

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Group Counseling to Improve Body Image

Meli Susanti Br Saragih^{1✉}, Mungin Eddy Wibowo² & Awalya²

¹ Universitas Negeri Medan, Indonesia

² Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling to improve the body image of the students of Kesatrian 2 Junior High School (SMP 2 Kesatrian) Semarang. Meanwhile, the research methods used were repeated measures of experimental design with pretest and multiple posttest design. For more, the sample used were 7 students selected by using purposive sampling technique. The results of this study showed that cognitive behavioral therapy group counselling was effective to improve students' body image. At last, the findings succeeded in proving the effect of cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling towards the body image of junior high school students.

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✉ Correspondence address:
Willem Iskandar, Medan, Sumatera Utara, 1589
E-mail: melisusanti_saragih@yahoo.com

INTRODUCTION

Bestiana (2012) defines body image as a part of self-concepts associated with physical characteristics and is an individual evaluation of himself. It is also defined as a person's mental image regarding the shape and size of his body, how the person will perceive and give assessments of what he thinks and feels about the size and shape of his body as well as how others think about him.

The urgency of body image for life is related to individuals' confidence in the body because the more positive self-esteem possessed by individuals, the more body image values will increase, and reinforce their identity of others and themselves. For more, the individuals will be easier to understand and accept others. Also, when individuals possess a positive body image, they will see his body according to the actual conditions. Therefore, it can be concluded that positive body image describes satisfaction with physical appearance, and oppositely, negative body image appears as a picture of dissatisfaction with physical appearance.

A research by Rahayu (2012) reveals that strong attention to the body that adolescents encounter will have a bad influence. As a result, girls will look for various ways to have an expected body and apply any in appropriate behaviors in achieving the ideal body shape that is desired. Moreover, a wrong way that is often done is to do a strict diet. This usually is done because of the facts that even in social life adolescents often feel insecure, embarrassed when dealing with many people, ask questions about their body to family or friends, and not infrequently do deviant eating behavior.

Another study related to body image was also done by Leone (2011) to students and seniors. It was found that there is a strong correlation between body image and risk behavior management strategies. In addition, adolescents have high body image differences seen from the desire for an ideal body and interesting physical appearance. At last, facial features are the strongest predictors of the emergence of risky behaviors.

Alipoor's study (2009) on female students in Iran showed that body image dissatisfaction is strongly correlated with self-physical and self-concept. Cash (2002) reveals that factors that can influence negative judgments on the body are academic demands in school and social demands related to appearance.

Smolak & Thompson (2009) also explain the importance of media factors, especially the mass media in shaping values adopted by communities. Through the mass media, an image of an ideal body is formed in society. Also, through various types of advertisements, fashion in magazines, and Hollywood films, people are introduced to slim female figures. Therefore, those shape an ideal figure which becomes a role model for adolescents (Bestiana, 2012).

A case study conducted by Muhsin (2015) on negative body image of young women aged 19 to 22 years old found that adolescents are dissatisfied with the condition of their hair, teeth, facial skin, thin body, keloid scars on legs, and the dark color of their legs. Further, the perceived impact is stress, low self-confidence and disruption of social interaction. These feelings will obviously obstruct the adaptation of adolescents, so there is a need for special attention to the importance of positive body image.

Anggoro (2016) conducted a study that reveals that in general, physical appearance consistently correlates most with confidence. According to this study, it can be said that physical appearance in individuals has a very close relationship with self-confidence so that if the individuals have a physical appearance that matches their ideal concept, then the level their confidence is high, and vice versa.

Based on the preliminary study at SMP Kesatrian 2 Semarang, the researchers found many students identified as having negative body image, including (1) saying that the most important thing according to them is appearance. If their physical appearance is not attractive, they would not feel confident, (2) Always comparing themselves with others, (3) Others' judgments about themselves are very important because the judgements determine their attitudes and

behaviors to others. According to these findings, the problems that appeared were related to negative body image resulted by students' self-distrust of their abilities. Those were realized by acting inferior in front of others, easily getting discouraged, pessimistic and afraid. In addition, according to the questionnaires in form of body image scales given during the preliminary study at Kesatrian 2 Semarang Middle School, it was found that students who had very high body image level were found as many as 7 (20.59%), high body image level as many as 6 students (17.64%), fair body image level as many as 9 students (26.47%) and low body image level as many as 13 students (38.23%).

By referring to the above problems, it is necessary to have group counseling service techniques that can help students to improve their body image. One way that can be done to help individuals in the process of changing feelings, ways of thinking, acting related to body image they own, getting confidence in body shape and positively perceiving other's perceptions about their body shape is by implementing cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling services.

