The Implementation of Eco-Art Therapy in Guidance and Counseling in Expressing Students’ Social Problems

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ABSTRACT

Eco-art therapy can be used in guidance and counseling as a creative, cutting-edge technique. This study intends to examine how eco-art therapy is used in group and individual counseling as well as guidance and counseling. The research methodology employed is a qualitative descriptive technique. Four students and one teacher from public senior high school 1, Sigli made up the participants. The study's tools included open-ended questions and instructions for conducting observations. To conclude, data were evaluated by reducing, presenting, and verifying methods using transcripts of group guidance conversations, individual counseling, observation data, activity documentation, and interview results. The analysis's findings indicate that using natural-material objects with aesthetic value in group counseling can inspire clients to express their feelings and share experiences, as well as help them recognize and understand their needs so they can make decisions that suit those requirements. Additionally, group counseling might help the counselee develop the values that are important to him in his interactions with others at school. Additionally, the use of eco-art therapy in one-on-one counseling can help the client explore and express their emotions as well as identify and meet their needs, enabling them to come up with solutions to challenging issues. The use of eco-art therapy in group and one-on-one counseling teach guidance and counseling teachers how to give counselees stimulants that will encourage them to solve their difficulties.
INTRODUCTION

Guidance and counseling as an integral part of the educational process have a significant contribution to the success of the entire learning process in schools. Guidance and Counseling (BK) teachers can provide stimulus for students to be critical of the problems they face so that these conditions generate ideas for them to solve the problems they face (Aldina et al., 2023; Fitri & Kushendar, 2019; Prayitno & Amti, 2004). BK teachers are one of the important factors in educational institutions in achieving educational goals in general and the success and success achieved by students in particular.

The distance learning process caused by the 2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic has been implemented for a long time. The experience of online learning during the pandemic surprised many educational institutions ranging from elementary school to university levels (Amiruddin et al., 2023). Implementation of learning using various technologies such as smartphones or computers that require students to spend a lot of time studying in front of the smartphone or computer monitor screen. Various psychological problems arise among students who are increasingly symptomatic as one of the effects of distance learning.

Andiarna and Kusumawati (2020) revealed that the distance learning system creates anxiety and also pressure for some students. Because they are unable to immediately connect with their lecturers or friends at home, students frequently become bored very fast (Oktawirawan, 2020). They also cannot carry out hobbies and cannot carry out practical activities for certain learning in the laboratory. Students are less physically active and tend to spend more time in front of the monitor screen (Qiu et al., 2020). Furthermore, it seems that today’s human life is increasingly disconnected from nature through the use of technology (Ives et al., 2018).

Another fact is the condition that occurred to students in a school in Bandung Regency who previously underwent learning activities from home. This finding is supported by the results of interviews with several students which show that activities related to learning from home make students very stressed with tasks that are difficult to understand, and communication with teachers that is less effective and boring. Likewise, the results of the questionnaire analysis survey from the deputy head of the curriculum sector showed that the attendance rate for student participation in distance learning through Zoom meetings was 40%.

Departing from this, it is felt that it is very important to help deal with matters related to the understanding and also the beliefs of students regarding the conditions that occur so that special attention and handling are needed from educators, especially from guidance and counseling teachers. To aid a counselor in the counseling process, many different types of approaches are related to guiding and counseling. Many post-modern methods are in use today, including art therapy, which combines several methods. Art therapy is a modality that is developing in the psychological field, its goal is to heal by prioritizing individual needs (Saraceno, 2017). Art as a powerful medium can be used as a means of communication (Malchiodi, 2014).
The use of natural materials will keep students interacting with nature even though all learning takes place with the help of the internet network and using digital media. The fact states that spending time in nature, for sports or other things, is beneficial for mental health, overcoming anxiety, and reducing tension (Psychology Today, 2020). Research related to eco-therapy conducted in schools with outdoor class programs shows that exposure to the outdoors has a positive impact on students as shown by the increase in students' social studies, science, language, and mathematics (Buzzell & Chalquist, 2010). Corazon dkk. (2018) in his research related to nature-based therapy revealed that stressed adult individuals tend to prefer nature-based therapy more than conventional-based therapy. Additional studies demonstrate that eco-therapy can promote the growth of empathy, interpersonal competence, and self-concept (Dimpel, 2019).

