of group counseling on bonding among Student Assistance Program (SAP) participants.

Study Information

- The study sample consisted of 369 participants
- The study evaluated 79 students (45 individual participants and 28 group participants)
- The study utilized a one-group posttest-only research design

Results and Implications

- Both group and individual counseling participants showed raised levels of school bonding
- Group counseling and Individual counseling yielded no significant difference as it related to school bonding

Introduction

The Student Assistance Program is a school service developed by the Reach Out organization. The Reach Out organization, established in 1969, has been dedicated to its purpose of helping communities to grow and thrive. For the past 12 years, the Student Assistant Program has serviced the San Bernardino area, combatting the many risk factors which result in lower levels of student achievement.

Evaluation Question

- What is the effect of group counseling on student bonding among SAP participants?

The current study utilized secondhand data, provided by the Reach Out program for means of evaluation.

Sample

- Researchers utilized convenient sampling to gather the 73 total study participants (45 individual participants and 28 group participants)

Data Collection

- Study data was collected during the initial screening process, where student needs were also identified and intervention determined

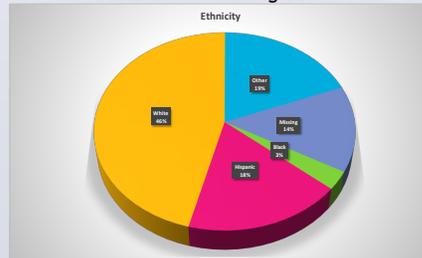
Evaluation Design

- The study evaluates the effect of group counseling on bonding
- A post assessment was administered to students using the PEAR Institute's Holistic Student Assessment (HSA) tool
- The study utilized a one-group posttest-only research design

Demographics

Ethnicity

Black 3% Hispanic 13% White 46%
Other 19% Missing 14%



Methods

Operational Definitions

Dependent Variable

- School bonding was measured based on a 5-point scale on the retrospective HSA self-reporting tool

Independent Variable

- Group counseling was determined based upon the type of participants received

Inferential Statistics

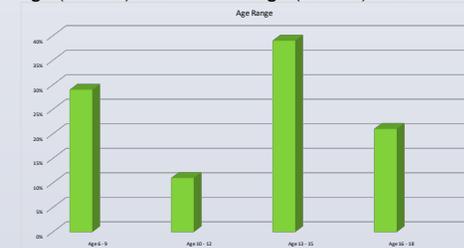
- A one-sample *t* test that compared the mean HSA school bonding of the sample to a value of .05 was conducted
- An independent sample *t* test compared group counseling results against individual counseling results

Measures

The Mean HSA School Bonding factor, 5-point retro, measures the participants' experienced level of school bonding post-intervention. The HSA is a self-report tool that provides a profile of a student's social-emotional strengths and challenges. The mean score is based on a 5-point scale on the retrospective HSA.

Age Range

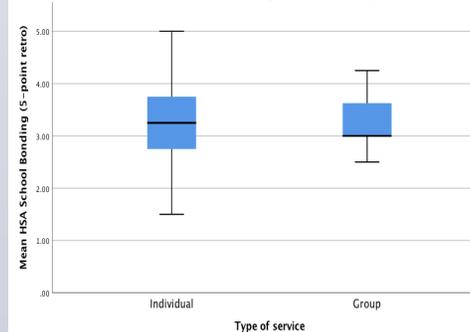
Age (6 - 9) 29% Age (10 - 12) 11%
Age (13 - 15) 39% Age (16 - 19) 21%



Results

- Individual counseling participants showed raised levels of school bonding
- Group counseling participants showed raised levels of school bonding
- Individual counseling and group counseling were seemingly equally effective in raising levels of school bonding

Simple Boxplot of Mean HSA School Bonding (5-point retro) by Type of service



Discussion

Literature Review

- The literature stated the empirically based interventions utilized in the Positive Youth Development (PYD) model successfully improved relational skills among student participants
- The literature cited evidence of the PYD model bolstering bonding and prosocial behavior among at-risk youth participants
- The literature did not draw a contrast between group and individual counseling regarding promoting protective factors

Implications

- The study findings are important for social work practice because it points to the use of either group counseling or individual counseling as ways to yield positive results among at-risk youth
- The study findings are important for social work practice because it points to the expansion of agency reach
- The study findings are important for social work practice because it points to greater program sustainability

Study Limitations

- The SAP data fell short of identifying reason(s) for participant exit
- The SAP provided no meaningful information indicating the process of service determination
- The SAP did not provide data indicating participants' presenting issues
- The SAP's HSA demographic data was missing meaningful data
- The SAP utilized a small sample size

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study provided meaningful information to the field of social work in the areas of child welfare, educational attainment, psychosocial advancement, scope of service, and program sustainability. A larger sample size would further substantiate the findings of the study.

References

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