Individual Counseling in Improving Juvenile Inmate's Self-Esteem

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Abstract. One of the problems facing juvenile inmates is low self-assessment due to life experiences that do not give an individual a positive impression. Good self-esteem is essential for all individuals, including juvenile Inmates. High self-esteem will trigger enthusiasm to change for the better, mainly when convicts are serving their sentences and are ready to face social life after returning to society later. This article discusses the role of guidance and Counseling in helping to increase self-esteem, namely through individual counseling services as a psychological intervention to create behavior change toward a practical daily life. The method used is a literature study from various references. The results of this study show the role of individual Counseling in increasing the self-esteem of juvenile Inmates through the stages and therapeutic procedures.

Keywords: individual counseling; self-esteem; juvenile inmate.

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Introduction

Being a prisoner makes a person feel afraid, anxious, and ashamed, resulting in feelings of worthlessness for their mistakes. To achieve change and meaningfulness in life, individuals must have self-esteem that triggers them to continue to survive and appreciate life. Self-esteem is an individual's self-assessment of his quality that occurs continuously based on the experience gained during life. Self-esteem is an essential part of forming an individual's self-concept and will broadly impact attitudes and behavior (Srisayekti & Setiady, 2015). In line with the opinion of Coopersmith (1967), an individual's assessment of feelings of worth or significance which is depicted in the individual's attitude towards the individual himself, is called self-esteem. Self-esteem is a factor that is learned and formed throughout the individual experience, not a factor that is innate (Widodo & Niken, 2013).

The high prevalence of mental health problems in prisons has become a global problem; this certainly affects the psychological well-being of prisoners by severing their relationships with their families and environment. Besides mental health problems, prisoners also have high anxiety, self-esteem, self-compassion, or low self-acceptance (Amita et al., 2023). Research conducted by Rahman & Coralia (2020) explained that there is a correlation
between self-esteem and state anxiety. Self-esteem is considered sufficient to be a predictor of the emergence of state anxiety in female inmates. Based on this, it can be seen that it is essential to increase the self-esteem possessed by convicts so that convicts can avoid stress which can later interfere with their daily life while serving their sentence in a correctional institution. Problems related to self-esteem, if not handled properly, can cause anxiety in prisoners (Fredani & Herani, 2022).

High self-esteem helps increase initiative, resilience, and feelings of satisfaction in individuals (Myers, 2005). High self-esteem reflects a positive self-condition and creates a good attitude in relating and interacting with others. Self-esteem includes the need for achievement, excellence and competence, self-confidence, independence, and freedom (Maslow, 1975). Low self-esteem causes feelings of inferiority in prisoners with considerable difficulties adjusting to and adapting to circumstances with the surrounding environment and a lack of self-acceptance (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Putri et al., 2021); This is due to loss of physical freedom, control over life, family, goods and services, security, heterosexual relationships, lack of stimulation, and other psychological disturbances (Nugroho, 2022; Juniartah et al., 2015). Self-esteem contributes to life's journey; this is necessary for healthy development and expected survival (Putri et al., 2022; Refnadi, 2018).

Low self-esteem conditions arise when convicts serve their sentences and are free from punishment. Prisoners feel low self-esteem and need recognition and rewards from others to restore their self-esteem (Ikhwani et al., 2021). Low self-esteem, if allowed to continue, will result in prisoners repeating their actions when they escape punishment or even more severe behavior than before to gain recognition and appreciation from the environment (Fakhrah & Purnamaningsih, 2020). Therefore, to restore the prisoner's self-esteem, it is necessary to provide psychological intervention for Guidance and Counseling services.

