GAMES AS A METHOD OF CREATIVITY IN GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING
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ABSTRACT
This article was written based on the reality in the field that there are many Guidance and
Counselling teachers or counsellors who still use monotonous methods which are less
attractive to their students. This condition makes the students to be unresponsive yet not
interested to the materials in the service toward them. They are then become bored of the
guidance and counselling activities. This condition should immediately be overcome in order
to give a better service to them. For that reason, guidance and counselling teachers should be
creative in organising and managing their classes in order to create acceptable materials to the
students. One of the methods which can be applied is games. Some experts conclude that
games are needed in the learners’ development. Research findings show that games are
mediums to develop creativity in both teacher and students. Consequently, a Guidance and
Counselling teacher should enrich his/her knowledge and materials through meaningful games.

Key words: games, creative, guidance, counselling

A. INTRODUCTION

Creativity is the heart of innovations. On the one hand, there are no innovations without
creativity. On the others, the higher the creativity is, the broader the way leads to innovations.
The same thing happens when an educator, in doing his/her teaching and learning activities,
should always be creative so that the materials s/he delivered are well-accepted and learnt.
Guidance and counselling teachers and counsellors as educators should always look for more
knowledge and insights in order to help the students in developing and actualising themselves.
In fact, there are still not many of those teachers who make use of possible resources around
them to make an impressive service. They still use in-class lecture method, while this method,
however, is less likeable for it is monotonous and give the students less chance to move and
express themselves. As a result, they have negative thoughts on the teacher as the learning
process is less impressive.

Sulistyawati (2009) states that there are many teachers who still use lecture method in
the way they deliver the service material, so that the students become unresponsive toward the
content of the material. In line with that, Sulistyawati demonstrates that guidance and
counselling teachers in Yogyakarta still have less pedagogical competence, especially in
mastering learning media in delivering his/her material at school. This should not be happening
since the students will be less interested yet ignorant to the materials when the teacher does not
have a good teaching ability and not designing and making use of the facilities around him/her.
Therefore, a technique which promotes to give students support to lead to a better
concentration in learning is barely needed. From several learning methods which can be done,
game is one of which bear creativity aspects so it can increase students’ interest and motivation
in learning. In this paper, studies on games, creativity and the importance of games as a
creative learning media in guidance and counselling are discussed.
B. DISCUSSION

1. Studies on Games

Playing games and games have existed since prehistoric era up till now. The system and techniques are developed as the human civilisation did. From traditional to modern ones, from the simplest to the most difficult, relying only on what one’s body has, then making use of things around, to the use of multimedia which was made to arrange games to become a learning method with art and creativity in it, so that it becomes pleasurable, beneficial, and meaningful for the players.

Experts states different definitions on playing games and games itself in different views. According to Santrock (2006), playing is a pleasurable activity which is done for the sake of the activity itself. Erikson and Freud (Santrock, 2006) argue that playing is a form of human adaptation which is useful in helping a child cope with worries and conflicts. In line with the opinion, Piaget (Santrock, 2006) considers playing as a method which improves children mental cognitive. Hurlock (1997) argues that playing is an activity which is done based on some pleasure and without relying on the result. Playing activity is done voluntarily, without compulsion or pressure from others.

There are two kinds of theories which base what playing really is. Suyanto (2005) mentions that playing can be basically seen from:

a. Classic Theory
   1) Energy excess; that children tend to have energies to survive. This is supported by Herbert Spencer (English philosopher)
   2) Recreation and relaxation; that playing is meant to refresh the body, so that children can be more active and reenergized
   3) Instinct; that playing is an instinct which is useful for preparing them to do adult roles; Playing such as role playing and pretending or pretending to be father or mother or teacher
   4) Recapitulation; that playing is an event of repeating what the forefathers did and at the same time preparing them to live in the present; for instance, playing with water, sand, soil as if repeating prehistoric games

