Improving Student Social Skills Using Bibliocounseling Techniques During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

During the COVID-19 pandemic, students' social skills need to be improved. Social distancing implemented due to the pandemic makes it difficult for counselors to provide counseling services directly / face to face. One alternative that can be done by counselors is to provide bibliocounseling techniques. This study aims to improve students' social skills by using bibliocounseling techniques. This research is an experimental research using DesignOne Group Pretest-Posttest. The population in this study was students of the State Islamic Institute (IAIN Bukittinggi, West Sumatra, Indonesia. The research sample consisted of 30 students. The samples were taken using the purposive sampling technique. The scale used is the social skills scale. Data analysis was performed using descriptive analysis and t-test. Based on data analysis and studies that have been carried out, it was found that the mean pretest score before the intervention was given was 117.43 and was included in the medium category. This score then increased after being given intervention in the form of a bibliocounseling technique, the average posttest score was 136.73 and was in the high category. In hypothesis testing, the probability number Asmyp. Sig. (2-tailed) obtained is 0.000 where this value is below alpha (0.000 < 0.05) with a difference in the mean pretest and posttest scores of 19.3. Based on these data, H1 is accepted. This indicates an increase in students' social skills before and after being treated with bibliocounseling techniques. Knowing the results of the study, it can be concluded that bibliocounseling techniques are effective in improving students' social skills during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Social Skills, Bibliocounseling, Pandemic Covid 19.

INTRODUCTION

Social skills that exist in individuals may affect their ability to learn, play, work and participate in community activities (Woodie, 2007; Zelst, 2000). Failure to develop social skills can have a negative impact throughout an individual's life (Choi & Kim, 2003; Danielson & Phelps, 2003; McClellan & Katz, 2001). Individuals who fail to develop social skills will experience negative things, such as behavioral disorders (Gresham, Elliott, & Kettler, 2010), rejection and intimidation from peers (Fox & Boulton, 2003, 2005), not comfortable in participating in school/college activities (Elksnin & Elksnin, 1998), various psychological pressures such as stress and depression (Aikawa, Masami, & Kengo, 2007; C. Segrin & Flora, 2000; Chris Segrin, Mcnelis, & Swiatkowski, 2016), loneliness (Panayiotou, Panteli, & Theodorou, 2016; Segrin & Domschke, 2011), eating disorders (Mallinckrodt, McCreary, & Robertson, 1995), social anxiety and phobias (De Lijster et al., 2018; Wenzel, Graff-Dolezal, Macho, & Brendle, 2005), low academic achievement and limited job opportunities (Arnold, Kupersmidt, Voegler-Lee, & Marshall, 2012; Gresham, Van Bao, & Cook, 2006; Walker, Ramsey, & Gresham, 2004)

Individuals need to learn and practice social skills to prevent problems for themselves in the future (Beheshtifar & Norozy, 2013; Campbel & Hansen, 2010; Koscelnikova, Lehotska, & Dobes, 2009; Pereira-Lima & Loureiro, 2014). Social skills training can reduce various negative responses that may be experienced by individuals in dealing with the social environment (Elliott, Pring, & Bunning, 2002; Patterson, Moscona, McKibbin, Davidson, & Jeste, 2001). Social skills that are learned and practiced are effective in reducing psychological stress, such as social anxiety (De Lijster et al., 2018; Wenzel et al., 2005), satisfaction with life, and reduced feelings of loneliness in individuals (Ozben, 2013), improve social/prosocial relationships with the environment and peers (Aram & Shlak, 2008; Goldstein & Naglieri, 2011; Gresham et al., 2006), increase self-esteem in the social environment (Tsang & Pearson, 2001), and increase the effectiveness in leading a group (Riggio & Reichard, 2008).

A survey conducted by the Association of American Colleges and University revealed that 75% of entrepreneurs expressed their desire that schools and colleges place more emphasis on developing the skills of their students, especially in the aspect of improving Social Skills. In addition, employers expect that prospective employees with a bachelor's degree have not only expertise in their discipline, but also good social skills (Stephenson, Mayes, Combs, & Webber, 2015).

