

Effectiveness of Systematic Desensitization to Reduce Students Anxiety in Facing Undergraduate Thesis

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Keywords: Anxiety, Effectiveness, Systematic Desensitization.

Abstract: Anxiety in facing undergraduate thesis is an obstacle for students in completing their undergraduate study in university, so that a proper handling is required. This research is to examine the effectiveness of systematic desensitization to reduce student anxiety in facing undergraduate thesis. This research is an experimental research using Pre-experimental research design with one group pre-test and post-test design. The subject of this research was 10 students of guidance and counseling study program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Mulawarman University. Sample was collected using purposive sampling technique and the data analysis technique was descriptive percentage analysis. The results show that systematic desensitization technique is effective to reduce student anxiety in facing undergraduate thesis. Effectiveness is illustrated in the results of pre-test and post-test.

1 INTRODUCTION

Every individual has experienced anxiety in his/her life, various reactions arise when anxiety is approaching. The reactions shown by an individual is normal and do not last for too long. According to Atkinson (2008) anxiety is an uncomfortable emotional state characterized by subjective tension, concern, and anxiety coupled with the vibration of the autonomic nervous system with varying degrees. The anxiety that occurs in the individual has a different intensity depending on the readiness of someone in facing it.

The anxiety that occurs mostly cause a negative reaction in a person. According to Dewi (2006), the negative reaction has an impact on some components, namely: 1) Cognitive components, widespread fear and often affect the ability to think clearly, solve problems and overcome the environment, 2) Emotional components, the person has a widespread fear and conscious, so that emerged feeling of self-doubt, 3) Behavioral components marked with trembling, anxiety, and behavior of avoiding. Anxiety usually occurs in individuals who have certain tasks but are unable to finish well because they have high anxiety, such as students.

One of the anxiety that occurs in students is when they face the final task of preparing the thesis. Anxiety in facing the preparation of undergraduate thesis is a realistic anxiety. Anxiety in preparing

undergraduate thesis occurs on students of guidance and counseling study program, it can be seen from the visible symptoms: 1) Students are anxious to get undesirable advisor, 2) Students make excuses to avoid thesis, 3) Students do not know what to do in preparing the thesis. Symptoms that appear are reinforced by interviews on some students who are preparing their undergraduate thesis. From the interview, there are several things obtained: 1) Students are anxious to prepare their thesis because they do not know what to do in preparing the thesis such as starting the thesis, references used, 2) anxious when their thesis is rejected, 3) anxious when they get undesirable advisor, 4) Low motivation to finish their thesis.

In addition to visible symptoms and interviews to students who are preparing their undergraduate thesis, the researchers conducted in depth research through the distribution of psychological scales about anxiety to guidance and counseling students in facing undergraduate thesis, 70% of guidance and counseling study program students have anxiety in preparing their undergraduate thesis. The problems faced by students in preparing undergraduate thesis needs to be overcome so as not to affect the students and inhibit the completion of the thesis.

Based on the problems faced by guidance and counseling study program students in preparing their undergraduate thesis, a proper treatment is required so that the problems can be resolved. Treatment used

in this research was systematic desensitization technique. This technique was used with the consideration of the problems experienced, which was anxiety in facing undergraduate thesis. According to Erfort (2016), systematic desensitization is a procedure in which clients repeatedly recall, imagine or experience anxiety-inducing events and then use relaxation techniques to suppress anxiety caused by the event. Taking into account the problems faced by students, researchers asked question: how is the effectiveness of systematic desensitization technique in reducing students anxiety in facing undergraduate thesis?

2 INTRODUCTION TO SYSTEMATIC DESENSITIZATION TECHNIQUE

Systematic desensitization technique is one of approaches used in changing negative behavior that occurs in an individual. According to Abimanyu&Manrihu (2000), desensitization is an approach to change behavior through a combination of techniques consisting of thinking about something, calming down, and imagining things.

