

The Development of Group Counseling Model in Conducting Thesis to Meet the Educational Expectations of Graduate Students

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Abstract

The major purposes of this research were to study and develop the group counseling model in conducting thesis to meet the educational expectations of graduate students. The specific purposes were 1) to analyze the educational expectations components 2) to construct a group counseling model in conducting thesis and 3) to prove the effectiveness of group counseling model in conducting thesis. The research procedures are quasi – experimental method between one group pretest – posttest design. The research instruments are 5 rating scales questionnaires, approved by the experts. The Content Validity Index for Items (I-CVI) between .83 – 1.00 and Content Validity Index for Scales (S-CVI) at .90. The statistics for data analysis are percentage, mean and standard deviation. The results were found that; 1) the educational expectations components consisted of goals, pathways, agency, confidence, and effort and tolerance, 2) The group counseling model consisted of three major stages: the initial counseling stage, the working stage and the summarizing stage and 3) the effective of group counseling model in conducting thesis showed that all suited in propriety, feasibility, congruity and utility.

Keywords: group counseling, educational expectations, graduate students

Introduction

As the constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E 2550 (2007), part 4 mentioned that “The State shall implement social, public health, education, and culture policies as follow: ... (3) To develop the quality and standard of all levels of education and all forms of education in conformity with social and economic changes, to provide a national education plan and a law for national education development, to provide the development of quality of career teachers and personnel in education to be able to follow the global change, and also to instill Thai awareness, discipline, public interested concerns and to believe firmly in democratic form of government with the King as Head of the State. (Office of the Education Council. 2010)

The heart of National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and amendments (Second *National Education Act* B.E. 2545 (2002)), is a move toward student-centered learning and a student-centered classroom. Specifically, Section 24 of the Education Act outlines what must be done to improve education performance: 1. arranging learning in line with the students’ interests, aptitudes and individual differences; 2. training students in thinking abilities, especially critical thinking; 3. organizing learning activities that draw from authentic experiences; and 4. promoting situations where learners and teachers learn together. In addition to addressing these key issues of education reform in Thailand, indeed in international education, it also focus on the attention and resources on the goal of promoting Thai teachers to reach their potential as skilled teachers by using teaching methods that engage their students with the result that students love to learn through self-discovery. (Office of the National Education Commission. 2011)

Counseling theories are used as a guideline for understanding human nature and to determine which counseling skills you will use in your counseling sessions such as; 1) Psychoanalytic Theory: This theory was originally developed by Sigmund Freud (1964). It supports the idea that unconscious forces drive human actions. A psychoanalytic therapy session includes skills such as dream analysis, free association, resistance analysis, and transference analysis. Much of the personality is thought to have developed in childhood and similarities are identified and explored in the therapeutic relationship. 2) Person-Centered Therapy: This theory is a form of

psychotherapy originally developed by Carl Rogers. Sometimes also known as Rogerian therapy, it operates on the assumption that every human being has the ability to fulfill their full potential. A client-centered approach in the therapeutic relationship involves self-actualization, empathy, and unconditional positive regard. When practicing person-centered therapy, the client therapist relationship is very important because the positive interactions are a form of therapy themselves. The relationship should be supportive and the therapist acts as the client is the expert of their own life.

3) Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT): CBT is a shorter term approach to the therapeutic process. This hands-on approach lends its practice to the theory that human problems stem from faulty patterns of thinking. The counseling process primarily involves the challenge of automatic thinking and often negative thought patterns. It encourages the client to find logic in their way of thinking. The counselor plays an important role in challenging these thoughts, and

4) The Family Systems Model: Family Systems view all human troubles and conflicts as a familial unit. The theory, originally developed by Murray Bowen, is focused on the idea that family is the primary source of emotions and personality. A family system can be present into many forms, including structural, strategic, and intergenerational. Common techniques used in the therapeutic process include the creation of a georama, family projection activities, emotional triangles, and the differentiation of self. This counseling theory is often used in marriage and family counseling sessions. As mentioned, the counseling is about creating strong relationships with your clients that will empower them to obtain mental health and to fulfill their goals. Through the use of intentional counseling techniques and an understanding of human nature developed through counseling theories.

Group counseling provides students with the opportunity to connect with others in a safe, confidential and supportive space. Groups allow students to share about their experiences, expectations with others who can understand and relate to their concerns, connect across differences to learn new perspectives, and experiment with new ideas, behaviors, and ways of being or interacting. Through group engagement, students develop insights and skills that can be used to work through the challenges they face and improve their expectation and quality of life.

Graduate students in all programs are expected to gain expertise in a particular area of study and, especially in Ph.D. programs, to expand the knowledge of that disciplinary field or to push disciplinary boundaries through interdisciplinary /collaborative research, by discovering and pursuing a topic of scholarly inquiry and research. As junior colleagues and professionals-in-training, graduate students will learn to impart disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge through appropriate forms of instruction and publication.

