

IMPROVING INSIGHT OF SELF-MEANING LIFE IN REVOLUTION FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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ABSTRACT

Self-meaning has become part of students' expectations that aid them to achieve academic success and determine life direction, especially in the industrial revolution era. This research aims to determine the effectiveness of Adlerian counseling is increasing self-meaning for academic success. Adlerian counseling is carried out to improve understanding of self-meaning using a pre-and post-test control group research design. Data were collected from 7th-grade students of Airmadidi State Junior High School 2, North Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi Province, Indonesia for the 2019/2020 academic year, with a low understanding of self-meaning life. The numerical and verbal data were analyzed using the Two Independent-Sample Test Mann Whitney-U and the counseling conversation analysis method (verbatim). The results showed that the experimental subjects' understanding of self-meaning can significantly increase through Adlerian counseling. This indicates that students' high insight into self-meaning life is a fundamentally essential attribute that opens self-awareness and triggers a competent, creative lifestyle to live a meaningful and successful life that allows self-actualization in the current industrial revolution era. Therefore, counselors need to be skilled in implementing strategies that help students understand self-meaning life in order to have a successful identity. Furthermore, it is imperative to conduct research on counseling training for Counseling Guidance teachers in schools.

Keywords: Adlerian counseling, self-meaning, successful life

According to Maslow (1987), students tend to seek ways to grow and develop their needs in school to actualize and prepare themselves for the working world. Their desire to be successful in their various academic fields is associated with their ability to meet a defined range of expectations. Generally, students come from various family backgrounds to live with each other, form new social relationships, and learn the various educational skills needed in an increasingly advanced technology era to achieve their set goals. Success can be defined as the struggle focused on the goals to be achieved.

Students face various academic challenges as an adolescent to meet the rapid advancement of the existing technology. For instance, they bravely and diligently struggle to challenge obstacles and difficulties, such as playing games and using social media, which take up the time needed to complete their school assignments. Therefore, life meaning plays an essential role in optimizing humanity, especially when dealing with situations full of burdens and agendas.

Adler (1964) stated that life meaning is a form of effort to determine solutions to social problems faced.

According to Steger (2006), people with a clearer picture of their life meaning have a better ability to manage challenges. Kiang & Fuligni (2009) stated a positive correlation between the search for meaning, self-esteem and motivation through academic success. These findings indicate that self-meaning in a social environment creates a sense of responsibility and a need that should be fulfilled through the struggle for success. These conditions support individuals to combat various obstacles in obtaining recognition as meaningful individuals in their community. Self-responsibility enables self-committed individuals to demonstrate a lifestyle for success.

However, the impact of technological advances does not only support success, rather, it also attracts the desire to play online games. This indicates that technological advances have the opportunity to bring success and a very high

chance of attracting failure. An attachment to things that take time to learn and a lack of self-responsibility to fulfil one's needs leads to failure. This weakens the struggle to overcome various challenges, thereby allowing the individual to remain within the sphere of inferiority.

Failure leads to disappointment and despair, which needs attention and professional handling to achieve success. Conditions that show a lack of life meaning can be a cause of frustration that can continue in worse conditions. Frankl (1985) and Maddi (1978) stated that neurosis is a state of saturation experienced by a person due to a lack of meaning, empathy, and purpose.

According to Adler, humans are social beings, therefore awareness is needed to determine how life becomes meaningful to others. Adlerian counseling is based on humans who experience inferiority feelings and struggle to adapt to the existing successes in their environment. Individual experiences in the environment become a model for striving to become successful in gaining recognition in the environment. Adler (1964) stated that inferiority feelings arise when individuals compare themselves with others. Inferiority feelings also raise awareness that triggers the struggle to gain success and meaning in life both from oneself and others. This is usually achieved through appropriate efforts, the zeal to progress, and feelings of satisfaction and happiness.

Madidi (1978) reported that the search for meaning is fundamental in human motivation. Life meaning is born from the cognitive process that an individual needs to create. Frankl (2003) stated that "the role of meaning is significant in human life." Furthermore, it is emphasized that meaning is a cognitive category that forms one's perspective on reality and with defined actions. Therefore, this research aims to analyze the effectiveness of implementing Adlerian counseling in increasing the understanding of life meaning in the revolutionary era to achieve academic success.

The goal of Adlerian counseling is essential to change inferior feelings into success by restoring an individual's condition as a social being. According to Adler (1964), humans are motivated to carry out social responsibilities and fulfil the need to achieve something.