The procedures used in systematic desensitization technique according to Willis (2009) are 1) analyze behavior that triggers anxiety, 2) arrange hierarchy or levels of situations that trigger anxiety from the least to the most worrying to the counselee, 3) provide relaxation exercises for muscles, starting from the arm muscles to the leg muscles. Counselee's feet are placed on a pillow or wool cloth. In details, muscle relaxation starts from arms, head, then neck and shoulders, back, abdomen and chest, then lower body parts, 4) The counselee is asked to imagine a pleasant situation like being on the beach, in the middle of a green garden, etc., 5) The counselee is told to close his/her eyes, then told to imagine a less worrying situation. If the client is able to be finish it without being anxious and restless, then the situation can be resolved by the counselee, 6) If in a situation counselee feels anxious and restless, the counselor orders the counselee to imagine the pleasant situation to eliminate the anxiety, 7) Arrangement of hierarchy or levels of anxiety must be done with the client, and the counselor writes it on paper.

According to Morris in Corey (2012) systematic desensitization technique is divided into three steps: (1) relaxation exercise, (2) develop an anxiety hierarchy, (3) use the right systematic desensitization. Anxiety reduction can be effective if

the counselor performs treatment with a prescribed procedure.

3 RELATED WORKS

This study aims to reduce student anxiety in facing undergraduate thesis. Therefore, the research focuses on reducing the anxiety that appears in students who are facing undergraduate thesis. According to Corey (2012), anxiety is a state of being tense that forces someone to do something. Anxiety reduction is done by using a technique related to anxiety that is systematic desensitization technique.

The anxiety that emerged became the basis in determining this research, it can be seen from the results of observation, interview and measurement through psychological scale. Meanwhile, systematic desensitization technique was used based on its function that can change problematic behavior. So in this research, the effectiveness test of systematic desensitization technique to reduce student anxiety in facing undergraduate thesis was conducted.

4 METHOD

This research used pre-experimental design with one group pre-test and post-test design. In this design, the subject was subjected to a double-measurement treatment. The first measurement was conducted prior to the application of systematic desensitization technique and the second measurement was conducted after the application of systematic desensitization technique to research subject.

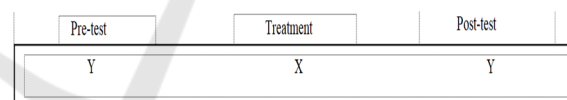


Figure 1: Treatment design

Description:

- Y: The first measurement, student anxiety in facing undergraduate thesis before receiving treatment and being measured using an anxiety scale instrument.
- X: Systematic desensitization technique implementation.
- Y: Final measurement, after receiving treatment using systematic desensitization technique.

The research process began with data collection before treatment (pre-test), then giving treatment using systematic desensitization technique and followed by data collection after treatment (post-test). The research was conducted in guidance and counseling study program of the Faculty of Teacher

Training and Education of Mulawarman University, from April to November 2017. Subjects in this study were 10 students who experienced anxiety in facing undergraduate thesis using purposive sampling.

Data collection technique was using psychological scale. According to Azwar (2009) that the scale of psychology always refers to a measure or affective attribute. Data collection tool used in this research was the scale of anxiety in facing undergraduate thesis that has been developed by researchers based on various theory. Data analysis was using percentage descriptive analysis to find out empirical data about student anxiety level in facing undergraduate thesis before and after receiving treatment using systematic desensitization technique.

5 EXPERIMENTS AND RESULTS

The results of this research were obtained from the experimental process through pre-test and post-test results related to student anxiety in facing undergraduate thesis with the following stages:

5.1 Pre-test Results

Levels of anxiety of guidance and counseling study program students in facing undergraduate thesis before receiving treatment will be measured using pre-test through anxiety scale to find out the frequency of student anxiety level. Data distribution of anxiety level of students in facing undergraduate thesis will be presented in the followings.

Table 1: Recapitulation of pre-test results

Criteria	Range of Score	Frequency	%
High	154-210	8	80
Moderate	98-153	2	20
Low	42-97	0	0
Total		10	100

From the above data, it can be explained that the level of anxiety of guidance and counseling study program students in facing undergraduate thesis before and after treatment using systematic

desensitization techniques in general is in the high criteria then the anxiety decreased after the treatment.

From the above data, it can be seen that 8 respondents (80%) are in high criteria and 2 respondents (20%) are in moderate criteria. These results are supported by respondent answers stating that they experience tension, discomfort, pessimism, are depressed and not relax.

5.2 Post-test Results

Level of anxiety of guidance and counseling study program students in facing undergraduate thesis decreased after receiving treatment using systematic desensitization technique. The following table shows the frequency distribution of student anxiety level after receiving treatment.

