

EFFECTIVENESS OF GROUP COUNSELING USING COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING TECHNIQUES TO REDUCE PHUBBING BEHAVIOUR AT CHRISTIAN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL 1 SURAKARTA

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Abstract

Phubbing is a behavior that does not respect the other person by choosing to focus on playing with a smartphone when the other person invites him to communicate. Phubbing when done continuously will damage the quality of social relationships. The aimed of this research is to test the effectiveness of cognitive restructuring technique group counseling to eradicate phubbing behavior in class VIII students of SMP Kristen 1 Surakarta in the 2023/2024 academic year. This experimental study used Nonequivalent Control Group Design. The research subjects were 14 class VIII students of SMP Kristen 1 Surakarta who were divided into two groups, namely 7 students in the experimental group and 7 students in the control group. Data collection used a closed questionnaire on phubbing behavior to obtain pretest and posttest scores. The experimental group was given cognitive restructuring technique group counseling treatment and the control group was given group counseling without a specific approach and technique. Each group was given treatment for two

meetings. The results of the analysis using the Mann Whitney test showed a significance value of 0.395 ($0.395 > 0.05$) on the pretest score, which means there is no significant difference in the initial condition of the pretest score of phubbing behavior, while the posttest score gets a significance value of 0.008 ($0.008 < 0.05$) which means there is a significant difference from the posttest score between the experimental group and the control group. The difference in scores is the result of providing cognitive restructuring technique group counseling treatment to the experimental group. The Gain score results in the experimental group, namely an average of 7.85 and the control group an average of 3.14. It is known that the average gain score is higher in the experimental group that received cognitive restructuring technique group counseling treatment. This means that cognitive restructuring technique group counseling is effective in eradicating phubbing behavior.

Keywords

Group Counseling, Cognitive Restructuring Techniques, Phubbing Behavior, Junior High School

Introduction

Education in Indonesia is increasingly influenced by the rapid development of technology. The advancements in technology within the educational world provide various conveniences, such as quickly and effectively searching for and providing information. This convenience is experienced by all parties, especially teachers, in the learning process. Classroom learning processes have already incorporated technology, one example being the use of smartphones among students, particularly at the Junior High School (SMP) level.

The use and ownership of smartphones have become commonplace among students, especially at the SMP level. This is supported by data indicating that young individuals make up 61%

of all smartphone users in Indonesia (Rahmandani et al., 2018). Moreover, students at the SMP level are considered capable of responsibly using and making use of smartphones. As a result, almost all SMP students own smartphones.

Smartphones offer various benefits to students, such as serving as tools to read news, search for learning materials, read books, and entertain, all supported by interesting features. The presence of these diverse features can replace books as the primary source of information and knowledge. This is reflected in the abundance of electronic books that can be easily accessed on smartphones.

Despite the conveniences they offer, smartphone usage can often become excessive and inappropriate, impacting students' personalities and character. This occurs because students can become so absorbed in using their smartphones that they neglect the people around them. Excessive smartphone use leads to a lack of social interaction with friends in real life, which in turn disrupts social relationships with their environment.

This disruptive behaviour is known as phubbing. Phubbing is a combination of the words phone and snubbing. Isrofin (2020) defines phubbing as a phenomenon where an individual becomes absorbed in their smartphone without paying attention to or respecting others who are trying to communicate with them. According to Karadag, phubbing refers to an individual's behaviour of being preoccupied with and using their smartphone while conversing with others, ignoring the ongoing interpersonal communication. From these definitions, it can be concluded that phubbing is a behaviour that shows disrespect for the other person by focusing on the smartphone when they are trying to engage in conversation.

When phubbing is done continuously, it can harm the quality of social relationships. The impact on students who engage in phubbing is that they may become ostracised by those around them. This feeling of being excluded often leads to an increased

use of social media, resulting in social media dependence. The negative consequences of this dependence extend beyond the use of social media and can affect the individual's overall well-being (David & Roberts, 2017).

