



Development of Strategic Media Animation for Forgiveness Education (SMART-FORGIVE) to Foster an Attitude of Forgiveness Among High School Students

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Abstract

Forgiveness is an important emotional skill for adolescents in managing negative emotions and resolving interpersonal conflicts in an adaptive manner. This study aims to develop and test the effectiveness of the Strategic Media Animation for Forgiveness Education (SMART-FORGIVE) program in fostering an attitude of forgiveness among high school students. The research approach used a Research and Development (R&D) design with 34 tenth-grade students from State High School 1 Malang as subjects. The instruments used in this study were the Enright Forgiveness Inventory (EFI) scale, as well as expert and prospective user evaluation forms. Data analysis included inter-rater agreement to assess product feasibility and a paired-sample t-test to evaluate effectiveness. The results indicate that the SMART-FORGIVE media achieved a very high level of feasibility in terms of accuracy, usefulness, appeal, and ease of use, based on the agreement scores from experts and prospective users. The effectiveness results showed a significant increase in students' forgiveness scores between the pretest and posttest (Sig. <0.05). Thus, the SMART-FORGIVE medium is deemed suitable and effective for use as a classical guidance service strategy to develop forgiveness attitudes among high school students.

Introduction

Adolescence is a developmental phase characterized by rapid psychological, cognitive, and emotional changes (Fitriani & Hafnidar, 2023). During this phase, adolescents face the challenge of achieving emotional maturity as part of their developmental tasks. On the other hand, adolescents' emotional development is greatly influenced by their experiences and the environment's response to their feelings (Jia et al., 2025; Zeng et al., 2025). Immaturity in emotional regulation can lead to maladaptive responses (Pilkington et al., 2023). These conditions indicate that adolescents need the ability to manage their emotions appropriately so that interpersonal conflicts do not escalate into serious problems. Several cases in Indonesia highlight the serious consequences of individuals' inability to cope with emotional distress. One such case involved a teenager who murdered his biological father due to emotional distress caused by the victim's words (Liputan 6, June 22, 2024). A high school student in Banjarmasin stabbed a classmate, driven by emotional distress stemming from frequent bullying (Kompas, August 1, 2023). A child of a government official committed severe abuse due to emotional distress over the victim's treatment (Liputan 6, February 23, 2023). These incidents indicate that students' capacity for forgiveness has not developed optimally.

These findings align with conditions on the ground. The results of a preliminary study conducted by the researcher on 348 tenth-grade students at State High School 1 Malang showed that 62.3% of respondents reported difficulty in forgiving their friends. Additionally, 65.5% of students reported frequently harboring prolonged resentment following a conflict. Furthermore, interviews with guidance counselors revealed that while students may

verbally express forgiveness, they often still harbor negative feelings. Issues related to forgiveness frequently arise in friendships, such as misunderstandings or feeling offended, which impact students' social relationships. These results are also consistent with the research by Dewi et al. (2024), which showed that 52% of students in vocational high schools (SMK) have low levels of forgiveness. Malik & Suminar (2022) also found that 38% of adolescents fall into the low forgiveness category. This low level of forgiveness is influenced by various factors.

In this context, forgiveness plays a crucial role in helping adolescents alleviate negative emotions. According to Kim et al. (2022), individuals with high levels of forgiveness tend to experience lower levels of anger, anxiety, and depression. Forgiveness can reduce the urge for revenge and increase the desire to reconcile with the person who caused the harm (McCullough et al., 1997). Improvements in psychological well-being in individuals can also be influenced by forgiveness (Skalski-Bednarz et al., 2024). Toussaint et al. (2015) also state that forgiveness can reduce negative emotions, lower stress, and improve social relationships. Thus, forgiveness makes a positive contribution to individual development. According to Thompson et al. (2005), forgiveness can also help individuals reframe their perspective on painful events in a more positive light. Individuals who show little evidence of such positive change can be described as harboring unforgiveness. Unforgiveness is characterized by hatred, bitterness, resentment, and a desire to avoid or retaliate against those who have hurt them (Worthington & Wade, 1999). Levels of forgiveness also influence an individual's happiness (Devassykutty & P Jose, 2025; Dikmen & Çankaya, 2023; Papadopoulou et al., 2023). Thus, higher levels of forgiveness increase an individual's happiness.

