Investigating the impact of on-line psychodrama workshops on the emotional intelligence wellbeing of secondary school students in a London school during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Abstract

Research Question: Does the use of on-line psychodrama workshops impact the emotional intelligence and wellbeing of secondary school students?

Introduction: Prior to the covid-19 Pandemic, face to face Acting up! psycho-drama workshops in schools, were already providing a positive impact on mental health and wellbeing of young participants. However, with the onset of the Covid-19 Pandemic, and the inability to provide face-to-face intervention, programs were re-written and adapted for virtual online use. At their core, the Acting Up! workshops are about teaching children and young people how to identify and manage their moods, as well as the impact their moods can have on themselves and people around them. In adapting the workshop, so it was completely virtual, it was accessible to all of the students including those at home self-isolating and teachers with an international team of drama facilitators and mentors zooming in from USA, China, Colombia, UK, Spain and Bulgaria amongst other European countries.

This paper discusses the challenges and findings of the impact of online psychodrama workshops on the emotional intelligence and mood of children participating and the teachers.

Methods:

An experimental, mixed methods convergent design was used to collect and analyse the data in this study. Three hundred year 9 students and their parents were given pre and post Strength and Differences Questionnaires, with a smaller sample of 20 students chosen with randomised purposeful stratified sampling techniques from which to conduct semi-structures pre and post interviews. Interviews were also conducted with drama facilitators and mentors. Teachers of the student sample in oder to detect changes in emotional intelligence and mood management with an objective to triangulate results.

Results:

Students really enjoyed online sessions especially the sessions on body image and the dangers of social media. In addition, there was a positive impact on their mood management and self-esteem.

Conclusion:

Online psychodrama workshops were seen to have a positive impact on the emotional intelligence and wellbeing of secondary school students.

Discussion points:

Keywords: covid-19 pandemic, online education in schools, emotional intelligence, mood management