

Effectiveness of a Counseling Program to Improve Self-Concept and Achievement in Bully-Victims

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of a counseling program on the self-concept and achievement behavior of bully-victims. To realize the aim of the study, self-concept and bullying behavior scales and a group counseling program based on CPT were applied. The counseling program consisted of 10 sessions ranging between 60-70 minutes. The participants were chosen from sixth grade pupils at an elementary school in Zarqa District, their ages ranging between 12 and 13 years, who were victims of a serious bullying problem. The study sample was divided randomly into two groups of 10 pupils, an experimental group and a control group, and pre-assessment T-tests were computed to find the equivalency value of the two groups; the counseling program was then administered including only the pupils from the experimental group; post-tests and assessments were applied including both groups.

The study results indicated significant statistical differences at 0.05 between the experimental and control groups in self-concept, bullying victim behavior, and achievement on the post-assessment. The experimental group showed improvement in self-concept and achievement, and a decrease in bullying behavior compared with the control group. The study concluded that the counseling program had a positive effect. The researchers' recommendations included adopting the counseling program, further research by concerned sectors dealing with pupils exposed to serious problems as a result of bullying; including training courses and workshops for counselors to help them identify bullying victim indicators and help them to understand and deal with this problem.

Keywords: counseling program, self-concept, achievement, bullying victim behavior

1. Introduction

1.1 *Bullying in Schools*

Bullying in schools is a worldwide problem for young people throughout the formal education environment, demanding a great expenditure of time, thought and effort from school principals, counselors and teachers working with bullies and their victims which consequently affects their main roles in regard to their other pupils. In the past bullying was often considered an inevitable stage of childhood which had to be endured, but the rising level of this form of violence and aggression by pupils against their peers is causing growing concern among parents and educators.

Ross (2003) identified two groups of children and adolescents who have a long history of being subjected to various forms of bullying: one group was subjected to vicious cruelty, but the current study focuses on the second group, bullying of children in schools. Although much has been done in recent years to address this problem, counseling has typically been directed toward the bully rather than the victim. The term "bullying" covers a wide range of hurtful behavior including name-calling, character assassination through lies and rumors, exclusion, threats to personal safety, unkind and hurtful remarks, physical abuse, racist remarks, sending nasty text or email messages, stealing belongings, making sexual remarks, forcing someone to do things he/she does not want to do, using threats or physical abuse.

Bullying can be defined as oppressive behavior involving victimization and repeated intimidation and

maltreatment by a person or group against someone younger, smaller, weaker, or otherwise vulnerable and is a form of violence, either psychological or physical. Rumboldt and Zimman (1996, p. 325) defined violence thus: "Violence is any mean word, look, sign, or act that hurts a person's body, feelings, or things. No one is entitled to use violence and violence is not tolerated at our schools" while bullying was identified by Ericson as being of three basic types: physical, verbal, and psychological, although other forms such as gestural abuse, cyber denigration and intimidation, and sexual harassment are also included. There is a distinct pattern to the practice of bullying in schools, commonly starting in elementary school then increasing through the intermediate school years and persisting into the higher grades (Ericson, 2001).

In his study, Rigby (2001) looked at bullying from the gender-group perspective and this gender-targeting aspect was also discussed by Ericson, commenting that in general males were subjected to physical and verbal bullying, whereas females were more likely to experience verbal bullying in the form of sexual taunts and insults and spiteful rumors. Geffner, Loring, and Young (2001) provided reports on the dynamics of bullying, including who are bullies and why, who are the victims, and how depression and anxiety are correlated with bullying.

Studies by many researchers have indicated that pupils who have poor social skills, do not make friends easily and are considered "loners" are particularly at risk of long-term victimization, with their low self-esteem contributing to self-blame for their victim status. (Browning, Cohen, and Warman-Martin, 2003; Perry, Hodges, & Egan, 2001) With regard to the final statement relating to low self-esteem, several researchers state that pupils who experience peer harassment have low self-regard (Egan & Perry, 1998), are at risk due to poor self-image and social skills (Graham & Juvonen, 1998) and typically suffer repeated antagonism and belligerence, as well as acts of aggression (Hodges, Boivin, Vitaro, & Bukowski, 1999). The nature of individual and group friendships as being mutually protective suggests that friendship plays a major defensive role for pupils at risk of frequent and continuing victimization (Browning et al., 2003). Similarly, Kochenderfer-Ladd and Ladd (2001) found that the strategies used by young victims to cope with persistent peer-victimization might reduce the range and magnitude of psychological maladjustment. While a study by Houbre, Tarquinio and Lanfranchi (2010) asked whether low self-esteem was in fact a cause or a consequence of bullying, given that it clearly influenced pupils' psychological stability and equilibrium.