Forgiveness relates to an individual's behavior toward the perpetrator. According to McCullough et al. (2006), forgiveness is associated with a decrease in the motivation to avoid and seek revenge, as well as an increase in the motivation to act kindly toward the perpetrator. Additionally, there are aspects that influence forgiveness, namely cognitive, affective, and behavioral factors (Enright & North, 1998). Through these aspects, forgiveness helps individuals rebuild relationships through understanding, empathy, and the motivation to foster better interactions. The forgiveness process does not occur quickly but involves several stages, beginning with the phase of expressing feelings, the decision-making phase, the phase of taking action, and the phase of internalizing the meaning of the forgiveness process (Enright, 2001). Guidance and counseling services play a crucial role in helping students address personal and social issues (Hrisyov & Kostadinov, 2022). In fostering a forgiving attitude among adolescents, guidance counselors can provide support through counseling services. This effort can be implemented through classroom counseling sessions using animated video media to cultivate a forgiving attitude. Classroom counseling is the delivery of services in a scheduled, face-to-face classroom setting provided to all students (Kemdikbud, 2024). The implementation of classroom counseling services is intended to help students achieve their developmental goals (Dlaza & Marais, 2025; Sharma et al., 2023). Developmental tasks for students are aligned with the High School Student Independence Competency Standards (SKKPD). Developing a sense of forgiveness falls under the "Emotional Maturity" category of the SKKPD. This is because students need to cultivate forgiveness by releasing negative emotions within themselves to prevent prolonged conflicts with others.

Animated videos are digital media that present moving visual objects designed to convey material in an engaging manner (Mellisa et al., 2023). Animated video media is the result of combining fictional images and sound that are systematically arranged to produce realistic motion (Constantika et al., 2022). According to Harley et al., (2025), the use of animated video media helps teachers deliver material through more engaging visual displays, thereby increasing students' interest and understanding. In line with Caella & Yulianto (2024), the study also notes that animated videos can capture students' attention, thereby supporting a more effective delivery of instructional content. This suggests that animated video media has the potential to serve as an effective tool for fostering a sense of forgiveness among high school students. The results of a preliminary study conducted by the researcher on 10th-grade students at State High School 1 Malang showed that 78% of respondents needed to improve their understanding and development of a forgiving attitude. Students reported that animated video media was engaging and helped them understand examples of conflict situations. Furthermore, the topic of forgiveness is rarely discussed specifically in school counseling services, and the use of counseling media remains infrequent. Therefore, there is a need to strengthen the curriculum with interactive and easily understandable media. Interviews with school counselors revealed that counseling services related to forgiveness are not yet provided specifically and are still integrated into materials on emotional management and social relationships. The use of media in these services remains limited. On the other hand, research by Hwang et al., (2022) found that students' sense of responsibility in high school can be enhanced through guidance services based on animated videos. Thus, animated video media can assist guidance counselors in delivering classroom-based guidance services.

Based on the above explanation, this study aims to develop the Strategic Media Animation for Forgiveness Education (SMART-FORGIVE) to foster an attitude of forgiveness among high school students. The animated video

will present the material combined with colorful images that students will find engaging. The goal of developing this animated video is to help students become more enthusiastic and better understand the material. It is hoped that this study will produce a medium capable of meeting criteria that include accuracy, usefulness, attractiveness, and convenience.

