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A proposed study of the affect of group counseling upon students on academic probation at the University of Louisville.

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UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

A Proposed Study of the Affect of Group
" Counseling upon Students on Academic
Probation at the University of Louisville

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty
Of the Graduate School of the University of Louisville
In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Of Master of Arts

Department of Psychology

By

Morrison L. Cooke

1949

NAME OF STUDENT: Morrison L. Cooke

TITLE OF THESIS: A Proposed Study of the Affect of
Group Counseling upon Students on
Academic Probation at the University
of Louisville, Kentucky

APPROVED BY READING COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF

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CONTENTS

	Page
I. Introduction and Purpose of the Study	5
II. Review of the Literature	9
III. Statement of the Problem. Methods and Procedures	24
IV. Comments	29
V. Summary	32
VI. Bibliography	35

I. Introduction and Purpose of the Study

Psychotherapy is a term that has come to be given to many varied situations involving a relationship between one or more persons. In fact, it has been applied to such extreme conditions as an autobiography, in which an individual writes out his personal problems, and to a vast radio audience, in which one or more persons is thought capable of therapeutic action on the masses.

This vague use of the term has made it very difficult to make any kind of scientific approach to the study of psychotherapy. There are almost as many definitions of the word as there are persons who use it. Likewise, this has contributed to the many obstacles that arise in the evaluation or measurement of psychotherapy.

Nevertheless, the time has come to try to overcome some of these obstacles wherever possible. Therapists, as well as others, are crying for research in the field. But, while it is impossible to uncover any really valid results, or derive any reliable conclusions without some comparable measure of criteria, it would seem that such measures can only be discovered through research, and research methods.

It is not our position, nor our purpose, to attempt to produce a noncontradictory result, nor an infallible criterion of measurement. In any research

where a limited population is used, when it is also a pioneer attempt, only an exploratory study can be made. With the extremely limited experience and knowledge of the field that we possess, we can do no more than scratch the surface of a problem which might be expanded to cover much of what has been written, and little of what is known. However, somewhere there must be a beginning, and if we are able to show only that this study may have merit in its theory, and perhaps indicate that more research might be worthwhile in this area, then we may feel that our efforts, at least, have not been in vain.

Were this a completed experiment, there would still be much to be desired before any sort of conclusions or predictions could be made, due to the narrow scope of the material. At best, we could only imply, or infer, or suggest the possibility of for future trials, even though our results were everything we hoped they would be. Therefore, let us hope that this study will give encouragement to other Neophytes who, in the everlasting search for the Truth, like us, will "rush in where angels fear to tread."

The purpose of this exploratory study is to determine experimentally whether students on Academic Probation in the College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Louisville may be enabled to increase their quality-point standing after group counseling at the Psychological Services Center of the University. The Center has recently begun to offer its counseling services

to students of the University, and particularly to those on Probation in the College of Arts and Sciences. In order to determine to some extent the effectiveness of the program, from the standpoint of the College and the Center both, some measure of evaluation must be utilized.

Inasmuch as the quality-point standing of students in the College is the determinant by which they may be placed on Probation, and likewise be removed from Probation, thus being a measure of achievement according to the College's own standards, it is logical to use this standing experimentally as an evaluative measure. We hope, accordingly, to be able to observe whether group counseling, in a given situation, will be effective in one area, at least. Our hypothesis is derived from this theory, namely: That group counseling of students on Academic Probation in the College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Louisville, through the medium of the Psychological Services Center of the University, tends to help them improve their quality-point standing.

II. Review of the Literature

The first use of group psychotherapy in the United States was with adult patients with somatic disturbances. It was used as a didactic teaching method, and was known as "The Class Method." It was considerably later that the method was used with adult psychiatric patients. The greatest strides in group therapy, however, have been made with children. Group interviews are most effective with adolescents and adults. Conversation is the same as in individual interviews. Group interviews yield clarification and release from emotional tension; break through anxieties; help the patient to gain insight into his problems; and develop more wholesome attitudes toward others.(19)

Although the literature contains some writings about counseling and scholasticism, not very much has been done in the way of experimental research on the subject from a scientific viewpoint. There are a great many reasons for this, primarily because of the lack of agreement among therapists and counselors, as well as others, as to a standardized definition of terms, and also because of the scarcity of reliable tools and measures with which to proceed.