Meanwhile, the results of research conducted by Leggette, Sitton, & Blackwell (2011) and Yale (2014) found that one of the causes of undergraduate graduates not being absorbed by the work environment was the low level of Social Skills in the field of communication, even some of them were found to be still in the substandard category. This is also reinforced by the results of a survey released by the Workforce Solutions Group (2013) that more than 60% of the world's employers reported that job applicants who graduated with bachelor's degrees lacked communication skills where the number increased by 10% in the last two years. On the other hand, *The Manpower Group (2018)* revealed that 45% of employers from around the world have difficulty finding job candidates/applicants considering that most job applicants do not have the talent as desired by the company. In addition, as many as 8% of applicants do not have the required Soft Skills, in the form of low work motivation, inappropriate

appearance, lack of discipline, inflexibility, and lack of Social Skills in the areas of communication skills, empathy, and collaboration skills.

In Indonesia, data released by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in February 2019 found that unemployment for diploma and undergraduate graduates had increased compared to the previous year. The unemployment rate for diploma graduates increased by 8.5% (0.5) from only 6.4% to 6.9%, while for undergraduate graduates, the increase was 25% (1.2), from 5.0% to 6.2% (Pusparisa, 2019). Whitehead, Langley-Evans, Tischler, & Swift (2009); Leggette et al., (2011); Moeller & Seehuus (2019) in their research suggest that universities should teach various abilities to students, especially the Social Skills required by the work environment so that it is hoped that undergraduate graduates will have no difficulty in finding work after graduating from university. This is because Social Skills are behaviors that can be learned and practiced (Beheshtifar & Norozy, 2013).

However, the whole world is now facing the condition of the Corona or COVID-19 pandemic. There are 3,568,331 people recorded as positive confirmed cases of the Covid 19 Pandemic in Indonesia per August 2021 (https://kawalcovid19.id/). During the Covid 19 pandemic, counselors experienced difficulties in developing individual social skills due to the implementation of health protocols and the application of social distancing. In this case, counselors can use bibliocounseling techniques as an alternative to counseling services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The bibliocounseling technique is a technique that uses literature to increase and develop the potential and assets that exist in individuals through reading books (Eich, 1999; Pardeck, 2013; Hariyadi, Sugiharto, & Sutoyo, 2014; İlbay, 2016; Kramer, 2009; Shem, 2016). The goals of bibliocounseling techniques include providing information, generating new insights, and stimulating discussion in a group (Campbell & Smith, 2003).

The results show that bibliocounseling can be used to prevent individual problems (Pardeck, 2013); effective in increasing negative self-concept in individuals (Rachmayanie, Rusandi, & Sulistiyana, 2018); effective in overcoming depression in adults (Floyd et al. (2004); able to reduce depression levels in inmates in prisons (Pardini et al. (2014); effective in increasing self-esteem in students (Karacan & Güneri, 2010); effective in developing students' interpersonal intelligence (Hariyadi, Sugiharto, & Sutoyo, 2014).

Based on the background described, the research/study problems are as follows: Is there an increase in student social skills before (pretest) and after (posttest) treatment with bibliocounseling techniques during the COVID-19 Pandemic?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Bibliocounseling Techniques

The bibliocounseling technique is a technique that utilizes literature that aims to increase and develop the potential and assets that exist in individuals through reading books (Eich, 1999; Hariyadi, Sugiharto, & Sutoyo, 2014; İlbay, 2016; Kramer, 2009; Shem, 2016). The purpose of the bibliocounselin technique is to provide information, generate new insights, and stimulate discussion in a group (Campbell & Smith, 2003). Brammer & Shostrom (1982) stated that bibliocounseling techniques have long been practiced and are intended to change human behavior.

Biblicounseling is a therapy technique that has been around for a long time. However, bibliocounseling has only become a tool and science in the aid profession in the 20th century. Around the 1930s in Europe and North America, this technique began to be published, both related to theory and practical instructions on the implementation of Bibliocounseling. Bibliocounseling has now received serious attention from therapists, counseling, education, and even religion. Bibliocounseling has now also become a branch of library science that plays a role both as information and therapy related to the health professions, counseling, education, and so on (Eich, 1999).

Based on the explanation above, it can be understood that bibliocounseling is an activity using literature as a counseling medium, such as books, poetry, films, internet songs, and other library media. Through the bibliocounseling technique, the counselee is expected to be able to relate their problems to the situation in a book, so that the counselee will understand themselves and find solutions to problems independently.