Bullying behavior should be addressed school-wide in order to effectively curb the negative and long-term effects of peer abuse. It is important to assess the pupils being bullied and also whether they know of others who are being bullied. Due to the fact that bullying occurs in many places outside the classroom, and the primary role of the school counselor is the emotional well-being of pupils which is related to self-concept and academic achievement, the counselor should address different bullying issues from a variety of approaches including: preventing bully-bully confrontation, models of bully and victim behavior, the roles of dominance and bullying in the development of early heterosexual relationships, psychosocial correlates in bullying and victimization, peer influences during early adolescence, and students who are passive observers to the victimization of others.

1.2 Self-Concept

Piers and Harris, (2002, p. 37) based their research on the hypothesis that an individual's self-image is built and consolidated during the formative years of childhood and remains fairly persistent and unchanged into later life, these beliefs about himself therefore constitute his self-concept. Santrock contributes to the definition of self-concept as "domain-specific evaluations of the self" and children self-assess their standard or performance in the domains important to them, for instance appearance, academic achievement, sports, etc. (2002, p. 337) Although the molding of perceptions is influenced by cultural and biological factors, the foundation is established during the formative years of childhood. These early years of interaction with his environment and exposure to the behaviors and attitudes of others have a strong influential impact on the child's perceptions, generating the self-evaluation attitudes that contribute greatly in motivating behavior.

Shore (2005) and Allen (2006) elaborate on the fact that self-concept is built up gradually as a result of and response to changes in the environment, age and development, priorities and values, rather than specific isolated experiences. The researchers also note that bullies generally possess average self-esteem whereas their victims not only have low self-esteem but also suffer severe psychological and sociological problems as a result of bullying, with neither bully nor victim exhibiting a high degree of self-esteem.

1.3 Achievement

Following their analysis of 33 relevant studies, Nakamoto and Schwartz (2009) stated that results of standardized achievement tests (Juvonen, Wang, & Espinoza, 2011) showed those students who were victims of bullying did not achieve high grades. Despite a considerable amount of research having been performed on this issue, it has mainly targeted higher grades with few studies examining the correlation between school achievement and

victims of bullying during the elementary school years.

In their study, Kochenderfer and Ladd (1996) found victimization problems including anxiety and low achievement in kindergarten children, while Ladd, Kochenderfer, and Coleman (1997) reported higher anxiety shown by kindergarten children about returning to school in the autumn term when they had been bullied in the previous spring term. Haynie, Nansel, Eitel and Crump (2001) carried out an in-depth discriminate function analysis to determine the extent and effect of a number of psychosocial and behavioral predictors in four groups of children, results showing a clear division between the comparison group (never bullied or victimized) and the victim, bully, and bully/victim groups. The test predictors included non-conformist attitudes and problem behavior, peer influence, withdrawal and depression, overall responsiveness and functioning in the school environment and finally, parenting. The results of a study of 2,300 students through the three years of intermediate school conducted by Juvonen et al. (2003) showed that victims of sustained peer persecution consistently showed low academic interest and achievement, students with the lowest grades being those most victimized. Research by Schwartz, Farver, Chang, and Lee-Shin (2002) concluded that children with lower academic ability were more easily intimidated and therefore more likely to become easy targets for bullies.

The present study aims to provide important insight into the counseling of sixth grade bully-victim pupils, examining the differences between the experimental and control groups in academic performance and self-concept. Schwartz et al. (2005) found a relationship between peer victimization, academic difficulties and depression. They showed that high level bullying is related to lower achievement scores and grade point averages. Wang and Espinoza (2011) stated that bullied students generally have lower grades on standardized achievement tests.