Table 2: Recapitulation of post-test results

Criteria	Range of Score	Frequency	%
High	154-210	0	0
Moderate	98-153	1	30
Low	42-97	9	70
Total		10	100

From the data above, it can be seen that 9 respondents (70%) stated that the level of anxiety in facing undergraduate thesis using systematic desensitization technique decreased to low criteria and 1 respondent (30%) was in the moderate criteria after the treatment.

These results indicate that the level of anxiety of guidance and counseling study program students in facing undergraduate thesis decreased after the treatment. Treatment results show that there was 1 respondent who was in moderate criteria. The respondent also experienced a decrease in anxiety from high to moderate. Respondents in moderate criteria are still experiencing anxiety in overcoming tension.

The followings are the levels of anxiety of guidance and counseling study program students in facing undergraduate thesis before and after treatment using systematic desensitization technique.

Table 3: Data summary of criteria before and after Treatment

Before Treatment				After Treatment			
Criteria	Range of Score	F	%	Criteria	Range of Score	F	%
High	154-210	8	80	High	154-210	-	-
Moderate	98-153	2	20	Moderate	98-153	1	30
Low	42-97	0	0	Low	42-97	9	70
Total		10	100	Total		10	100

desensitization techniques in general is in the high criteria then the anxiety decreased after the treatment.

5.3 Effectiveness Test of Systematic Desensitization Technique in Reducing Student Anxiety in Facing Undergraduate Thesis

Effectiveness testing of systematic desensitization technique to reduce student anxiety in facing

undergraduate thesis. The testing criteria is if the average value before the treatment is greater than the average value after the treatment, it is said to be effective. Conversely, if the average value before the treatment is smaller than the average value after the treatment, it is said to be ineffective. The following will present data on the effectiveness of systematic desensitization technique.

Table 4: Effectiveness of systematic desensitization technique

No Respondent	Total	Total	Average	Average	Desc
	Before Treatment	After Treatment	Before	After	
K1	156	56	15.3	6.9	Effective
K2	170	60	13.8	6.3	Effective
K3	160	82	16.3	10.2	Effective
K4	162	108	14.4	6.7	Effective
K5	158	50	15.2	6.3	Effective
K6	179	56	16.4	4.9	Effective
K7	164	70	14.4	7.3	Effective
K8	174	82	15.2	5.5	Effective
K9	102	45	15	6.1	Effective
K10	106	50	11.1	5.8	Effective

From the table above, it can be concluded that the systematic desensitization technique is effective to overcome anxiety of guidance and counseling study program students in facing their undergraduate thesis.

accompany the problematic behavior, identify the intensity of problematic behavior, identify the client's feelings when telling the problematic behavior, summarize the client's confession, find the core of the problem, identify the points of interest in the counselee's life, motivate the counselee and identify the counselee's social relationship.

6 DISCUSSION

From the result of data description about student anxiety in facing undergraduate thesis before treatment using systematic desensitization technique, there were 10 students of the high criteria of anxiety becoming the respondents based on observation, interview and anxiety scale. There is a decrease in anxiety faced by students after the treatment using systematic desensitization technique.

Thus, it can be said that students are experiencing some symptoms such as tension, discomfort, pessimistic, depressed and not relaxed before the treatment. These symptoms are the accumulation of anxiety faced by students. systematic desensitization technique can be one strategy in overcoming anxiety faced by students in completing the final task.

The systematic desensitization technique is said to be effective when the technique is able to calm a client from tension. The trick is to teach the client to relax, ask the client to tell the problem, identify the problematic behavior, clarify the problematic behavior, identify the events that initiated the problematic behavior, identify the events that

7 CONCLUSION

This research provides strategy alternatives on overcoming anxiety problems faced by students in completing their undergraduate thesis. The results show that systematic desensitization technique is effective to reduce students anxiety in facing undergraduate thesis. Effectiveness is illustrated in the results of pre-test and post-test.

8 FUTURE WORK

This research can be the basis in the development of other techniques to overcome the problem so as to provide various alternatives to counselors in overcoming various problems of their counselee. Future researchers will develop other techniques in their research but keeping the focus on behavior can disrupt individual development. Individuals in their lives always experience changes.

Changes that occur in individuals often create obstacles that lead to problems within them, therefore a proper strategy is required in overcoming these obstacles.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researchers would like to express their deep sense of gratitude to the faculty of teacher training and education of mulawarman university for the support and assistance in this research.

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