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A Reality Group Counselling to Reduce Cheating Habit in High School Students

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A Reality Group Counselling to Reduce Cheating Habit in High School Students



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Abstract: Cheating behavior often arises due to a lack of individual self-control, influenced by both internal and external pressures, as well as the presence of opportunities to engage in dishonest actions. To address this issue, a pre-experimental study was conducted utilizing a one-group pretest-posttest design to evaluate the effectiveness of reality group counseling in reducing cheating behavior among high school students. After administering the intervention, the students were re-assessed, and the results were analyzed using a paired T-test. The findings revealed that the calculated t-value was 6.350, which exceeded the critical value of 3.82 at a 5% significance level with 3 degrees of freedom. Additionally, the significance value (2-tailed) was 0.008, which was lower than the threshold of 0.05. Based on these results, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted, indicating a significant difference in students' cheating behavior before and after the counseling intervention. These findings suggest that reality group counseling was effective in reducing cheating habits among the high school students who participated in the study. In conclusion, reality group counseling can be considered a beneficial approach for mitigating cheating behavior in educational settings, contributing to the promotion of academic integrity.

Key Words: Cheating behavior; Reality group counseling; Self-control; Pre-experimental study; Academic integrity

INTRODUCTION

One of the problems at a school is academic cheating by students. This cheating habit looks normal; however, it will give bad effects to students and the purpose of national education will not be achieved. The effects of cheating are students become lazy, creates lying habit, students allow themselves to do anything they want to achieve their need, etc. (Wantaritati et al., 2022; Starovoytova and Namango, 2016). Hartono (2018) stated that cheating is an dishonest behavior of an individual to copy or using notes during an examination process to obtain an academic advantages. This behavior can happen at any level of education middle.

Academic dishonesty happens also in high schools. Desi et al. (2018) found that 59% of students of class X and XI had experience doing cheating. Students cheating increases every year. It was found in the data of Minister of Education and Culture Republic of Indonesia that students cheating in the national examination for Vocational High School (high school of regular, vocational, and religion-based schools) increases from 71 cases in year 2017 to 126 cases in 2019 (Florensia, 2020; Küçüktepe, 2014). The same case happens also in regular/daily study at school. Azkia (2020) found that 95% of students in a high school in Samarinda have experienced cheating during exam, test, or doing their assignments.

Students cheating are because mostly (89%) they want to have high marks (Suhandi & Lestari, 2021; Meiseberg, et al 2017; Vučković, et al, 2020). The research of Yulianto (2022) at a high school in

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Bandung found that the reason of students' cheatings was to get satisfactory marks (39.9%), free from other assignments (43.6%), and no firm punishment from teachers (7.2%).

In the period of COVID-19 pandemic, students learned by remote learning using Internet connection. This condition made academic dishonesty increase since the parents and teachers did less monitoring. The effect was in the normal classes the students used to do academic dishonesty such as cheating. Moreover, the cheating habit was treated as a trivial behavior by the school or teachers (Yazici, et al, 2023; Ndovela & Marimuthu, 2022; Newton & Essex, 2023). Restura (2021) stated that academic dishonesty increased during Covid-19 pandemic period since all assignments were done at home without any supervision and the students had access to the answer easily then it made the students become lazy. Moreover, during the online classes, the understanding of students to the subject matters was less such that it caused the students to have reason for cheating.

The same condition happened at one public high school in Gresik in class X. A need assessment test using an AKPD (*Angket Kebutuhan Peserta Didik/* a need assessment questionnaire for students) instrument was conducted. The question of "I sometimes cheat during a test" was chosen by 28 from 35 respondents (about 80%). It is a high number. Based on the site observation by the author, the model of cheating can be copying friend's works, making notes on a small paper, browsing, bringing a book, discussing with friends during the test, taking picture of problems and giving them to their friends. Cheating habits were common at the location of this research. Students who do not want to give answers to their friends will be antagonized by their classmates. The school has made some efforts to prevent and solve the problem by rebuking, taking answer sheets or handpone of students, reducing marks, etcetera. However, these actions were not effective since many students cheated.

