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THE EFFECT OF SELF-AFFIRMATION ON ADOLESCENT ANXIETY IN FACING THE HIGHER EDUCATION ENTRANCE SELECTION PROGRAM AT STATE MADRASAH ALIYAH 2 LEBAK

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ABSTRACT

Background: Adolescence is a transition from childhood to adulthood, which causes psychosocial changes, one of which is anxiety. Anxiety is a feeling of fear of something that will happen due to anticipation of impending danger, thus helping a person prepare themselves to face threats. To overcome anxiety, self-affirmation can be used as a non-pharmacological measure to reduce anxiety in a person. Purpose: The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of self-affirmation on adolescent anxiety in facing college entrance selection at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Lebak . Method: The method used in this study is quantitative with a quasi-experimental pretest and posttest design on one intervention group without a control group. The sampling method in this study is purposive sampling. The sample used in this study was 30 respondents. The instrument used in this study was the HARS Self-Affirmation Standard Operating Procedure questionnaire which was applied for 7 days with statistical analysis of the T test. Results: The results of the Simple Paired T Test obtained a P value of 0.000 <significant value (α = 0.05). Conclusion: The results of this study show that adolescents who experienced anxiety after being given self-affirmation intervention showed a decrease in anxiety, so it is true that self-affirmation has an effect on adolescent anxiety.
Keywords: " Anxiety"; "Adolescents "; " Self-affirmation ".

INTRODUCTION

Anxiety is a feeling of fear that something will happen due to anticipation of impending danger, thus helping people prepare themselves to face threats. (Ummah, 2019) . This can cause discomfort and interfere with daily functioning, leading to distress or avoidance of stressful social situations (Amira *et al.* , 2021). A person may experience anxiety or feel confused and lose control over their future direction. This makes it difficult for them to plan for the future, ultimately contributing to ongoing anxiety about the future .

The World Health Organization (WHO) noted that the number of people suffering from mental disorders in the world has reached 699 million people, WHO data (2019) shows that there are around 301 million people who experience anxiety disorders (Grace Septyanti, Novita Anggraini and Aprida Manurung, 2024) . *The prevalence* in Indonesia related to anxiety disorders based on the results of the 2018 Basic Health Research (Riskesdas) shows that 19 million people aged 15 years and over in Indonesia experience emotional mental disorders indicated by symptoms of anxiety and depression . While the figure in Banten province reached 8.7% (Ministry of Health, 2018) .

To prevent and reduce anxiety, particularly in adolescents, interventions are needed, one of which is self-affirmation. *Self-affirmations* are positive phrases that convey hopes and desires in the mind and are designed to eliminate negative thoughts and increase positive ones. Repeating *self-affirmations* regularly can strengthen positive beliefs by encouraging the brain to think positively and optimistically. (Septyanti et al., 2024) .

The results of previous research, namely Idrayani (2019), showed that *self-affirmation* interventions can reduce anxiety before and after treatment is given, according to research by Fortunada et al. (2024) which

showed that the results of the paired t -*statistical test* indicated the influence *of self-affirmation.* In previous research, there are still many gaps where respondents are not focused on age and the form of intervention provided is not detailed. Based on the results of a preliminary study conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Lebak on Thursday, January 16, 2025, using the interview method on 10 adolescents, signs of anxiety were found. Therefore, researchers are interested in studying "The Effect of Self-Affirmation on Adolescent Anxiety in Facing College Entrance Selection at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Lebak."

