

CBT Group Counseling with Stress Inoculation Training and Thought-Stopping Techniques to Improve Students' Academic Hardiness

Ira Gustanti^{1✉}, Mungin Eddy Wibowo² & Mulawarman²

¹ Public Senior High School 1 Godong, Grobogan, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia

² Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to analyze CBT group counseling with stress inoculation training and thought to stop techniques to improve students' academic hardiness. Meanwhile, the design used was pre-test and multiple post-test by involving 16 subjects of the study chosen by using purposive sampling from total 280 students of Public Senior High School 1 Godong. Their data were collected though the Hardiness Scale. Furthermore, repeated measure anova analysis showed that CBT group counseling with stress inoculation training and thought stopping techniques was effective to improve students' academic hardiness. These findings assert that CBT group counseling with stress inoculation training and thought stopping techniques is effective to improve students' academic hardiness.

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✉ Correspondence address:

Raya Semarang- Purwodadi KM.37 RT.02/RW.01, Manggarmas,
Godong, Grobogan, Jawa Tengah, 58162
E-mail: iragustanti08@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

Kobasa, Maddi, and Kahn (in Gayton, and Kehoe, 2015) state that hardiness is a personal variable which functions as a resource to reject any negative consequences of the unbeneficial condition. The hardy person will use transformational coping strategy when dealing with the forceful situation, namely changing their cognition and behaviors (Kobasa, and Maddi in Bakhshizadeh, Shiroudi, and Khalatbari, 2013).

Abdollahi, Talib, Yaacob, and Ismail (2015) in their study discuss the influence of hardiness on suppressing suicidal desire caused by academic stress experienced by Malaysian students. Next, Zhang, and Wong (2011) reveal that hardiness has a relationship with cognitive styles (thinking styles). Therefore, repairing cognitive structures would improve hardiness.

Group counseling can be used as a medium to help students in achieving their development, and as assistant to deal with students' academic hardiness. Group counseling is aimed at fostering and facilitating problems resolution faced by students (Wibowo, 2005). Also, group counseling is a help to students in a group situation that is preventive and curing and directed to facilitate their development and growth (Kurnanto, 2013).

Cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) approach helps individuals to rebuild paradigm (attitudes, assumption, and beliefs), examine paradigm, decide on which one is beneficial and unbeneficial for them. Cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) also shows individual how to develop the way to see all the things from many perspectives (Wilding, and Milne, 2013). This is supported Unwin, Tsimopoulou, Kroese, and Azmi (2016) which discovers that cognitive behavior therapy is effective to improve hardiness.

Cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) group counseling with stress inoculation training and thought stopping techniques is a form of intervention given to students who have a low level of hardiness. Stress inoculation training and thought stopping with group counseling service were expected to be able to help students to

improve academic hardiness. These are techniques done by changing and stopping negative thoughts owned by counselees by helping them restructuring the negative ones into the positive ones (Cormier, Nurius, and Osborn, 2009).

Cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) group counseling with stress inoculation training and thought stopping techniques is a form of intervention done by the researchers. Jamilian, Malekirad, Farhadi, Habibi, and Zamani (2014) in their study reveal that therapy group format is proved effective to do. The use of stress inoculation training technique in group counseling would possibly make students learn abilities which are applicable in other possible situation to face in the future, as well as develop distressed tolerance on every kind of distress (Erford, 2016; Corey, 2013).

Marian, and Szabo (2012) in their study explain that SIT is very effective in teaching coping strategy for adolescences in order to reduce stress and anxiety which are measured in a short-term and three months ahead. Shalkouhi, Vatankhah, and Zarbakhsh (2015) also explain that SIT treatment can improve body immune from stress and improve life hopes.

However, a study done by Flaxman, and Bond (2010) shows that SIT has a less significant impact on psychological flexibility and cognitive dysfunctional in facing stress at workplace. This would impact individuals in utilizing coping strategies. As a result, they will have difficulties to tolerate (Fetzner, Peluso, and Asmundson, 2014). The intervention aims to restructure subjects' thought back into positive thoughts (positive cognitive restructuring), expand perspective (enhanced restructuring), try to understand well (dependent understandings), decide future actions (device action), and achieve emotional support (emotional support). All those actions can be conducted by doing transformational coping when individuals have good hardiness (Kobosa in Tavousi, 2015).

Furthermore, another study by Anthony, and Edelstein (1975) shows that thought stopping technique is effective to reduce anxiety, stress, and pressure. Their study findings show that

anxiety can be overcome by thought stopping technique after 3 weeks and follow-up.

Similar to the above study, Baker, Robichaud, Dietrich, Wells, and Schreck (2009) has done a study to examine several kinds of literature related to the effectiveness of thought stopping technique toward anxiety, depression, and cases associated with obsessive-compulsive disorder.