Methods

Design

This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach using the Borg and Gall development model (Borg & Gall, 1983). The development has several advantages, including its cyclical research procedure.. Therefore, the product developed through this model is not merely conceptual, but has been refined based on empirical data. In addition, its purpose is not merely to identify the implementation of learning, but rather to emphasize the development of a product that is effective and efficient in its application. The development stages included: (1) research and data collection; (2) planning; (3) product development; (4) preliminary field testing; (5) product revision; (6) main field testing; and (7) operational product revision. This model was used to develop and examine the effectiveness of Strategic Media Animation for Forgiveness Education (SMART-FORGIVE) as a classroom counseling medium designed to foster forgiveness attitudes among high school students.

Participants

The participants in this study consisted of media experts, content experts, prospective users, and 10th-grade students from Class J at State High School 1 Malang. The student participants totaled 34 individuals. Participants were selected purposively based on criteria relevant to the development, validation, and implementation of the SMART-FORGIVE media in classroom counseling services.

Data Collection

Data were collected using expert review instruments and a forgiveness scale. The forgiveness scale used in this study was the Enright Forgiveness Inventory (EFI), adapted from (Fariña et al., 2024; Molinero et al., 2023; Song et al., 2024). The EFI was originally developed by Enright and Rique and consists of 60 items covering three aspects of forgiveness: affective, behavioral, and cognitive. Before being used in the study, the instrument was translated and adapted to the local cultural context. The scale was validated through expert judgment by two doctors in the field of guidance and counseling. The validation results showed an average score of 3.4, which was categorized as acceptable. Therefore, the instrument was considered appropriate for use in the study. Previous studies have reported that the EFI has very high reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha coefficients ranging from 0.98 to 0.99 across several samples, including high school students. The test-retest coefficient was 0.86, while construct validity coefficients ranged from 0.53 to 0.74, indicating adequate validity. Data were collected before and after the intervention through pretest and posttest procedures.

Data Analysis

Data analysis involved both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data were analyzed using the Inter-rater Agreement Model and the paired-sample t-test (Bakar et al., 2026). The Inter-rater Agreement Model was used to analyze evaluation results from media experts, content experts, and prospective users. Meanwhile, the paired-sample t-test was used to examine significant differences between pretest and posttest scores. The significance level was set at $p < 0.05$. Qualitative data were analyzed descriptively based on suggestions, comments, feedback, and recommendations provided by media experts, content experts, and prospective users. These qualitative findings were used to support product revision and improve the quality of the SMART-FORGIVE media before broader implementation.

Results

The research findings are presented according to the stages outlined by Borg & Gall (2013:569), namely: (1) research and data collection; (2) planning; (3) product development; (4) preliminary field testing; (5) product revision; (6) main field testing; (7) operational product revision.

Research and Data Collection

The research and data collection stage was based on a preliminary study and a literature review. The preliminary study was conducted by distributing a needs assessment questionnaire to 348 tenth-grade students at State High School 1 Malang. This was done to identify the state of forgiveness and the necessary services required. The results showed that 62.3% of students reported difficulty forgiving their peers. Additionally, 65.5% of students reported frequently holding onto feelings of anger for a long time following a conflict. On the other hand, the preliminary study revealed that 78% of students expressed a need for understanding and the development of a forgiving attitude. Students also stated that the use of animated video media was considered more engaging and effective in helping them understand examples of situations related to the attitude of forgiveness. In addition to the preliminary study, the researcher also conducted a literature review related to the concept of forgiveness and the use of animated video media in classroom counseling services. This served as the foundation for the development of the educational media.

Planning

The planning phase involved designing the product to be developed: the SMART-FORGIVE animated video to foster forgiveness in high school students. During this phase, the researchers formulated the product development objectives, developed a needs assessment instrument and an expert evaluation instrument, and designed the animated video content based on the three aspects of forgiveness: cognitive, affective, and behavioral. The researcher also compiled a guidebook for guidance counselors as a guide for conducting classroom counseling services using the SMART-FORGIVE media.