Rationale of Study

The rationale for conducting this study lies in the recognition of the potential benefits of incorporating eco-art therapy into guidance and counseling practices for addressing students' social problems (Andiarna and Kusumawati, 2020). Traditional counseling approaches may sometimes fall short in providing avenues for creative expression and exploration of issues, particularly those related to environmental or social concerns (Ives et.al., 2018). Eco-art therapy offers a holistic and innovative approach that integrates creative expression with environmental awareness, potentially fostering deeper insights and facilitating the resolution of social problems among students (Miranda, 2021). By investigating the implementation of eco-art therapy in guidance and counseling, this study seeks to fill a gap in the existing literature and contribute to the development of more effective counseling interventions tailored to students' needs.

Objectives

The research aims to evaluate the effectiveness of eco-art therapy in both group and one-on-one counseling sessions as a means to empower participants in resolving personal challenges. Specifically, it seeks to investigate the impact of eco-art therapy techniques on fostering self-driven problem-solving behaviors among counselees. By examining the role of eco-art therapy in creating a supportive environment within group counseling sessions and assessing individual experiences within both group and one-on-one contexts. Ultimately, the research endeavors to explore the potential benefits of integrating eco-art therapy approaches into counseling practices, aiming to equip educators with tools to inspire meaningful engagement and empowerment among counselees in addressing their difficulties.
LITERATURE REVIEW
Cutcher and Boyd (2018) in Miranda (2021) who studied eco-art revealed that children's learning processes benefit from creativity. This finding is consistent with the literature, which claims that practices rooted in the outdoors and the arts foster creativity and improve learning (Pike, 2021). As a result, adding natural components to art therapy represents a development in the approach to guidance and counseling. Studies on eco-art therapy, however, have not yet been widely used. As a result, the research that will be done focuses on eco-art therapy, a method utilized in counseling and guiding that is also anticipated to be helpful in developing a number of things in those fields.

METHODOLOGY
The approach used in this study is qualitative and uses a descriptive method. Participants for this study were selected from class XII students of senior high school 1, Sigli. Researchers put up recruitment flyers via WhatsApp Class XII guidance group (documentation attached). From these methods, the researcher obtained the participants involved consisting of four students and one teacher who were most suitable according to the qualification criteria for primary participants. The study's tools included open-ended questions and instructions for conducting observations. Individual therapy, group counseling, observation data, activity documentation, interview findings, and transcripts of group counseling discussions were analyzed through reduction, presentation, and verification so that a conclusion can be drawn.

Regarding this study, data validity was carried out through a process of triangulation, member checks, and expert opinions. In this study, the triangulation process was carried out on observation data, interview data, and documentation data. In addition, The triangulation approach was implemented through both group counseling and one-on-one counseling which was carried out in two sessions and polls of students and teachers regarding the research subject. Four students with the initials RI, NA, EN, and HI, as well as one teacher with the initials BI were involved in this triangulation process. In member checks using interviews, if the data that has been obtained is by the interpretation given by the research subject, then the data can be said to be credible. The expert opinion activity takes place when the researcher first starts going to the field until the research report writing activity is complete and the researcher receives direction and guidance during the research activity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Methods and Materials Used in Eco-Art Therapy
The use of natural material media in counseling sessions with eco-art therapy besides being easy to find and inexpensive is also directly related to education in caring for nature, what is around us can be collected and used to express ideas and emotions Speert (2016). Art materials can appear everywhere by collecting shells on the beach, seed pots, twigs, pine trees, leaves and bird feathers even while walking around town (Summers & Vivian, 2018).

Understanding the complicated life of interdependent connections doesn't always start with the internet. By making art in relation to the earth, a context is
set for emotional and psychological health as it resides not only within individuals, families, communities or even the human species, but in relationships with the entire planet. As Roszak (1993), revealed that other therapies seek to heal the alienation between people and people, people and families, people and society. Caine (2013) revealed that nature has an impact on psychological and psychosocial health. Eco-psychology seeks to heal the deeper alienation between people and the natural environment (Berger & Tiry, 2012).

Some examples of art materials in eco-art therapy sessions that can be prepared include: materials for drawing, painting, collage and sculpture Pike (2021).

1) Materials for drawing in eco-art therapy, paper is made from any plant material. As an alternative to tools, charcoal, and wood ashes, pens could be made by cutting the end of a stick. Ink could be extracted from leaves, legumes, roots, flowers, and berries.

2) Materials for painting, for eco-art therapy sessions, natural dyes can be mixed with water, lense oil, or cornstarch to produce paint.

3) Materials for Collage During an eco-art therapy session, collage materials can include dry leaves, including species of butterfly wings, (which are ethically obtained), flowers, seeds, stem pods, feathers, sand, etc. The glue can be plant sap, root excretion, sap, or beeswax. Quartz sand and vines as rope or twine.

4) Materials for clay, fruit and vegetable sculpture: Apples, potatoes, pears, coconuts, Africans, can be dried after carving to produce interesting textures and effects.

