

How Children Experience Positive Education - a Qualitative Study Focusing on Positive Relationships

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Abstract: <p>Positive relationships are an integral part of both mental and physical wellbeing. As such they have been a focal point of many positive education programs, but few studies have looked at the mechanism through which positive change is made. This is problematic as educators have expressed difficulty in utilizing tools from positive education in the classroom as a result of the vastness of the field. The current study attempts to gain an understanding of how children internalise teachings from positive education and how this information is translated into their daily lives. The study examines the effects of five lessons on positive relationships as part of a positive education program spanning 32 weeks in total. Participants were children aged 10-12 (N=72) from several Finnish schools. The aim of this qualitative study was to understand mediating factors of change in social wellbeing. Participants were interviewed in focus groups consisting of 4-6 students following the lessons. The data was analysed using qualitative content analysis using an inductive approach. Three main categories emerged: conflict management, listening and massage. The students had gained new ways of navigating conflict and could use the lessons on listening to enhance their social cognition. Teaching students how to give a massage served as a way of signalling differences between students and how touch and relaxation can be intertwined. The analysis showed that important factors for transfer of material taught in class to students' daily lives were peer interaction, educators using an active pedagogy in class and use of stories as prototypes for social interaction. Additionally, the results suggest that theoretical constructs can be remembered well by students in this age-group, but a concrete experience is required for a change in behaviour. Recommendations for further research is discussed.</p>	

Keywords: Positive psychology, Positive education, Social relationships Active-Constructive Responding, DESC model	
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<p>Abstrakt:</p> <p>Att kunna ta del av positiva relationer med andra är en betydelsefull del av både den mentala och fysiska hälsan. På grund av detta har många program inom den positiva pedagogiken fokuserat på hur man kan stärka dessa relationer. Trots detta fokus är mekanismerna bakom hur stärkta positiva relationer resulterar i en förbättring av välmående efter en intervention i stort sett okänd. Detta är problematiskt då många pedagoger pekat på svårigheter med att använda sig av verktyg från den positiva psykologin i sina klassrum. Denna studie ämnar bilda en förståelse för hur barn internaliserar lektioner inom positiv pedagogik samt hur denna information används i vardagen för att öka välmående. Studien undersöker effekterna av en 5 veckor lång intervention gällande positiva relationer som var del av ett större interventionsprogram på 32 veckor. Deltagarna i studien var barn i åldern 10-12(N=72) från skolor runt om i Svenskfinland. Målet med denna kvalitativa studie var att kartlägga de mekanismer som bidrog till förändringar i välmående. Deltagarna intervjuades i fokusgrupper bestående av 4-6 elever. Datat som insamlades analyserades med hjälp av en induktiv innehållsanalys. Tre huvudkategorier framkom: konflikthantering, att lyssna och massage. Eleverna hade lärt sig nya sätt att hantera konflikter och kunde använda lektionerna om lyssnande för att reflektera kring faktorer bakom problem i relationer. Eleverna hade även lärt sig att ge någon annan en massage vilket även gav dem information om hur beröring och avslappning kan höra ihop. Analysen pekade på att interaktion med jämnåriga då materialet lärdes ut var viktigt för dess inverkan på barnens vardag. Lärare som använder sig av aktiva undervisningsmetoder verkade även ha bättre effekt, att använda sig av historier och prototyper för beteende var även effektivt. Resultaten visade även på att barn i denna åldersgrupp kan använda sig av och komma ihåg konstrukt från den positiva psykologin, men att konkreta exempel eller övningar var nödvändiga/hjälpsamma för att informationen skulle ha en effekt på barnens vardag. Rekommendationer för vidare forskning diskuteras.</p>	

Nyckelord: Positiv psykologi, Positiv pedagogik, Positiva relationer, Active-Constructive Responding, DESC-modellen	
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A Qualitative Look at how Children Experience Positive Education Classes- With Focus on Positive Relationships

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Introduction

Schools are important environments for the integration of the individual into society and an important learning environment for skills and thinking strategies that contribute to well-being and, thus, a viable arena for the acquisition of such skills (Seligman, 2011). For this reason, governments have encouraged schools to socialise their pupils into a modern and changing world while preparing them for dealing with possible problems with mental health. In Finland, the values of the national curriculum emphasize maximising the potential of the individual, enabling the individual to find personal strengths, a positive identity, and the tools to manage a modern world (Finnish national curriculum 2014, p. 18). These values are in line with the theoretical model of positive psychology and shows the conceptual applicability of positive education in the education system. The prospect of finding robust and effective interventions to reach the abovementioned goals is becoming increasingly important, as mental well-being in adolescents seems to be experiencing a downward trend in many parts of the world (World Health Organisation, 2020). Studies examining the trends in the United States show an alarming increase in the prevalence of mental illnesses in schoolchildren and the population at large during the last 10 years (Twenge et al., 2019). A similar trend was seen in a report conducted by the World Health Organisation which noted unprecedented rates of mental illness among adolescents in Europe and Canada (World Health Organisation, 2020). Additional support for this decline can be found in studies from the UK, Australia and the USA which indicate that adolescents are experiencing higher rates of depression, anxiety and suicide ideation compared to previous generations. (Bloch, 2016; Bor et al., 2014; Patel et al., 2007). These statistics extend to Finland where longitudinal data has shown a steady increase of mental illnesses during adolescence (Gyllenberg et al., 2018). In addition to anguish suffered by the individual, a decline in mental health affects societies economically and functionally. As such an increased interest in how best to build interventions

and systems to prevent or even revert this trend has emerged from both governments and individuals worldwide.

Positive Education

Positive education is an umbrella term defined as the application of techniques, philosophies and strategies derived from positive psychology, applied in a school environment. In the words of its founder Martin Seligman positive education is “education for both traditional skills and for happiness” (Seligman et al., 2009). The goal of positive education is thus to promote positive mental health in a school environment (Norrish et al., 2013). Positive education has been developed to be actionable and combines elements from research on positive psychology with the best practice guidelines from education (Slemp et al., 2017). Interventions are often modelled after the PERMA model of well-being and integrated into the already existing curriculum. The PERMA model consists of five distinct areas believed to be integral for flourishing: Positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning and achievement. Interventions are often modelled to cover them all. Positive education has the ambition to provide an increase in well-being and function as a buffer for mental illness. With success-stories such as the Geelong grammar school gaining traction, interventions incorporating elements of positive psychology are becoming ever more frequent (Slemp et al., 2017; International Positive Education Network. 2017). This seems to be a global phenomenon as educators and psychologists all over the world are implementing positive education (Seligman & Alder 2018). More and more evidence is showing that that interventions derived from the PERMA model are effective at solidifying and strengthening well-being and are well suited for application in schools (Norrish et al., 2013; Seligman, 2011; Seligman et al., 2009; Kern et al., 2015; Shoshani et al., 2016; Waters, 2011). A meta-analysis on positive psychology interventions in education from 2013 showed that significant but modest effects can be achieved on subjective and personal well-being in addition to a decrease in depressive symptoms (Haverman et al., 2013). This development, both scientific and political, has made it clear that positive education is here to stay. However, research is urgently needed to guide the development of best practice guidelines and implementation standards.