An individual who engages in phubbing is referred to as a phubber. Phubbers tend to be indifferent or ignore others who are trying to communicate with them, opting instead to focus on their smartphone. This behaviour does not foster respect for others, which is crucial for successful social relationships. Thus, phubbing is considered a maladaptive behaviour. Maladaptive behaviour refers to an individual's inability to adapt or adjust to their environment. In order to change this maladaptive behaviour, it is essential to address its cognitive aspects. Therefore, there is a need for an intervention that can help reduce phubbing behaviour.

Based on the results of a preliminary study conducted on Monday, 24 July 2023, using a closed-ended questionnaire distributed to all grade VIII students at Christian Junior High School 1 Surakarta, it was found that students with a high frequency of smartphone usage also exhibited higher levels of phubbing behaviour. The data obtained revealed that, of the total 79 students, 10 students were categorized as having a high level of phubbing behaviour, 60 students as having a moderate level, and 9 students as having a low level of phubbing behaviour. Based on the administration of this closed-ended questionnaire, it can be concluded that the ten students who fell into the high category were among those with high levels of phubbing behaviour and required responsive services.

This issue can be addressed by providing responsive services such as individual or group counselling using a Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) approach. The CBT counselling approach combines cognitive and behavioural therapy to help individuals modify their behaviour, thoughts, beliefs, and the attitudes underlying those behaviours. Beck (Asyanti, 2019) suggests that there is a connection between an individual's

cognition, emotions, and behaviour. Thus, an individual's thought process affects their emotions and behaviour. CBT posits that problems arise because individuals do not think objectively about events or occurrences in their lives. This illogical thinking stems from learned experiences in their environment. In this case, the maladaptive behaviour is phubbing. The counselling process in this approach involves understanding the client through cognitive restructuring of distorted thoughts, then changing irrational beliefs into more rational ones to bring about positive changes in emotions and behaviour (Youarti & Hidayah, 2018).

Based on the expert opinions above, the appropriate technique to address phubbing behaviour is cognitive restructuring. Cognitive restructuring is a therapeutic skill used to change the way the client thinks, directing their thoughts and beliefs to be more adaptive. This technique is used to alter maladaptive behaviours.

Based on the theoretical review above, along with the information regarding the importance of addressing phubbing behaviour in students and the significant role of school counsellors in resolving this issue, this article aims to illustrate that group counselling using the cognitive restructuring technique can be an effective method for reducing phubbing behaviour among students at the Junior High School (SMP) level.

Method

This research is a quasi-experimental study using a Nonequivalent Control Group Design. This design is chosen because it allows for the assessment of the effectiveness of an intervention when applied to both a control group and an experimental group.

In this study, the control group received conventional group counselling services to address phubbing behaviour, while the experimental group received group counselling services with

cognitive restructuring techniques to reduce phubbing behaviour. Both groups were administered pretests and posttests.

The subjects of this study were grade VIII students of Christian Junior High School 1 Surakarta for the 2023/2024 academic year, selected using purposive sampling. This technique involves selecting subjects based on specific criteria. In this study, the specific criteria included students exhibiting phubbing behaviour, characterised by dependence on smartphones, social isolation, interpersonal conflicts, and neglecting others. Based on these characteristics, classes VIII A and VIII B were deemed suitable for the study, as they shared similar characteristics. A closed-ended phubbing behaviour questionnaire was distributed to a total of 56 students. The researcher then selected subjects based on high and moderate phubbing behaviour categories, totalling 14 students, with 7 students from each class. These subjects were then divided into two groups: the experimental group and the control group.

Data were collected using a closed-ended phubbing behaviour questionnaire to obtain pretest and posttest scores. The data analysis technique used was the Mann-Whitney test, with the assistance of SPSS 25.0 software.