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research is a quantitative study with a quasi-experimental pretest and posttest design on one intervention group without a control group. The sampling method in this study is purposive sampling. The population taken is 122 12th grade students who participated in the college entrance selection, then selected based on Lameshow criteria and formulas and found a sample of 30 respondents. The variables in this study are self-affirmation and anxiety levels with categories of no anxiety, mild anxiety, moderate anxiety and severe anxiety. The instrument used in this study is the HARS Self-Affirmation Standard Operating Procedure questionnaire which is applied for 7 days with T-test statistical analysis. This research has been tested ethically by the relevant ethics agency and declared passed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Respondent Distribution

Characteristics	**Frequency**	***Percentage* (%)**
Gender		
1. Male	7	23.3
2. Women	23	76.7
Total	30	100%

Table 2. Anxiety level before treatment

	Frequency	**Percentage**
Does not matter	0	0%
Mild anxiety	15	50.0%
Moderate anxiety	13	43.3%
Severe anxiety	2	6.7%
Total	30	100%

Table 3. Anxiety levels after treatment

	Frequency	**Percentage**
Does not matter	20	66.7%
Mild anxiety	9	30%
Moderate anxiety	1	3.3%
Severe anxiety	0	0%
Total	30	100%

Table 4. Data Normality Test

	Frequency	**Statistics**	**Signature.**
Pre - Test	30	0.965	0.415
Post - Test	30	0.947	0.143

Table 5. Simple Hypothesis Test Paired T-Test

	Frequency	**Average**	**Standard Deviation**	***Number of T***	**Signature.**
Pre - Post Test	30	13,067	7,390	9,684	0,000

Based on the data obtained, women dominate the population. This is also because women are at greater risk of experiencing anxiety and stress disorders due to hormonal differences and different psychosocial stressors in women. This statement is supported by the theory that women tend to experience 30% higher stress levels than men (Aji and Rizkasari, 2023) . As for symptoms caused by anxiety, as found in the questionnaire results, respondents generally answered feeling anxious, excessively worried about various things, easily irritated and angry, experiencing nightmares and difficulty sleeping, difficulty concentrating, increased frequency of urination, feeling shaky, and so on (Swarjana, 2022).

After undergoing *self-affirmation therapy* for 7 days, it was found that the anxiety experienced by respondents after therapy was mostly at the non-anxious level. The results found after therapy in respondents showed that anxiety levels decreased or there was a decrease in anxiety. Anxiety levels can decrease because *self-affirmation* has physical and psychological effects in the form of calm due to the presence of anti-stress hormones, thus providing a feeling of relaxation and forming a positive emotional response (Aji and Rizkasari, 2023) .

In this treatment, respondents were asked to write positive sentences and hopes in a book or sheet provided. They were then asked to relax and apply the written sentences and hopes in their minds for 10 to 15 minutes daily for seven days. Research conducted by Idrayani (2019) showed that *self-affirmations* influence anxiety in adolescents by nurturing their subconscious emotions toward something more positive. Desires formulated by adolescents and lived out with deep meaning every day can increase their self-confidence. Repeated positive cognitive perceptions will write memories in a person's subconscious, resulting in a more positive mood and thoughts (Khadijah and Zakky Abdul Ghoniy, 2022) .

According to researchers, when individuals focus on positive aspects, the central aspect of their self-identity will provide benefits such as an increase in a more positive mood, thereby reducing the symptoms of stress and anxiety themselves. The more individuals bring or direct their thoughts to something positive in the subconscious, the individual will continue to feel positive things so that symptoms felt such as anxiety will decrease because the subconscious controls thoughts that are used to heading in a positive direction.

This study faced limitations, including the limited literature used in its preparation. Supporting literature on *self-affirmation theory* presented a challenge due to limited research and standard procedures for administering *self-affirmation treatments.* In addition to the limited literature, the one-group design was deemed insufficient to demonstrate an effect, necessitating the need for a control group to strengthen the findings.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study showed a significant decrease in the anxiety levels of 12th-grade adolescents after being given a self-affirmation intervention with a P value = 0.000. On the first day of the pretest, adolescents were found to experience mild anxiety, moderate anxiety, and moderate anxiety. However, on the seventh day of the posttest, the anxiety levels of adolescents were found to be no anxiety, mild anxiety, and moderate anxiety, with a difference of 13.067. Although these findings indicate that self-affirmation is an effective action in reducing anxiety levels in Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 2 Lebak, the absence of a control group limits more convincing results. Future research should include a control group to further validate the effects of self-affirmation.

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