

CASE REPORT: APPLICATION OF POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS AND PEER SUPPORT IN ADOLESCENTS WITH LOW SELF-ESTEEM

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Abstracts

Adolescent is one of the largest age groups in Indonesia. Adolescence is a volatile period to experiencing mental health problems, a transition period from childhood to adults who are looking for their identity in choosing life decisions, in the next period of development they have to choose a principle of life. The most common mental health problems in adolescents are anxiety, major depression, behavioural disorders, PTSD and ADHD. Nevertheless, remains a very few adolescents who try to seek professional help. We carried out 5 female adolescents age 15-16 years, who were combined into one group to give positive affirmation techniques and the use of peer support. Pre-test and post-test measurements used the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSES) instruments. We provide positive affirmation therapy embarks with providing information directly using the website namely *rehat.site* and problem solving sharing sessions with peers group. Mentoring was carried out by psychiatric nurse facilitators for two weeks through a WhatsApp group. The results showed that scores before intervention on RSES measurements was 80% students experienced low self-esteem, 20% students had moderate self-esteem. After giving intervention for 2 weeks there is a different score showed for RSES that 60% of students had moderate and 40% had high self-esteem. In addition, changes of self-confidence also lead to more positive outcomes.

Keywords: Low Self-esteem, Peer Support, Positive affirmations

Introduction

Adolescents means people in the age group 10-19 years (WHO in Kusumawardani, 2023). Adolescents has more than 44,000 people, one of the largest age groups in Indonesia. This demographic bonus also can be a challenge. Adolescence is a vulnerable phase in connection with transition period from childhood to adulthood (Meilan, Maryanah & Follonah, 2018). During this phase, adolescents looking for their identity in choosing life decisions, the principles they hold, as well as life choices in the next period of development. Adolescents have a lot of energy to explore new things and experience emotional fluctuation, yet they have unstable self-control (Ali & Asrori, 2016). Adolescents tend to have social changes by interacting more with peer group (Kusumawardani, 2023). In this phase, adolescents try to seek the meaning of themselves in the form of cognitive representations about themselves and their self-esteem (Shirvastava & Mishara, 2015).

Trend issues that increasing among adolescents are incidence of bullying, physical abuse, sexual harassment, and negative social environments. Some of this behavioural misuse bring out the problems for individuals, especially victims. The impact of bullying, sexual harassment, and abuse are a mental health problem in adolescents. The Indonesia National Adolescent Mental Health Survey (I-NAMHS) (2021) showed 1 in 3 adolescents having mental health problems. One in twenty Indonesian adolescents experienced mental health problems in the last 12 months. The most common mental health problems are anxiety, major depression, behaviour problems, PTSD, and ADHD (Center for Reproductive Health, University of Queensland, & Johns Bloomberg Hopkins School of Public Health, 2022). Symptoms of anxiety and depression usually begin with a feeling of low self-esteem and feels different from the environment. This problem certainly requires early treatment unless they will have more severe mental health problems.

In fact, a few of adolescents who remains to do self-diagnosed and not seeking professional help. Health promotion that can be implemented to adolescents with low self-esteem problems are empower adolescents' self-efficacy and environmental strengths. Interventions that can be carried out is not only applying positive affirmations alone but also using peer support.

Materials and Methods

The method used analytic descriptive with a case study approach among 5 female adolescents with low self-esteem at SMK Tiara Nusa Depok. The measurement of self-esteem scale using Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSES) instruments before and after the intervention. The intervention was scheduled for positive affirmation and peer support via WhatsApp group for 2 weeks. The intervention was provided by the first author and evaluation was carried out by the second author.

Interventions are carried out both offline and online. The therapy begins with providing health education introducing mental health and stress management using PowerPoint media and website namely *rehat.site* that was prepared by the author. Adolescents gathered into a focus group discussion (FGD) for 60 minutes to exchange thoughts, problems, and feelings afterwards. Adolescents also facilitated to discover solutions simultaneously and practice positive affirmations. Furthermore, the practice of positive affirmations is carried out independently by adolescents at home with a schedule determined by them. For two weeks, Adolescents was accompanied by a facilitator (author team) to ask "How's your day?", evaluating obstacles and problems during their daily activities. In the first week monitoring was carried out every day and in the second week, it was carried out once every

three days. During two weeks, adolescents also asked to care for each other, express their feelings, and discover the solutions based on their individual experiences.

Result

The characteristics of Adolescents who have low self-esteem are explained in the table below:

Table 1: Characteristic patients with low self esteem

Characteristics	f	%
Gender		
Man	0	0%
Woman	5	100%
Age		
10-17 years old	5	100%
Class		
10	1	25%
11	4	75%
12	0	0%

Based on the Table 1, all Adolescents involved in this report was female aged 10-17 years. 1 student in class 10 and 4 students in class 11. An overview of the self-esteem scores assessed using the RSES instrument for each student that can be saw in the table below.

