Connecting the world's Children through Communication: Effects of the Letter Exchange Program on Mental Health in Japanese High School Students

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Citation: Sustainability Weeks 2009 Opening Symposium "International Symposium on Sustainable Development - Recommendations for Tackling the 5 Challenges of Global Sustainability". Session 3, First Hokkaido University Sustainability Research Poster Contest. 2 November 2009. Sapporo, Japan.

Issue Date: 2009-11-02

Doc URL: http://hdl.handle.net/2115/39719

Type: conference presentation

Note: Outstanding Performance Award in the Practical Initiative

Additional Information: There are other files related to this item in HUSCAP. Check the above URL.

File Information: 55_sw2009otake.pdf (Poster)
1. BACKGROUND

- Mental Health might be improved by Cultural Exchange.
- Various programs aim to create Global Friendship in Japan. However,
- Evidence is not available in Japan.
- High cost makes limitations of current programs.
  ✓ Surface communication like entertainment
  ✓ Few participants is included
  ✓ and Expensive!!

...Can we do more effective, cheaper program?

Breakthrough: Letter Exchange Program

- Closer communication
- More participants can be included
- and Inexpensive!!

2. OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this study is to evaluate Letter Exchange Program.

Children and Youths Problems in the World

Japan
Mental Health Problem

Developing Countries
Life Adversities

Can Letter Exchange Program
- improve Mental Health in youth?
- contribute to Global Friendship?

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3. METHOD to EVALUATION

High School Students

22 Participants
M=5, F=17
Age=16.68
Response rate = 75.86% from 14 schools

22 Non-participants
M=5, F=17
Age=16.91
Random sampling matched with hope to join from 3 schools

Pre-TEST (July)
- Self-Esteem
- Self-Efficacy
- QOL
- Depression

Day 1
- <Lecture>
- <Activities>
- <Send the letter>

Day 2, 3
- <Receive the letter>
- <Discussion>
- <Presentation>

Post-TEST (Sep.- Oct.)
- Self-Esteem
- Self-Efficacy
- QOL
- Depression
4. RESULT

In participants,

◆ Mental Health (QOL, Self-Efficacy) was improved!
◆ The belief “I Can Contribute to the World” was increased.
◆ Satisfaction with living environment was increased.

**Table 1 Effects of the Letter Exchange Program on Mental Health**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Non-participants</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>p</td>
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<td>Mean</td>
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<td><strong>3.90</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>&lt;.01</strong></td>
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<td>29.09</td>
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<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* N of QOL[whole] in Non-participants=24

Letter Exchange Program contributed to Mental Health and Global Friendship.

![Fig1 Significant differences of Subjects' pre- & post-test](http://exchange.kuronowish.com/)