



EFFECTS OF RELAXATION THERAPY TO LOWER ANXIETY

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Abstract

This research aims to determine the effect of relaxation to reduce anxiety. Subjects in this study amounted to five six adults who are female and aged 20-45 years. The method used in this study is an experimental method with a one group pretest-posttest research design using purposive sampling technique. The research instrument used the BAI scale (Beck Anxiety Inventory) by Beck & Steer (1998) which has consistency with Cronbach 0.92. Based on the results of the non-parametric test with the Wilcoxon analysis technique to see the difference between the pretest and posttest. The results of the analysis obtained were 0.043, the score was <0.05. These results indicate that there is a decrease in the participants' anxiety scores. These results can be concluded that the application of relaxation can reduce anxiety.

Keyword : therapy, relaxation, anxiety.

INTRODUCTION

Mental health is a condition of a person who can develop physically, mentally, spiritually and socially so that individuals can handle pressure independently and can contribute to the community. Data from WHO on the mental health status of the world shows that 25% of the population has experienced mental and behavioral disorders and only 40% of these cases are diagnosed. More than 300 million people suffer from depression and 260 million people who experience anxiety disorders (WHO, 2012). In Indonesia, the prevalence related to anxiety disorders according to the results of Basic Health Research (Riskasdas) in 2013 showed that 6% of the population aged 15 years and over or around 14 million people in Indonesia experienced mental emotional disorders as indicated by symptoms of anxiety and depression (Ministry of Health, 2014) . (ILMPI, 2017).

The mental emotional changes that are often found in everyday life are anxiety.

Anxiety is a subjective feeling of nervous mental tension as a common reaction to an inability to cope with a problem or a lack of security. These erratic feelings are generally unpleasant which will later lead to or be accompanied by physiological and psychological changes (Rochman, 2010). Anxiety is a vague and unpleasant emotional condition accompanied by the characteristics of being afraid of something, pressing, and uncomfortable. Anxiety is usually distinguished from fear because it is sometimes directed towards things that are not objectified, while fear always leads to an object, individual or specific event (Reber & Reber, 2010).

Freud (in Feist & Feist, 2012) states that anxiety is an affective situation that is felt to be unpleasant followed by physical sensations that warn a person of threatening dangers. These unpleasant feelings are usually vague and difficult to pinpoint, but they are always felt. Anxiety is a feeling of anxiety as if something bad is happening and feeling



uncomfortable as if there is a threat accompanied by physical symptoms such as heart palpitations, cold sweat and trembling hands (Keliat et al, 2011).

Shri (2006) suggests the factors that cause anxiety, namely genetic factors, psychological factors, social factors and neurotransmitter imbalance factors in the brain. Genetic factors affect some individuals who experience anxiety. Individuals raised in anxious family situations will experience more anxiety. Psychological factors that can cause anxiety include external and internal conflicts, negative emotions, mismatches in thought patterns and perceptions of situational factors. Social factors that can cause anxiety such as traumatic experiences such as death, divorce, job loss, etc. Neurotransmitter imbalance in the brain, studies on brain function have found that several neurotransmitter systems are associated with the neurobiological function of anxiety. An imbalance between excitatory neurotransmitters and inhibitory neurotransmitters can cause individuals to experience anxiety disorders.

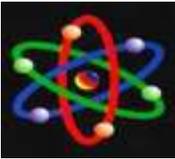
Firmansyah (2007) also explains that someone who experiences anxiety tends to constantly feel worried about a bad situation, which will happen to him or other people he knows well. In addition, someone who experiences anxiety usually tends to be impatient, irritable, often complains, has difficulty concentrating, and is easily disturbed by sleep or has difficulty sleeping. Individuals experiencing anxiety usually exhibit symptoms such as excessive sweating (even though the air is not hot and not after exercise), heart beats extra fast or too hard, cold hands or feet, experiencing indigestion, feeling dry in the mouth, looking pale, frequent wasting water exceeds the normal limit, and others.

Based on interviews conducted with six participants in this study, they said that in the last two weeks, they often had feelings of worry. The six participants said they were worried that bad things would happen to them due to the problems they were facing. The

problems faced by the six participants varied, including problems with family members, economic problems and problems with spouses. The problems they experience have an effect on psychological reactions such as feeling anxious, worried and nervous so that they have an impact on physical conditions such as tense muscles, heart beats faster, difficulty concentrating, muscles feel tense and even complain about difficulty sleeping.

