Reducing Students' Truant Behaviour through Group Counseling Services

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Abstract. The problem of student truancy behaviour is a problem that often occurs in schools today. Efforts are being made to reduce truancy behaviour by using group counselling services because the primary function of group counselling services is the problem alleviation function. This study aims to increase students' understanding of behaviour, which has negative consequences for themselves and others, and to reduce truant behaviour through group counselling. The type of research used is Guidance and Counseling Action Research with the object of studying 12 class VIII students of SMP Negeri 18 Palu in the 2023/2024 academic year consisting of 10 males and two females, and the research subjects were guidance and counselling teachers. The data collection technique in this study was to use inventory, interview guidelines, observation guidelines, and documentation. The data analysis technique is an interactive model presented as qualitative research. The study results revealed that truant behaviour in class VIII students of SMP Negeri 8 Palu after attending group counselling services was lower than before attending group counselling services.

Keywords: truant behavior; group counseling services.

Introduction

Counseling is an assistance service for students, both individually and in groups so that they can be independent and develop optimally, in the areas of developing a personal and social life, learning abilities, and career planning, through various types of services and support activities, based on norms applicable (Tohirin, 2009). Explains that group counseling is an activity carried out by a group of people utilizing group dynamics. The topics discussed in group counseling are general. In group counseling, all students interact with each other are free to express opinions, respond, give suggestions; and what is discussed is beneficial for the students themselves, those concerned with themselves, and all other students through group activities in order to achieve optimal development such as decreasing the number of students who truant behavior at school (Prayitno & Amti, 2004)

Ditching behavior is the behavior of children who deliberately leave learning activities at school (in class) while lessons are in progress without permission from the teacher; this is

what was stated by Mulyadi (2010) that truant behavior is the behavior of children who leave activities school without permission. In addition, according to Yusuf & Nurihsan (2019) truant behavior is a form of action to neglect obligations. Truant behavior is a way for a child to avoid a problem that causes anxiety (Sukardi, 2016).

The problem of student truancy behavior is a problem that often occurs in schools today. Skipping behavior is caused by internal factors and external factors. Internal factors come from within students, such as a lack of self-confidence and decreased motivation to learn. External factors come from outside the student's self, such as the influence of peers, school environment, community, or family (Yusuf, 2001). Students should be able to carry out their obligations and responsibilities as a student and have a disciplined attitude because this is very much needed to achieve satisfactory learning outcomes. Student success cannot be separated from the role of the teacher in school, both subject teachers and guidance and counseling teachers. Providing group counseling services is a form of assistance that can be provided with the hope that student truancy behavior can be adequately resolved. The primary function of this group counseling service is the alleviation function, namely alleviating the problems faced by students through group activities and by utilizing group dynamics that grow during group counseling service activities so that group counseling services can influence student behavior, especially in the school environment (Sukardi, 2016).

The purpose of group counseling services is to develop students' skills in socializing and communicating; this is because, through interaction with group members, they can develop various skills which, in essence, increase self-confidence and trust in other people, considering that in an atmosphere of group counseling services, they may find it easier to talk about the problems they face than individual counseling services (Sukardi, 2016).

The results of direct observations conducted at SMP Negeri 18 Palu show that many students, especially class VIII, deliberately did not enter the class or leave class during the teaching and learning process and returned at the time of changing of class hours, did not enter by pretending to be sick or making excuses. -for example, not attending certain class hours because they think the lesson is too difficult to understand or not going because they do not like the teacher's character and not going because they are following an invitation from their friends to skip class.

So far, student truancy behavior has not been handled optimally because of the large number of students who have truant behavior, so implementing group counseling services becomes necessary. One of the reasons for using group counseling services to solve student truancy behavior problems is because the primary function of group counseling services is the problem alleviation function. This study aimed to increase students' understanding of truant behavior, which has negative consequences for themselves and others, and to reduce truancy behavior through group counseling at SMP Negeri 18 Palu. So that after attending group counseling services, students who often behave truant are expected not to repeat truant behavior.

Method

The type of research used in this research is Guidance and Counseling Action Research with steps according to Wardhani & Mudarya (2018) can be seen in the following chart:
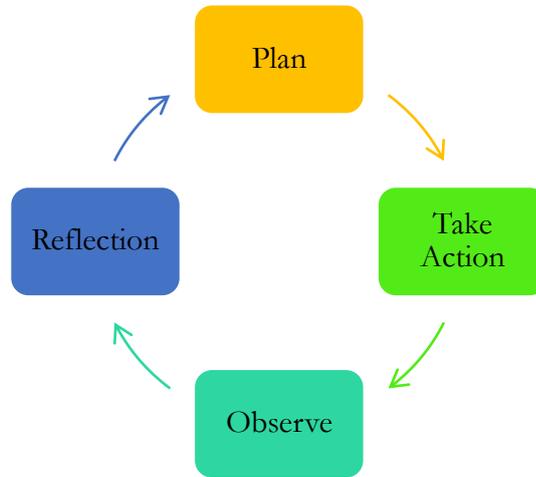

