

Effects of humanistic groups counseling to reduce psychological distress in adolescents

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to find out the effect of humanistic groups counseling towards psychological distress in adolescents who will go to university, who have many stressors as teenagers, and as individuals who will choose their path for their future. The research subjects consisted of 32 people, the requirement must be teenagers aged 17-18 years, had the same problem, due to waiting for the university entrance exam. They complained of insomnia, can not concentrate on learning, and were often sad, even some of them cried a lot with no exact reason. The result is self-improvement in reducing the stress of university examinations conducted through humanistic group counseling, which can make the subjects also learn about knowing themselves and good coping skills to reduce anxiety and fear of tests and the test results.

Keywords: *Humanistic Counseling, Psychological Distress, Adolescent*

There is a rapid development of many aspects of life during adolescence, the transition from children to adults brings many changes to adolescents. Daily stress relates to the environment, changes that come from within, ranging from changes in body shape, voice, emotion, to emotional. In addition to the many changes that occur in adolescents, there are many problems encountered by individuals in this adolescent age group, such as the search for identity, expressing sexual feelings, feel free to determine opinions, thoughts are no longer children's adaptation to changes that occur in their lives, these things which causes many individuals in this age group to experience storm and stress (Stafford, Cooper, Barkham, Beecham, Bower, Cromarty, Fugard, Jackson, Pearce, Rose, et al., 2018).

In early adolescence, teenagers really need for help and understanding about themselves and the changes they experience. Once leaving childhood, adolescents will always feel the freedom, autonomy, and choice compared to when they were a child. Feeling no longer a child arises with responsibilities that are not easy to pass through, learning about responsibilities is as difficult as applying responsibilities to adolescents (Crowley et al., 2018).

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Physical changes or puberty are also the reason for the emergence of anxiety during adolescence. This is in line with the results of research that says that more than half of female students experience mild golden age due to puberty, one of the causes is dysmenorrhea and menstruation which is the most significant change felt by young women. In most adolescents, these changes become obstacles in the lives of adolescents. Often this disrupts their physical and emotional health, destroys motivation and ability to succeed at school and damages their personal relationships. Many adolescents reach adulthood with painful suffering, but they are then asked to participate responsibly in society (Sibinga et al., 2011).

Changes that occur in adolescents include the rapid development of adolescents and the problems they must experience every day can cause adolescents to experience vulnerability to stress. Seyle introduces the concept of eustress and distress to show various responses to stress. Lazarus explained that eustress is a positive cognitive response to stressors, this type of stress is related to positive feelings and physical health while distress is severe stress related to negative feelings and physical disturbance. The main factor that determines whether a stressor will cause distress or eustress is the perception and interpretation of a situation from each individual. Psychological distress can have a negative impact. Psychological distress is formed from anxiety, sadness, irritability, self-awareness, emotional vulnerability related to morbidity, decreased quality and duration of life, and increased use of health services (Akba, 2015).

The impact of untreated psychological distress will lead teens to negative things like depression, anxiety, juvenile delinquency, drug abuse to physical changes that can lead to mental problems (such as body dysmorphic or eating disorder). Mental and psychological problems begin when an individual enters adolescence, so special attention must be paid to things that can reduce psychological distress in adolescents, to mitigate the negative effects of mental illness that are very vulnerable experienced by individuals when entering their teens (Stafford, Cooper, Barkham, Beecham, Bower, Cromarty, Fugard, Jackson, Pearce, Ryder, et al., 2018)

Adolescence is a time of rapid biological, cognitive and social change. These changes in normative development can contribute to several mental health problems, such as increased stress levels. The global prevalence of mental health problems in youth is estimated at 10-20% while mental health problems in youth predict poor educational performance, poor physical health, substance abuse, and doing problems later on. It is estimated that 15-30% of years of life adjusted for disability are lost due to initial mental health problems (and thus present a significant burden on the economy. The most common mental health problems experienced in adolescence are stress, anxiety, and depression (Marsh, Chan, & MacBeth, 2017)

The humanistic approach provides different counseling methods and focuses primarily on the individual's personal and unique potential to explore creativity, growth, love, and psychological understanding. The nature of humanistic counseling emphasizes philosophical reflections on what it means to be human. Humans have the ability to think consciously and rationally in controlling their biological desires, and in reaching their maximum potential. humans are responsible for their own lives and deeds and have the freedom and ability to change their own attitudes and behavior.

