

## ART THERAPY TO REDUCE ANXIETY IN ADOLESCENTS WHO BECOME VICTIMS OF BULLYING

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**ABSTRACT:** Bullying still occurs in many schools today. Kinds of bullying acts, such as insulting, beating, ostracizing, kicking, slandering, and destroying objects, often occur in schools and have impacts on the victims; one of which is the psychological impact of anxiety. Anxiety can cause physical, emotional, and behavioral complaints. This research aimed to discover the effectiveness of art therapy to reduce anxiety in adolescent victims of bullying. This research used the experimental method with the pretest-posttest one-category research design, along with the purposive sampling technique. There were five participants in this research, and all of them were vocational school students who became the victims of bullying. The analysis results of this research indicated that art therapy was effective in reducing anxiety in adolescent victims of bullying.

**Keywords** -Bullying, art therapy, adolescents

### I. INTRODUCTION

Rigby (2007) states that bullying is an intimidation acted repeatedly, both psychologically and physically. Such actions are performed by those who feel stronger toward those who are considered weaker. Bullying can occur anywhere, and can be done by anyone. Schools are such places where there are many bullying cases. Schools, which are supposed to be safe places to study, yet are feared by some students who get bullied.

Bullying cases at school, in the form of actions such as insulting, bullying, and humiliating, still often occur. The KPAI (the Indonesian Children Protection Commission) data recorded for 9 years, from 2011 to 2019, that there were 37,381 complaints of violence against children and bullying, both in education and social media, where the number reached 2,473 reports, and continues to increase. This data shows that there is still a lot of bullying that occurs in the world of education. Bullying seems like a normal behavior nowadays. There are several bullying behaviors carried out by students, and this is shown by video-recording the bullying acts as well so that the videos spread on social media (KPAI,2020).

Bullying can be done physically, verbally, and psychologically. Verbal bullying can be by scolding, insulting, slandering, accusing, and mocking. Physical bullying can be by slapping, spitting on, forcibly asking for money, and throwing with things. Psychological bullying can be by looking cynical, seeing full of threats, shushing, expelling, and humiliating (Sejiwa, 2008).

According to Smith & Craig (2010) that children who have physical weaknesses, negative self-concept, low academic achievement, interpersonal problems, shy, and anxious, can increase the risk of becoming victims of bullying.

Being a victim of bullying can increase the risk of having mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, excessive psychosomatic, frequent excessive drinking, and dependency on substances other than alcohol; bullying that occurs between the ages of 8 to 25 has the opportunity to commit suicide (Kaltiala-Heino, Rimpela, Rantanen, and Rimpela, 2000). The initial signs that occur in children who become victims of bullying are the risks of psychological, academic, and psychosocial problems (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Sarazen (2002) reveals that victims of bullying with persistent aggression have several signs such as anxiety, shame, fear, low self-esteem, social isolation, becoming physically weak, and becoming more emotional. The emotional effects of violence are weakness, hopelessness, anxiety, loss of identity, fear, and shame. According to Rigby (2008), children who are bullied at school experience psychological and physical changes; they have impaired social functioning, anxiety, and depression.

Anxiety is one of the impacts that can occur on victims of bullying. According to Drajat (1998), anxiety is a manifestation of various mixed emotions that occur when a person is experiencing emotional stress and inner pressure. This situation requires resolving appropriately and satisfactorily so that someone will feel safe. However, the reality is that not all problems can be resolved properly by individuals; in fact, there is

something that someone tends to avoid. This situation creates unpleasant feelings such as anxiety, fear, or guilt. This condition is called anxiety.

According to Sejiwa (2008), victims of bullying averagely never report to their parents and teachers that they have been abused or bullied by other children at school. This attitude is created because they think that reporting the bullying will not solve the problem. If the victims report to the teachers or parents, the teachers will call the bullying perpetrators, but then the perpetrators will even bully the victims more and more. Victims of bullying do not feel safe even though they are in educational institutions, i.e., schools, which should be a safe and comfortable place to study. Victims of bullying are sometimes unable to take action to solve their problems, which can lead to other problems.

Rigby (2007) says that the easiest way to find out how students perceive bullying is to ask them to draw pictures to illustrate bullying at their school. Drawing can also be an alternative therapy for dealing with anxiety caused by bullying. Drawing is also a form of therapy that can be used to express hidden negative emotions. Drawing therapy is one of the methods in art therapy, in expressive therapy, to express thoughts and feelings in different ways, and can help individuals quickly communicate their problems (Malchiodi, 2005).

Art therapy is a method that can be used to treat anxiety. Art therapy is based on the idea that the creative process of making art facilitates repair and recovery, and is a non-verbal form of communication of thoughts and feelings. Like other forms of psychotherapy and counseling, it is used to encourage personal growth, and has been used in a wide variety of settings with children, adults, families, and groups. It is an approach that can help individuals of all ages achieve meaningful and insightful, find relief from emotional overload or trauma, resolve conflicts and problems, enrich everyday life, and achieve an increased sense of well-being. (Malchiodi, 2011). The art therapy in this research is drawing, done in groups.

