

The Effectiveness of Hypnotherapy in Reducing Public Speaking Anxiety Among Adolescent at Islamic Boarding School

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Abstract – This study examines the effectiveness of hypnotherapy in reducing public speaking anxiety among adolescents at Islamic boarding schools. The result showed hypnotherapy was effective in reducing public speaking anxiety among adolescents at Islamic boarding schools. It also showed positive changes in subjects of the experimental group when they faced public speaking situations. The person can control the biological symptoms. The heart is beating normally, irregular breath, feet and hands warm and trembling, thought became more positive, more adaptive behavior and better mood.

Keywords – Hypnotherapy, Public Speaking Anxiety, Adolescent, Islamic Boarding School

I. INTRODUCTION

Public speaking anxiety is a disorder that can hinder the development of individual self-potential. In addition, it also harms various aspects of life, one of which is the academic aspect. This is under the opinion of (Bodie, 2010) which states that public speaking anxiety harms students' academic abilities. For students' potential to develop optimally, it is necessary to intervene to overcome public speaking anxiety.

Researchers are interested in examining the effectiveness of hypnotherapy in reducing anxiety in public speaking, especially in adolescent subjects who study and live in Islamic boarding schools. (DeVito, 2016) defines public speaking anxiety as a condition of speaker apprehension, namely a state of fear or anxiety in communication interactions, and emphasizes that the phenomenon of public speaking anxiety is centered on the speaker. Based on the experience of dealing with clients who fear public speaking for five years, (Swerdlow, 2008) states that one of the techniques to overcome the fear of public speaking is hypnotherapy.

Hypnotherapy is a straightforward, fast, effective, and efficient way to reach the subconscious mind, re-educate and heal sick minds (Gunawan, 2007). When a person is hypnotized and in a very relaxed state, the subconscious is more responsive to the suggestions given than when it is in a state of complete awareness. So the suggestion is a direct medium to enter into the subconscious, which can become a belief, change behavior, produce an effect or action (Hadley & Staudacher, 1996). Several previous researchers have researched public speaking anxiety using various interventions, but no use of hypnotherapy intervention. Therefore, we will use hypnotherapy interventions to reduce public speaking anxiety.

II. METHOD

The subjects in this study were teenagers from one of the Islamic boarding schools in Kampar Riau Regency with the following characteristics:

1. 15-18 years old, Madrasah Aliyah/High School.

2. The subjects are experiencing public speaking anxiety in the moderate to high category obtained from the public speaking anxiety scale score based on the component of public speaking anxiety according to Monarth & Kase (2007).
3. Subject has state (situational) anxiety disorder, not trait (permanent) obtained from the results of the TMAS Scale measurement.
4. Subjects have an easy to moderate level of suggestibility.
5. Subjects are willing to be given hypnotherapy.
6. Subjects were able to communicate in the same language as the hypnotherapist.

Method of collecting data

Data collection in this study used several ways, namely:

1. Scale

This study has two scales, namely the public speaking anxiety scale and the TMAS scale. The public speaking anxiety scale aims to reveal public speaking anxiety in Islamic boarding school adolescents. In contrast, the TMAS scale eliminates the possibility of subjects experiencing persistent anxiety disorders (traits).

2. Questionnaire

There are two questionnaires used in this study. The first questionnaire aims to determine the factors that cause public speaking anxiety on the subject as material for suggestions in hypnotherapy. The second questionnaire was a self-report media for research subjects to describe any changes experienced by the subject from the biological components, thoughts, behavior, and moods after the following hypnotherapy. The results become a guide in conducting interviews on research subjects.

2. Interview

In this study, we interviewed the research subject and the student affairs. Interviews on research subjects aim to obtain data about any changes in the subject after receiving hypnotherapy based on four components of public speaking anxiety: biological components, thoughts, behavior, and moods. The interview guide used is based on a questionnaire that the research subject has filled out. Interviews in the student section aim to strengthen and prove the information from previous research subjects.

Procedure

Research preparation includes:

1. Obtaining research permits.
2. Preparing a public speaking anxiety scale.
3. Testing a public speaking anxiety scale.
4. TMAS scale.
5. Compiling a hypnotherapy module.
6. Testing a hypnotherapy module.

The procedure for carrying out this research is as follows:

- a. The subject of the study was a MA/SMA teenager from one of the Islamic boarding schools in Kampar Riau. Researchers explain the research, schedule, and rights of research subjects to understand what they will do during the research process..
- b. Researchers conduct screening to obtain research subjects who meet the criteria. The initial screening measures public speaking anxiety using a public speaking anxiety scale based on the four components of public speaking anxiety according to Monarth & Kase (2007), which have previously been tested and have obtained validity and reliability. The researcher selected research subjects based on their level of anxiety. The research subjects are those who get a moderate to high category anxiety score.
- c. We gave the second screening the TMAS scale to eliminate the possibility of a subject experiencing a persistent anxiety disorder (trait). With this second selection stage, hopefully, that this research will provide proper treatment to subjects who experience

public speaking anxiety disorders (state), not to subjects who have previously persistent anxiety disorders. Thus, the research subjects involved in the study were under the criteria for the dependent variable in the research design.

