

Research Article

Bibliotherapy for Emotional Literacy

Leny Latifah*^a

[a] Study Program Guidance and Conseling, Educational Faculty, Universitas Kanjuruhan Malang, Indonesia

Abstract

One way to help teens manage their emotions is by using emotional literacy. Emotional literacy is a person's ability to understand, express emotions to people, respond to the expression of the feelings of others, and take responsibility for their actions. Emotional literacy can be done through pedagogical strategies, as well as the use of the application of theory and various other learning strategies. Counselors need a method to develop emotional literacy skills in students either by media bibliotherapy or better known as bibliokonseling. In this case, the counselor gave the book or story. The utilization of the book as a medium of therapy is called bibliotherapy. Bibliotherapy is psychotherapeutic support through reading material to help someone who is experiencing personal problems. This treatment method is highly recommended, especially for patients who are challenging to express issues verbally. The subjects were students' Universitas Kanjuruhan Malang Department Guidance and Counseling in 2015, 2016. The reason for choosing Guidance and Counseling Student Universitas Kanjuruhan Malang, as guidance and counseling student, is a candidate for school counselors, and they are required to have a good personality and need to be developed early on. This study aims to determine the effectiveness of bibliotherapy techniques to improve the skills of emotional literacy student guidance and counseling Universitas Kanjuruhan Malang. The method used in this study is the technique of pre-experimental design with one group pretest-posttest design. This design is a design study to test the effectiveness of a treatment on an individual basis.

Keywords: emotional literacy; bibliotherapy; guidance and counseling; counselors

GUIDENA: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan, Psikologi, Bimbingan dan Konseling
Website : <https://ojs.fkip.ummetro.ac.id/index.php/bk>

Received: 2018-09-17. Published: 2019-12-30 *Corresponding Email: enylatifah@unikama.ac.id



This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium provided the original work is properly cited.

Introduction

Emotional literacy is the ability of a person to understand, express, and respond to the emotional expression of others and is responsible for the actions taken (Steiner, 1991). Emotional literacy can be done through pedagogic strategies such as cooperative learning, group work, jigsaw, the six thinking hats, and positive-minus-interesting (Richfield, 2014; Nemeč & Roffey, 2003). The previous research has also been done by Badrujaman, Filliani, & Herdiyani (2016) about the emotional literacy of learners using the six thinking hats method. The result is higher than learners who get authoritative guidance using the lecture method. In the same year Nufus, Filiani, & Dimiyati (2016) conducted a different study using storytelling techniques in group counseling services to improve the emotional literacy of grade 3 elementary school students, and there was a significant increase in. Based on the results of these studies, it can be interpreted that emotional literacy is a skill that can be learned and developed (Ripley, 2008).

In this study, bibliotherapy was chosen as a technique to improve the emotional literacy of the students since it has several advantages according to McNicol (2018) and Smith Family (2009), those are: 1) to communicate well, able to convey empathy, and also disagreement toward others, 2) more

self-understanding, needs, and goals, 3) have a tendency to stay away from stress, 4) have a right level of understanding of self-potential, and how to achieve it.

Furthermore, [Jack & Ronan \(2008\)](#) and [Jachna \(2005\)](#) says that a bibliotherapy is a form of psychotherapy support through reading material to help someone with personal problems. The implementation steps of bibliotherapy techniques according to [Handarini \(2015\)](#) those are: 1) the formation of rapport, 2) giving stimulants in the form of written text/film, 3) reflection and discussion, 4) commitment development, 5) commitment test, 6) reflection on experience and, 7) make self-improvement.

Based on the research conducted by [Songprakun and McCann \(2012\)](#), it is stated that the benefits of bibliotherapy or self-help therapy in book form in helping to reduce psychological distress in people with moderate depression. The approach is easy to use and can be incorporated as an adjunct to standard care and treatment. Bibliotherapy can be used by community mental health nurses and other clinicians to reduce psychological distress and promote recovery in people with moderate depression.

This study aims to determine the effectiveness of bibliotherapy to improve emotional literacy, especially students at one of the private universities in Malang Indonesia. Three subcategories of bibliotherapy those are institutional bibliotherapy, clinical bibliotherapy, and bibliotherapy development. The technique most likely to be applied by educators is the development of bibliotherapy as it offers a way of helping students individually or in groups facing certain situations so that they will be better prepared to live life by reading and discussing ([Jack & Ronan, 2008](#)).

