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# Training to Reduce Anxiety Level in Foster Children of Sanggar X

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### Abstract

Sanggar X was founded on the concerns of its chairman, over the problems often faced by street musicians. Foster children in Sanggar X feel anxiety because of various problems they face both at home, school, or when they are working on the streets. The purpose of this research is to reduce the anxiety level of Sanggar X foster children by using Self-Talk, Imagery, and Cognitive Restructuring training. The subjects in this study consisted of 15 Sanggar X foster children, Cibinong. Training is carried out by giving pre-test, conducting training, giving post-test and evaluating training. Pre-test and post-test in this study used the Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale questionnaire. The results of this study were a decrease in anxiety levels in 15 foster children of Studio X. The training conducted for foster children tends to be effective because of several things, such as giving an example by the trainer every time the theory is delivered, active foster children in practicing the skills that have been taught, exercises that are easy and can be done anywhere, and the suitability of training with problems that are they face.

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*Keyword: anxiety; rational emotive behaviour therapy; self-talk; imagery; cognitive restructuring; sanggar x*

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## 1. Preliminary

Foster children in Sanggar X who are still in junior high school, and come from families with a low economic level, on average they choose to become street musicians, used goods sellers, or become sellers in the market, to help family economy, and also for their daily lives. Working on the streets, making foster children often get bad experiences. In addition, the low economic background also often creates other problems for them at school, ranging from the issue of payment of school fees, to the problem of harassment by their friends. These bad experiences then become triggers of anxiety that often arises. This is consistent with the theory expressed by Marsh. Marsh (2015) says that anxiety is a word used to describe feelings of discomfort, worry and fear. It combines both emotions and physical sensations that we might experience when we are worried or nervous about something.

When viewed from the factors causing anxiety, according to Shri (2010) there are three factors that cause anxiety, namely biological factors, psychological factors, and social factors. The social factor in this anxiety case is the social environment on the street where foster children work, and also at school. As long as foster children work on the streets, it is not uncommon for them to get abusive treatment, as well as harassment from people who don't like them, or think of them as rivals. Problems that occur in schools, mostly in the form of harassment from their own friends, because they are considered as underprivileged children, because they live in foundations, and others. Low self-esteem, feeling of inadequacy, making foster children who get mistreated in their environment, feel unable to do anything other than accepting such mistreatment, especially they also think, if even fighting will only cause greater problems for them, which may be the punishment from Studio X that is responsible for them at school, and might have a worse impact on their future. This has become one of the psychological causes why foster children experience anxiety. Biological or physical causes also affect. As is well known, the subjects in this case study are middle school adolescents. Where in adolescence hormonal changes are very influential on the feelings of anxiety they experience.

Besides the family environment in this case, the condition of the house with conditions that are full of quarrels, or full of misunderstandings, as well as the parents' ignorance of their children, can cause discomfort and anxiety in children while in the house. Foster children who come from underprivileged families, and the profession of parents as street musicians, used goods sellers, sellers in the market who are accustomed to hard life on the street, have quite a negative impact on parenting applied to foster children in their home. Often foster children have to experience physical or verbal violence from their parents or family. Facing fights between parents, quarreling with their siblings, making the atmosphere in the family environment not conducive, causing anxiety in themselves about the family, so that foster children feel insecure and uncomfortable when at home, and ultimately choose to longer activities outside, such as participating in activities in Studio X. The social environment around where they live can also cause anxiety for them, because most people who live in their home environment have the same economic background and also professions such as street musicians, used goods sellers, or sellers in the market who are accustomed to life on the street.

So it can be concluded that the anxiety experienced by the foster children of Sanggar X, mostly triggered due to environmental factors, both within the family, and social environment. The rest can be due to adolescent age, where at that age, hormones are very influential in changing feelings in foster children. Therefore, foster children come to Studio X in the hope that they can be in a better environment, which can provide support for them to become better personal, have clear life goals, get attention and affection that

might not be able they feel when they are at home, and can feel comfortable because they are surrounded by friends who also experience the same thing.