b. Modern Theory; by viewing that playing is a part of child’s development cognitively, emotionally, as well as socially. Playing in modern theory is differentiated to three classifications, such as:
   1) Psychoanalysis theory: Freud states that playing is a tool for releasing emotions. Erikson states that playing develops confidence and social abilities. Playing is regarded as a method to express feeling freely without mental pressure.
   2) Cognitive development theory: Piaget and Bruner argue that playing becomes a part of children development. Playing with objects around them is one way they learn. Sutton-Smith adds that playing is a flexible process of thinking and a process of solving problems.
   3) Social theory: Vygotsky elucidates that playing is a tool for socialising. By playing with other children, ability to understand feelings, ideas and needs of others which become the basis of social ability will grow and develop well. While playing, they outperform their normal ability. Piaget also finds that playing starts from playing with themselves until playing in cooperation show that there is a social development.

2. Considerations on Creativity

John Kao, the writer of Jamming: The Art and Discipline in Business Creativity (1996), mentions that human has impressive creative ability which actually can be taught and learnt. Creativity in Wikipedia refers to the phenomenon whereby a person creates something new (a product, a solution, a work of art, a novel, a joke, etc.) that has some kind of value. What counts as "new" may be in reference to the individual creator, or to the society or domain
within which the novelty occurs. What counts as "valuable" is similarly defined in a variety of ways. According to Rogers, creativity is a tendency to self actualisation, potential realisations, and motivations to develop and become mature, tendency to express and activate all organism abilities. Creativity is strongly related to oneself and the others. This idea is supported by Clark Moustatis that creativity is the experience of expressing and actualising integrated identity in relation to oneself, to the nature, and to others.

Creativity needs skills, talents, willingness, and motivations. According to John G. Young (2002) creative ability does not automatically make someone do an activity which results in creative output if there are no willingness and motivations in doing something. Though qualifying high in academic and intelligent, this will be nothing if there is no willingness in creating something. So will this when creativity is stimulated and improved by exercises, but the related individuals are having no passion on being creative. Consequently, motivation is important for creativity.

Those opinions are supported by Madhukar Shukla, the writer of The Creative Muse: Story of Creativity and Innovation. He states that “the difference between the creative people and those who are not is just in the ability of the creative ones to drive away the obstacles in creative abilities”. Sternberg and Lubart (1999, in Suwarjo and Eliasa, 2010), who summarize opinions from experts state that creativity is the ability to work and produce something new (original, previously unimaginable) and precise (beneficial, fulfilling expected working goals).

Chen, et.al. (2005) findings also prove that creativity is a possible matter to be taught. Chen is doing longitudinal observations in two years toward 177 students which results in findings that education is able improve students’ ability in solving problems creatively. The findings are in the form of Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT) which is used to measure the change in students’ creativity. The findings demonstrate that they who finish the educational curriculum are significantly improved in creativity.

External factors, such as learning circumstance and teacher also affects students’ creativity. That can be seen in Csikszentmihalyi’s study (in Sternberg, 1999 and in Saptoto, 2008) which proves that it is the community which emulates one’s creativity. The opinion makes teachers to become more optimistic in applying creative teaching strategies and designing learning circumstances which promote creativity to improve students’ creativity. Creative teachers also encourage their students to produce and imagine in group discussions. Various research findings (in Horng, et.al., 2005) prove that teachers are capable of giving more positive influence by supporting them to “becoming creative”.

Moreover, Petrowski’s findings (in Horng, et.al., 2005) prove some principles to develop a creative learning circumstance. These principles are: (a) providing chances to choose and know various possibilities, (b) supporting various attempts to do or create, and (C) implementing precise class management strategy.

Basically, every person has more creative potentials than he usually has. Capabilities to create or look for solution to problems precisely are not only limited to outstanding talents, but also to those who have average talents.

Tony Buzan (2003: xix) in his book entitled Head First states that “Creativity was once regarded as ‘miraculous gift’ which only specific people have. Right now we know that intelligence is the miraculous gift that everybody has. Elaborating creative intelligent talents is only how we manage to do this”. Creativity, aside of having good meaning for one’s development it is also one of human basic needs, which is the need of self realization as one of the highest needs among humans (Maslow, 1968).

