The Implementation of Narrative Counseling to Improve Students' Self-Concept

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Abstract: This study aims to describe (1) the negative self-concept of the students in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency; (2) the implementation of narrative counseling to improve the self-concept of the students in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency; and (3) the impacts of the implementation of narrative counseling to improve the self-concept of the students in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency. This study used the quasi-experimental design with the quantitative approach. The sample of the study was 20 students in the 11th grade of Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency. Data were collected through questionnaires, observations, and interviews and analyzed using the Independent Sample t-Test. The study found that the self-concept of most students in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency was at the moderate level and there was quite a significant difference in the scores of the students' self-concept before and after the application of narrative counseling. These results suggest that narrative counseling is effective in improving the self-concept of the students in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency.

Keywords: Narrative counseling, group counseling, self-concept, adolescents

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk (1) Mengetahui gambaran tentang konsep diri negatif pada siswa di Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang Kabupaten Polewali Mandar. (2) Mengetahui gambaran pelaksanaan konseling naratif melalui untuk meningkatkan konsep diri siswa di Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang Kabupaten Polewali Mandar. (3) Mengetahui apakah melalui konseling naratif untuk meningkatkan konsep diri pada siswa Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang Kabupaten Polewali Mandar. Pendekatan yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini yaitu pendekatan kuantitatif dengan menggunakan quasi-experimental design. Sampel penelitian ini adalah 20 siswa kelas XI di Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang Kabupaten Polewali Mandar. Teknik pengumpulan data melalui angket, observasi dan wawancara. Analisis data menggunakan analisis statistik deskriptif parametrik independent sample t test. Hasil penelitia menunjukkan bahwa konsep diri siswa di Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang Kabupaten Polewali Mandar memiliki kecenderungan konsep diri kategori sedang dan terdapat perbedaan yang cukup signifikan pada skor konsep diri siswa sebelum dan sesudah pemberian teknik konseling naratif. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa konseling naratif efektif untuk meningkatkan konsep diri siswa di Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang Kabupaten Polewali Mandar.

Kata Kunci: Konseling naratif; konseling kelompok; konsep diri; remaja

INTRODUCTION

Adolescents normally experience identity confusion. They tend to avoid influences from their parents and to struggle to grow and develop independently in order to discover themselves. Adolescents need to form self-concept to know themselves better and to shape their behaviors. (Wulandari & Susilawati, 2016) ; (Desmita, 2014). Thus, students should have self-concept so that they can have perceptions and views about themselves. Self-concept will determine how one behaves, views oneself, and directs one's own life. Sobur, (2013), Leonard and Supardi (2010), and Ghufron (2012) defined self-concept as an effort to evaluate themselves and the extent to which they consider themselves valuable to others.

Self-concept is a subject in positive psychology that specifically studies mentally and physically healthy humans who aims to live a quality life (Zanden, Marsh, Seaton, & Parker, 2015). Slaninova & Stainerova (2015); Assahhra (2012); Suryadin (2014) ; Nauly & Sihombing (2012); Durado, Tololiu, & Pangemanan (2013); & Santrock (2012) described that self-concept is self-perception formed through experiences with the environment and influenced by social support from family and social environment.

Self-concept can have significant impacts on one's behaviors, attitudes in social environment, and communication skills. Self-concept plays a very important role in the process of one's social development. According to Sternke (2010); & Putri, Aprison & Sari (2020), in the process of development, adolescents really need to develop positive self-concept and self-assessment so that they will find it easier to accept themselves and know their own personal characteristics in order to gain happiness in their lives. Students' emotional wellbeing will suffer if they have low self-esteem and negative self-concept. Besides, Wang (2009); Alamsyah (2016); Andinny

(2015); Pambudi & Dian (2012) stated that positive self-concept can help students improve their academic achievements.

The results of interviews with the school counselors in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency showed that many students in the 11th grade still had negative self-concept. Negative self-concept is characterized by students' failure to be optimistic and fears of making mistakes when doing school tasks. It is also shown by students' remarks, such as "I cannot answer the questions" or "The questions are very difficult for me". These are what the students said when doing the tasks from their teachers.

Besides, some students were found to lack self-confidence when speaking in front of the class during the teaching and learning process, to have poor relationships with friends, and to be unaware of their own potentials when they were asked to introduce themselves in the class. Additionally, some students often criticized their friends, complained, could not stand criticisms from others, felt inferior, failed to appreciate themselves, and considered themselves stupid even though their academic reports did not suggest that they were stupid. These kinds of students are students who have low positive self-concept.

Bette (2014); Suminar & Meiyuntari (2015); Khotimah, Radjah & Handarini (2016); Prabadewi & Widiasavitri (2014) revealed that there is a correlation between self-concept and students' academic performance. The study conducted by Mutiah, Yaya, & Effendy (2019) found that narrative counseling affects students' self-concept. After the observation of the conditions in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency, the researcher suggested an alternative to deal with the issue. In narrative counseling there is an assumption that the negative stories of each person are the root of all the problems.