Product Development

The product development phase resulted in the SMART-FORGIVE animated video media containing forgiveness-related content. The media was developed by combining animation, text content, and voice-over to aid students' understanding. The media was organized into three videos based on the aspects of forgiveness: cognitive, affective, and behavioral. Each video has its own title: (1) Bye-Bye Resentment, Hello Peace of Mind!, (2) Stay Cool, No Need to Get Upset Over Everything, (3) Making Up Doesn't Mean Losing, But a Sign of Maturity (see Figure 1).

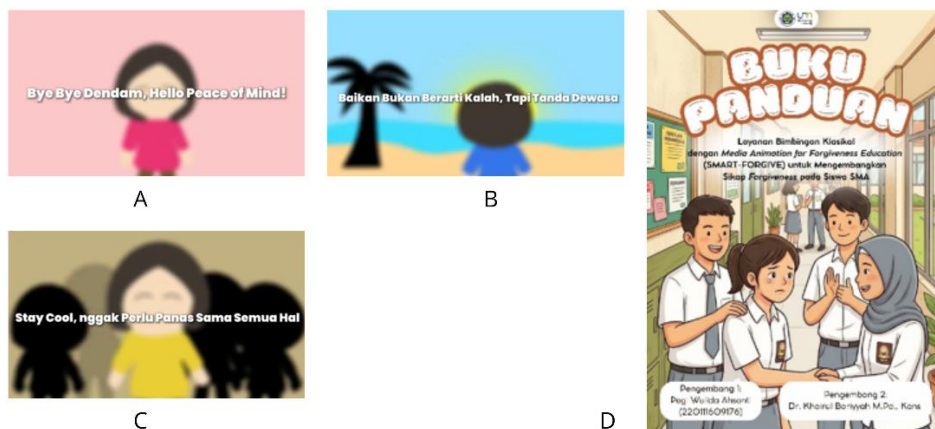


Figure 1. Animated video media.

Note. A = Video Topic 1 (<https://youtu.be/zrpMt794WdA>); B = Video Topic 2 (<https://youtu.be/hT6dsslqEhg>); C = Video Topic 3 (<https://youtu.be/VDYc2jwKC-A>), D= SMART-FORGIVE Guidebook.

The researchers also developed the SMART-FORGIVE Guidebook as a supporting manual for guidance counselors. This guidebook provides clear instructions for using the animated video media in classroom counseling sessions. It explains the objectives, procedures, and stages of media implementation during counseling activities. The guidebook is expected to help counselors use SMART-FORGIVE effectively to foster students' forgiveness attitudes.

Preliminary Field Test

The preliminary field test was conducted through a validation process involving several experts, including subject matter experts, media experts, and prospective users (counselors). The evaluation was carried out using a questionnaire covering the aspects of accuracy, usefulness, appeal, and ease of use. Validity test results were calculated using the inter-rater agreement model. Based on table 1, the interpretation of the validity test results is as follows:

Table 1. Validity test index categories.

Expert Test Index	Validity Classification
0,76 – 1,00	Very High
0,50 – 0,75	High
0,26 – 0,50	Moderate
0,00 – 0,25	Low

The table 1 below shows the results of the product usability test conducted by media experts, subject matter experts, and potential users. The content expert pilot test results indicate that the SMART-FORGIVE media achieved a very high category in terms of accuracy and ease of use, with ratings of 1.00 for both aspects. The usefulness aspect received a rating of 0.75, while the interest aspect obtained a rating of 0.66, both of which were categorized as high. These findings suggest that the content of the media was considered accurate, useful, interesting, and easy to apply in classroom counseling services.

Table 2. Media evaluation results by subject matter experts and media experts.