The authors want to investigate which guidance and counselling services can be effectively implemented to mitigate students' cheating behaviours. In this research, group counselling was applied since the problem must be treated as a curative measure. Ginting and Gulo (2017) stated that a reality group counselling can improve the academic honesty of students by 36% after provided by 2 cycles of services. Prabawa and Antika (2021) also found that the academic honesty can improve by 20% after treated using a reality. Therefore, the problem statement of this research is wheather a reality group counselling can reduce the cheating habit of students of a high school public school. The aim of this research is to determine the efficacy of reality group counselling in mitigating the cheating behaviours of public high school students. The research problem is whether reality group counselling effectively reduces cheating behaviour among high school pupils.

METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach. This study used a pre-experiment and one group pretest-posttest design for its experimental analysis. Because there was no control variable and the samples were selected at random, a pre-experiment design was utilised in this research (Hardani et al., 2020). First, a pretest was given to students to observe the academic dishonesty of students. The results were analyzed and ranked from high to low level of academic dishonesty. Students with high level academic dishonesty were then chosen and treated using reality group counselling for six meeting sessions. The process and results of treatment were evaluated using questionnaires. Students were also asked to reveal some messages, impressions, and critics to the treatment processes and what they felt after the treatment. At the end, a posttest was conducted, and the results were analyzed and compared to the pretest results such that it could be concluded whether the hypothesis was accepted or rejected.

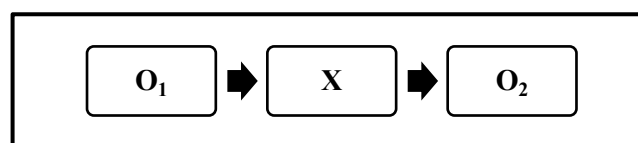


Figure 1 The Research Design

Remarks:

- O₁ = Pretest
 X = treatment using a reality group counselling
 O₂ = Posttest

The study population comprised high school students in class X, selected based on an AKPD test, revealing that 80% of the students, specifically 28 out of 35, had engaged in cheating. The sample consisted of four pupils. They were selected via a pretest utilising an inventory questionnaire and were suspected of possessing a high propensity to cheat. Samples were selected by nonprobability sampling, namely purposive sampling, in accordance with the research purpose. The aim of the research was to evaluate the efficacy of reality group counselling in diminishing students' cheating behaviours.

The instrument used in this research was inventory questionnaire cheating behavior that was developed based on characteristic of cheating behavior by Nizaar (2017). He stated that cheating behavior was comprises of two types, i.e. in group and individual. Anderman and Mudrock 2006) wrote that the characteristic of cheating behavior were (i) give, take, and receive information illegally, (ii) use prohibited materials (books, hand phone, notes, etc.), and (iii) exploit neglectfulness somebody, procedure, or process to obtain academic advantages. The inventory was used for pretest and posttest in the research, as well.

The cheating behaviour inventory results from the pretest and posttest were analysed using SPSS 23.0 for Windows for statistical parametric analysis. The statistical parametric analysis technique employed in this research was the T-test or paired T-test to determine the difference in variables before and after therapy. The decision was taken based on T-test in which if significant number was less than 0.05 (Sig. (2-tailed) < 0.05) then nil-hypothesis nil (H₀) was rejected. However, if significant number was bigger than 0.05 (Sig. (2-tailed) > 0.05) then nil-hypothesis (H₀) was accepted.

RESULTS

The data for this research was gathered from tenth-grade high school students. The data were gathered by questionnaires utilising a cheating behaviour assessment, aligned with the study's purpose to examine the efficacy of group counselling in mitigating students' cheating behaviour. The research employed an experimental method utilising a pre-experimental design, specifically a one-group pre-posttest format. Consequently, there existed solely one subject group without a comparison group. A one-group pre-posttest was administered, with a pretest completed prior to the application of the therapy. The pretest aimed to gather preliminary data and classify the research individuals. The posttest will be administered following the treatment, and the findings will be compared to those of the pretest. Prior to its utilisation as the study instrument, the questionnaires were administered to 103 students for testing purposes. The questionnaires contained 42 items.

