

The Effectiveness of Exercises Group Technique for the Development of Senior High School Adolescents' Gratitude

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Abstract—This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of group exercise techniques for the development of adolescent gratitude. This study used a quantitative approach with the quasi-experimental method and used pre-test and post-test control group design. Subjects of research in the X grade of high school students were determined by purposive sampling technique. The instrument was gratitude questionnaire. The results of the study showed empirically that intervention in group exercise techniques was effective for developing adolescents gratitude. This research could be used as a reference for teachers guidance and counseling in schools in developing adolescent gratitude.

Keywords—gratitude; group exercise technique; adolescent

I. INTRODUCTION

The success of education is largely determined by the success of the nation's next generation in advancing science. Through education in schools, the nation's next generation must be able to improve their cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skill. This is emphasized in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning educational goals that are oriented towards the personal development of Indonesian people who are aspired, namely: (1) faith and fear of God Almighty; (2) noble character; (3) having knowledge and skills; (4) having physical and spiritual health; (5) having a strong and independent personality; (6) has a sense of community responsibility and nationality. Achieving educational goals related to physical and spiritual health needs to be prioritized. Body health is physical health while spiritual health is a psychological health that can generate motivation to behave productively. However, in reality adolescents today are less aware of emotions and are often unstable managing emotions in their daily lives. As a result adolescents are prone to depression, anger, academic difficulties, drug abuse, and teenage acquaintances.

One of the challenges in the development of the 2045 gold generation is the adjustment to the characteristics of globalization that are identical to the improvement of competence and the use of technology. The generation prepared to face the challenges of this globalization era is adolescents. According to Sarwono adolescents are a transitional period from childhood to adulthood, which is

characterized by biological, psychological, religious, cognitive, and social development [1]. As the nation's next generation, the development of adolescents becomes the attention of parents, educators, and the community. One of the most highlighted developments is the development of cognitive skill and the management of positive emotions. The ability to manage positive emotions is characterized by a sense of forgiveness, gratitude, optimism, hope and meaningfulness of life [2].

The fundamental characteristics of adolescents who have low gratitude are not skilled in managing positive emotions and tend to display negative emotions symptoms of anxiety, and symptoms of depression. Low gratitude tends to cause negative emotions characterized by symptoms of anxiety, and symptoms of depression [3,4]. Individuals' gratitude has been present since birth and develops as the individual's cognitive and emotional systems maturity. Gratitude is assumed to be one of the developmental achievements and characteristics of individual emotional maturity. Gratitude is manifested in feelings and behavior appreciating the kindness of others and for themselves. Gratitude in each phase of individual development starts from children, adolescents, and adults, the tendency can be measured. This is a reference in conducting a comprehensive counseling service strategy to develop adolescents' gratitude.

Gratitude for adults has also been studied through the research of Krause and Hayward who found that gratitude is able to improve the quality of life's well-being in the final days of life [5]. This study surveyed 1011 adults towards the elderly in the United States. The most interesting finding is that adults and elderly who have gratitude tend to be more religious by diligently visiting the church, like to help others, and have good health. Whereas adults and seniors who are less thankful rarely go to church, rarely help others, have a tendency to struggle with others and tend not to appreciate the health that God has given. Based on the description of the phenomenon and findings of the study, it can be concluded that gratitude in each phase of individual development starts from children, adolescents, and adults, their tendency can be measured. This is a reference in conducting a comprehensive counseling service strategy to develop adolescents' gratitude.

Gratitude in its essence can be developed through integrated training methods and processes. This is implicitly stated by Research Rash, Matsuba and Prkachin which suggests 'gratitude can be developed through gratitude list techniques, behavioral expressions and reflections stimulating gratitude given to group formats' [6]. Other findings also indicate that individuals who write letters of gratitude to people who have contributed to their lives have positive feelings and gratitude that this research was carried out by Froh, Kashdan, and Ozimkowski [7]. The need for gratitude development in adolescents is getting bigger and bigger this is in line with the subject of research on gratitude development in special populations such as disabled people, disaster victims, prisoners [8-10].

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This study used quantitative approach with quasi-experimental method and used pre-test and post-test control group design. The population of this study was 244 adolescents in X grade of Senior High School. The sample of this study was 18 students of Senior High Schools in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. The sample consisted of 8 male and 10 female (experimental group, n = 8, control group n = 8). The age of the study sample was early adolescents who were 15 year-old – 18 year-old. The gratitude data collection received from gratitude instruments.

III. RESULTS

A. General Profile of Adolescents' Gratitude

The results showed that the level of adolescents gratitude was in the medium category. This could be seen from the number of frequency answers to adolescents who are mostly as many as 117 adolescents or as much as 73% were in the medium category. Thus, it could be concluded that the level of adolescents' gratitude in high school was in the medium category. In more detail the profile of gratitude for high school teenagers is presented in Table 1.

TABLE I. ADOLESCENTS GRATITUDE PROFILE

No	Category	Score Interval	Frequency	Percentage
1	High	>115	28	11%
2	Medium	98-115	117	73%
3	Low	<98	39	16%
Total			244	100%

B. The Effectiveness of Group Exercise Technique for the Development Senior High School Adolescents Gratitude

The description of the effectiveness of guidance group with group exercise techniques for the development of adolescents' gratitude can be described through: (1) comparison of the pre-test and post-test scores between the experimental group and the control group; (2) comparison of post test scores for the experimental and control groups.

