

Evolving Communication Skills: The Impact of Transactional Analysis Counseling

Lita Fitara Cania¹, Netrawati², Zadrian Ardi³

¹²³Fakultas Ilmu Pendidikan, Universitas Negeri Padang

E-mail: litafitara599@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This article provides a comprehensive exploration of the role and effectiveness of Transactional Analysis counseling in improving interpersonal communication skills. By synthesizing studies and theories from a variety of sources, the article presents insights into the intrinsic aspects of Transactional Analysis counseling and its applicability in various scenarios. A highlight of the article is its emphasis on role-play techniques and their positive impacts on communication skills enhancement. Further, the role of interpersonal communication in building relationships and understanding within diverse societies is also analyzed. The importance of emotional intelligence, conflict management, and social interaction in the context of Transactional Analysis counseling is underscored. The review reveals that Transactional Analysis counseling can be a potent tool to enhance self-awareness, tackle adolescent developmental issues, and minimize bullying behavior. It emphasizes that a counselor's role, built on Transactional Analysis approach, is vital in fostering improved interpersonal communication.

Keywords: transactional analysis; counseling techniques; interpersonal communication; ego states; personal development



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INTRODUCTION

Human beings are innately social creatures, an aspect that permeates every facet of human existence (Muslim, 2013). In their everyday life, they thrive on the interactions and assistance from others, thereby underlining the crucial role of interpersonal communication. This process of exchanging messages between individuals facilitates understanding, relationship building, and cooperative problem-solving. Each individual is inherently unique, possessing distinctive personality traits that shape their communication style (Santoso, 2017). These differences in communication can, however, lead to misunderstandings and discrepancies that may hinder effective interpersonal interaction (Dewi, Widyana & Sriningsih, 2016). In light of these challenges, one avenue of addressing the issue is by building a new ego state, an aspect that requires professional assistance from a counselor. This concept of ego state, as derived from the Transactional Analysis (TA) theory, relates to the facets of personality that are manifested in behavior. Counselors, through counseling services, aid individuals in understanding their ego states and subsequently altering their communication scripts. This intervention encourages effective communication and facilitates individuals in their day-to-day life (Sridasweni, Yusuf & Sabandi, 2017).

Transactional Analysis is a comprehensive system that provides a framework to understand communication patterns. TA aids in interpreting the ego states of an individual, the fundamental building blocks of personality, comprising the Parent, Adult, and Child states. These states play a significant role in influencing an individual's responses during interactions or transactions (Widiatmoko & Ardini, 2018). TA Counseling is designed to assist individuals in eliminating contamination that might be affecting their ego states negatively, causing

communication difficulties. It aims to enhance the capacity of the individual to use their ego states appropriately, leading to optimal functioning of the Adult ego state that is associated with rational and objective thinking (Rahmi, 2021). Furthermore, TA Counseling assists individuals in formulating new decisions and lifestyle changes by assessing their current ego states. By evaluating the prominence of Parent and Child ego states, individuals can consciously work towards enhancing their Adult ego state, which encourages objective and balanced communication (Maepin, Suarni & Mudjijono, 2013).

Research has validated the efficacy of TA as an intervention. A study by Permatasari (2020) revealed that TA significantly improved the communication skills of pre-service teachers, emphasizing the effectiveness of this approach in enhancing interpersonal communication. Similarly, research conducted on students from PKA Yayasan Sahabat Anak Jakarta demonstrated significant improvements in interpersonal communication when TA counseling, supplemented with role-play techniques, was applied (Lepa & Wati, 2020). Conclusively, TA counseling emerges as a potent tool in fostering better social interactions and enhancing interpersonal communication. By understanding and managing ego states, individuals can develop improved communication scripts, contributing to effective and harmonious interpersonal interactions.

METHOD

The primary methodology employed in this analysis is literature analysis, a comprehensive review of a multitude of sources, including books, articles, and journals that contain relevant data or insights about the topic of interest (Azizah & Purwoko, 2019). The process involves reading and understanding a plethora of material, which allows for a thorough examination and analysis of the topic, leading to a well-grounded conclusion. This method proves advantageous in investigating counseling methods, such as Transactional Analysis (TA), and their implications on interpersonal communication. By conducting an exhaustive review of the literature, one can gain insights into TA and its impact on improving the quality of interpersonal communication. One of the key aspects that the literature analysis will delve into is understanding the concept of ego states within TA, particularly the Adult ego state, which is associated with an individual's ability to think and respond objectively to real-world situations (Zed, 2008). In a nutshell, this study uses a literature analysis method to explore and understand the TA counseling method, particularly the role of ego states in interpersonal communication. The insights obtained from the review of the literature are expected to contribute significantly to the existing body of knowledge about TA and its practical applications in improving interpersonal communication.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Transactional Analysis (TA) in Communication and Counseling