The humanistic-existential approach does not have strictly determined techniques. The counseling process with a humanistic approach is very concerned about the therapeutic

relationship by seeing the counselor and client as human beings. The purpose of counseling is that the client is authentically aware of his existence. Broaden the client's self-awareness in order to be able to make free and responsible choices. Helping clients to be able to deal with anxiety related to decision choices and accept the fact that he is more than a victim of the forces of influence from outside himself (Zulfikar, 2017).

Through observation and interviews, all subjects come from happy, capable families, the subject's parents are also diplomatic enough to free their children's choices, it's just that the subject's personality and bad coping actually worsen the subject's condition. The first subject tends to do shopping coping and sleep in the room when they start to not focus on the lesson, he also tends to postpone work because his work is more perfect. The second subject is easily worried about the future and has a coping of watching videos and watching videos about people who have entered the university he likes, it is more stressful because he has enough competitive spirit and ultimately compares himself to that person. The third subject prefers to cry and does not interact with other people, other than because the subject's character is closed, the subject is also lazy to socialize and after crying the subject will continue to study into the night but will be very anxious if not learning and make a few mistakes have high self critics, and easy to surrender to failure, he does not want to fail because he must be a perfectionist, he has high ideals how a child should behave because he always considers himself not good when one or two things that bother him.

INTERVENTION HUMANISTIC GROUP COUNSELLING

Etymologically, the term group counseling comes from the word counsel taken from Latin namely *counselum* which means "together", which is then assembled by "accepting" or "understanding". Furthermore, in the English dictionary counsel means advice, advice, conversation. Thus, counseling is interpreted as providing advice, advice, and talk by exchanging ideas. Group counseling is an activity between the counselor and several people at once who act as counselees and counselors and counselees will be joined in a small group. Furthermore, another opinion states that counseling is a face-to-face activity that is confidential, filled with the attitude of acceptance and providing opportunities from the counselor to the counselee, and in this case, the counselor uses his knowledge and skills to help the counselee overcome the problems he faces. The counseling process will be realized in communication between counselor and counselee, in which the counselor will use certain techniques and it aims to facilitate interpersonal communication and allow counselees to find solutions to problems that are being discussed in counseling activities. Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that group counseling is a process of providing assistance to a problem by a counselor to several individuals (counselees) who are members of a small group and have the same problems with the aim to overcome the problems faced by the counselee (Stafford, Cooper, Barkham, Beecham, Bower, Cromarty, Fugard, Jackson, Pearce, Ryder, et al., 2018).

Basic humanistic theory concluded that humans look at the ability and desire to choose and make their own decisions. Humans have an element of freedom or freedom of choice in seeing, exploring, and challenging nature and the world is determined around them. Furthermore, Humanistic counseling is an effective approach to be applied in dealing with client anxiety, because this approach focuses on client openness and presence, freeing the client, building self-awareness, client responsibility, recognizing that decisions and final choices lie with the client, recognizes the client's freedom to express his views and to develop his own goals and values, work towards reducing client dependency and increasing client freedom (Bailey & Keefe, 2004).

Humanistic counseling in groups aims to make the counselee experience his existence authentically, by becoming aware of his own existence and potential and being aware of how he must reveal his potential and act in harmony with his potential. There are three characteristics of authentic existence (1) full awareness of the present moment; (2) choosing the current way of life; and (3) taking responsibility for the choice decisions he has made, Natawidjaya, (2009). Based on the explanation above through the humanistic-existential group counseling approach, it is expected to be effective in helping to reduce student anxiety, this is because the function and role of the humanistic-existential counselor can expand the client's or student's self-awareness, provide freedom of choice and take responsibility for their choices, understand the meaning of the choices they make, give direction or the purpose of life according to his ideals. The implications of this humanistic-existential group counseling can make students have high self-awareness, have the freedom and a sense of responsibility towards specialization choices according to their potential so that they can develop positively into creative, effective independent and happy individuals (Pearce et al., 2016).

