

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GROUP COUNSELING IN STIMULATING
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG UNDERACHIEVERS
IN JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

by

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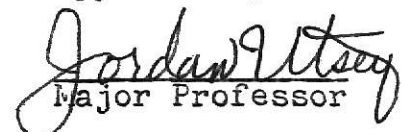
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

According to several educators, there are three broad groups of underachievers: (1) chronic, (2) hidden, and (3) situational.

The chronic underachiever is defined as one who has been performing below the level of his ability. However, the hidden underachiever is difficult to diagnose since test scores are consistent and, whether low or high, fall below the level of the student's true ability. Generally, this type of below-par academic performance is detected by the highly observant and intuitive teacher whose judgment is often supported by a marked improvement after remedial procedures are implemented. The situational underachiever is one whose underachieving is of a temporary nature.

According to Fine (1967), the lowered academic performance is sometimes caused by a serious illness or the upset caused by the death of a parent: Still other reasons for lowered academic performance are: (1) the physical and psychological problems accompanying growth into adolescence, (2) the personal problems that develop when a child ~~attempts~~ to wean himself from over protective parents, and (3) many other similar kinds of situations, all may be productive of academic underachievement which may be relatively short in its duration. But the hurried teacher, or the principal

who does not take time to probe, or the counselor who fails to use all the tools at his disposal, can change academic underachievement from a short term to a life-long pattern.

In a recent study made by the Pennsylvania Advancement School (1971) on Group Counseling for Urban Schools, it was found that group counseling has been used extensively with adults for sometime. It has been proven an effective method in increasing sensitivity and opening up communication in a wide range of groups from executives to drug addicts.

Until recently little thought had been given to the use of group counseling with children. Group counseling can provide more resources for self-exploration and student learning than the traditional one-to-one counseling. As a result of group counseling, a student can share his perceptions, feelings, and problems with all members of the group, his peers as well as adults.

Group counseling provides the counselor with an additional skill in providing the best services for children. Therefore the counselor, by observing how his group functions, can provide valuable feedback to teachers on how to work with the students in his group.

Statement of Problem

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of group counseling in stimulating academic

achievement among underachievers in junior and senior high school.

Issues to be Investigated

It was the purpose of this paper to investigate the following:

1. Characteristics of the underachiever
2. Causes of underachievement
3. Group counseling as a technique and process
4. Effects of group counseling with the under-achiever

Definition of Terms

Academic Achievement - Academic achievement is the performance of individuals in school subjects, usually measured by class grades or a general achievement test, as used in this paper.

Group Counseling - Group counseling is the process whereby a trained counselor, using the principles of group dynamics in group discussion, assists selected applicants to understand their problems better and to make choices through awareness (Hopke, 1968).

Underachiever - An underachiever is a pupil whose academic performance falls below his level of ability.

Research Procedures

After the problem was formulated, relevant literature was researched using as guides the Educational Index, Encyclopedia of Educational Research, Eric, Reader's Guide, card catalogue and Master's Reports. This literature was abstracted and organized to provide answers to the research problem.