In our attempt to find historical evidence supporting this study much of it has been as theoretical, or at least as inconclusive as this thesis must necessarily

be. However, there are some students in the field who have been interested enough to consider the same general problem as ours, or a similar one anyway.

Perhaps the most closely related experiment in this field has come right out of the University of Louisville itself. Godfrey, (10) in getting material for a thesis in the Department of Education in the University, made a study of veterans returning to college who were formerly probationary students. He refers to a statement by Heaton and Weedon (12) that mental ability is not the only important factor to be considered in the prediction of academic success or failure. Many failing students have high scores on tests of mental ability. (10)

Godfrey's study showed that of 75 students on probation, 28% of them had graduated in the upper third of their high school class. Of this 75, 82% lived at home and did not have to make adjustments on leaving home, as some college students must do. It is interesting to note that this group was awaiting call to Military Service and had anxieties over it, as brought out in later interviews with the students.

A like number of 28% changed their major study. This led Godfrey to state that "...factors other than ability, or lack of ability, to do college work...are interfering with the student...on probation." (10)

One instance in which a change of majors proved successful, although the change was only incidental to an

underlying problem, is illustrated by Godfrey in the case of C. who had been influenced by his uncle to study medicine. C. enrolled in a pre-medical course and got on probation. He was called to Service and served as a surgical technician. In so doing he realized he did not like the medical profession, and when he returned to school after his Service, he decided to take up Law. Following this, an increase in his quality-point standing was noticed; although C. credited the change of his major study as the important factor in his academic progress, (10) it is conceivable that the reason for choosing medicine in the beginning may have had something to do with his lack of adjustment in college.

In the case of J. (10) we have an instance of a boy who had graduated in the lower third of his high school class. He joined the Naval program at the University and when he got on probation, he was sent out to sea duty. After his return to school, he made excellent progress; he made 4 hours "A", 22 hours "B", and 8 hours "C".

In his Psychology class J. felt he had "been able to see through his problems and to take steps to correct them." (10) In spite of the fact that he was in the class of high school graduates that might have been refused admission to the University (4) "J.'s scholastic success is exceptional....Maturity of purpose and accurate self-analysis must certainly have been the redeeming factors." (10)

It certainly seems, from this study, that there is a relationship between emotional adjustment and scholastic achievement. One might hazard a guess that in the case of J.

his psychology class was one in the nature of group therapy. From the study prepared by Godfrey (10) it was shown that worry over the War, lack of maturity, and lack of interest were the most important factors mentioned in 24 interviews with the students regarding their progress. Attainment of maturity and change of major, according to the students' own statements, were the most important factors aiding their progress.

There are several factors that influence achievement, and it is not wise to lay too much stress upon any one of them. Wrightstone (26) says: "Modern concepts in the evaluation of achievement require...not only acquisition of academic information and skills, but also interests, attitudes, appreciations, physical health, and personal-social adaptability." Heaton and Weedon (12) in Chapter X of their book mention the importance of personal and social factors in achievement. The boy who is in love with a girl, for example; the student who wants friends; the student whose parents are experiencing marital difficulties; the student who loses a close relative through death; all these influences, they say, illustrate some of the personal and social factors which may affect students' scholastic success.

An excellent example of this is given in Murphy and Ladd, "Emotional Factors in Learning," (17) a study of girls at Sarah Lawrence College in New York. In the chapter on The Role of "Problems" in Learning, they first state that "Approximately no more than one third of a

freshman class has reached college age without having to confront major family, social, or physical difficulties.... frequently she (the normal college girl) brings her problems to college with her." (17, p.105)

Murphy and Ladd made an intensive case study of 25 girls at Sarah Lawrence. It may be worthwhile to quote what they have to say as an indication of the problems students may have. "...we found that 14 of the 25 girls had experienced death of a parent, divorce of the parents, or extremely strained relations between parents and children. Illustrations of the ways in which early troubles can affect the student's adjustment at college are seen in Lucille, disturbed about a family scandal and always uncertain whether she was as secure and as popular in the college group as she should be; Peggy, whose brother was described by her and another student as a serious problem; Hazel, so worried about the hostile atmosphere between children and parents in her home that her conferences were dominated by discussion of it. In another instance, Carol's inability to face reality objectively in relation to course material seemed to be a direct reflection of her experience in family relationships; and the same summary might be made of Beatrice. Harriette's hostility to teachers appeared to be a direct reflection of hostility toward domineering adults at home; Laura's insecurity was rooted partially in social disorientation following the failure of her father in business; Sonia's scattered flights from one topic to another seemed to reflect a deep anxiety grown from

the death of one parent and the lifelong illness of another.