Based on the background described above, research is needed that aims to enable researchers to get diagnoses about anxiety problems that are raised by foster children, researchers can also design interventions that are appropriate to existing anxiety problems, and research can overcome the problems of community subjects by implementing interventions. With this condition, appropriate intervention is needed. Community intervention will be carried out using training methods. The training method is an educational activity to bring the current state of individual behavior to better behavior (TPIP FIP-UPI, 2007). This training method is given because the community is considered to be able to quickly learn new knowledge given in a short time. The training provided is training to reduce the anxiety level of Sanggar X foster children when involved in the community. Anxiety training is done by teaching Self-talk, Imagery, and Cognitive Restructuring techniques because all three techniques are part of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT).

## **2. Research methods**

The method that will be used in this research is quasi-experimental research method. The quasi experiment research method is a study used to determine whether there is an effect of certain treatments on others under controlled conditions. This means that the experiment is an experimental activity to examine an event or symptom that appears in certain conditions. The type of design used is Quasi Experiment with one group pretest and posttest design. One group pretest and posttest design is a technique to determine the effect before and after the treatment (Sugiyono, 2012). The dependent variable in this study is anxiety, and the independent variable is training intervention which is part of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT). The subjects in this study consisted of 15 foster children from Sanggar X. All the subjects of this study had joined Sanggar X for around one to three years. Subjects consisted of five men and ten women. The age range of research subjects is 12-15 years and students in grades one through grade three in junior high school.

At the end of the intervention, an evaluation sheet on the implementation of the intervention was also given to the research subjects, to find out what the research subjects thought about the intervention that had been given. Interviews, and focus group interviews were conducted as an initial stage to look at the problems faced by Studio X foster children, before being given a pre-test and post-test.

Anxiety was measured by the Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HAM-A) questionnaire compiled by Hamilton (1959). The validity of the questionnaire uses content validity. Content validity indicates the extent to which items can measure what is intended to be measured. The validity of the contents of the questionnaire was determined through professional opinion in the question review process. In this study, measuring instruments have been examined by expert lecturers, and have been said to be suitable for use. The Alpha Cronbach reliability value of this gauge is 0.793 ( $> 0.7$ ). This anxiety questionnaire consists of 14 item statements and uses a Likert Scale. The assessment weights for each answer for a favorable item are 0 = no symptoms, 1 = mild, 2 = moderate, 3 = severe, and 4 = very severe. While the weight rating for each answer in the unfavorable items is 4 = very severe, 3 = severe, 2 = moderate, 1 = mild, and 0 = no symptoms.

The techniques used in this study are Self-talk, Imagery, and Cognitive Restructuring, which are part of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT). Hirmaningsih, and Minauli (2015) explained, the basic concept of REBT is emotions and behavior is the result of cognitive processes. Emotional disturbance comes

from the error in thinking about an event. Mistakes in the thought process cause irrational thoughts that don't make sense, blame yourself and cause emotional problems. Froggrat (2005) explains that in REBT's view individuals have three levels of thinking, which is about what happens based on facts and evidence (inferences), conduct an assessment of facts and evidence and belief in facts and evidence (evaluation), and belief in the process of inferences and evaluations (core belief). In addition, according to Winkel (2007), REBT is a counseling approach that emphasizes togetherness and interaction between thinking with common sense, feeling and behaving, as well as emphasizing deep changes in ways of thinking and feeling that result in changes in feelings and behavior.

From some of the definitions above it can be concluded, that emotive rational therapy is therapy that seeks to eliminate the client's way of thinking that is illogical, irrational and replace it with something logical and rational by confronting the client with his irrational beliefs and attacking, opposing, questioning, and discuss irrational beliefs. Sellars (in Indraharsani, 2017) explains that self-talk is a strategic technique in which individuals speak, and is addressed to themselves either directly or indirectly or uttering silently. It was also mentioned by Sellars that self-talk is what someone says both using a loud voice and a small voice to themselves.

