

The Development of a Training Package for Student-Teacher Counseling Skills

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Abstract

The purposes of the study were 1) To develop a training package for counseling skills of student teachers, 2) to study the effectiveness of the developed training package on student teachers' counseling skills, and 3) to study student teachers' satisfaction with Training with the developed package. The study was conducted using a combination of the developmental and a quasi-experimental design. The sample group consisted of 32 student-teachers under the College of Education University of Phayao. who were selected by Dependent sample. The instruments include a training package for counseling skills of student-teachers, a training package evaluation form, a pre-post test, and a satisfaction questionnaire. The mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data gained from the training package evaluation form and satisfaction questionnaire. A paired-samples t-test was used to study the effectiveness of the developed training package. The results showed that :1. The training package set consists of 4 units: Unit 1 Counseling Principles Unit 2 Counseling Theory Unit 3 Counseling Process Unit 4 Practicing. 2. The results of the study on the skills training and counseling techniques for student leaders and peer advisors They had a statistically significantly higher after school score at .05 than before. 3. The results of the Satisfaction with the skills training and counseling techniques for the lead students and fellow counselors was at a high level.

Keywords: Training Package, Counseling Skills and Techniques, Student Leader, Student-Teacher Counseling

1. Introduction

Teachers' counseling skills are crucial as they could promote students' success in both education and life. Teachers' advice could help students cope with concerns and issues during their educational processes. It should also be noted that teachers' behaviors influence the pupils as they are expected to be role models who lead by giving a good example. According to Mitchell, et al. (2016), during their adolescent years, apart from their parents, students place the most trust in their teachers. Therefore, the processes of teacher counseling play an important role in teacher education and become one of the most important skills for the teacher profession Lai Yeung (2014).

Moreover, to be an effective counselor, teachers must develop the ability to consider the physical and mental principles and issues that will affect their students. Mutswanga and Chivasa (2014) introduced 10 principles for assisting students who seek advice to help teachers provide proper advice for both students with and without learning disabilities. According to the authors, counseling should be confidential, voluntary, non Judgmental, genuine, client-based, enabling, updated, and based on mutual respect between client and counselor. Therefore, teachers need to develop the ability to understand students' problems to show passionate characteristics in helping them cope with their difficulties (Chuenyane, 1990).

Therefore, it is not easy for teachers to be good counselors for their students as they have to express care and concern for their troubled students. Mushaandja et al. (2013) claimed that one of the greatest challenges in counseling includes failing to gain students' trust, lack of space and time to develop teacher counseling skills, lack of power to protect their students, cultural issues, and legal issues. These challenges are greater for student teachers who lack experience in dealing with real-world problems found in schools. Therefore, during the education year in the program, students need to keep in mind that good teaching also involves providing students with understanding assistance to help them overcome the difficulties in life and education (Kochar, 2009). They also need to practice taking the counselor's role to facilitate the students' personal development and positive

change through self-understanding. According to Baumert and Kunter (2006), teachers with effective counseling skills tend to progress in their careers.

It can be seen that counseling skills are important for teacher education. However, it is a great challenge to establish the skills of student teachers who lack both life and teaching experiences. Therefore, an instructional method that could enable student teachers to practice giving advice with care and concern for students' problems should be applied to solve the problems in teacher counseling education. The current study, therefore, aims to develop a training course to develop student teachers' counseling skills. The developed training course should establish the knowledge of counseling principles, theories, procedures, and practices for the students and help them progress in their future careers.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Individual Psychology

Individual psychology (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956) has been considered one of the major principles used in counseling. The theory was introduced by Alfred Adler who utilized the concepts of social responsibility and individual needs to achieve in the process of counseling. In Individual psychology theory, people are believed to be motivated by the feeling of social belonging, and social training results in individual social interests. Therefore, people seek to become successful otherwise they would develop an inferiority complex, a condition faced by those who could not reach the line of personal success. Moreover, Adler believed that personal conscious behaviors are the results of personal development and are important in the processes of how an individual interprets and adjusts to different life circumstances. Consequently, maladjustment occurs when a person lacks social interest and when a person's positive attempts at good behavior have failed to produce the desired results. They engage in this type of misbehavior. With this principle, the most common solution to misbehaviors was to encourage good behavior.

