

Transactional Analysis Counseling: A Potential Game-Changer for Adolescent Behavioral Issues in Schools

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ABSTRACT

Adolescence is a period of transition marked by emotional fluctuations and behavioral changes, which can result in stress and cognitive disturbances. These challenges can be exacerbated by societal expectations and the surge of technological advancements. Within a school setting, these issues necessitate professional interventions, such as Transactional Analysis Counseling, which assists students in understanding their personality, communication styles, and behavioral patterns. This study used a descriptive research design and qualitative analysis to examine the practical application of Transactional Analysis Counseling in schools. The findings suggest that Transactional Analysis Counseling can enhance self-awareness and enable students to make more conscious, beneficial decisions in their academic and personal lives. However, continued research is necessary to assess the long-term benefits and challenges of this approach in varying school environments and student demographics.

Keywords: adolescent development; transactional analysis counseling; behavioral issues in schools; school counseling techniques; psychoanalytic therapeutic modality



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INTRODUCTION

The phase of adolescence, typically intertwined with deep-seated societal misconceptions and an array of behavioral aberrations, is considered a pivotally transformative epoch in a student's life journey (Schwartz et al., 2015). The volatile and tumultuous nature that signifies this developmental stage can be principally ascribed to an inherent disequilibrium between emotional fluctuations and behavioral disruptions, which are largely shaped by a combination of intrinsic personal variables and the effects of extrinsic environmental determinants. This transitional journey from the relatively simple roles of childhood to the more complex expectations during adolescence further escalates the intricacies associated with this developmental stage, thereby underscoring the imperative need for specialized guidance and judicious intervention (Arnett, 1999).

A profound comprehension of the convolutions inherent in each stage of development is vitally instrumental in equipping adolescents with the requisite skills and aptitude to adeptly navigate through their continually evolving responsibilities. Accomplishing this navigational feat not only germinates seeds of personal gratification and self-esteem but also fosters an environment of societal acceptance and inclusion (Côté, 2006). Nonetheless, the burdensome nature of these responsibilities, coupled with the towering societal expectations, can act as catalysts for the emergence of stress and cognitive disturbances, thereby imparting a significant influence on individual behavior (Compas et al., 2001).

In the whirlpool of negative emotions, such as sadness, anxiety, insecurity, and loneliness, adolescents often find themselves spiraling into delinquency. This trend is further exacerbated by the physiological pressures concomitant with their developmental progression and the relentless surge of technological advancements in contemporary society (Bartlett et al.,

2019). As a result, adolescent-centric issues, particularly those intricately linked with their developmental tasks, necessitate immediate and professional intervention.

Adolescents' behavioral conundrums, especially evident within the confines of a school environment, require amplified attention and comprehensive care. These challenges often germinate from the effects of their immediate milieu, resulting in a failure to fulfill their developmental responsibilities and subsequently obstructing their holistic growth trajectory (Van Ryzin, 2011). While adolescent misconduct at school is often dismissed as normative, it still warrants increased scrutiny from educational stakeholders, especially school counselors (Sink & Stroh, 2003). Any apathy towards these problems may lead to severe, long-term repercussions on their development, thereby emphasizing the pivotal role of counselors in guiding, directing, and supporting students in managing their school-related challenges (Whiston et al., 2011; Arjanto, 2020).

The breadth of issues confronted by students within the school environment necessitates the provision of professional services (Netrawati et al., 2018). Among the viable strategies, Transactional Analysis Counseling stands out as a promising approach. This psychoanalytic therapeutic modality assists individuals in comprehending their personality, communication styles, and behavioral patterns, thereby furnishing an alternative solution to address and ameliorate these pressing issues (Ernst, 2019). This article aims to delve into the practical application of Transactional Analysis Counseling within the school context, exploring its benefits, potential challenges, and rendering recommendations for future practice.

METHOD

The researcher adopted a descriptive research design for this study. The data collected and analyzed for this investigation were derived exclusively from articles relating to the application of transactional analysis counseling in schools. The time frame for the selected articles ranged from 2007 to 2018. Data collection techniques utilized for this study involved the extraction of findings from previously published research articles and scholarly papers. The sources were primarily accessed through academic search engines such as Google Scholar.

The methodology for this study embraced a descriptive qualitative approach through a literature review. This involved presenting findings from previous studies related to the application of transactional analysis counseling (Marliana & Almunawwaroh, 2018). The goal was to collate and synthesize the relevant literature in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. In line with the descriptive qualitative approach, the collected data were subjected to thematic analysis. This entailed a systematic identification, organization, and interpretation of themes and patterns within the data. The process involved coding the collected information, aggregating the codes into potential themes, reviewing and refining these themes, defining and naming each theme, and ultimately, integrating and synthesizing the themes into a cohesive narrative that captured the essence of the application of transactional analysis counseling in schools.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

At the crux of Transactional Analysis theory lies a profound understanding of an individual's past experiences that profoundly shape their decisions and choices, molding them in alignment with their unique lived experiences (Berne, 1961). Conceived within this theoretical framework, the primary aim of the present research was to create an environment that facilitates students in gaining an enhanced level of awareness, thereby providing them with the requisite resources that could potentially enhance their lives. This exploration of the theoretical constructs of Transactional Analysis and its application in a practical context necessitates an in-depth examination to fully grasp its intricacies and implications.