Narrative counseling encourages people to frame their stories positively so that

they can construct a more positive way of thinking. Corey (2009) argued that narrative counseling is an appropriate technique to improve students' self-concept. This is because narrative counseling can help people construct more meaningful stories and have more positive images of a truth.

Based on the results of interviews with the school counselors in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang, when they asked their students about negative self-concept during a counseling process, many students felt embarrassed to tell their stories, but they preferred to use a written form, such as a diary or social media networks, to share their stories. Narrative counseling is assumed to be easily applied in schools considering that many students are enthusiastic when receiving the service and enjoy learning through stories.

The implementation of narrative counseling can hopefully help students become more open to disclose their problems related to negative self-concept. Narrative counseling is a technique in counseling that encourages the counselee to share what they have experienced by writing it down systematically and then to continue by writing an alternative story and relating it to their future hopes. Through narrative counseling, students can build a positive self-concept. The results of the needs analysis indicated that the self-concept of the students in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency needs an improvement by giving narrative counseling.

A study about narrative counseling to build students' positive self-concept has been done by Sary, Purwanto, and Japar (2017), but it did not explore the indicators of changes in students' self-concept. The current study, however, investigated the aspects that can indicate the changes in students' self-concept after the interventions, including self-openness, self-confidence, and optimism, were given.

RESEARCH METHODS

This was a quasi-experimental study with a quantitative approach. This study employed the Pretest-Posttest Control Group Design that can be further seen in the table below.

Table 1. Research Design

Group	Pretest	Treatment	Posttest
Experiment (R)	Y_1	X No.	Y_2
Control (R)	Y_1		Y_2

Source: (Pandang & Anas, 2019)

where:

E	= Experimental group
K	= Control group
Y_1	= Pretest of the experimental group
Y_1	= Pretest of the control group
X	= Treatment (narrative counseling)
Y_2	= Posttest of the experimental group after narrative counseling was given
Y_2	= Posttest of the control group

In this study, two variables measured were: narrative counseling as the independent variable and negative self-concept as the dependent variable. The population of the study was all the 11th grade students in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency, but 40 students were identified to have negative self-concept. The identification was done using an instrument of students' self-concept developed by the researcher and the results of observations by homeroom teachers and school counselors. Then, a purposive sampling technique was employed to choose the respondents to participate in the study. A total of 20 students were selected as the sample of the population as described in the table below.

Table 2. Sample

No	Class	Population	Number of Respondents	
			Control (R)	Experiment
1	XI 1	9	1	2
2	XI 2	7	4	2
3	XI 3	10	3	1
4	XI 4	8	2	5
	Total	40	10	10

Source: Sampling Technique

The instruments for data collection were: a) a measurement scale developed by the researcher. The scale was developed by adopting the theory by Killing (2015) that classifies positive self-concept into three categories, namely: optimism, confidence, and openness; and b) direct observations, conducted to assess students' participations in the narrative counseling activities aimed to improve self-concept. Data analysis involved content analysis, descriptive analysis, and analysis of the independent sample t-test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The table below shows the self-concept level before (pretest) and after (posttest) narrative counseling was given to the 11th grade students in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency. The frequency distribution is categorized into four types, namely very low, low, moderate, and very high.

Table 3. The self-concept levels of the students in the experimental group before (pretest) and after (posttest) narrative counseling was given

Interval	Categorization	Pretest		Posttest	
		f	P (%)	f	P (%)
112 – 137	Very high	0	0	3	30
86 – 111	High	0	0	7	70
60 – 85	Moderate	8	80	0	0
34 – 56	Very Low	2	20	9	0
Total		10	100	10	100

Source: Results of the questionnaires from the experimental group

The table above illustrates the self-concept of the students in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency before narrative counseling was given to the experimental group. Two students (20%) were at the low level and 8 students (80%) were at the moderate level. No students were found to be at the high and very high levels. These results suggested that most students had negative self-concept, felt that no one liked them, was sensitive to criticism, and pessimistic about their competence. However,

changes occurred after narrative counseling was given. The students' self-concept level significantly increased. Students now believed in themselves that they could solve the problems as well as accepted criticisms and used them for self-improvement. Three students (30%) were at the very high level, while seven students (70%) were at the high level. No students were found to be at the moderate, low, and very low levels. Overall, students were at the high and very high levels after they were given narrative counseling.

Regarding the control group, 10 students took the pretest on March 18, 2019 and the posttest on April 30, 2019. The table below presents the data about the self-concept levels of the students in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency who

were put in the control group that did not receive narrative counseling. The frequency distribution of the control group was also categorized into four types that can be seen in the table below.

Table 4. The self-concept levels of the students in the control group before (pretest) and after (posttest) narrative counseling was given

Interval	Categorization	Pretest		Posttest	
		f	P (%)	f	P (%)
112–137	Very high	0	0	3	30
86 – 111	High	0	0	7	70
60 – 85	Moderate	7	70	90	90
34 – 56	Very Low	3	30	1	10
	Total	10	100	10	100

Source: Results of questionnaires from the control group

Based on the data in the table above, 3 students (30%) in the control group had a very low level of self-concept, while 7 students (70%) had a low level of self-concept. No students had a high level and a very high level of self-concept. However, after taking the posttest, no significant improvement could be seen; 1 student (10%) had a very low level of self-concept, while 9 students (90%) had a high level of self-concept. No students had a very high level of self-concept. The results of the posttest showed that the self-concept of the students in the control group did not improve significantly. Negative self-concept was still exhibited by the students in the control group, such as students were feared no one liked them, sensitive to criticism, and pessimistic

about their own competence. The hypothesis of the study was that narrative counseling has impacts on students' self-concept.

