A Comparison of Remote and In-Person Modalities at a University-based Wellness Coaching Program

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Background

- Coaching has traversed disciplines, including college student health, well-being, and success services.
- To address growing demands and the needs of distance learners, services are often offered in-person or remotely.
- The expansion of remote services was further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- While in-person and remote coaching have separately been shown to be effective at increasing motivation and behavior change, the modalities have not been directly compared and thus it is unclear if clients have comparable experiences or outcome achievement.

Study Purpose

- To compare the effectiveness of wellness coaching modalities (remote vs. in-person) in a university-based setting among college students.
- Additionally, assess the difference in impact by specific type of remote coaching (audio only or video-chat).

Methods

- Retrospective chart review of 638 students who participated in the University of South Florida's Success and Wellness Coaching program between May 2019 and June 2021.
  - 42.5% received in-person coaching
  - 57.5% received remote coaching
- Modalities were compared by
  - Utilization and engagement: attendance & no-shows
  - Coach/client relationship: self-determination theory constructs (autonomy, competence, & relatedness)
  - Self-efficacy: self-reported increased confidence, motivation, & readiness for behavior change.
- Further investigation compared audio vs. video coaching on improvements in satisfaction with 10 life domains.
- Analysis included bivariate independent sample t-tests and chi-square tests.

Results: Remote vs. In-Person

- As compared to students who received in-person services, students who received remote coaching had a higher proportion of graduate students (p<.01) and were significantly older (p<.001).
- There was no difference in utilization (total number of sessions) or engagement (total number of no-shows) by modality.
- Increased confidence, motivation, and readiness for behavior change rates were very high for students receiving both modalities. There was a slightly higher rate of increased motivation after one session among in-person users compared to remote users (p<.05), with no other observed difference in self-efficacy after either session one or session three.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome Measures</th>
<th>In-Person (n=271)</th>
<th>Remote (n=367)</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engagement and Utilization (M SD)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Sessions</td>
<td>3.0 (2.7)</td>
<td>3.1 (2.5)</td>
<td>.596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of No-Shows</td>
<td>0.3 (0.6)</td>
<td>0.4 (0.7)</td>
<td>.278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Efficacy n (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Post Session 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Confidence</td>
<td>78 (78.0%)</td>
<td>185 (77.1%)</td>
<td>.488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Motivation</td>
<td>87 (87.0%)</td>
<td>181 (75.4%)</td>
<td>.011*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Readiness for Behavior Change</td>
<td>75 (75.0%)</td>
<td>180 (76.6%)</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Session 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Confidence</td>
<td>18 (85.7%)</td>
<td>66 (80.5%)</td>
<td>.423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Motivation</td>
<td>18 (85.7%)</td>
<td>67 (81.7%)</td>
<td>.674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Readiness for Behavior Change</td>
<td>19 (90.5%)</td>
<td>67 (81.7%)</td>
<td>.273</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * indicates students who received in-person coaching completed the post session 1 assessment.
*240 students who received remote coaching completed the post session 1 assessment.
*1101 students who received in-person coaching completed the post session 3 assessment.
*2240 students who received remote coaching completed the post session 3 assessment.

- There was no difference by mode in the student’s perception of the coach/client relationship after the first session. However, after three sessions, in-person coaching users reported higher levels of autonomy (p<.01) and relatedness (p<.05) within the relationship with their coach.

Results: Audio vs. Video

- Audio only users had satisfaction increases in family and physical environment domains that were not found among video-chat users.
- There was no change in satisfaction with friends or romantic relationships for either mode.

Coach/Client Relationship by Modality

- Remote coaching was found to be as effective as in-person coaching in terms of increased confidence, motivation, and readiness for behavior change.
- While university-based wellness coaching is still relatively new, its potential with remote offerings can expand reach, providing further approaches for improving access to services.

Conclusion

References