A review of well over 500 implementation studies on various types of health promotion and prevention studies pointed out that effect sizes are two to three times higher in a context where a program is carefully implemented, i.e., pays attention to contextual factors and is truthful to its source material (Durlak & DuPree, 2008). As positive education shares characteristics with these programs it can be assumed that the effectiveness of an intervention could be affected by implementation style. As such it becomes crucial to understand the mediators of this change to be able to replicate the positive effects of positive education. A decline in efficacy of positive psychology interventions compared to previous reviews and meta-analyses has been observed in a recent meta-analysis and while the effects on wellbeing stay significant, effect sizes have dropped (Carmela et al., 2019). This decline in efficacy calls for an observation of mediators underpinning successful interventions. Within recent years many research projects have focused on the effectiveness of positive education interventions, yet little is known about the mechanisms mediating this change and what implementation praxis should be used (Halliday et al., 2019a, p.174). This is problematic as it has been shown that the vastness of the field makes it hard for educators to grasp and consequently implement positive education interventions (White & Murray 2015; White 2016; White & Kern 2018). In other words, evidence and knowledge of how best to implement it in complex school systems is scarce (Conoley et al., 2014). Schools are multifaceted environments with multiple mediating variables which need to be understood to develop robust and replicable interventions. Many studies have used questionnaires to report the efficacy of positive education interventions (Crawford & Henry 2010; Diener, 1984). Quantitative methods such as questionnaires serve a purpose in allowing the phenomenon to be observed and evaluated empirically and compared to other school-based interventions but is ill-equipped to identify mediating variables. The fact that respondents are children also presents methodological problems as the developmental profile of the child regarding memory capacity and verbal processing makes understanding written questions and summarising ones thoughts more difficult. (Leeuw, 2011). Qualitative designs then become crucial, as this is information not easily conveyed solely by quantitative means.

Positive Relationships

Having fulfilling relationships is a key part of living a meaningful and happy life. Positive relationships are defined as being able to rely on others for support while feeling that these connections are secure and authentic (Seligman, 2011). There is ample evidence that relationships contribute to important factors relating to well-being such as engagement, academic success and resilience while preventing loneliness, attendance problems and social anxiety (Shoshani et al., 2016; Slone & Shoshani, 2008, Hymel et al., 1996). Positive relationships have been shown to be able to elevate the level of positive emotion experienced which has crucial connections to subjective well-being (Vittengl & Holt, 1998). Positive education tries to create a foundation for positive relationships by making students more aware of different ways of interacting with others and provide avenues for connection and friendship. Interventions focusing on these elements have been shown to significantly strengthen relationships (Boehm & Lyubomirsky, 2009).

While the PERMA model is a powerful tool for predicting well-being, the elements of the model are correlated moderately highly (range .37 to .79, mean = .61) with each other (Forgeard et al., 2011). As such it is possible that there is a varying degree of influence exerted on well-being by different elements of the model. In the current study one of the elements of the PERMA model, relationships, is examined and it could be hypothesised that relationships exert a larger effect on well-being than other elements of the model. This is supported by findings that the upper 10% of consistently happy people differ from less happy people in terms of their relationships, and that relationships are a must for reaching such a state (Diener & Seligman, 2002). A meta-analysis of 39 studies regarding social capital showed that the prevalence of good relationships increased the likelihood of good health by 27%. These odds were further increased if variables such as reciprocity (39%) and trust (32%) were present (Uchino et al., 1996). Reciprocity and trust are at the core of positive relationships and could be an important variable in explaining why positive education increases well-being. A description of how participants internalised and benefitted from the concepts of positive relationships is important for understanding the mechanisms mediating a change in well-being.

The Building Blocks of Fostering Positive Relationships

Many different methods of facilitating positive relationships have sprung up over the years. The common denominator seems to be to learn strategies for communicating and interacting with others. To be able to interact with others in a balanced fashion, emotional regulation is important. In order to be able to regulate one's emotions, emotional intelligence is required. Therefore, strategies focusing on strengthening emotional intelligence are often integrated in positive education and refer to the teaching of cognitive strategies with the goal of improving regulation of emotion-eliciting events. Mayer and colleagues have modelled emotional intelligence as consisting of the following areas: (a) perceiving emotions, (b) using emotions to facilitate thought, (c) understanding emotions, and (d) managing emotions in a way that enhances personal growth and social relations (Mayer et al., 2001). The following sections will detail the theoretical underpinnings of methods used in strengthening emotional regulation in the current study: teaching children new models for social interaction, honing listening skills and social reciprocity and giving and receiving a massage as an arena for exploring reciprocity and touch.

Teaching Models for Social Interaction

A prevalent way of achieving change is by teaching new models for dealing with emotions and social situations. Programs focusing on social emotional learning have had positive effects on emotional, social, and academic performance, as highlighted by a meta-analysis of 213 interventions on social emotional learning (Durlak et al., 2011). Positive education incorporates both how to deal with negative emotions and how to note and increase the frequency of positive emotions. This allows participants to develop greater psychological flexibility, which has been proven to be a key correlate for life satisfaction (Gruber et al., 2013; Kashdan & Rottenberg 2010; Quoidbach et al., 2015).

One important aspect of social interaction is assertiveness, the ability to express one's personal needs and wishes while also taking into account and respecting others (Rakus, 1991). It has been shown that not being able to be assertive is associated with reduced well-being (Sarkova et al., 2013). Adolescents have particularly much to gain from assertiveness as there is evidence to suggest positive effects on social interactions with adults and peers, improved academic performance and a reduction in

aggressive behaviour (Farley & Kim-Spoon 2014; Laursen & Mooney 2008;Plenty et al., 2014; Eslami et al., 2016). The ability to be assertive when needed allows one to give signals to others on how you wish to be treated and serves as a buffer for stress. One model for enhancing assertiveness is the DESC model, which details four distinct steps to follow when being assertive: Describe, Express, Specify, and Consequences (Bower & Bower, 1991). The model offers a template for giving feedback that does not cause a threat response in the recipient, instead focusing on clarifying the matter in a balanced way and thus increasing the chances for further collaboration.