Guidance and Counseling are the provisions of assistance by counselors to clients with the intention of alleviating the problems faced by clients (Prayitno & Amti, 2004; Sutirna, 2013; Yandri et al., 2019). Guidance and Counseling focus on efforts to facilitate human growth and development (Hariko, 2016). One of the services that can be used is through individual counseling services. Individual counseling services assist the counselor with the counselee in a one-to-one manner that aims to develop the counselee's potential so that he is independent in solving his problems (Sofyan & Willis, 2014). Counseling aims to create conditions so that clients feel free to carry out meaningful self-exploration (Taufik & Karneli, 2012). Counseling is needed for prisoners to overcome culture shock when they are in a different location or place so that positive behavioral changes and a healthy mentality appear as a result of the counseling services they receive (Handayani & Yuca, 2018; Handayani, 2019; Dako et al., 2022; Zao et al., 2019). Guidance and Counseling are also needed so that convicts will later become more valuable in society towards a practical life (Zikra et al., 2019; Rahmi et al., 2018).

This study aims to describe the role of individual Counseling in increasing the self-esteem of juvenile Inmates. Self-esteem gained throughout life experiences is very important to improve so that it is always positive. Being a convict is a negative experience, so to
maintain and increase self-esteem, one can do it by providing individual counseling services for juvenile Inmates. The involvement of counselors in efforts to provide counseling services in prisons needs special attention.

Method

The method used in this article is a literature review of various national scientific articles and several international articles, books, and other types of writing that are studied to discuss the role of counseling in restoring prisoner self-esteem by examining ideas, knowledge, and findings contained in the literature or scientific literature. The steps are selecting topics, exploring information, determining the research focus, collecting data sources, and presenting data (Syaodih, 2009). The data analysis technique used is content analysis from sources obtained by selecting, comparing, and combining relevant results and data (Sabarguna, 2005) regarding individual Counseling and the self-esteem of juvenile Inmates and how crucial individual Counseling is in increasing inmates' self-esteem in teenagers.

Results and Discussion

Self-esteem

Self-esteem explains individual values, beliefs, and attitudes, so individuals with healthy self-esteem will accept themselves as they are. In contrast, individuals with low self-esteem expect to be other people (Yendi et al., 2015). Self-esteem compares the ideal and actual selves (Santrock, 2012). Self-esteem is inseparable from the experiences that individuals gain during life. Individuals with life experience as prisoners tend to rate themselves worthless and lower than others.

According to Battle, self-esteem is divided into three components, namely: 1) general self-esteem includes feelings of happiness, the ability to do many important things and be happy with oneself; 2) social self-esteem, which includes a picture of one's association with other people and a picture of someone being liked or not by other people; 3) personal self-esteem which includes the feelings one has such as joy, sadness, worry and fear (Marjohan, 1997). A person with good life experience and who is able to accept himself will judge himself as a quality person, especially if he gets recognition and social support from those around him. Prisoners, as individuals with unpleasant life experiences, tend to evaluate themselves as low and worthless, especially if feelings of guilt are nurtured too deeply towards the people around them, as well as an environment that cannot accept the actions they have committed. Both when serving a sentence as a convict and when he returns to society, self-esteem is still needed and must be increased to lead to better behavior changes and the belief that he still has a chance to change.

Self-esteem is formed when individuals are born when individuals begin to interact with the outside world and the people around them and usually decreases during adolescence (Bos et al., 2006; Refnadi, 2018). Self-esteem problems that occur in adolescents will impact
the achievement of their developmental tasks, so interventions for adolescents with low self-esteem are very important. Self-esteem issues addressed after some time will cause individuals not to know their self-worth and self-capacity, so they cannot answer who they are and their plans.

According to Coopersmith (1967), the factors that influence self-esteem include: 1) gender, self-esteem in women is usually lower than in men; 2) intelligence, a complete picture of functional capacity as measured by academic ability. Individuals with self-esteem will have good academic abilities; 3) physical condition; this is more closely related to how individuals judge their body shape or physical form. So it is often found that individuals with poor or abnormal physical conditions will rate themselves lower than other people; 4) the family environment, fair treatment in the family, and democratic parenting will improve self-esteem; 5) social environment, individual self-esteem will be good if it is influenced by a good social environment, such as acceptance, environmental experience, appreciation for success, as well as competence and goodness values.