Neenan, and Dryden (2005) elaborate the mind hierarchy in cognitive behavior model which is divided into three major parts. First, negative automatic thoughts (NATs), namely thoughts arise automatically and unconsciously from the mind when someone is having stress or negative emotion. Second, underlying assumptions, namely assumptions which underlay and guide daily behaviors, decide standards, life values, and rules of life. The last is core belief, namely the most fundamental belief about self which is believed not to be loved and be powerless. The core belief which has settled can produce cognitive distortion that is a condition which indicates depressive thoughts, so individuals become in trouble, and have various perspectives of their problems, especially academic hardiness. Therefore, this study used the intervention of CBT approach group counseling with stress inoculation training and thought to stop techniques to improve students' academic hardiness.

However, what was interesting in this study was in order to examine the effectiveness of stress inoculation training and thought stopping techniques, in the framework of group counseling students were given problems which might obstruct hardiness and supported each other to face academic responsibilities with hope that the students can avoid stress and low level of hardiness (Gibson, and Mitchell, 2011).

On that account, this study was aimed to examine the effectiveness of stress inoculation training and thought to stop techniques to improve academic hardiness. In this study, academic stress became a problem in schools. For more, previous studies emphasized more on how to reduce academic stress in general, while this study had more focus on responses to hardiness

being experienced and turned it into motivations to be more adaptive.

METHODS

This study applied pre-test and multiple designs. The subjects for the experiment were chosen through purposive sampling from 280 students with the criterion of the low level of academic hardiness. From this process, the researchers got 15 students. Moreover, random assignment was done to place every eight students in the experimental group which achieved the intervention of CBT group counseling with stress inoculation training and thought to stop techniques.

There were four stages conducted in this study. First, giving a pre-test to measure students' hardiness before receiving the treatment. Second, giving intervention to the experimental group with stress inoculation training technique for 90 minutes for each meeting and thought to stop with the same duration and portion. Third, once the intervention is done, the researchers gave post-test to the experimental group. It was done to find differences from the results of the intervention. The last, after two weeks, lasted from post-test, the experimental subjects were given follow-up to know how far the students stabilized changes in their paradigm and hardiness behaviors.

The data collection technique used in this study was by using hardiness scale which was developed by Jimenez, Hernandez, and Blanco (2014). This scale has 15 items. Also, the researchers conducted equivalence processing thorough back translation, experts' validation, and validity and reliability tests. Also, all tests for the instrument showed that all items were said valid ($r_{xy} = 0.332 - 0.736$) and had alpha Cronbach coefficient of 0.860. Further, the collected data were then analyzed by using repeated measure ANOVA.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The collected data (pre-test – post-test follow-up) was prepared before analysis. Based

on these data, the academic hardiness of all 16 students was in the low level. After receiving the intervention, students' academic hardiness changed and turned into high level. According to the results of pre-test, post-test, and follow-up, CBT group counseling with stress inoculation training and thought stopping techniques was proved to improve students' academic hardiness.

Table 1. Mean, SD, and Repeated Measures ANOVA with Stress Inoculation Training and Thought-Stopping Techniques Test Results

Stress inoculation training technique			
	Mean	SD	F _(2,14)
Pre-test	27.13	2.29	732.47*
Post-test	58.25	2.81	
Follow-up	63.25	3.32	

Thought-stopping technique			
	Mean	SD	F _(2,14)
Pre-test	28.25	1.28	2053.80*
Post-test	62.00	2.56	
Follow-up	63.50	2.13	

Note: *p < 0.01

Table 1 displaying the results of repeated measures ANOVA showed that CBT group counseling with stress inoculation training technique was effective to improve academic hardiness ($F_{2,14} = 732.47, p < 0.01$). Meanwhile, the results of the same test also showed that CBT group counseling with thought stopping technique was also effective to improve academic hardiness ($F_{2,14} = 2053.80, p < 0.01$).

Table 2. The Results of Repeated Measures ANOVA

Group	F ₁	F ₂	F ₃
SIT	732.4*	1284.9*	3704.9*
TS	2053.8*	2530.3*	6505.0*
SIT*TS	2173.8*	4.63*	2.73*

Note:

SIT : Stress inoculation training

TS : Thought-stopping

F₁ : The results of repeated measure ANOVA

F₂ : The results of the differences between groups

F₃ : The results of interaction test of the group between measurement time

*p < 0.01

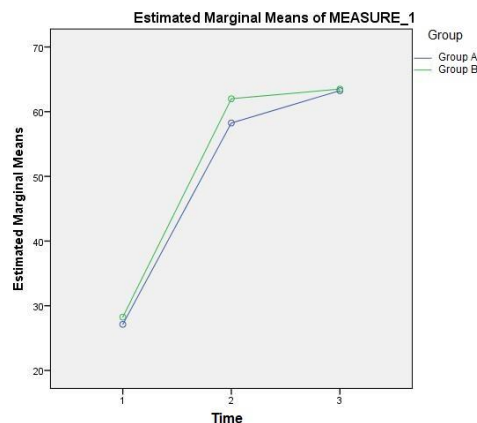


Figure 1. The Results of Group Interaction Within The Time

The number of the results of the analysis showed differences between the results of pre-test, post-test, and follow-up on the subjects of the study. It showed that CBT group counseling with thought stopping technique was effective to improve the academic hardiness of the students of Public Senior High School 1 Godong. Similarly, the effectiveness of stress inoculation technique and thought stopping was also seen from the improvement of time effect from (T₁-T₂) later (T₁-T₃) dan then (T₂-T₃), (Table 3).

