

The Effectiveness of Reality Approach-based Psychoeducational Group with Symbolic Modelling Technique to Improve The Forgiveness of SMA Kesatrian 1 Students

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Abstract

Studies in forgiveness topic have been focused mostly on individual context. Therefore, this study intended to prove that reality approach-based psychoeducational group format with modeling symbolic technique was effective to improve students' forgiveness. The study used repeated measure design with pretest, posttest, and follow up and involved the tenth grade students of SMA Kesatrian 1 Semarang amounted to 273 students. The data of the students were collected using Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS). After the intervention, the researchers obtained the mean of students' forgiveness in pretest of ($M = 41.33$; $SD = 01.00$), posttest of ($M = 61.56$ $SD = 2.35$) and follow-up of ($M = 63.11$, $SD = 2.76$). Repeated Measure Test Results proved that symbolic modeling technique was effective to improve students' forgiveness ($F(1,8) = 508.76$; $p < 0.001$). This study confirmed that the reality approach-based psychoeducational group with symbolic modeling technique effectively improved students' forgiveness.

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INTRODUCTION

Solving personal conflict and rebuilding a broken relationship are not simple matters. To do so, forgiveness can be an effective way to solve these interpersonal problems (Hargrave, 2008). Enright & Fredman (1998) mention that forgiveness requires abilities to get through various negative emotions, such as hatred, anger, rejection, and revenge desire. Forgiveness is a way to erase wounds or scars in the heart. The past sorrowful memories, such as parents' divorce may remain exist, but forgiveness makes the perception of that painful events erased (Toussaint, 2005).

Forgiveness attitude is important for everyone (Baumeister, et al, 2009). There are two required dimensions for this attitude, namely intrapsychic, and interpersonal. Intrapsychic dimension deals with what is happening inside the mind and the heart of the forgiver, decision to interact positively in terms of emotion, cognition, and behaviors toward the suspects as well as willingness to erase all revenge that is still present in mind and heart. Meanwhile, interpersonal dimension involves the relationship among humans, and social levels that engage others in this process. A forgiver will forgive suspect not for the sake of his business, but for helping the suspect. This dimension focuses on social relation contained in the act of forgiveness. Forgiveness will be easy if the offended person do not consider himself as a victim.

Forgiveness can be improved by using reality approach-based psychoeducational group with symbolic modeling technique. Brown (2011) states that psychoeducational group emphasizes more the learning process, and education rather than self-awareness, and self-understanding where cognitive components have bigger portion than the affective ones. It is because basically, psychoeducational group is aimed at providing information, training, readiness to face threats, communication process that focuses on topics such as attitudes, cooperation, communication, skills and confidence improvement.

In this study, reality approach was used by considering the condition of the subjects who have not been able to apply basic needs to bring about forgiveness. This approach enables counselees to face reality that happens in the future with full optimism. In this process of therapy, individuals choose how they think, will, and behave (Merdiekawati & Clairine, 2008). This process was elaborated in Bariyyah, Hastini, & Sari' study (2018) that the reality therapy is aimed at improving students' learning responsibility.

Symbolic modeling technique was implemented to help improving students' forgiveness because basically, the students who are having problems see themselves unable to make adjustment, and try to find a model to bring about confidence in learning sincerity, patient, and building positive relationship with other individuals. Essentially, symbolic modeling purposes are to change, add or reduce individuals action by learning through direct observation (observational learning) to imitate how the model behaves so that the individuals gain the new desirable behaviors (Shaleh, 2004).

The way forgiveness applied through groups was derived from the previous study by Van Tongeren, et. al (2014). For more, researchers can explore the forgiveness among groups in the context of team or small groups, such as business teams in an organization or sports team. In addition, the involvement of model was to encourage individuals who had low forgiveness. This is in line with the previous study by Michaelidou & Zembylas (2011), namely an important contribution from the forgiveness pedagogy is the creation of learning spaces that restore the humanity that is often lost in problematic societies. At this point, there must be a figure that can help individuals get out of these problems.

The findings of previous studies confirmed that the intervention to forgiveness can be done in group format. However, since those studies have not yet utilized any techniques, the current study was conducted to clarify and confirm that symbolic modeling

technique was effective to improve students' forgiveness in psychoeducational group format.

METHODS

This study used repeated measure design with pretest, posttest, and follow up. It involved the tenth grade students of SMA Kesatrian 1 amounted to 273 students. These subjects were selected using purposive sampling technique.