Another behaviour pattern often utilised is how to react to positive events. It has been shown that the style used when someone else is sharing a positive event is a better predictor for the well-being of a relationship than responses to negative events (Gable et al., 2004). The mechanisms of this are thought to be that additional positive emotion is generated if the person's experience is properly validated and that these positive interactions become a template of how relationships ought to be, thus strengthening them. On the contrary, not acknowledging positive emotion may dampen and eradicate their expression. Thus, being able to boost positive affect becomes an upward spiral increasing the quality of relationships (Fredrickson, 2001). Active-constructive responding (ACR) is a commonly used model for teaching this skill. The model focuses on facilitating relationships by fostering empathic listening, acknowledging and validating what has been said while being an active conversationalist. In practice, the model divides conversation partner styles into four groups where the goal is to show the advantages of being active and constructive and the drawbacks of not doing so (Gable et al., 2004.; Gable et al., 2006; Magyar & Moe, 2009).

While evidence is scarce on the efficacy of the model, studies have shown that the model can have significant effects on gratitude (Woods et al., 2014). Additionally, using an active-constructive conversational style was found to be beneficial regarding relationship satisfaction (Gable et al., 2004.; Gable, Gonzaga & Strachman, 2006).

Kindness and Gratitude

An integral part of many positive education interventions is being kind to oneself and others.

Interventions have therefore focused on teaching the value of valuing oneself and forgiving oneself and others for failures. A higher degree of gratitude has also been linked to more satisfactory relationships (Froh et al., 2009). The idea is that an increase in gratitude is an important mediator for improving relationships. As such, interventions have been put forth with this goal in mind.

The act of actively being grateful for events and experiences has been linked to an increase in positive affect and interpersonal benefits (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). A common way to practice this skill is to list things that the person is grateful for and ponder ways of increasing the frequency of such events. Methods commonly used include gratitude journaling, writing a letter where gratitude is expressed or writing one which aims to forgive. Another common method is to encourage students to perform acts of kindness which entails that students show gratitude or are kind to another person. (Waters, 2011). A meta-analysis looking at the effect of those performing the random acts of kindness showed there to be a small to medium effect size on subjective well-being, in addition to creating a less hostile and more compassionate environment (Curry et al., 2018).

Another venue for teaching kindness and gratitude is through mindfulness. A 2018 review of the effects of meditation on predictors for prosocial behaviour i.e., positive interactions with others, concluded that mindfulness can be used to increase the likelihood of prosocial behaviour and increase compassion (Luberto et al., 2018).

Physical Touch and Oxytocin

Oxytocin is a neurotransmitter involved in bonding between primates and is released through touch. In humans, it has been shown that oxytocin plays an important role in social cognition, bonding and prosocial behaviour (Viero et al., 2010). One way of achieving an increase in oxytocin is giving and receiving a massage as both have been shown to increase oxytocin levels while, additionally, decreasing adrenocorticotropin levels, which reduces the secretion of stress hormones such as cortisol (Morhenn et al., 2012). It is hypothesised that these hormonal changes are a big part of why social relationships reduce morbidity rates. While the field is still in an early stage regarding scientific scrutiny, a

meta-analysis from 2004 showed that a single massage can have an effect on state anxiety while lowering blood pressure and heart rate (Moyer et al., 2004). A 6-month study on pre-schoolers concluded that a massage lasting 5-10 minutes could be an easy and inexpensive way to reduce somatic, social and behavioural problems relating to aggression (Knorrning et al., 2008). Another study found that aggressive behaviours could be reduced in elementary schools by having children give each other massages, indicating a use for massage in reducing aggressive behaviour in elementary schools (Gonçalves et al., 2017). In positive education, tasks that involve students massaging each other can be used as a tool to convey how we all react differently to the same stimuli. It can also illustrate how touch can have a soothing effect while illustrating the importance of recovery.

The Current Study

The current study formed part of a larger study in which an intervention spanning the entire PERMA model was implemented in several Finnish schools (Laakso et al., 2020). The focus of this paper is the positive relationship unit, which utilised exercises and theory from the areas detailed above, specifically the DESC and ACR model, a massage instruction, and a loving kindness meditation exercise. Additionally, theory regarding positive psychology was introduced through normal teaching and dramatizations.

The current study aims to extract data about how children internalise lessons on positive relationships and how the information is translated into their daily lives. This examination is important, as a gap exists in the positive education literature regarding factors influencing learning and application of positive relationship concepts in the daily lives of students. A qualitative analysis of the intervention adds perspectives on positive education that can be used for the conceptualisation of new theory while providing insight into how the intervention affects participants. An equally important goal was gathering ecologically valid information that can be used to bridge the researcher-practitioner gap and, thus, aid interdisciplinary enrichment and formation of best practice guidelines. Consequently, the study aims to uncover mechanisms for change in well-being attained from lessons on positive relationships. As there is ample evidence regarding the importance of positive relationships for well-being, examination of its use in positive education is warranted and crucial for further evolution of the field.

The design of the study is inductive and exploratory and utilizes qualitative content analysis as its method. No hypotheses were formulated a priori. The research questions “How have the participants internalised the lessons on positive relationships?” and “How have participants used the lessons to modify their well-being?” were formulated to reflect this goal. The aim of the paper is twofold:

1. To gain insight into how children understand social interaction following lessons on positive relationships
2. To gain a greater understanding of how the knowledge gained through the lessons is translated into everyday life

Method

Context and aim

This study was part of a larger study examining the effect of implementing weekly positive education classes for an entire school year. The intervention spanned five different areas all derived from the PERMA model and was organised in Swedish-speaking schools in metropolitan and western Finland. (Laakso et al., 2020). The purpose of the study was to assess how the effects of lessons on positive relationships manifested itself in grade 5 primary school students (ages 10-12). The current study explores positive relationships which was one of the five dimensions focused on during the intervention. The study was conducted by researchers who belong to the same socioeconomic and cultural group (Swedish-speaking Finns) as the students and were, thus, sensitive to dialectal differences and methods of expression in the sample.

The Intervention

The aforementioned intervention started out from lessons in the book *Personal Well-Being Lessons: Positive Psychology in action for 11-14 year olds* (Bonniwell et al., 2014) and also used several other sources to construct the intervention (Laakso et al., 2020).

