

# Study on the Improvement of Communication Ability of Rehabilitation Technology Major Students in Higher Vocational Colleges by Experiential Group Counseling\*

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**Abstract**—With the changes of disease spectrum and the aggravation of aging, rehabilitation medicine has become an important pillar to improve people's quality of life and promote the construction of a healthy China. It is also a top priority to train a team of highly qualified rehabilitation therapists. It is hoped to enhance the communication competence of vocational rehabilitation technology major students in vocational colleges through experiential group counseling in this study, and thus enhance their competency, so that they can have better performance in future positions.

**Keywords**—rehabilitation major; communication competence; competency; experiential group counseling

## I. INTRODUCTION

Communication competence is not only the rehabilitation therapists should have, but also the important quality that all medical staff should have. "The Fukuoka Declaration" of the World Federation of Medical Education states: "All doctors must learn the skills to communicate and deal with interpersonal relationships. Lack of resonance (sympathy) should be regarded the same as insufficient skills, which is a performance of incompetent." [1] In the education of medical students, the cultivation of communication competence in China is also highly concerned. The basic standards in the "World Federation of Medical Education (WFME) International Standards" stipulate that medical schools must clarify and arrange appropriate amounts of behavioral science, social sciences, medical ethics, and

health law in the curriculum to make students have good communicate skills, make correct clinical decisions and conduct ethical practices [2].

For rehabilitation therapists, communication competence plays an important role in completing their daily work. The psychological support of the rehabilitation therapists can play a positive psychological rehabilitation role for the patients, which is reflected in the early, middle and late stages of rehabilitation. In the early stage of rehabilitation, it is necessary to respect the patients' right to know, inform patients and their families about the condition, rehabilitation treatment plan, precautions, respect the patients' right to choose, and discuss the details of rehabilitation treatment with patients and their families. It is necessary to enable patients to experience the positive rehabilitation treatment for their own, family and society [3], while demonstrating their professionalism, so that patients trust the therapists, which can make them actively cooperate with rehabilitation. In the process of rehabilitation, patients should be guided to exercise according to the program based on the progress of rehabilitation treatment. When patients encounter difficulties, therapists should actively communicate with patients and praise and encourage the progress made by patients. Timely to guide the negative emotions of patients, can help patients overcome the fear of difficulties, build confidence, and stimulate their initiative in rehabilitation training. After the rehabilitation treatment, it is necessary to understand the patient's expectation and satisfaction with the rehabilitation treatment, and accordingly, together with the patients and their families, formulate the next step of rehabilitation treatment, guide the patients to return to the home and continue the rehabilitation training, and pay attention to the guidance of family rehabilitation through return visits.

This study adopts the form of experiential group counseling to improve the communication competence of vocational rehabilitation technology students in higher vocational colleges, so as to enhance their competency in

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future positions and create greater performance to better meet the needs of the broad masses of people for rehabilitation work.

## II. RESEARCH DESIGN

The research selection was carried out at the C school. The rehabilitation treatment technology program of the school started in 2011 and currently enrolls two classes each year. Considering the school as a training intervention pilot is based on the following considerations: First, the school is located in the East China coastal economy. In more developed areas, people's health needs are rich and diverse, and the employment prospects of rehabilitation therapy technology are better, and there are more clinical practice opportunities.

The study was implanted in the Rehabilitation Psychology course and Mental Health course of rehabilitation technology major. According to the school's "Rehabilitation Psychology" (the first semester of the third year, a total of 64 class hours), there is a part of the professional psychology of the rehabilitation therapist in the course standards. Part of the research is placed in this module and the training will last for one semester.

The experiential group counseling used in the training design of this study is a group counseling activity based on the theory of Experiential Learning. David Cooper, a professor at Harvard University in the 1980s, believed that experiential learning is to introduce learners into the learning context through systematic contextual design, and to generate more specific and explicit emotions and insights through immersive experiences. He believed that experiential learning should include four stages: specific experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active practice [4]. The acquisition of experience and the emotional experience in learning, coupled with constant reflection in the learning process, are the characteristics of experiential learning. He believed that there are two aspects to be concerned with experiential teaching. On the one hand, it is the construction of direct experience, including the creation of real situations or simulated situations, allowing students to learn in observation while paying attention to the learning process; on the other hand, the guidance of learning reflection includes both the generalization, induction and improvement of experience, as well as the evaluation of the learning process and results [5].

## III. TRAINING PROGRAM

Group counselling activity 1: Pyramid (re-recognizing each other).

Purpose of the activity: it is to help students learn more about their classmates and their personality traits.

Activity steps: The first step is to give each student three minutes to think about how to introduce their characteristics in the best way (because they are classmates, and they are familiar with each other's names. If it is a new team, this step can start from the name introduction, reducing the corresponding difficulty of the characteristics).

The second step is to introduce themselves in a clockwise direction, requesting:

- First, it is needed to introduce themselves in one sentence. This sentence must contain two pieces of information: the name and their own distinctive characteristics, such as "I am the gentle Li Ming."
- Second, starting from the second classmate, each student must start from the first person when introducing himself in one sentence (such as "I am the cheerful and lively Wang Fang sitting next to the gentle Li Ming") and everyone must follow up from the first person. The reason why it is called the pyramid is because the later the student speaks the more he or she needs to remember. It is recommended to carry out this step in groups. The number of students in each group should not exceed 20. Otherwise, the pressure of subsequent students will be great.

