

Effects on Research Design and Outcomes from Conceptualization of the Horse in Human Services



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Education
Research
Clinical

Therapeutic
Human-Horse
Interactions

Equine Welfare
and Behavior /
Horses in
Communities



Human-Animal Interaction
Section 13
Division 17 of the APA



International Society
for Equitation Science



Yavapai
COLLEGE



AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION



CBEIP



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CHA™



EQUITOPIA
HORSES AND HUMANITY IN HARMONY



PROGRESSIVE EQUINE
BEHAVIOR & TRAINING
FORUM



THE HOMES FOR
HORSES COALITION
ADVANCING EQUINE PROTECTION

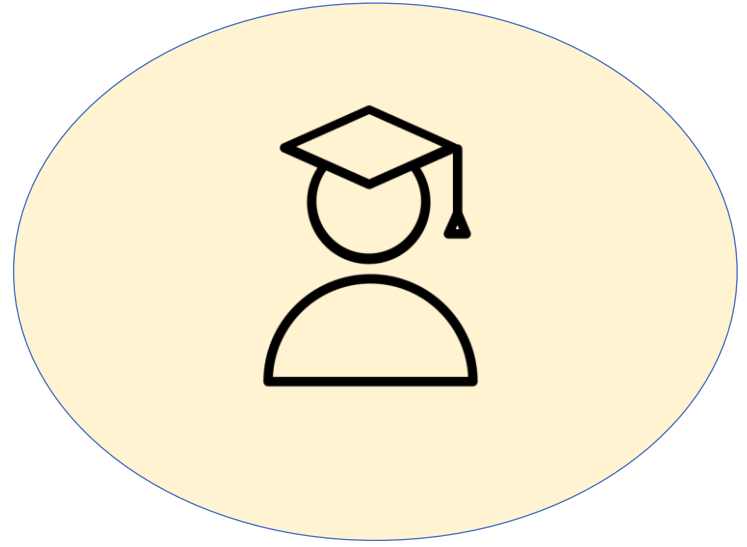
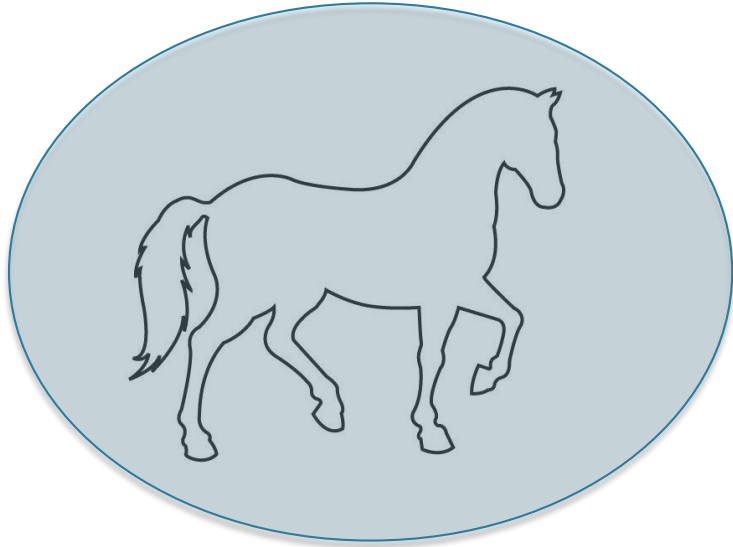


PATH
INTERNATIONAL
Professional Association of Therapeutic
Horsemanship International

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Effects on Research Design and Outcomes from Conceptualization of the Horse in Human Services
Nina Ekholm Fry – HETI Congress 2021, Seoul, South Korea





Conceptualization Matters!

Issues and Effects on Research Design and Outcomes Arising from Conceptualization

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Issues and Effects on Research Design and Outcomes Arising from Conceptualization

1. Conducting reviews

(scoping reviews, systematic reviews, meta-analyses):

- Issues of terminology, definitions, and descriptions
- Lack of similarity or comparing different categories

Example: Recommended descriptions in the U.S.

Therapy / Treatment

Inclusion of equine interactions and/or equine movement as a treatment technique or tool within existing treatment approaches. *Horses or interactions with them is not a standalone treatment or therapy*

Education / Learning

Inclusion of interactions with horses into academic settings, human coaching, or other learning settings to add experiential and relational elements to frameworks appropriate for each professional area

Horsemanship, Riding

Adaptive Riding / Therapeutic Riding

Providing access to horses and riding for those who because of physical, cognitive, or mental health-related barriers, might not enjoy a typical equestrian environment, or may find that such an environment cannot accommodate them in order to fully participate (*recreation/sport*)

American Hippotherapy Association, Inc. (2020);
APA Human-Animal Interactions Ethics Workgroup, n.d.);
Stewart et al., 2016; Wood et al., 2021

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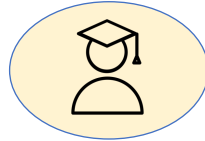
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2. Measuring effect

- Not being clear about the conceptualization used and its impact on study design with respect to effect

Example: Conceptualization and Design to Measure Effect

Research Team A



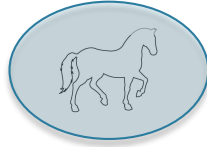
Group 1 receives 12 weeks of protocolized Cognitive Behavioral Treatment (CBT) in a typical indoor therapy setting by a therapist

Group 2 receives 12 weeks of protocolized Cognitive Behavioral Treatment (CBT) where interactions with horses are included to add experiential, relational, and somatic elements to treatment and is provided by a therapist

(A third group could be added to receive the same 12 week content in an outdoor setting but without horse interactions)

Example: Conceptualization and Design to Measure Effect

Research Team B



Group 1 receives 12 weeks of protocolized Cognitive Behavioral Treatment (CBT) in a typical indoor therapy setting by a therapist

Group 2 receives 12 weeks of horse interactions and horsemanship activities (leading, grooming, riding) by a horse instructor

Issues and Effects on Research Design and Outcomes Arising from Conceptualization

Research Team A

Team A attempted to establish whether the inclusion of experiential, relational, and somatic elements arising from interactions with horses would positively impact treatment outcomes for clients receiving CBT in a group setting. *Additional questions: setting + horses, or horses themselves? What kind of clients may benefit more?*

Research Team B

Team B attempted to establish whether doing typical horse-related activities with a focus on horsemanship is more clinically effective for the particular condition measured than receiving CBT treatment in a group. *Comparing recreation with treatment?*

Recommendations

- Describe clearly what is happening, what professionals are involved, and how they work (+ the intention behind each part of the researched activity)
- Determine if the conceptualization focuses on “horses” themselves, or on how professionals incorporate and translate elements from interactions with horses into the existing treatment or educational approaches that are appropriate for their professions
- Do not assume that terms are consistently used nationally or internationally
- Become familiar and *responsible* with terms and terminology as a researcher, do not just rely on input from practitioners participating in your study
 - Some terms may negatively impact professionals in your country



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