In relation to efforts to be done to improve body, a cognitive behavioral therapy has advantages that can be seen in investigation from several studies that have been done in advance and presented in the followings. Chakraborty (2014) examined the level of satisfaction of body image and its relationship with physical self-concept among adolescents and young adults with cognitive restructuring techniques. This study was supported by a research conducted by Christians (2012) which found the implementation of "unhealthy diet" by young women.

Tyler (2006) has also conducted a research using cognitive behavioral therapy and found that individuals who are dissatisfied with physical appearance can influence the level of psychological state. Alternatively, Sutisna, (2010) conducted a study with cognitive restructuring technique to increase students' independence and self-confidence. Same as the previous studies, Apollo's investigation (2008) also reveal the correlation between self-confidence and

academic achievement with cognitive behavioral therapy.

Based on the several studies above, cognitive behavioral therapy was hypothesized to be able to improve the body image of junior high school students. In addition, the selection of this technique arose based on a study that suggests a special approach that can open up and correct the mindset of students by which the changes in their mindset will affect their behavior. This suggestion was assumed to be suitable to implement in order to improve the body image of junior high school students. In general, this study is useful to find out the effectiveness of cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling to improve the body image of Junior High School (SMP) students in Semarang.

METHODS

This study used repeated measures of experimental design with pretest and multiple posttest design. Meanwhile, the sample in this study was selected by using purposive sampling technique. Through this technique, a total of 7 students who had low body image level were taken as research subjects.

Body image group was given a pretest (initial test). This pretest was given before the group received any treatments. Moreover, the experimental group members who had low body image level received a treatment in the form of cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling. After treatment, the researchers gave posttest and at the final stage, the researchers carried out a follow-up to the research subjects to determine the condition of the dependent variable after 2 weeks of posttest implementation. The follow-up was aimed at measuring the success of cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling services for groups to improve body image.

Data collection in this study was done by using body image scale measurement tool (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002). The scale consisted of 42 items with 2 items left unused. Based on the instrument test results, the items containing in body image scale were considered valid (0.227) with cronbach alpha coefficient of (0.927). Furthermore, the collected data were then

analyzed using the ANOVA Repeated Measures test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

All body image condition of the students of SMP Kesatrian 2 Semarang in the experimental group was in the low category or 100% (N: 7). After getting the treatment of cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling, their body image condition increased, namely low category of 14.2% (N: 1), fair category of 85.8% (N: 6) and high category of 0% (N: 0).

Furthermore, there happened an increase in the follow-up session showing the difference in the score of the students' body image which proved that cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling was effective to improve the body image of students, namely low category of 0% (N: 0), fair category of 57.2% (N: 4) and high category of 42.8% (N: 3).

Based on table 1, there were differences found in the average value of the level of students' body image before and after in the Pretest group (M = 66.71, SD = 4.35, $p < 0.01$). In posttest, the difference in the average score of students' body image showed that cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling was effective to improve the body image of students (M = 85.57, SD = 6.05, $p < 0.01$). Furthermore, there was an increase in the mean score of 29.5 points or 30.9% influenced by treatment. Meanwhile, in the follow-up session, the difference in the average of students' body image showed that cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling was effective to improve the body image of students (M = 96, 29, SD = 6.58, $p < 0.01$).

Table 1. The Results of ANOVA Repeated Measures Test

Measurements	Mean	SD
Pretest	66.71	4.35
Posttest	85.57	6.05
Follow-up	96.29	6.58
F (2.12)		135.12
p		< 0.01

The results of ANOVA Repeated Measures test on test of within-subjects effects showed that cognitive behavioral therapy group

counseling could improve students' body image ($F_{(2.12)} = 135.12$, $p < 0.01$). Furthermore, the researchers put a comparison of Post Hoc results in the study subjects with a significant increase in body image scores for the whole group. It can be seen in the following (Table 2).

Table 2. The Results of Post Hoc

Comparisons	Mean differences	SE	P
Pretest-Posttest	-18.857*	1.870	0.01
Pretest-follow-up	-29.571	2.103	0.01
Posttest-follow-up	-10.714	1.426	0.01

This study was attempted to examine the effectiveness of cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling to improve the body image of students. The results of this study indicated that cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling was effective to improve students' body image. This was proved by the results of effectiveness tests showing an increase in the pretest score (initial assessment) and posttest score (final evaluation). These results are in line with Deacon's study (2011) which concerned about the use behavioral group counselling with cognitive restructuring technique for the Eleventh Grade students majoring in Social Studies of State Senior High School (SMA Negeri) 2 Salatiga. This study found that there was a change in body image after receiving behavioral group counselling with cognitive restructuring technique on the research subjects. The assumption of this study was to significantly improve the body image of students.

