

Camp Stomping Grounds and the Promotion of Radical Empathy

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Background

Empathy involves the promotion of constructive inter-group relations through perspective-taking and prosocial action (Taylor, 2020). A focus on the development of empathy in youth is critical, as children are invaluable resources for future peace-building efforts (Taylor, 2020). Implementation of empathy-fostering practices at an institutional level is also a factor of interest.

Camp Stomping Grounds (CSG) is a sleepaway camp that focuses on autonomy, creativity, and restorative practices to promote radical empathy in summer campers. Due to the nature of CSG, further examination of its efficacy in fostering empathy is warranted. Drawing on previously collected data, we focused on analyzing years at CSG relative to other residential camps in relation to items that measured heightened empathy.

Hypotheses

Long-term campers would experience heightened empathy when compared to campers who have spent less time at CSG.

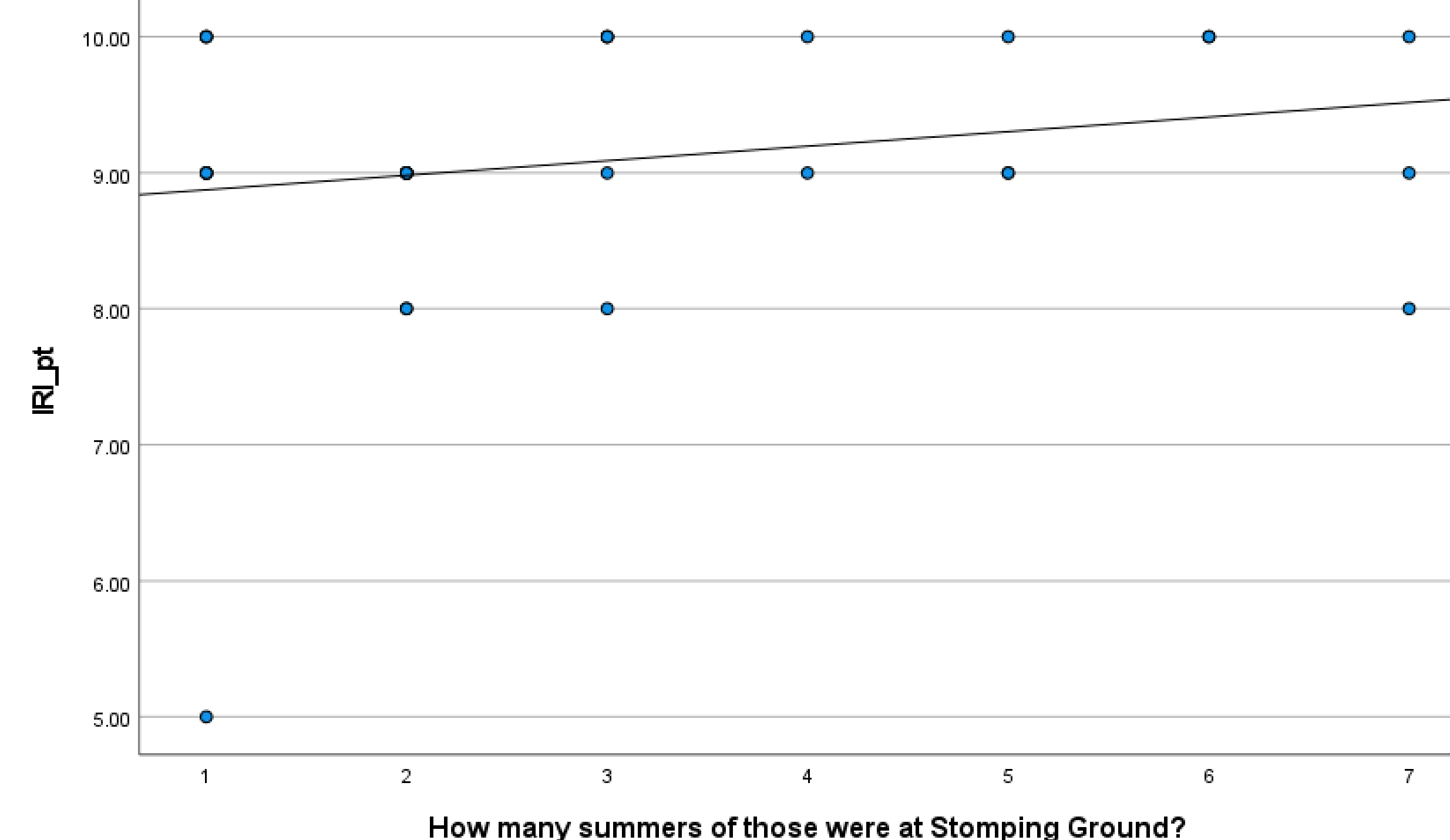
References

Taylor, L. K. (2020). The developmental peacebuilding model (DPM) of children's prosocial behaviors in settings of intergroup conflict. *Child Development Perspectives*, 14(3), 127–134. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdep.12377>
 Camping Photos, download the Best Free Camping Stock Photos & HD Images. (n.d.).
<https://www.pexels.com/search/camping/>



Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age Whole	32	9	17	13.31	2.039
NumStomp	32	1	7	3.03	1.975
NumNonStomp	32	.00	7.00	.6563	1.55769
IRI_pt	31	5.00	10.00	9.0968	1.01176
IRI_ee	32	11.00	15.00	13.8125	.89578
Valid N (listwise)	31				



Correlations

	IRI_pt	Age Whole	NumNonStomp	NumStomp	
Pearson Correlation	IRI_pt	1.000	.270	.208	.211
	Age Whole	.270	1.000	.326	.481
	NumNonStomp	.208	.326	1.000	-.088
	NumStomp	.211	.481	-.088	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	IRI_pt	.	.071	.131	.127
	Age Whole	.071	.	.037	.003
	NumNonStomp	.131	.037	.	.318
	NumStomp	.127	.003	.318	.
N	IRI_pt	31	31	31	31
	Age Whole	31	31	31	31
	NumNonStomp	31	31	31	31
	NumStomp	31	31	31	31

Methods

Campers at CSG completed pencil-and-paper daily diary surveys over a 2-week period. Measures for the present study were taken from demographic information, as well as question items derived from the Interpersonal-Reactivity Index (IRI).

New variables were computed for years spent at other summer camps, perspective-taking, and emotional empathy. Descriptive statistics were calculated using SPSS software. Mean, median, standard deviation, and variance were calculated for each measured variable. Frequency tables were also created for relevant variables.

Conclusion

Number of years at CSG was not predictive of heightened empathy when age and years at non-CSG camps were controlled for. Perhaps unsurprisingly, perspective-taking was marginally correlated with age, suggesting that as campers grow older, they have an enhanced ability to utilize cognitive empathy.

Our hypothesis was not supported by our analyses. A possibility is that our sample size (n=32) was too small to draw conclusions from. The time that campers spend at CSG may be a limitation, as camp only takes place over a 2-week period. Rather than being a result of time spent at camp, enhanced empathy may be a function of growing up.

Future research may wish to incorporate question items that are designed to measure experiences of enhanced empathy in relation to CSG specifically.