1) The comparison of pre-test and post-test: Based on the Shapiro-Wilk normality test it could be concluded that the sample was not normally distributed. Because one sample was not normally distributed, homogeneity testing was not carried out, but immediately tested the similarity of the two averages using the non-parametric Mann-Whitney statistical test. Before explaining the results of this study in the form of group exercise technique effectiveness test in the development of adolescent gratitude, it would first be explained about the changes in the Pre-test score and Post-test in general in the control and experimental group. The results of statistical tests were carried out to determine the effectiveness of group exercise techniques to the experimental group compared to the control group that did not participate in the program. The results of group exercise technical effectiveness testing for the development of high school adolescents gratitude using Mann-Whitney U Test is presented in Table 2.

TABLE II. THE RESULT OF MAN-WHITNEY U TEST TOWARDS SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS

	Mean Rank Eksperimen	Mean Rank Kontrol	Sum of Rank Eksperimen	Sum of Rank Kontrol	U-Test	P
Pretest	11.78	7.22	1.6.00	65.00	20.000	.070
Posttest	12.61	6.39	113.50	57.50	12.500	.013

Based on the table above, the results of Man-Whitney U Test showed that the average increase in the experimental group (12.61) was greater than the control group (6.39). So it could be concluded that the guidance group program with group exercise technique was effective for the development of adolescent gratitude in high school. The difference in the average experimental group and control group is seen in the following figure 1:

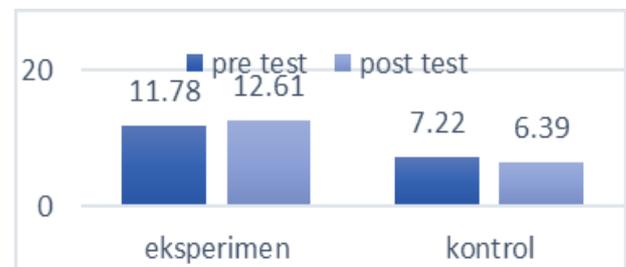


Fig. 1. The differences of experimental and control groups.

IV. DISCUSSION

The improvement of adolescents' gratitude score in high school was influenced by many factors, both in terms of internal (understanding of the material, readiness to attend group training and the desire to change) and externally (methods, facilitators, and environmental support). Development experienced by high school adolescents was not only seen from the statistical change in scores, but also based on behavioral changes during the intervention session. In this study activity journals and feedback sheets filled after the service session were very helpful in assessing the changes that occurred. Gratitude is identified with a feeling of gratitude for the achievement of individual life in the present by not forgetting valuable experiences in the past, this feeling of gratitude is also inseparable from the influence of parties outside the individual who have helped in the attainment of their lives such as God, the universe, and people around individuals [11].

The effectiveness of group exercise techniques for the development of high school adolescents' gratitude showed in the increasing of the average score of the posttest of the experimental group and the control group. In addition to being proven by comparing the average score, there was also a qualitative observation that marks a change process in high school adolescents. These changes are analyzed based on observations and activity journals so that it could be seen that group exercise techniques were effective in developing adolescent gratitude. The effectiveness of group guidance with group exercise techniques was also illustrated by the improvement of aspects of gratitude in the experimental group.

The results of the research by Froh, Yurkewicz and Kashdan concluded that gratitude is closely related to positive psychology so gratitude is assumed to be an emotion and a positive form of self-expression [7]. Men tend to avoid gratitude because men tend to express their emotions more often that are only related to strength, status and cognition [12], so that forms of gratitude disclosure (thanks and expressions of dependence) are considered something that able to threaten their masculinity and injure social status. As a result, to protect themselves from negative emotions or related social consequences, men tend not to or avoid experiencing and expressing gratitude. When compared to men, women are more likely to express their gratitude [13]. Some factors that influenced the development of gratitude include:

- Age, the existence of gratitude in the individual was also stated by Froh, et al. who made the first attempt to explore the relationship between gratitude and subjective well-being in early adolescents [14]. In his findings, Froh gave an intervention to develop gratitude through the practice of writing gratitude journals every day to a group of students. The result was compared with groups that were not given treatment to write gratitude. The groups of students who were given gratitude interventions had more subjective well-being and high optimism. Research on gratitude for adults has also been carried out by Kubacka, et al. [15] and Hlava, and Elfers [16].

- Gender, men tend to try to avoid gratitude because men tend to express emotions more often which are only related to strength and status and cognition [12] so that forms of gratitude disclosure (thanks and expressions of dependence) consider something that can threaten their masculinity and hurt social status.
- Religion, one factor that is often found to affect the difference in the level of gratitude in adolescents is religion [3,5]. Religion was a factor that is often associated with differences in the level of gratitude for adolescents because these factors cannot be separated from adolescents as individuals development. The concept of religion is directly related to the level of faith that individuals have. A clinical study that supports religious or faith factors influencing individual gratitude was research conducted by Miller, Bansal, Wickramaratne, Hao, Tenke, Weissman, and Patterson stating that individuals who are grateful based on strong faith will experience thickening in the brain is like thickening of the *parietal*, *occipital*, and *medial frontal lobes* in the right hemisphere and also in the *cuneus* and *precuneus* in the left hemisphere [17]. Thickening in this part of the brain makes individuals have a sense of resistance to depression and tend to be grateful in their daily lives. Individuals who understand religious values in experience can also influence the extent to which the individual is grateful.

V. CONCLUSION

In general, the results of the study showed effective group exercise techniques for the development of high school adolescents' gratitude who were both in the medium and low high category. The gratitude of the experimental group and the control group had different changes before and after the intervention. The effectiveness of group exercise techniques for the development of adolescents' gratitude could be seen from the comparison of the average score of the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group and the control group. The aspect of feeling abundant was one of the significant aspects in the effectiveness test, while the aspect of appreciation for simple things and appreciation for others was insignificant.

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