Before knowing whether there were any impacts, the hypothesis must first be changed to a working hypothesis, namely: "There are no impacts of narrative counseling on the self-concept of the students in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency." The null hypothesis is rejected if the significance level is <0.05. In testing the hypothesis, the gain scores (difference value), and the analysis of the independent sample t test were calculated with SPSS 25.0 program. The following is the table of the results of the testing

Table 5. The results of the independent sample t-test and the gain score

Group	Mean	Gain score	T	Sig.
Experiment	112.2	108.7	18.687	0.000
Control	73	770	18.687	0.000

It can be seen that the average score of the self-concept of the students in the experimental group was 112.2 after narrative counseling was given. The students in the control group, however, had an average score of 73. The results showed that there is a

difference in the obtained scores between experimental group and the control group Regarding gain score, the experimental group had 108.7, while the control group had 77.00. These results suggest that there is a difference between the experimental group and the

control group after narrative counseling was given to the experimental group. After the data of the independent sample t-test were processed using SPSS 25.0 for Windows, it was found out that the significance value of the paired t-test was 0.000<0.05. This results indicates that there are different points between the experimental and control groups.

The rule used was if the significance value is <0.05, then H_1 is accepted and H_0 is rejected. The results of the test indicate that the H_1 of this study was accepted. Thus, it can be said that narrative counseling has an impact on the self-concept of the students in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency.

Table 6. The results of the implementation of narrative counseling

Percentages	Criteria	Meeting					
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI
(80%-100%)	Very High	-	-	3	7	8	9
(60%-79%)	High	-	5	5	2	2	1
(40%-59%)	Moderate	8	4	2	1	-	-
(20%-39%)	Low	2	1	-	-	-	-
(0%-19%)	Very Low	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total		10	10	10	10	10	10

Source: Results of observations

Based on the results of observations on students who had been identified with negative self-concept, it was found in the first meeting that no students had a high level and a very high level of self-concept; 8 students were at the moderate level; 2 students were at the low level, and no students were at the very low level. In the second meeting, no students were found to be at the very high level, but 5 students were found to be at the high level; 4 students were at the moderate level, 1 student was at the low level, and no students were at the very low level. Then, in the third meeting, there were 2 students at the very high level, 5 at the high level, 2 at the moderate level, but no students at the low and very low levels.

In the fourth meeting, however, there were 7 students at the very high level 2 students at the high level, and 1 student at the moderate level; no students were at the low and very low levels. In the fifth meeting, 8 students were found to be at the very high level and 2 at the high level. However, there were no students at the moderate, low, and very low levels. In the last meeting, it was found that 9 students were at the very high level and 1 student at the high level, but no students were found to be at the moderate,

low, and very low levels. In a total of six meetings, students' participations improved in each meeting.

The results of the study indicate that narrative counseling is an effective technique in improving students' positive self-concept. Students experienced some improvements with their self-concept after they received narrative counseling. Narrative counseling is very appropriate to be implemented in schools with an aim to help students overcome their problems, which in turn can help them achieve success in both formal education and education in the family and society.

This is line with the arguments from Rakhmat (2015); Ghufron & Risnawati (2014); Afif & Listiara (2018) that individuals with positive self-concept tend to be more open to others and possess positive personalities, such as humble, generous, and unselfish. Thus, a counselor should really have an open attitude and acceptance towards others, especially when giving supports and praises to other people. Such characteristics reinforce students to build their sense of value that later can help them improve their self-concept. According to Rakhmat (2015); Suryanto, Putra, Herdiana & Alfian (2012),

one's personal quality, self-esteem, and self-acceptance are determined by how one values oneself. In light of the explanation above, it can be said that the implemented of narrative counseling is considered effective in improving students' self-concept and it is deemed necessary that school counselors apply the technique.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results of the study on the implementation of counseling narrative to address the negative self-concept of the students in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency, it can be concluded that: (1) the self-concept level of the students in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency was in the low category based on the pretest scores of the experimental and control groups. However, after narrative counseling was incorporated, students' self-concept changed from negative self-concept to positive self-concept. (2) narrative counseling can improve the negative self-concept of the students in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency; and (3) narrative counseling can boost the self-concept of the students in Madrasah Aliyah DDI Kanang in Polewali Mandar Regency.

Suggestions: Given the conclusions above, some suggestions are provided as follows (1) since narrative counseling was still poorly applied in the school in spite of its effectiveness in overcoming students' negative self-concept, school counselors are advised to implement the technique; (2) students can take advantage of narrative counseling to improve their self-concept; and (3) university students and researchers in the field of guidance and counseling should use and develop narrative counseling to address different issues so that the results of the study can be compared.

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