The Effectiveness and Comparison of Tier 2 Intervention on Improving Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Outcomes in Elementary School
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PURPOSE OF STUDY:

This dissertation research sought to provide a particular school district with a better understanding of effective Tier 2 interventions to address minor, but frequently occurring problematic behaviors occurring in the classroom. An additional intent was to add evidence to the literature by exploring differences in outcomes when pull-out and classroom-based interventions are used.

BACKGROUND

- 1st grade teachers expressed frustration with minor, yet chronic behaviors interrupting student learning
- Behaviors reflected social-emotional learning (SEL) skill deficits identified in the literature (Correia & Marques-Pinto, 2016; Jones & Doolittle, 2017)
- Tier 2 interventions, such as pull-out small groups, have been successful in addressing SEL skill deficits (Simonsen & Myers, 2015; Green et al, 2019)
- Less commonly used Tier 2 classroom-based group contingency programs have also been effective in reducing behavior problems (Maggin et al, 2012)
- This research provides beneficial information to teachers as they make decisions regarding the use of classroom based strategies to impact social/emotional learning or reliance on pull-out interventions

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What is the overall effectiveness of Tier 2 interventions in improving social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes for children identified as in need of behavioral intervention?
- How does a teacher-led, classroom-based intervention compare with a pull-out, small group intervention in improving social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes for behaviorally at-risk elementary school students?

DESIGN

- Quasi-experimental; Participants identified through criterion sampling
- Interventions occurred simultaneously for 8 weeks
- Data was collected pre- and post-intervention

MEASUREMENT

Independent Variables
- Pull-out Groups: We Thinkers! (Zweber-Palmer et al, 2016)
- Classroom-based: Class-wide Function Related Intervention Teams (CW-FIT; Kamps et al, 2016)

Dependent Variables
- Observational Data
  - Off-task behavior
  - Excessive social interaction during instruction

Outcome Variables
- Social-emotional competency: Social Skills Improvement System, Social Emotional Learning (SSIS-SEL; Graham & Elliot, 2017)
- Behavioral Concerns: Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ; Goodman, 2005)

FINDINGS

RESEARCH QUESTION #1: OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF TIER 2 INTERVENTION IN IMPROVING SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND BEHAVIORAL OUTCOMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>SSIS-SEL Core Skills Subtest</th>
<th>SDQ Total Difficulties Score</th>
<th>Off-Task Behavior</th>
<th>Excessive Social Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRE-INTERVENTION MEAN</td>
<td>73.33</td>
<td>18.45</td>
<td>14.33</td>
<td>7.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POST-INTERVENTION MEAN</td>
<td>77.83</td>
<td>17.33</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>6.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-VALUE</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFFECT SIZE</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teacher reported scores indicated an increase in social-emotional competencies including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.

- Results indicate the effectiveness of Tier 2 intervention in positively impacting social-emotional skills acquisition, however, results regarding actual behavior did not follow study expectations.

RESEARCH QUESTION #2: DIFFERENCES IN EFFECTIVENESS BETWEEN A PULL-OUT AND CLASSROOM-BASED INTERVENTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>PRE-INTERVENTION MEAN</th>
<th>POST-INTERVENTION MEAN</th>
<th>P-VALUE</th>
<th>EFFECT SIZE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We Thinkers!: Pull-out Intervention</td>
<td>69.56</td>
<td>74.00</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW-FIT: Classroom-based Intervention</td>
<td>84.66</td>
<td>89.33</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample size: Pull-out Intervention: 9
Classroom-based Intervention: 3

- The mean data scores were obtained by separating the pull-out intervention participants from the classroom-based intervention participants within the SSIS-SEL Core Skills subtest. Results indicated that the pull-out intervention was more effective in impacting social-emotional competencies relative to the classroom-based intervention.

DISCUSSION

- Teacher perceptions of acquisition of social-emotional skills were positively impacted while performance (measured by direct observation and the SDQ) did not produce a statistically significant change.
- The development of social-emotional competencies may be differentiated by the “acquisition” (knowledge) and “performance” (behavior) of skills.
- It was hypothesized that classroom-based intervention would be more effective in creating change, however, results were contradictory to this hypothesis.
- Research points to the explicit focus on social and emotional skills in the pull-out intervention, including teaching, practice, and leader feedback may have provided an opportunity for more effective learning.
- Potential benefit of classroom-based programs which provide explicit social and emotional skill learning in addressing chronic Tier 2 behaviors teachers encounter throughout their day.

LIMITATIONS

- Small sample size
- Lack of randomization due to design constraints
- Length of intervention

REFERENCES


