

Creative reality counseling model: Acceptability and effectiveness at improving self-regulated learning

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ABSTRACT

Counselors use the reality counselling model to help counselees overcome their problems, including the problem of self-regulated learning. As professionals, it is necessary for them to identify the elements that can improve the success rate of this model. One of the elements is creative art, and its use in integration with the aforementioned model will form what is termed creative reality counseling model. The aim of this article was to identify the acceptability and effectiveness of the creative reality counseling model to improve self-regulated learning. Borg and Gall's research and development design was a preferred design for this research, with the involvement of a total of five stages, namely: i) Problem identification; ii) Planning; iii) Product hypothesis drafting; iv) Expert and practitioner judgments; and v) Effectiveness testing. The acceptability of the product was analyzed using the interrater reliability Cohen's kappa, while the effectiveness was identified using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. The research results showed that the creative reality counseling model was acceptable and effective at improving students' self-regulated learning. These results may offer alternative counseling good practices for counselors to develop students' self-regulated learning.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Counseling is a service that impacts educational goals achievement. A research has shown that there was a close correlation between counseling service and the extent to which educational goals are achieved [1]. Counseling service also supports character education programs at schools [2], [3]. Students' character development through counseling service demands creativity on the counsellor's part, so that students can gain lessons learned from the counseling service that is provided at school [4]. Creativity itself is central to the effectiveness of counseling service [5].

Creativity offers society, particularly school counsellors, an answer to complex problems faced by counselees [6]. Some research recommended trainings for counselors concerning creativity in counseling service provision [7], [8]. Counselors who are able to apply the creativity element in themselves are benefited in two ways: i) They will have better appreciation for creative process principles; and ii) They will learn on creative efforts in counseling [9]. The two aforesaid benefits will have a significant effect on the counselees' behavior change after receiving counseling service. Counselors' creativity is one of the drivers of the

emergence and development of innovations in counseling service. Innovative counseling will introduce novel strategies at the time a counselor seeks a different way that fits the counselee's needs and characteristics [10].

Counselors may use a variety of media, including creative art, as a means of making counseling service innovations [11]. The modalities counselors may use encompass music, visual art, writing, and imagery, to name just a few [9]. In providing counseling service, counselors may take any of a variety of ways and thus attract counselees to take the counseling service. With such innovative counseling modes, the advantage that may be derived is that the counselees will be more focused on the counseling activities [9]. Innovations in counseling service also facilitate problems development in a globalization era like today, where the problems faced by counselees in the contemporary day has grown much more complex.

One of the embodiments of counselors' creativity is their optimization of the creative art element in counseling service. Creativity and creative art are integral to counseling service [9]. Virtually all people have knowledge of the concept of art, and art will allow them their well-being [12]. Art is an ideal medium for counselors as support counseling for interventions as it is readily available around both the counselor and the counselee [13]. Creative art will also provide facilitation for counselees who find it difficult to express their problems verbally [9]. As such, it is known that the artistic dimension is one of the components that support the effectiveness of counseling service itself.

One of the counseling approaches counselors may find useful in helping counselees out of their problems is reality counseling. Counselors who use this approach will help counselees develop a greater degree of awareness of their core motivational drives that include survival, belonging and love, power, freedom, and fun [14], [15]. Some research works have also proven that reality counseling is effective at problem-solving, such as in improving multiple intelligences and motivational achievements in Indonesian and Malaysian students with Internet use problems [16], reducing smartphone addiction symptoms in college students [17], and reducing academic procrastination and improving behavioral self-regulation in students [18].

Those findings suggest that reality counseling is potential to use as a strategy to help counselees out of their problems. In this research, reality counseling combined with creative art in what is termed creative reality counseling model was assumed to be able to help students develop self-regulated learning. Especially in a pandemic situation, self-regulated learning is central to maintaining students' achievements [19]–[21]. The COVID-19 pandemic that hit nearly the entire globe, with Indonesia being no exception, has an impact on the dynamics of students' self-regulated learning [22]. Research findings showed that students' self-regulated learning tends to decline over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic although female students were found to be better in it than their male counterparts [23].

The creative reality counseling model provides counselors with an answer to self-regulated learning problems in students with reserved personalities. Many a time counselees have difficulties in speaking up about their problems [24]. Reality counseling will require an active collaboration between the counselor and the counselee in order to arrive at a goal [14], [15]. Students' difficulties in uttering their complaints and problems regarding self-regulated learning relate to introversion, and the Indonesian culture wields a significant effect on such a condition [25]. The creative reality counseling model is capable of leaving a significant effect on the behavior change of the counselee by improving self-regulated learning. The counselee can express their problems and complaints through creative art, while the counselor can elaborate on that creative art the counselee has created [9], [26].