Purpose

Reduce the level of psychological distress by providing skills based on group counseling humanistic techniques.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Subjects were teenagers aged 17-18 years, as many as eight people and all subjects were women, they had the same problem, due to waiting for the university entrance exam, they had symptoms of moderate to high stress. They complained of insomnia, on learning, and were often sad even some who cried a lot. In addition, the subject was also very anxious about the upcoming exams, thus making the tryout scores in the last few days even dropped and dropped sharply. Subjects generally have almost the same personality characteristics, coming from favorite public schools. All subjects came from international classes or each school's flagship, had good grades and study results and all wanted to enter medical school, three of which were asked by their parents who were both doctors and one of the lecturers in the nursing faculty. The rest have a desire to enter medicine because of personal desires. All subjects have high standards for themselves, have a tendency to be seen and assessed by the achievement of the surrounding, perfectionist of all kinds of their work, a high orientation to detail. All subjects have a pretty good relationship with both parents, only for subjects who are "forced" to enter medical school, lately, the stressor has risen because actually, he wants to enter other majors, although, in the end, they don't want to change majors and still choose to continue the choice to participate tests at several universities with the best medical faculties.

Assessment Method

The assessment method, in this case, is observation and interview. This method is used to explore preliminary data and build rapport with clients, then do some psychological tests such as BAUM, DAP, HTP to determine the personality characteristics of the subject and obtain a deeper prognosis about the stress experienced by the subject, while the Kessler distress scale functions as a diagnosis and tests the success of the intervention, while the MSS and CFIT can provide information about intelligence, emotional, and affection.

Procedure

1. **Screening Subject** by recruiting them with research brochure and preparation for pre counseling

2. Researcher will ask subject to gather in intervention room and ask for **the problem specification and goal setting**. Subjects get acquainted and alternately introduce themselves to people they did not know before, the subjects also told their experiences and what they felt in a certain period before the exam, their background in choosing medical majors and their achievements in school all this time, they brought try out tutoring test results, try out-rank and which universities are their priority in the exam In this session also practical conducting interviews with several teachers at the tutoring center related to the potential and achievements of children who take part in this humanistic group therapy.
3. **Build commitment**, Each student is asked to make an agreement with themselves to follow all the processes that apply during therapy, match schedules with one another, determine the place and promise if whatever they hear in the forum will stop there without giving any explanation to parties outside the forum, including close friends, teachers and parents.
4. **Analyzing the cause of the problem**. After filling in the pre-test scale, initial assessment and in-depth interviews and observations, subjects began to determine together what they wanted to change and what they hoped for from this grooming, the students were invited to express their opinions.
5. **Creating a program implementation design**. The students were asked to analyze their strengths and weaknesses and how to coping or solving problems they had done so far when they were getting nervous and anxious because of the test. At this stage, students are also given homework to ask their parents and friends, "if I fail, what will you think of me?"
6. **Implementation of the program**. Subjects and counselors discuss about how their homework results, after previously the subjects were asked to write positive things about themselves and around them, whatever they think about, write them down, as simple as possible, as easy to remember as possible. They were asked to do the technique "GRATITUDE GAME" which is looking for the things they are most grateful for, remembering the most pleasant and happy things that their patutu are grateful for in life. After that continue to make an HONEST MIRROR which is drawing a mirror shape containing their potential and praise for themselves and words that can encourage themselves. Finally, using the WORD CHANGE technique, the counselor will give examples of some words that must be listened to, bad words or sentences that they don't like to hear. For example, "I surrender" to "okay, I just need to try this way, it doesn't have to work, but at least I try".
7. **Evaluation I** . After doing the above techniques and role-play for 3 days, take part and write the results in a diary, the counselor asks the subject to continue doing so outside the counseling session, after a few days each subject is asked to contact with the counselor through social media.
8. **Termination and prevention** Subjects were asked once again to tell about how they deal with stress by starting role play in front of their friends, when stressors come such as anxiety, fear, insecurity what they appear and how they should do, the first, second, and third steps.
9. **Preparation for Post Test**, ask for experiment and control group for fill *distress Kessler scale*
10. **Analyzed with paired sample t –test SPSS 21**. This research recruiter 32 adolescent. Students recruited and chosen by their grade in school, they had a stressful problem related with their coming up university examination some of them had insomnia, gastritis and some physically complained, pre-test before beginning interventions which is all of the students have deficit psychological distress scale.

