

The Effectiveness of Group Counseling with Self-Management and Cognitive Restructuring Techniques to Reduce Students' Aggression

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Abstract

This study aimed at analyzing the effectiveness of group counseling with self-management and cognitive restructuring techniques to reduce the aggression of the students of SMK LPI Semarang. The study employed randomized pretest-posttest comparison group. There were 18 students selected as experimental subjects, and placed into three groups (each were six students) randomly. It had no control group, but comparison group with the intervention of the combination of two techniques. The data from the groups were collected using aggression questionnaire scale. The results of wilcoxon test showed that self-management technique was effective to reduce students' aggression ($Z = 2.201$, $p < 0.05$), while cognitive restructuring technique also effectively reduced aggression ($Z = 2.207$, $p < 0.05$), and the combination of self-management and cognitive restructuring techniques effectively reduced students' aggression ($Z = 2.201$, $p < 0.05$). These findings confirm that the group counseling with self-management and cognitive restructuring techniques is effective to reduce students' aggression.

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INTRODUCTION

Aggression is an individual action which is physically and verbally threatening, harassing others, mocking, saying rude, and forcing others to get things that do not belong to him. This behavior is very disturbing and disadvantageous to the development of oneself and others. According to Myers (2012), aggression is a physical or verbal behavior aimed at hurting others. In addition, Purnaningrum (2017) in her study states that aggression and violence can be done to anyone, and anything which causes individuals to be angry. It is different from bullying because bullying is only done to people who have lower strength than the bullying actors.

Students are required to reduce this behavior in order to have good personality, effective learning, and optimum achievement. If not, this behavior can cause them less able to do self-control, and self-awareness to perform something better (Jamilludin, 2019). The higher tendency of individuals' aggression would make them get stronger rejection from their peers, and experience social isolation (Krahe, 2005). On the other hand, individuals who have high emotion maturity will be able to reduce aggressive impulses, control their emotion, read others' feelings, maintain good relationship with environment. In this way, the individuals will be able to control their aggression (Winarling, 2016).

Self-management techniques involves self-monitoring, positive reinforcement from contracts or agreement with oneself, and mastery of self-management stimuli. These are some strategies used to change the individuals' behavior. Those can be done using the combination of therapeutic techniques. Skinner (2013) mentions that self-management includes controlling behavior, and controlled behavior in which the controlling behavior applies self-management strategies to modify the behavior. For more, the findings of Herman and McWhirter (2003) in SCARE program, (Student created aggression replacement Education find that in the end, adolescents who joined this program apparently experienced significantly lower aggression level, higher controlling level,

and higher self-management in the end of 15 meetings, and after one year the program took place.

The implementation of 8 sessions of self-management seemed not yet effective to reduce students' aggression. Since the students are at risk of aggression, the length of programs or the number of sessions are needed in order to strengthen the desired results (Wilkowski and Robinson, 2008). Thus, the future studies are required to provide additional sessions after the programs end in order to retain students' abilities and skills. Also, it is possible to give supplemental materials or intervention, such as moral education and social skills to complete and improve the benefit of self-management (Hermann and McWhirter, 2003).

Cognitive restructuring technique is not only beneficial to treat enuresis students, but also those who have behavioral problems. Erford (2016) states that cognitive restructuring technique is used to treat individuals with uncontrolled mind. In this state, they will perform aggression because their ability to control particular situations is absent. For more, the advantages of this technique have been proved in several previous studies. First, Ekennia et. al's study (2013) used cognitive restructuring to manage nocturnal enuresis for junior high school students. Second, Meichenbaum (in Dobson, 2010) shows the effectiveness of cognitive restructuring technique to deal with speaking anxiety, test anxiety, phobia, aggression, inability to socialize, and children withdrawal from their surroundings. Third, McKay and Fanning (in Donald Maichenbaum, 2010) mention that cognitive restructuring technique helps individuals to understand cognitive distortion which causes them criticize themselves with negative judgments. In this way, the implementation of cognitive restructuring can correct their irrational thoughts into rational.

The above studies are relevant to the current study. However, the researchers found a gap in their findings, namely the not optimum results of the implementation of self-management in dealing with aggression. Therefore, there was a need for further study to improve the limitation,

such as by adding instruments and interventions (Siddiqah, 2010). In line with this, this study used the intervention of group counseling with self-management and cognitive restructuring techniques to reduce students' aggression, and added more instruments. By doing so, it was expected that this study could complete and strengthen the previous studies, and be a basis for further researchers.

METHODS

The subjects in this study were students of the grade XI, and XII of SMK LPI Semarang, consisting of 65 students from four classes with 2 different majors, namely Software design (RPL) and Accounting (AKT). They were selected using a purposive random sampling technique based on the high level of aggression ($140.5 < X \leq 216$). In the placement, they were divided into three groups, namely self-management group, cognitive restructuring group, and the combination of cognitive restructuring and self-management group with 6 members for each. In the self-management group, cognitive restructuring group, and the combination group, the subjects were treated using self-management technique, cognitive restructuring technique, and the combination of self-management, and cognitive restructuring technique respectively.

The instrument used to measure student's aggression was aggression questionnaire scale designed by Buss & Perry (1992). It describes four indicators with five criteria of likert scale, namely physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility. The instrument validity test showed that all items passed the validation with the alpha coefficient of 0.909.