According to David Campbell, creativity is an activity of causing results which are 1) novel: innovative, previously not existed, fresh, interesting, unusual, surprising, 2) useful: easier, more practical, facilitating, accelerating, encouraging, developing, educating, solving problems, reducing obstacles, overcoming hardships, causing better/more results; 3) Understandable: understandable and consistent results which can be remade at other times.
Creativity does not emerge immediately, but through processes. Creative processes according to Bobbi De Porter & Mike Hernacki (2001: 301), in their book “Quantum Learning”, flowing through five phases as follow:

1. Preparation: defining problems, goals, or challenges
2. Incubation: assimilating facts and processing them in mind
3. Illumination: pressing to the surface, ideas emerging
4. Verification: making sure whether or not the solution exactly solve the problems
5. Application: taking steps to follow ups toward the solutions

Similarly, Wallas also explain in one of the traditional theories which has been quoted up till now since 1926, in his book entitled “The Art of Thought” (in Piirto, 1992), declares that creative process is through five phases as follow: (1) preparation, (2) incubation, (3) illumination, and (4) verification.

Creativity can be done by anyone. Colin Rose & Malcolm J. Nichol (2002: 275) maintain in their book entitled “Accelerated Learning” that “Creativity demands more hard works and requires well preparation”. Moreover, more people now write about methods to be creative, not only in the form of literatures, games, mind maps, etc. Owing to this, creativity development should be started from the early age, considerations and studies on creativity processes, the conditions, and methods to foster, stimulate, and develop it becomes absolutely important.

c. Games as a Method of Creativity in Guidance and Counselling

Play media and expressive arts can be used in the implementation of guidance service (Pamela, 2006). They function in a counsellor job because: (1) children usually do not have verbal ability to ask questions, to help them solve the problems, playing becomes a way to communicate with them and see their world; (2) these can be shown as one of the methods to help them express their feelings and develop positive attitudes for themselves and their friends; (3) developing relationship strategy is used as attitude improvements, feelings clarifications; (4) There are limitations of attitude types.

Gladding (1992, in Pamela, 2006) makes counselling interventions by employing music, dance, playing and humour, imagination, fine arts, literature, writings, and drama, states that by employing these media, art develop an experience that “process-oriented, emotionally sensitive, socially directed and awareness focused” in games orientate how the process is, whether sensitive or emotional, aiming for socialization and focusing on caution or carefulness. It makes possible people from diverse backgrounds to develop in ways that are personally enhancing and enjoyable.

On the other hands, Violet (1998, in Pamela, 2006) takes into account that play approach is one of the alternatives in communication methods; a window to our children. This creativity technique can lessen attitude problems, improve pleasurable results, promotes to healthy cognition, affection, and interpersonal developments.

Playing has become a part of counselling process, moreover after Melanie Klien and Anna Freud use the techniques for children psychotherapy. Anna Freud (in Muro & Kottman, 1995) suggests that observing children games is becoming a method for a counsellor to form the emotions attacking them. She uses games and dolls to gain children in her activity. She also suggests that children spontaneity in playing is the best communication method by inviting them to the circumstance which is safe and friendly for them. Moreover, Melanie Klein (in Muro & Kottman, 1995) points out that “…advocated play as being the equivalent of the adult’s language. She used spontaneous play as a substitute for free association. In Kleinan
play therapy, the counsellor makes direct psychoanalytic interpretations of the play to child” and maintains that game has a very important role as a technique in association.

Both Virginia Axline and Landreth agree that several counsellors who work and have children counselees, insist that game is an arena where children can express their thoughts and emotions naturally and spontaneously. Geldard & Geldard (2001: 156) in their book “Counselling children” claim that: “from a counselling perspective, games can be a useful way of engaging children who are shy, or for other reasons, reluctant to enter the counselling relationship. Playing a game with a child can create a relationship that may be a precursor to meaningful counselling”.

Erikson adds that game is a form of significant communication toward children. Piaget, as well as Erikson, believes that game is a method in assimilating new information for their world and adapting to a new situation (Muro & Kottman, 1995).