In the Individual Psychology theory, teachers should take the roles of diagnostician and model. They should work with students to investigate conscious contemplation, beliefs, and the logical basis for behaviors that are not fit the students' best interests or those of society. Teachers could apply counseling techniques such as establishing rapport, defining a style of life, helping the client to gain insight, and challenging students' private logic and behaviors. They may inquire how the students' lives would differ if there were not in trouble and encourage them by how the teachers believe in their ability to develop personal growth. Students can be assigned tasks to help them set short-term goals leading to the achievement of long-term goals to identify and limit destructive behaviors. These techniques would help students to gain insight into their style of life and contribute to a collaborative relationship between counseling teachers and students.

2.2 Principles of Teacher Counseling

Various principles have been presented as components of teacher counseling (e.g., Georgiana, 2014; Jiya, 2018; Nkechi et al., 2016, Mutswanga & Chivasa, 2014). The summary of the main principles in counseling can be seen below.

2.2.1 Confidentiality

Keeping counseling secret is one of the most important issues teachers should take note of. Most counseling issues are sensitive matters such as family, financial, and interpersonal relationships. To gain students' trust, teachers must not leak the information, and only persons with interest should get access to the data.

2.2.2 Willingness

It should also be noted that students must not be forced to be in counseling processes. The student should voluntarily select a person or teacher with whom she/he feels comfortable sharing concerns. How the dialogue begins and develops should be carefully selected by teachers. The sound of counseling should never be forceful.

2.2.3 Genuineness

Genuine counseling is an atmosphere for both teachers and students. It should be noted that it might be one of a few opportunities that students to meet a person with whom they could exchange their true thoughts and feelings. During the dialogue, students should be allowed to express themselves without interruption. The teacher's empathy should be communicated through actions, and those actions should demonstrate the teacher's willingness to assist.

2.2.4 Non Judgement

A neutral stance should be considered an important counseling skill for teachers. Students should have a

substantial say in determining the course of action, as they are the ones who must live with and respond to the problem. When it comes to helping students find solutions to their problems, however, the teacher should serve as a mediator.

2.2.5 Student Empowerment

Empowering students to be more capable of dealing with their life situations, in the long run, should be taken as an important purpose of counseling. Therefore, The students, not the counselor, are in charge of resolving their problems while the teacher is attentively listening and showing that he or she is interested in putting their best attempts to help the students.

2.3 Attempts in Developing Student Teachers' Counseling Skills

Due to the importance of counseling for teachers' careers, research has been conducted to develop teachers' abilities to provide assistance and guidance in resolving students' problems (e.g., Gerich et al., 2017; Gerich & Schmitz, 2016; Lin, 2011; Ray, 2007; Shechtman & Or, 1996). For example, Shechtman and Or (1996) found that counseling training could change teacher beliefs regarding classroom diversity in a democratic way. In teacher education, Gerich and Schmitz (2016) applied simulated parent-teacher talks to develop teachers' counseling competence. The results of the study demonstrate the efficacy of counseling talk simulations as an intervention within the context of counseling teacher education programs. It enabled teachers to practice and refine their professional counseling competencies, obtain expertise in counseling, and develop their confidence in counseling. Likewise, Gerich et al. (2017) used the same method to develop prospective teachers' counseling competence. The findings indicated that training and individual process-oriented feedback are effective in fostering the counseling competence of student teachers. What can be noted from the results of the previous studies is that to enable student teachers' counseling skills, authentic practice and feedback are important as it familiarizes the prospective teachers with the situations they might deal with throughout their careers. The current study aimed to develop a training package with authentic practice and feedback learning activities using individual psychology as the main principle of the design to develop student teachers' counseling skills. The purposes of the study were 1) To develop a training package for counseling skills of student teachers, 2) to study the effectiveness of the developed training package on student teachers' counseling skills, and 3) to study student teachers' satisfaction with learning with the developed package.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

A combination of the developmental and quasi-experiment design was employed. The study was divided into 2 phases including the development of the training package and the implementation of the developed package. The participants' skills before and after the treatment are compared to the effectiveness of the package. The participants' satisfaction with the treatment is also investigated to provide a psychological aspect of the treatment in class.