The recommended reality counseling innovation that employs creative art has yet to be fully embraced by counselors. There remain numerous technical obstacles that can hinder the effectiveness of reality counseling at improving self-regulated learning. This article intended to identify the acceptability and effectiveness of the product named creative reality counseling model to improve self-regulated learning. A description of the research methods, presentation of research results in the forms of product acceptability and effectiveness analysis data, discussion, and conclusions will be provided in the forthcoming sections.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Research design

Using the research and development design, this research attempted to figure out the acceptability and effectiveness of a research product in the educational field. The study adapted Borg and Gall's model to arrive at this objective. In specific terms, the stages in which this research went through were fivefold: i) Identification of the problem based on which the product was developed; ii) Making the research design; iii) Drafting the creative reality counseling product to improve students' self-regulated learning; iv) Assessing the acceptability of the product based on expert and practitioner judgments; and v) Product try-out. The data from the product acceptability and effectiveness analysis are presented in the results section.

2.2. Research instruments

This research employed two instruments. The first was a product assessment sheet to be filled out by counseling experts, counseling media experts, and product users, while the second was a self-regulated learning scale to be completed by students, particularly to measure self-regulated learning before and after product try-out. The latter of the instruments consisted of two aspects (awareness to demonstrate learning performance and to demonstrate learning motivation) and 43 items, with a validity coefficient ranging between 0.302 and 0.524 and a reliability coefficient of 0.880 (categorized as high).

2.3. Research procedure

As the first step, students' problems identification was carried out by performing a literature study on students' self-regulated learning problems. The literature study was conducted on articles on the theme of self-regulated learning of students in Indonesia, particularly in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Then, we planned the research and development conduct on the product, i.e., creative reality counseling model, and drafted a product hypothesis. In the following step, we invited expert (experts in counseling and counseling media) and practitioner assessors to assess the product feasibility. Finally, as an empirical proof that this product was meaningful and useful, we carried out a try-out.

2.4. Data analysis techniques

This research used a quantitative data analysis. An interrater reliability Cohen's kappa analysis describes the feasibility of the product, i.e., the creative reality counseling model, to improve students' self-regulated learning. Meanwhile, a non-parametric statistical Wilcoxon signed-rank test was conducted to test the product effectiveness.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The product acceptability was identified using an interrater reliability (IRR) Cohen's kappa analysis. This analysis aimed to measure the degree of agreement between two assessors in each field of expertise. The assessors in this research consisted of two counseling experts, two counseling media experts, and two product users. Table 1 provides a summary of the results of the IRR Cohen's kappa analysis based on expert judgments.

Table 1. Product acceptability based on expert judgments

Expert	Value	Category	Asym Std. Error
Counseling experts	0.740	High agreement	0.117
Counseling media experts	0.632	High agreement	0.199
Product users	0.704	High agreement	0.118

According to Table 1, the judgments of both counseling experts had a coefficient of 0.740, meaning that the agreement between them on the product acceptability was high. Meanwhile, the judgments of counseling media experts scored a coefficient of 0.632, indicating that the two of them were in a high degree of agreement regarding the product acceptability. Among product users, the judgements had a coefficient of 0.704, showing that there was a strong agreement too between them about the product acceptability. As for Asym Std. Error, it is indicative of standardized measurement error; the lower the coefficient, the more reliable the measurement result is. These figures can be interpreted to imply that, based on the judgments of the counseling experts, counseling media experts, and product users, the creative reality counseling model was with a high level of acceptability to be applied by counselors at schools.

Then, an effectiveness test was conducted involving one group of respondents to test the effectiveness of the creative reality counseling model at improving self-regulated learning. The results of the measurements before and after intervention are provided in Table 2. The table shows the differences in students' self-regulated learning scores before and after the intervention. The level of students' self-regulated learning increased after receiving an intervention in the form of creative reality counseling model. The results presented in Table 2 are subsequently subjected to a Wilcoxon signed-rank test, and the results were analyzed using SPSS 21 application. The results of the SPSS analysis are provided in Table 3.