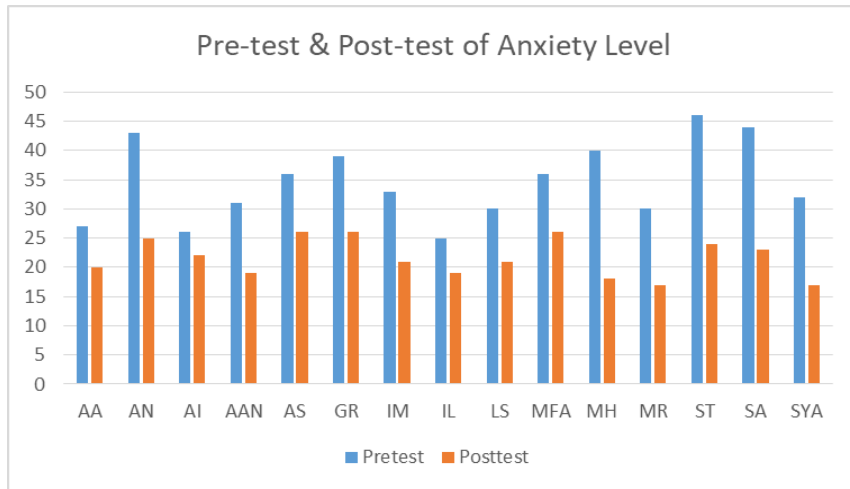
Vealey and Greenleaf (2006) define Imagery as the use of all the senses to create or re-create an experience in the mind. Based on this definition, there are three main keys to understanding Imagery, namely (1) creating or re-creating experiences in the mind. Imagery is based on memory, and individuals experience that memory internally by reconstructing external experiences in the mind. (2) Imagery involves all the senses that are owned. When experiencing an event, all the senses have an important role. Visual refers to sight, auditoris refers to sound, olfactoris refers to aroma, tactile refers to sensation from touch, gustatoris refers to taste, and kinesthetic refers to sensation of body movement in different positions.

Cognitive restructuring is a technique that leads to a cognitive therapy approach. Cognitive therapy develops as a reaction to a behavioral counseling approach that minimizes or even ignores the importance of the mind in counseling (Khairi et al, 2017). Bariyah (2009) explains the purpose of cognitive restructuring techniques, including: (1) providing assistance to clients in order to critically evaluate their behavior and focus on negative personal matters. This can be done by gathering information relating to the client's background in dealing with past and present problems, (2) so that the client appears in recognizing and observing the extent of thoughts and feelings at that time. The counselor can exaggerate irrational thinking to make his points more visible to the counselee, (3) changing the way the client thinks wrong; (4) so that clients can evaluate student behavior, which focuses on negative personalities.

### **3. Results and Discussion**

#### **3.1. Results**

Based on the assessment that has been done, it is known that there is a decrease in anxiety levels after training in foster children in Sanggar X. The results of the questionnaire levels of pre-test and post-test anxiety are summarized in the following picture:



Picture 1. The results of the anxiety questionnaire pre-test and post-test 15 foster children

As we can see in the picture above, it can be concluded that 15 foster children show a decrease in anxiety levels. Next, the researchers looked at whether there were differences between pre-test and post-test scores using the Wilcoxon signed rank test. The following below are the results of the test:

#### Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Pretest	15	34.5333	6.70678	25.00	46.00
Posttest	15	21.6000	3.26890	17.00	26.00

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

#### Test Statistics

	Posttest - Pretest
Z	-3.411
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.001

Table 2. Test Statistics

Based on the descriptive statistics table above, shows the mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values of each group of data (pretest and posttest). It appears that the mean or average posttest value is 21.6000 which is smaller than the pretest value, which is 34.5333. Furthermore, based on the calculation of the Wilcoxon signed rank test, the Z value obtained was -3.411 with a p value (Asymp. Sig 2 tailed) of 0.001 which is less than the critical limit of the research 0.05 so it appears that there are significant differences from the results of the pretest and posttest.