Pike (2021) reveals that clinically eco-art therapy is rooted in: (1) the value of sustainability, (2) the desire for experiences and a healthier environment, (3) the need for various methods, and (4) the priority of high quality therapy without exponential cost of commercial art materials. Some eco-art therapy methods include:

1) The method of eco-art therapy during virtual sessions (Methods of Eco-art therapy During Virtual Sessions)

2) Methods of Creating an Onsite Garden

3) Methods of Cultivating Art materials.
Table 1. Categories of Art Making and Examples of Eco-Art Therapy Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sample Material</th>
<th>Example Method, Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draw</td>
<td>Sand</td>
<td>Creates an image using continuous lines to compose a geometric pattern layer composition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sculpture</td>
<td>Sand or plaster</td>
<td>Dig a design in the sand and pour plaster to maintain shape.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making baskets</td>
<td>Lemongrass, Grass</td>
<td>Coil: tie the grass, coil it, wrap it and roll it into a basket shape.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weave</td>
<td>Various vines, tree parts such as twigs</td>
<td>Form an X with the stick weave a vine above and below the stem combined and form a container.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyeing cloth</td>
<td>bark, tree leaves, fruits such as walnut, eucalyptus and wood</td>
<td>Substantive dyes, use plants rich in nins (such as bark, leaves or seeds) to produce long-lasting color without mordant still.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making ink</td>
<td>Various herbs and types of berries</td>
<td>Use the plant mixed with vinegar (to keep it colored) and salt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make watercolor</td>
<td>Beets, saffron</td>
<td>Use temporary plants: often eaten.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making oil paint</td>
<td>lens oil</td>
<td>Crush the rock and mix with lense oil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making paper</td>
<td>granules from any plant</td>
<td>The pulp plant is blended with water, pour it into the streamin, remove the wet sheet from the screen and dry it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air dry</td>
<td>Plants, tweezers</td>
<td>Hanging: tie the plant to the stem and hang it on the rope let it hang for two: tie the plant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preservation</td>
<td>Silica</td>
<td>Gel: cover the plants in silica for 3-5 days in a suitable place cold and dry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring for color</td>
<td>Essential oils: salt, ironoxide vinegar and soy milk</td>
<td>Mordant: a mixture of oil, salt, vinegar or other mordant onto a surface to be dipped in a coloring agent to maintain color.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group Guidance with Eco-Art Therapy Approach

There are several stages performed with group direction by an eco-art therapy approach. At the formation stage, some topics and objectives are conveyed in group guidance services. The topic and objectives are presented as follows: "The topic in this group guidance aims to enable you to recognize emotions and determine values and ways of behaving that are acceptable in social life." Emotion recognition is a topic in the first group guidance session which aims to recognize emotions and determine students' values and ways of behaving that are acceptable in social life. Another activity at the formation stage is setting goals. Before IN, LM, UK, and SN students conveyed their respective goals in participating in group guidance services, they each got to know each other because the formation stage is the stage of self-involvement or the stage of inserting oneself into the life of a group (Prayitno & Amti, 2004). The students hope to be able to meet again with their school friends soon so they can share stories and be happy with their friends.

In the transitional stage, students are allowed to submit questions or opinions regarding the core activities that will be carried out in group guidance services. There was a student who expressed his opinion that the group guidance process did not have note-taking tasks, as follows: "Miss, we hope that in the group guidance, there is no note-taking task." This indicates that in group
guidance services, students do not want boring or boring activities because while studying from home students already feel boredom or deep boredom.

In the activity stage, students first spend a minute focusing on breathing while they are sitting in a comfortable position. Then the students search for and collect natural materials to make an object according to the instructions of the supervisor or counselor where the natural materials collected can describe a form or object that is meaningful to the students. This shows that nature can be a medium for students to solve psychological problems. Delaney (2020) revealed that nature-based therapy is an intervention that is used to suppress the mutually beneficial link between people and nature. Outdoor practice (Outdoor Eco-art therapy Practice) involving the creation of symbolic works of art using natural materials (Flowers et.al., 2014). The exposure of the emotions expressed by LM students and the problems faced by IN, UK, and SN students at the results evaluation stage, demonstrates how student-made, artistically valuable things made of natural materials can be used to communicate difficulties that students experience or express the emotions experienced by students. One example of objects that have been compiled by students from natural materials is described in Figure 1.