The criticality of establishing a robust connection between the student, herein referred to as the 'counselee,' and the therapeutic contract becomes paramount, acting as the backbone of the entire therapeutic process. The contract itself can serve as tangible evidence of the establishment and progression of a relationship between the counselee and the counselor during therapy. The interaction between the counselor and the counselee, from the establishment of trust to the continuous negotiation of their roles and responsibilities, forms an integral part of the counseling process.

The role of a counselor, while multifaceted, essentially revolves around the provision of guidance and motivation to students, aiming to foster an environment of trust and understanding. The crux of their role lies in emphasizing the importance of the student's adult ego state, positioning it as a focal point of trust and understanding, rather than superimposing the counselor's adult ego state onto the student. This shift in focus promotes an introspective evaluation of their decisions, providing room for reflection, self-analysis, and the opportunity for new choices to be made (Kadek et al., 2014). Herein, the emphasis is on empowering the counselee to gain an increased level of self-awareness, to understand the influences shaping their choices, and to consciously work towards making beneficial decisions.

Transactional Analysis counseling encompasses a range of techniques, with group counseling and role-playing techniques forming an integral part of this therapeutic approach. This approach, distinguished by its inherent inclusivity, reached out to students who were identified and categorized from low to very low categories. Within this student population, fourteen students were identified as falling within this range. Nevertheless, an interesting shift was observed when four students from this category, along with one student from a high category, voluntarily participated in the group counseling activity, bringing the total count to five participating students. This unexpected participation provided an interesting dynamic to the group counseling process, enriching the group interaction, and creating a diverse environment for shared learning and personal growth.

As the counseling activity unfolded, it commenced with a guided question-and-answer discussion, which was expertly facilitated by a counselor. During these initial stages, each group of students was systematically prompted by the counselor to engage in a process of positive thinking. Given the nature of the exercise, the students responded in a manner that was reflective of their individual perspectives, thoughts, and interpretations. Following each student's response, the counselor encouraged a healthy dialogue, seeking feedback or comments from each group participant.

This unique approach, while centered around the concept of positive thinking, transcended its foundational premise. Instead of limiting the exercise to the mere understanding of positive thinking, the counselor navigated each group member through a self-reflective journey of recognizing and deciding how they have interpreted and applied positive thinking in their daily lives, including at school. This involved an introspective evaluation of their thoughts, behaviors, and decisions, and how these factors influenced their engagement with positive thinking. Furthermore, the discussion delved deeper into exploring factors that might pose potential hindrances to their habitual positive thinking (Counseling, n.d.). At its core, Transactional Analysis counseling underscores the significance of open communication and self-awareness. These foundational principles pave the way for students to develop a nuanced understanding of their thoughts and behaviors, enabling them to evaluate and reflect upon their actions consciously. The findings gleaned from the study suggest that the implementation of such an approach in school counseling could potentially create an environment that empowers students to make more conscious and beneficial choices in their academic and personal lives.

However, it is also important to consider that while the findings of this research offer promising insights, they should not be viewed in isolation. Rather, they should be considered as a starting point, providing direction for further research in this field. More comprehensive and longitudinal studies are required to assess the long-term benefits and challenges of integrating Transactional Analysis counseling in school settings. This necessitates an in-depth exploration of different school environments, student demographics, and other related factors that could influence the effectiveness and applicability of this approach. With continued research and refinement, Transactional Analysis counseling could potentially serve as an effective tool for supporting students' personal and academic development, thereby contributing to the field of school counseling. In conclusion, while this research provides a valuable examination of Transactional Analysis counseling within a school setting, it also highlights the importance of continuous research and exploration in this field. As our understanding of students' needs, school environments, and counseling techniques continues to evolve, so too must our approach to addressing these challenges. By continuing to explore and refine counseling techniques like Transactional Analysis, we can work towards creating an environment that not only supports students in their current challenges but also equips them with the skills and understanding needed to navigate future obstacles. Thus, the role of Transactional Analysis counseling extends beyond immediate therapeutic intervention, providing students with the tools needed for lifelong learning and personal growth.

CONCLUSION

Transactional Analysis theory plays in counseling by emphasizing the influence of past experiences on decision-making and promoting self-awareness. It stressed the importance of establishing a solid relationship between the counselor and counselee through a therapeutic contract and the value of fostering trust in students. Additionally, it introduced different counseling techniques, including group counseling and role-playing, which opened an avenue for diverse perspectives. However, while the results show promising potential for this approach in guiding students to make more informed life choices, further research is needed for a

comprehensive understanding of its long-term benefits and applicability in various school settings.

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