	Aspect	Rating	Category
Content Expert Pilot Test Data	Accuracy	1,00	Very High
	Usefulness	0,75	High
	Interest	0,66	High
	Ease of Use	1,00	Very High
Media Expert Pilot Test Data	Accuracy	0,66	High
	Usefulness	1,00	Very High
	Interest	0,80	Very High
	Ease of Use	1,00	Very High

Based on the data presented in table 2, the media expert pilot test results also showed positive evaluations across all assessed aspects. The media obtained a rating of 0.66 for accuracy, which was categorized as high, while usefulness and ease of use received ratings of 1.00, indicating a very high category. The interest aspect also reached a very high category, with a rating of 0.80. Overall, these results indicate that the SMART-FORGIVE animated video media is feasible and appropriate for use as a counseling medium to support the development of students' forgiveness attitudes. The content expert pilot test results further support the feasibility of the SMART-FORGIVE animated video media from the perspective of material quality. The accuracy and ease of use aspects received ratings of 1.00, indicating that the content was considered highly appropriate and easy to implement in classroom counseling sessions. The usefulness aspect obtained a rating of 0.75, showing that the media was viewed as beneficial for supporting students' understanding of forgiveness. Meanwhile, the interest aspect received a rating of 0.66, suggesting that the media was sufficiently engaging for students. These findings indicate that the SMART-FORGIVE media has acceptable content quality and can be used as a supportive tool in guidance and counseling services.

Table 2. Media evaluation results by subject matter experts and media experts.

	Aspect	Rating	Category
Content Expert Pilot Test Data	Accuracy	1,00	Very High
	Usefulness	1,00	Very High
	Interest	1,00	Very High
	Ease of Use	1,00	Very High
Media Expert Pilot Test Data	Accuracy	1,00	Very High
	Usefulness	1,00	Very High

Interest	1,00	Very High
Ease of Use	1,00	Very High

Based on the data presented in Table 3, the SMART-FORGIVE guidebook received highly positive evaluations from both content experts and media experts. All assessed aspects, including accuracy, usefulness, interest, and ease of use, obtained a rating of 1.00. These results indicate that the guidebook was categorized as very high across all evaluation aspects. Therefore, the SMART-FORGIVE guidebook is considered highly feasible and appropriate to support guidance counselors in implementing the animated video media in classroom counseling sessions.

Table 4. Results of the user (counselor) test.

	Aspek	Penilaian	Kategori
Prospective User (Counselor) Test Data	Accuracy	1,00	Very High
	Usefulness	1,00	Very High
	Interest	1,00	Very High
	Ease of Use	1,00	Very High

As shown in Table 4, the results of the prospective user test showed highly positive responses from the counselor. All assessed aspects, including accuracy, usefulness, interest, and ease of use, received a rating of 1.00. These scores indicate that each aspect was categorized as very high. The accuracy aspect shows that the SMART-FORGIVE media was considered appropriate for use in classroom counseling services. The usefulness, interest, and ease of use aspects also suggest that the media is beneficial, engaging, and easy for counselors to implement. Overall, these findings indicate that SMART-FORGIVE is highly feasible for use by guidance counselors to support the development of students' forgiveness attitudes.

Product Revision

Based on the results of the pilot test, the product revision process was then carried out. Improvements were made to several parts of the animated video and user manual based on suggestions and comments from subject matter experts, media experts, and prospective users. The revisions were made to enhance the product's quality and ensure it meets the needs of the students.

Main Field Trial

The effectiveness of the SMART-FORGIVE medium in fostering students' attitudes of forgiveness was assessed through a main field trial. Thirty-four students from Class X-J at Malang State High School 1 served as subjects for the main field trial, which employed a pretest-posttest design. Measurements were taken before and after the implementation of classroom counseling using the SMART-FORGIVE media.

Table 6. T-test results.

