

## The Effectiveness of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Group Counseling to Improve the Resilience of Students as Divorce Victims

Wiji Wahyu Setyorini<sup>1✉</sup>, Mungin Eddy Wibowo<sup>2</sup>, Awalya Awalya<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> SMP Negeri 1 Juwana, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

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### Abstract

Studies focusing on the provision of intervention for students as divorce victims are truly limited, so the present study aimed to prove that CBT group counseling with cognitive restructuring technique is effective to improve the resilience of students as divorce victims. Here the researchers used multiple pretest posttest design by involving students as divorce victims in SMP Negeri Juwana, Pati Regency, Central Java. Their data were collected using resilience scale. Based on the results of repeated measure test, the CBT group counseling with cognitive restructuring technique was effective to improve the resilience of students as divorce victims by having  $F(1, 8) = 275.03, p < 0.001$ . Another proof was showed by the results of within subject test showing the resilience improvement by the cognitive restructuring technique from pretest ( $M = 57.62, SD = 2.29$ ), posttest ( $M = 82.87, SD = 1.34$ ), and follow-up ( $M = 86.50, SD = 0.98$ ). This study confirms the effectiveness of CBT group counseling with cognitive restructuring technique to improve the resilience of students as victims of divorce.

✉ Correspondence address:

Tanggal, Wanong, Pati, Jawa Tengah

E-mail: [wahyuwiji905@gmail.com](mailto:wahyuwiji905@gmail.com)

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## INTRODUCTION

Resilience is one's ability to assess, counter, and improve or change himself from adversity or misery in life (Grothberg, 1995: 10). It is also an ability or capacity owned by someone, a group or society to face, prevent, minimize and even eliminate any disadvantaged impact from unwanted situation, or turn the undesired condition into normal one so that it can be solved. Thus, everyone needs this ability (Desmita, 2013: 228).

One form of resilience in individuals is positive emotion, such as happiness, no stress, and anxiety (Cohn, et al: 2009). In the same way, Short, Barnes, Carson, and Plat (2018) mention that one of resilience predictors is individuals' positive emotion. Basically, resilience is strongly related to spiritual strength, competency, optimism, flexibility, and ability to effectively solve difficult problems experienced (Wagnild; 2009).

Resilience becomes significant for students, especially those as divorce victims because this ability will enhance their ability to assess, counter, and improve themselves from adversity or difficulty (Krisnayani, Antari and Dantes: 2014). However, when it is not improved, students' daily lives can get interfered because low resilience will disrupt individuals' activity and lives when not addressed immediately.

CBT group counseling emphasizes dynamic group communication and centres counselees' thinking ability in changing behavior (Corey, 2013: 232). Based on a study by White and Freeman (2000) CBT group counseling is effective to deal with several specific problems, such as depression, anxiety, panic, and phobia. Meanwhile, Petrocelli (2002) states CBT group counseling is effective to solve emotional and behavioral issues.

In this study, CBT group counseling was given by utilizing cognitive restructuring technique. Krisnayana, Antari, & Dantes (2014) argue cognitive restructuring can effectively improve resilience. It is also good for coping with anxiety (Wild, Hackmann, & Clark: 2007),

depression (Wheatley, et al., 2007), and assisting individuals to survive from traumatic issues (Jung & Steil, 2012).

Studies related to intervention given to students as divorce victims are rare, so the present study attempted to prove the CBT group counseling with cognitive restructuring technique is effective to improve students' resilience. In addition, it tried to fill the gap of the previous studies which investigated the implementation of CBT group counseling intervention to students in an academic or general setting. In details, this study was specifically designed to improve the resilience of students as divorce victims and confirm the effectiveness of CBT group counseling with cognitive restructuring technique to improve it.

## METHODS

There were eight students involved as the subjects of this study considering their status as divorce victims and having low resilience level. They were grouped into one for then being given intervention and assessed repeatedly for three times.