1.4 Intervention and Prevention

In recent years there has been a noticeable increase in bullying behavior in schools worldwide with a consequent focus on both awareness and methods of combating this harmful and damaging behavior. Jordan is no exception to rising levels of aggressive behavior between pupils and despite the concern, efforts and involvement of principals, teachers, and counselors to help offenders and victims, bullying in schools continues to rise almost everywhere. Typically, efforts to either eliminate or at least ameliorate bullying have been concentrated on the bully aggression in whatever form it takes, and although this aspect is of considerable importance and should in no way be disparaged, there is also a need for more attention, understanding, and help to be given to the victims. In fact, targets of bullying are often overlooked and their needs neglected particularly in dealing with their anger, resentment, and sense of frustration, a situation which often leads to a desperate uncontrolled outburst. Therefore, in attempting to address the overall problem of bullying it is important to remember that the targets are generally highly vulnerable and unprotected from their tormentors and too often become the forgotten victims.

In her study, Besag (1989) suggested that providing emotional support for targets of teasing and victims of bullying through support groups would be an excellent method to aid these children. (Freid & Freid 1996) expand on this idea with specific suggestions while noting that the targets of bullying frequently blame themselves for the derogatory names and labels by which they are identified by their peers, to the extent that even when the targeted traits or deficiencies are the result of genetic or physiological sources which the victim is unable to control (p. 34). The researchers then suggest practical methods to assist victimized children, building their confidence and response ability with specific techniques and skill training. The training would typically include conflict resolution and peer mediation in addition to assertiveness training, a language-response technique using sentences beginning with "I" messages, an effective, non-violent approach if ignoring the bully does not bring positive results. Incorporating these techniques in support group sessions would boost the child's self-confidence in defending his rights and consequently instill a sense of self-assurance. Once these positive qualities are established the child will then have gained a sense of control and optimism which will give him the confidence and security to face new confrontational situations. Ross (2003) commented on one role of the support group as that of instigating behavioral changes which would enable and empower the target with protection against bullying and teasing.

Gottheil and Dubow (2001) reported that victimized children were so deeply affected by their treatment that they were often not only aware of how they were perceived by others of their peer group but agreed with the perceptions (p. 90). So although the children's self-perceptions regarding their victim behavior and subsequently low status within the peer group were accurate, they were insufficient to be an impetus for change. This suggests that these children need help in acquiring the skills necessary to reverse the dominant feelings of helplessness and hopelessness and break free from this negative state. Regarding the topic of support groups for bully victims, Katz (1993) reported that in cases of bullying victimization, the needs of these children may not be met through

the usual channels, but benefit from participation in special needs support groups. The safe environment provided by the group encourages them to talk freely about their distress and often violent outbreaks of rage resulting from long-term, repeated torment at the hands of their peer group, and the associated counseling is structured to develop victim skills in breaking the bonds of behavior associated with the low self-esteem, misery and despair prevalent in victims of aggression.

The study by Salomone (2007) was aimed at determining the degree of improvement in self-concept following counseling training.

A recent study by Boulton (2013) however concluded that the success of counseling and group therapy techniques was affected by the belief that by keeping company with victims a child was more likely to become a victim himself. This finding was supported in the result of a further experiment in the same study (Experiment 3 (n=120), which echoed the original "victim reputation" effect while identifying the participant's current victim status as another moderating influence, the strongest effect exerted by targets with a high current victimization status. Findings of the Kimberly, Jensen, Bender and Williford (2013) study indicated a significant difference in bullying and self-confidence, also in self-concept, also a significant correlation between bullying behavior and self-concept, but no significant difference in bullying prevention.

Pupil victims of bullying are typically unable to deal with the problem without help so the first step is to tell someone, parents, an older sibling, a teacher, or any adult they trust, the sooner the problem is shared the better. Victims need assurance that it is not their fault they are being tormented and by talking to a responsible adult they are taking the first step towards alleviating the problem. Counselors are professionals trained to stop victimization, working with both the aggressor and the target to reduce the hurt, loneliness, fear, timidity, frustration, misery, and anger engendered by bullying behavior, and help these young people to build the self-esteem, confidence, and security by which to achieve a happy, rewarding, and successful integration into all aspects of school life.

2. Purpose of the Current Study

The study addressed the need to demonstrate the effectiveness of a counseling program and determine whether it would result in a positive effect on bully victim self-concept and resistance against bullying behavior among school children, as well as improving pupils' ability to differentiate between childhood play and bullying, between different types of bullying behavior and victim behavior, and subsequently implement effective intervention. The self-concept scale, bully victim scale, and academic achievement grades will be used as effectiveness determinants.