3.2 Participants

32 student-teachers under the College of Education University of Phayao. The sample group consisted of 32 student-teachers under the College of Education University of Phayao. who were selected by Dependent sample. The participants were in the first year of their program, and they were treated anonymously throughout the process of data collection.

3.3 Instruments

The instruments include a training package for counseling skills of student teachers, a training package evaluation form, a pre-post test, and a satisfaction questionnaire. In detail, the package consists of 4 components including principles in counseling, counseling theories, counseling procedures, and practical counseling. The evaluation form includes 11 items in 3 components which are components of the training package, participant roles, and trainer roles. The test consists of 20 question items designed in 5 multiple choices. The satisfaction questionnaire consists of 12 question items related to positive opinions toward the training package.

3.4 Data Collection

The data collection was divided into 2 phases. The first phase was the development of the package using the analysis of data and the validation of the experts. The package was then employed to develop the participants. It took a semester of data collection. The counseling skill evaluations took place before and after the treatment. The questionnaire was employed at the end of the data collection to investigate the participants' satisfaction with the package. All data collection processes were completed with ethical considerations. The participants' privacy was

protected, and they participated in the project with full consent.

3.5 Data Analysis

The mean score and standard deviation were used to analyze the data gained from the training package evaluation form and satisfaction questionnaire. A samples t-test was used to study the effectiveness of the developed training package.

4. Results

4.1 The Training Package Development

Table 1. The training package evaluation

The training package evaluation	\bar{x}	S.D.
1. The components of the package	4.66	0.38
1.1 The instruction is clear and practicable.	4.67	0.58
1.2 The content is relevant to the purposes of the training package.	5.00	0.00
1.3 Training time is relevant to the content.	4.67	0.58
1.4 The content complexity is in ascending order.	5.00	0.00
1.5 Media and training patterns are appropriate in the current situations.	4.33	0.58
1.6 Evaluation methods are relevant to the purposes of the training package.	4.33	0.58
2. Participant roles	4.11	0.52
2.1 The participants have opportunity to practice counseling.	4.33	0.58
2.2 The participants have opportunity to ask questions.	4.00	0.00
2.3 Discussions in the training are supported.	4.00	1.00
3. Trainer roles	4.67	0.58
3.1 Training resource are useful and diverse.	4.67	0.58
3.2 Class instruction is stimulating.	4.67	0.58
Average	4.52	0.46

The results of the study indicate a very level of appropriateness in the training package evaluation ($\bar{x} = 4.52$, S.D = 0.46). In detail, the aspect of components of the package was evaluated at a very high level of appropriation ($\bar{x} = 4.66$, S.D = 0.38). The participant role was at a high level ($\bar{x} = 4.11$, S.D = 0.46), and the trainer role was at a very high level ($\bar{x} = 4.67$, S.D = 0.58). It could be interpreted that the developed training course was appropriate and can be used to develop student teachers' counseling skills.

4.2 The Implementation of the Developed Training Package

Table 2. The comparison between the participants' pre and post-tests

Test	n	Fullmark	\bar{x}	S. D.	t	Sig.
Pre-test	32	20	10.23	4.24	1.69*	.000
Post-test	32	20	15.38	3.53		

The results of the study indicate the improvement of the participants' counseling skills after participating in the developed training package. A paired-samples t-test indicates a significant difference between the participants' pre-test scores ($\bar{x} = 10.23$, S.D = 4.24) and post-test scores ($\bar{x} = 15.38$, S.D = 3.53), $t = 1.69$, $p = .00$. Therefore, it could be interpreted that the developed training package positively affected the participants' counseling skills.