The curriculum was created using multiple sources and regarding positive education application in schools (Laakso et al., 2020). The program spanned 32 lessons categorised into five different themes(positive emotions, engagement, positive relationships, achievements) focusing on fostering different parts of well-being.

The positive relationship block spanned 5 lessons total and are detailed in the matrix below:

Table 1

An Overview of the Lesson Plan for the Positive Relationships Unit

Unit 3 Positive Relationships, Lessons
1. A Good Friendship: Active constructive responding theory: Nonviolent communication, Oxytocin, and massage practice (Gable, 2004).
2. Toxic Friendship: Active constructive responding theory:(Gable 2004), The DESC model, application, and discussion
3. Forgiveness: Strengths regarding forgiveness, what forgiveness is in practice, writing a forgiveness letter based on Seligman (2002)
4. Listening and Empathy: Theory and exercises designed to make the material come alive. Discussions about empathy and active listening
5. Kindness and Gratitude: Discussions about the importance of kindness and gratitude, writing a gratitude diary, loving kindness meditation

Sampling Strategy and Data Collection

The participants of the study came from four Swedish-speaking middle schools, situated in metropolitan or western Finland. Participation was not compulsory and 83% of the pupils gave their informed consent to participate, totalling 72 students participating in the intervention. The participants had an advantaged socioeconomic status (SES) with 57,4% categorizing themselves as having a high socioeconomic status. Data regarding SES was retrieved from ratings made by parents of pupils participating in the intervention regarding income level, occupation and education level. This does not, however, differ from the Finnish population where 60% of children participating in the nationwide PISA

exam were categorised as high SES (Salmela-Aro & Chmielewski 2019). The intervention took place between May of 2016 and May of 2017.

First, students were given the opportunity to individually write down their reflections regarding the lessons through open-ended questions. This was done to allow for better recall of the intervention and help students focus on their own opinions (rather than one student dominating the group) during the group interview. Students were then divided into smaller focus groups of 4-6 children. The focus group interviews used the same questions as the individual questionnaire. Discussions were held in empty classrooms and lasted 10 minutes on average, depending on the talkativeness of the group. The questions can be found in table 2.

Focus Groups

Focus groups are a common way to study a phenomenon in a qualitative way. The procedure is characterised by being akin to an informal discussion regarding a preselected topic. The group is moderated by the interviewer who is responsible for steering the conversation in an investigative direction. The moderator asks the questions provided by the interview guide but then acts as a catalyst for group discussion. This is achieved by asking questions, pitching in with different perspectives, encouraging members to speak and not allowing one member to dictate the direction of the conversation. This approach for older schoolchildren is supported by research, as it has been shown that they have the capacity to point out if they do not understand questions in an interview (Feldman, 2011). The role of the moderator is, thus, to allow all members to express their opinions and facilitate discussion. The resulting conversation often has the characteristics of an informal discussion.

This setting provides a good way to clarify middle school children's perceptions of health and mental well-being. As middle schoolers are undergoing the developmental transition to adolescence, it can be difficult to talk about sensitive topics with an adult stranger (Christensen, 2004; Holmes, 1998). This barrier is lessened by providing peer support in the form of a focus group, thus, allowing for more relaxed

explorative answers (Homer, 2000). Hence, focus groups provide a way to investigate the perceived effect of the intervention in an ecologically valid way.

Table 2

Questions Used in the Focus Groups

Interview structure
1a) What have you learned about friendship and how to react in case of conflict? 1b) What have been the benefits of learning about friendship and how to react in case of conflict? 2a) What have you learned about the DESC model? 2b) What have been the benefits of the DESC model? 3a) What have you learned about listening in a good way? 3b) What have been the benefits of learning to listen in a good way? 4a) What have you learned about the buddy-massage? 4b) What benefits have you experienced by learning about the buddy massage? 5 What you feel has changed in the classroom, at home or with friends since we started with the Happiness-lessons? Questions were selected to capture a) what the children had learned as a result of the intervention. b) the benefit of the intervention

Data Processing and Analysis

Qualitative Content Analysis

As the data was derived from a semi-structured interview and the research questions were clearly defined, qualitative content analysis (QCA) was selected as the method of analysis. QCA is a procedural process that sorts data into different categories in order to answer questions posed by the researcher. No

holistic overview is sought, instead the research questions are used to generate a coding frame which then categorises the data according to their relevance to the research question (Mayring, 2000; Schreier, 2013).

The core of a qualitative content analysis is the coding frame which determines how meaning bearing statements form different categories. The coding frame is generated either by a theoretical framework or inductively by procedurally tuning the coding frame using pilot data. Once the coding frame has been developed and has reached consensus among the researchers involved it is applied on the entire dataset.

The first step in the analysis was to get the interview data transcribed, this was done by a professional to ensure high quality. Once transcribed the data was read through multiple times spread out over 3 months. It was decided that an inductive approach was best suited for the dataset. The main factors guiding this decision was the dearth of literature that would have provided a theoretical backdrop and that inductive formation of categories reacts well to the often-incoherent speech found in schoolchildren. Also, the nature of the material made an inductive method for generating categories ideal as big chunks of the material was not suitable for analysis (indistinct chatter, random questions and topics, interruptions etc.). To generate categories the irrelevant data had to be excluded. The whole dataset was analysed, and statements were extracted if they were concordant with the research questions. This first coding was dichotomous with text being assigned either as included or not included. The procedure can be categorised into five steps (Mayring, 2010):

1. A research question is formulated on a theoretical backdrop
2. A selection criterion is established, categories defined
3. The text is worked through, new categories are formulated
4. Revision of categories and rules after analysing 10-50% of the data
5. The material is worked through and put through a validity and reliability check using a third-party coder

After the initial rough coding highlighting relevant information in the interviews the data was extracted and organised again with the interview questions for both datasets as a coding frame. Meaning bearing statements from the initial coding were grouped with the questions they answered. Before a full coding was conducted, the coding frame was piloted on 25% of the data by one psychology student and one researcher. The coding frame was revised and then applied to the data. The full coding of the data using this coding frame was completed.

After the process was completed, additional categories were created using the process of Inductive Category Formation (Mayring, 2010 p.79). The text was read line by line and if a new category explained the statement better, one was created. New categories were created until saturation was obtained, i.e., all the data could be subsumed into existing categories. The two main research questions were used as main headings.

