

Model of Metacognition-Based Counseling at Senior High School

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ABSTRACT

Counselor competencies cover both academic competence and professional competence. Academic competence is the scientific basis of professional counseling services and the foundation for the development of professional competence. The objectives of this research are: (1) describing the characteristics of Senior High School counselors; (2) describing the metacognition of Senior High School counselors; (3) analyzing the need of metacognition-based counseling training model for Senior High School counseling services; and (4) finding the characteristics of metacognition-based counseling training model for Senior High School counseling services. The first year research employed descriptive method using survey. The research subjects in the survey were 166 counselors in five cities in East Java: Malang, Surabaya, Kediri, Pamekasan, and Jember. The instruments to measure the research variables were developed by the researcher. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results of the analysis showed that most of the counselors agreed to the idea of metacognition-based counseling training model development for Senior High School.

Keywords: counseling skills, counselor, metacognition

INTRODUCTION

Counseling is a professional job in which the experts not only apply a set of standard operating procedures but also try to carry out academic counseling services. Therefore, professional counselors must meet the academic and professional competence standards, as mandated in the Minister of National Education Rules Number 27 Year 2008 regarding the academic qualification standards and counselor competencies in article 1, paragraph 1. The counselor competencies cover academic competence and professional competence as a whole. Academic competence is the scientific basis of professional counseling services implementation and the foundation of professional competence development. The academic competencies include: (1) understand the counselee deeply, (2) understand the foundation and theoretical framework of counseling, (3) provide counseling services which support counselee's independence, and (4) develop sustainable counselor professionalism (ABKIN, 2007).

Counselor performance is largely determined by the four competencies quality and based on the values, attitudes, and personal qualifications (discipline, patient, punctual, trustworthy etc). In the counselor professional education field, one of the main elements of the curricular program is building counselor metacognition (Jones, 2001). Psychologically, counselor thinking process to respond counselee's problems is interpreted as metacognition (Dawson, 2008). Jones (2001) refers to it as *mind skills*. Joni (2008) calls it as *mind competence*. Metacognition is intrapersonal skills, ie the monitoring and reflection of mind process take place when someone do an activity such as how and when to use a specific procedure to solve the problem of the counselee (Jones, 2001).

In other words, what is meant by metacognition is the mastery of ability to respond contextually (Joni, 2008b). Metacognition skill is indicated to be occurred when someone consciously adjust his thinking and manage strategies in solving problems and thinking about an objectives. The objective is to build self-awareness, self-regulation, self-monitoring and self-evaluation (Flavel in Marzano, et al, 1988: 9).

Counselor performance expectations in carrying out counseling services are based on altruistic motive, empathic attitude, diversity respectability and appreciation, and the effort to put the interests of counsees over the interests of others. To realize such performance, metacognition which must be owned by a counselor, according to Jones (2005), are self-positive speech, helpful hopes, helpful explanations, helpful perceptions, helpful rules, and helpful visual imagery. Those are a set of skills and actions which must be owned by a professional counselor to conduct a counseling appropriately and effectively. With the skills possessed, a counselor can review the actions that have been taken and make adjustments on the next action. Once it progresses, the stored cognition of the counselor is in the form of experience or knowledge of how to perceive and deal with the counselee in the counseling process.

The counselor task is to develop the potential and independence of the counselee in making decision and choice to realize a productive, peaceful, and care for the welfare of the counselee's life (Joni, 2008). To reach the objective, counselors are required to think reflectively which means that counselors continue to do a self-evaluation on their performances and are ready to make improvements that led to effective performance. A counseling is called as an expert service because its application requires a decision which is not only in the form of prescriptions delivered to counselee during the implementation of counseling (Joni, 2005a, 2005b, 2006). Professional counselors are required to always question why, how, and when his professional action is carried out in addition to understand what happened during the counseling process.

As a professional activity, the counselor task is not only to implement the program as stated in the fixed procedure but also to carry out comprehensive considerations for any action taken in facilitating the personal development of the counselee. In addition, professional counselors are required to always criticize their professional actions in the sense of thinking critically about their actions, their experience as well as the decisions taken during the counseling. It is because the counselor task is to develop the potential and independence of counselee in making decision. Therefore, the counselor performance expectations should have a high standard and is oriented to quality as Joyce and Weil (2009) called *the principle of reaction*, which means the presence of altruistic motives in the attitudes and philosophy of work, sincere and humble, creativity which comes from profession appreciation, and adherence to the code of professional conduct.