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean				
Pair 1	Pretest Forgiveness	210.29	34	39.884	6.840				
	Posttest Forgiveness	257.74	34	47.444	8.137				
						95% confidence Interval of the Difference			
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Pretest Forgiveness-	-47.441	64.286	11.025	-69.872	25.011	-4.303	33	.000

Posttest
Forgiveness

The data were then analyzed using a paired sample t-test (see table 6). The pretest results showed that the majority of students fell into the moderate category, with 21 students (61.8%). Twelve students (35.3%) were in the high category. There was 1 student (2.94%) in the low category. After the implementation of the guidance service using the SMART-FORGIVE medium, the posttest results showed a change. Based on the posttest results, 23 students (67.6%) were in the high category and 11 students (32.4%) were in the moderate category. Through statistical analysis using a paired-sample t-test, the mean pretest score was found to be 210.29 and the mean posttest score was 257.74. This indicates an increase in forgiveness scores among the students. The t-test results showed $t = -4.303$ with a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). The t-test results indicate a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores.

Revision of the Operational Product

The operational product was revised based on the results of the main field trial. This aims to refine the product for more effective use in classroom counseling services. Improvements were made to several parts of the animated video media, as well as refinements to the user guide for guidance counselors.

Discussion

This study aims to develop the Strategic Media Animation for Forgiveness Education (SMART-FORGIVE) as a tool for classroom guidance and counseling to help foster an attitude of forgiveness among high school students. The development of this tool is motivated by the fact that students still struggle to forgive after a conflict. Therefore, there is a need for engaging guidance and counseling materials tailored to the characteristics of the students. Preliminary study results indicate that the majority of students still struggle to forgive their peers and hold onto feelings of anger for a long time after a conflict. Consequently, students still find it difficult to release negative emotions, resulting in the forgiveness process failing to develop optimally. Additionally, most students also expressed a need for understanding and the development of a forgiveness attitude. Students also stated that the use of animated video media is considered more engaging and effective in helping them understand examples of situations related to the attitude of forgiveness. Based on interviews with guidance counselors, students tend to have verbally forgiven others but often still harbor negative feelings. Issues related to forgiveness, such as misunderstandings or feeling offended, can lead to conflict. Additionally, specialized services addressing the topic of forgiveness are still insufficiently provided to students, and the use of educational media remains limited. In line with the views of [McCullough & Witvliet \(2002\)](#), individuals who experience negative emotions such as anger or hatred tend to find it difficult to forgive. Therefore, guidance services are needed to help students manage their emotions and develop a positive attitude toward forgiveness.

Forgiveness is a process that helps individuals increase their motivation to make peace with those who have hurt them ([McCullough et al., 1997](#)). According to [Thompson et al. \(2005\)](#), forgiveness also helps individuals reframe their perspective on unpleasant events into a more positive one. Through forgiveness, levels of stress, anxiety, and even depression can be reduced ([Worthington & Wade, 1999](#)). This occurs because individuals become better able to control their emotions and behavior, reduce the pain they feel, and are able to forgive those who have hurt them. Guidance and counseling teachers (BK teachers) play a crucial role in helping students develop forgiveness through guidance and counseling services. These services assist students in overcoming challenges at school ([Ahfadzi et al., 2023](#)). One of the basic services that can help students is classroom guidance. Classroom guidance helps students reach their full potential through classroom activities delivered systematically ([Imro et al., 2024](#)). Based on the Student Independence Competency Standards (SKKPD), the development of certain aspects in adolescents must be fulfilled, one of which is emotional maturity. This aspect can help adolescents alleviate negative emotions through the process of forgiveness ([Nurhikma et al., 2023](#)).

The implementation of classical guidance services requires the use of media appropriate to the characteristics of the students. One type of media that can be used is animated video. The use of creative media in guidance services can effectively help students change their behavior ([Indreswari et al., 2022](#)). Animated videos can present information visually and audibly, thereby helping students understand the material in a more engaging and accessible way ([Pilendia, 2022](#)). In line with this, [Afrilia et al. \(2022\)](#) also state that animated video media helps students understand

