

## IMPROVING SOCIAL CONCERN THROUGH GROUP COUNSELING

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to examine the significance of improving social concern in middle school students through group counseling. The research subjects are 9 students from 9th grade in G class and 7 students from 9th grade in H class who have a low level of social concern. This is an experimental research. The subject retrieving technique uses observation and a Guttman scale based on SIS (Social Interest Scale) by James E. Crandall with 24 items. The SIS reliability testing uses a product moment correlation, while the analytical technique uses a Mann Whitney test. The pre-test differences of the two groups result in  $P=1.000 < 0.050$ , which means there is no significant difference between the experimental group and the control group. In other words, the experiment can be conducted. The data analysis results produce a pre-test mean of 5.83 and a post-test mean of 13.17 for the experiment group. There is a difference of 7.34 with an *Asmp. Sig. (2-Tailed)* of 0.002, which means there is a significant increase in the experimental group because  $P < 0.050$ . Thus, group counseling service can significantly improve student social concern.

**Keywords:** social concern, group counseling.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Human life is not separate from its interactions with the environment. In this era, many individuals still do not understand the importance of their environment for humanity. For instance, high school students often smoke, which can cause air pollution. They also engage in beatings of their underclassmen which was recently shown on TVku Semarang, on September 16th, 2012. There were even brawls between public high school students (Sindo, November 24, 2011). From these cases, it can be seen that high school age teenagers do not have much social concern, which can be disadvantageous to themselves and others.

There are technological, life, and lifestyle developments which become more modern and make a number of people have less social concern, so that they do not care about their social environment. Teenagers tend to imitate the actions that are continuously shown on television. This signifies that nowadays many family members happily spend more of their time to access electronic media, especially children (Tim Pustaka Familia, 2010). This

is in line with the opinion that electronic media can provide negative influences towards concern for one's surrounding environment. Alfred Adler (in Loekmono, 2010) emphasized that "humans are social creatures, ones who are motivated by the desire to interact in a community". However, the fact shows that this need has been replaced with electronic media that makes an individual comfortable and safe towards interacting in the virtual world. From here it is seen that an individual's social concern has a negative influence from technological developments.

It is important for humans to care for their environment. Good social concern will assist and support an individual in having relationships with other people in fostering cooperation and friendships. The refore, with the current technological developments, it is expected that children and teenagers have positive social concern.

The research results are obtained by distributing a social concern attitude scale to 55 students from Public Middle School 2 Salatiga from 9th grade class G and class H. There are 16 students with low social concern. The reason why the research subjects are chosen from 9th grade class G and class X of Public Middle School 2 Salatiga is because of observations there are gaps between individuals in the class. There are clear gaps between individuals where some individuals can blend in with others, and there are others who do not interact with their classmates. Because of this reason, this problem is chosen to be researched.

In increasing social concern, a group guidance counseling service is used. A group guidance counseling service is a media to advise an individual who needs it by utilizing a group dynamic to reach shared goals. With a group guidance counseling service, students can interact with each other between group members to share experiences, knowledge, insights, or ideas. This is expected to provide students with understanding about social concern.

According to Jones (in Nursalim, 2002), he explained that the goal of group guidance counseling is to assist students to realize their needs and problems, as well as to help students learn to understand other participants' feelings and problems. Through group guidance counseling service activities, there will be interactions between group members and will result in a feeling of mutual trust to share problems. From this background, the research strives to examine whether a group guidance counseling service can significantly

improve students' social concern. The purpose of this research is to test the significance of increasing social concern in Salatiga through a group guidance counseling service.

## II. THEORETICAL STUDY

### A. Social Concern

Social concern was devised by Alfred Adler in his term *Gemeinschaftsgefühl*, which means a feeling of belonging with all of humanity; this states indirectly that membership is in a social community for all humans (Feist & Feist, 2008). Crandall (in Kristian Holm Carlsen, 2000) explained further that social concern involves interest and concern towards other people. According to the individual psychology theory of Alfred Adler (in Loekmono, 2010), who provides a viewpoint of humanity, humans are social creatures that are motivated to a desire to interact and become close with other community members. Adler believes that upon birth humans are gifted with social awareness that makes them responsible to other people to reach good welfare for themselves and others.