The subjects of the research were chosen from the students who had high scores in the answer to questionnaires questions. It indicated the cheating behavior of students. The results of questionnaires were explained in the following section. Results of the questionnaires showed that (i) 4 students had high cheating behavior scores, their score was more than 112, (ii) 23 students had medium cheating behavior scores, their score was 86–112, and (iii) 5 students had low cheating behavior scores, their score was below 86. Four students who had high cheating behaviors were AFM, ASAS, ASA, and RH. Then, they were treated using a reality group counselling method to reduce their cheating behavior. 4 students and their scores are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Research Subjects

No	Name	Pretest scores	Category
1	AFM	117	high
2	ASAS	115	high
3	ASA	120	high
4	RH	116	high

The implementation of treatment using reality group counselling was conducted in 6 steps which were developed based on the systematic reality group counselling steps of Wahyuni & Muhari (2014). The steps were (i) group formation, (ii) exploration wants step, (iii) exploration direction and doing step, (iv) evaluation step, (v) planning step, and (vi) ending step (evaluation). Reality group counselling was a developmental method which focused on the change of an individual such that he or she can totally behave and have his or her identity. The change would be successful if 3 criteria had been achieved, i.e. (i) responsibility, (ii) accepting any consequences due to his or her action, and (iii) act based on norms. The cheating behavior was chosen by counselees since they wanted to achieve their wants with minimum efforts. This behavior was irresponsible action and if this behavior was not treated early, it will create bad habits to counselees in the future. Therefore, this behavior needs to be reduced.

The reality group counselling treatment was conducted over six sessions as follows:

a. Meeting session 1: Group Formation Step

It was the early step to start the group reality counselling activity. In this step, students met and interacted with each other such that they could understand each other and built relationship. In this step the focus of the counselling was to build trust between each other and create bonding and emotional relations among the group members. In this session they play games, telling everyday activity stories, their hobby, and others. Moreover, in this step the counsellor explained everything related to the group counselling, creating rules of the activities, asking all counselees to be open each other, obey to rules of the activities, and asking the counselees to participate in all section until the end. The observation of counsellors to counselees showed that the bounding worked well since they can interact actively out of class. It could be expected they could actively participate in the counselling activities.

b. Meeting session 2: Exploration Wants Step (W)

In this step the counselor explored perception of counselees related to academic, experienced problems, and what the counselees wants and their objectives. The problems experienced by counselees were mostly related to time management and difficulty in subject learning. Even though, there was no demanding questions from their parents or others related to their academic achievements, however, they wanted to achieve something such as understanding and mastering some academic subjects, obtaining satisfied academic marks, entering the desired universities, and becoming best achievement at school. They thought that academic achievement was important, however, they were lazy to study and work hard since they think that it was useless and they will obtain the same marks (low marks).

c. Meeting session 3: Exploration Direction and Doing Step (D)

In this step the counselor helped counselees to explore anything they had done to achieve their objectives, dreams, and wants and identifying the direction of life of the counselees. The focus on this step was the exploration of total behavior of counselees included what they had done, they feel, they think, and all physiology responses of counselees to their wants. Based on this counseling step, it can be detected that counselees had tried to achieve their wants and dreams by cheating during exam, discuss with friends, bringing books during exam, and copying their friends' works. These activities had been done since they were not confidence to their own work, and they had difficulty in finishing the exam problems. Moreover, this condition was getting worse since there was an opinion to students who did not give the cheat material, they will be considered as stingy by their classmates. Furthermore, the teachers did not give firm punishment to suspected cheating students.

d. Meeting session 4: WDEP System–Evaluation Step (E)

