

Group Counseling Promote Mental Health Education Capacity in Head Teachers

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Abstract: Research was carried out in order to explore the influence mechanism of improving the head teacher 's mental health education ability. The research subjects are 9 head teachers in primary and secondary schools. The research method is 7 online group interventions, weekly. The ' primary and secondary school teachers ' mental health education ability questionnaire ' was used to test the mental health education ability of the head teacher. The pre-test and post-test were conducted before the group (T1) and after the group (T2). The study found that 7 weeks group counseling improved the mental health awareness of head teachers ($t = -6.27, p < 0.001$), strengthened the class teacher 's mental health skills ($t = -4.06, p < 0.001$), Improve the head teacher 's mental health education ability ($t = -4.55, p < 0.01$). It has certain enlightening significance for exploring and improving teachers ' psychological education ability.

Keywords: Mental health; Group counseling; Group intervention

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1. Introduction

Primary and secondary schools are the key period of individual personality and intelligence development. Many mental health issues such as adaptation and growth are the problems they have to face. Teachers may act as key resources in promoting mental health with adolescents^[1]. Teachers have expertise in mental health education, as well as in supporting pupils' mental health through their everyday practices.^[2] Teachers are often the first contact for students with mental health difficulties; They are in an ideal position to identify students who are struggling and frequently support them using different approaches and techniques^[3]. Early identification and treatment of mental health problems during adolescence can result in a better prognosis and functional outcome in adulthood. Unrecognised and untreated, mental health problems could severely influence children's development, educational attainments, and potential to live fulfilling and productive lives^[1].

As one of the important others of students, the head teacher plays an important role in the way of students ' growth. The mental health education ability of the head teacher has an important influence on the growth of the students. A study indicated, initial teacher training and in-service education prepare teachers for their role in supporting pupils' mental health, both proactively and reactively, through teaching and learning^[2]. Further education and school-based mental health training programmes have significant effects^[4].

Based on the theory of experiential learning, this study is carried out by means of group participation and group design. It is hoped that applying what has been learnt to the educational and pedagogical practice of themed classroom meetings. This will improve the mental health education skills of head teachers. The research subjects are 9 head teachers in primary and secondary schools. The research method is 7 online group interventions, weekly. The ' primary and secondary school teachers ' mental health education ability

questionnaire ' was used to test the mental health education ability of the head teachers. This study is to explore the promotion of mental health education ability in head teachers .

2. Materials and methods

2.1 Research object

Convenience sampling method was used to recruit 9 head teachers in primary and secondary schools in Hengzhou, China. There were 2 males and 7 females. The study adopted the principle of voluntary participation.

2.2 Questionnaire on Mental Health Education Ability of Primary and Secondary School Teachers (QMHEA)

It compiled by Li Zhao in 2010. It is divided into three dimensions: psychological problem consciousness, psychological education knowledge and psychological education skills. Includes 20 items, using 5-point scoring, the higher the score, the better the individual 's mental health education ability. Cronbach α in this study is 0.85.

2.3 Teachers ' psychological growth group online, semi-structured, developmental groups.

Embodied experience, emotional expression and emotional support are appeared in the psychological growth group. More dimensions about educational events are presented to the group, more understanding of education from the group's perspective. The ability to discover self-education resources and the changes of themselves are felt by group members. 90 minutes for each group, weekly, total seven, on-line meetings. (see Table 1 for examples). The group is led by 4 experienced group teachers. Each leading teacher is responsible for a group at a time. With 4 experience teachers, the group consists of 13 people. Through the experience and design of the group, we hope that the teachers have the ability to design group counseling or theme class meeting activities for their students.