Table 2: Pre and Post test score Student with Self Esteem (RSES) (n=5)

	Adolescent self-esteem			
	Pre	Description	Post	Description
P1	14	Low	29	High
P2	11	Low	17	Moderate
P3	22	Moderate	29	High
P4	12	Low	18	Moderate
P5	11	Low	18	Moderate

Based on the Table 2, before intervention, there were 4 students in the low self-esteem category and 1 student in the medium self-esteem category. After intervention, the number of students who had the moderate self-esteem category was 3 students and 2 students had the high self-esteem category. The different between adolescents' self-esteem categories before and after positive affirmation interventions and utilizing support systems can be seen in Table 1.3 below:

Table 3: Different of Self Esteem Scale After Positive Affirmation and Peer Support Intervention (n=5)

Self-esteem	Pre	%	Post	%
Low	4	80%	0	0%
Moderate	1	20%	3	60%
High	0	0%	2	40%

Based on Table 3 there is an improving score between students' self-esteem scale. Students with low self-esteem (80%) has decreased low self-esteem that was proved by the absence of adolescents with low self-esteem (0%) after the intervention. Students with moderate self-esteem increased from 20% to 60% as well as students with high self-esteem increased from 0% to 40%.

Discussion

Adolescence is a developmental phase that searching for identity and phase of role confusion (Becht, et al., 2016). Adolescents have 8 developmental roles, namely: 1) being adapted to biological and sexual maturity; 2) developing abstract thinking skills; 3) applying new coping to various situations; 4) understanding the values, morals, and beliefs in the environment; 5) understand and express emotional experiences; 6) building close and loyal friendships; 7) determine self-identity; 8) responsible for roles within the family, school, and community (Keliat, 2022). Adolescents should be able to make decisions, discover problem-solving and conflict resolution. Adolescents who can carry out their developmental tasks well will become mentally healthy adolescents, able to find their identity also be able to carry out their adult developmental tasks. When Adolescents fail to carry out the tasks, they will have mental health problems, such as low self-esteem (Erickson, 1950 in Merrit, 2016). As the finding in this report, 5 students did not know their developmental tasks therefore they did not care to each other.

The intervention began with introducing education about mental health and the importance of stress management in adolescents using PowerPoint media and a website that had been prepared by the author. Using PowerPoint media has been approved in increasing motivation, interest, and better learning outcomes (Wulandari, 2022). The utilization of educational website namely *rehat.site* as a cognitive ability provision in adolescents related to positive affirmation and peer support is more effective in providing the influence of mental health problem management, and can reach wider communities as well (Harrer et al, 2021; Zhou et al, 2021).

The unique result was found in students P1 that showed P1 experienced a very large increase in RSES scores (from low self-esteem scale to high). This happened because P1 implemented schedule

affirmation 3 times daily. P1 also utilized peer support outside this group. P2, P4, P5 practicing positive affirmations 2 times daily, meanwhile P3 only once daily.

Self-affirmation is the ability to find inner strength, positive hope, being able to concentrate on success, solving problems, and the courage to face challenges. Positive affirmations are the collection of positive sentences that are said repeatedly to influence the subconscious mind to be more positive and maximize one's potential (Subiyo et al, 2013).

Positive affirmations have an effect on regulating limbic systems which produces opioid, serotonin, and GABA in amygdala part which can repair the cortisol regulation. The intervention can reduce the pain scale as well as blood pressure, reduce the anxiety, and improving the 3F (Fight, flight, freeze response), improves autonomic nervous system regulation and provides comfortable feeling, reduce depression, grows self-esteem as well as being happier (Wandira & Alfianto, 2021; Rafanani 2021).

The result of this report according to the result was conducted by Miller's (2022) shows that students who use positive affirmations can improve their learning abilities. Students feel that the use of positive affirmations can increase their confidence in facing mathematics exams. Students who feel they don't like math lessons experience a change different in perspective and feel they can learn better. Students experience greater improvements in their learning process. The higher of frequency of the students, the greater of resulting change.

The utilization of peer support in adolescents is very necessary since the psychological development process that they've been through is identity vs role confusion. Adolescents tend to use more information outside their family, such as peer support. The efforts to maximize positive peer support as a support system will make adolescents who have problems become positive individuals (Rismandanni & Sugiasih, 2019). Miller's (2022) research also proved that a positive affirmation perspective supported by environmental support can improve good results. In this report, the practice of affirmation was carried out by students and facilitated by teachers at school.

Conclusion

This case report showed that positive affirmation has ability to increase self-esteem in adolescent with low self-esteem. The more appropriate in practicing positive affirmation, the greater positive effects that can be reach. Peer support can help increasing the self-esteem in adolescents. Recommendations for school can develop learning curricula that apply the concept of positive

affirmations and facilitate positive peer relationship. Recommendations for Nurses, can apply positive affirmation interventions and positive peer support in every community and work area.

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