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The Effectiveness of Group Counseling Intervention for Vocational High School Students with Addictive Behavior to Playing Online Games

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Abstract: This study aims to determine the extent to which group counseling is effective in handling cases of online game addiction among students at vocational schools. Before being decided whether addicted to playing games, the subjects will go through observations on their surroundings, interviews and psychological tests. The WBIS test and Graphic test are the psycho-test tools in use. The research subjects consisted of three (3) tenth-grade students from a vocational school majoring in Network Engineering. After the examination, the next step is giving the intervention. This study involves an intervention in the form of group counseling techniques regarding the self-management strategy to help overcome the issues. From previous results, changes to the subject are visible. They are getting used to sharpening and effectively managing their skills besides other activities. Hopefully, future research will be able to employ group counseling techniques to other groups using the longitudinal method, which hopefully can explore changes in behavior over a longer period.

Keyword: Addictive Behavior, Group Counseling Intervention, Vocational High School

INTRODUCTION

Today's technology is advancing very rapidly. One that we can experience is the internet. Individuals can take advantage of the features available on the internet, one of which is online-based games (Przybylski et al., 2017). Currently, Indonesia ranks third in the world as a country with the highest number of gamers (online game users) after the Philippines and Thailand. We Are Social reports that Indonesia has 94.5% of internet users aged 16 to 64 years playing online games (Dihni, 2022). From these data, it is noted that teenagers are the major population of online game users (Paulus et al., 2018). Online games are now in great demand and have spread widely to all age groups, especially among teenagers (Erik & Syenshie, 2020). The widespread convenience that the internet provides makes online games accessible anywhere and anytime (Chen et al., 2019). However, this convenience will negatively impact if not well-addressed (Novrialdy, 2019). One of the behavioral issues towards the convenience

of the internet is playing online games continuously for a long period which leads to addiction. Game addiction is a condition where a person plays games repeatedly and is bound to this habit. The frequency continues to increase and the person no longer cares about the negative consequences of these activities (Rohman, 2019). Online game addiction can be due to internal and external factors (Ko et al., 2005). Internal factors indicate a strong desire to get a high score in the game, the individual's inability to set priority activities, boredom that causes the individual to switch to online games, and a lack of good self-control. Meanwhile, external factors include an uncontrolled environment, lack of good social relations, and parents' high expectations for their children, forcing them to take on so many activities. According to Kamal & Wok (2020), online game addiction is one's continuous dependency which ends up causing negative consequences and affects one's psychological and physical development.

Playing games too often will bring a negative impact on everyday life. That often makes one easily neglect one's other activities. As a visible example, many school students keep playing games even though they are at school. In this case, online games serve as a form of escape for teenagers from the realities of life that they feel tough, the reason why people addicted to games tend to have worse time management than those who are not (Wang, 2019). These individuals, normally students, spend their time playing online games which can also degrade their learning performance (Mihara & Higuchi, 2017). Children will find it difficult to concentrate on lessons at school since their minds are only on the online games they are playing (Prasetiawan, 2016). Another consequence that can arise from addiction to playing online games is that teenagers tend to focus more on games and ignore their social adjustment skills (Nadeak, 2021).

With its negative impacts, online game addiction needs prompt suppression and handling. One of the treatments given to individuals with game addiction cases is group counseling interventions, a counseling service provided to a group of individuals dealing with relatively similar problems so they don't experience obstacles to developing their potential (Jacobs et al., 2015). Previous research has discussed the handling of group counseling in online game addiction. The first one is research by Prasetiawan (2016), which found that group counseling managed to reduce the game addiction level in grade VIII junior high school students by comparing two classes with different treatments. The next one is by Muhammad Reza & Mulawarman (2021) which revealed that group counseling is proven effective in reducing online game addiction in 152 grade IX students of high schools.

Although previous research has discussed a lot about group counseling in online game addiction cases, none has applied it to students of the Computer Network Engineering (CNE) at Vocational School, where students more often use gadgets and the internet as media for their daily learning activities. Based on the background described above, the research aims to determine the extent to which group counseling is effective in dealing with online game addiction among students in vocational schools.