At this point the coding frame had 23 categories. The coding frame was then evaluated by two researchers and two psychology students not directly involved in the study and consequently revised one more time. Categories were either expanded upon or subsumed into other categories. It was decided that no one category should contain less than 2 meaning bearing statements as such categories were too specific. Such cases were simply included in a similar category and a new one was not created. The focus was mostly on creating categories that exposed themes in the text and thus a reduction in categories was necessary. The research questions guided the formation and subsummation of categories to make the categories capture the differences in the answers while simultaneously creating coherent categories. After all categories had been established the data was coded using this final coding frame. Once the coding had been made no more changes were made to the structure of the coding frame.

Trustworthiness of the Analysis

Trustworthiness is a central concern in qualitative research. Thus, several steps were taken to ensure trustworthiness. Bias regarding categorisation and analysis was controlled for by having a different person interview and analyse the data. To ensure that the data was transcribed correctly and without

interpretation, transcription of the material was done by a professional versed in Finnish-Swedish dialects. Documentation of all data and files throughout the coding process were kept record of.

To ensure that the coding frame was reliable the entire dataset was coded by two separate coders using the same coding frame. An interrater-reliability score of 0.825 was extracted using the formula described in Miles and Huberman 1994.

$$\text{reliability} = \text{number of agreements} / \text{number of agreements} + \text{disagreements}$$

An interrater score between 80% and 95% is seen as sufficient and thus the study met this criterion for reliability (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Results

The current study aimed to answer how 1. children internalised the material taught in class 2.) how this knowledge was used for their benefit. The results for each of the areas examined are presented with both domains in mind. Three main categories could be extracted from the data based on the interview structure:

1. Conflict management
2. Listening
3. Buddy massage

Table 3

Categories extracted From the Qualitative Content Analysis

Category	Theme	Repeating idea
Conflict management	Ability to discern between different ways of responding to conflict.	Use of the DESC and ACR model allowed for new ways of looking at conflict
	A more nuanced understanding of the others inner world	A deepened understanding of similarities in how others feel in social interactions

	Gained understanding of a model for conflict management	Could summarise the main points of the DESC model
	The value of forgiveness	Forgiveness is easier when you know why it is important
	Why it is important to stand your ground without being aggressive	Why being aggressive is counterproductive when being assertive
Practical use of conflict management	Able to better stand up for themselves	An increase in confidence through the use of mental models.
	Fights can be resolved faster	Escalation of fights could be avoided by using the teachings from class
	The examples from class were used as prototypes for behaviour in relationships	Situations discussed in class through drama or discussion served as a model of interaction in daily life.
Listening	Learned that listening is important	The importance of listening was conveyed through how it felt when not listened to
	The others mood is affected by how you listen	Mood can be affected by being present
	Learned to balance the roles when in a conversation	Asking questions is just as important as answering them
	Using the ACR model in conversations	Participants had difficulties using the ACR-model without context
Practical use of listening	Attending behaviours	An increase in active reflective listening, pointing out when others are not listening.
Message	How a buddy massage can reduce stress	A massage makes others feel good and allows for better performance and well-being
	Learning to know others through massage	Messages allow for exploration of our differences
	Learned how to give a buddy massage	Being proud of gaining a tangible skill
	The value of a buddy massage	A massage increases positive energy and promotes collaboration.
Practical implications of a massage	Peers	Messages were appreciated when used in school but not used during students' free time.
	Family	Messages were greatly appreciated and used in the family
Benefit of the intervention was unclear		

Note: Categories are ranked based on frequency in the material, where the first ones had more material than the last ones. The “practical use of” categories were made into distinct main categories to match the research questions and adhere to the interview structure.

Theme 1: Conflict Management

A central goal of the positive relationship lessons was to improve the understanding of how one’s own actions impact others. The results showed that the pupils had an easy time categorising emotional states and response styles. They also emphasised the importance of forgiveness and speaking one's mind in conversations.

Ability to discern between different ways of responding to conflict

Children were able to remember and apply the categories and theory of the DESC model: “It feels better when you react in a firm but kind way, you don't get sad, when you don't react at all it makes you feel bad”.

A more nuanced understanding of the others inner world

Students gained a better understanding of what others might be thinking and feeling. One pupil summarised this category “I have gained an understanding of how it all works (other people) and how I in turn can react differently in different situations. In case it all goes wrong or something”.

In a similar vein, another pupil applied this notion of trying to understand where the other is coming from to conflict management:

For example, if a friend has a different opinion than you it makes them feel mad about that you do not share that opinion. But you are allowed to have your own opinions, it's all about how you express it, so your friend doesn't get sad.

Gained understanding of a model for conflict management

The accessibility of information regarding conflict management was made easier using the DESC model for conflict management. Many students showed that they had internalised its contents, however, it was more difficult to see the applicability of it. Most children repeated what had been taught in class directly, much like answering a test. First, you are to describe the situation and then express it, how you feel at that moment and specify that the other is to remember this for the next time.

While most students did not apply any value judgement to the model, some commented on its potential use in the future: "Well maybe I'll use it more now that I know that it exists, or now that you know it you can use it".

The value of forgiveness

Forgiveness was a theme that was brought up a few times. Statements focused on a change of mindset regarding the importance of forgiveness and that it is a skill that is much needed in relationships. "It's easier to forgive someone now that I understand the value of it".

Why it is important to stand your ground without being aggressive

One of the most prominent themes was that of responding to conflict, more answers were collected for this category than any other, signifying that it was an important theme.

Most statements underlined the importance of not escalating the problem but still not giving in.

"It's important to react firmly but kindly if a conflict occurs, well if you do the friend understands your viewpoint without getting even more angry".

Practical use of conflict management

Able to Better Stand up for Themselves.

Children were able to use the lessons to stand up for themselves more in their daily life. This was done by using the models for conflict resolution taught by the DESC-model.

"It's been easier to tell people how you feel, for example if someone comes in late, I tell them that they didn't really check the time this time".

Fights can be Resolved Faster

The children felt that fights were not as drawn out as before and that escalation of conflicts could be more easily avoided. A participant remarked that: "Before (the intervention) I could fight for a very long time but now I get angry, and I tell the other person and it makes it go away". Answers from other participants also hinted that the DESC model had been used to great effect: " (talking about the benefits of the program) I think the best thing is that we don't fight as much, because we have learned from that DESC model"

The Examples From Class Were Used as Prototypes for Behaviour in Relationships.

