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Psychology

Higher level

Paper 3

8 November 2023

Zone A afternoon | **Zone B** afternoon | **Zone C** afternoon

1 hour

Instructions to candidates

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Read the passage carefully and then answer all the questions.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[24 marks]**.

The stimulus material below is based on a qualitative study that investigates adolescents' experiences of a school-based mental health programme.

Supporting positive mental health development in adolescents is a major public health focus worldwide. Preventing adolescent depression is important because it is associated with a diminished quality of life. The need for early prevention of depression in adolescence is the background for the development of a specific school-based programme targeting 13 to 15 year olds.

The aim of this study was to explore adolescents' subjective opinions of this specific school-based mental health programme. Two researchers recruited participants from eight schools offering the programme. The researchers used a purposive sample of sixty-four adolescents aged 13 to 15 years old (25% males) who had completed the programme.

10 The study was approved by an ethics committee. The participants and their parents were fully informed about the study and signed consent forms. They were also told that their data would be kept confidential.

15 The researchers decided to meet with adolescents in the groups that had completed the programme together. Males and females were in separate groups of eight on average. The group interviews took place in the school and lasted between 30 to 50 minutes. One researcher facilitated the discussions. Each session was recorded and the other researcher made a verbatim transcription. Both researchers analysed, coded and interpreted transcripts and notes. A third researcher checked the results.

20 The analysis of the transcripts revealed the following themes related to perceived benefits of the programme:

- learning to identify negative thoughts and turning them into positive thoughts
- realizing that thoughts, emotions and behaviour can be linked together and help change behaviour and reduce stress.
- discovering that others also have negative thoughts and doubts about themselves makes it easier to manage negative thoughts.

30 The findings of this study suggested that participation in the school-based mental health programme was generally perceived as beneficial. However, participants did not like that the programme focused more on problems than opportunities. This was perceived as negative expectations. The researchers concluded that this programme would be more widely accepted by adolescents if it focused less on problems and more on promoting positive mental health.

1.
 - (a) Identify the research method used and outline **two** characteristics of the method. [3]
 - (b) Describe the sampling method used in the study. [3]
 - (c) Suggest **one** alternative **or one** additional research method that could be used to investigate the aim of the original study, giving **one** reason for your choice. [3]
2. Describe the ethical considerations that were applied in the study and explain if further ethical considerations could be applied. [6]
3. Discuss how a researcher in this study could ensure that the results of the study are credible. [9]