![Figure 1. Objects Compiled by in Students](image)

In students give the title or theme of the object they make with the name "Over Thinking and Positive Thinking". The objects consist of natural materials, such as dry grass, cobia thorns, star anise, black peppercorns, white peppercorns, ginger, yellow flowers, ecorbia flowers, red shoots, and gutter flowers. Then the IN student interprets the natural materials he uses in the object "Over Thinking and Positive Thinking" which is presented in Figure 1, as follows:

1) The first circle consists of natural materials, such as dry grass, black peppercorns, pine flowers, ecorbia thorns, green leaves, red leaves, and gutters. This first circle is an object that describes "overthinking" where this object means that I am not accompanied in doing the assignments given by the teacher so that the assignments given are done individually.

2) The second circle consists of natural materials, such as ginger, ecorbia flowers, dry grass, white pepper, yellow flowers, green flowers, and red leaves. This second circle is an object that describes "positive thinking" where this object means that people are not as bad as I think, they are good if there is something
they don't understand they tell them and want to accompany them. In the past, I was more of an individualist, but, now, I think that I will have a hard time passing this level of school if I am an individualist.

Group counseling emphasizes that things created of natural materials can convey thoughts and feelings. These findings show that group guidance activities using an eco-art therapy method benefit students much in terms of experience and knowledge. In line with Pike (2021) who demonstrated that nature-based art therapy can be used to express the feelings or issues that a person is going through. In addition, Malchiodi (2002) revealed that the artistic value contained in objects that are arranged can support expressing emotions and understanding the person. Also, Dybvik et al., (2018) revealed that exposure to natural items helps patients, in this case, students see themselves differently than they would normally.

At the closing stage, specifically at the social skills strengthening stage, the students shared their experiences from participating in group guidance services. The results of the presentation show that group counseling services instruct students to live life independently. This is in line with Hayden (2013) who revealed that group guidance aims to assist students in meeting their basic physiological needs, understanding themselves, and providing opportunities to gain independence. In addition, Yusuf (2006) revealed that group guidance is a process of assistance that can increase optimal cognitive development in broadening an individual's insight. Also, objects that have artistic value and aesthetics can deepen students' understanding of new experiences (Ankenman, 2010).

Furthermore, the last activity of the closing stage was the culmination with an exhibition where students presented their respective objects by conveying the challenges or difficulties they faced in the group guidance process with an eco-art therapy approach and how to overcome these challenges or difficulties. Eco-therapy plays an important role in the process of making art because eco-psychology is also based on experiential practice in nature and practical application in the relationship between humans and nature to prevent or solve human psychological problems (Scull, 2008). Challenges or difficulties in the group guidance process and how to overcome them are a reflection for students where this helps students to consolidate learning and engage in deeper thinking and interpret an active role in their growth (Houghton & Worroll, 2016).

**Individual Counseling with Eco-Art Therapy Approach**

The implementation of individual counseling in this study used an eco-art therapy approach or natural art therapy. Speert (2016) revealed that natural art therapy is a therapy that combines elements of art and elements of nature in practice where therapy uses natural materials or modified natural situations in the form of objects that have artistic value to treat their patients. The collage method is used in this study's eco-art therapy strategy for individual counseling services. According to Pike (2021), the collage method is a way of arranging things or resources to make something significant. One of the greatest values of art therapy is that it enables non-verbal forms of expression and communication. Atkins (2017) reveals that art offers ways to hold, express and release emotions
and they provide possibilities to deepen and broaden personal understanding and meaning, to create and maintain community and to sustain life.

Pike (2021) states that there are six stages in eco-art therapy, namely (1) setting goals, (2) education and modification, (3) evaluating the results, (4) emphasizing social skills, (5) model structure and framework, and (6) a culmination with exhibits. In the application of individual counseling services with the eco-art therapy approach, a combination of individual counseling stages and eco-art therapy stages is elaborated simultaneously whereas at the individual counseling stage, there are eco-art therapy stages. In the initial stage, there is the stage of setting goals. Meanwhile, in the middle stage there are two stages of eco-art therapy, namely: (1) education and modification, and (2) evaluation of results, where in the education and modification stage, students use the collage method to produce an object that has artistic value and is made from natural ingredients. Furthermore, at the final stage, there are three stages of eco-art therapy, namely: (1) emphasizing social skills, (2) model structure and framework, and (3) culminating with exhibitions.

In the early stages, some topics and objectives are conveyed in individual counseling services. Confusion in expressing personal problems is a topic in the first individual counseling session which aims to reveal student problems. In line with Shetrzer dan Stone (1981) who revealed that uncovering the actual problems faced by individuals who in this context are students, is an important part of individual counseling where mentors or counselors can provide stimulants that stimulate students to solve their problems individually and independently.