Method

The research design used was the experiment with one group pretest-posttest design. The population in this research is all students of Guidance and Counseling 2015 and 2016 intake counted 190 students, then 10% were taken using simple random sampling method ([Arikunto, 2002](#)) based on the percentage, there are 19 students used as a sample of the research. This was done by shuffling on a number of rolls of paper containing the student absentee number, then the captain of the class took as many as nine turns of writing for 2015 intake and ten rolls of paper for 2016 so that there was a total of 19 rolls of paper. Furthermore, the 19 selected students were given a pretest, and at the end of the training were given a posttest. This design was used in accordance with the goal to be achieved, which is to know how much the increase of emotional literacy after training by using bibliotherapy techniques.

The study included the preparation stage, the implementation stage, and the final stage. The preparation stage was to determine the sample of the research, and to know the level of emotional literacy owned by the 19 students Guidance and Counseling 2015, 2016 intake by using emotional literacy scale developed herself. The implementation stage was done by providing bibliotherapy training to the students. The final step is to test the research hypothesis about the difference in the emotional literacy level of the students before and after obtaining bibliotherapy training using the formula (Test - paired Two Sample for Means).

Result and Discussion

Pretest Emotional Literacy

This research started by giving activity in the form test to know the emotional literacy level of the student before providing treatment. Based on Table 1, it can be explained that from 19 students, 15.8% (3 students) are at moderate emotional literacy level, 73.3% (14 students) are at high emotional literacy level, and 10.5% (2 students) are at a very high emotional literacy level.

Table 1. Pretest Emotional Literacy Result of the students

Emotional Literacy category	Interval Score	Frequency	Percent (%)
Moderate	33-64	3	15.8
High	65-96	14	73.7
Very high	97-128	2	10.5
Total		19	100

The Students' Emotional Literacy by using Bibliotherapy Technique

This bibliotherapy technique was done by giving reading material in the form of short stories titled "Sorry and Thank You," "Cendekiawan Yung," "Honest for the Peace of Life," then did the discussion related to the reflection of reading and self-reflection. The reading materials served to divert orientation and to provide positive views so it could inspire the students' awareness to understand, express, and respond to the expression of emotion on each reading character. After the reading material was given on an ongoing basis, students were given a posttest questionnaire. The following results of data analysis on table 2:

Table 2. The result of students' Posttest Emotional literacy by using Bibliotherapy technique

Emotional Literacy Category	Interval Score	Frequency	Percent (%)
Medium	33-64	0	0
High	65-96	12	63.2
Very High	97-128	7	36.8
Total		19	100

From table 2, it can be explained that 19 students who follow the bibliotherapy technique training, as many as 36.8% (7 students) have very high emotional literacy rate, 63.2% (12 students) have high emotional literacy level, and none of the students have emotional literacy level in the medium category. This means that there is a change of emotional literacy on the students before and after treatment.

The hypothesis test Results of Emotional Literacy by using Bibliotherapy Technique

To test the research hypothesis pretest and posttest data were analyzed using T-test as follows:

Table 3. The analysis result of the T-test (Paired Samples Statistics)

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Before	72,05	19	17,093	3,921
After	102,58	19	16,450	3,774

Based on table 3 above, it appears that the average score of the emotional literacy level of the students before the given bibliotherapy technique was 72,05 and increased to 102,58 after training. This means that bibliotherapy techniques are effective in improving Guidance and Counseling students' emotional literacy.

The correlation Result using Bibliotherapy Technique

The analysis results of table 4 show that the correlation between two variables is 0,579, with the significance of 0,009. This indicates that the relationship between the two average emotional literacy rate scores before and after training is intense and significant.

Table 4. The correlation result (Paired Samples Correlations)

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1 Before & After	19	0,579	0,009

5. The result of the T count

In table 5, the value of the T count is -8,638, with the significance of 0,000. Because of the importance is <0.05, it can be concluded that H0 is rejected, it means that the average score of the emotional literacy level of guidance and counseling students before and after given bibliotherapy technique is different.