Adler depicted the characteristics of a person with social concern as:

“They have inner identifying feelings for humans in general, sympathy, and care, even though they occasionally feel angry or impatient. They have an inner desire to help humanity, as if they are all part of the same family.” Ansbacher and Ansbacher (in Kristian Holm Carlsen, 2000).

Adler (in Freist & Freist, 2008) admitted heredity and environment form one's personality. Every child is born with unique traits and soon has different social experiences from different humans. This social concern is important because it can be used as a normality barometer. An individual who has social concern has reached psychological maturity.

Crandall (in Kristian Holm Carlsen, 2000) concluded that a lack of social concern is related with the problem of someone's job, friendships, and family. A person who experiences an increase in alienation, competitiveness with others, and threats will not be very interested in things outside of themselves, which will often cause a constriction in the scope of interests and activities as well as reduce one's capacity and opportunity to enjoy many life potential satisfactions. In general, social concern is positively correlated with welfare.

According to Crandall (in Addison E. Gradel, 1989), social concern aspects are: motivation (striving), cognition (understanding, identification), emotion (empathy, sympathy), and behavior.

## **B. Group Guidance Counseling**

According to Shertzer and Stone (in Winkel & Hastuti, 2006), guidance counseling is a process to assist individuals to understand themselves and their environment. That helpful process is done by an expert who has received special training, so that it can mean with a guidance counseling process an individual can understand oneself and one's environment, direct oneself and adapt with one's environment, as well as develop oneself optimally for self-welfare and societal welfare.

According to Depdiknas (2007), the general goal of group guidance counseling is:

- 1) To plan study solving activities, career development, as well as future lives.
- 2) To develop all of one's potentials and strengths as optimally as possible.
- 3) To adapt oneself with one's educational environment, social environment, and job environment; as well as overcome obstacles and difficulties in one's study.

According to Romlah (2001), techniques involved in group guidance counseling are: providing information, group discussions, problem solving techniques, role playing, sociodrama, psychdrama, simulation games, field trips, and home rooms. From the various techniques above, this research focuses on using the information providing technique, group discussion technique, problem solving technique, and simulation game technique.

## **III. RESEARCH METHODS**

This research is a quasi experimental research. According to Arikunto, an experiment is a way to look for a causal connection between two factors that intentionally arise in the research by eliminating, reducing, or separating other factors that may be disruptive. To find the effectiveness of a group guidance counseling service, the way to do this is by comparing the pre-test and post-test results that have been retrieved from the experimental group.

The subjects taken in this research are 9th grade students (class G and class H) with certain considerations based on the attitude scale scores (who have low concern) with a total of 16 students. From the 16 students, they are divided into two groups based on their

class. The experimental group consists of 9 students from class G, and the control group consists of 7 students from class H. This research uses two variables: free and bound. The free variable is group guidance counseling service (X), and the bound variable is social concern (Y).

In this scheme, there are two groups: an experimental group and control group according to their classes. Then both groups are given a social scale (SIS) to test the level of student social concern (pre-test). After compiling the results, it is expected that with the assumption both groups have a low level of social concern, the experimental group will be given a group guidance counseling service 8 times (treatment). Meanwhile, the control group is not given treatment. After the pre-test is done to determine the number of students who have a low level of social concern, a homogeneity test is conducted to find out whether both groups have the same characteristics (have low social concern).

**Table 1: Pre-Test and Homogeneity Test of Social Concern in the Experimental and Control Groups**

		Ranks		
	KLMPK	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
NPRETEST	eksperimen	9	8.50	76.50
	kontrol	7	8.50	59.50
	Total	16		

Test Statistics <sup>b</sup>	
	NPRETEST
Mann-Whitney U	31.500
Wilcoxon W	59.500
Z	.000
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	1.000 <sup>a</sup>

a. Not corrected for ties.

b. Grouping Variable: KLMPK

In Table 1, there are 9 students for the experimental group and 7 students for the control group. The mean rank score for the experimental group and control group is 8.50, while the *Asymp. Sig. (2-Tailed)* coefficient is 1.000, which means there is not a significant

difference between the experimental group and the control group because  $P > 0.050$ , so that the experiment can be conducted by doing treatment.

The data gathering technique uses a Guttman scale. In this research, James E. Crandall's instrument (*Social Interest Scale/SIS*) is used according to an indicator from Alfred Adler's theory.

Before the research is conducted, an instrument significance reliability test must be conducted showing 0.000, which means that it is very significant because  $P < 0.01$ . Thus, this instrument is considered reliable.