Adler was one of the first to recognize this process in human development and argued that the sequence of individual experiences is the teleological narrative of a lifestyle. It is also an

individual's unique way of coping and moving through life's tasks. Adler (1964) also stated that the main purpose of human life is to provide a source of motivation to achieve goals that bring security. Adler asserted that the source of motivation is primarily a social responsibility to fulfil the meaning of life in society. The desire to realize responsibility as a meaningful individual needs to be generated or conditioned through encouragement by the counselor in helping to build insight into the client's self-meaning life.

Wong (2011) stated that meaning is one of the four pillars in the positive psychological development wave, with others consisting of virtue, resilience, and well-being. Longitudinal research on meaning proves that life has a relationship with outcomes (Farber et al., 2011). Counselors in the Adlerian counseling process try to optimize encouragement effectively. The encouragement is equipped with reflections to reflect on the counseling experience by helping the counsees to find their strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, the technique in Adlerian counseling is precise and complete.

The sincerity of the counselor, leads to a feeling of encouragement, enthusiasm and hope needed for the counselee to achieve success. The steps are as follows:

1. Building Counseling and Assessment Relationships
2. Building Self Awareness
3. Reorientation and Reeducation
4. Termination

Furthermore, the counselee is encouraged to understand its meaning to the environment to achieve goals to achieve success. The characteristics of Adlerian Counseling with encouragement reflection techniques can guarantee that the counseling is appropriate to be used as an intervention to increase self-meaning and trigger self-motivation.

Increased academic achievement is strongly associated with students' ability to succeed through learning. Students, who learn from experience, tend to have a more positive perspective of the lifestyle. They also learn to be consistent with goals through self-evaluation of performance and a mindset that encourages them to reject a failed lifestyle by struggling to succeed (Brooks, R. L. & Noy Van, M. 2008, Rill, et al. 2009).

Problem Formulation

The main problems in this research are formulated as follows:

1. Is Adlerian counseling effective in increasing the counselee's life meaning?
2. Are there differences between the Adlerian counseling experimental and groups using the encouragement reflection technique?

Hypothesis

Based on the research problems and objectives, the hypotheses are formulated as follows:

1. Adlerian counseling with encouragement reflection techniques is effective in increasing the counselee's self-esteem.
2. There are differences in awareness of life meaning between the counsees in the Adlerian counseling experimental and control groups.

A. A. Adlerian counseling in improving self-meaning life

Adlerian counseling is based on the concept of Adler's theory (1992) which is relevant to individual and social life. The three main concepts are as follows:

- 1) Inferior complex as the problem
- 2) Compensation for perceived deficiencies is real or imagined and is the ultimate goal
- 3) Concept is a part of society (*Gemeinschaftsgefühl*)

Inferiority feelings are the initial state when individuals start to observe the success obtained by others, which also encourages them to be successful. This is generally associated with the urge to succeed to feel happy. Adler (1964) stated that the only force behind moving forward and struggling dynamically is the results through appreciation. Meanwhile, failure shows that things need to be learned, evaluated, and changed in the form of a consistent choice of lifestyle manifested in a valid struggle to succeed. William (2011) stated that a serious inferior complex is a condition that presents a serious problem, thereby making the situation is difficult for individuals to achieve success.

Individuals unable to increase success since they are difficult to change from feeling inferior to superior. A life full of meaning tends to show

compensatory behavior to cover up shortcomings. Most of the compensation take the individuals further from their expectations. Haugen (2014) stated that individuals act in an unhealthy competitive way when desperate.

According to Wilbum (2005), children that do not receive encouragement and support tend to choose inappropriate goals, as a result, feelings of inferiority become excessive, which can lead to depression. The concept of belonging to society, also known as *Gemeinschaftsgefühl*, is defined as a healing process (Adler, 1964). This is associated with feelings of being part of the wider community, which helps to reduce solitude and isolation. This concept allows individuals to learn many things about improving themselves to be cooperative, live healthier, and think positively. It also provides them with a lifestyle that is consistent with the goal, and living it with social interaction in the community is part of life. Adler (1964) further explained that social interest promotes people to strive for superiority by adapting healthy and not getting lost. Furthermore, Campbell & Brigman (2005) stated that the key factors for behavior change in this model lie in reflection and encouragement.

Adler's views imply that in addition to education in the family environment, counseling also teaches about social interests, which are useful in the following: (1) Character building and development, (2) developing social awareness and cooperative living to contribute to the good of others, and (3) encouraging each other, while striving to achieve success, by mutually reinforcing, appreciating, or contributing to each other for personal and collective interests.