Table 3. The Results of Pairwise Comparisons of Stress Inoculation Training and Thought-Stopping Techniques

Stress inoculation training technique			
Time	MD	SE	P
T ₁ -T ₂	-31.125	1.187	< 0.01
T ₁ -T ₃	-36.125	1.008	< 0.01
T ₂ -T ₃	-5.000	0.845	< 0.01

Thought to stop technique			
Time	MD	SE	P
T ₁ -T ₂	-33.750	0.750	< 0.01
T ₁ -T ₃	-35.250	0.701	< 0.01
T ₂ -T ₃	-1.500	0.327	< 0.01

Based on the statistical test in Table 3, there were significant differences between pre-test, post-test, and follow-up. It can be concluded that CBT group counseling with stress inoculation training and thought to stop techniques was effective to improve students' academic hardiness.

These findings are in line with several opinions of researchers about the implementation

of stress inoculation training (SIT) to improve the academic hardiness of students. SIT treatment can teach coping strategy to individuals to reduce stress (Marian, and Szabo, 2012). Besides, the provision of SIT technique also helps improving body immune to fight against stressful situation (stressor) and improve life chances (Shalkhouni, Vatankhah, and Zarbakhsh, 2015). By adding more time on the implementation of SIT which can develop hardiness aspect (through conceptualization phase), it would possibly enable students to be more ready to face the future stressors (Oon, 2007; Maldy, and Kobosa in Nurhidayah, and Hidayati, 2009). It is because hardiness can be a prop and factors which can reduce life pressure (stressor) by improving adaptation strategies (Spurlock, 2008).

Further, thought stopping technique is one of the solutions to cope with students' stress. This finding is supported by Videbeck opinion (2008) that CBT is considered effective to overcome anxiety disorder and minimize stress.

Various CBT techniques are used as an effort to overcome academic stress, one of which is thought to stop. Other than that, the results of this study are also relevant to a study by Latipun, Kurniawan, and Mulia (2016) that the implementation of thought stopping technique can reduce the stress experienced by nursing department students caused by the burden of academic tasks.

Next, Selvia, Sugiharto, and Samsudi (2017) proved that thought stopping is effective to reduce students' bullying phenomenon about the victims of the bullying which suffered from negative impacts, one of them is stress and reduction of motivation. Wolpe (in Erford, 2016) explains that thought stopping technique trains clients to get rid of unwanted thoughts as early as possible, usually by calling the command "stop" to interrupt unwanted thoughts.

This is based on the premise, the use of stress inoculation training and thought stopping techniques in counseling services is not just to help clients to replace negative thoughts they have, but to teach clients to have specific skills in dealing with stress that occurs due to low hardiness and ability to apply it in everyday life.

Based on the results of the research to increase students' hardiness in facing stressors, it is important to prepare a group counseling strategy that can touch hardness. This is in line with what was stated by Kobosa, Maddi, and Khan (in Gayton, and Kehoe, 2015) that personality aspects can provide negative consequences of adverse conditions. It is by group counseling strategies that can help students to improve hardiness caused by academic demands.

The provision of CBT group counseling with stress inoculation training and thought stopping techniques can facilitate individuals to interact directly with mild to severe stress stimuli. Through stress inoculation training and thought-stopping techniques, professional counselors can improve the ability of clients to deal with stress by modifying beliefs and self-statements through cognitive structuring so that personality hardiness can develop (Corey, 2013; Darvishzadeh, and Bozorgi, 2016).

Based on the findings of this study, the implication for counselors is in order to improve academic hardiness of students; they can use CBT group counseling with stress inoculation training and thought to stop techniques. Also, important things that need to be addressed by counselors in implementing CBT group counseling with stress inoculation training and thought stopping techniques are time constraints that simply modify the counselee cognitive. When counselors use stress inoculation training and thought to stop techniques, the first thing to be involved is the cognitive component (Corey, 2013). So, it takes 2-4 sessions in the cognitive structure of the counsees (Cully, and Teten, 2008).

The findings of this study successfully proved that CBT group counseling with stress inoculation training and thought to stop techniques was effective to improve academic hardiness. However, the findings of this study still have limitations in it. The subjects of this study were more female. Therefore, this study has not found the effect of gender.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the effectiveness of CBT group counseling with stress inoculation training and thought to stop techniques to improve the hardiness of the students of Public Senior High School 1 Godong. This can be seen from the results of the pre-test, post-test and follow-up results analyzed using repeated measures ANOVA which showed a significant difference. From these results, it can be concluded that H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted "academic hardiness can be improved through CBT group counseling services with stress inoculation training and thought stopping techniques for the students of Public Senior High School 1 Godong.

The effectiveness test of this study was focused on cognitive structuring at the beginning of the CBT group counseling. Also, in this study, there was no control group as a comparison group, so it was expected that in the next study it could add a control group. The time range used for repeated measurements in this study was quite short so that in future studies it is expected to use a considerable amount of time.

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