The design was realized by providing the symbolic modeling group the same intervention, and repeated measurement for three times, covering pretest, posttest, and follow up. It was aimed at examining the development of consistency after the subjects receiving the intervention. On the other hand, the data of students' forgiveness were collected using Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS) published by Positive Psychological Assessment. It was taken from one chapter in a handbook of models and measures by Thompson, L. Y. & Snyder. C. R. (2005). Since the original instrument is in English, it went through back-translation process to Indonesian before distributed to the subjects. This instrument or scale consists of 18 statement items covering three indicators, namely 1) showing that individuals do not forgive themselves, others, and uncontrolled situations, 2) showing that individuals tend to forgive or not forgive themselves, others, and uncontrolled situations, and 3) showing that individuals usually forgive themselves, others, or uncontrolled situations.

The intervention given to the psychoeducational group was many as 5 to 6 times meeting with the time allotment of 1x60 minutes for each session. The data collected from these sessions were analyzed by repeated measure test using SPSS 23 software. This test was used to observe whether the symbolic modeling was effective to improve students' forgiveness through reality approach-based psychoeducational group or not.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data description of this study showed that the mean and standard deviation of the students' forgiveness gained improvement after treated using symbolic modeling technique, namely pretest of ($M = 41.33$; $SD = 01.00$), posttest of ($M = 61.56$ $SD = 2.35$) and follow up of ($M = 63.11$, $SD = 2.76$). These data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The Results of Modeling Symbolic Repeated Measure

Categories	M	SD
Pretest	41.33	01.00
Posttest	61.56	2.35
Followup	63.11	2.76
F(1,8)	508.76	
P	<0.001	

Based on the results of repeated measure analysis, symbolic modeling technique intervention has successfully improved students' forgiveness ($F_{(1,8)} = 508.76$; $p < 0.001$). Since the results showed improvement after the intervention, it can be concluded that the reality approach-based psychoeducational group with symbolic modeling was effective to improve the forgiveness of SMA Kesatrian 1 students.

These findings are in line with what was found by some studies related to the implementation of symbolic modeling to improve students' forgiveness. In Fitriana, Ajie. G, & Suhendri's study (2016) symbolic modeling was proved to improve university students' characters. The treatment was effective by providing example, and models for the students intensively, and continuously.

A study by Fauziah, Fadhilah & Djanah (2017) shows that symbolic modeling is effective to improve the achievement motivation of the students of SMP N 2 Minasatene. This finding is supported by Mochamad Nursalim (2005) who states that symbolic modeling can be presented using written resources, audio, video, movies, or presentation slides. It can also be designed for individual clients or can be standardized for client in groups.

The importance of model to assist individuals in improving forgiveness attitude is also expressed by Michaelidou & Zembylas (2011). Basically what determines someone good or bad is his own life guidelines and environmental factors. Positive environmental factors will have a positive impact for individuals who are experiencing problems. Here, environment is a model benchmark for individuals who want to be better than before.

Symbolic modeling intervention is believed to improve students' forgiveness because its purpose is to learn new behaviors by observing models and learning their skills (Hutomo, 2011). Modeling technique is intended for counselees who have acquired knowledge about behavior appearance, but not been able to show it yet. The therapeutic process in modeling technique will influence and strengthen weak behaviors or behaviors that are ready to learn and facilitate the response.

Based on the findings, the implication for counselors is that they can use symbolic modeling to improve students' forgiveness. However, the counselors need to be patient in running this intervention because every individual has differences in problem openness. To make sure of it, the counselors require a quite long time. Thus, the understanding the characteristics of each individuals who have low forgiveness is needed.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study show that the reality approach-based psychoeducational group with symbolic modeling technique is effective to improve the forgiveness of the students of SMA Kesatrian 1. Regarding these findings, the future studies are welcome to explore wider samples because forgiveness problems are surely experienced by many individuals in all ages and genders. It happens because in today's era humans are more self-centered than to be sincere with other individuals and their social environment. Similarly, counselors are suggested to use symbolic modeling to improve students' forgiveness.

Apart from the advantages, the study was limited from the implementation of one technique only. There has been no results when it comes to the comparison of two techniques. Meanwhile, the improvement of forgiveness can be developed through individual counseling with single session for gaining more details in exploring the low level of forgiveness.

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