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Anxiety is a natural thing, because anxiety is needed as an alarm against a threat. However, if the anxiety continues to occur to interfere with daily life and excessive, it will have a bad impact on the individual and can even cause the individual to become depressed. Therefore, anxiety needs to be overcome. Anxiety can be overcome in several ways, namely by means of CBT, humanistic therapy, relaxation, dhikr, etc. In this study, the method used to reduce anxiety in participants was relaxation therapy. According to the scientific view, relaxation is a technique to reduce stress and tension by stretching the entire body to achieve a healthy mental state (Varvogli & Darvivi, 2011). This is in accordance with research conducted by Sari & Subandi (2015) which explains that relaxation technique training carried out in the study has been proven to be effective in reducing anxiety.



The results of research conducted by Ekawaldi & Litfiah (2014) on futsal athletes who experienced anxiety about to compete who were then given relaxation showed that breathing relaxation was effective in reducing anxiety in futsal athletes who wanted to compete. Research by Lutfia & Maliya (2008) which shows that progressive muscle relaxation can improve sympathetic nerves by reducing sympathetic nerve work so that it can suppress the mutual tension experienced by individuals or the impact will reduce tension, anxiety and blood pressure, and heart rate.

METHOD

This study was a quasi-experimental study with a one group pretest posttest design involving one group, namely the experimental group only. This method aims to compare the condition of the subject before and after being treated. Sampling in this study using purposive sampling technique. The research instrument in this study was to use data collection methods by means of observation, interviews and measurement of anxiety using the BAI scale (Beck Anxiety Inventory) from Beck & Steer (1998). Participants in this study were 6 adults who live in the Ngampilan sub-district, Yogyakarta City, who have an age range of 25-45 years. Participants in this study were adults who had moderate to high anxiety levels.

Table 1.

Experimental design one group pretest – posttest

Experimental group	O ₁	X	O ₂
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Keterangan:

O₁ : Pretest / Measurement before treatment

O₂ : Posttest / Measurement after treatment

X : Treatment

Variable in this study is general anxiety in adults. The data collection instrument used was the BAI scale (Beck Anxiety Inventory) by Beck & Steer.

The anxiety scale used is Beck's, namely the Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI). This scale consists of 21 self-report inventory items in the form of multiple choices that measure how much anxiety is felt by adolescents and adults with an age range from 12 to 80 years (Grant, 2015). Every item in BAI is a simple description of aspects of anxiety. Participants were asked to make choices about what happened to him during the past week. Individuals are asked to choose one of the four answer choices that are according to what they feel (Beck, et al, 1988).

The BAI score is interpreted if the higher the participant's score, the higher the anxiety experienced. BAI has 21 items that measure physical, cognitive, and emotional aspects. There are four scoring options that have a range from 0 to 3. Score 0 = never, score 1 = almost never, score 2 = sometimes, score 3 = often. The results obtained ranged from 0 to 63, with the assessment category 0-9 = normal anxiety, 9-15 = low anxiety, 19-29 = moderate anxiety, 30-63 = high anxiety.

The treatment given to the participants was in the form of relaxation therapy. This relaxation therapy aims to reduce anxiety levels in adults. The intervention was carried out in three meetings with 1-2 hours each, located in the Ngampilan sub-district area. Relaxation therapy instructions were given directly by the researcher, with the capacity to provide relaxation interventions.

RESULT AND DISCUS

Participants who took relaxation therapy, consisted of six adults with the following profiles :