information effectively. In response to this need, this study developed the SMART-FORGIVE media, an animated video series. The SMART-FORGIVE media consists of three videos designed to assist guidance counselors in providing classroom counseling services. The media is structured around the aspects of forgiveness. According to [Enright & North \(1998\)](#), there are three aspects of forgiveness: cognitive, affective, and behavioral. The SMART-FORGIVE media consists of three animated video episodes: (1) “Bye Bye Resentment, Hello Peace of Mind!”, which discusses negative thoughts that arise during conflicts and how to transform them into positive ones. (2) “Stay Cool, No Need to Get Upset Over Everything”, which addresses the emotions that arise during conflicts and how to manage those emotions. (3) “Making Amends Doesn’t Mean Losing, But a Sign of Maturity,” which discusses concrete actions in forgiving and fostering more positive relationships. Therefore, the SMART-FORGIVE media is designed in an engaging manner through animation and a narrative flow tailored to the students’ life experiences to help foster an attitude of forgiveness.

This study also developed a guidebook for implementing classroom counseling services using the Strategic Media Animation for Forgiveness Education (SMART-FORGIVE) tool to foster an attitude of forgiveness among high school students. This guidebook assists prospective users (counselors) in delivering the service. The guidebook was developed with several sections, namely: (1) introduction, (2) conceptual insights, (3) user instructions, (4) service implementation plan, (5) evaluation procedures. This guidebook was also developed so that school counselors can understand the flow of implementing classical counseling services using the SMART-FORGIVE media. The content expert review of the SMART-FORGIVE media was conducted by two guidance and counseling faculty members. The results of the content experts’ feasibility assessment of the SMART-FORGIVE media indicated a high level of feasibility. The agreement score for the accuracy aspect was 1.00, categorized as very high. The usefulness aspect received an agreement score of 0.75, categorized as high. The appeal aspect received a score of 0.66, categorized as high. The ease of use aspect received a score of 1.00, categorized as very high. The agreement scores from the subject matter experts indicate that the SMART-FORGIVE media meets the feasibility criteria, which include accuracy, appeal, usefulness, and ease of use. This is also consistent with the theory proposed by [Enright & North \(1998\)](#), which states that forgiveness is a process of change involving an individual’s cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects in responding to conflicts with others. Therefore, the results of the content expert review indicate that the content of the SMART-FORGIVE media aligns with the concept of forgiveness and is thus suitable for use in traditional guidance counseling settings.

The media expert review was conducted by two guidance and counseling instructors with expertise in guidance and counseling media. The evaluation results indicate a very high level of suitability. The accuracy aspect received a consensus score of 0.66, categorized as high. The usefulness aspect received a consensus score of 1.00, categorized as very high. The appeal aspect received a consensus score of 0.80, categorized as very high. And the ease of use aspect received a score of 1.00, categorized as very high. Based on the consensus scores from the media experts, the results indicate that SMART-FORGIVE meets the suitability criteria based on the aspects of accuracy, appeal, usefulness, and ease of use, making it suitable for use in classical guidance services. In line with the opinion of [Anam et al. \(2023\)](#), animated video media can present illustrations of objects in an engaging manner, thereby helping students understand the material well. Thus, the results of the media expert evaluation indicate that the SMART-FORGIVE media has good visual quality, making it suitable for use as an engaging tool in the delivery of traditional counseling services. The results of the user trial, conducted by two school counselors, indicate that the SMART-FORGIVE media received a rating in the “very high” category. The agreement scores, covering the aspects of accuracy, usefulness, appeal, and ease of use, all received a score of 1.00 in the “very high” category. These results indicate that the SMART-FORGIVE media is highly suitable, useful, engaging, and easy for counselors to use in delivering classical counseling services. According to [Condeng et al., \(2025\)](#), animated video media can serve as a tool to make instructional content more engaging and interactive. Therefore, the SMART-FORGIVE media can be an alternative tool to assist guidance and counseling teachers in delivering classroom counseling services.