4.3 Participants' Satisfaction with the Training Package

Table 3. Participants' satisfaction with the training package

Statements	\bar{x}	S.D.
The training activities were beneficial for developing counseling skills.	4.66	0.60
I participated in every process of the activities.	4.28	0.63
The content of the package was appropriate and ordered in ascending complexity.	4.56	0.56
The knowledge gained in the training package can be applicable in real practice.	4.31	0.59
The training package was well promoted.	4.44	0.67
The activities were interesting and relevant to the content.	4.28	0.58
Training time was relevant to the content.	4.52	0.68
The media used in the training package was appropriate.	4.25	0.62
Evaluation methods were appropriate and rational.	4.34	0.70
The knowledge gained in the training package could be applicable in advising acquaintances.	4.53	0.67
The knowledge gained in the training package could be applied to deal with unexpected situations.	4.41	0.67
The knowledge gained in the training package was beneficial in developing my counseling skills.	4.31	0.64
Average	4.41	0.64

The results of the study indicate that the participants were satisfied with the training package. Statistically, the average student satisfaction with the training package was at a high level ($\bar{x} = 4.41$, S.D = 0.64). In detail, it seems that the participants perceived the training package as an instructional method that could benefit the development of their counseling skills with interesting and participatory activities, appropriate learning media, and rational evaluation methods. Therefore, it could also be interpreted that the developed training package could contribute to a preferable class atmosphere in developing student teachers' counseling skills.

5. Discussions

5.1 The Effectiveness of the Training Package

The results of the study indicate the developed training package was effective in improving 1st-year student teachers' counseling skills. The training package joins the previous methods such as parents-teacher talk (Gerich et al., 2017; Gerich & Schmitz, 2016), direct instruction of theory and practice (Lin, 2011), and child-centered play therapy (CCPT) and teacher consultation (Ray, 2007) in guiding student teachers to develop counseling competence throughout their education programs. Further studies should also invent instructional methods that could be beneficial in counseling education for education staff. Moreover, it should be noted that the current study applied only one group experiment design to prove the effectiveness of the package. The direction of further studies might focus on the comparison between instructional methods in counseling education.

In addition, it is noteworthy that authentic practice and feedback played an important role in the success of the training package. The findings of the study are consistent with Gerich et al. (2017) who also found that the practice and feedback processes would let prospective teachers practice using counseling theory in action. Feedback from peers or teachers would let them learn from their mistakes (if any) regarding how they ask questions, consort clients, and place themselves in counseling situations. Therefore, further studies should focus on designing instructional methods that could provide opportunities to practice counseling using authentic situations and to discuss the quality of their performance with supervisors.

5.2 The Students' Satisfaction with the Training Package

Findings indicate that the participants were satisfied with the training package as it helped them develop their counseling knowledge and skills through participation in learning activities. It could be notified that the package consists of both theory lecturing and practical parts. Therefore, the participants were allowed to take the knowledge into practice. According to Billett (2010), learning by doing not only leads learners to knowledge of the subject matter but also brings about a preferable learning environment. Therefore, further studies should consider practical training to create a learnable atmosphere throughout their processes of data collection.

6. Conclusion, Recommendation, and Limitation

6.1 Conclusion

The current study was conducted to develop and implement a training package for improving student teachers' counseling skills. Throughout the processes of data collection, the results of the study could be concluded that the training package was developed with the potential to improve the participants' counseling skills. At the

implementation stage, the participants' skills were positively affected after participating in the training program. Moreover, they were satisfied with the learning activities throughout the training package.

6.2 Recommendations

The results of the study could be implemented in teacher counseling education as teaching staff could employ the training package developed in the current study in the development of teacher education with the majors related to consultation. However, as the package was developed with the principle of individual psychology, it should be implicated with the consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of the theory. Participants' needs should be considered as the main criteria before employing the package.

6.3 Limitations

The study also bared limitations in design as it only employ a quasi-experimental design with one group of participants. Assigning the comparative group might provide a broader picture of how the package assists student teachers to develop their counseling skills. Moreover, a qualitative aspect of data collection should illustrate how student teachers develop their skills through each stage of the training package.

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