Social Skills

Social skills that exist in individuals may affect their ability to learn, play, work and participate in community activities (Raymond, 1990; Woodie, 2007; Zelst, 2000). Social skills are behaviors that encourage individuals to interact positively with others and adapt to their social environment (Gresham, Elliott, Vance, & Cook, 2011; Lynch & Simpson, 2010; Rifauddin, 2017). Individuals will easily understand and be understood by others through interaction (Beheshtifar & Norozy, 2013). Social skills will also help individuals to have good psychological well-being (Chris Segrin & Rynes, 2009).

Individuals who have good social skills will be easily accepted in a social environment and will avoid unpleasant social situations (Quinn & Hoffman, 2000; Schloss & Schloss, 1985; Chris Segrin & Taylor, 2007). The forms of social skills include a). the ability to communicate with others; b) ability to cooperate; c). have assertive behavior; d). ability to be responsible; e). have empathy; f) involvement in group activities; g) the ability to control oneself (Gresham, F.M. & Elliot, 2008).

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Model

This research is an experimental study using the Design One Group Pretest-Postest (Campbell & Stanley, 1963). The design form is as follows:
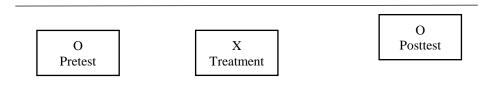

Figure 1. One Group Pretest-Postest Design Research Model

In the One Group Pretest-Postest Design, the dependent variable is measured as a group before (pretest) and after (posttest) treatment is given.

Participants

The participants in this study were students of the Guidance and Counseling Study Program at the State Islamic Institute (IAIN) Bukittingi, West Sumatra, Indonesia. The research sample consisted of 30 students who were taken using the purposive sampling technique.

Research Instruments

The instrument used in this study was a social skills scale developed by the researcher himself. The social skill construct developed is based on the theory of Gresham, F.M. & Elliot (2008) include a). the ability to communicate with others; b) ability to cooperate; c). have assertive behavior; d). ability to be responsible; e). have empathy; f) involvement in group activities; g) the ability to control oneself. This scale consists of 38 items. The level of validity of this social skills scale is 0.519 with a reliability score which is 0.894.

Procedure

This research procedure consists of several stages as follows:

a. The researcher measures the level of social skills (pretest) of students of the Guidance and Counseling Study Program, IAIN Bukittinggi and selected 30 respondents based on the medium category of social skills.
b. Provides treatment in the form of bibliocounseling techniques.
c. After the treatment is given, a posttest is carried out to measure students' social skills.

Analysis of Research Data

Data analysis used in this research is descriptive analysis and t-test. Descriptive analysis is used to describe the level of social skills of the respondents. The levels of student social skills scores are as follows:

Table 1. The Level of Achievement of Respondents' Social Skills

Interval	Category
160 - 190	Very High
129 - 159	High
98 - 128	Medium
67 - 97	Low
< 66	Very Low

Hypothesis testing is done by using the t-test. The criteria applied to hypothesis testing are as follows:

- if $p > .05$ then H_0 is rejected
- if $p < .05$ then H_1 is rejected (Coakes, Steed, & Ong, 2010).

The hypotheses in this study are as follows:

H_0 = There was no increase in student social skills before (pretest) and after (posttest) treatment with bibliocounseling techniques during the COVID-19 Pandemic

H_1 = There is an increase in students' social skills before (pretest) and after (posttest) treatment with bibliocounseling techniques during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

The research findings before (pretest) and after (posttest) were given treatment with bibliocounseling techniques are described as follows:

Table2. Increased Score on Student Social Skills before (Pretest) and After (Posttest) Treatment of Bibliocounseling Techniques

No	Respondents	Pretest	Category	Posttest	Category	Description
1	WA	121	Medium	139	High	Improving
2	DO	123	Medium	144	High	Improving
3	SA	117	Medium	130	High	Improving
4	AW	123	Medium	136	High	Improving
5	HR	113	Medium	125	Medium	Improving
6	PN	115	Medium	127	Medium	Improving
3	VR	117	Medium	129	High	Improving
8	RH	123	Medium	134	High	Improving
9	ES	123	Medium	131	High	Improving
10	ER	122	Medium	138	High	Improving
11	AZ	112	Medium	121	Medium	Improving
12	YM	116	Medium	127	Medium	Improving
13	RM	118	Medium	137	High	Improving
14	SA	108	Medium	125	Medium	Improving
15	GE	111	Medium	127	Medium	Improving
16	NH	112	Medium	132	High	Improving
17	IF	110	Medium	124	Medium	Improving
18	MN	126	Medium	153	High	Improving
19	EC	112	Medium	130	High	Improving
20	MK	121	Medium	146	High	Improving
21	LS	120	Medium	146	High	Improving
22	ZF	120	Medium	148	High	Improving
23	AS	121	Medium	149	High	Improving
24	SA	119	Medium	148	High	Improving
25	WN	104	Medium	126	Medium	Improving