In the process of each person's self-introduction, each member behind must concentrate on listening and trying to remember the member's name and characteristics, which can deepen mutual understanding in a short time.

Group counselling activity 2: You say and I draw.

Purpose of the activity: this is to let students master the skills of expression and listening in the interaction, and to let them know how to convey their ideas, how to accept others' information and understand them correctly.

Activity steps: All students are paired to form a two-person group. The teacher presents a picture to one of the members to ensure that the other person cannot see. Then the teacher asks the former to describe the picture to the latter and let the latter draw the picture. It is required that the student can only speak without gestures, in order to see which group can be fast and good. Then the students need to exchange their roles and the teacher presents another picture, which makes the speaking one be the party of listening and drawing. The next is to ask the groups to express their feelings. The final step is that the teacher reviews the activity.

Group counselling activity 3: Communication island.

Purpose of the activity: This is one of a series of psychological table games produced by Beijing Anren Times Psychology Application Technology Co., Ltd. The main purpose is to help students learn to solve problems in communication and fully consider each other's feelings in communication.

Activity steps: Each person needs to pay a gold coin for each round as a cost. You can choose to get the bridge card or material card by answering the question, and the bridge card can be used to build the bridges. Other players who pass the bridge need to negotiate with the bridge owner. The ones who select the material cards can get the number of gold coins indicated on the cards. The winner will be the first one who can arrive at the ending point. The questions are all about interpersonal communication, and there is no absolutely correct answer. Those who meet the following

three points can be judged as getting the correct answer and obtain the bridge card:

- Those who can solve the problem by means of communication;
- Those who can have positive significance in solving the problems;
- Those who can fully consider the feelings of the other party, and do not create new contradictions and conflicts in the process of solving problems.

#### IV. TRAINING EFFECT ANALYSIS

In order to summarize the experience and lessons of the training course, and find out the advantages and disadvantages of the training course on communication competence improvement, this study selected 8 students in the experimental group class for interviews, who were coded from S01 to S08. The data were collected through individual interviews, observations, etc. The outline of the interview is as follows

- Do you think these training courses are useful?
- Can you accept this style of teaching of this course?
- What improvements can you think of these training courses?

From the results of the interview, the advantages of the training course can be summarized from the following aspects:

First of all, it stimulates students' interest and enthusiasm for participation. Classmate S03 said: "The activity class is something I have not touched before. It used to be either a theoretical class or a practical class. This kind of activity class is quite interesting. At first, I thought it was just to play games which would be fun. However, when the teacher asked us to share the experience, I began to think about the truth in the game. Later, after the teacher said it, I felt that I suddenly realized that there are various kinds of life truth in these games, and I felt rewarded." Classmate S05 said: "I don't really like to participate in school and class activities, and I am more solitary. But in the game everyone is active, I am also embarrassed to give our team a drag, but in fact it is quite interesting to play. It is very high."

The experience class in the training uses the group counseling activities designed by psychology to enable students to gain experience and feelings in the activities. The effect is obviously more attractive to students than the simple lectures, which can stimulate students' enthusiasm. Especially for the improvement of interpersonal communication ability, the atmosphere and pressure of the group will affect some "silent people" who usually hide in the corner to participate in, so that more students can benefit. However, in the implementation process, it should be emphasized that students can "think and gain", not just "play and enjoy". The design of the game items in the course should not be too much, and a large number of games cannot be used for the classroom atmosphere or the preferences of

the students. It is best not to have more than four games in a class. It is necessary to have a lot of sharing time, so that every student can share, especially those who are "silent". Then the teacher will do some lead-based guidance, and guide the students to infiltrate the previous game sentiment into the latter games, and enhance their ability to transfer the ability and quality they acquired in the classroom to the usual life.

Second, the training course reflects professional characteristics. Classmate S04 said: "I have also been in communication classes before, and I have also heard of empathy. But they are all mental health classes, and they are all about how to do it in general, how to do it in school, and so on. But the teachers are all about how to be a rehabilitation therapist in the future, how to communicate, and how to empathize. After listening, I really think that we can not optical technology, but also learn these psychological things related to work... Empathy requires us to think differently. If I am a patient, I definitely want to meet a passionate, responsible and patiently rehabilitated teacher, so I feel that these things in class are very useful for us to do a good job in the future."

Some clinical cases are cited in the training. Through group discussion and situational performance, students can experience the various psychological qualities needed in the future workplace. Knowledge can only make sense in the context in which it is created and applied. Knowledge must never be isolated from the environment in which it is situated. The best way to learn knowledge is to do it in context [6]. It will be necessary to integrate the characteristics of the competency that need to be taught into the simulated work situations and cases. On the one hand, students can deepen their impression through self-exploration and group discussion, and on the other hand, it can make students reflect on their attitudes and behaviors in future work through case studies, which make the training of competency closely related to the future work situation and more targeted. Judging from the results of the interviews, the characteristics that are most satisfying to the trainees in the training course are the enjoyment and enthusiasm stimulated, and the closely integration with the profession and reflection of the characteristics of the professional situation. The overall training has received a good response.

#### V. CONCLUSION

The cultivation of communication competence is of great significance for improving the level of competency of rehabilitation therapists and building a team of high-quality rehabilitation therapists. The training method of experiential group counseling adopted in this study has achieved certain results. But it is believed that the training method is more than this one, it is hoped that the follow-up research will further enrich the forms of training. At the same time, the effectiveness of the training is also needed to be proved in a longer time span and through the performance of the trainee in the post.

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