Compared with Duygu's findings (2016), this study decided to examine the effectiveness of CBT group counseling which aimed to explore interpersonal sensitivity, dysfunctional automatic thoughts and overcome the habits of nursing students before and after getting a treatment in form of cognitive behavioral therapy group counselling services. This study concluded that cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling services help to reduce interpersonal sensitivity and dysfunctional automatic thoughts and increase effective coping.

In addition, cognitive behavioral therapy counseling is also based on theoretical reasons that the way humans feel and behave is

determined by how they perceive and structure their experiences. Therefore, when an individual looks negative at his appearance, it will affect his behavior. In relation to this, cognitive behavioral counseling theory has a goal to change the way counselees think by using their automatic thoughts to reach the core scheme and begin to introduce the idea of scheme restructuring. In other words, it is focused on automatic thoughts that individuals have about their bodies.

Those automatic thoughts will be changed by encouraging counselees to gather and consider evidences to support beliefs about negative body image. Individuals tend to maintain their beliefs about themselves, their world, and their future. Sharf (2012) revealed that the main focus of cognitive therapy is to help clients in testing and restructuring their core beliefs. The individual core beliefs related to his body image will be restructured into more positive.

Relevant researches on the use of cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling services to overcome depression and changes in eating behavior proved effective. Therefore, this study used cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling to overcome individuals who had negative body image. This needs to be done because when individuals have the concept of a negative body image, it will affect their behavior. For more, body image is an individual's assessment of his own body formed from cognitive aspects, perceptions, and behavior (Cash, 2002). This is in line with the research by Husna (2013) which states that when individuals reject their appearance, they will do various ways to get an ideal body or behave not as appropriate such as doing strict diet or extreme sports. Those are the states where cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling urges to be carried out, namely to help individuals who have problems related to low body image by utilizing group dynamics.

In addition, relevant studies conducted associated with cognitive behavioral therapy show effective results in terms of helping individuals who experience over weight anxiety. Therefore, when these studies are associated with current research, cognitive behavioral therapy can help individuals identify thoughts about self-

image. Then, the individuals who suffered over weight in the study felt pressured by the mind to become fat. Such thought was caused by the negative body image on the individuals. Accordingly, Prihaningtyas (2013) states that a person who has a negative body image considers his body unattractive, embarrassing, and unconfident in his own body shape and feels depressed by his thoughts, so there is a need for a technique that can help individuals change and restructure the thoughts that make him feel depressed.

Erford (2016) states that cognitive behavioral therapy can help individuals to stop thoughts that become stimuli for negative body image or dissatisfaction with their physical appearance, and help them to restructure the thoughts to become more positive and more beneficial. On the one hand, individuals' desire to keep their appearance attractive in their social environment is very natural, given that one of the 5 basic human needs according to Maslow is the need for respect and self-esteem. When self-esteem and appreciation needs from others are not met, the person may feel helpless and feel inferior. A person will feel himself valuable when having a positive self-concept. When the individual's self-concept is positive, it will be able to develop traits such as self-confidence, and the ability to see himself realistically (Hurlock, 2012).

A person who has a positive body image will feel that his body and appearance are cool and attractive, even though in reality, his body and appearance are less attractive, but if someone has a negative body image, he will feel his body and appearance are less attractive and lack confidence. This is in line with the research by Apollo (2008) whose aim was to find out the correlation between self-confidence and achievement. In this study, it is known that by having high self-confidence, individuals will experience an increase in self-esteem, and they will appear perfectly in every academic opportunity that comes to them with confidence. As a result, academic achievement will be easily achieved.

Therefore, based on the availability of previous relevant studies related to cognitive

behavioral therapy group counselling services and body images, the researchers were interested in conducting a study to overcome negative body image experienced by individuals through cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling services. Furthermore, this study was expected to be able to help individuals to improve the concept of body image they knew. At last, a research on cognitive behavioral therapy was also carried out by Saputra (2012). This study concludes that cognitive behavioral therapy technique can be used to increase students' self-confidence.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, a conclusion was drawn according to the purpose of the study, namely the intervention of cognitive behavioral therapy group counselling is effective to improve the body image of the students of SMP Kesatrian 2 Semarang. This was showed in the results of the scale, the significant average difference from the results of the pretest, posttest and follow-up in the group receiving intervention in the form of cognitive behavioral therapy to improve body image.

Based on the discussion of the results and conclusions of the study, suggestions are given to various related parties, in particular: (1) Counselors are suggested to apply cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling to improve students' body image. (2) Future researchers are suggested to conduct cognitive behavioral therapy group counseling to improve students' body image against other variables and with different samples.

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