Table 2. Effectiveness test results

No	Name	Pretest	Category	Posttest	Category
1	RPn 1	71	Low	89	Moderate
2	RPn 2	73	Low	84	Moderate
3	RPn 3	74	Low	86	Moderate
4	RPn 4	62	Low	87	Moderate
5	RPn 5	79	Low	94	Moderate
6	RPn 6	79	Low	93	Moderate
7	RPn 7	70	Low	89	Moderate
8	RPn 8	73	Low	82	Moderate
9	RPn 9	73	Low	86	Moderate
10	RPn 10	64	Low	87	Moderate
11	RPn 11	77	Low	94	Moderate
12	RPn 12	79	Low	94	Moderate
13	RPn 13	71	Low	89	Moderate
14	RPn 14	73	Low	87	Moderate
15	RPn 15	64	Low	86	Moderate
16	RPn 16	60	Low	73	Low
17	RPn 17	79	Low	94	Moderate
18	RPn 18	77	Low	94	Moderate
19	RPn 19	71	Low	89	Moderate
20	RPn 20	73	Low	84	Moderate
21	RPn 21	74	Low	87	Moderate
22	RPn 22	61	Low	89	Moderate
23	RPn 23	72	Low	94	Moderate
24	RPn 24	73	Low	92	Moderate
25	RPn 25	71	Low	89	Moderate
26	RPn 26	73	Low	84	Moderate
27	RPn 27	72	Low	85	Moderate
28	RPn 28	62	Low	71	Low
29	RPn 29	81	Low	95	Moderate
30	RPn 30	71	Low	94	Moderate

Table 3 shows that the negative ranks were valued 0, meaning that there was no reduction in the self-regulated learning rate after intervention. Then, the positive ranks were valued 30, meaning that thirty research subjects experienced an increase in self-regulated learning after intervention. The ties were valued 0, suggesting that none of the research subjects had fixed self-regulated learning scores before and after intervention. It is also shown by the table that each research subject saw an increase of an average of 13.5 points.

Table 3. Wilcoxon signed-rank test results

No	Descriptor	Coefficient
1	Negative ranks	0
2	Positive ranks	30
3	Ties	0
4	Mean rank	13.5
5	Z	-4.787
6	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000

Furthermore, Table 3 specifically shows a Z count value of -4.787, with the Z table at a 5% alpha value being 0.003 (the negative mark being dependent on the Z count output). Meanwhile, the Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) value obtained was 0.028. Because Z count > Z table (-2.201 > -0.986) and Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) (0.000) < 0.05, it can be interpreted that the students' self-regulated learning scores increased after the implementation of the creative reality counseling model intervention.

The phenomenon of decreasing self-regulated learning rate during the COVID-19 pandemic lays the grounds for the development of the creative reality counseling model. Earlier research findings reported widespread learning crisis among students during this period. The pandemic has propelled the turn of the learning process from previously face-to-face to online based and eventually affected the dynamics of students' self-regulated learning [22]. Some studies even reported that students' self-regulated learning has declined under the influence of online learning [23], [27], [28] although self-regulated learning constitutes a main element of online learning success [19]–[21]. Therefore, creative reality counseling comes as an alternative solution for developed students' self-regulated learning.

The results of the present study showed that the creative reality counseling model was acceptable and effective at improving students' self-regulated learning. Reality counseling per se is a counseling model

developed by Glasser. In the 1980s, he added control theory among the theoretical frameworks of reality counseling practices as he took interest in this theory after reading William Powers' book the control of perception [15]. Additionally, Powers theory on how the brain functions as a control system also lays a theoretical foundation for reality counseling. In 1996, Glasser renamed control theory into choice theory, attributed to the most fundamental concept that says "*we can control only our own behavior*" [15].

From the perspective of reality counseling, human beings have five simultaneous basic needs: love and belonging, power, freedom, fun, and survival [15], [29]. The purpose of reality counseling is to help counselees satisfy these basic needs in responsible ways. Learning how to behave responsibly is essential for children's development to reach a "success identity". A counselor will work in counselling sessions to express their empathy with a counselee's experience when they are attempting to identify the way in which the counselee meets their five needs. The counselor may share with the counselee some phenomenological experiences that can improve the counselee's relationships and perceived security with the counselor when their problems and basic needs are being explored [30].

Reality counseling entails an operational procedure to guide counselors in giving counseling interventions to improve students' self-regulated learning, which is called the WDEP system. The 'W' denotes wants, needs, and perceptions, 'D' does direction and doing, 'E' does self-evaluation, and 'P' does planning [15], [29]. It is the counselor's strategy to make improvement to self-regulated learning. A counselor who uses the reality counseling perspective is capable of integrating the operational procedure of reality counseling, i.e., the WDEP system, with creative art. The use of creative art such as drawing, puppets, metaphors, and sand trays in integration with reality counseling generates an operational guide for counselors with four counseling sessions [31]–[33].