A common theme for practical application of the lessons were that behaviours observed through drama and examples made students aware of how they could change their interactions with the world around them, highlighting integration of lessons about ACR. The following statement from a participant gives an example of this interaction:

Those examples were actually true, because it happened the same way when my sister had been studying really hard for a test. She got a good result and showed it to my dad who said, "You got really lucky". But then I told dad about the example and then he gave a lot of praise and my sister got really happy

Another pupil brought up that the examples had had an impact on how interactions were handled in groups. Examples ranged from extracurricular activities to schoolwork, but all had in common that the examples were used to positively affect how they interacted with others.

Theme 2: Listening

Listening was taught to students through theory and drama. The Active Constructive Responding ARC model was a headstone in these teachings. Results showed that students had been able to grasp the ACR model and the value of listening and were able to extend this knowledge to their everyday life.

Learned That Listening is Important

Pupils emphasised that their view on the importance of listening had changed because of the intervention. This category had more answers than others: “Well listening actively and being interested is very important, so that you really listen and don't like look in another direction and don't really care”

The Others' Mood is Affected by How You Listen

Children also brought up how they have started to think more about how their way of having a conversation might affect the mood of others, ideas prevalent in active constructive responding. A student pinpointed this: “Others might get sad if they notice that you don't really care (by not listening)”

Learned to Balance the Roles When in a Conversation

The children were taught that questions are an important part of conversations and that it makes others feel better if questions are asked, something ACR deems as important. “Your friend becomes happier if you look him or her in the eyes and ask more questions.

Using the ACR Model in Conversations

Children could count the categories of listening and responding taught during the lessons but could not apply it to a context. It seemed like they were not able to apply the teachings directly. Many students reported that they had not used the model at all and that it was confusing.

Attending Behaviours

The pupils displayed an increased understanding of how listening affects others and started to employ it in their daily lives. It allowed children to have more close and shared experiences with their friends.

Participants seemed to have latched on to the sentiment of attending behaviours and expressed it through “It's really important to listen because it's a lot more fun for the friend you are with, because if you do you can experience the situation together, that makes it much more fun!”

Another benefit was that students were able to tell others if their conversation partner was not listening. Children were able to use the information and models generated in class to tell others if they were not being an active listener. “If I notice that someone is not listening, I try to tell them “hey you are not listening” and then I also try to listen better myself”

Theme 3: Buddy Massage

Students were taught a model for how to give a massage and practiced this skill on each other. Simultaneously students were given information on oxytocin and its effects on the body and mind. Students gained an understanding of the impact a massage has on the body, and how we all like to be touched differently. Students appreciated the acquisition of the skill of giving a massage, and it was used outside of school as well.

How a Buddy Massage can Reduce Stress

Pupils listed several things that they had been taught about giving a friend a massage. The main new things were that it could be something used after a stressful day and that massages could give more energy for cognitive tasks. The students expressed this in statements such as "You get more energy and you can be a better thinker after one".

Learning to Know Others Through Massage

The massage symbolised that different people have different tastes and feel sensations differently. The massage allowed children to ponder how different we all are, not everyone reacts the way they themselves would. It illuminated the need to communicate for the best results "Well that you should not do it too hard and not too soft but instead ask what the other wants. If the person says harder, then you can do it harder"

Learned how to Give a Buddy Massage

Children experienced that they had learned to give a massage to others, a skill they had not had before: "I have learned that it's actually pretty easy to give a massage and then others get that nice feeling into them (referencing oxytocin)".

The Value of a Buddy Massage

Getting a massage was perceived as fun by most students and regarded as something positive. Many described the experience of having someone else massage them as fun and liked when it was part of the curriculum: "Many in our class liked it very much, we often ask if we can do it again"

Practical implications for the buddy massage

Peers

The massage was found to be hard to use outside of class as is summarised well by the following quote: “No i haven't found it useful, but that's because others don't take it seriously if they would have i surely would have had a lot of use”. Some use it as a way to calm down after a fight was described but most had not used it with their peers.

Family

A lot of use in the family was described by the students and many had used it on their parents or family. It was perceived as something positive in this environment. Participants described scenarios such as “I got a buddy massage from mom” and “I can massage my mom if she feels stressed” as things gained from the intervention.

Benefit of the Intervention was Unclear

For some pupils, the benefits were unclear, and they did not understand how it was to be implemented further. One participant stated that: “I haven't learned anything special, and I don't know if it has affected my day in any particular way”, a thought which was shared by a few other participants. Another student expressed uncertainty regarding the intervention but remained hopeful. “I do not know, maybe I'll have some use for it in the future”.

Discussion

The current study aimed to conceptualise and gain understanding of themes of positive education on enhancing relationship qualities. The study aimed to examine how children internalised the material used in class, and how this knowledge was translated into real life.

The results showed that the participants had gained an increased understanding of how their own actions affect others. The intervention had thus allowed children to be more emphatic and caring towards their peers. The main pathway for this change was that participants had gained access to models for breaking up fights or responding to conflict and could use these models to speculate on how people felt in

different situations. They could also describe which interaction styles are best for resolving conflict and were more sensitive to nuance in conflict situations. Importantly, participants understood that it is not always what you say, but rather how you say it that matters most. These findings highlighted that the key concepts from the DESC model and ACR had been added to the toolbox of students, allowing for their use when thinking about ways to respond in social situations (Bower & Bower, 1998; Gable et al., 2010). Similarly, the listening domain contained many examples and thoughts on how their own actions affect others in social interactions, which signifies that the students had gained new ways of thinking about listening. This understanding allowed children to notice when they themselves were a poor listener or actively tell others if they felt like they did not listen. The analysis showed that while the children's understanding of the conflict resolution model (DESC model) was at a very basic level, they were able to extract the main points of the model through examples and experiential learning in the classroom. This could be a result of the developmental profile of students where their current profile makes abstract reasoning difficult unless latched on to something concrete (Leeuw, 2011). However, the results showed that models can be a tool used when trying to foster assertiveness in children

Children frequently described situations in which they felt they had gained knowledge of how to react. These experiences echoed the teachings from class but were described using an example or experience. Theory learned in class that was put into practice using examples, discussions and experiences with other peers was well remembered by participants, signalling that a potential mediator for transfer would be experiential learning through peer interaction. This is supported by a recent meta-analysis which concluded that peer interaction is more effective for learning than traditional teaching (Tenenbaum et al., 2019).

