

## The Effectiveness of Reality Group Counseling to Improve the Self-Esteem of Students with Low Body Image

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### Article Info

History Articles  
Received:  
19 December 2022  
Accepted:  
16 January 2023  
Published:  
30 April 2023

Keywords:  
Group counseling,  
classroom meeting,  
self-esteem, body  
image

### Abstract

Low body image is potential to cause students have low self-esteem and poor learning concentration. This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of reality group counseling with a classroom meeting and metaphor techniques to improve the self-esteem of students with low body image in Senior High School or SMA grade. During the investigation, the classroom meeting and metaphor techniques were given for four sessions in a framework of a pretest and posttest method analyzed using a Wilcoxon test. In addition, the subjects were the 8 students at SMAN 1 Maospati sampled from 320 total students. Findings showed that the group counseling with a classroom meeting technique was able to improve the self-esteem of the students with low body image. Thus, school counselors are suggested to adopt this treatment to deal with similar issue.

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## INTRODUCTION

Adolescent is a determinant period of one self-identity. Here, someone will try to recognize and develop all his life aspects. It will determine whether he will gain positive or negative self-esteem (Kamila and Mukhlis, 2013). Self-esteem determines the overall mental of a person, even behavior (Wibowo, 2016). Self-esteem is a significant factor for students because it assists them to discover self-identity as one of crucial developmental tasks in adolescence (Ericson in Papalia, Olds, & Feldman, 2001).

Students with high self-esteem will have good self-confidence, be sure of his abilities, and realize his roles in this world. Besides, they can achieve their desired goals. During the process, this belief will motivate the students to seriously achieve what they desire. Meanwhile, adolescents with low self-esteem will be more risky to do negative things because self-esteem can influence one's actions (Clames, et al., 2012). It is in line with a statement by Mruk (2006), namely students will gain negative self-esteem, such as considering themselves low, feeling meaningless in life, and having sorrowful feeling if they fail to accomplish something.

Each individual has his own perspectives of himself, covering physique, behavior, and ability. Body image is a factor which influences one's self-esteem (Burn, 1993). It is about what someone feels about his body. If someone sees it good, the body image will be positive, and vice versa (National Eating Disorders Association, 2005).

Barcalau (2010), Ayu (2015), Muhsin (2015), Lars (2016) state that there is a positive correlation between self-esteem and body satisfaction. Students' self-esteem and positive body image are correlated. Someone who has high self-esteem will develop a positive evaluation of his body, but someone who has low self-esteem will increase a negative body image (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002).

Students who have low self-esteem according to Guindon (2010) is indicated by their feeling of inadequate and worthless, more resigned and reluctant to challenges, feeling

afraid or embarrassed by other people's responses, being quiet, and avoid the problems faced. Meanwhile, according to Halil (2007), negative body image distorts one's perception of his body shape, believes that other people are more attractive, feels body size or shape is a sign of personal failure, feels ashamed, anxious about the body, uncomfortable, overwhelmed, and strange with the body. Therefore, students who have low body image and have low self-esteem will hinder adolescent adjustment.

The gap between the actual and ideal body makes students experience low body image. To obtain an ideal and interesting look, they must force themselves to be thin by losing weight and doing some treatments to change their looks. Physical appearance which affects body image is also associated with self-esteem. Tiwari (2014) mentions body image satisfaction contributes 74.50% of self-esteem score.

A preliminary study done to guidance and counseling teachers at SMA N 1 Maospati found some students who truly concerned about their look, even they no longer thought about school and scores they must achieve. In addition, they prefer changing or improving body image to improving their performance on particular subjects. Also, most of them would rather bring cosmetics than textbooks. Diet becomes their habit although it makes them feel unwell and hard to concentrate on learning.

Based on the above phenomenon, there needed an effort to improve the self-esteem of students with low body image. A possible treatment is by giving a group counseling service with a cognitive approach. Wibowo (2019) states group counseling is an interpersonal relationship that emphasizes conscious thinking process for both behavior and feelings by each group member to gain more optimal development. Sharf (2012) explains that cognitive counseling is a service whose focus is on insight by emphasizing recognition and changing negative thoughts as well as maladaptive beliefs.

Haryanti, Sugiyo, & Purwanto (2020) has confirmed the effectiveness of reality group counseling with confrontation and being positive techniques to improve students' self-control. In

addition, a group counseling technique which can contribute to behavioral changes is reality counseling with a metaphor technique. Metaphor is defined as a speaking technique which can express something using different way of expression (Thompkins, in Chapman, 2009), or transferring meaning from one element to another. Metaphor is an attempt to describe an idea or problem concretely so that it is easy to understand.

Counselors need a right strategy to solve students' problem and instill positive characteristics within themselves. A possible approach for this improving the self-esteem of students with low body image is classroom meeting model. Darlean (2015) found the increase in students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor assessments following the implementation of a classroom meeting learning model. It is a learning model which requires students to cooperate and create a warm and peaceful learning atmosphere.