Table 5. Result of T Count (Paired Samples Test)

Pair 1	Before - After	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
		-30,526	15,403	3,534	-37,950	-23,102	-8,638	18	0,000

According to [Faupel \(2003\)](#), Emotional literacy is the ability to recognize, understand, deal with, and appropriately express the self-emotion and accept, understand and appropriately respond to the emotions expressed by others. Based on these statements can be interpreted that each individual must have the self-emotional maturity and the ability to recognize, handle the feelings of others with different levels.

In the pretest results of guidance and counseling, students obtained data that their average emotional literacy was at a high level. However, there were still some students who have moderate emotional literacy levels. This can happen because of the influence of several factors, including a social environment that is family, college friend, and society. It is in accordance with [Hurlock's \(2004\)](#) opinion that in the early adulthood individuals will be faced with various problems in development task, one of them is emotion. But according to [Ripley & Elspeth \(2007\)](#), emotional literacy is one skill that can be learned and developed. Therefore, college counselors have the opportunity to train students. The role of counselor as a professional employee not only gives service in guidance and counseling but also held activity training for an individual in order to reach optimal individual development.

There are various ways to improve students' emotional literacy. One of them is by using the bibliotherapy technique which can be interpreted as an effort of giving psychological assistance by experts to people who have problems, and it has also been suggested by some experts that bibliotherapy has been employed in nearly every helping profession, with every age group, and in multiple populations. Among the groups that use bibliotherapy are school counselors, social workers, and teachers ([Pardeck & Pardeck, 1998a](#); [Kramer & Smith, 1998](#)) cite in [Pehrsson and McMillen \(2005\)](#) and ([Gladding, 2015](#)).

[Handarini et al. \(2015\)](#) argued that bibliotherapy is useful for identifying character figures, recognizing various emotions of self-related, providing experience through the richness of life experiences, characters, situations, and problems that are present in reading materials using high-quality reading material. [Pehrsson and McMillen \(2005\)](#) state, how does a counselor choose just the right book for a particular client? The counselor considers multiple factors based on prior experiences, client needs and situation, costs, and developmental level of the client. However, choosing the wrong book could have ethical and detrimental consequences that might impact the client, counselor, or reputation.

Bibliotherapy is used to stimulate students to take wisdom (self-reflection) based on stories that have been read. From reading, students will easily catch messages in learning the material than they are simply explained through lecture methods. When reading, students can interpret the author's mind, translating letters into words and sentences that have a specific meaning, such as caring for others. The ability to bring the self, be honest and sincere in behaving, be able to influence others to do good and be empathetic. These feelings can reflect and encourage people to act more positively. The benefits that have been reported include increased self-awareness ([DeFrances, 1982](#)) cited in [Pehrsson and McMillen \(2005\)](#), Individuals have a greater empathic understanding of others ([Adler & Foster, 1997](#); [Pardeck & Pardeck, 1998](#)).

Based on the result of the posttest given to 19 samples, obtained that there were seven students had very high emotional literacy, 12 students had high emotional literacy, and none of the

students who had moderate emotional literacy. It can be interpreted that there was an increase of emotional literacy on the students after given bibliotherapy in the form of reading material entitled "Gifts from the King", "Yung Scholars", "Golden Ax and Red Ax". Students can identify characters, recognize emotions, explore, reflect feelings, and recognize situations and problems in reading material.

According to Pardek (1998), there are benefits of bibliotherapy. One of them can help individuals to improve interpersonal relationships. For instance, if an individual has problems with peers, bibliotherapy can help develop an attitude of tolerance and understanding of others and formulate a more objective approach to solve the issues.

In contrast to the previous opinions, Durlak & Wells (1997) complemented other benefits of an emotional literacy enhancement program that included more effective learning, better behavior, better attendance, higher motivation, better morale, and a student's value.

Conclusion

Based on the results obtained, it can be concluded that the level of emotional literacy of students increased after training with bibliotherapy techniques, and there are differences in emotional level literacy of guidance and counseling students before and after training with bibliotherapy techniques. Research advice: (1) bibliotherapy technique can be applied by counselor or educator to help improve individual emotional literacy (2) For further research, and it is expected to more expand the material of study about the use of bibliotherapy technique with other variables such as improvement of creative thinking skill.