This research uses a *Mann Whitney* testing technique because it compares two mean populations that come from the same population. As a requirement, the measurement data scale used should be ordinal.

#### IV. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The research subjects are 9th graders from class G and class H of Public Middle School 2 Salatiga with 16 students who have a low level of social concern. The control group of this research consists of 7 class H students, while the experimental group consists of 9 class G students.

**Table 1: Comparisons of Pre-Test Results from the Control and Experimental Groups**

Interval	Category	Pre-Test Experiment		Pre-Test Control	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
0-6	Low	9	33%	7	25%
7-11	Average	11	41%	16	57%
12-15	High	7	25%	5	18%
Total		27	100%	28	100%

Testing of the experimental group and control group is done by using a pre-test and post-test for each group to find out whether there is a significant difference between the level of social concern for the group that is given treatment and the group that is not given treatment.

**Table 4: Experimental Group Pre-Test and Post-Test Improvement**

		Ranks		
	KLMPK	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
NTILES of NPREPOST	pretest eksperimen	9	5.83	52.50
	posttest eksperimen	9	13.17	118.50
	Total	18		

**Test Statistics<sup>b</sup>**

	NTILES of NPREPOST
Mann-Whitney U	7.500
Wilcoxon W	52.500
Z	-3.130
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.002
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.002 <sup>a</sup>

a. Not corrected for ties.

b. Grouping Variable: KLMPK

Based on the *Mann Whitney* analysis results in Table 4, it shows that the experimental group mean rank pre-test score was 5.83, and the mean rank post-test score was 13.17 with an *Asymp. Sig. (2-Tailed)* coefficient of 0.002, which means it is very significant because  $P < 0.01$ . There was a gap of 7.34 between the *mean rank pre-test* and the *mean rank post-test* in the experimental group. From these results, it shows that there was a significant increase in the *mean pre-test* and *post-test* in the experimental group. This conveys that giving a group guidance counseling service could significantly increase social concern in the experimental group. So the hypothesis proposed in this research is accepted.

In this research, a pre-test was done as an initial step to find out the scores of students from the experimental group and control group who showed a low level of social concern. After being given group guidance counseling treatment and after taking a post-test to find out whether there was an increase in social concern for students in the experimental group, the research results showed that there was an increase in the experimental group, while there was no change in the control group.

Overall, from the beginning until the end of providing service, the situation could run well and smoothly. The group dynamic could surface well, the group members could be active in all activities they joined. This shows that there was interest and attention from the group members to actively discuss and share their ideas/opinions about the topics under discussion, as well as a feeling that group members wanted to know themselves. This self-

understanding was a strength or weakness they had that originated from themselves or from other group members.

Furthermore, group members were able to show their creativity, foster friendly attitudes, as well as complement other group members. The feeling of togetherness of group members in helping the group was really visible when the group members volunteered their personal belongings for the sake of the group's advancement.

Through group guidance counseling, research subjects who had low social concern could understand the importance of social concern, so that it could improve their social concern that in the future could be beneficial for themselves and their surrounding environment. In a group guidance counseling service, students were given activity simulations. This was done to train their social concern.

The activities that were conducted were in line with Romlah's theory (2001) about group guidance counseling techniques and appropriate with the opinion of L.V. Reddy (2008) in his book that explained that one of the important aspects of group guidance counseling is it is a technique that assists/develops a personal-social relationship.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

In this research, it can be concluded that there was a significant increase in students' social concern after they joined the group guidance counseling activity. Based on the research results, recommendations are given to:

### **1. Future Researchers**

This research shows that there was a significant increase in social concern after joining the group guidance counseling activity. It is hoped that future researchers can go more in-depth regarding improving social concern by using group guidance counseling with a more specific technique. There are benefits of conducting research with different problems and serviced through group guidance counseling.

### **2. Guidance and Counseling Teachers**

For guidance and counseling teachers, they can use group guidance counseling to assist in increasing students' social concern. It is hoped that students who do not interact with their surrounding environment much because they have low self-esteem or are not very responsive start to adapt toward their social environment.



### 3. Students

Students can get advantages from group guidance counseling to improve their social concern. Students can become more open and communicate with other students, so that they have interactions which result in increasing awareness/concern between students, which then is expected to assist students to adapt with their surrounding environment (students become more sensitive to their surrounding condition).

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