As an expert service, counseling always follow a continuous cycle which consists of diagnosis, action, assessment on the the impact of the action or rediagnosis, readjustment of the action, assessment on the impact of the adjusted action and so on. This process is commonly called as an equalization process between decision or action of the counselor and the counselee's needs which are going very fast in the process that

seemed to be " unobserved " by the counselor because of the short span between decision and action (Joni, 2009). An informed responsive counselor is the one who can predict the impact of his decision and/or action he does (Shone, 1983).

Counseling services at schools will effectively facilitate the counsees when the activities are conducted by a professional counselor. It means that the counselor's way to think, way to feel, and way to do must be within the professionalism corridor. Conceptually, it can be interpreted that the counseling services should always be an art implementation which is based on a reliable academic foundation. A counselor should always think and act according to his own style by integrating what is known through research or references from experts with what is required by a counselor and what is expected by society (Joni, 2008b). This commitment will form an insight which determine the way a counselor looking at him/herself, looking at his/her works, and seeing the served counselee. In short, the worldview is used by the counselor to see his/her world (Corey, 2001).

Various approaches used by counselors depend on the set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the counselors in solving problems. In other words, the various considerations in counseling activities depend on the counselor's metacognition. Inadequate metacognition can make the counselor perform less positive actions such as lack of seriousness, do routine work only, difficult to accept criticism, insensitive to circumstances, lack of self-awareness, lack of self-productivity, and lack of independence (Metcalfe, 2009).

Counseling practice will be effective when the counselors can arrange mental treasures which help professional practice. To reach the effectiveness, the counselors should equip themselves with a number of skills, both of which require external behavior and interpersonal skills or thinking skills (metacognition).

There are six metacognition skills which should be achieved by the counselor. First, **creating rule** (Ellis, in Jones, 2005), which emphasizes the preferred mind, and based on the realistic rules. All counselors should have rules on how to live and work. The rules should be realistic and preferential, not the demanding or absolute one. Preferential rules are flexible, provide a number of alternative options so that the rules are far from the irrational demands. For example: I want to be a professional counselor. For that, I will do the best that I can do. Indeed, I am proud if a lot of people love me but I will be more proud if I can carry out my duties and responsibilities in a correct manner and intentions. Demanding or absolute rules are rigid, absolute, and do not give a choice. For example: I have to be successful and happy. I must be a very good counselor. I have to be liked by everyone.

Second, **creating perception** (Beck & Weishaar, in Jones, 2005) which emphasizes more on the proportionate mind and based on the testing of reality rather than directly make a conclusion. Thus, the counselor should be able to distinguish between facts and conclusions (generalizations), and learn to be able to make accurate conclusions. The focus is more on self-awareness rather than on other-awareness. There are some common mistakes made in perception: (a) Draw conclusions without adequate supporting evidence or contrary to the evidence. For example, I was a good counselor, or I was a scary counselor. (b) Selectively focus on one part which is out of context and at the same time ignore the more accurate information. For example, A counselor is frightened when the counselee moves closer to him/her in order to hear better. (c) Evaluate specific events which are far beyond or far less important than the actual situation. For example, if I am nervous during counseling process, it means a great catastrophe has happened to me, or vice versa, counselors describe the ailing condition by saying I am just a little unwell and it is my daily life condition. (d) Think in black and white, for example, the counselee is extremely cooperative or uncooperative, and counselee should have been a problem or the counselee must immediately be treated (Beck and Weishaar, 2005)

Third, **Creating Self-Talk**. Self-talk is a psychological term used to describe the situation when someone tells about himself to himself (thinking about thinking). Self-talk has many names such as monologue, inner dialogue, talking to himself, revealing himself, instructing himself, or self-speech (Jones, 2003). The entire verbal mind can be regarded as self-talk. Creating a positive self speech will greatly help individuals create calmness and clarity of mind so that it is possible to organize themselves towards more positive attitude. While developing a negative self-talk will contribute to weaken the individuals internally through unskillful thinking. This is in line with what was stated by the experts in cognitive theory, that what we say to ourselves will affect our behavior (Mahoney, 1993; Meichenbaum, 1977; Watson & Tharp, 1989) and that the internal cognitive function is as clues to respond and manipulate the environment actively (Shepard, 1984).