In the first meeting, the counselor and the counselee discuss wants, needs, and perceptions. A counselor who uses the reality counseling perspective helps a counselee identify their wants and hopes [15]. The counselee will find it useful for their finding out what they expect and want from the counselor and themselves. What they say about their wants and hopes during the counseling session are certainly associated with the fulfilment of human's five basic needs. Some counselees will stumble upon difficulties in saying out loud what they want and hope under certain situations. Therefore, creative art may serve as a representation of wants and hopes that they have difficulties to express [30]. Counselors may use creative art such as drawing, puppets, metaphors, and sand trays for counselees to express their wants and hopes when they are facing particular problems [31]–[33].

Counselors may use creative art like drawing as a support for the identification of counselees' wants and hopes when they are having some predicaments. Drawing itself is one kind of visual art that is potential to use to enhance counseling service effectiveness [13], [34], [35]. Drawing enables counselees to convey their wants and hopes otherwise they are unable to do verbally. Additionally its application in counselling will help reveal hidden conflicts in the counselees' internal worlds in a way that is unique, concrete, and powerful [9]. In this activity, the counselees get involved in reality counselling visually for sustained evaluation and processing of wants, choices, and new behavioral preferences [32].

Counselors may also use puppets to aid counselees to convey their wants and hopes in the face of problems. This kind of aid is compatible for use for children. With puppets, children gain a lot of opportunities to externalize feelings, thoughts, or experiences they typically have a hard time to do and symbolize them in unique ways [32], [36]. They will be accustomed to using puppets at play on a daily basis, and this will make the counseling process fun. Puppets can be used as a creative way to observe reality counseling aspects such as total behavior and how the four components influence their preferences [32].

Meanwhile, sand tray use is an expressive, projective way of counseling that involves personal problem processing through the use of specific materials as media for counselees to express their problems in a non-verbal manner [37]. The materials used may include trays, sand, and various miniatures of humans, animals, buildings, vehicles, fences, and objects of nature, which allow for the combining of fantasy and reality components [38]. Using sand strays in reality counseling, children are asked to demonstrate scenes over the sand trays with the miniatures to express their internal worlds. Sand trays can be used to explore their quality world and to process how they satisfy their basic needs.

Metaphors are one of the creative arts that are integral to reality counseling [14]. They also serve as modality in creative art that supports reality counseling service success. Metaphors are a language counselees use to describe themselves, others, or difficult situations [33]. Traditionally, counselees describe themselves, others, and certain situations abstractly when metaphors are used. It is important for the counselor not only to understand the abstract and symbolic nature of the counselee's language, but also to appreciate the fact that metaphors are laden with cues on the counselee's emotional experiences [33], which can inform discussions when the counselee's wants and hopes under certain situations are to be understood.

In the second meeting, direction and doing are discussed. At the onset of this session, it is critical to discuss thoroughly with the counselee the direction in which they live their lives, which is symbolized by

certain creative art of their choosing. Discussion might be centered on the counselee's artistic creation for both the counselor and the counselee to explore the problem the counselee is facing. This exploration is the first step to the subsequent evaluation as to whether that direction is the one desired. The counselor asks specifically about what the counselee has done as well as the counselee's perspective in reality counseling; the root of the counselee's problems is in their doing rather than in their feeling [14], [15].

In the third meeting, discussion is directed toward self-evaluation. The counselor will ask whether what the counselee has done has helped them out of their problems or whether the other way round is true. They will also ask whether the counselee's behavior preference is based on their belief that it is good for them. The counselor's function is not to judge whether that behavior is right or wrong, but to guide the counselee to make judgments of their own present behavior [14], [15]. During this meeting, the counselor will try to confront the counselee into understanding that their behavior is irresponsible and of no point to their attempt to achieve their goals and hopes.

The fourth meeting is to discuss planning. The counselee is to focus on planning to change their behavior. This activity emphasizes the action to be taken as opposed to the behavior to be eliminated. Planning is in the counselee's control and sometimes expressed in a written contract form with specifications of accountable alternatives. The counselee is then asked to be committed to that action plan. A sound plan is one that meets SAMIC3 components that is simple, attainable, measurable, immediate, involved, controlled by the planner, committed to, and consistently done [14], [15], [29].

The studies demonstrated that reality counseling integration with creative art can be applicable to problem-solving. However, not many have specifically identified its acceptability and effectiveness at improving self-regulated learning. A research work showed that art-based reality counseling could be used to help with children's chronic problems that could affect their personal, social, and learning aspects [31]. Another was conducted to revitalize Minangkabau culture to reinforce counseling practices [39]. Yet another study has also proven that reality counseling using metaphors was effective at overcoming students' sorrow [33]. However, no research has developed a reality counseling model in combination with creative art for improved self-regulated learning. In this particular research, creative art such as drawing, puppets, metaphors, and sandtrays sees comprehensive applications to support reality counseling.