Adolescents fulfilling their developmental tasks as prisoners will tend to judge themselves as worthless. When the demands of their age begin to explore and plan their future life, the conditions make individuals feel frustrated and lost. It is not uncommon to find that after undergoing the sentencing process, convicts still are not accepted in the social environment, such as being ostracized and lacking public trust in them. In addition, feelings of disappointment and shame from his family made him feel even more guilty, and looked down on himself. Conditions like this lead to low self-esteem; other factors that influence self-esteem are the family and social environment.

Juvenile Inmate's

Adolescence is an age of transition to adulthood. Law Number 11 of 2012 concerning the Juvenile Criminal Justice System explains that citizens who commit crimes aged 12-18 years are still categorized as children and receive special treatment in the juvenile justice system, and other special treatment. This age is categorized as a teenager. Teenagers who become prisoners will experience various pressures and processes of adaptation to a new life. Adolescents serving sentences must be able to adapt and socialize with prison regulations that are very stressful and adapt to the routine of social life with other prisoners (Utami & Asih, 2017).

In Indonesia, the number of prisoners based on data from the Direktorat Jenderal Pemasyarakatan of the Kementerian Hukum dan Hak Asasi Manusia Republik Indonesia in 2022 is 227,431. As many as 2,579 people are included in the group of children and adolescents; this is because, during adolescence, individuals engage in various forms of juvenile delinquency due to various factors, such as lack of attention from parents or association with peers who are far from values and morals. Juvenile delinquency is a pathological social symptom caused by a form of social neglect that results in the development of deviant behavior (Kartono, 2002). In the justice system, children or
adolescents have the right to receive legal assistance effectively, and it is necessary to pay attention to the conditions of their placement (Hilman & Indrawati, 2017).

Article 85 of Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning child protection states that detained children are placed in Lembaga Pembinaan Khusus Anak, referred to as LPKA. At this stage, the child also obtains the same rights as the adjudication stage: the right to service, care, education and training, Counseling, and assistance. Meanwhile, several LPKA in Indonesia has compulsory education programs adapted to the general school curriculum. LPKA plays a role in optimizing developmental tasks (Handayani & Hidayat, 2022). In addition, education at LPKA helps create better behavior, fun, and thinking about the actions taken.

**Individual Counseling as a Psychological Intervention**

Practical everyday life is the desire and life expectancy of many people. Counseling services are one of the efforts to realize a practical life through various professional counseling services by experts called counselors. Juvenile inmates are individuals whose practical daily lives are disrupted, one of which is low self-esteem. Individual counseling services are one of the appropriate counseling services to help adolescents improve their self-esteem and respect themselves more while serving punishment and as a form of readiness to face the social environment after being released later (Subarkah & Bani, 2019; Suarja et al., 2023). Individual Counseling is a counseling service that is held face-to-face or directly to discuss client problems (Prayitno, 2012). Today, individual Counseling is not only carried out face-to-face but can also be carried out indirectly or in a network by utilizing the media. However, it is more effective for convicts to do it directly or face to face. Counseling is carried out with the assumption that the client is not a sick person, but the client is an individual who can plan goals and make decisions, and respond to behavior (Brammer & Shostrom, 1982).

Counseling is given to individuals who are aware but are hindered in achieving an effective life. Thus, Counseling is given consciously to clients directly through a therapeutic relationship. According to Brammer & Shostrom (1982), Stages in Counseling first arouse the client's interest and awareness of the need for help. Counselors must be able to arouse inmates' interest in participating in Counseling and provide them with an understanding that they very much need Counseling. Strategies that counselors can carry out are warm acceptance, revealing the client's experience of Counseling as an illustration for managing the process and form of Counseling, and assisting in explaining the core of the client's problem. Prisoners usually experience anger, fear, confusion, and uncertainty as clients who meet a counselor. The counselor should invite the client; in this case, the prisoner expresses his feelings about the current situation (Munro et al., 1983).