Chart 1. Guidance and Counseling Action Research Step

As for in more detail, the action scene in the counseling guidance action research can be described as follows: 1). Planning, namely preparations made in connection with research Guidance counseling actions carried out include: Forming groups, compiling activity schedules, establishing service procedures, and preparing administrative completeness of group counseling; 2) Taking action is research that will be carried out—corrective action work scenario and action procedures to be implemented; 3) Observation and interpretation, namely the description of the procedure for recording and interpreting data regarding the process and results of implementing the corrective actions designed. Data collection was obtained through direct observation during and after the implementation of group counseling; 4) Evaluation and reflection, namely a description of the analytical procedures for the results of monitoring and reflection regarding the process and impact of corrective actions through group counseling carried out. Evaluation of the success of the intervention is carried out at each meeting and after all intervention programs have been completed.

Research with the object of studying 12 class VIII students of SMP Negeri 18 Palu in the 2023/2024 academic year consisting of 10 males and two females, and the research subjects were guidance and counselling teachers. The data collection technique in this study was to use inventory, interview guidelines, observation guidelines, and documentation. The data analysis technique is an interactive model presented as qualitative research.
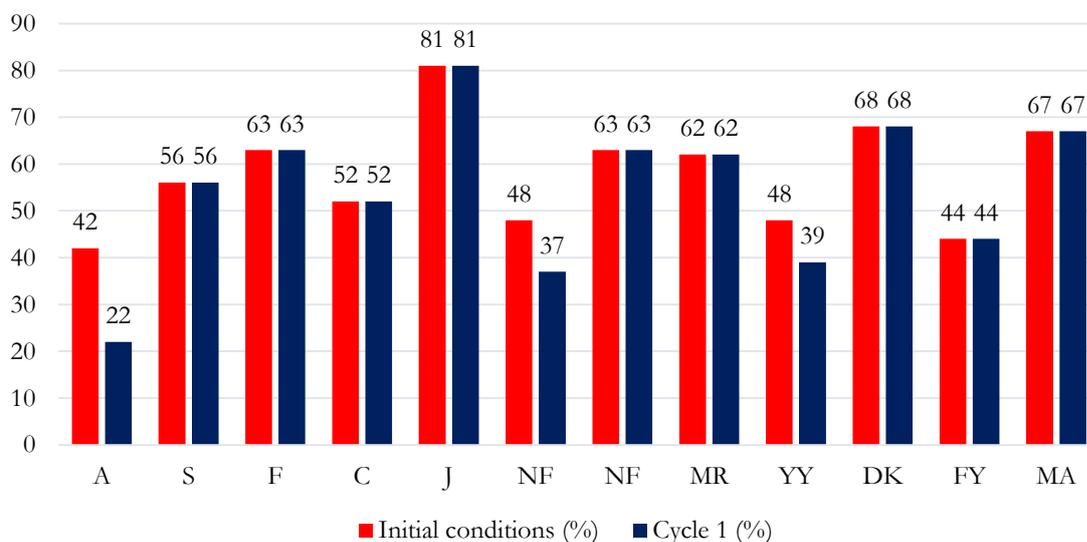
Results and Discussion

The implementation of group counseling was carried out by researchers as observers and two counseling teachers at SMP Negeri 18 Palu as executors and carried out on March 6-15, 2023, in the classroom. Group counseling is carried out in the morning from 09.00 to 10.00. Group counseling is carried out in four stages, namely the formation stage, the transition stage, the activity stage, and the termination stage, and lasts 60 minutes.

