

Research: The Organizing Together Program

Overview

The Organizing Together Program is used to teach students how to organize their notebooks, desks, and lockers. The research was conducted in four, fourth-grade general education classes. Two classes were randomly selected for the experimental condition; the other two were selected for the comparison condition. A total of 124 students participated, with 64 in the experimental classes and 60 in the comparison classes. Students ranged in age from 7 to 10 years. Twenty-seven percent were students with exceptionalities; 32% were representatives of minority populations. The teachers of the experimental classes taught their students the Organizing Together Program. The teachers of the comparison classes did not use this program.

Results

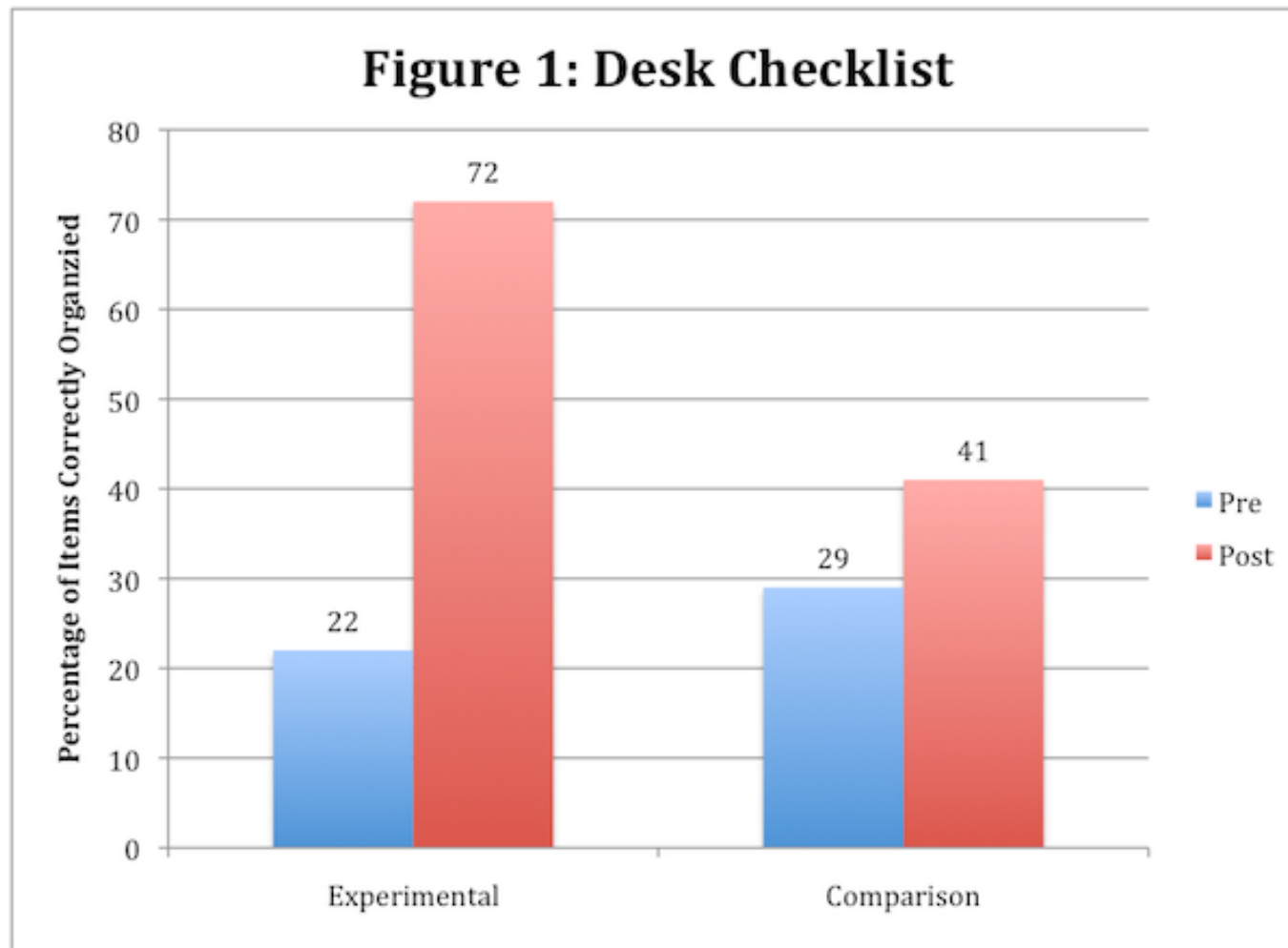
Data were also gathered on organization of the students' desks, notebooks, and backpacks. Observers determined the percentage of items completed correctly on a checklist related to each item inspected. Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4 show the mean percentage of items correctly organized in the students' desks, notebooks, backpacks, and calendars, respectively. Experimental students organized more items in their desks, notebooks, backpacks, and calendars than the comparison students. The ANCOVAs (using the pretest scores as the covariate) showed that the adjusted mean scores gathered during observations after the experimental classes participated in Organizing Together instruction were significantly different between the experimental and comparison students for desk organization [$F(1, 123) = 49.286, p < .000, \eta^2 = .280$], notebook organization [$F(1, 112) = 833.300, p < .000, \eta^2 = .887$], backpack organization [$F(1, 117) = 12.814, p < .001, \eta^2 = .109$], and calendar recordings [$F(1, 108) = 22.173, p < .0001, \eta^2 = .389$]. (These η^2 s represent large and medium effect sizes.) The adjusted mean scores for the experimental group were significantly larger than the adjusted mean scores for the comparison group in all cases.