Table 1 Program of group counseling program for teachers ' mental health education ability

No.	Content	Object
1	Clear everyone 's expectations for the group. Find the most impressive teacher on the way to growth. Learned and felt from the teacher on teaching and learning.	Learn from respectful teachers. Find teachers' pattern and support.
2	Review the most significant thing in members' teaching and learning.	Review the teachers' educational process and find resources
3	What do you think they would say to you, if they are students, peers, elders and leaders?	Find teachers' educational characteristics from different perspectives
4	Set three different cases about students. What is the idea and feeling in the case if you are students?	Improve the ability of teachers to understand students through the story.
5	What'er new findings about regret story in your ducation and teaching?	Explore the wealth and resources that education regrets leave teachers.
6	Which student or parent will say thank you to you? What is the reason ? What happened ?	Stimulate the teachers' value from students and parents.
7	Summary of seven group counseling. When is the most impressive thing in group? What happened ? What are your feelings and points ?	Review learning and experience of teachers mental health education ability

Table 2 The correlation coefficient of mental health awareness, knowledge and skills in head teachersat at different time.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.T1 Awareness								
2.T2 Awareness	0.19							
3.T1 Knowledge	0.53	0.29						
4.T2 Knowledge	-0.12	0.06	0.14					
5.T1 Technique	0.81**	0.34	0.92**	-0.02				
6.T2 Technique	-0.34	0.10	0.09	0.00	-0.17			
7.T1Mental health education ability	0.82**	0.31	0.92**	0.02	0.99**	-0.13		
8.T2Mental health education ability	-0.19	0.53	0.26	0.63	0.04	0.64	0.07	
<i>M</i>	21.33	26.78	22.67	23.00	35.56	41.78	79.56	91.56
<i>SD</i>	2.55	1.20	3.67	1.66	4.03	1.64	9.49	2.74

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

2.4 Data collection and analysis

First data collection before the start of the group (using QMHEA), recorded as T1 in this study. The second data collection was conducted after the end of 7 group experience activities, recorded as T2. SPSS 27 was used to analyze and process the data.

3. Results

3.1 Variables analysis of covariance

The analysis of covariance revealed that (see Table 2), positively related to Technique T1, Awareness T1 and Knowledge T1 ($r = 0.81, p < 0.01; r = 0.92, p < 0.01$); Awareness T1, Knowledge T1, Technique T1 and Mental health education ability T1 ($r = 0.82, p < 0.01; r = 0.92, p < 0.01; r = 0.99, p < 0.01$).

3.2 Paired Samples T Test

The difference between the mental health awareness pre-test (21.33 ± 2.55) and the post-test (26.78 ± 1.20) of the head teachers was statistically significant ($t = -6.27, p < 0.001$) (see Table 3). There was no significant difference in the mental health knowledge pre-test (22.67 ± 3.67) and the post-test (23.00 ± 1.66) of the head teachers ($t = -0.26, p > 0.05$). The difference between the mental health Technique pre-test (22.67 ± 3.67) and the post-test (23.00 ± 1.66) of the head teachers was statistically significant ($t = -4.06, p < 0.001$). The difference between the head teachers' mental health education ability pre-test (79.56 ± 9.49) and the post-test (91.56 ± 2.74) was statistically significant ($t = -4.55, p < 0.01$).

Table 3 Paired Samples T Test ($n=9$)

	$M \pm SD$	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	Degree of freedom
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
T1 Awareness - T2 Awareness	-5.44 ± 2.60	-7.45	-3.44	-6.27***	8
T1 Knowledge- T2 Knowledge	-0.33 ± 3.81	-3.26	2.59	-0.26	8
T1 Technique- T2 Technique	-6.22 ± 4.6	-9.76	-2.68	-4.06***	8
T1 Mental health education ability - T2 Mental health education ability	-12 ± 0.97	-19.45	-4.55	-3.71**	8

4. Conclusion

This study is based on the practical problems of improving the mental health education ability in head teachers. The study results show that group counseling increased the score of mental health education ability, awareness and technique. The improvement of the effect may come from the rich inner experience of the teachers in the group activities and the different perspectives they experience in the group. This helps teachers to better understand students and improve teachers' mental health education ability.

The next step in the research could be to focus on how teachers apply the knowledge and skills learnt during the experience. To explore how to integrate group counseling with the theme class meeting, how to design and teach a good psychological group activity class. For students who need to focus on single-parent families, learning difficulties, discipline difficulties, and left-behind children, how to better carry out psychological care for them, improve their mental health, and promote their healthier growth. These are the contents that teachers need to explore and apply in practice.

There are some limitations in this study. The sample size is small. It should be increased in the future for more applicability. The total group counseling is less. Increase the theme units in follow-up research can be considered. More activity frequency in practice may enhance the effectiveness of intervention.

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