Additionally, participants reported that the examples from class were used as prototypes outside of class, which is closely related to Albert Bandura's social learning theory, according to this theory, learning is achieved and reinforced through direct experience or by observing the behaviour of another (Bandura, 1977). The interviews indicated that rehearsal of behaviours through drama and play aided their consolidation. Participants were able to use models experienced in the classroom and reproduce them in

an outside setting. These observations align with the emerging field of embodied cognition, where sensory experiences are integral in memory consolidation. The theory stipulates that the richer a representation is, regarding different channels of stimuli, the more robust the memory trace will be (Shapiro, 2011). This theory has scientific support in a classroom setting where it has been shown that encoding incorporating more senses and bodily interaction allows for better recall and use of that information (Fugate et al., 2018). The analysis suggests that information gained in this manner was more readily available and usable. Use of dramatizations, games, examples and so on was described by the participants as having the best transfer to the daily lives, indicating that this approach is important when transferring the learning to everyday interactions. This was echoed in another qualitative study where it was established that learning experiences are most effective when teachers employ an active pedagogy (Riedel et al., 2020). Similar to Vygotskian theory, it would seem that concrete situations and social interaction provided the best results and theoretical constructs were outside the children's zone of proximal development (Hogan & Tudge 1999). This need for engagement and interaction highlights the importance of positive education equipping educators with tools and guidelines to bridge the gap between the theoretical and practical. If this is not the case, it may be that participants only gain a theoretical understanding, if any understanding at all, with no tangible effect on their relationship skills.

The effectiveness of engaging pedagogy was exemplified in the case of the buddy massage, where children appreciated the applicability of it while it was a road to deepening understanding of touch and friendship. The massage was practical in nature and many children appreciated this approach. Children's knowledge about how stress reduction and new friendships can be a result of a massage was intertwined in their own experiences from giving and receiving a massage. It allowed them to understand themselves and others better and was perceived as something fun. Children seemed to particularly enjoy the practical skill gained through the teaching, as they now had a way of interacting with others. However, these interactions were mostly focused on family members rather than peers. Thus, the massage served the purpose of teaching children how others react differently than themselves, the benefit of touch regarding stress, and

gave them a way to connect with their families. A feeling of accomplishing something was also prevalent when describing massage as a tool to make someone else happy.

The findings demonstrate the importance of connecting the material taught to real life situations. In addition to making the material familiar, the study highlighted the importance of active participation from students. Theoretical constructs seemed to be remembered well by this age group, but it was exercises and examples that allowed children to translate what they had learned into a real-life setting.

Limitations

The current study is only able to analyse the opinions expressed during the interview. Thus, it is possible for it to sway the results in a more positive way. Questions that were asked heavily implied that positive experiences were to be talked about and as such demand characteristics may have influenced the answers given. Thus, it is possible that children that had negative views on the program did not answer these questions the way they truly felt. Unfortunately, not enough data was available to analyse these neutral or negative experiences. Children in some classes did not answer the questions at all, using statements such as "I do not know". With all of this combined, it would be beneficial to study what makes students feel that the intervention was unenjoyable.

Conclusions

The results highlighted the importance of using material that mimics real life situations, is interactive and utilises peer participatory mechanisms. This would suggest that interventions fostering relationships are effective when children learn from each other and examples are given in a vivid and practical way. The current study suggests that interventions focusing on positive relationships should focus on these elements, as they are perceived as useful and fun by students and possible mediators for establishing change in behaviour and well-being. Directions for further study would be:

1. A comparison between typical teaching and teaching employing embodied cognition in a positive education setting
2. The role of embodied cognition and peer learning in other domains of the PERMA model

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Summary in Swedish-Svensk sammanfattning

Inledning

Positiv psykologi

Positiv psykologi är en rörelse som uppkommit under 2000-talet som en motreaktion mot den traditionella psykologins fokus på psykopatologi och avvikande utveckling (Peterson et al., 2009). Målet med positiv psykologi är att upphöja individers potential och ge dem redskap för att utveckla kreativitet, hopp, optimism och andra positivt betonade egenskaper. Sedan rörelsens begynnelse har fokus lagts på att hitta sätt att främja mental hälsa och hitta de faktorer som tillsammans utgör ett balanserat och lyckligt liv. Viktigt att poängtera är att den positiva psykologin inte eftersträvar den semantiska betydelsen av ordet lycka utan snarare ett tillstånd där individen lever ett meningsfullt och tillfredställande liv (Seligman, 2009; Ryff & Singer 2006). En av de mest framstående modellerna för denna konceptualisering av lycka är PERMA-modellen som består av fem separata områden som enligt dess skapare, Martin Seligman, utgör grunden för ett lyckligt liv. Dessa områden är: positiv affekt, engagemang, positiva relationer, meningsfullhet och att uppnå något. Termen "blomstra" är ett centralt begrepp inom den positiva

psykologin och innebär att kriterierna för PERMA-modellen uppfylls och att individen upplever positivt fungerande i vardagen, på ett psykologiskt plan och i sina sociala relationer.

Positiv pedagogik

Skolornas roll som förmedlare av kunskap och socialisering av ungdomar utgör en lämplig arena för implementering av positiv psykologi. Modellen där positiv psykologi integreras i undervisningen har blivit populär och omspanner nu hundratals program världen över (Seligman & Alder 2018). Denna kombination av traditionell skolning och positiv psykologi har benämnts positiv pedagogik och dess mål beskrivs som utbildning för både akademiska förmågor och välmående.

Syfte och ämnesmotivering

Syftet med avhandlingen är att undersöka effekterna av fem veckors lektioner uppbyggda för att främja positiva relationer. Positiva relationer har visat sig ha många hälsofrämjande effekter och studier tyder på att de är nödvändiga för att leva ett lyckligt liv och fungerar samtidigt som en buffert för psykopatologi (Seligman 2011). Forskning har visat på att ungdomar i Finland och världen uppvisat en ökning i prevalensen av psykopatologi i en rad olika länder och populationer (Gyllenberg et al., 2018). Detta är mycket problematiskt och regeringar världen över sätter allt mer tid och resurser på att främja den mentala hälsan hos sina medborgare. Såvida är insikter om hur positiva relationer kan främjas av intresse för folkhälsan och utgör en byggsten för vidare förståelse av interventioner i skolmiljö.

Textens mål är att undersöka hur effekterna av en intervention inom positiv pedagogik konkret får uttryck i barns vardag. Barnens egna upplevelser och tankar gällande interventionen är även i fokus. Detta skiljer sig från mycket annan forskning på området som undersöker fenomenet ur ett kvantitativt perspektiv där mycket av den praktiska förankringen går förlorad. Detta är viktigt eftersom studier som haft en kvantitativ och holistisk inblick i positiv psykologi resulterat i instruktioner och metoder som har visat sig vara svåra för pedagoger att använda sig av i skolor.