2.1 Study Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: The counseling program had no effect on bully victim behavior.

Hypothesis Two: The counseling program had no effect on bully victim self-concept.

Hypothesis Three: The counseling program had no effect on bully victim achievement.

3. Method

3.1 Participants

The study participants consisted of 20 male sixth grade pupils from Zarqa Elementary School who had a high mean on the bully victim behavior scale. Half of the pupils were randomly assigned to the treatment group to receive counseling and half (n=10) were randomly assigned to the control group and would not receive counseling. The Self Concept Scale and Bully Behavior Scale were administered to both study groups pre and post the counseling program.

3.2 Instrumentation

1) *The Bully Behavior Scale (BBS)* is designed to assess bullying behaviors in school. The researchers was developed to measure bully victim behavior in pupils. Assessments were made according to specific items related to properly identifying bullying behavior, interventions for bullies, and interventions for victims. The instrument assesses knowledge of these particular subject areas, as well as skill acquisition of interventions to address bullying behaviors. The items were derived from (BBS; Austin & Joseph, 1996), the Peer Victimization Scale PVS (Neary & Joseph, 1994), the current study scale (Bully Behavior Scale) provides for the identification of pupils who are being bullied and who engage in bullying behavior. The use of the BBS as a screening measure assists in identifying youngsters who bully as well as their victims, who often feel distressed, disenfranchised, and alienated from school, and applies to both bully and victim. The BBS consisted of 54 items relevant to bullying behavior. Participant responses to each item are rated on a 5-point Likert scale anchored by 1 (*strongly*

disagree) and 5 (*strongly agree*). High scores indicate a high incidence of bullying.

The items of the BBS were reviewed by five professors in the faculty of educational sciences at the Hashemite University. The researcher revised the scale on the basis of their recommendations, such as changing the tense of some items from passive to active. Internal consistency or reliability coefficient has been found satisfactory for the purposes of the study, obtaining 0.85 on the Cronbach Alpha scale. For reliability, test-retest was administered to 30 pupils with a two week interval and the Kuder Richardson formula was used to calculate the correlation of 0.80.

2) *Self-Concept Scale*

The Piers-Harris Children's Self-concept Scale (2004) is used in both educational and clinical settings to identify specific problem areas and was used in the present study. This comprehensive 60 item scale was used to grade the self-concept illustrated by each participant's response and a total overall self-concept score was then derived. Participants were given statements to read and required to determine whether the statement was true or false, answering "yes" if true or "no" if untrue. The primary standard score used to interpret the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale results is the normalized T-score ($M=50$, $SD=10$) with respondents' self-concept scores ranging from <29 (very low) to >60 (very high) While Piers & Herzberg, (2002) rate the 60 item scale as $M=54.58$ and $SD=9.46$, the resulting total score reflecting the respondent's overall perception of him or herself. The Piers-Harris 2 included a sample of approximately 1,400 students ranging in age from 7 to 18 from a variety of school districts throughout the United States, while the Piers-Harris manual provides abundant reliability data (Piers, 1996). Further confirmation of reliability is provided by Chiu (1988) reporting an alpha coefficient of 0.90 for both male and female populations and KR-20 reliabilities of 0.88 to 0.93 for boys and girls. KR-20 cluster scales ranged from 0.73 to 0.81 and the internal consistency coefficient for the total scale was 0.90 (p. 299).

The Scale was translated into Arabic by the researcher and reviewed by a colleague holding a PhD in English teaching; for validity assessment the Scale was submitted to a panel of five arbitrators specialized in education, psychology, or counseling for comments, corrections, additions, suggestions and recommendations. The Scale was revised on the basis of their recommendations and one item was added. The internal consistency coefficient calculated by Cronbach Alpha was 0.90 and the correlation coefficient between the two tests was calculated as 0.83. The scale in its final form was administered to 30 pupils who constituted the subjects of the study for pre, post and follow-up applications of the psycho-education group program. Ethical considerations regarding the data collected were observed throughout the study.

3) *Achievement*

Academic achievement measured by grade point average, based on marks given to each pupil by the teacher an average mark was calculated and the score adapted to a scale of 1-20.

