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# Efficacy of Group Counseling on Students' Social Skills

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## Research Question

In what ways does group counseling affect the development of students' social skills?

**Social skills** refer to any competence that facilitates interaction and communication with other individuals, where social rules and relations are created, communicated, and changed in verbal and nonverbal ways.

## Methodology

- I used keywords found in discourse around sociology, psychology, and education. Phrases like "social skills," "group counseling," and "restorative circles" were used to find articles. Ames MegaSearch, ERIC, ILLiad, and Education Research Complete were used to search for relevant sources.
- When selecting articles to review, the title, abstract, methods, and conclusion sections were evaluated.
- By finding repetition, theory-related materials, similarities and differences, and missing data in my selected articles, effects of group counseling were synthesized.

## Literature Review

- Ortega, Lyubansky, Nettles, and Espelage (2016) noticed positive outcomes in ownership of the process/bypassing adults, interrupting the school-to-prison pipeline, improving relationships, preventing destructive ways of engaging in conflict, and conducting meaningful dialogue.
- Improvements in personality traits of individuals, communication skills, problem solving skills on an interpersonal level, friendly relationships, and behavioral problems after implementing solution-focused group counseling (Ateş, 2016).
- Lee, Huh, and Reigeluth (2015) found that appropriate use of social skills allowed students to solve problems in a way that enhanced and supported collaboration.
- Strengths of group counseling intervention included "learning practical skills to support academic performance, fostering social and school connections and support, exploring gender role and identity, and learning how to deal with life conflicts and decisions" (Pérez-Gualdrón, Yeh, & Russell, 2016).

## Results

- Although group counseling in school settings is often activity-based, using mindfulness meditation in groups is an effective way to improve behavioral and emotional strengths for students. (Wisner and Norton, 2013).
- School-based group counseling is an effective method for addressing the needs of multiple students, as well as to correct any deficits in social skills (Stephens, Jain, & Kim, 2010).
- A person gets an understanding of who they are, based on the groups they belong to. Students can gain a sense of identity through involvement in a counseling group. (Tajfel, 1979)

## Conclusion

- There is much needed research around the implementation of group counseling and the impact on students' social skills.
- Implications of this research suggest that teachers and school counseling professionals utilize group counseling strategies to increase student behavior and development of social skills.
- Future research should be conducted around the long-term effects of group counseling in students' development.