In the evaluation step, counselors helped counselees to evaluate their action and decide whether what they had done were responsible actions or not, harm or not, in accordance with norm or not, and included in 3—R (Right, Restriction, Responsibility) actions or not. This step was

conducted on Monday, 10 April 2023. All counselees stated that what they had done was irresponsibility, harm to themselves since it made them to be dependent on others, and it harm to others since they are disturbing others during exam. Moreover, this action was a violation of rules and dishonesty. The counselees wanted to become honest people and to do their exam by themselves and not lazy in learning. However, they chose to cheat since they could not answer the exam problems and they were not confident to their own ability.

e. Meeting session 5: Planning Step (P)

In this step, with the help of counsellors, counselees created or planned the development of new behavior which was more responsible in achieving their needs. The planning included changing learning methods, learning time, developing self-confidence, and getting used to be honest in academic purposes, gradually, started from doing their assignments by themselves.

f. Meeting session 6: Evaluation to the implementation of activities and posttest

In this step, an evaluation of the implementation of activities was conducted. The counselees expressed their messages, impression, and critics. They also stated their achievements, understanding, or changing of their behavior during the sessions, as well. A posttest was also conducted to compare with the pretest such that a conclusion can be taken whether a reality group counselling worked to reduce the cheating behavior of students.

The posttest was done after the treatment using reality group counselling. The results of the posttest and their comparison to the pretest results are presented in Table 2 and Figure 1.

Table 2 Results of Pretest and Posttest

No	Name	Pretest	Posttest
1	AFM	117	104
2	ASAS	115	106
3	ASA	120	101
4	RH	116	98
Total		468	409

Data presented in Table 2 was then compared to check whether there were any differences of cheating behavior of students before and after the treatment using a reality group counselling.

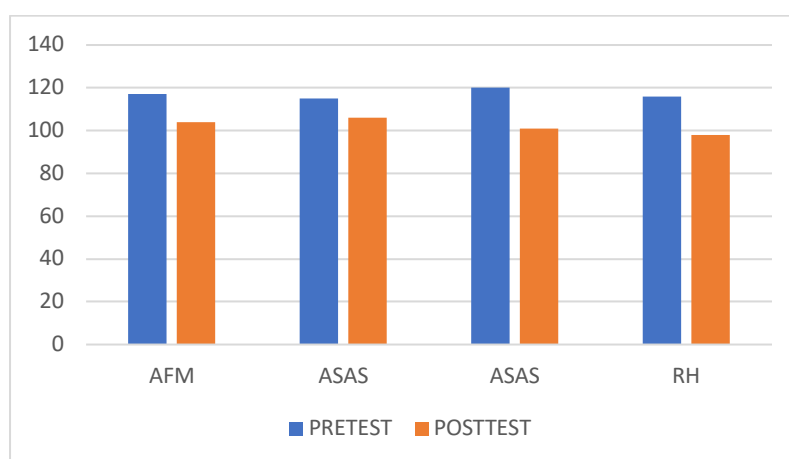


Figure 1. Graph of Pretest and Posttest

Data presented in Table 2 and Figure 1, the distribution of the data can be estimated. The statistical data was total, mean, highest value, and lowest value, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Description of Statistical Data

	Number of students	Data description	
Pretest	4	Total	: 468
		Mean	: 117
		Highest value	: 120
		Lowest value	: 115
Posttest	4	Total	: 409
		Mean	: 102.25
		Highest value	: 106
		Lowest value	: 98

Table 3, the mean value of pretest was 117, while the mean value of posttest was 102.25. It was a difference of 14.75 between pretest and posttest results. It means that there was a decrease of 12.6% of cheating behavior. The next step was a hypothesis test to answer the statement of the problem using SPSS 23.0 for windows.

In determining the hypothesis test method in inference statistics, a classical assumption test was needed. The classical assumption test was a normality test. The normality test used Shapiro-Wilk by SPSS. The significant value was 0.577 for pretest and 0.894 for posttest. Since the significant value was more than 0.05, the research data was normally distributed. Therefore, T-paired test was used. The hypothesis in this research was

- Ho = There was no difference in cheating behavior before and after the treatment using a reality group counselling.
 Ha = There was a difference in cheating behavior before and after the treatment using a reality group counselling.