The Effectiveness of Adlerian Counseling in Increasing the Understanding of Life Meaning

Repeated failure weakens individuals urge in choosing goals and planning a striving lifestyle. It becomes a problem of discouragement that must be corrected by turning weakness into a striving strength that makes success possible. Adler (1992) stated that when children do not receive appropriate encouragement and support, their feelings of inferiority are exaggerated, thereby leading to despair. Many struggles to be successful are not paying attention to others,

rather their goals are personal, and their struggles are motivated by an exaggerated sense of self-worth. After individuals adopt "wrong goals," they further build misconceptions to support "false logic." Millar A. (2007) reported that encouragement is a multi-faceted process and essential for effective Adlerian practices. According to Nasheeda A. (2008), one of the main tasks of counselors is to help restore patterns of hope. Meanwhile Adlerian stated that the counselor helps the counselee find patterns related to feelings of hope through various experiences. Watts (2006) stated that "the process of encouragement is a fundamental key to restore the pattern of hope" in counseling. Counselors provide opportunities for counselee to have an insight into their predetermined goals. Lifestyle enables individuals with a consistent personality to plan goals that need to be achieved. This is a successful life agenda, associated with accepting individual reports as a pleasant fact. Nasheeda's (2008) research on "Life Skills Education for young people: Coping with Challenges," found that adaptive abilities in positive behavior enable individuals to deal with daily demands and challenges effectively. These are the basic skills of overcoming challenges; therefore, individuals feel more confident, motivated and develop a positive attitude towards life.

Method

This is a quantitative research with the Fraenkel & Wallen (2006) and a pretest-posttest design used for the experimental and control groups. It was selected with the consideration that (1) it is appropriate for this type of experimental research, including educational and psychological experiments. (2) it is appropriate to test hypotheses and provide adequate control hence the variables can be assessed correctly.

The main characteristics of this design are as follows: (1) the experimental group received Adlerian counseling treatment with encouragement techniques by randomly placing subjects and subjects in the experimental and control groups. (2) The control group received treatment with transactional analysis counseling, and (3) the samples selected in both groups were given a pretest by measuring the instrument for understanding the meaning of life consisting of the ability to self-evaluate, the motivation to try (striving) and the ability to learn from experience. The experimental design in this research is shown in Figure 3.1.

The Randomized Pretest- Posttest Control Group Design

Figure 3.1: Experimental design with pretest-posttest design with a control group

Treatment Group	R	O1	X	O2
Control Group	R	O3	C	O4

(Source: Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006)

Where:

R = Subject assignment by random assignment

X = Experimental Treatment Adlerian counseling with encouragement reflection technique

O = Pretest measurement or initial observation and Posttest observation after treatment

C = Treatment counseling Transactional Analysis

O1 = Pretest in the experimental group

O2 = Posttest in the experimental group

O3 = Pretest in the control group

O4 = Posttest in the control group

Data analysis to test the effectiveness of Adlerian counseling with encouragement

reflection technique used a nonparametric statistical analysis technique called Mann Whitney t-test. This technique is used to test the difference in the average score of self-esteem.

= Experimental group with Adlerian encouragement reflection counseling, (pretest and posttest)

= also control group (pretest – posttest)

= posttest in both groups (experimental group and control group)

The findings showed that Adlerian counseling with encouragement is a treatment process because it contains empowerment for

growth and competency improvement as well as a technique to restore the client's expectation pattern. According to Millar A. (2007), "encouragement is an essential basic principle in the entire Adlerian practice, therefore in every treatment, it should not deviate from encouragement."

Research Implication

This research shows that Adlerian counseling has the ability to increase awareness of life meaning that triggers the struggle for successful behaviors. The Adlerian counseling processes through in-depth encouragement help the counsees realize the default lifestyle, understand self-problems related to the mindset that is inconsistent with the dream. It is also associated with helping the counselee towards a mindset capable of creating a lifestyle that is consistent with the achievement of meaningful goals.

The effectiveness of the Adlerian counseling process is the basis for expanding its use in dealing with various undeveloped psychological aspects of adolescents for better understanding. Furthermore, Adlerian counseling is an educational implication to help adolescents develop their mind and psyche in holistically exploring the world and becoming meaningful individuals. Adlerian counseling allows the emergence of self-meaning within the family and society. The emergence of self-meaning in society allows individuals to transmit a sense of responsibility in helping friends succeed. It concerns self-acceptance, the crucial meaning of life, as well as the commitment to personal life satisfaction and psychological health.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Adlerian counseling effectively increases the understanding of life meaning for academic success.

Suggestion

This research suggests that counselors should be skilled in implementing Adlerian Counseling to help counsees understand self-meaning life in order to have a successful identity. Also, it is

necessary to research counseling training for Counseling Guidance teachers in schools.

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