Result and Discussion

The results of this study consist of pretest and posttest data, followed by the descriptive statistical results. The pretest data reflect the condition of the students before the intervention, in order to determine the level of phubbing behaviour among the students. Meanwhile, the posttest data represent the students' condition after the intervention. The pretest and posttest data results are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Pretest Results for the Experimental and Control Groups

Descriptive Statistics Deskriptif						
	N	Min	Max	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation
Eksperiment	7	8	15	78	11.14	2.795
Control	7	7	13	70	10.00	2.582
Valid N	7					

Based on Table 2, it can be seen that the lowest pretest score for the experimental group was 8, and the highest was 15. In contrast, the lowest pretest score for the control group was 7, and the highest was 13. The average score for the experimental group was 11.14, while the control group had an average score of 10.00. The total pretest score for the experimental group was 78, and for the control group, it was 70.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Posttest Results for the Experimental and Control Groups

Statistik Deskriptif						
	N	Min	Max	Total	Mean	Standard Deviation
Eksperiment	7	2	5	23	3.29	1.254
Control	7	4	12	48	6.86	2.795
Valid N	7					

Based on Table 3, the lowest posttest score for the experimental group was 2, and the highest was 5. Meanwhile, the control group had a lowest posttest score of 4 and a highest of 12.

The average posttest score for the experimental group was 3.29, and for the control group, it was 6.86. The total posttest score for the experimental group was 23, while the control group's total was 48.

This study consists of 14 subjects divided into two groups: the experimental group and the control group, with each group consisting of 7 students. Therefore, the data analysis technique used is nonparametric analysis. This is in line with Karmini's view that for small sample sizes (less than 30), nonparametric statistical tests can be applied (Karmini, 2020). Consequently, no prerequisite tests are required for this study. The data analysis technique used in this study is the Mann-Whitney test, which aims to test whether there is a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of phubbing behaviour in the experimental and control groups. The hypothesis testing results using the Mann-Whitney test for the pretest phubbing behaviour scores are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Mann-Whitney Test Results for Pretest Scores

Test Statistics ^a	
	Pretest Result
Mann-Whitney U	18.000
Wilcoxon W	46.000
Z	-.851
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.395
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.456 ^b

a. Grouping Variable: Group

b. Not corrected for ties.

Based on Table 4, the significance value is 0.395 ($0.395 > 0.05$), which means that the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is rejected. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the initial pretest phubbing scores between the experimental and control groups.

Table 5. Mann-Whitney Test Results for Posttest Scores

Test Statistics ^a	
	Posttest Result
Mann-Whitney U	4.000
Wilcoxon W	32.000
Z	-2.664
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.008
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.007 ^b

a. Grouping Variable: Group

b. Not corrected for ties.

After two treatments, the researcher then measured the final condition of students in both groups as shown in Table 10. Based on Table 10, the significance value is 0.008 ($0.008 < 0.05$), which means that the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted. This indicates that there is a significant difference in the posttest scores between the experimental and control groups. This difference is

due to the group counselling treatment using cognitive restructuring techniques in the experimental group.

Looking at the change in scores (gain score) of phubbing, the data recapitulation consisting of the pretest and posttest results for both the experimental and control groups reveals how much the phubbing behaviour level decreased after the intervention. The data is presented in Table 6.

Tabel 6. Data Rekapitulasi Kelompok Eksperimen dan Kelompok Kontrol

Group	Pretest	Posttest	Gain Score
Eksperiment	15	5	10
	13	3	10
	13	5	8
	12	3	9
	9	3	6
	8	2	6
	8	2	6
	Mean		7,85
Control	9	6	3
	8	4	4
	8	5	3
	7	5	2
	13	12	1
	13	7	6
	12	9	3
	Mean		3,14

Based on the difference in gain scores, it can be observed that the greatest reduction in phubbing scores occurred in the experimental group, with an average of 7.85, while the control group had an average reduction of 3.14. Therefore, it can be concluded that the decrease in scores was greater in the group that received the group counselling treatment using cognitive restructuring techniques.

Discussion

This study aims to test and determine the effectiveness of group counselling using cognitive restructuring techniques in reducing phubbing behaviour among eighth-grade students at SMP Kristen 1 Surakarta for the academic year 2023/2024. The research design used to address the research problem is the Nonequivalent Control Group Design. This design was chosen because it allows for evaluating the effectiveness of an intervention administered to an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group received group counselling treatment with cognitive restructuring techniques, while the control group received conventional group counselling treatment.