### 3.2. Discussion

Based on the results of observations after the activity was carried out (post-test), it was seen that almost all foster children experienced changes in the level of anxiety in a positive direction. Foster children begin to be able to reduce their anxiety in every situation that at first often makes them worried. Caregivers explained that the behavior of foster children experienced changes in a positive direction. But caregivers still have to steer so that foster children can continue to reduce the anxiety they usually experience, and become more positive personalities.

Some things that support the success of intervention activities are (1) foster children feel that their anxiety problems are enough to interfere with their daily activities, especially when they are at school or in the studio. This makes them have the motivation to change, (2) the rules that are implemented are made in agreement with the foster children. During the intervention, there is no penalty imposed by the researcher if there is a violation, because caregivers always oversee the course of the intervention, if there are violations committed by foster children, the punishment will be given by the caregiver. This makes foster children have the awareness to obey the rules and do not feel forced, (3) in addition to punishment, giving rewards also increase the motivation of foster children to comply with the rules set. Every foster child gets the same gift every time someone succeeds in answering a question or dares to explain the theory that has been conveyed in front of his friends. In addition, at the end of the session there were also prizes for foster children who had always attended training, and were never absent, (4) theories were explained using languages that were easily understood by foster children.

The success of these intervention activities is in accordance with the opinion of Pardey (2007). Pardey (2007) explains that there are a number of factors that determine the success of a training, namely before conveying the theory, the facilitator or theory presenter introduces the topic to be discussed first, the delivery of a clear theory so that trainees can understand and absorb all theories given at the time training and can apply it in everyday life, always provide training at the end of each session, and there is an evaluation process after the training activities are carried out, which aims to find out how much influence the training has on changing the behavior of the trainees.

During the implementation of the activity, researchers always explain in advance about the topics to be discussed. Researchers explain the existing theories in language that is relaxed and appropriate to convey to children in their teens, so that they will be easy to understand, and can apply them in their daily lives. At the end of each session, researchers always give participants time to try the interventions that have been described. The training given, will be retested at the next meeting, to find out how much the participants understand, and its influence after they are put into practice.

Researchers have a little difficulty at the beginning of the delivery of theory to foster children. This happens because, younger foster children, who are still sitting in elementary school, and who are not yet in school, sometimes enter the room to take part in seeing, and often disturb the concentration of foster children in paying attention to the theory conveyed. But these problems can be overcome when caregivers help direct, so that those who do not participate in the intervention do not interfere with foster children who must follow the intervention.

## 4. Conclusions and recommendations

### 4.1. Conclusion

Based on the results of the assessment that has been done to as many as 15 foster children, it is known that the problems experienced by foster children is the difficulty of overcoming anxiety. Most foster children are quite anxious when they encounter things that can be a source of anxiety for each other. Based on these problems, then to overcome them an intervention design is designed to overcome anxiety with the REBT approach that aims to overcome anxiety from foster children. This intervention activity was carried out in four meetings. Based on the results of the interventions that have been carried out, the results are obtained that all foster children who have participated in the intervention, have decreased levels of anxiety very significantly. Most foster children have been able to apply the ways they have learned to reduce their anxiety.

### 4.2. Suggestion

Caregivers need more often to provide assistance, and guidance to foster children, so that caregivers can find out what problems are being faced by foster children, and together find a way out, so that foster children do not feel anxiety for a long time. Caregivers can involve foster children to make rules and penalties that must be obeyed, so that foster children can avoid problems that can cause anxiety. Foster children are expected to be able to maintain the changes that have been made and can improve the ability to control anxiety. Foster children who have received training to reduce anxiety, are expected to apply and provide knowledge to foster children, who are younger than them at the foundation, so they can also reduce anxiety.

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