Some approaches in playing techniques are clearly described in Play Therapy with Adults by Charles Schaefer (2003). Charles elaborates some playing techniques which has been adapted to counselees’ problems in their play therapy, such as (1) dramatic role play with drama therapy, psychodrama, improvisational play in couples therapy; (2) therapeutic humour with therapeutic humour with depressed and suicidal elderly; (3) sand play with counselees with somatic conscious or dementia, doll play for psycho-generic; (4) play groups using games with adults, hypno-play, client-centered play, play therapy for dissociative disorder.

Abraham Maslow and some other personality experts, for instance Adler, Sullivan, Erick Fromm, and Horney insist that the function of togetherness in groups, especially in playing, developing human personality, forming social contexts through social interest, bringing cooperation and decreasing interpersonal relationship problems (Schaefer, 2003). Their theories bring values that group forms in games is the curative step for all adult types. Yalom (1975, in Schaefer, 2003) mentions the benefit of the existence of groups in playing games as follows: (1) it raises expectations, (2) it forms the sense of having, (3) it helps share information, (4) it reduces altruistic sides, (5) it corrects family function mistake, (6) it performs as a relational skill model, (7) it forms emotional support and genuine confessions, (8) it helps one another, (9) it promotes to a more meaningful and purposeful life.

Russ (2004, in Rusmana, 2008) in children counselling literature writes that there are four important functions of games in counselling. Firstly, playing is children’s natural expression of feelings, it is also as an effort to express their wants and fantasy, and even let the problems and conflicts inside them out. As a result, playing can be categorized as a media to confess. Secondly, they can use games as the language for communicating with the counsellor. It also stimulates empathy to one another, so that functional interpersonal relationship can be achieved. Thirdly, playing acts as a vehicle which heighten understanding and accelerate counselling process.

Games as one technique in guidance and counselling, was suggested by children counselling experts, Katryn Geldard and her husband David Geldard (2001). In their book, they discuss some playing techniques as a communication bridge in counselling children. The use of games as a medium in children counselling aims at:
1. gaining self control toward the self problems;
2. gaining strength inside him/her;
3. expressing emotions;
4. developing problem solutions and decision-making ability;
5. developing social ability;
6. developing self concept and self esteem;
7. increasing ability to communicate;
8. enriching insights.
Studies on playing in guidance and counselling is described by Russ (2003, in Rusmana, 2008) as by observing playing process, counsellors are able to perceive expressions from a number of cognitions, affections, interpersonal processes, and problem solving. Cognition process through playing games includes (1) organisation, (2) divergent thoughts, (3) symbolism, and (4) fantasy or imagination. Affection process through playing games includes (1) emotion expressions, (2) affection themes expressions, (3) emotion rules and emotion modulations, and (4) cognition and affection integration. Interpersonal process through playing games includes (1) empathy, (2) interpersonal scheme and self representation, and (3) communication. Empathy refers to the expressions of caring and care toward people, while interpersonal scheme or self representation refers to individual capacity to believe others. Communication refers to the ability to communicate, to express ideas and emotions towards others.

The process of problem solving or conflict resolutions which is expressed through playing process is researched by Septi Purnama (2007) which includes: (1) approaches to problems and conflicts, (2) problem solving and conflict resolutions. This is shown when an individual tries to find solutions to the emerging problems, while problem solving and conflict resolution is shown when an individual handles and solves a problem.

Sweeney and Homeyer (1999 in Rusmana, 2008) adds that there are nine benefits from counselling through group play, for instance: (1) groups can raise children’s spontaneity so that they achieve higher participation levels, (2) counselling through group play can be used to respond to two problems at the same time; i.e. children’s interpersonal and intra-psychic dimension, (3) group acts make possible for reflection and confession to happen, (4) counselling through group play is a chance for children to achieve self-growth and self-exploration, (5) through counselling with group play, children is pulled closer to the actual life realities, (6) since counselling through group play is as if the miniature of people, the children will understand the meaning of their presence toward other children, (7) the roles in counselling through group play can lessen children tendency to fantasise in solving their problems, (8) children have more chances to practise in their daily life the experience gained, (9) the presence of one or some children might help in therapeutic development for other children.