26	RW	125	Medium	149	High	Improving
27	NF	110	Medium	136	High	Improving
28	SA	117	Medium	147	High	Improving
29	YC	119	Medium	150	High	Improving
30	YP	125	Medium	148	High	Improving
Average		117.43	Medium	136.73	High	

The data in the form of a diagram based on the findings above are as follows:
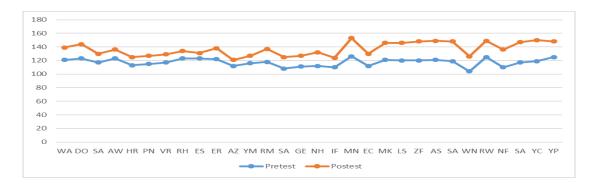

Figure2. Increased Score on Student Social Skills before (Pretest) and After (Posttest) Treatment of Bibliocounseling Techniques

Based on table 2 and figure 2 above, it can be explained that all respondents (30 respondents) experienced an increase in social skills scores after being given intervention in the form of bibliocounseling techniques. When viewed from the average total score, this also experienced a significant increase where the average pretest score was 117.43 (Moderate) which then increased after being given treatment to 136.73 (High).

Research Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis test in this study is as follows:

Table 3. Research Hypothesis Test

Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Differen	Std. Error
Skor	Equal variances assumed	15.035	.000	9.377	58	.000	19.30000	2.05813
	Equal variances not assumed			9.377	46.522	.000	19.30000	2.05813

Based on table 3 above, it can be seen that the probability number of Asmyp. Sig. (2-tailed) is 0.000 or the probability is below alpha (0.000 < 0.05), with the difference in the mean pretest and posttest scores is 19.3. It can be concluded that H1 is accepted and H0 is rejected. This indicates an increase in students' social skills before (pretest) and after (posttest) treatment with bibliocounseling techniques.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study found that there was a significant increase in social skills between the pretest and posttest groups after being given the intervention of bibliocounseling techniques. The results of data analysis showed Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) obtained is 0.000 0.05 which means that there has been a significant increase in social skills between before (pretest) and after (posttest) given the bibliocounseling technique.

Knowing the results of this study, it was concluded that the treatment in the form of biblicounseling techniques was effective in improving students' social skills during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Bibliocounseling techniques aim to provide information, generate new insights, and stimulate discussion in one group(Campbell & Smith, 2003). It is hoped that this research will further support the results of previous studies on the effectiveness of bibliocounseling techniques. These studies include such as bibliocounseling can be used to prevent problems in individuals (Pardeck, 2013); effective in increasing negative self-concept in individuals (Rachmayanie, Rusandi, & Sulistiyana, 2018); effective in overcoming depression in adults (Floyd et al. (2004); able to reduce depression levels in inmates in prisons (Pardini et al. (2014); effective in increasing self-esteem in students (Karacan & Güneri, 2010); and effective in developing students' interpersonal intelligence (Hariyadi, Sugiharto, & Sutoyo, 2014).

CONCLUSION

Based on data analysis and studies that have been carried out, it was found that the mean pretest score before the intervention was given was 117.43 and was included in the moderate category. The increase in score occurred after being given intervention in the form of a bibliocounseling technique, the average posttest score was 136.73 and was in the high category. In hypothesis testing, the probability number of Asmyp. Sig. (2-tailed) obtained was 0.000 or the probability was below alpha ($0.000 < 0.05$) where the difference in the mean pretest and posttest scores was 19.3. The data thus indicate that H1 is accepted. This means that there is an increase in students' social skills before and after being given treatment in the form of bibliocounseling techniques. Knowing the results of the study, it was concluded that bibliocounseling techniques were effective in improving students' social skills during the COVID-19 pandemic.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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