"Severe physical difficulties occurred in two instances. Great social strain occasioned by ambiguity of social status or collapse of family economic security existed in 3 cases, while anxiety over adoption, family sex problems, or the consequences of a temporary break in the family appeared in 3 additional cases." (17, pp.104-105)

Certainly it is plausible that such personal problems as these can prevent the college student from doing his level best, even were we to doubt that they might not cause him to do his worst.

Two more studies that lend support to the relationship between adjustment and scholastic achievement have been published recently. Darley (6) gave the Bell Adjustment Inventory, the Minnesota Survey of Social Opinion, and the Minnesota Inventory of Social Attitude tests to 326 male and 217 female students at the General College of the University of Minnesota in 1935 and 1936. From the results obtained, Darley made the statement that "While it is impossible to state from these data that... maladjustment...leads to student mortality...it does appear that...maladjustment...may depress achievement below the level to be expected from ability...."

Assum and Levy, (1) at the University of Chicago, made a comparison of a group of adjusted students with a group of maladjusted students. Their achievement and aptitude were measured. 71 students at the University who were counseled during one year at the Counseling Center,

were matched with a control group of 71 students at the University equated on the basis of sex, date of entrance into the college, and grade level of entrance into the college. The conclusion reached was that there was no difference in academic ability between the two groups, but there was a difference in achievement in favor of the adjusted group. (1)

In another experiment in which a control group was used in much the same way, but with a greater number of students over a longer period of time, similar results were obtained. Williamson and Bordin (24) studied the records of 405 Arts college freshmen at the University of Minnesota, over a period of four years. They were selected from the Counseling Bureau of the University on the basis of completeness of case data. The control groups were matched on the basis of college class, age, sex, size and type of high school, percentile rating, aptitude test score, and Cooperative English test.

In commenting upon their findings, Williamson and Bordin stated: "It may be contended that the fact that students in the experimental group voluntarily sought counseling...and that the control group did not, invalidated this matching procedure. If true, such criticism holds equally for the numerous learning experiments in psychology and education, and invalidates them, since it is usually stated in such experiments that it is assumed that motivation was comparable in the experimental and control groups." (24) It was also pointed out that the exact

effects of self-selection are unknown, and may be either positive or negative.

The results showed the counseled group to achieve higher grades than the non-counseled group. (24)

Toven (22) also made a study of students who had been counseled for four years, although he considered their grades for the first year only. His findings, on 188 students, were that the counseled students were more likely to graduate; had more point credits (quality points); and had a better recognition of their aims in attending college. Baller (2) became interested in the low scholastic records of some students. In a study of 46 freshmen who came for counseling for problems of emotional or social adjustment he demonstrated that practically all made poorer scholastic records than their rating or aptitude showed. "Evidently," he says, "scholastic difficulties resulted from or at least accompanied the problems which the...freshmen brought to the guidance counselor's office."

Anna Fults, of the University of Arkansas, tried an experiment with a 7th and 8th grade class in Home Economics (8) which resembles these other studies to some extent. She endeavored to determine why some students had more difficulty in learning than did others. In order to discover some of the factors operating in their difficulties, she gave them a series of psychological tests. Among the obstacles pointed out by the tests were: frustrated needs; conflicts in values; inadequate preparation; intense personal problems; overloaded life schedules; poor health; remoteness

of goals; social structure; incapacity; and environmental blocks. Her experiment was one in human relations, in which the children were encouraged to take a genuine interest in the other members of the class; to help those that needed help; to be aware of the attitudes of their classmates; and to give support and security to those members of the class who were backward and withdrawn.

Miss Fults decided through this experiment (8) that "...improving learning through...teacher education... which emphasized human relations within the total group, tended to result in significant increases in social acceptance, reading skills, and interest as measured by a psychological test." It is more than likely that some of these devices will operate to some extent in our own study.