3.3 *Counseling Program*

To realize the study objective in assessing the effectiveness of the counseling program designed to decrease bullying at school and whether group counseling would be beneficial to school students who are the targets of bullying. The subsequent objective was to provide support for each child participating in the group, helping them to identify their feelings, increase self-awareness, and ultimately improve their self-concept through the development of a stronger sense of self-worth and confidence.

The purpose of the program is to enhance the program objectives; emphasis was placed on two types of skills: (a) ability to differentiate and recognize different types of social settings and behavior and (b) ability to activate relational behavior that is functional for achieving the aims one might pursue in a given setting. The program adaptations concerned the introduction of examples of aggressive and passive behavior episodes that teachers and counselors had actually observed in the school setting, role play of highly-probable situations, and assertive ways of reacting that would be feasible at school. Pupils were also required to do homework aimed at helping them retain and generalize what they learned.

The program is divided into 10 weekly sessions of an hour each, attended by groups of 10 pupils at risk of social maladjustment.

Individuals are screened to identify those most at risk via study scales, as well as evaluating the frequency and intensity of behavioral problem indicators (e.g., lack of assertiveness, difficulties in managing bullying situations, low efficacy beliefs, low self-regulation and low self-determination), in addition to being rated by the pupils themselves. Problems and difficulties that emerge in these sessions are duly considered during the counseling sessions, including training to develop self-concept rehearsal or role-play to plan and practice what to say in the

event of future bullying situations. The group sessions are also constructed to develop assertive communication through assertive training, saying yes or no in the right place, and using the words, tone, and body language which all communicate self respect.

The program sessions are developed according to the CPT; the specific components of CBT are summarized by the acronym PRACTICE (Cohen & Mannarino, 2011; Cohen, Mannarino, & Deblinger, 2010); (1) Psycho-education about the impact of bullying and common psychological reactions of pupils, and how to differentiate between types of bullying behavior (e.g., aggressive, passive, relational) and victim behavior (e.g., passive, provocative, bystander). (2) Relaxation and imagination skills. (3) Effective expression skills. (4) Coping and processing skills. (5) Enhancing future safety.

4. Results

A t-test was used to examine if there were differences between experimental and control groups, before and after the intervention.

4.1 Hypothesis One: The Counseling Program Had No Effect on Bully Victim Behavior

For research hypothesis one, t-test results were significant, resulting in rejection of the first null hypothesis, experimental group participants demonstrated significantly higher acquisition of knowledge for the awareness of bullying; how to decrease bullying victim behavior. Table 1 shows t-test results.

Table 1. Pre and post t-test results of for experimental and control groups in bullying scale

Bully Behavior	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	t	df	Sig.
pre	3.500	11.410	0.307	18	0.188
post	66.300	19.834	3.343	18	0.003

4.2 Hypothesis Two: The Counseling Program Had No Effect on Self-Concept of Bully Victim

A t-test was used to examine if there were differences between experimental and control groups before and after the intervention, in regard to self-concept of bully victims. In experimental vs. control groups, pre-test and post-test, t-test results were significant, resulting in rejection of the second null hypothesis, experimental group participants demonstrated significantly higher acquisition of knowledge for the awareness of how to increase self- concept. Table 2 shows t-test results.

Table 2. Pre and post t-test results for experimental and control groups in self-concept of bully victims

Self-Concept	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	df	t	Sig
pre	1.000	2.278	18	0.439	0.666
post	17.200	2.699	18	6.372	0.000

4.3 Hypothesis Three: The Counseling Program Had No Effect on Bully Victim Achievement

A t-test was used to examine if there were differences between experimental and control groups, before and after the intervention, in regard to bully victim achievement. Experimental vs. control and pre-test and post-test t-test results were significant, resulting in rejection of the first null hypothesis, experimental group participants demonstrated significantly higher acquisition of knowledge for awareness, and how to increase their academic achievement. Table 3 shows the t-test results.