The decision in this hypothesis test was based on the value of significant, in which if the significant value of the analysis > 0.05 , then Ho was accepted, and Ha was rejected. On the other hand, if the significant value of the analysis < 0.05 then Ho was rejected, and Ha was accepted. In other words, if significant value > 0.05 , there was no difference in cheating behavior before and after the treatment using a reality group counselling and if the significant value was < 0.05 , there was difference in cheating behavior before and after the treatment. Moreover, the decision for the hypothesis test can be determined from t-test. If the t-calculated $>$ t-table, then Ho was rejected and Ha was accepted (Winarsunu, 2017), vice versa. The results of paired T test analysis were presented in Table 4.

Table 4 The results of the Paired T Test

		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Pretest - Posttest	14.750	4.646	6.350	3	.008

The interpretation of T-paired test was

1. Sig. (2-tailed) was 0.008, in which $0.008 < 0.05$
2. T-calculated 6.350 and t-table with df 3 and significant 5% was 3.182; i.e. t-calculated $>$ t-table.

Interpretation of the T-paired test showed that Ho was rejected, and Ha was accepted. Therefore, there was a difference in cheating behavior of students before and after the treatment using reality group counselling.

DISCUSSION

The results of this research is in accordance with the research of Aini (2019). The research samples comprised 9 students from class VIII F and 9 students from class VIII A, serving as the control group. A selective sampling was performed, selecting the individual with the highest score in the cheating attitude assessment. She employed a quasi-experimental design featuring a nonrandomized control group with pretest and posttest measurements. A quantitative analysis indicated a 21% drop in the cheating mindset following intervention through reality group counselling.

A relevant research had done by Ginting and Gulo (2017). One of the aspects to be investigated was the honesty of students. The samples were 21. The method used was action class research. The students were treated using reality group counselling. The results of the analysis showed that before the treatment the honesty value of students was low, i.e. 40.4%. After the first cycle of treatment the honesty value became 61% and after the second treatment became 76.7%. Totally the value increased by 36.3% compared to the condition before the treatment.

Prabawa & Antika (2021) also did research about the effectiveness of reality e-counselling to improve senior high school students' academic honesty. They used quantitative methods with a single subject design model AB-A'. The subjects of the research were ten students who had low academic honesty. The results of the research showed that there was an increase of 20% of students' academic honesty after they had treated using counselling reality.

All referenced research yielded results consistent with those of the author's study. The academic integrity of students improved following the application of the reality counselling method. This strategy was evidently helpful in addressing academic dishonesty among pupils. Nevertheless, the research exhibited a deficiency due to the absence of a control group for comparative analysis. The comparison utilised solely pretest and posttest scores. The absence of a control group precludes attributing the score difference between the pretest and posttest only to the treatment. Furthermore, in this study, the reality counselling group intervention was administered for only one cycle, resulting in a score drop of merely 12.6%.

This study employed reality group counselling to mitigate the cheating behaviours of high school pupils. This strategy has demonstrated efficacy in diminishing pupils' cheating behaviours. In this study, the researchers functioned as counsellors who implemented reality group counselling for the experimental group. The individuals were screened based on inventory assessments of cheating tendencies selected from a group of students who exhibited high cheating behaviour. According to the assessment of cheating behaviours utilising a measurement tool, four pupils from the population were identified as exhibiting strong cheating tendencies.

The alteration in the cheating behaviour of students in the experimental group was identified through the variation in inventory score criteria for cheating habits between the pretest and posttest. The statistical analysis indicated that all students in the experimental group exhibited a decrease in cheating behaviours. The findings of this study aligned with prior research. Hajhosseini (2016) stated that the reality counselling is an effective intervention to cope psychological problems of children. Moreover, Tümlü, et al (2017) wrote that the reality counselling in a group was effective to improve a self concept of teenagers.