Borow (3) investigated some of the predictive methods of collegiate performance. Some of his results showed that many tests of intelligence, such as high school record exams, and content exams, give a Median correlation with collegiate performance of only .45 which is only about 11% better than guesswork. The best combination of intelligence tests, content exams, and high school record exams rarely gets a correlation over .75. This is still less than 34% better than guesswork, according to Borow. In spite of all these tests, he remarks, we are "forced to the conclusion that the greater part of the difference among college students in academic achievement is still unaccounted for by the prognostic instruments in current use." (3)

An important factor in the "academic achievement of any student is the result of combined influences of a great many behavioral influences." The typical college aptitude test shows how much intellectual promise the student has, says Borow, but does not show to what degree the student will use his promise. "...it is more than conceivable that the achievement of a college student is in part shaped by such personal and non-intellectual considerations as these: Does he adjust well to the inevitable regimentation and routine of academic life? Is his desire for a college education founded upon mature and sturdy motives? Is he worried about financing his academic career? Is he carrying too arduous a load? Does he proportion his time wisely among the many activities in which he engages? Is he in good health? Is he beset by irrational feelings of failure and insecurity?" (3)

A similar conclusion was reached by Winston in his studies of freshmen at North Carolina State in the late 30's. (25) In his investigation he considered only three factors: economic insecurity, delayed matriculation, and uncertainty of vocation. He observed that four-fifths of the freshmen earned part or all of their expenses; almost half of them earned 50% of their expenses. Only about two-thirds of the freshmen had come to college directly from high school; almost one-fifth were out a year before entrance, and one-seventh were out from 2 to 9 years. As to the choice of vocation, 36% were uncertain, and 25% had no choice at all. This gave rise to the conclusion that social

and personal factors may be as important in adjustment as purely scholastic achievement or intellectual ability. (25)

Wagoner (23) reported in an Abstract some results he found in relating achievement and adjustment. He took from 35 to 64 patients while they were in a state of anxiety and administered Kohs Block Test to them. He re-tested them after an interval when the anxiety had subsided. The results indicated that "anxiety exerts a detrimental effect upon most subjects, on the level of performance on these tests." (23)

Writing in a pamphlet published by the University of Missouri Press, Garnett makes the statement that "...the failures resulting from the lack of adjustment are unquestionably reflected in unknown and untold loss of time and money, in discouragement, in depression and human misery, in increased difficulty in adjustment to other lines of work, and in distorted views of life....there is a definite need...for a method of guiding the student into those courses and toward those occupations for which his abilities and inclinations make him well adapted." (9)

Ferguson and Crooks (7) made one of the few studies concerned with Quality Point Ratios. They took the four-year records of 341 students graduated from the University of Connecticut in 1937 through 1939 and investigated the relationship of the Q.P.R. and ability. They arrived at three possible conclusions: 1. the proportion of better than average Q.P.R.'s automatically increases in upper division years, and the proportion of lower than

average Q.P.R.'s automatically decreases in proportion to what they were in lower division years. 2. Q.P.R.'s of adjacent semesters tend to correlate higher with each other than those further removed. 3. "The tendency for the correlation between scholastic aptitude test scores and grades to become lower with each successive semester indicates that the kind of ability measured by the test... becomes less important....This would again point to the desirability of developing other...predictive instruments which would...measure the factors contributing to success and failure...." (7)

In another correlation experiment, somewhat related to the problem, Montalto attempted to correlate college achievement and intellectual ability by mean of the Group Rorschach technique. (15) He did his study on 90 women students at the University of Cincinnati, using grade-point averages (quality-points) as a measure of achievement, and the A.C.E. test as a measure of intelligence. He made correlations and partial correlations, and produced two somewhat contradictory observations: 1. achievers showed more signs of good adjustment than did non-achievers; 2. achievers had a neurotic trend in their personality which may be an important factor in their achievement. (15) This second observation may be very significant as an argument that achievement is not always a sign of integration.