Table 3. Pre and post t-test results for experimental and control groups in bully victim achievement

Achievement	Mean Difference	Std. Error Differ	t	df	Sig.
Pre	0.400	0.408	0.980	18	0.862
Post	10.800	1.256	8.574	18	0.002

5. Discussions

The purpose of this study was improvement in the self-concept, social skills, and coping ability of bully victims among the experimental group pupils, who fitted the pupil bully target mold as identified in the literature. The t-test results showed significant differences between the experimental and control groups in changing the behavior of bully victims. The experimental group identified and accepted responsibility for their emotions, exploring different and acceptable ways of expressing their feelings, especially anger. The group members discussed different ways of both expressing their anger and using anger-management techniques, in breaking the cycle of bullying for instance, by walking away from the aggressive situation instead of responding to bully provocation. The study result was not consistent with that of Oksal, Kartal, and Bilgin (2014) which revealed significant overall differences in self-concept between the different types of bullying. On the other hand, Remboldt and Zimman (1996) described the bully target as not making friends easily, being lonely, more at ease in the company of adults than with his peers, having higher than average suicidal tendencies, and lacking in assertiveness, all of which strongly characterize the traits and behavior observed in and identified by members of the experimental group.

Hazler (1996) suggested that targets frequently use isolation in some form to deal with situations involving bullying, admitting that they were often lonely and friendless and created a fantasy existence to escape from their miserable reality. T-test results showed significant differences between the experimental and control groups, indicating improved self-concept. The success of the Piers-Harris 2 in identifying emotional problems in young bully victims prompted Piers and Herzberg (2002) to suggest its use to screen and identify children who might benefit from further psychological evaluation. Some of the pupils stated that they preferred to socialize with adults or would choose solitude rather than the company of their peers. It was evident that although bully victims identified a few friends, they generally felt more relaxed and secure with adults such as a counselor, parent, or teacher. In the school environment in particular, the counselor engendered and supported the assurance that the pupil could rely on the security provided by any adult on the premises. Hazler (1996) identified the best results for pupils in a bully-target situation were achieved by being assertive, with pupils gaining experience and confidence of taking an assertive stance through practice and role-play. Overall, this present research proves that pupils who have been victims of aggression do show an improvement in self-concept and do benefit therefore from group counseling.

The success of the counseling program is attributable to many factors providing security and alleviating feelings of isolation common to young bully victims. The sessions with the counselor in an atmosphere of trust provided pupils with the encouragement and opportunity to express feelings and thoughts they had never shared before. The counselor thus reinforces the importance of the counseling group in giving help and hope to pupils, some of whom may have been suffering from bullying violence over long periods of time, even years. Schools have recently become aware of the need to implement a proactive approach in bullying prevention, first and foremost in the setting up of counseling groups that provide a safe place for the exchange of experiences, thoughts and feelings. Thus the experimental group in this study realized that they were not alone in their suffering and responded to the concept of collective understanding and solidarity present in the group. Members expressing their thoughts and emotions discovered that everyone had been the target of some form of aggression and had similar thoughts and feelings at one time or another. This realization ultimately helped group members to an improved self-concept. The path they travelled together was a journey of self-discovery and learning, about self-respect and respect for others, about choices assertiveness, support, and violence, while at the same time being open and accepting of others and respecting their rights.

A significant relationship between bully victimization and grade point averages was expected as illustrated in several literature reviews showing lower SAT grade achievement for bullied students. This finding was echoed by Nakamoto and Schwartz (2009) whereas Schwartz, Farver, Chang, and Lee-Shin (2002) on the other hand, posit low academic achievers as likely easy bullying targets. However, results of a study by Oksal, Kartal, and Bilgin (2014) revealed no significant difference between grade point averages and student victims of bullying.

6. Conclusion

The results of this study provide evidence of the need to continue research and provide education on the problem of bullying in schools. This has been highlighted by several traumatic events, with conclusive evidence of prolonged and merciless bullying by peers, making the focus on bullying counseling programs in schools a necessity. This study provided supportive services within a group counseling setting for pupils who have been subjected to aggression.

7. Recommendations

—Further research should explore whether low self-concept and/or poor academic achievement leads student to be involved in bullying or whether being victimized causes low self-concept and/or poor grades in school.

—The school's counselor should bring insight and knowledge about bullying to the group process, which would certainly enhance the group process.

—More time should be given to pupils: because of the limited time allotted and the number of participants, there were often times that discussions had to be interrupted to stay on task with activities.

—Encourage the researcher to provide this counseling to other pupils in the school. This recommendation should be made formally to the counseling staff.

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