A research by Sarpourian, et al (2022) showed that the reality counselling was proved to improve pride or self-concept of depression counselees. Furthermore, Jusoh & Hussain (2015) concluded in their research that the reality counselling can improve pride or self-concept of teenagers at ages 13-18 years. Compared to the previous research, the specific difference that was applied in this research, that had not been applied in that research, was that this research used approach of a reaita with the procedure of W (Want), D (Doing/Direction), E (Evaluation), and P (Planning). This procedure was designed in a group process to reduce cheating habits of middle-aged teenagers.

Tümlü, et al (2017) wrote that a reality counselling which was designed in a group process would be better and more affective compared to individual counselling. The same statement was stated by Hajhosseini (2016) that the group approach was more efficient by 50% compared to the individual counselling. Jusoh & Hussain (2015) confirmed that a reality counselling in a group process was proved to be effective and efficient to cope with clinical problems such as stress, and problems related to personality such as problems with self-conception. It is because this approach emphasized to a cognitive

process such that it resulted relationship and feeling amongs the group members. This relationship and feeling could not be achived in an individual counselling.

Mitchell,et al (2018) wrote that the cheating behavior in teenagers was because discrepancy between ideal-self and perceived-self. It causes teenagers perform a certain behavior to others and often this behavior looked like illusive and be forced. Mitchell, et al (2018) stated was proved empirically in this research, from the experimental or control groups. They showed discrepancy between ideal-self with perceived-self. The subjects AFM and ASAS felt inferiority and not confident if they must do the exam problem by their own ability. The subjects ASA and RH were cheating because they could not evaluate their own capability and they doubted their own capability at school.

The success factor of reality group counselling was influenced by things that happen to their life and condition as well as situation during the counselling process. The influenced condition and situation during counselling process were physical preparation, atmosphere of the counselling process, and attitude or gesture of people around the counselees' environment. There are many factors that influence cheating habits such that family relationship, ability to do important things, other people perception to them, and social supports (Jusoh & Hussain, 2015).

This research also checked that the effectivity of the intervention was related to the counselees' characteristics. The role of counsellors and counselees has the same weight in the intervention process since the reality group counselling basically is a collaboration project between counsellors and counselees (Wesbrook, Kenerly dan Kirk, 2007). Therefore, the counselees' characteristics were one of factors that can influence the effectiveness of the reality group counselling. The counselee's characteristics which were suitable to the reality group counselling are counselees with high motivation to solve their problems, want to be open minded, and daring to express their own opinion or statement. This is an important matter such that the counselees understand the process of intervention and they can apply all techniques they obtain from the process in their daily life. Another factor which influences the success of the reality group counselling is that the intervention must combine innovative techniques to cope with psychological problems (Resenvald, Oei, and Carroll, 2007).

In general, the intervention process was conducted in accordance with the aims of the research. All counselees were able to conduct all activities, i.e. comprised of six meetings. The intervention using reality group counselling proved to work well to reduce the cheating habits of counselees. It can be seen from the significant reduction of scores between pretest and posttest.

CONCLUSION

The research concluded that the average score of pretests was 117, whereas the average score of posttests was 102.25. A decrease of 14.7 points, or 12.6%, occurred. It demonstrated a reduction in students' cheating behaviour. (ii) The paired T-test yielded a t-value of 6.350, exceeding the t-table value of 3.182 at 3 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 5%. Furthermore, the significance (2-tailed) was 0.008, which is below 0.05. Consequently, H_0 was dismissed, whereas H_a was approved. The study indicated a disparity in student cheating behaviour prior to and during the intervention of reality group counselling. The findings indicate that reality group counselling effectively diminished the cheating behaviour of students at the research site.

This research suggests that the school should prioritise addressing student cheating habits, implement measures to avoid and resolve the issue, and foster internal collaboration to cultivate an honest and sportsmanlike environment. In future research pertaining to this topic, it is advisable to administer the medication over multiple cycles. It is preferable for the research findings to be supplemented with structured oversight from educators and the principal to dramatically diminish the prevalence of cheating behaviours.

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