








INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND PROMOTION OF STRENGTHS- BASED TOOLS

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POSITIVE INTERDEPENDENCE AND EMPOWERMENT IN AN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION CONTEXT WITH THE PROMOTION OF STRENGTHS-BASED TOOLS



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BACKGROUND

CONTEXT

SCHOOL INCLUSION - VISION

- A Consensus in Switzerland (Conférence des directeurs de l'instruction publique, 2024)
- Diversity is the Norm (Ebersold, 2009)
- Special Needs are Dynamic (Pelgrims & Buholzer, 2013)
- The Approach is Based on Identifying Resources and Needs (Vianin, 2007)

CONTEXT

SCHOOL INCLUSION - IMPLEMENTATION

- A Persistent Challenge (e.g., Radio télévision suisse, 2024)
- Perception of Diversity (Prud'Homme et al., 2017)
- Negativity Bias (Baumeister et al., 2001)

CONTEXT

A PROMISING APPROACH: STRENGTHS-BASED INTERVENTIONS

- A Promising but Underused Domain for SEND (Niemiec et al., 2017)
- Identification of Individual and Collective Resources (Quinlan et al., 2014)
- Enhancement of Relationships, Social Participation (Vuorinen et al., 2019)

CONTEXT

CHARACTER STRENGTHS

- Taxonomy of 24 Character Strengths (Peterson & Seligman, 2004)
- Identification, Use, Development, Celebration (Linkins et al., 2014)
- Perception by Peers (Quinlan et al., 2014)
- Well-being and Academic Learning (Wagner & Ruch, 2023)
- Life Satisfaction (Schutte & Malouff, 2018)

CONTEXT

SIGNATURE STRENGTHS ?

- e.g., Top 5 Most Prominent Strengths in a Person
- Identify (by oneself, by others) and Use in New Ways

POTENTIAL AND DOUBTS (PROYER ET AL., 2015)

- Some Strengths are More Suitable than Others
- Neglect of Valuable Work on Weaker Strengths
- Sensitivity of the Pedagogical Approach (for Better or Worse)

CONTEXT

“Individual Strengths, Collective Power!” (Bressoud et al., 2023)



CONTEXT

“INDIVIDUAL STRENGTHS, COLLECTIVE POWER!”

Positive Interdependence

- “Individual Strengths, **Collective Power!**” (Johnson & Johnson, 1999)

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“INDIVIDUAL STRENGTHS, COLLECTIVE POWER!”

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Empowerment

- “**Individual Strengths**, Collective Power!” (Rappaport, 1987)

CONTEXT

“INDIVIDUAL STRENGTHS, COLLECTIVE POWER!”

Positive Interdependence

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Empowerment

- “**Individual Strengths**, Collective Power!” (Rappaport, 1987)

Classroom Climate

- Perception of Relationships (Bressoud et al., 2021)
- Teacher-Student Relationships (Hattie, 2017)
- Student-Student Relationships (Johnson & Johnson, 1999)

AIMS

PURPOSE

Improve Inclusion Practices **In / For / With** the Field

OBJECTIVES

How Do Character Strengths Based Practices Influence Positive Interdependence and Student Empowerment in an Inclusive Context?

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How Do Character Strengths Based Practices Influence Positive Interdependence and Student Empowerment in an Inclusive Context?

- Relevance of Positive Psychology within Educational Sciences
- Measurement of Strengths Use
- Pedagogical Intervention
 - Creation of the Program
 - Measurement of Effects

METHODS

PARTICIPANTS

179 students aged 8 to 12 years divided by class into:

- Experimental group ($n = 104$)
- Active control group ($n = 75$)

| | Experimental group | Active control group |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Number of classes | 6 | 4 |
| Students (Perc. of girls) | 104 (46.2%) | 75 (44%) |
| Mean age (stand. deviation) | 9.83 (1.06) | 9.84 (1.17) |

MEASURES AND RELATED ANALYSIS

Two-Step Measurement:

MEASURES AND RELATED ANALYSIS

Two-Step Measurement:

QUESTIONNAIRES

Strengths Use Scale (SUS, adapted from Govindji & Linley, 2007)

- 14-item scale
- e.g. “I know how to use my strengths”
- Rated on a scale from 1 (I strongly disagree) to 7 (I strongly agree)

Gratitude questionnaire (adapted from McCullough et al., 2002)

- 5-item scale
- e.g. “I readily say thank you to people”
- Rated on a scale from 1 (I disagree) to 5 (I agree)

MEASURES AND RELATED ANALYSIS

Two-Step Measurement:

TEXT COLLECTION

Free-form description by students of themselves in three to four sentences

Coding and Inter-Rater Agreement (Cohen, 1968; Rosenthal & Rosnow, 2008)

Themes:

- Frequency of Strengths Vocabulary Use (Empowerment)
- Frequency of Positive Comments About Others (Positive Interdependence)

MEASURES AND RELATED ANALYSIS

Two-Step Measurement:

SOCIOMETRY

Sociometric Analysis via a *Peer Acceptance Index (PAI)*

Original Index Developed from Moreno et al. (1943)

Content

Formula

4 questions allowing each to name between 0 and 3 student(s):

- classmates you like (1) **the most** / (2) **the least**
- classmates you (3) **would** / (4) **wouldn't** like to work with

PAI ranging from -1 to 1

INTERVENTION

- 9-week intervention
- 45-minute sessions per week
- based on a simplified version of the “Individual Strengths, Collective Power!” program (Bressoud et al., 2023)

INTERVENTION (EXAMPLES)

Engage in group discussion to identify the strengths present in given situations.



INTERVENTION (EXAMPLES)

Think of a strength;
the other students
guess the strength
by asking questions.



INTERVENTION (EXAMPLES)

Choose a less-known classmate and identify their strengths in various situations.



INTERVENTION (EXAMPLES)

Share an experience that made the day better and link it to the strengths activated.



RESULTS

RESULTS

MAIN RESULTS (TL;DR)

RESULTS

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Increased Use of Strengths Vocabulary:

Both groups showed an increase in the use of strengths-related vocabulary, with a significant interaction between time and group ($b = -0.91$, $SE = 0.44$, $z = -2.09$, $p = .037$)

RESULTS

MAIN RESULTS (TL;DR)

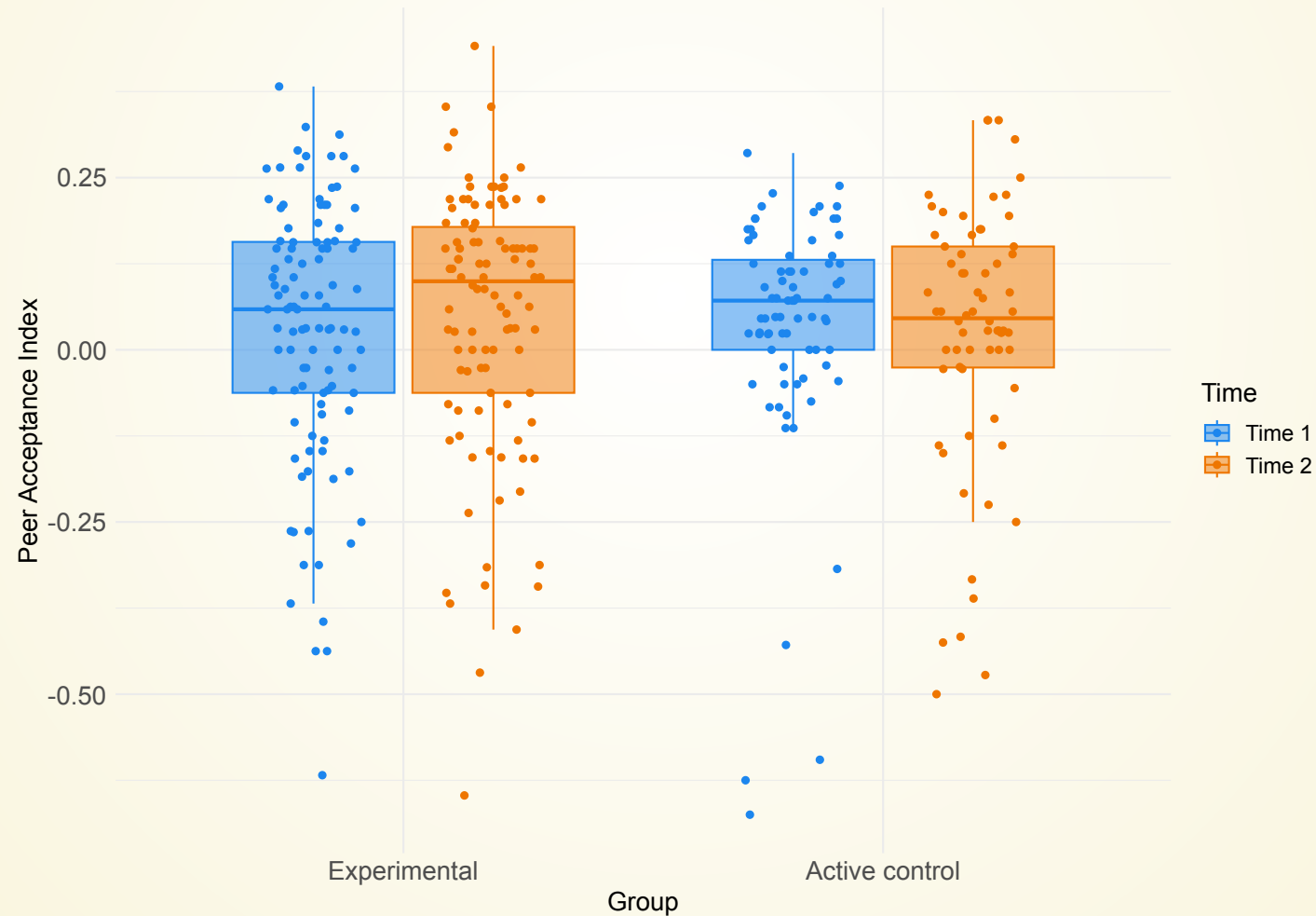
Increased Frequency of Positive Mentions of Others:

Both groups showed an increase in the frequency of positive mentions of others ($b = -0.32$, $SE = 0.11$, $z = -3.00$, $p = .003$)

RESULTS

MAIN RESULTS (TL;DR)

Peer Acceptance Index: No significant effect ($p = .569$)



RESULTS

MAIN RESULTS (TL;DR)

Gratitude predicts:

- **Strengths Vocabulary** ($b = 0.80$, $SE = 0.20$, $z = 4.03$, $p < .001$)
- **Positive Peer Comments** ($b = 0.75$, $SE = 0.19$, $z = 3.88$, $p < .001$)

RESULTS

USE OF CHARACTER STRENGTHS VOCABULARY (MIXED MODEL ANALYSIS)

Results Table

Use of Character Strengths Vocabulary¹

| Predictive Variable | Estimate | Standard Error | Statistic | p-value |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------------|-----------|----------|
| Gender | 0.37 | 0.11 | 3.48 | < .001** |
| Age | 0.30 | 0.18 | 1.71 | .086 |
| Strengths Utilisation Scale | 0.00 | 0.12 | 0.01 | .995 |
| Gratitude Questionnaire | 0.80 | 0.20 | 4.03 | < .001** |
| Time | -0.77 | 0.11 | -6.77 | < .001** |
| Group | 0.16 | 0.24 | 0.67 | .501 |
| Time * Group | -0.23 | 0.11 | -2.09 | .037* |

¹ *p < .05, **p < .001

RESULTS

POSITIVE ORIENTATION TOWARDS OTHERS (MIXED MODEL ANALYSIS)

Results Table

Positive Orientation Towards Others¹

| Predictive Variable | Estimate | Standard Error | Statistic | p-value |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------------|-----------|----------|
| Gender | 0.18 | 0.10 | 1.68 | .093 |
| Age | 0.32 | 0.16 | 1.98 | .048* |
| Strengths Utilisation Scale | -0.18 | 0.12 | -1.50 | .135 |
| Gratitude Questionnaire | 0.75 | 0.19 | 3.88 | < .001** |
| Time | -0.32 | 0.11 | -3.00 | .003* |
| Group | 0.26 | 0.21 | 1.28 | .202 |
| Time * Group | -0.16 | 0.10 | -1.48 | .138 |

¹ *p < .05, **p < .001

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

DISCUSSION

COMPARISON WITH TWO REFERENCE STUDIES:

Study 1

How 'other people matter' in a classroom-based strengths intervention - Exploring interpersonal strategies and classroom outcomes (Quinlan et al., 2014)

Study 2

A character strength intervention in 11 inclusive Finnish classrooms to promote social participation of students with special educational needs (Vuorinen et al., 2019)

DISCUSSION

COMPARISON WITH TWO REFERENCE STUDIES:

Aims

- Impact of Character Strengths Interventions on Students

DISCUSSION

COMPARISON WITH TWO REFERENCE STUDIES

Samples

- School-Based Interventions
- Sample similar in Terms of Student Age

Cultural Contexts

- Different Cultural and School Settings

DISCUSSION

COMPARISON WITH TWO REFERENCE STUDIES:

Statistical Methods

- Different Statistical Methods
- Similar or Convergent Variables of Interest

Results

- Positive Impact of Character Strengths

CONCLUSION

Positive Interdependence and Empowerment

- Highly Probable Positive Impact of Character Strengths-Based Practices

“Individual Strengths, Collective Power!”

- Suitability of the Program for the Cultural Context and the Needs of Users

Impact of Research

- Realistic Contributions to Teacher Competencies and the Promotion of Inclusive Schooling

LIMITATIONS

Sample

- Lack of Randomisation and Equivalence of Classes

Measures

- Reliability of Self-Assessments among Children is Uncertain

Fidelity of Implementation

- No Verification of Adherence to the Protocol

PERSPECTIVES

Measure of Heterogeneity

- Develop a Method to Measure the Level of Inclusion in Classes

Gratitude and Inclusion

- Explore the Explanatory Potential of Gratitude in Improving Relationships

Teachers' Perceptions

- Study the Influence of Teachers' Perceptions on the Effectiveness of Interventions

PROGRAM FREE ACCESS



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