The use of the Rorschach by Muench (16) to evaluate non-directive therapy indicates that some of the

effects of therapy might be important factors in any improvement in achievement. In addition to the Rorschach Muench used the Bell Adjustment, both without a control group, and proffered the conclusion that therapy "tends to develop more integrated personal control, a richer and more mature inner life, more accurate perceptions, greater emotional adaptability and control, a greater social adaptability, and a decrease in anxiety. The greatest changes which occurred...are, as follows: a decrease in anxiety; a greater degree of personal integration; a greater tendency toward doing the expected thing; and a better integrated emotional life, including greater emotional stability, control, and adaptability." (16)

If, as we have been shown, anxiety, lack of emotional stability, lack of maturity and social adaptability, and so forth, are problems affecting scholastic achievement, then we may hope that alleviating these conditions (through therapy) will have a consequential effect on collegiate performance.

In an endeavor to verify or nullify Muench's experiment (16) Hamlin and Albee (11) at Pittsburgh were able to provide a control group of subjects comparable in age, sex, education, and adjustment problems with those of Muench's group. They found no significant changes in their no-therapy control group on the Rorschach scale, and concluded that "it has been demonstrated that significant changes in personality structure accompany the experience of non-directive therapy, and are not associated with the

passage of time." (11) It might be assumed that such changes might occur through group therapy, also.

And thus we have some evidence that there is a relationship between scholastic achievement and adjustment in college students. We have seen that problems of adjustment have affected grades, and that when these problems were dealt with that an improvement in grades was noticeable. We have also been shown that counseling, in various forms, has been of some value in dealing with these problems, and we may assume that it has been a factor in improvement in achievement in this way.

Luchins (14) declares that persons who acknowledged value from group therapy took positive action as a result of it; carried over their changes in attitudes and actions into other fields; and felt that they were changed personally rather than having their specific problems solved. This has been borne out by the different authors we have reported above.

Now we come to the method by which our experiment will be handled. It is necessary to conduct it on a group basis, rather than an individual basis, on account of the large number of students to be counseled, and the small size of the Center staff. However, Sternbach (20) says that "Unequivocally: Group therapy is a therapy in its own right, and on the same level as individual therapy, but one which probably has even wider applicability."

Some suggestions for a therapy group are offered by Hulse.(13) He says that patients should not be selected

too closely; the therapist should be trained; the sessions should be regular and continuous, and the number in the groups should be small, under 20 if possible. Our groups will resemble this description to a great extent. Again referring to Sternbach (20) he advises that "the interest a patient may take in a specific group will not necessarily be identical with the announced group purpose. Neither will the patient always be conscious of the character of his interest...the interest the members take in the group need not be the same for all members...The avowed purpose of joining can even be a mere excuse for joining..." If this be true, it may fit our case very well.

In the matter of controls for our experiment, (we have showed cases where controls were used and where they were not) we have to try to overcome the difficulties involved in setting up a control group. Some writers have taken the stand that control groups may be impossible to organize. Rogers (18) says in getting groups for controls it is hard to "match clients comparably as to the seriousness of their problems...." He suggests a control between the earlier and later interviews of the same client. "Perhaps we cannot set up control groups in the usual sense." (18) In the same article (18) Brennan remarks that "...the study of problems of internal consistency is...more fruitful than the establishment of control groups."

In the same vein, Burchard, Michaels, and Kothov (5) declare that "Satisfactory controls in individual therapy

are difficult to establish; in group therapy, in which so many more variables are present, the difficulty becomes multiplied...few if any of the published reports on group psychotherapy have dealt with the problem of control." (5)

In closing our review of the literature, we might quote from a review of the literature, written by Thomas (21) in 1943. "It is apparent that powerful forces can be mobilized in groups which are capable of producing remarkable results in the individual making up the group... there is ample evidence in the recent literature of the effectiveness of group psychotherapy in all psychiatric conditions." If that were true in 1943, it should be so much more true in 1949.

III. Statement of the Problem. Methods and Procedures

Students in the College of Arts and Sciences are graded on a five-level basis; these grades range from "A" through "F" and the quality points earned per semester or quarter hour depend upon these grades. "A" is Excellent and gives 3 quality points for each semester or quarter hour; "B" is Good or Superior and gives 2 points per hour; "C" means Average, and gives 1 point per hour; "D" is Passing but Poor and carries 0 points per hour; while "F" means Failing and has minus one (-1) points, or in other words, subtracts one quality point for each hour "F". (4) It may be feasible from the standpoint of statistical analysis to consider "F" as giving credit hours, in order to make a continuous scale of quality-points. This would keep the variable of hours constant.