Transactional Analysis (TA) is a critical psychological concept utilized in counseling, especially in understanding and enhancing an individual's interactions and communication with others. It's founded on the principle that individuals have the capacity to alter and improve their interactions through guided counseling (Netrawati, Khairani & Karneli, 2018). TA, which was

developed by Eric Berne, proposes that each person has three ego states: the Parent, Adult, and Child. Each ego state has specific characteristics and influences our behaviors in different ways. The Parent ego state is reflective of the behaviors, thoughts, and feelings copied from parents or parental figures. It can embody authoritarian and moralistic attitudes and is often expressed through a set of rules and admonishments (Prayitno, 1998). The Adult ego state, on the other hand, is focused on dealing with the here and now. It is reflective of an individual's ability to think, act and react based on the current facts and reality, allowing for objective evaluation of information and rational responses. This ego state can aid individuals in finding the balance between the Parent and Child states, and is often a target state for development in TA counseling (Ginting, Asiah & Nasution, 2019). The Child ego state represents the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors that are directly linked to childhood experiences. It symbolizes spontaneous, creative, and emotional aspects of personality and can lead to both creative problem-solving and nonconstructive emotional reactions. Eric Berne, the founder of TA, established that TA counseling can stimulate individuals to take personal responsibility for their behavior through logical and rational thinking. He believed that a significant aspect of TA is the concept of 'redecisions' - the process by which an individual can revisit decisions made in childhood and reshape them into ones that serve their Adult needs better. This form of counseling promotes a shift in ego states that results in improved communication (Rahmi, Neviyarni & Netrawati, 2023).

Techniques of Transactional Analysis

TA counseling deploys a variety of techniques to analyze an individual's behaviors and interactions. One technique involves examining the client's ego states based on their responses to various stimuli. This analysis helps the counselor discern the dominant ego state and assess its appropriateness for the client's interactions (Widdowson, 2009). Another technique is the analysis of transaction patterns within a group, which can help identify recurrent interactional patterns that may impede effective communication. This can be useful in determining whether individuals are acting out of their Parent, Adult, or Child ego states during their transactions. A third technique is script analysis, an innovative concept in TA that deals with the exploration of an individual's life plan. Everyone develops a life script that dictates their behavior patterns and choices. TA counseling aims to uncover these scripts and assist clients in understanding how they affect their lives. Finally, the assessment of game-playing behaviors forms another key technique in TA. 'Games' in TA refer to specific sets of transactions that are repetitively played out in various social situations, often leading to negative outcomes. Identifying and understanding these games can help individuals break free from unhelpful patterns of interaction (Widdowson, 2009).

Stages in Transactional Analysis Counseling

TA counseling involves several stages to ensure effective and constructive communication and interaction. The first stage involves establishing a good therapeutic alliance between the counselor and the client. This stage is vital as it sets the foundation for the work ahead and ensures that the client feels safe and supported. The next stage involves working

through the challenges identified in the counseling process. This could include addressing any 'rackets' or unhelpful behaviors that the client presents. 'Rackets' in TA refers to a set of manipulative behaviors or feelings that were learned and used in childhood to manipulate the environment. These can be detrimental to the individual's relationships and personal development, and TA counseling aims to address and alter these behaviors (Pratiwi, Muslihati & Rachmawati, 2022). Motivating clients to make decisions forms the subsequent stage. Here, the counselor encourages the client to reassess and change their previous decisions, especially those made in childhood that no longer serve their Adult self. This process of 'rededcision' can be empowering for the client and lead to significant changes in their life. The final stage of TA counseling involves supporting clients in finding and developing new scripts. Once the unhelpful scripts are identified and understood, the counselor helps the client create a new script that better serves their current needs and future goals (Pratiwi, Muslihati & Rachmawati, 2022).

CONCLUSION

Transactional Analysis (TA) counseling is an invaluable tool that empowers individuals to understand and improve their interpersonal communication. By facilitating the exploration of ego states—Parent, Adult, and Child—TA provides insights into individuals' behavioral patterns, thus fostering personal responsibility, logical and rational thinking, and ultimately better communication. The application of TA counseling techniques and stages allows for the deconstruction of unhelpful behaviors, decision re-evaluation, and the development of new life scripts, contributing significantly to healthier and more fulfilling interactions and relationships.

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