RESULTS

Based on the results of the comparison of the pre-test and post-test scores shows that there is an increase in the average score. This shows that the participants experienced a significant increase in happiness through counseling because of the differences before and after were very significant.

This analysis is used to find out the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores using a paired sample t-test with SPSS for Windows 21.

Table 2. Paired Sample Test T-Test Pre-Test and Post-Test Data

Group	N	Average Score		Sig. (p)
		Pre-test	Post-test	
Counseling	32	39,8	28,2	0,004

Based on the analysis of Paired Sample T-Test, the value of $p = 0.004$ ($p < 0.05$) with a significance level (α) is 5%. This shows the difference in the average score of a happy feeling that is significant between before and after the intervention. The average post-test score was 28.2 lower than the average post-test score of 39.8. This means that the intervention provided can decrease students psychological distress.

BEFORE COUNSELING	AFTER COUNSELING
1. Blame yourself, feel anxious about the future because the value of the tryout continues to fall	1. have positive thoughts about themselves, start to improve learning styles with new motivations and goals
2. Want to give up and not become a doctor, but afraid to disappoint parents, easily sad and often cry alone	2. want to make parents happy whatever the outcome, they are at least trying
3. The power of concentration decreases because of fear	3. improved concentration and motivation
4. Have bad coping and tend to avoid solving problems	4. choose good coping, such as doing activities and reading books or writing grateful journals

DISCUSSION

Participants were included in the analysis if they had started, and completed, a counseling episode, a counseling episode defined as a series of consecutive counseling sessions without interruption. In humanistic counseling with young people, the theories about adolescent development, relevant issues of ethics, law and child protection, and research.

In humanistic counseling, subjects receive unconditional positive regard and knowledge about the distress they experience, group counseling is a way to facilitate positive change because of the insight that has been gained by adolescents. When these students learn how to become agents of change, overcome changes in their lives, recognize themselves and succeed in loving themselves, they are further starting to formulate their identities as the people they want and expect in the future.) (Stafford, Cooper, Barkham, Beecham, Bower, Cromarty, Fugard, Jackson, Pearce, Rose, et al., 2018).

In the humanistic counseling process based on principles such as group processes and stages of development, styles and characteristics of effective group leadership, group literature and research, group counseling theories and approaches, and student effectiveness and evaluation

are fully explored. Furthermore, the humanistic nature of the course exposes students to various types of groups and ethics and law, because of that emotional involvement, getting to know oneself fully, thinking well of oneself, and avoiding developing the wrong type of coping, proved effective for reducing psychological distress in a teenager. With the involvement of various parties, efforts to reduce psychological distress in adolescents come from various points of view, this is what then forms a unity to be able to reduce psychological distress in adolescents. Interventions consisting of several targets and targets have proven to be effective in reducing psychological distress (Pearce et al., 2016)

After follow up and termination, Participant admit it they are feel group counseling give "accepting" or "understanding", got an advice, and talk by exchanging ideas. Group counseling is an activity between the counselor and several people at once who act as counselees and counselors and counselees will be joined in a small group. Furthermore, another opinion states that counseling is a face-to-face activity that is confidential, filled with the attitude of acceptance and providing opportunities from the counselor to the counselee, and in this case, the counselor uses his knowledge and skills to help the counselee overcome the problems he faces. The counseling process will be realized in communication between counselor and counselee, in which the counselor will use certain techniques and it aims to facilitate interpersonal communication and allow counselees to find solutions to problems that are being discussed in counseling activities. Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that group counseling is a process of providing assistance to a problem by a counselor to several individuals (counselees) who are members of a small group and have the same problems with the aim to overcome the problems faced by the counselee (Stafford, Cooper, Barkham, Beecham, Bower, Cromarty, Fugard, Jackson, Pearce, Ryder, et al., 2018

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interests.

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