In this study a classroom meeting model and metaphor techniques were used to improve the self-esteem of students with low body image. In details, this study gave students task writing using the classroom meeting model, while the video was given using a metaphor technique. Previously, studies state a task writing technique is related to self-esteem because it deals with the processes in which self-compassion and self-esteem. Furthermore, self-compassion consists of three components in which each of these components can be manipulated experimentally to determine its relative contribution to body image results Veya (2017).

Regarding the above descriptions, this study was intended to re-examine the effectiveness of group counseling with classroom meeting and metaphor techniques to increase self-esteem of students with low body image at a high school level. The results of the study are expected to provide recommendations for counselors to apply the group counseling with classroom meeting and metaphors models as an

effort to increase the self-esteem of students with low body image at school.

## METHODS

Initially the subjects of this study were 320 eleventh graders at SMAN 1 Maospati. Using a purposive sampling technique 24 of them were selected based on the low category of self-esteem and grouped into three equally.

The scale used in this study was adapted from the Self Esteem Inventory (SEI) developed by Catherine Potard (2015). It measures self-esteem and has 25 items. In scoring the instrument, respondents can choose from 1 (strongly disagree) up to 5 (strongly agree). The reliability of this instrument as indicated by cronbach' alpha was 0.87.

Another instrument was Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire-Appearance Scales (MBSRQ-AS) developed by Viren Swami (2018). It measures body image and has 34 items which previously has been through a back translation process in a language unit. It uses a scoring system from 1 (strongly disagree) up to 5 (strongly agree). In terms of reliability, the cronbach's alpha showed 0.60.

In implementing the group counseling with classroom meeting and metaphor techniques, this study employed a pretest posttest design followed by a Wilcoxon test to analyze the data. In details, the treatment was given for 5 sessions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of the group counseling with classroom meeting and metaphor techniques to improve the self-esteem of students with low body image at SMAN 1 Maospati. After the data collection and analysis using the Wilcoxon test, the following results in table 1 were obtained.

**Tabel 1.** Pretest dan Posttest Data

Kel	Pretest		Post Test		Z
	M	SD	M	SD	
Classroom Meeting Technique	37.25	2.121	75.38	5.502	-2.521
Methapor Technique	42.13	2.232	75.38	4.658	-2.527
Control Group	38.63	2.722	39.25	1.282	-0.940
Z = -2.5					
P < 0.05. 0.012					

The above table 1 presents the analysis results of the Wilcoxon test. It is known that there were differences in the self-esteem condition between and after the treatment using a classroom meeting model ( $z = -2.527$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ) and metaphor techniques ( $z = -2.521$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), whereas in the control group there was no significant difference ( $z = -0.940$ ,  $P > 0.05$ ). Thus both techniques were effective to improve the self-esteem of the students with low body image at SMAN 1 Magetan.

This study strived for determining the effectiveness of the reality group counseling with classroom meeting model and metaphor techniques in improving the self-esteem of the students with low body image. Self-esteem needs to be improved so that students have a self-evaluation ability, can accept or reject, strengthen the confidence, meaning, success, and worth. Self-esteem determines the overall one's mental development, even the behavior (Wibowo, 2016). In this study, the classroom meeting model technique met the effectiveness.

The classroom meeting model technique enables students to assess and correct their own behavior, improve self-discipline obeying what has been decided in a discussion, practice tolerance of other's opinions, and sharpen the ability to identify and solve problems. Thus, in group counseling with a classroom meeting model technique students can discuss various ways of self-acceptance, gain good tolerance, and respect others. Through the practices during the counseling, the students' self-esteem can improve as what has been previously desired.

The group counseling with a metaphor technique was carried out with the aim of improving the self-esteem of students with low body image. Improving self-esteem would enable individuals to do self-evaluation, have the habit of accepting or rejecting attitudes, and increase confidence in their abilities, significance, success and worth. In this study the metaphor technique was effective to increase students' self-esteem.

The metaphor technique bridges the interpersonal relationship between students and a counselor so that the communication can run well. The use of metaphoric narration can help students improve themselves to be as authentic as in their narration. Through a narration and self-improvement, students will attain the ability of self-evaluation, acceptance and rejection, beliefs in skills, significance, success and worth.

Similarly, a study by Powell, Newgent, & Lee (2006) explains that the metaphor technique contained in cinematherapy can increase self-esteem. Metaphor language can increase insight and reduce resistance levels. In this study, the cinematherapy has elements of metaphor that can help client insight so that it can make a process of self-disclosure through dialogue. Another study by Maulida (2022) shows the results that reality group counseling with a metaphor and modeling techniques can improve students' self-regulation.

## CONCLUSION

Regarding the data analysis results, it can be concluded that the implementation of the

group counseling with classroom meeting and metaphor techniques is effective to improve the self-esteem of the students with low body image.

School counselors are suggested to use classroom meeting and metaphor techniques as an intervention to improve the self-esteem of students with low body image.

Future studies are recommended to conduct a follow-up to see the effect of time in the effects of the intervention. Besides, the next researchers are expected to create better plans and focus on subjects at different levels with more varied problems, especially in terms of self-esteem and low body image.

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