

Prevention of depression and anxiety in college students

Abstract

The research aim was to evaluate the impact of a prevention program for depression and anxiety through the development of critical thinking and problem solving strategies in first-semester college students. Method: A quasi-experimental design, assessment pre-test and post-test and control group was used. Involving 60 students from two universities of Colombia who were in their first year of training (25% male and 75% female), mean age 18.5 years; experimental group n = 31, control group n = 29. The program lasted 10 sessions. The instruments used were the CES-D (Rodloff y Locke, 1986), SCL-90 (Derogatis, 2002), Stressful Events Questionnaire (Connor-Smith y Calvete, 2004), ATQ (Kendall, Howard y Hays, 1989), ASSQ (Kendall y Hollon, 1989). Results: Significant changes were identified in the clinical indicators of depression, anxiety, negative thoughts and assessment of life events in the experimental group. Conclusions: The prevention program for depression and anxiety through the development of critical thinking and Socratic dialogue is effective in young students of the first year of training, as it significantly decreases the indicators of depression and anxiety, negative thoughts and life events appraisalment.

Key-words: Prevention; Depression; Anxiety; Critical thinking; Socratic dialogue.