Speech self can help drive behavior, self-evaluation as well as self-motivation. Thus, the objectives which have been planned can be realized appropriately (Bandura , 1986). However, the alike internal cognitive processes can alter someone's perception to become negative so that it can weaken himself. Consequently, he becomes less controlable over his own feelings and thoughts which cause a problem with the external communication. Positive self-talk will increase confidence by recognizing strength , supporting factors and the previous successful experiences.

Fourth, **creating a visual imagery** which is calm and pleasant. The atmosphere of counselor feelings also influence the accuracy in visualizing counselee.

Fifth, **creating explanation**. The counselor should give explanations on the cause of the self-initiated problems and avoid explanations that are contrary to the real cause. Counselors should not use redundant excuses or reasons but use a wide range of relevant and constructive considerations to clarify the explanation.

Sixth, **creating hope**. The counselor should create realistic expectations about the level of ability to cope with difficult situations and people. Competence expectations include predictions about a person's ability to achieve certain performance levels and this will affect the way a person think and feel. While expectation is related to the results which include predictions on the possible consequences of performance.

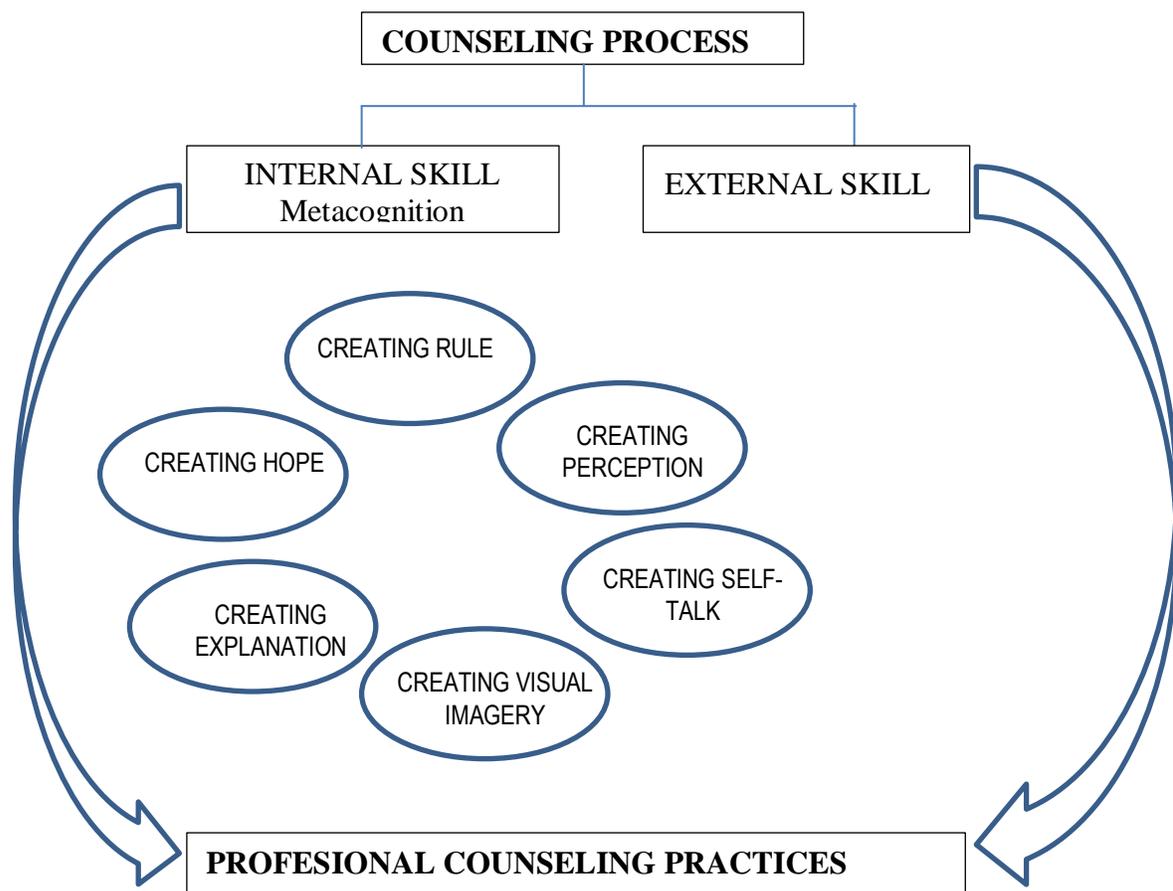


Figure 1. Counselor Metacognition in Counseling Practice (adapted from Sutanto, 2007)

Based on the explanation above, it can be seen clearly the importance of an in-depth study on the counseling skills training model which is based on counselor metacognition. Therefore, this research starts from the most fundamental issue, which is the counselor metacognition process in senior high school counseling services.