The standard for acceptable scholarship in the College is an average grade of "C" or a quality-point standing of 1.0. This average is generally known as the Q.P.R., or Quality Point Ratio. When a student's total quality-point standing goes down six points or more, i.e., when he has six or more total quality points less than total semester or quarter hours, he is placed on probation. Students on probation who make a 1.0 or better standing for one semester may be continued on probation until their total standing is 1.0. (4)

Students admitted to the Freshman Class in the College must usually meet the following requirements for admission: they must have graduated from a four-year accredited high school; they must have passed a General Scholastic Aptitude Test, and an English Usage Test; and if the student's average on these tests is below the 26th Percentile, and he also ranked in the lowest third in his high school class, he may be refused admission to the College, or else he may be admitted on probation. (10)

The problem, then, is whether group counseling of these probationary students can be helpful to them in getting off probation by increasing their quality-point standing. Actually, getting off probation itself is not a strict goal, or criterion of this experiment, for it is set up on the basis of the semester quality-point standing, rather than the aggregate point standing. As has been stated (4) an increase in one semester's quality-point standing will not release the student from probation if his overall standing is less than 1.0.

We are interested, not only in finding out if group counseling will be effective as stated above, but also in some of the factors that may be involved among those students who receive counseling. We should like to know, for instance, if all students on probation at any time can be counseled as a matter of course, or whether involuntary counseling can be given as well as voluntary counseling. While we do not expect a conclusive answer to

these questions, we hope to provide some opportunities for further research and investigation in this realm.

The group counseling will be provided by means of a non-credit course offered by the Psychological Services Center for the probationary students. It may be called an Orientation course, or given any other appropriate title. All students on probation in the College during one semester will be used as the population, from which samples will be selected. Quality-point standings of the students for the semester preceding counseling, and for the semester following counseling, will be used as criteria.

The students will first be separated into three divisions, and an Experimental Group and a Control Group will be chosen from each of these divisions. First, one third of the students will be selected at random from all those on probation. It will be assumed that this group will include a proportionate number of students who want counseling and who do not. This group may be called Group R, and will give us a sample of the population at large to be measured; it will also be an index of future students on probation.

The remaining two thirds of the students will be divided according to their desire or undesire for counseling. The orientation course will be suggested to these students by the College, and those who come over to the Center to enroll in it will be considered those who desire counseling. Those who do not come over will be

considered those who do not have a desire for counseling. The former group may be called Group W; the latter group may be called Group D.

A random sample of each of these groups, R, W, and D, will be selected, dividing each group in half. This will give us, then, two sub-groups in each group, or a total of six groups at this point. Three sub-groups from R, W, and D, will comprise the Experimental Group, X, which is to have counseling; the remaining three sub-groups from R, W, and D, will comprise the Control Group, Y, which is not to have counseling. In this way, Group X and Group Y will each contain students who want counseling, students who do not, and students who did not express a choice.

The Experimental Group X will include Xr, Xw, and Xd; the Control Group Y will include Yr, Yw, and Yd. Group Xd will be required by the College to take the orientation course, in a manner to be agreed upon by the College and the Center. Group Yw will be placed on a "waiting list" for the orientation course. This is not too desirable a circumstance, but it is necessary so that the situation can be handled without creating a systematic bias.

Group X will be divided into smaller size groups, by random selection, to facilitate counseling; the number of groups depending upon the total N of Group X. Counseling in these groups will be by Staff members of the Center assigned to each group, with the method of counseling to be left to the discretion of each counselor. The sampling in

all instances in this experiment will be from the Table of Random Numbers.

It will be possible, by this division of groups, to compare students selected from the general population with those who wanted counseling and those who did not. The results may be analyzed or correlated by different methods and for different purposes, by anyone who may be interested in some other phase of the experiment. If the increases in Q.P.R. are significant, as far as this experiment is concerned, it may enable the College to determine whether or not choice in the matter is an important factor.

The measure of the effectiveness of the experiment will be obtained by the increase or decrease in quality-point standings of all the probationary students for the semester following the group counseling, over the semester preceding the course. The criteria will be analyzed and examined by making a Critical Ratio of the differences between the Means of each group. The CR is one of several statistically valid measures of testing significance, and is being used arbitrarily. It will indicate whether any increase in quality-point standing is significant, or merely due to chance.