The role of games done by the counsellors, according to Geldard & Geldard (2001: 158), is aiming at:
1. Building a counselling relationship with a resistant or reluctant child;
2. Helping a child to explore her responses to restrictions, limitations and the expectation of others;
3. Providing an opportunity for a child to discover her strengths and weaknesses with regard to fine and gross motor skills, and/or visual perceptual skills;
4. Providing a child with an opportunity to explore her ability to attend, to concentrate and preserve with tasks;
5. Helping a child to practice social skills such as cooperation and collaboration and to practice appropriate responses to disappointment, discouragement, failure and success;
6. Helping a child practice problem solving and decision making;
7. Providing an opportunity for a child to learn about relevant issues or life events, for example domestic violence, sexual abuse, stranger danger.

Some research in guidance and counselling which employs games as one of the most effective techniques is Fazriah (2008) who insists that students experience social competence increase after being given basic service activity in guidance and counselling through games. Other finding on games as an effective strategy in guidance and counselling to cope with students’ problems is also found on the other studies and is also supporting each other as Rusmana’s (2008) in tsunami victims in Tasikmalaya. Ramli (2007) notes that guidance service games are needed to improve students’ emotional intelligence. Mulherin (in Muro &
Dinkmeyer, 1977) claims that games is one of the guidance and counselling models which is regarded effective in improving students’ knowledge, skills, and self conscience.

Jajang’s (2008) findings show that games in the form of social play is mostly effective as the media to support children to develop their social ability. Games are also able to improve students’ racial tolerance (DeKrock, 1969, Muro, 1977, in Ramli, 2007), it also improves the administrator’s ability in taking parts as a teaching and learning leader (Wilcox, 1985 in Ramli, 2007). Games as the facilities for students’ problem solving skills (Babb, 1985, in Ramli, 2007), games as a students’ self assessment in making decision for their careers (Wittrock, 1986) and games to improve young adults and teenagers’ working transitions (Kathleen, 1995, in Ramli, 2007), the improvements of students’ understandings and their circumstances (Flurentin, 1993, in Ramli, 2007), and the improvements on consultation service quality for students’ parents (Mansyur, 2001, in Ramli, 2007).

Research findings show that games in interactions can improve students’ intrapersonal and interpersonal competence. This support Wilcox’s (1986, in Suwatjo & Eliasa, 2010) opinion that games can be used as the most effective instrument for intra and interpersonal among students. Elias, Hunter, and Kress (2001, in Eliasa, 2010) research findings also show that activities in education can improve a set of students’ emotional intelligence, so that they can identify, employ, understand, and organise emotions intensively as their emotions is a part of psychological part of individuals and a condition of complex feelings (Yusuf, 2007).

Rustianti (2008) research performs the same result where games in group guidance can improve students’ social skills which are supported by Purnama’s (2008) findings that Social Individual Guidance programme can improve conflict resolutions for santri (Islamic religious students) in pondok pesantren Babussalam (Islamic religious institution which is equal to junior or senior high school). Eliasa’s (2010) findings also support the ideas that Social Individual Guidance program through games improve students’ intrapersonal and interpersonal competences. From exposure above the game as a method can be used as a vehicle of creativity for teachers and students

C. CONCLUSION

Creativity as a process of thinking needs various ideas, particularly in coping with problems as a process of playing with ideas or aspects in thoughts, is a pleasurable obsession and challenging for creative students. By being creative, critical and bright, problems should be easily overcome. Furthermore, people should be calm and able to think clearly in solving problems creatively.

Creativity is an educational demand and life recently and even for the future life. It will result in various innovations and novel developments. Creative individuals and organisations will always be needed by the circumstances they are in, as they are able to fulfil the changing needs of the environment. Creative individuals and organisations are able to survive tight and dynamic global competitions.

Creativity is packaged in the form of the game very personal influence in it The effects of games have been proved in much research regionally, nationally, and even internationally. The findings show that games have complex functions so that these make possible creativity aspects from teachers to organise games to become learning media in order to make the students more creative and more innovative in learning.

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