Graduate students are expected to 1) Work within the guidelines provided by the department to select an appropriate advisor and committee members. This selection should be free of conflicts of interest or coercive relationships among committee members and with the student that might preclude a committee member from evaluating student work by academic merit alone. 2) Devote an appropriate amount of time and energy toward achieving academic excellence and earning the advanced degree or certificate. Estimated time and effort needed for success in course and research credit hours is about 4 hours of work per credit per week, including both in-class and out-of-class activities. A full-time assistantship amounts to an average of 20 hours of work per week, independent of time spent on courses or tasks related to research credits. 3) Take primary responsibility to inform themselves of and conduct themselves in accordance with the Graduate School's policies and procedures, specific program requirements, and standards of performance established by faculty and articulated in departmental graduate student handbooks and their respective professional associations or organizations. Students should locate and review their departmental graduate student handbook. 4) Take the initiative to ask questions that will promote their understanding of the academic requirements of their specific graduate program. In addition, students should be understand the assistantship requirements and seek to fulfill them satisfactorily, and 5) fulfill the requirements of their programs in a timely manner and participate in the annual progress review. Each department or program may have different policies regarding time limits to degrees.

As the mentioned, it has clearly placed the importance of the group counseling in conducting thesis to meet the educational expectations of graduate students. Also should be proof that this model can be reach the needs of educational expectations of graduate students, and also apart to fulfill the quality of counseling, efficiencies of learning and teaching.

Research Objective

1. To analyze the educational expectations components
2. To construct a group counseling model in conducting thesis
3. To prove the effectiveness of group counseling model in conducting thesis

Research Methodology

Samples

Data for this study was obtained through survey method. The sample consisted of 85 Ph.D. Students at Nakhon Si Thammarat Rajabhat University and divided into 2 groups; 1) the experimental group (E) consisted of 11 Ph.D. Students and 2) the control group (C) consisted of 74 Ph.D. Students.

Research Instruments

The research instruments consisted of focus group discussion, one group pretest – posttest design, 5 rating scales questionnaires, the content validity index for items (I-CVI) between .83 – 1.00 and content validity index for scales (S-CVI) at .90. The statistics for data analysis are percentage, mean and standard deviation.

Research Results

The research results were presented according to the research objectives as follows;

4.1 The analysis of the educational expectations components. The results found 5 major components consisted of; goals, pathways, agency, confidence, and effort and tolerance. Details as shown in table 1

4.2 The construct of a group counseling model in conducting thesis. The results found 3 major stages; the initial counseling stage, the working stage and the summarizing stage.

4.3 The approval effectiveness of group counseling model in conducting thesis. The results shown all suited in propriety, feasibility, congruity and utility. Details as shown in table 2

Table 1

The educational expectations components

Components	Index	k	Min	Max	M	SD	Level of educational expectations
GOALS		3	1.00	5.00	3.87	0.82	High
	goals1	1	1.00	5.00	3.57	0.99	High
	goals2	1	1.00	5.00	3.92	0.89	High
	goals3	1	1.00	5.00	4.13	1.12	High
PATHWAYS		8	1.00	5.00	2.90	0.77	Moderate
	pathway1	4	1.00	5.00	2.99	0.75	Moderate
	pathway2	3	1.00	5.00	2.93	0.84	Moderate
	pathway3	1	1.00	5.00	2.79	1.12	Moderate
AGENCY		14	1.00	5.00	3.92	0.64	High
	agency1	6	1.00	5.00	4.04	0.72	High
	agency2	4	1.00	5.00	4.06	0.70	High
	agency3	3	1.00	5.00	3.91	0.75	High
	agency4	1	1.00	5.00	3.69	1.12	High
CONFIDENCE		3	1.00	5.00	3.01	0.89	Moderate
	Confidence1	1	1.00	5.00	3.42	1.15	Moderate
	Confidence2	1	1.00	5.00	2.82	1.25	Moderate
	Confidence3	1	1.00	5.00	2.77	1.05	Moderate
EFFORT & TOLERANCE		11	1.00	5.00	3.80	0.76	High
	Eff&tol1	6	1.00	5.00	4.00	0.77	High
	Eff&tol2	2	1.00	5.00	3.64	0.97	High
	Eff&tol3	3	1.00	5.00	3.76	0.88	High
SUM		39	1.00	5.00	3.50	0.53	High

As shown in table 1, found that the summary levels of educational expectations are in high level. When considering in each component found 3 components are in high level; agency, goals and effort and tolerance consequently. While the others components are in moderate level consisted of; confidence and pathways.

4.2 The construct of a group counseling model in conducting thesis. The results found 3 major stages; the initial counseling stage, the working stage and the summarizing stage. The group counseling theories and techniques were applied to enhance the group counseling in conducting thesis.