METHOD

This study aims to determine the effectiveness of group counseling in dealing with online game addiction cases. The subjects in this study were three (3) students (K, I, and F) of class X majoring in Computer Network Engineering who came from a vocational school in the city of Bekasi. Before the group counseling, the subject will be examined first to confirm the case of game addiction. Examinations that will be carried out include administering psychological test kits that can measure the subject's personality and intelligence, observing the subject's school and home environment, as well as interviewing the subject (autoanamnesis) and also people related to the subject (alloanamnesis).

After the examination, the subjects in this study will receive intervention in the form of group counseling with behavioral and self-management group counseling techniques. They

will be subjected to self-management techniques for seven meetings which include self-introduction so that they can manage themselves and control their behavior using a combination of techniques to achieve behavior change and the desired goals (Nungdyasti, DR, & Nuryono, 2022). The steps to process self-management with group counseling techniques given to the subject are: a) Various problems and self-control; b) Learn self-recognition and self-awareness; c) Learn and be aware of triggers for game addiction behavior; d) Learn and practice analyzing the behavior; e) Learn and practice behavioral contracting techniques; and f) Learn and practice looking for alternative solutions when facing problems.

In this case, the researcher acts as a party that helps the subject learn how to increase self-control through certain techniques.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of Observations on the Subject's School Environment and Home Neighbourhood

Observation serves as an overview of the subject's school environment and neighborhood. Based on observations of its environment, this school has quite a large yard. The school's front yard is usually for motorcycle parking and ceremonies. As we step into the school building, an indoor court and a canteen are there. This school has 29 classes from several majors, namely Office Administration, Computer Network Engineering, and Light Vehicle Engineering1q. Each class has 30 students on average. The school is right by the highway and in front of a fast-food restaurant. Because of that, transportation is easy to find. Also, it is easy to hear the sound of vehicles, especially from the classrooms with windows directly facing the main road. This school has several facilities such as a canteen, indoor court, parking area, toilet, computer lab, and prayer room. Classrooms at the school are facilitated with two (2) air conditioners and one (1) fan, but they are not enough to cool the rooms. The walls are painted beige with quite a lot of graffiti on them. Each student in the classroom has a single wooden table chair in one.

By observing the surroundings of the subject's home, we found that K's house is quite close to the school as it is four (4) km away by motorbike. K's house is in a residential complex area packed with residents and a bit far from the main highway, so there is not too much noise from vehicles. Houses of neighbors are in the vicinity and many children are of K's age. Even so, K rarely plays around the house. We can say that the house is the right fit for six people. I's house is also quite close to school, about five (5) km. It is in a residential plot that has many residents. I's house is quite far from the main road, but the roads around the housing area often become alternative roads, especially during the busy time. The neighbors' houses are close to each other. The house is large enough to accommodate six people. F's house is quite far from the school, about six (6) km. F's house is in a residential lot where the residents are quite busy and a bit far from the main highway, so there is not too much noise from vehicles. Neighbors' houses are close together. Many children are the same age as F but they rarely play together, mostly busy in their own homes. F's house is large enough to accommodate three people. F's mom previously opened a salon at her home, so salon equipment and tools in the main room of F's house are complete enough.

Results of Interviewing Subjects (Autoanamnesis)

The first subject was K. K grew up in a family consisting of a father, mother and two younger brothers. Between K's mother and father, K feels closer to the mother because the father works from early morning until late at night. K felt loved by K's parents, but K's father often compared K with other people regarding career plans. K's father expects K to have a stable and well-paid company job. Meanwhile, K's mother supports K in choosing a career based on passion. At home, K is often asked for help by K's parents, but K always procrastinates and eventually forgets the requests. K rarely talks or chats with the parents or younger siblings.

At home, K plays games--it is most often Mobile Legend--or watches movies. K can play the game for five (5) hours a day. K works as a game jockey, K does not set a high price for his services. K only provides that kind of service to their friends. K said that K once topped up a game using K's savings, which K should have used to buy a new cell phone.