Second, build relationships; this stage aims to build the client's trust in the counselor and create an open atmosphere where the client openly conveys things that disturb his thoughts and feelings to the counselor and vice versa. Building client relationships is essential, especially if the client is a prisoner. Counselors are required to be skilled in communicating with these clients so that clients are open, not embarrassed, and do not feel
cornered or interrogated. Communication with the right language style will stimulate a constructive counseling process (Hariko, 2017). Third, set goals and explore alternatives; the purpose of this stage is to discuss what the client wants by discussing what he should do in Counseling to realize goals related to his problems (Lianawati, 2017); This is done by discussing several options that can be taken by the client to achieve results and negotiating about several work agreements. Alternatives or options, in this case, are intended as another possibility that causes problems for the client.

Fourth, work with problems and goals; this stage is also known as the intervention stage (Ray, 2015). The client's problems determine the goals and strategies of Counseling at this stage. In addition, the approach and theory used by the counselor determine success at this stage, the desire of the client, and the style of communication built by both. In this case, Counseling focuses on increasing the self-esteem of juvenile Inmates, which includes general self, social self, and personal self, by classifying the nature of the problem and selecting strategies, problem-solving processes, further investigation of client feelings, providing values and limits for expressing feelings, and express their feelings in the actualization model. An excellent general self helps prisoners to do many positive things and are happy with themselves, which will create an excellent social self to be able to get along and relate to their environment and, in the end, have an excellent personal self, which is manifested in positive actions and behavior.

Fifth, raise the client's awareness to change; at this stage, the counselor discusses feelings until the client has awareness so that the client gains the awareness needed to achieve their goals during the counseling process (Bell, 2018). Various techniques are commonly used, such as open questions, confrontation, focusing on problems (personalizing) with assertiveness, empathy, fun, and good listeners (Haolah & Irmayanti, 2018). Sixth, planning activities or actions; with the client's awareness to change, the counselor helps the client, in this case, juvenile Inmates, compile what actions will be taken after the counseling process is complete (Hays, 2020); This is, of course, in the form of adaptive actions and behavior as a manifestation of the success of Counseling to increase the self-esteem of prisoners. The counselor helps the client place new ideas and awareness in real-life actions to actualize the model. Finally, the final evaluation and end of Counseling; the primary indicator of the success of Counseling is the extent to which the client has achieved counseling goals. Some questions about counseling evaluation, namely, to what extent can Counseling help clients? If it does not help, why? If goals still need to be achieved, what progress has been made?

Counselors have responsibilities in the coaching process, such as encouraging students to develop their potential, achieving an efficient life for their families, communities, and nations, and increasing faith and piety so that they become human beings who are balanced between intellectual, social, emotional, and religious moral development (Rusfandi, 2019). Obstacles to implementing individual counseling services for juvenile inmates are the lack of interest and character of prisoners who are not good at participating in Counseling and inadequate space for Counseling (Rivaie, 2013; Resti & Isnarmi, 2021).
Conclusion

As prisoners, they tend to judge themselves as individuals who are not qualified, which will interfere with their social relations, are afraid of being ostracized from society, and will always feel inferior for the actions they have committed. Role of guidance and Counseling is urgently needed to increase the self-esteem of juvenile Inmates both during their sentence and as preparation for returning to society. Through individual counseling services for juvenile Inmates, it is hoped that they will respect themselves more as quality individuals, and there are still many opportunities to lead a better life. Individual Counseling helps juvenile Inmates to be able to behave adaptively to achieve a practical daily life. In addition, there needs to be cooperation between prison supervisors and counselors to develop a program of services for inmates. Therefore, Counseling for prisoners must be carried out by a counselor or someone with a guidance and counseling background; this is because Counseling is not an ordinary interview, so it cannot be done by prison staff who do not have a guidance and counseling background.

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Reference


