

Review of: "A Phenomenological Study of the Lived Experiences of Counseling Students in a Co-Facilitated Experiential Group"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The article presents a phenomenological study exploring the lived experiences of counseling students participating in a co-facilitated experiential group. The research aims to uncover the students' attitudes, perceptions, and personal reactions to the group process, providing valuable insights into the dynamics of experiential learning in counselor education.

Strengths:

1. Methodological Rigor:

The use of a phenomenological approach is a significant strength, as it allows for an in-depth exploration of participants' subjective experiences. The semi-structured interview format effectively captures rich qualitative data, enabling the researchers to delve into the nuances of the students' experiences.

2. Emergent Themes:

The identification of four key themes—Importance of Trust & Vulnerability, Movement through the Stages of Group, Development of Self-Awareness & Personal Growth, and Comprehension of the Group Process—provides a comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences. These themes are relevant and resonate with existing literature on group dynamics and counseling education.

3. Practical Implications:

The findings offer practical recommendations for counselor educators, suggesting that the techniques and structures used in the study could enhance the effectiveness of experiential components in training programs. This connection between research and practice is crucial for advancing the field.

4. Contribution to Literature:

The study addresses a gap in the literature regarding the experiences of counseling students in co-facilitated groups, making a noteworthy contribution to the field. It opens avenues for future research and encourages further exploration of co-facilitation methods.

Areas for Improvement:

1. Sample Size and Diversity:

The study's sample size of six participants, while providing rich qualitative data, may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research could benefit from a larger and more diverse sample to capture a broader range of experiences and perspectives.

2. Theoretical Framework:

While the article mentions the theoretical orientations of the group leaders, it does not explore how these orientations may have influenced the participants' experiences. A more detailed discussion on the impact of different counseling theories and techniques could enhance the depth of the analysis.

3. Limitations Acknowledgment:

Although the authors briefly mention potential variables that could impact the results, a more thorough acknowledgment of the study's limitations would strengthen the overall rigor. Discussing factors such as participant demographics, the context of the study, and potential biases would provide a more balanced view.

4. Future Research Directions:

While the article suggests areas for future research, it could benefit from more specific recommendations. For instance, exploring the long-term effects of participation in co-facilitated groups or comparing outcomes across different theoretical orientations could provide valuable insights.

Conclusion:

Overall, the article is a significant contribution to the field of counselor education, offering valuable insights into the experiences of counseling students in co-facilitated experiential groups. With some improvements in sample diversity, theoretical exploration, and acknowledgment of limitations, future research can build on these findings to further enhance the understanding of experiential learning in counseling training.