The second subject is I. I grew up in a family consisting of a father, mother, two older brothers and one younger sister. I does not talk or speak much when being around I's family. I spends more time playing games. I can do house chores and play at the same time. For example, when washing dishes, I sets the computer to play the game while continuing to monitor game activity. I said that once I didn't play games for three (3) days as I's cell phone was confiscated and it made I feel anxious. At school, I often plays games, especially during break time. Even though the game wasn't over when class started, I kept playing the game secretly. I does homework (PR) at school by copying homework from friends. I is a member of the OSIS (intra-school organization) in the public relations section where I has one partner. If I's partner attends the meeting, I will not.

F grew up in a family consisting of a father and a mother. F is an only child. F's family recently moved from outside the province and settled in a housing complex that tends to be quiet. Therefore, F has no friends from the neighborhood. When F's parents ask for help, F often puts it off and then forgets about it. When at home, F rarely talks or has conversations with F's parents. F plays games more often. When at school F often plays games during break time. F once played a game in the middle of class and was found out by the teacher who was teaching. F's cell phone was held until school hours ended as punishment. F can play games more than five (5) hours a day. F once was off of playing the games since F's parents seized the cell phone. That made F feel anxious and bored. F rarely does schoolwork or homework. F does homework at school by copying a friend's.

Results of Interviewing Others Related to the Subjects (Alloanamnesis)

K, I and F are students of a vocational school from the same class, so they have the same homeroom teacher. According to the homeroom teacher, K, I, and F are fairly obedient students. Despite often playing games during class hours, they will stop when caught and ordered to stop. The homeroom teacher revealed that almost all students in the classroom like to play games, but K, I and F are among the students who do it the most. According to the homeroom teacher, learning from home during Covid-19 was a significant factor. Students stayed long at home with limited activities, making them addicted to playing games. Regarding academic activities, K, I and F always submit assignments despite their late submissions.

The Guidance and Counseling Teacher also conveyed the same thing. According to the BK teacher, K, I, and F are most of the time caught playing games in the school environment. The school environment does allow students to bring mobile phones for their use as learning media. Students browse resources on the internet for deeper discussions about lessons, but they then browse other things instead, including games. The guidance and counseling teacher admits that it is difficult for the teachers to control this since they can't monitor all student phone screens. The school also cannot prohibit the use of mobile phones since digital learning is now necessary.

Psychological Test Results

The psychological tests consisting of the WBIS (Wechsler Bellevue Intelligence Scale) test and the Graphical test were used during the examination. The graphic tests used are the BAUM Tree Test, DAP (Draw a Person), and HTP (House Tree Person). The WBIS test carried out reveals that K's general intelligence level is on average (IQ = 99). However, K has not yet optimized K's intellectual potential while K's original IQ is 108. With this ability, K tends to be more capable to develop performance intellectual capacity (P.IQ = 119) rather than the

verbal one (V.IQ = 80). I's general intelligence level is below average (IQ = 83). I has optimized I's intellectual potential with an original IQ of 79. I tends to be more able to develop performance intellectual capacities (P.IQ = 95) rather than the verbal one (V.IQ = 75). F's general intelligence level F is below average (IQ = 87). However, F has not been able to optimize intellectual potential while F's original IQ is 96. F's WBIS results indicate that F tends to be more capable of developing performance intellectual capacities (P.IQ = 99) rather than verbal ones (V.IQ = 79).

The results of the graphic test reveal that K is an individual who has ambition but lacks courage. K feels inferior and lacks enthusiasm for facing challenges. On the other hand, K has good adaptability but is not accompanied by good social relations. Within the family, K is a more self-oriented individual. I is an individual with a dominant ego and is more introverted. I likes to keep problems for I's self. I tends to have unstable emotions and be impulsive. I is a quiet person and reluctant to be approached. Furthermore, I also feels worried about the pressure from I's family. However, F is an individual who tends to be objective. F has a naive attitude as F tends to be afraid of facing reality. Regarding social relations, F has obstacles that make F have a feeling of uncertainty in social contacts. On the other hand, F is also stiff and does not like authoritarian individuals because it makes F insecure. F is a self-oriented individual and wants to get more attention.