Isrofin (2020) explains that phubbing is a phenomenon where an individual becomes engrossed in using their smartphone, ignoring or failing to acknowledge others trying to communicate with them. The person exhibiting phubbing behaviour is referred to as a "phubber", and the person being ignored is called a "phubbee." Abivian (2022) further mentions that during lessons, a phubber often checks their smartphone in their pocket while the teacher is explaining the material.

There are several factors contributing to why someone engages in phubbing behaviour. According to Karadağ et al. (2015), four key factors influence phubbing: dependence on smartphones, internet addiction, social media dependence, and gaming addiction. Additionally, Hafizah, Adriansyah, and Permatasari (2021) identified another factor influencing phubbing, which is low self-control. Individuals with low self-

control are more likely to continuously use social media or other applications on their smartphones, even when it is not necessary.

The researcher's alternative to address this issue is to provide group counselling using cognitive restructuring techniques. This technique helps to change the client's irrational thoughts—those that are illogical, hard to understand, and lead to maladaptive behaviour, in this case, phubbing. Through this approach, clients are trained to identify negative thoughts, assess the evidence for and against these negative thoughts, and replace them with more positive and rational thoughts.

The results of the research conducted at SMP Kristen 1 Surakarta show that there is a significant effect of the application of group counselling with cognitive restructuring techniques in reducing phubbing behaviour. This is because the clients are guided to identify negative thoughts, assess supporting and opposing evidence for these thoughts, and replace them with more positive thoughts. Consequently, the clients are able to determine solutions to their problems and apply them in daily life.

The effectiveness of group counselling with cognitive restructuring techniques in reducing phubbing behaviour among students is consistent with previous research. Hapsari (2021) conducted a study that demonstrated the effectiveness of cognitive restructuring techniques in reducing phubbing behaviour among eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Banyudono. The study also highlighted the anxiety experienced by phubbers when not using their smartphones, their tendency to prioritise smartphones over their surroundings, and their reduced self-control.

Research by Trisnany (2023) found that phubbing behaviour changed after students received group counselling focused on cognitive restructuring. The treatment was based on the realisation that students were unaware of their phubbing behaviour, which could be alleviated by changing irrational thoughts into more directed, positive thinking.

Youarti (2018) recommended counselling aimed at cognitive change, as this approach can be used by counsellors to address phubbing behaviour. This approach helps clients gain new insights into their problems, enabling them to replace misguided thoughts with more logical ones and thus develop adaptive behaviours.

Research by Bağatarhan (2022) also supports the effectiveness of cognitive restructuring counselling in addressing internet addiction among adolescents at the secondary school level. Addressing internet addiction is closely related to reducing phubbing behaviour, as excessive use of the internet is one of the key causes of phubbing.

Additionally, a study by Ksiksou (2023) concluded that group counselling focusing on cognitive restructuring can help reduce anxiety, stress, and depression, particularly in students addicted to the internet. This study also found that counselling of this type could help address other addictive behaviours, including smartphone addiction.

Overall, the results of this study align with these previous findings, providing further evidence that cognitive restructuring counselling is an effective method for reducing phubbing

behaviour and its underlying causes, such as smartphone and internet addiction.

Conclusion

Summary

This study aims to test and determine the effectiveness of group counselling using cognitive restructuring techniques in reducing phubbing behaviour among eighth-grade students at SMP Kristen 1 Surakarta for the academic year 2023/2024. The research design used to address the research problem is the Nonequivalent Control Group Design. This design was chosen because it allows for evaluating the effectiveness of an intervention administered to an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group received group counselling treatment with cognitive restructuring techniques, while the control group received conventional group counselling treatment.

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Overall, the results of this study align with these previous findings, providing further evidence that cognitive restructuring counselling is an effective method for reducing phubbing behaviour and its underlying causes, such as smartphone and internet addiction.

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