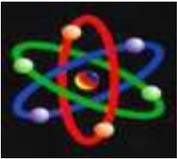


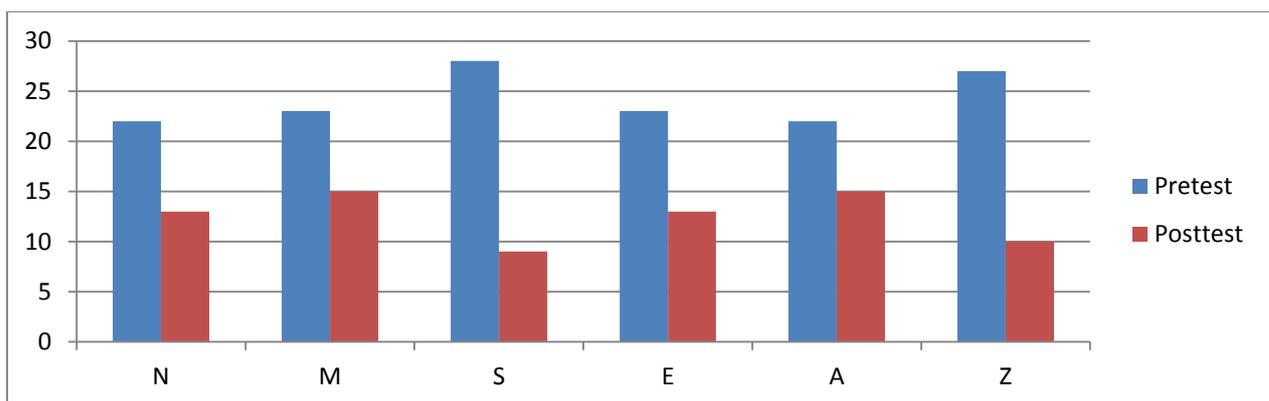
Table 2.
 Profile of participants

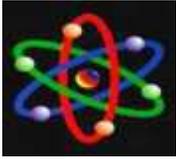
No.	Name	Age	Gender	Education	Adress
1.	N	28 years old	Female	SMA	Yogyakarta
2.	M	35 years old	Female	SMA	Yogyakarta
3.	S	45 years old	Female	SMK	Yogyakarta
4.	E	41 years old	Female	SMA	Yogyakarta
5.	A	29 years old	Female	SMA	Yogyakarta
6.	Z	30 years old	Female	SMA	Yogyakarta

Based on the results of data analysis using the Wilcoxon test shows a reliability coefficient of 0.043 with $p = 0.043$ ($p < 0.05$). The results of the analysis indicate that there is a significant difference between the pre-test

and post-test scores of the study participants after participating in relaxation therapy, so that the relaxation therapy that has been applied can be concluded that it can reduce the level of general anxiety in the participants.

Graphics 1.
 Results of the pretest and posttest of research participants





Based on the results of the graph above, it shows that there are significant differences in each participant after the relaxation group therapy. The blue graph shows the results before doing relaxation therapy and the red graph shows the results after doing relaxation therapy. The participant's pretest score was 22-27, this score fell into the medium anxiety category. While the posttest score after relaxation therapy was 15-20, this score was included in the very low to low category. The decrease in the score results showed a significant result shown by the participants S, and Z. The two participants, namely S, and Z experienced the most decrease in anxiety scores because the participants were very active in each therapy session, besides that the two participants were also diligent in practicing relaxation techniques while they were at home, this makes it easier for participants to practice relaxation techniques when anxiety symptoms appear, especially physical symptoms.

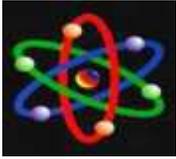
Participants who previously felt anxious when facing various problems in daily life, causing physical reactions such as heart beats faster, trembling hands, and difficulty sleeping. Psychological reactions, namely feeling afraid, worried, restless and nervous. After participating in relaxation therapy, the participants felt calmer and their physical reactions were more relaxed. This is because relaxation therapy which consists of breathing relaxation, muscle relaxation and visual relaxation can provide physical and psychological calm to the participants. Participants said that the relaxation of breathing made their heart rate stable. In addition, muscle relaxation also relieves physical tension such as neck muscles, facial muscles and leg muscles. The participants also mentioned that visual relaxation made them feel a sense of calm so that it was easier for them to sleep. Relaxation therapy has been shown to reduce

anxiety. This is in accordance with research conducted by research conducted by Praptini (2014) showing that progressive muscle relaxation can reduce anxiety levels in chemotherapy patients at the Denpasar Cancer Halfway House. In addition, research conducted by Purwaningtyas & Arum (2010) states that progressive muscle relaxation techniques can reduce anxiety levels in schizophrenia patients. Then the research conducted by Tri & Ruhyana (2015) which states that progressive muscle relaxation can significantly reduce anxiety and quality of life for preoperative patients.

The success of this study is supported by cooperative participants who are willing to take part in routine therapy. Participants are also willing to be open to their problems so that other participants in this relaxation therapy group provide support and solutions in the form of coping in dealing with anxiety. The six participants shared their coping experiences when experiencing anxiety. Coping includes doing istighfar, taking ablution and praying. The participants were also cooperative in doing homework in the form of repeating the relaxation that had been previously given by the researcher. This is in accordance with research conducted by Bryan (2017) which states that the participation of friends in group therapy can reduce anxiety levels in PLWHA. In addition, research conducted by Kotijah (2018) states that social support models can reduce anxiety levels in menopausal women.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that relaxation therapy is effective in reducing general anxiety in participants with $p = 0.043 < 0.05$. The results of the analysis indicated that there was a significant difference after relaxation therapy. Relaxation therapy that has been done can reduce general anxiety symptoms in



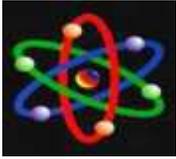
participants. Participants are able to follow any instructions and directions given during the intervention. Each group participant has different problems and their anxiety reactions are different, so that participants feel that it is not only themselves who experience these problems but other participants also experience them. Therefore, there is a process of giving opinions and helping other participants who are having problems. This process makes participants feel helped and goes deeper into the problems they are experiencing. After attending therapy, the participants were able to control the anxiety they experienced and were able to provide positive support to other participants.

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