

Psychosocial Training in Teacher Education

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Abstract

Psychosocial training is a non-therapeutic active social learning intervention program designed to help individuals cope with stressful situations by developing their social skills (sensitivity, assertiveness, empathy, communication, and cooperation). It helps participants to understand their own and other people's emotions and behavior, increase their self-confidence, learn appropriate responses, recognize the reasons for their anxiety, strengthen their will and active self-awareness, and cope with stage fright. Psychosocial training is widely accepted and used at all levels of education in the United States and Europe. Compared to more traditional forms of education, it produces deeper and longer-lasting positive changes in participants' social skills. In the current study, psychosocial training was applied to a group of pre-service English teachers. It was led by a psychologist and delivered exclusively to the experimental group for 12 weeks (one 90-minute session per week). A mixed methods design was used and both qualitative and quantitative data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, and observation. It was found that most participants achieved deeper self-understanding and greater spontaneity in their interpersonal relationships. The main benefit of the psychosocial training was that participants who had low self-esteem and self-consciousness before the training received sensitive support and feedback.

Keywords: affective intervention; mixed methods; positive changes; pre-service teachers; social competences