In collecting the resilience data, the researchers used resilience scale that has been developed and designed previously. This scale consists of 25 items and covers seven indicators covering resilience aspects, namely emotional regulation, impulse control, optimism, causal analysis, empathy, self-efficacy, and achievement (Reivich, and Shatte, 2022: 36-46). Likert scale was utilized in this scale by having 5 choices, starting from strongly disagree (STS), disagree (TS), agree (S), and strongly agree (SS). In terms of reliability, this instrument got the alpha coefficient of 0.970 or very reliable category.

Repeated measure with pretest and multiple posttest design were used in this study. There were three repeated assessments done, namely pretest, posttest, and follow up, while the intervention of CBT group counseling with cognitive restructuring technique was given 2x45 minutes according to the agreement.

Students were asked to follow all series of CBT group counseling with cognitive restructuring technique. Once it was done, the data were analyzed using repeated measure with the help from SPSS 23. This measure intended to examine the effect of CBT group counseling with cognitive restructuring technique to improve the resilience of students as divorce victims seen from differences between assessment times.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Data description showed that the mean and standard deviation of the students got increased after the implementation of CBT group counseling with cognitive restructuring technique. In details, the mean increase was (M=57.62, SD=2.29) for pretest, (M=82.87, SD=1.34) for posttest, and (M=86.50, SD=0.98) for follow up. Further data are presented in table 1.

Table 1. The Description of Resilience Improvement Data with Cognitive Restructuring Techniques and Repeated Measure Test

	M	SD
<i>Pretest</i>	57.62	2.29
<i>Posttest</i>	82.87	1.34
<i>Follow Up</i>	86.50	0.98
F(1,8)	275.03	
P	<0.001	

The data analysis of CBT group counseling with cognitive restructuring technique was done using repeated measure. This technique was done repeatedly in pretest, posttest, and follow up and intended to examine the intervention effectiveness in improving the resilience of the students as divorce victims.

According to the table, the repeated measure indicated an effect of time on the improvement of the resilience of the students as divorce victims. It was known that the increase in the data was (F(1, 8)=275.03, p<0.001). It proved that there was improvement in the students' resilience after they were given CBT

group counseling with cognitive restructuring technique.

The findings are in line with several previous studies related to CBT group counseling with cognitive restructuring technique to improve resilience. A study by Aliem, Sugiharto, & Awalya (2020) reveals that group counseling with cognitive restructuring technique is effective to improve students' self-efficacy and assertiveness. In details, their study found the improvement of self-efficacy and assertiveness after the students received the group counseling with cognitive restructuring technique.

A study by Mastur, Sugiharto, & Sukiman (2012) confirms group counseling with cognitive restructuring technique can be used to improve students' confidence. It indicates the emergence of resilience since self-confidence is a part of resilience itself. Further, the study states the group counseling with cognitive restructuring is effective to improve students' self-confidence. This way implies that the same treatment of CBT group counseling with cognitive restructuring surely can improve the resilience of students as divorce victims. It is because during the process of intervention, the students focused on changing negative thoughts and interpretation into the more positive ones.

Furthermore, the findings of this study confirms that the CBT group counseling with cognitive restructuring can improve the resilience of students as divorce victims. However, there were imitations regarding the implementation of experimental and control (placebo) groups, and the observation for the effect of time only, while there are actually possibility to observe the effect of gender, so the future researchers are encouraged to investigate that effect.

**CONCLUSION**

The findings of this study indicate that the CBT group counseling intervention with cognitive restructuring technique is effective to improve the resilience of students as divorce victims in SMP Negeri Juwana Pati. Based on

the findings of this study, it is recommended for school counselors to emphasize the cognitive improvement of students who are victims of divorce. Students are invited to change their beliefs and internal assumptions that tend to deviate. Meanwhile, future researchers are advised to find differences by holding a control group. Then this study also has not looked at the effect of gender and is only limited to the effect between time. Therefore, future studies are expected to see the effect of gender in repeated measure tests

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