THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF ENCOUNTER GROUP IN THE SPORT ACTIVITY ON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Background

The purpose of this research is to investigate the effects of structured encounter group in the sport activity for mental health on university students. According to Annual Statistical Report 2003 (Japanese Society of for University Mental Health, 2003), about 2 to 3 % percent of students suffer from adjustment disorder that needs professional support in Japan. It has been pointed out that students' adjustment disorder is partly due to lack of social support in school. This research was conducted to clarify the psychological modification of university students who participated in the structured encounter group at sport activity that intended to build close human relationships by facilitating communication and interaction among participants.

Method

149 subjects were asked to answer the two types of questionnaires (Intrapersonal Perception Scale; Gushiken et al., 2005 and Mental Health Pattern; Hashimoto et al., 2000) on April 17 (pre-test) and July 14 (post-test) in 2006. The subjects who participated in the structured encounter group at sport activity were in the Experimental group (N=30, male=21, female=9; M=19.47, SD=1.87). On the other hand, the subjects who did not participate in the structured encounter group at sport activity were in the Control group (N=119, male=44, female=75; M=19.13, SD=1.49). Repeated-measured two-way ANOVA (2 groups x 2 times) was conducted to examine the effects of the structured encounter group at sport activity.

Result

The results showed that the statistical interactions and the main effect of times in Physical stress were statistically significant. The score in Physical stress was significantly increased in both groups. The result also showed that the main effects of times in Psychological stress were statistically significant. Psychological stress was significantly increased in Control group while Experimental group was not. Moreover, the result showed that the main effects of groups in Intrapersonal Perception and QOL were statistically significant. In Intrapersonal Perception, Control group was significantly higher than Experimental group. On the other hand, Experimental group was significantly higher than Control group in QOL.

Conclusion

This study indicates that structured encounter group in sport activity for university students positively improve Intrapersonal Perception, and found to have buffering effects for Physical stress and Psychological stress. Therefore, the sport activity including encounter group has possibility to improve students' mental health as a therapeutic intervention. In future research, sport activity with structured encounter group needs to be compared to regular methods of physical activities.

Literature


Keywords: Physical Education, Mental Health