4.3 The approval effectiveness of group counseling model in conducting thesis. The results shown all suited in propriety, feasibility, congruity and utility. Details as shown in table 2 and 3

Table 2

The educational expectations of Experimental Group

Educational Expectations	Experimental Group								
	Pretest			Posttest			After Follow Up		
	M	SD	Level	M	SD	Level	M	SD	Level
Components									
GOALS	4.04	518.	High	4.29	486.	High	4.29	486.	High
PATHWAYS	2.38	390.	Low	3.13	458.	Moderate	3.20	482.	Moderate
AGENCY	3.62	393.	High	4.25	301.	High	4.14	408.	High
CONFIDENCE	2.25	556.	Low	3.17	666.	Moderate	3.17	504.	Moderate
EFFORT &TOLERANCE	4.08	331.	High	4.44	309.	High	4.42	382.	High
SUM	3.42	141.	Moderate	3.99	3.27	High	3.96	342.	High

Table 3

The educational expectations of Control Group

Educational Expectations	Control Group								
	Pretest			Posttest			After Follow Up		
	M	SD	Level	M	SD	Level	M	SD	Level
Components									
GOALS	4.04	786.	High	4.08	427.	High	4.17	563.	High
PATHWAYS	2.56	390.	Moderate	2.39	435.	Low	2.47	405.	Low
AGENCY	3.58	145.	High	3.63	337.	High	3.72	377.	High
CONFIDENCE	2.71	547.	Moderate	2.73	233.	Moderate	3.13	589.	Moderate
EFFORT & TOLERANCE	3.90	606.	High	3.88	581.	High	3.92	784.	High
SUM	3.43	242.	Moderate	3.41	228.	Moderate	3.51	374.	High

As shown in table 2 and 3, found that before the experiment, the overall educational expectations between the experimental group and the control group were insignificant. When considering in each component, it was found that goals, pathways, agency, confidence, and effort and tolerance were insignificant. After the experiment, the overall educational expectations between the experimental group and the control group were significantly different. When considering in each component, it was found that pathways, agency, and effort and tolerance were significantly different whereas goals and confidence were insignificant. After the follow up period, the overall educational expectations between the experimental group and the control group were significantly different. When considering in each component, it was found that pathways and agency were significantly different whereas goals, confidence, and effort and tolerance were insignificant.

After focus group discussion, the experts approved the effectiveness of group counseling model in conducting thesis. The results shown all suited in propriety, feasibility, congruity and utility.

Discussion

The following points based on the research objectives and results were discussed;

1. The analysis of the educational expectations components. The results found 5 major components consisted of; goals, pathways, agency, confidence, and effort and tolerance. The discussions of the results are aimed in educational expectations, so their expectations were analyzed by pretest and posttest and approved by the experts. This is identical to firm that the importance of the group counseling in conducting thesis to meet the educational expectations of graduate students. According to McDermott; & Snyder (61 :1999) claimed that goals, can be sequence in to two parts. The short term or long term goal is the human needs, but all have to be reach. Snyder; & Lopez. (2002: 258) said that pathway is the idea to plan to reach the goal. While Nowotny (1989: 57 – 61) said that expectation is concern to the future by setting target, plan and act, etc.

2. The construct of a group counseling model in conducting thesis. The results found 3 major stages; the initial counseling stage, the working stage and the summarizing stage. The group counseling theories and techniques were applied to enhance the group counseling in conducting thesis. By this finding, the discussion of the results should be aimed to the systematic approach in all process of operations in conducting thesis. All concerns in conducting thesis, such as students, advisory teams, curriculum and university should be clear in system and process.

3. The approval effectiveness of group counseling model in conducting thesis. The results shown all suited in propriety, feasibility, congruity and utility. By this finding, the research procedures are quasi – experimental method between one group pretest – posttest design and follow up. The result found that the posttest means score was higher than pretest and the students' attitude toward the educational expectations were high level. These results are relevant to the statement made by Gazda (306 :1967 – (307) stated that, the valued of expectations can be found in reflect of propriety, feasibility, congruity and utility. While Tippawan Kittiporn (1993) stated that group counseling is the best way to meet the needs and expectations in educational administration, and also apart to fulfill the quality of counseling, efficiencies of learning and teaching.

Conclusion

The main purposes of this research were pointed to the importance of the group counseling in conducting thesis to meet the educational expectations of graduate students. By the introduction, results and discussions found that counseling theories are used and applied as a guideline for understanding human nature and to determine which counseling skills you will use in your counseling sessions. Groups allow students to share about their experiences, expectations with others who can understand and relate to their concerns, connect across differences to learn new perspectives, and experiment with new ideas, behaviors, and ways of being or interacting. Graduate students in all programs are expected to gain expertise in a particular area of study and, especially in Ph.D. programs, to expand the knowledge of that disciplinary field or to push disciplinary boundaries through interdisciplinary /collaborative research. Group counseling is the best way to meet the needs and expectations in educational administration, and also apart to fulfill the quality of counseling, efficiencies of learning and teaching. The valued of expectations can be found in reflect of propriety, feasibility, congruity and utility.

Recommendation

The following are some recommendation based on the research results;

1. The finding model developed by researchers can be used by relevant and applied to fit with the context of students, the graduate school's policies and also university purposes.
2. For the future studies should be conduct with others level of graduate students such as master degree, etc.

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Naresuan University.

Acknowledgement

With my greatest appreciation to my great teacher in my mind, Professor Dr. Sermsak Wisalaporn (FRI) and thanks go to Nakhon Si Thammarat Rajabhat University, for the fellowship support, and of course Vongchawalitkul University, my highest institute of education.

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