Experimental teachers and students used a 7-point Likert-type scale to rate items regarding their satisfaction with the program ("7" indicating extremely satisfied; "1" indicating extremely dissatisfied) at the end of the year. Teachers endorsed the program, and their ratings indicated satisfaction with each aspect of the program, with mean ratings on individual items ranging from 6.3 to 7.0. Their mean overall rating for the program was 6.7. Students also indicated that they were satisfied with the program, with mean scores on items ranging from 5.2 to 5.8. The students' mean rating for the program overall was 5.5. Ninety percent of the students recommended that all third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade students receive this instruction.

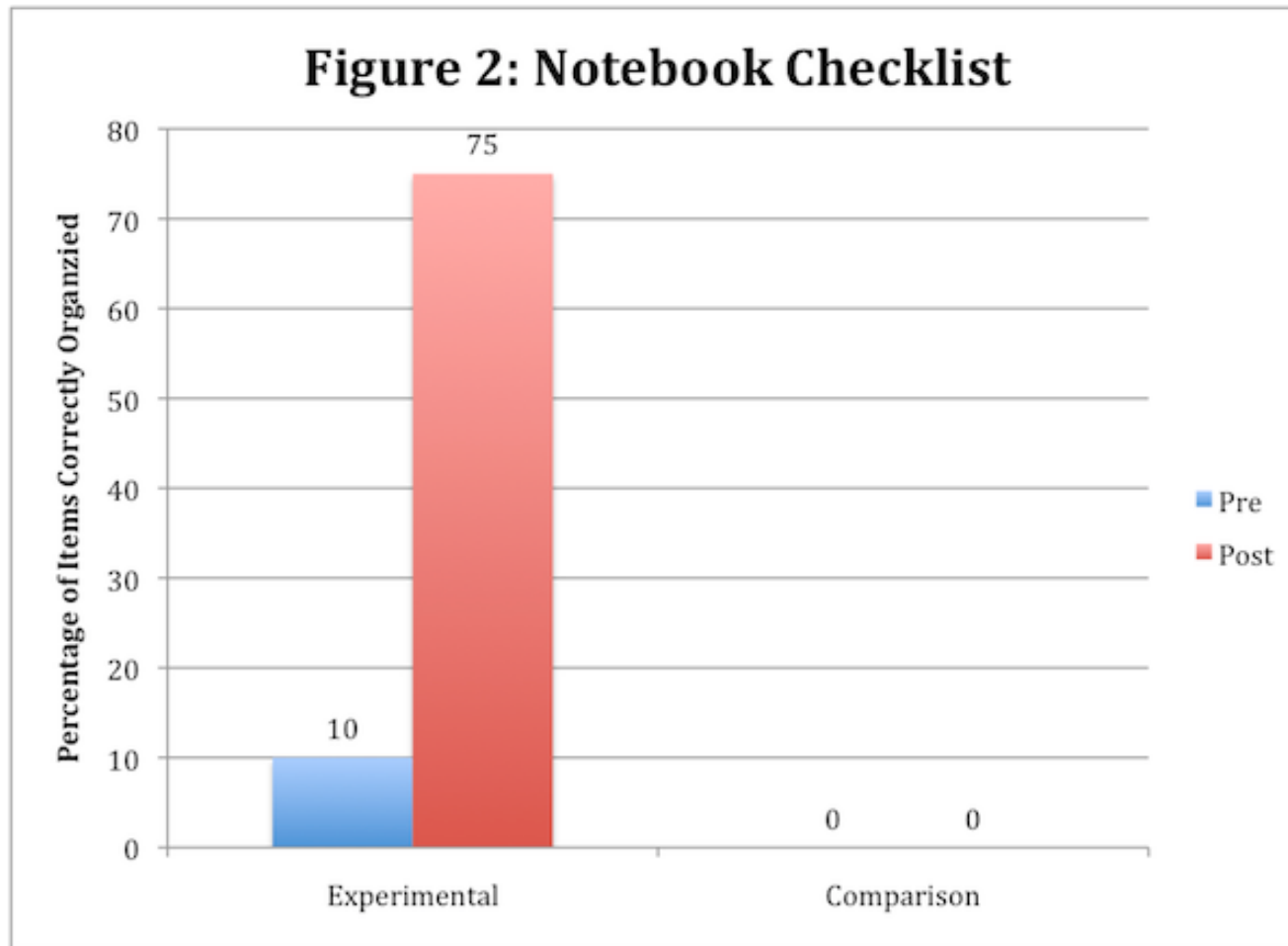
Reference

Vernon, D.S. (2000). *Effects of the Organizing Together program: Progress summary*. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, SBIR Phase II #1R44HD34306.

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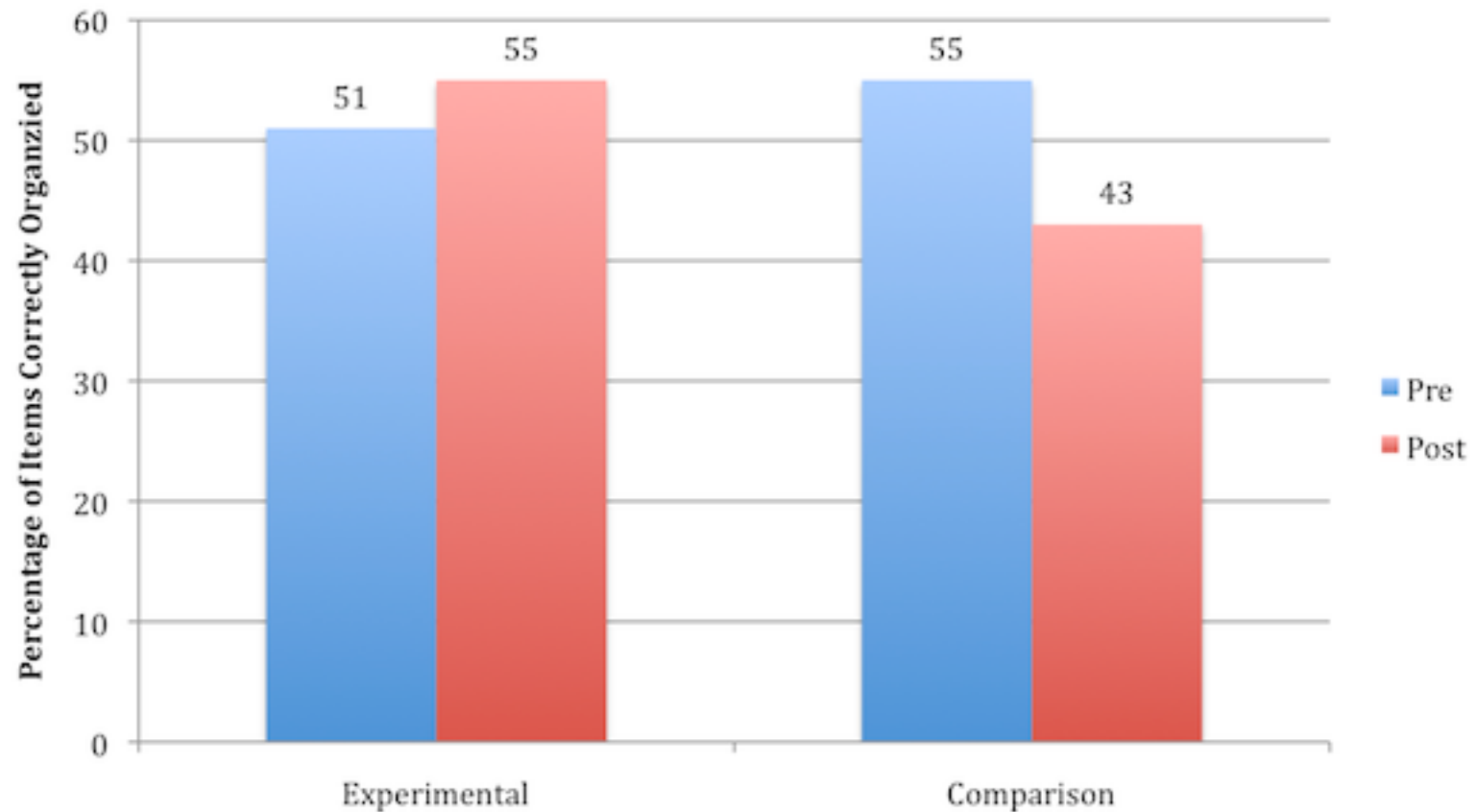


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Figure 3: Backpack Checklist



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