In the middle stage, students search for and collect natural materials to make an object according to the instructions of a supervisor or counselor where the natural materials collected can describe a shape or object that is meaningful to students. Furthermore, from the natural materials collected, students are instructed to arrange objects where the colors, shapes, designs, and patterns of the objects made must coordinate with each other and have a relationship between the object and the feelings or problems encountered.

In the middle stage, there is an education and modification stage which shows that SN students begin to combine natural materials to create items that can depict how they relate to one another to the problems SN students face. This means that natural materials compiled by SN students must be meaningful and able to express the problems they face. In line with Speert (2016) who revealed that the use of natural media materials in individual counseling sessions with the help of eco-art therapy is used to express ideas, emotions, or problems. In detail, the SN student expressed his problem through the objects he had arranged regarding his bitter life journey. The presentation of the problems expressed by SN students at the results evaluation stage shows that artistically valuable items composed by SN students and the difficulties faced by SN students can be expressed via art made from natural elements. The following objects with the theme "painful journey" compiled by SN students are presented in Figure 2.
The description of these natural materials is as follows:
1) Stones on the grass, this shape describes my hard head where the contents of my thoughts are aplenty. But there is one thing that I think is the stupidest thought I have ever thought because I have ever thought about ending my life.
2) Moss, this material is identical to what bothers me, for example on the walls of the house. Even though the moss can prevent flooding and there are benefits. It's just that that person always sees the bad side, that's the same with people to me where people always see my bad side and never see the good side, some people say that I am a good person who is always kind to people who have been mean to me and always forgive.
3) Talang flower, this material describes the wounds on my body from being beaten.
4) Yellow flowers, this material describes me as being humble to everyone, cheerful but small in form among many people which is sometimes invisible. My hobby is speaking in front of people where I have spoken in front of many people.
5) Patterned leaves, this material describes the nature of different people. So is the nature of people to me.
6) Twigs formed by a house and a star anise in the middle, this shape describes the uncomfortable atmosphere of my house and I seem to want to stay away from it.
7) The pieces of branches that line up, this shape describes my life which is not always above and not always below.
8) Three babadotan flower buds, this shape depicts my three wishes, namely I want to be successful, make my parents happy, and make my parents proud of my success.

The results of these interviews revealed that SN students gained a lot of experience using this eco-art therapy technique in individual counseling sessions where SN students could express their feelings and problems that had been buried because they felt afraid and embarrassed to express them. In line with Pike (2021) who showed that nature-based art therapy can explain the issues a person is having. In addition, Malchiodi, (2002) revealed that the artistic value contained in objects that are arranged can support expressing emotions and...
understanding the person. Also, Dybvik et al. (2018) revealed that exposure to natural items helps patients—in this case, students—see themselves differently than they would normally.

The final activity of the final stage is the culmination with an exhibition where SN students present the objects they have composed by conveying the lessons SN students get from the individual counseling process. These findings indicate that SN students find challenges or difficulties in this individual counseling activity. In line with Cherdymova et al. (2019) who revealed that one of the functions of art therapy based on natural materials is liberation from negative conditions experienced by an individual who in this context is an SN student. To overcome these challenges or difficulties, SN students try to use the try & error method to get meaningful objects from existing natural materials. Furthermore, SN students plan to apply the results of individual counseling activities obtained in stages to minimize the problems they face. The process of individual guidance and how to overcome it is a reflection for SN students where this helps SN students in consolidating learning and engaging in deeper thinking and interpreting an active role in their growth (Houghton & Worroll, 2016).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Two conclusions can be drawn from this study. First, The use of group counseling with an eco-art therapy approach can help the client learn to express issues, emotions, and sentiments through items made of natural materials. In addition, being the ability to recognize and comprehend needs to make judgments based on those needs. And The client can also implement the social care values into his daily interactions, which is specifically in the setting of a school. Second, the use of eco-art therapy in private counseling sessions provides stimulants that stimulate counselees to make various efforts To take care of the issues they encounter. As a result, the counselee has behaved and thought in a positive direction where the counselee has a clear purpose in life. The eco-art therapy method can be utilized in place of traditional therapy in group counseling services to be able to learn to express problems.

Some recommendations that can be provided for further research are (1) involving a wider scope of the environment so that students can search for and select more varied natural materials, (2) involving other observers so that data is not recorded during processing observation can be minimized, (3) The eco-art therapy approach for group guidance services and individual counseling can be tried out to be applied at other educational levels such as Elementary School, Junior High School, or Senior High School.

FURTHER STUDY

This research still has limitations, so it is necessary to carry out further research related to the topic of The Implementation of Eco-Art Therapy in Guidance and Counseling in Expressing Students’ Social Problems in order to improve this research and add insight to readers.
REFERENCES