METHOD

Research Design

The first year research used descriptive method conducted using survey. The survey aimed to obtain data on: (1) metacognition-based counseling skills training model in counseling services, (2) needs analysis of the metacognition-based counseling skills training model in counseling services, (3) the specifications and components of metacognition-based counseling skills training model in counseling services.

Research Subjects

The subjects in the study were counselors in five cities in East Java: (1) Malang, (2) Surabaya, (3) Kediri, (4) Pamekasan, (5) Jember.

Research Instruments

The instruments for measuring variables of the research were developed by the researcher based on the variables which were translated into indicators of research.

Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics.

FINDINGS

The Implementation of the Counseling Processes

Related to the implementation of the counseling processes which involves the process of counselor metacognition in school counseling, there are some variations in each component which are summarized as follows:

- Counselors applied four of six metacognition indicators, namely, the creation of rule, the creation of perception, the creation of self-talk and creation of explanation. Two metacognition indicators which were not applied by the counselors were the creation of visual images and the creation of hope.
- Counselors applied the creation of rule, the creation of perception, the creation of self-talk and creation of explanation. Two metacognition indicators which were not applied by the counselors were the creation of visual images and the creation of hope.
- Counselors applied four indicators of metacognition in the process of counseling which include the creation of rules, the creation of visual imagery, the creation of explanation and the creation of hope. Two other metacognition indicators which were not applied by the counselor were the creation of perception and the creation of self-talk.
- Counselors applied five of the six metacognition indicators namely the creation of rule, the creation of perception, the creation of self-talk, the creation of visual imagery, and the creation of hope. Indicator which was not used by the counselor in the counseling process was the creation of an explanation.
- Counselors applied the creation of rule, the creation of perception, the creation of visual imagery, the creation of explanation, and the creation of hope. The only metacognition indicator which was not used by counselor in the counseling process was the creation of self-talk.
- Counselors applied five metacognition indicators respectively, the creation of rule, the creation of perception, the creation of self-talk, the creation of visual imagery, and the creation of explanation. While the creation of expectation has not been applied by the counselors in the counseling process.
- Counselors applied all indicators, namely, the creation of rules, the creation of perception, the creation of self-talk, the creation of visual imagery, the creation of explanation, and the creation of hope.
- Counselors applied four from six metacognition indicators namely the creation of perception, the creation of self-talk, the creation of explanation, and the creation of hope. Two indicators which were not applied by the counselors namely the creation of rule and the creation of visual imagery.
- Counselors applied the five indicators in counseling process namely the creation of rule, the creation of self-talk, the creation of visual imagery, the creation of explanation and the creation of expectation

while the creation of perception was ametacognitionindicator which was not applied by the counselors in the counseling process.

- Counselors applied all metacognition indicators which include the creation of rule, the creation of self-talk, the creation of visual imagery, the creation of explanation and the creation of hope. The only metacognition indicator which was not applied by counselor namely the creation of perception.
- Counselors applied six metacognition indicators which included the creation of rule, the creation of perception, the creation of self-talk, the creation of visual imagery, the creation of explanation, and the creation of hope.
- Counselors applied four of the six metacognition indicators namely the creation of rule, the creation of perception, the creation of explanation and the creation of hope. Two of the six indicators which were not applied by the counselors included the creation of self-talk and the creation of visual imagery.
- 13) Counselors applied all the necessary metacognition indicators in counseling services, namely, the creation of rule, the creation of perception, the creation of self-talk, the creation of visual imagery, the creation of explanation and the creation of hope.
- 14) Counselor implemented all the existing metacognition indicators, namely, the creation of rule, the creation of perception, the creation of self-talk, the creation of visual imagery, the creation of explanation and the creation of hope.

Needs Analysis

The results of the survey on the metacognition -based counseling at senior high school showed that the majority of the counselors (81.3 %) agreed to the idea of developing metacognitive-based counseling at senior high school. Furthermore, it can be seen in Figure 1 below that the majority of respondents stated that the requirements were printed learning resources (70.3 %), audio-visual learning resources (65.8 %), computer learning resources (60.8 %) and metacognition-based training model (59.5 %).