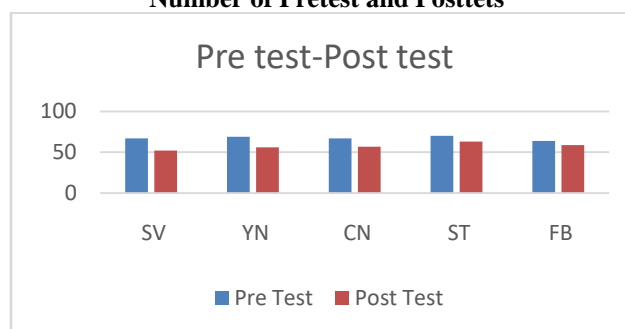
## II. METHOD

This research used a quasi-experimental design with one group pretest-posttest. The variable in this research was art therapy to reduce anxiety in adolescents who became victims of bullying. The participants in this research were five vocational students. The participant ages between 15-17 years old, gender is boy and girl. The sampling technique used in this research was purposive sampling method. The data collection methods in this research used observation and interviews, conducted during the art therapy process. The measurement for the bullying victims' anxiety used the Anxiety Scale for bullying victims, developed by Yunita A. in 2014 with the calculation results of the Cronbach coefficient reliability of 0.858 as many as 24 items; this scale measured the anxiety in adolescents who became victims of bullying.

## III. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The results of the non-parametric analysis using the Wilcoxon Test to discover the difference between the pretest and posttest. These results indicated that there was a difference in anxiety before and after being given art therapy, with  $p = 0.043$ . The results of the analysis showed that the participants had been able to overcome the anxiety they had experienced so far.

Picture .1  
Number of Pretest and Posttests



The therapy carried out in groups made participants dare to tell their problems by telling the pictures they had drawn, and this made the participants feel more relieved because they could share their unpleasant experiences

through the created picture. The support provided by fellow participants made them have the courage to overcome the problems they were facing. The art therapy also made participants feel that there was a positive thing inside of them, and unlike what they had received by being bullied. Abbingett.all (2018) The described working mechanisms of art making are: induction of relaxation; working on emotion regulation by creating the safe condition for conscious expression and exploration of difficult emotions, memories and trauma; and

working on cognitive regulation by using the art process to open up possibilities to investigate and (positively) change (unconscious) cognitions, beliefs and thoughts.

Before the posttest was given, participants were also given the opportunity to do anything they got during the therapy.

**Table. 1 Table of intervention result**

No	Subject	Cause	Form of Bullying	Impact of Bullying	Post-therapy
1	SV	Low socioeconomic level	Being underestimated and considered incapable, seen cynically by friends	Sad and depressed, the heart beat fast during group work	Dare to express opinions during group work, feel confident and happy to be able to argue during group work
2	CN	A boy, yet the body language speaks like a girl	Being called by names and being laughed	Sad, and the heart beat fast when about to pass the crowd of other students	Feeling that other people are happy with him, and is capable of being easy to make friends, and have friends who accept him.
3	FB	Conflict with other students over girlfriends	Being hostile, sneered at, and get harsh words via WhatsApp	Fainting, sad, crying, often sick and dizzy; the heart beat fast when arrived at school	Rarely sick, overcoming sadness by establishing good relationships with mom to overcome the sadness, and more comfortable to go to school
4	ST	Low socioeconomic	Being taunted by friends	Being alone, and afraid of initiating communication with friends.	Starting to take part in group work, take part in school activities and also become a committee.
5	YN	Thinks himself weird	Being shunned and excommunicated	Often fainted, had no friends, felt disliked, and the subject was always being alone.	Starting to invite friends to tell stories, joining friends for doing the Duha prayer, joining friends when going to the canteen

The role of the counseling teachers during this therapy session also supported the success of this research. The teachers always accompanied by asking about the situation of each student who was a participant, and providing support.

The results of this research indicated that the art therapy was effective in reducing anxiety in adolescents who became victims of bullying. The art therapy that was performed can overcome the anxiety felt

by the adolescents who became victims of bullying so that they felt calmer and more comfortable in carrying out activities while at school. The participants also had the courage to tell their unpleasant experiences when they were bullied. The art therapy for people diagnosed with anxiety rests on the idea that the creative process allows clients to engage in self-expression and personal exploration (Liebmann, 1990).

Art making allows participants to step back, look inward, and identify their strengths and weaknesses by creating a visible picture of their mentality. Seeing oneself through pictures allows a person to get a clearer understanding of the factors that contribute to personal development, and what life changes need to be done (Chambala, 2008). Art therapy is suitable for people suffering from anxiety disorders for several reasons, that is, expressing oneself by creating shapes, colors, and designs is often more useful than relying solely on words for self-expression and communication (Chambala, 2008). The research results of Triantoro&Yunita (2014) showed that art therapy could reduce anxiety in victims of bullying.

The supports from groupmates make the participants feel brave to overcome their problems and positivity in themselves. A group art therapy usually involves participants criticizing each other's work that can help patients build communication skills and overcome their fear of being judged by others (Crespo, 2003). According to Yalom& Leszcz (2005) this group approach has the usual advantages is called the therapeutic factor such as understanding more about himself, gets support from fellow group members, can exchange information, can learn from different experiences and mutually reinforcing.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that art therapy can reduce anxiety in adolescents who become victims of bullying. Several factors that support the success of the art therapy in this research are the participants that provide mutual motivation and support and the open attitude of each of them. This makes the participants feel better since they can finally express their uncomfortable feelings that previously have been held back. After expressing their each experience, they get support and motivation from other participants so that they feel happy and have a sense of worth towards themselves. The participants can overcome the anxiety that occurs, and overcome the bullying problems they have faced so far.

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