The integration of reality counseling with creative art to improve self-regulated learning is founded on some reasons. For one, this integration assists counselees who have a hard time interacting with the counselor verbally, helping them to express themselves in a certain creative art form [30]. Indonesian people are predisposed to be reserved when facing problems. They tend to express their complaints and problems in simplistic sentences [40]. As evidence for this notion is a research finding that showed that students who were reserved did not necessarily have poorer speaking abilities than those who were not [41]. However, it was also reported that some students wanted to share their complaints and problems but found it difficult to do verbally [9], [26]. Obviously, such a condition prevents the counselor from applying reality counseling. This tendency of the counselee to reserve themselves will negatively impact the effectiveness of the counseling service provided.

Counselees who have difficulties expressing their problems verbally may do through a certain form of creative art. For instance, a student may express their complaints and problems they normally have difficulty to do through music [42]–[44]. In addition, they may also use visual art for this purpose [13], [45]. It is also possible for counselors to use poems as media to help counselees out of the problems that they have been bearing [46], [47]. Students may choose a creative art form that represents their current condition, helping them relaxing the tensions in them in relation to their own problems.

A counselee's expression of their problems through creative art is plainly one of the ways for them to understand their own subconscious state [48]. By making an art creation in a counseling session, a counselee will have an increased awareness of their own problems, stressful and traumatic experiences, and cognitive abilities [49]. They will create symbols out of their sub-conscious realm, which will be discussed with the counselor [50]. Gradually they will be able to construct the experienced problems and have a behavioral design to get out of those problems. This awareness of hidden problems within the counselee becomes an important component because it is vital for a reality-counseling-oriented counselor to identify irresponsible behavior on the part of the counselee. In subsequence, the counselor will encourage the counselee toward responsible behavior in meeting their psychological basic needs [14], [15].

Art is one of the central variables that support reality counseling service success. Some research has proven that counseling that is integrated with art is effective at helping counselees out of various problems in their lives [51], [52]. The use of art in counseling itself encourages counselees' engagement in counseling sessions, so active participation of the counselees will promote the success of the counseling service [53]. This is especially true because the application of reality counseling by a counselor will demand active participation of the counselee in counseling service [14], [15], [29].

Counseling and creative art combination is advantageous to counseling service success. The benefits of using creative art in counseling include greater pleasure in the activities involved, strengthened collegial

relationship, better communication, assistance for the counselee to express themselves in various ways, and encouragement for the counselee to extract more meanings out of the counseling [9]. With these benefits, school counselors are recommended to maximize creative art use as a counseling service medium in the hope that the integration of creative art and counseling will give a distinct, artistic color to counseling service.

Counselor's creativity is a requirement in maximizing art use in counseling. All counseling sessions that maximize creativity drive the counselors to dedicate art, creativity, and esthetic experiences to improve human wellbeing [12]. Creativity per se is often defined as an experience that involves two primary things: originality and functionality [9]. Originality here refers to novel ways in which a counselor provides counseling services. The counselor may as well invent unprecedented ways other counselors never think of. Meanwhile, functionality implies that the counselor's counseling ways are optimally functional and significantly impactful to the behavior change of the counselee.

This finding of creative reality counseling model may serve as a reference for counselors to provide assistance for counsees with unique characteristics, such as having difficulties in expressing their problems verbally. It is necessary for counselors to pay attention to the characteristics of the problems and the personalities of the counsees when using certain creative arts to support the reality counseling success. The findings presented in this article need further investigations that can empirically identify the effectiveness of creative reality counseling at solving certain problems among students.

4. CONCLUSION

Creativity is essential for counselors to conduct innovative counseling service. Counselor's creativity can take the form of maximal use of creative art to support the counseling service success. One of the indicators that a counseling service is successful is a behavior change that goes with the counselee's aim. A counselor can combine creative art with a counseling approach, in this case reality counseling, to increase the rate of counseling service success. The shapes that creative art can take in support of reality counseling include drawing, puppets, metaphors, and sand trays, among others. Creative art is capable of reinforcing reality counseling operational procedures, one of which is the WDEP system, to have increased counselee's engagement and openness in counseling service. The creative reality counseling model can be a reference for counselors to conduct reality counseling service in innovative ways to help counsees out of their problems. It is suggested that future research identify empirically the role of creative reality counseling in overcoming certain problems faced by counsees.

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