IV. Comments

We have tried to eliminate as many undesirable factors from this study as possible, and also to consider every angle of the problem. In so doing, we hoped to be able to present results which would be true and consistent as far as the experiment goes. It is obvious that in any study of this nature there will be so many variables that cannot be excluded or overlooked, so many factors in operation that cannot be controlled or ruled out, so many hypotheses that are bound to spring up, that it would necessitate not only many different kinds of research to obtain any reliable conclusions, but also more investigations of the same situation.

For instance, if significant increases in quality-point standings are shown as a sequence of group counseling, how we can account for all the other environmental influences that may be operating, how we might find out what they are, how we would measure them if we did, all these questions must remain unanswered. If one of the groups shows an increase in Q.P.R. and another group does not are we to attribute it to the particular therapist, or to the particular group, or to any specific individual or condition in the group?

Suppose a decrease in Q.P.R. is evident; are we

going to assume that it is the result of the group counseling course? How will we "explain" it? Suppose there are no students who want counseling; or that do not? There are many questions that can not be answered with satisfaction; some can be answered only after scrutinizing the results at hand. But we must be aware of the possibility of these things, and not become so imbued with our own postulates that we will not ourselves "face reality objectively," to coin a phrase.

However, our study does have merit in that if negative results are shown, it will not necessarily nullify the experiment. Such results would provide us with a means of examining our whole undertaking so that we might correct some of the errors and false assumptions we had made previously.

In the statistical analysis of our findings we have not been interested in any correlations between groups or between items. We have only been interested, for the sake of this experiment, in the one criterion of an increase in Q.P.R. The results will be presented so that anyone desiring any correlations may make them with little difficulty.

In conclusion, we realize only too well that we have probably left much undone, but we feel that even in this initial undertaking we have gained insight into our own failures, and have profitted by this experience. If this study has given us the appreciation of the subject, the value of research in the field, as well as of research

methods, then we feel that the time and effort put forth have been well worth the while.

Perhaps it will not be impertinent at this point to express appreciation to the Director of this thesis and to all those in the Department who were kind enough to submit benefits of their knowledge and experience to our efforts.

Summary

An exploratory study of the affect of group counseling on probationary students has been proposed. The Psychological Services Center of the University of Louisville is now offering counseling services to the College of Arts and Sciences of the University for the benefit of the students on probation in the College. It is in the hope of finding some measure of the effectiveness of these services that this experiment was set up.

We have observed in a similar study that former veteran probation students experienced problems of adjustment in connection with their scholastic difficulties. We have learned through other studies that acquiring information is not the only factor involved in measuring achievement, but that personal-social factors also play an important part. We have presented brief case studies of the personal problems affecting students in a girls school. Much of this information has been gained through interview techniques.

Some experimental studies have also been tried in which evidence has appeared that there is a definite relationship between adjustment and scholastic achievement. In one such experiment it was demonstrated that adjustment problems were responsible for some students to fall below their scholastic aptitude. Psychological tests

have been given to indicate some of the emotional problems confronting college students. Studies of the success and of the failure of students have been made. There have even been studies of the predictive methods used for scholastic performance.

There seems to be an abundance of evidence to support the relationship between problems of adjustment, personal, social, and emotional, and performance or achievement. This relationship, of course, is not confined to college students, or to any other students for that matter.

In the literature we have also read of the studies that have been made to evaluate counseling and therapy, and to indicate some of the results that may be realized from therapy, including group therapy. Some of the studies have been experimental in nature, with the application of a control group, while others have not established controls, and still other have been chiefly theoretical in content.

The results from all of these reports tend to credit therapy with the means of dealing with these problems of adjustment in an effective manner. Findings that show what is accomplished in therapy itself, as well as studies that reveal results that accompany or follow adjustment in "successful" therapy, may be referred to in substantiation of this.

Thus, we can by deduction, if not through induction, conclude that: 1. college students have problems of adjustment that affect their achievement in school; 2. counseling

and psychotherapy are effective means of treating problems of adjustment; 3. an improvement in the person himself through help with his problems is carried over into other areas of his personality and environment; and, 4. therefore, an improvement in performance in college students may be ensuing.

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