The feasibility test of the SMART-FORGIVE guidebook was divided into two parts: a media expert evaluation and a content expert evaluation. The media expert evaluation results showed that the guidebook scored 1.00 in the areas of accuracy, usefulness, appeal, and ease of use. This score falls into the “very high” category. Based on these results, the SMART-FORGIVE guidebook is deemed highly suitable and appropriate for use as a guide for counselors in providing SMART-FORGIVE media-based classroom counseling services. The pretest results indicate that the level of forgiveness among the 34 students in Class X-J at State High School 1 Malang falls into a mixed category. Most students fall into the moderate category, suggesting that their ability to forgive has not yet developed optimally. Consequently, these students still have the potential to harbor negative emotions when experiencing conflicts with others. This aligns with the view of [Worthington & Wade \(1999\)](#), who state that individuals who still

harbor negative feelings such as hatred and resentment will find it difficult to forgive and may harm themselves. This situation indicates that students require services that can assist them in developing a forgiving attitude.

Following the intervention with the students, the posttest results showed that the majority fell into the high category. This indicates that the intervention provided helped students develop an attitude of forgiveness. Additionally, the results of the paired-sample t-test revealed a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores. Therefore, this difference demonstrates that the SMART-FORGIVE intervention is effective in fostering an attitude of forgiveness among students. In line with the view of [McCullough et al. \(1997\)](#), forgiveness is defined as a process of changing an individual's motivation from a desire to avoid or seek revenge to a motivation to reconcile with the person who has wronged them. This process helps individuals reduce negative emotions and develop a forgiving attitude. Based on these findings, the results also corroborate a previous study by [Khayati et al. \(2022\)](#), which found that animation-based guidance services produced significant differences in high school students' scores on the topic of learning responsibility before and after the intervention. Recent studies have also emphasized the potential of animated video-based interventions in promoting students' socio-emotional development and tolerance-related attitudes ([Wang & Ou, 2025](#); [Wang et al., 2025](#)).

The educational materials developed by the researchers have undergone a validation process involving subject matter experts, media specialists, and prospective users (counselors). Based on the validation results—which assessed accuracy, usefulness, appeal, and ease of use the SMART-FORGIVE materials received a very high validity rating. Thus, the materials are deemed appropriate in terms of content, subject matter, presentation, and the accompanying guidebook. Additionally, the results of the effectiveness test of the SMART-FORGIVE media on high school students also showed a significant improvement. This was determined through pre- and post-tests conducted before and after the implementation of classroom guidance services. Consequently, the development in this study produced the SMART-FORGIVE media as a tool for classroom guidance services to foster a forgiveness attitude among high school students, making it suitable for use. Therefore, it is hoped that the development of the SMART-FORGIVE media will benefit guidance and counseling teachers, particularly as a guidance service tool for fostering a forgiveness attitude in schools.

Conclusions

The Strategic Media Animation for Forgiveness Education (SMART-FORGIVE) media product that was developed has met the criteria for acceptability, which include accuracy, usefulness, appeal, and ease of use, and has been evaluated by subject matter experts, media experts, and prospective users. The evaluation results indicate that the SMART-FORGIVE media falls into the high category, making it suitable for use in classroom counseling services to foster a forgiveness attitude among high school students. Additionally, the results demonstrate effectiveness, as evidenced by an increase in students' forgiveness scores following the provision of classroom counseling services using the SMART-FORGIVE media. On the other hand, based on the results of the paired sample t-test with a significance value of 0.000 (<0.05), the SMART-FORGIVE media is deemed effective in helping to develop forgiveness attitudes among high school students. Future research is recommended to test the SMART-FORGIVE media on a broader subject group or different educational levels, as well as to develop innovations in guidance and counseling media as a form of assistance for students in developing other aspects of personal and social development.

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Author Contributions

All authors contributed equally to the research process and the preparation of this article. This includes the formulation of the concept, the development of the SMART-FORGIVE tool, data collection and analysis, as well as the writing and editing of the manuscript. All authors have reviewed and approved the final manuscript.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors have no financial, personal, or professional conflicts of interest related to this research.

Ethical Approval

This research was conducted in accordance with applicable standards and guidelines.

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