Presentation av metod och material

Denna studie är en del av ett större forskningsprojekt där man undersöker effekterna av positiv pedagogik i finlandssvenska skolor. Interventionen i positiv pedagogik bestod av totalt 32 veckor och omspände alla

element i PERMA-modellen. Totalt sex skolor och totalt 72 elever deltog i interventionen. Denna studie undersöker specifikt blocket om sociala relationer som bestod av totalt 5 lektioner.

Datainsamlingen genomfördes genom intervjuer i små grupper. Samtliga grupper bestod av 4-6 elever som intervjuades av en forskare eller forskningsassistent. Dessa intervjuer bandades in och transkriberades av en utomstående aktör.

För den kvalitativa analysen av datat valdes kvalitativ innehållsanalys. Kvalitativ innehållsanalys innebär en process där data kategoriseras enligt olika nämnare för att få en ram som kan användas för att förstå materialet bättre. Processen är induktiv och består av många iterationer där man hela tiden jobbar för att finslipa kodningsramen. Metoden valdes eftersom den fungerar bra i samspel med semistrukturerade intervjuer och ett induktivt synsätt är lämpligt då forskning görs på gräsrotsnivå utan tidigare forskningsunderlag.

Resultat

Tre stycken huvudkategorier med därtill hörande underkategorier framkom efter analysen. Dessa kategorier var Konflikt hantering, Att lyssna och Massage. Resultaten för de olika huvudkategorierna beskrivs i korthet nedan:

Konflikt hantering

Eleverna hade fått en insikt i hur deras handlingar påverkar andra och kunde kategorisera och fundera kring deras emotioner och sinnesstämning. Eleverna förde även fram vikten av förlåtelse och att hävda sig själv i interaktion med andra. Praktiska inslag och övningar hade möjliggjort en bro till användning utanför skolan.

Lärde sig: Förmåga att skilja mellan olika sätt att reagera på en konflikt, en förståelse av den andres inre värld, fick en modell för konflikt hantering, värdet av att ge förlåtelse, varför det är viktigt att hävda sig själv

Nytta i vardagen: Bättre på att hävda sig själv, kan lösa konflikter snabbare, exempel från klassrummet användes som modell för beteende

Att lyssna

Att lyssna instruerades genom drama-och teoriundervisning. Barnen hade lätt att lära sig de olika delarna av en modell som och resultaten visade på att de använt sig av denna kunskap i deras vardag. Speciellt viktigt visade sig dramainslagen ha varit då elever kunde använda sig av de situationer som framkommit som prototyper för beteenden i vardagen. De märkte även av att de blivit bättre lyssnare och sagt till ifall någon inte lyssnade.

Lärde sig: Lärde sig att lyssnande är viktigt, den andras humör påverkas av hur man lyssnar, lärde sig hur man kan balansera rollerna i ett samtal, lärde sig hur man kan använda ACR-modellen i samtal med andra

Nytta i vardagen: Började uppmärksamma den andras signaler och lyssnade reflektivt i större grad

Kompismassage

Barnen uppskattade det praktiska med att lära sig att ge en massage och många kände att de lärt sig en ny färdighet i och med lektionerna. Centrala teman i utsagorna var hur beröring kan minska på stress men att det även finns individuella skillnader i hur vi vill bli berörda. Många av barnen uppskattade även att de nu kunde massera personer även utanför skolan, såsom deras föräldrar.

Lärde sig: Hur en kompismassage kan minska på stress, lärde sig att man kan lära känna andra genom en massage, lärde sig hur man ger en kompismassage, värdet av en kompismassage

Nytta i vardagen: Att massera jämnåriga var trevligt i skolan, men inte utanför. Inom familjen var massagen uppskattad.

Diskussion

Syftet med studien var att undersöka vilka element inom positiv pedagogik som möjliggör förändring i ungdomars sociala interaktioner. Resultaten visade på att eleverna hade tagit till sig hur deras egna handlingar påverkar andra och kunde analysera olika situationer med de modeller som använts under lektionerna. Modellerna utgjorde en grogrund för ökad mentaliseringsförmåga. Trots att modellerna hade haft en positiv effekt på elevernas sociala fungerande var inkörsporten för denna förändring de praktiska övningarna som de gjort på lektionerna. Eleverna refererade ofta till att de känt igen en situation eller förstått samband genom dessa upplevelser. Eleverna hade även lärt sig vikten av att lyssna på andra. De

beskrev att de nu i större grad märker ifall de själv är en dålig lyssnare och kan säga till om de upplever att någon annan inte lyssnar.

Ett tema som framkom är hur eleverna kunde överföra kunskapen från klassrummet till det vardagliga livet genom praktiska exempel och övningar. Detta fenomen är nära besläktat med teorin om Kroppsligt förankrad inläring (Eng. Embodied cognition) vars huvudpoäng är att multisensorisk processering av en situation innebär ett robustare minnesspår. Denna studie visar på att information som barnen tagit till sig genom att själv ha en aktiv roll var en viktig faktor för överföringen av informationen till livet utanför skolan. Resultaten tyder på att positiv pedagogik bör integrera element av multisensorisk processering i form av drama och övningar för att få det bästa möjliga resultatet.

Massagen gillades även eftersom den var praktisk och lätt gick att överföra till andra domäner i personens liv. Massagen möjliggjorde en ny möjlighet för interaktion även om massagen främst användes inom den egna familjen snarare än jämnåriga. Eleverna var även stolta över att de lärt sig en ny förmåga och kunde använda massagen som ett sätt att tala om stress och beröring.

Resultaten tyder på att praktiska element som kopplas till vardagliga situationer hade de bästa effekterna på positiva relationer i barnens liv. Teori och modeller kunde barnen memorera men hade svårt att använda sig av denna teori utan praktiska exempel, något som återspeglas i Vygotskis teori om proximal utvecklingsszon (Hogan & Tudge 1999). Utöver detta var interaktion med jämnåriga samt en aktiv utlärningsstil något som verkade ha påverkat barnens förmågor att lära sig, något som även framkommit i en annan kvalitativ studie med samma tema (Riedel, Vialle, Pearson, & Oades, 2020). Vidare forskning kunde fokusera på:

1. Att jämföra traditionell undervisning med aktiv undervisning där kroppsligt förankrad inläring används
2. Kroppsligt förankrad inläring och interaktion med jämnåriga och dess effekter på inläring i andra domäner av PERMA-modellen

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