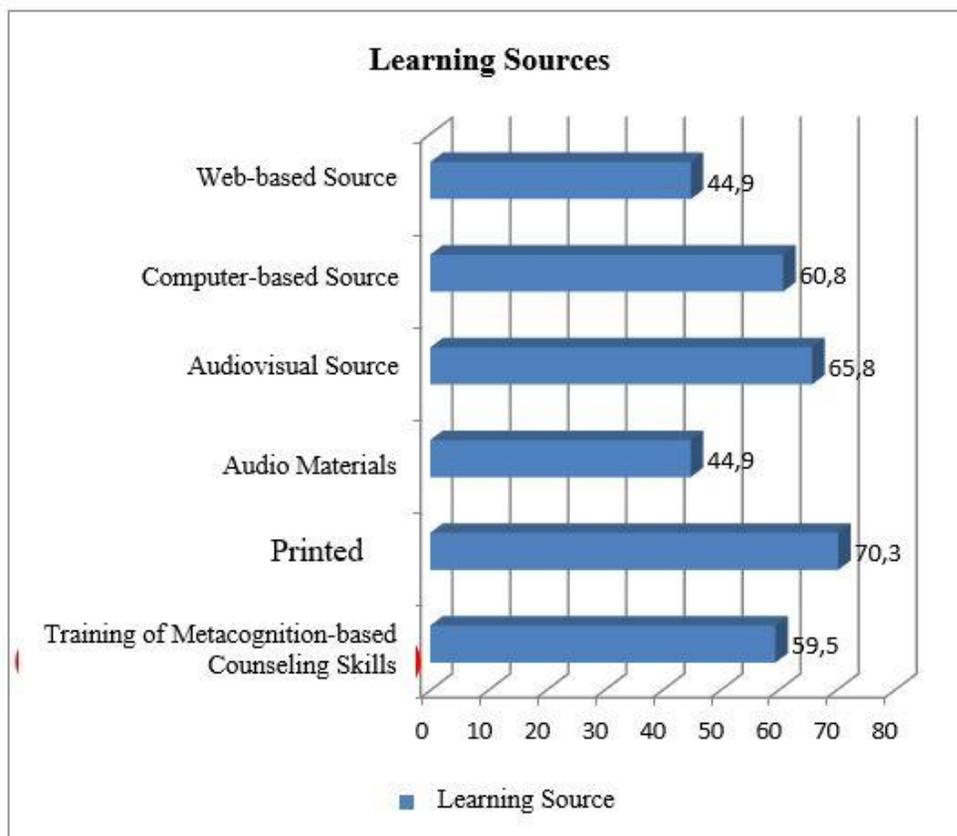


Figure 2. Learning Resources needed for Metacognition-based Counseling Training

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

Conclusions

The conclusions of this study are formulated as follows. (1) Description of the counselor characteristics: Most the counselors have undergraduate degree with over ten years experience, at the age of over forty years, and handle over one hundred students. Large number of schools own counselors which are equipped with room for counseling. Furthermore, most of the students' arrivals are based on the initiative of the students. (2) Description of counselor metacognition in the counseling process at senior high school include the creation of rule, the creation of perception, the creation of self-talk, the creation of visual imagery, the creation of explanation and the creation of hope. The underlying reasons for the selection of various metacognition skills refer to a professional activity where the skills were seen as the major skills needed to achieve the goal of counseling. (3) Most of the counselors agreed to the idea of training model development of metacognition-based counseling at senior high school. (4) Most of the counselors agreed that in order to develop the knowledge and skills related to metacognition-based counseling, the development of printed, audio-visual and computer learning resources are required (5) The characteristics of the training model of metacognition-based counseling at senior high school consists of the some components: (a) objective, curriculum, strategy, implementation, and evaluation (b) printed-manual, (c) Textbook of Metacognition in Counseling; (d) Audio Materials in MP3 that can be loaded on a computer, MP3 player, mobile phone, and WEB; (e) Video Material; (f) Computers (interactive multi-media) Materials; and (g) students; learning website which uses metacognition and counselor as keywords.

Suggestion

Based on the research conclusions above, further suggestion of this research activity is to develop a training model of metacognition-based counseling which will be conducted in the second year. The components need to be developed are as follows: (1) The objectives, curriculum, strategy, implementation, and evaluation of the metacognition-based counseling training model; (2) Printed (textbook) material of the training model; (3) Printed (textbook) materials of metacognition in Counseling; (4) Audio Materials in MP3 which can be loaded on a computer, MP3 player, mobile phone, and WEB; (5) Video training materials; (6) Computer (multi-media interactive) training materials; and (7) WEB of the training which uses metacognition and counselor as the keywords.

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