So far, student truancy behavior has not been handled optimally because of the large number of students who have truant behavior, so implementing group counseling services becomes necessary. One of the reasons for using group counseling services to solve student truancy behavior problems is that the primary function of group counseling services is the problem alleviation function. When group counseling service activities take place, students learn to give ideas, suggestions, or ideas to get solutions to the problems being discussed. Students can learn to practice new behaviors, namely from bad to even better, so that after participating in counseling services groups, and students who often behave truant are expected not to repeat truant behavior.
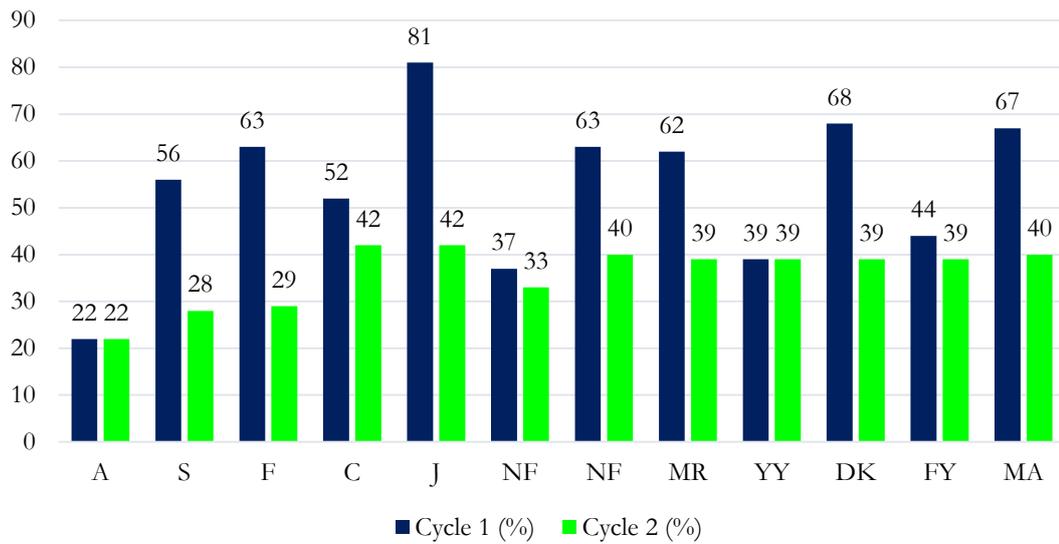
The results of the implementation of the 20-25 February 2023 cycle 1 group counseling were carried out in the Class VIII room by the researcher as the supervising teacher. With the topic of truant behavior and how to overcome it. The purpose of implementing group counseling in PTBK is expected to achieve three things, namely (1) increasing students' understanding of truant behavior, which has negative consequences for themselves and others, (2) increasing students' positive attitudes in dealing with truant behavior and (3) reducing truant behavior skipping classes.

Objectives (1) and (2) will be revealed by filling out the laser and interviewing each student. In contrast, objective (3) will be revealed by inventory by analyzing the results of truancy behavior scores on the initial data and data after the implementation of group counseling cycle 1.

Graph 1. Inventory Scores in the Implementation of Group Counseling Cycle 1

From graph one, it can be seen that in the initial conditions before giving group counseling, the score for the percentage of truant conditions for students on average was in the high category; after being given group counseling in cycle one, there was a decrease in the percentage of truant students. Then from the results of cycle one, evaluation and planning were carried out for treatment in cycle two, which can be seen in the following two graphs.

Graph 2. Inventory Scores in the Implementation of Group Counseling Cycle 2

In graph two, it can be seen that there was a decrease in truant behavior in students from cycles one and two after being given group counseling. The research findings conducted by Nopiarni et al. (2020) state that in the industrial era 4.0, truant behavior occurs in students. Guidance and counseling teachers in providing group guidance services and group counseling require professional competence (Barida & Widyastuti, 2020) because the problem of truancy has become a habit of students who are lazy to study at school (Annisa et al., 2013). The purpose of group counseling in cycle 2 experienced a better improvement in students understanding of the topic (cognitive), positive attitudes of students to improve themselves (affective), and decreased student truant behavior. Ditching behavior is the result of one's learning. Ditching behavior can be obtained from imitating or imitating the observed model. As Bandura (Feist, 2006) explained, aggressive behavior is formed from observing other people, direct experience with positive and negative reinforcement, training or instructions, and odd beliefs. Therefore group counseling is effective for reducing truant behavior because, in group counseling, there are several methods and theories such as strengthening oneself positively, manipulating emotional states well, carrying out other responses and changing stimulus conditions, and interacting and being able to imitate friends—others who are not behaving aggressively. With the multidirectional interaction formed through group dynamics, group members exchange ideas with other members, observe other people directly, imitate what friends say, and take suggestions and opinions of other friends as valuable input for themselves in improving self is also included in reducing the habit of truant behavior.

The results of this study indicate that there is a good influence from the provision of group counseling services, and this is to the findings of previous studies, which revealed that group counseling services could develop students' positive thinking abilities and solve human life problems (Yandri et al., 2019; Yandri et al. (2022) In line with that, the results of research from Putri et al. (2020) which revealed that group counseling services could reduce students' cheating behavior at school. Furthermore, research results from Ratu & Nurwahyuni (2013) revealed that the group counseling model through Assertive training techniques to alleviate

anxiety in facing final semester exams, then group counseling with the behavior contract technique to reduce truant behavior (Dewi & Setiawan, 2016).

Then, apart from group counseling, behavioral counseling with positive reinforcement techniques can also minimize truant behavior (Indayani et al., 2014). Furthermore, group counseling with assertive training techniques can reduce students' academic procrastination behavior (Munir & Ratu, 2016). In addition, reducing truant behavior in students can also be done through group counseling services using the CBT model (Ralasari, 2015), and transactional analysis counseling theory using the empty chair technique can minimize truant behavior (Wardhani & Mudarya, 2018).

Conclusion

The results of this study showed that from the initial data on student truancy behavior, there were six students, or 50%, who had a high level of truant behavior; after being treated with group counseling services, there was a decrease in truant behavior as much as 83% who were in the low truant behavior category; this means that truant behavior in grade VIII students of SMP Negeri 18 Palu after attending group counseling services is lower than before participating in group counseling services.

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