Administering Group Counseling as Self-Management Intervention

From the results earlier described, the three subjects appear to have several similarities, namely playing games for more than four (4) hours a day, playing continuously, feeling attached to the game, neglecting other activities, and feeling anxious and bored when not playing games. According to Prasetiawan (2016), this is a feature of addiction to playing games. Therefore, the next intervention will be given to the three subjects. The intervention will be given for 13 days with a single intervention for nine (9) days for each subject so that the subject can have self-understanding first and understand the stages of group counseling that they will undergo. The results of the interventions carried out are presented as follows.

Session 1: 16-18 May 2023. Intervention (CP explained the counseling to be undertaken and reviewed and explained the results of the psychological examination to K, I, and F). Pre-intervention behavior (K, I and F did not understand themselves and the counseling to be carried out). Post-intervention behavior (K, I and F began to understand themselves and the group counseling they had).

Session 2: 19-22 May 2023. Intervention (CP asks K, I and F to explained the games being played, also the advantages and disadvantages of it. CP also askec K, I and F to explain potential conflicts from playing games). Pre-intervention behavior (K, I and F did not understand potential conflicts of playing games). Post-intervention behavior (K could understand potential conflicts from playing games, which is conflicts with parents and friends. I has conflicts with parents and siblings. F has conflicts with parents)

Session 3: 23-25 May 2023. Intervention (CP asked K, I and F to review why they prefer to play games). Pre-intervention behavior (they did not yet understand the factors why they prefer to play games). Post-intervention behavior (they could understand the factors that affect them to play games, that is boredom and lack of other activities)

Session 4: 26 May 2023. Intervention (CP brought together K, I and F to discuss the answers from the second and third meetings. CP asked them to analyze the problems and then concluded the discussion). Pre-intervention behavior (K, I and F did not understand the problem). Post-intervention behavior (K, I and F found the same issue, that they play games because they are bored with the lecture method of learning)

Session 5: May 27, 2023. Intervention (K, I and F discussed the difficulties and barriers to not playing games. CP provided a behavioral contract so that they tried not to play online

games for 24 hours with monitoring support from teachers and parents). Pre-intervention behavior (they thought they would get bored if they don't play games all day). Post-intervention behavior (they got together with other friends and did other things such as playing basketball, football, and playing the guitar. They admitted that they are not bored not playing games)

Session 6: May 29, 2023. Intervention (CP asked about the behavior contract given to K, I and F. CP gave instructions for them to identify what reinforcement keeps them from playing the game for 24 hours). Pre-intervention behavior (they could not identify what reinforcement made them stop playing the game). Post-intervention behavior (they identified the reinforcement as doing other activities and mingling with friends while at school they also hone their skills in computer hardware software. For this, the school does not limit students' access to using the computer lab)

Session 7: May 30, 2023. Intervention (K, I and F gave each other feedback on how it feels not playing online games for 24 hours. CP provided rewards and an evaluation of interventions and recommendations for the school and parents). Pre-intervention behavior (They did not understand how it feels like not playing online games). Post-intervention behavior (they could understand how it feels to not play online games 24 hours and manage time for other activities. K, I and F along with teachers and parents have received recommendations).

Seven evaluations taken within the psychological examination process are apparent to bring about changes in reducing the intensity of game addiction behavior of K, I and F. The three subjects previously addicted to online games began to slowly change through the intervention of the self-management group counseling approach. That they are getting used to honing computer skills as a new hobby and consolidating it with other activities is the change identified.

CONCLUSION

Referring to the results of psychological tests and the theoretical studies for this case, we can conclude that K's potential intelligence is at the average level while I's and F's potential intelligence levels are below average. K, I, and F have online game addiction behavior, seen from the frequent play of games at school and home. Therefore this study applied an intervention with self-management group counseling techniques to help overcome the problem. The interventions given reveal that there has been a change in K, I, and F. They seem to be getting used to honing their skills and managing time for other activities. For the ongoing capacity to reduce the intensity of aggressive behavior, a collaboration of various parties (the family and the school) is needed, including the subjects' self-motivation. Hopefully, future research can carry out group counseling techniques to a wider group using the longitudinal method which is expected to dig deeper into behavioral changes in a longer period.

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