This study was quantitative with experimental design. The experimental design was realized by the use of randomized pretest-posttest comparison group design by involving three previously mentioned group. To do so, the researchers conducted several steps. First, the provision of pretest to determine the initial aggression level of students. Second, the provision of intervention in form of group counseling with self-management and cognitive

restructuring techniques for five sessions with the duration of 2x4 minutes for each. Third, the provision of posttest to see any reduction. Fourth, doing evaluation in form of positive encouragement manifested in the homework given. After that the results of pretest and posttest were analyzed using wilcoxon test to see the significance of the effectiveness in reducing the students' aggression through the techniques in the counseling. Moreover, kruskal-wallis test was used to determine any significant differences among the three groups after the intervention was given.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The description of the data in this study informed that the level of mean and standard deviation of aggression behavior in self-management technique has decreased from the pretest (M = 25.26; SD = 4.69) to post-test (M = 11.98; SD = 5.33) by the difference (M = 10.27; SD = 1.05) and the group of self-management and cognitive restructuring technique combination (M = 25.30; SD = 4.75) to posttest (M = 11.53; SD = 4.60) by the difference (M = 13.78; SD = 1.45). This results are presented on the following table.

Table 1. The Description of Data, Result of Wilcoxon and Kruskal Walts tests

	Pre-test		Post-test		Z	P
	M	SD	M	SD		
SM	25.26	4.94	11.94	5.33	2,20	0,028
CR	23.42	4.74	13.23	5.62	2,21	0,027
SM+CR	25.30	4.75	11.53	4.60	2,20	0,028
H	2.000		2.000			
P	0.368		0.368			

SM = self-management

CR = cognitive restructuring

SM+CR = self-management and cognitive restructuring

The data analysis of group counseling data with self-management and cognitive restructuring techniques was conducted through Wilcoxon test. This technique was used to test the effectiveness of self-management and cognitive restructuring techniques to reduce students' aggression in pretest-posttest. The result of Kruskal Walts test was used to find out the

effectiveness level of self-management, cognitive restructuring, and the combination of both techniques.

As seen in table 1, the result of Wilcoxon analysis shows that the self-management technique was positively effective to reduce students' aggression ($Z+2.21$, $p < 0.05$). Similarly, cognitive restructuring technique, and the combination of both techniques also resulted the same ($Z = 2.21$, $p < 0.05$), and ($Z=2.20$; $p < 0.05$) respectively. These results indicated that the group counseling with self-management and cognitive restructuring technique was effective to reduce students' aggression. Also, the result of Kruskal Wallis test showed that there was no significant difference of the effectiveness level of group counselling with self-management and cognitive restructuring technique to reduce students' aggression ($H = 2.000$; $p > 0.05$).

Further, the results of this study showed that the group counseling with self-management and cognitive restructuring technique was effective to reduce the aggression of SMK LPI Semarang students. The implementation of this group counseling was given to students who had high aggression. As a result, this study was able to contribute theoretical significance, especially regarding the limited theory of group counseling with the combination of self-management and cognitive restructuring techniques.

Apparently, the results of this study are in accordance with several previous studies. Sa'diyah et.al. (2016) confirm that self-management is effective in reducing students' aggression since it is one of techniques in behavior counseling which studies about individual behavior, and aimed at changing any behaviors that harm oneself and others. Thus, the results of Sa'diyah et.al study strengthen studies about the use of self-management to reduce students' aggression. Additionally, Isrofin (2016) suggests that cognitive restructuring is also effective in reducing students' aggression. This technique teaches students to identify and evaluate their behavior by changing disruptive and negative thoughts into positive.

Above all, the effectiveness of self-management and cognitive restructuring

techniques, and the combination of both techniques are explained as follows. Self-management technique helps the counselee to understand situations that obstruct behaviors to change and prevent, such as disturbing others, provoking other's anger, beating, and other aggression. As a result, those unwanted behaviors can be minimized. Cognitive restructuring technique facilitates counselee to describe the situation, feelings, and behavior connected to one's mind so as to produce emotional response. During the process of cognitive restructuring, counselees have to reset the negative and irrational thoughts into positive and rational. Indeed, counselees must avoid harmful behavior especially threatening, throwing, provoking, and other aggression.

The combination technique of self-management and cognitive restructuring techniques is the idea of CBT approach. Both of these techniques are related to cognitive and behavior. Self-management is a strategy to change negative behavior into the positive one with strong commitment and often doing reinforcement exercises. Meanwhile, cognitive restructuring is a technique to rearrange maladaptive thoughts that harm others and one's self into adaptive one. Consequently, one's thought can be more positive. Hence, the combination of these technique can be alternative to reduce students' aggression in the school.

Eventually, this study implied that self-management, cognitive restructuring, and the combination of both technique are effective in reducing students' aggression. It is important to help and pay attention to students to control their aggression by giving a group counseling with various techniques such as self-management and cognitive restructuring techniques. School counselees are also expected to collaborate with the students regarding to the implementation of group counseling in order to be optimum. However, this study was limited only in one vocational high school with limited number of students and gender.

CONCLUSION

Based on the description of findings, it can be concluded that group counseling with self-management and cognitive restructuring techniques is effective to reduce students' aggression in SMK LPI Semarang.

In addition, this study provides suggestions to the following related parties (1) Guidance and Counseling (BK), this study provides additional knowledge regarding the implementation of group counseling with self-management and cognitive restructuring techniques to reduce students' aggression along with the procedures, (2) the results of this study can be the consideration and reference for further studies which fill the gap in the limitation of this study. Also, the future studies are recommended to add control group as a comparison and plan the need for further actions or follow up in monitoring the intervention impact on how long the length of students' aggression reduction.

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