Funding

The authors have no funding to report.

Acknowledgments

The authors have no support to report.

References

- Adler, E. S., & Foster, P., (1997). A Literature-Based Approach To Teaching Values To Adolescents: Does it work? *Adolescence*, 32(126), 275-287.
- Arikunto, Suharsimi. (2002). *Prosedur Penelitian: Suatu Pendekatan Praktek*. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.
- Badrujaman, A., Filliani, R., & Herdiyani, A. (2016). Pengaruh Metode The Six Thinking Hats Dalam Bimbingan Klasikal Untuk Meningkatkan Emotional Literacy. *INSIGHT: JURNAL BIMBINGAN KONSELING*, 5(2), 145. <https://doi.org/10.21009/insight.052.01>
- Durlack, J. & Wells A. (1997). Primary Prevention Mental Health Programs for Children and Adolescents: A Meta-Analytic Review. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 25 (2): 115
- Faupel, A. (2003). *Emotional literacy Assesement and Intervention Ages 7-11 and 11-16*. Nelson
- Handarini, D. M, dkk. (2015). *Handbook Workshop Biblio-Edukasi dan Sinema-Edukasi Bagi Konselor Pendidikan*. Malang: Universitas Negeri Malang.

- Hurlock, E. B. (2004). *Psikologi Perkembangan Suatu Perkembangan Sepanjang Rentang Kehidupan*. Edisi 6, Jakarta: Penerbit Erlangga.
- Gladding, S. T. (2015). *Family therapy : History, Theory, and Practice* (6th, ed.). Pearson.
- Jachna, J. T., (2005). *Bibliotherapy: What, Why and How*. English 100 Section 04.
- Jack, S. J., & Ronan, K. R. (2008). Bibliotherapy. *School Psychology International*, 29(2), 161–182.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0143034308090058>
- McNicol, S. (2018). Theories of bibliotherapy. *Bibliotherapy*. Facet. <https://doi.org/10.29085/9781783303434.003>
- Nemec, Michelle & Roffey, Sue. (2003). Literacy and the Case for a Whole-School Approach to Promote Sustainable Educational Change. *Australia Journal of Moral Education*, 32(1).
- Nufus, N. P., Filiani, R., & Dimiyati, M. (2016). Pengaruh Teknik Storytelling Dalam Layanan Bimbingan Kelompok Terhadap Peningkatan Emotional Literacy Siswa (Studi Eskperimen terhadap Siswa Kelas III SDN Jatinegara Kaum 14 Pagi). *INSIGHT: JURNAL BIMBINGAN KONSELING*, 5(1), 66.
<https://doi.org/10.21009/insight.051.10>
- Pardeck, J. T. (1998). *Using Books In Clinical Social Work Practice: A Guide To Bibliotherapy*. New York, NY, USA: The Haworth Press, Inc
- Pehrsson, D. E. and McMillen, P. S. (2005). *A Bibliotherapy Evaluation Tool: Grounding Counselors In The Therapeutic Use Of Literature*. Elsevier.
- Richfield, S. (2014). Coaching Emotional Literacy to Children. *Journal of Psychology & Clinical Psychiatry*. MedCrave Group, LLC. <https://doi.org/10.15406/jpcpy.2014.01.00004>
- Ripley, Kate & Simpson, Elspeth. (2008). First Steps To Emotional Literacy: A Programme For Children In The Foundation Stage And Key Stage 1 And For Older Children Who Have Language And/Or Social Communication Difficulties. New York and London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203935347>
- Smith Family. (2009). *Emotional Literacy: Building Strong Relationships For Lifelong Learning*. Australia: The Smith Family.
- Songprakun, W. and McCann, T. V. (2012). Evaluation Of A Bibliotherapy Manual For Reducing Psychological Distress In People With Depression: A Randomized Controlled Trial, *Journal Of Advanced Nursing*. Wiley Online Library, 68 (12), pp. 2674–2684.
- Steiner, Claude & Perry, Paul. (1997). *Achieaving Emotional literacy, A Personal Program to Increase Your Emotional Intelligence*. New York: Avon Books.
- Steiner, R. (1991). *The Spiritual Guidance Of The Individual And Humanity*. New York: Anthroposophic Press.