- d. We gave the third screening using a questionnaire to determine the factors that cause anxiety in public speaking as material suggestions in the implementation of hypnotherapy.
- e. The next screening stage is the suggestibility test. This test aims to determine the level of subject suggestibility. Research subjects are subjects who have a level of suggestion in the category of easy and medium.
- f. After the screening stage, we gave the research subjects an informed concern or a statement of willingness to be a subject in this study. This informed concern is given to the subject so that this research is in the corridor of psychology research ethics. The information concern contains the following matters.
 - 1) Explanation of the hypnotherapy intervention, the researcher tells if the subject is likely to face negative impacts that the subjects cannot avoid due to the provision of psychological services/practices carried out in the intervention..
 - 2) An explanation that the researcher fully grants the rights of the subject for his involvement in this research, considering the voluntary principle that underlies the service user in accepting/involving himself in the research process.
 - 3) The researcher provided a form of willingness to be involved in a hypnotherapy intervention which the subject would sign.
- g. The researcher also explained orally to the subject concerning research ethics during the hypnotherapy process that the researcher would guarantee hypnotherapy intervention facilities
- h. Furthermore, the researcher gave the subject a hypnotherapy intervention for five days divided into seven scheduled meeting sessions. The researcher and the school have agreed upon the schedule.
- i. After giving hypnotherapy, the researcher measured the subject's level of anxiety using a public speaking anxiety scale to get a posttest score.
- j. After 15 days, the researcher carried out post-therapy measurements (follow-up) by giving a public speaking anxiety scale to see the resistance of hypnotherapy effectiveness.
- k. Next, the subject was given a questionnaire as a self-report media to describe any changes experienced by the subject from the biological components, thoughts, behavior, and mood after being involved in hypnotherapy.
- l. Furthermore, the researchers conducted interviews on research subjects based on the results of the questionnaire given previously.
- m. To strengthen the results of questionnaires and interviews with research subjects, the researchers then conducted interviews in the student affairs.

III. RESULTS

The researcher found that hypnotherapy effectively reduced public speaking anxiety in Islamic boarding school teenagers. The decrease in public speaking anxiety in Islamic boarding school adolescents was proven by statistical analysis of the Mann-Whitney test, with $p = 0.00$ ($p < 0.05$). It shows that there are differences in public speaking anxiety in the experimental group and the control group. This difference proves that there is a decrease in public speaking anxiety in adolescents..

The results of the qualitative analysis in this study showed that there were positive changes in the research subjects after being given hypnotherapy. The biological symptoms that appeared when facing public speaking situations such as a racing heart, body shaking, cold sweats, and shortness of breath experienced by the subject before but after hypnotherapy, these biological symptoms can be controlled and even do not appear again.

The mind aspects that previously tended to be negative, such as less capable and other people would laugh at him, feel judged, scary, not feeling confident. Many and other negative thoughts, after being hypnotized, the subject's views become more positive. The subject considers himself able to speak in public with confidence; other people will not laugh at him when speaking in public, do not feel judged, and see that speaking in public is a fun thing.

The behavioral aspects show that before the intervention, the subjects are avoiding public speaking situations, anxiety

while waiting for their turn to present. After hypnotherapy, the subject's behavior became more adaptive, such as not avoiding or refusing to speak in public. The subject was willing to appear in front of the audience. generally calmer and more relaxed when speaking in public.

The researcher found that before hypnotherapy, the subjects felt anxiety, fear, worry, tension, panic, nervousness when facing a public speaking situation. After being hypnotized, the mood changed for the better, such as not feeling anxious anymore, being brave to speak in public, not worrying anymore, enjoying more, relaxing, don't panic, and not feeling nervous anymore when facing a public speaking situation. In addition, the subject also becomes excited and motivated to add to the experience of appearing to speak in public.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

The hypnotherapy intervention designed in this study aims to reduce public speaking anxiety in adolescent boarding schools. The researcher found that hypnotherapy effectively reduced public speaking anxiety in Islamic boarding school teenagers. The decrease in public speaking anxiety in Islamic boarding school adolescents was proven by statistical analysis of the Mann-Whitney test, with $p = 0.00$ ($p < 0.05$). It shows that there are differences in public speaking anxiety in the experimental group and the control group.

This difference proves that there is a decrease in public speaking anxiety in adolescents who receive hypnotherapy. It is following experimental research conducted by Schoenberger, Kirsch, Gearan, Montgomery & Pastyrnak (1997), which tested the effectiveness of hypnotherapy in reducing public speaking anxiety. This study shows that hypnosis by providing relaxation exercises through induction and suggestion. Based on the results of this experiment, it showed that there was a decrease in public speaking anxiety in the experimental group compared to the control group. It proves that hypnotherapy is effective for reducing anxiety in public speaking.

Several things can explain the results of this study. First, hypnotherapy makes a person's condition relax. When someone is in a very relaxed state, the subconscious mind is more responsive to the suggestions given than when we are in a state of total awareness. The suggestion is a direct medium to enter the subconscious, which can become a belief, change behavior, produce an effect or action (Hadley & Staudacher, 1996). In the implementation of hypnotherapy, the subject can reach a relaxed state to a deeply relaxed state, making it easy to accept suggestions. The suggestions given are positive programs to change existing damaging programs, so The subjects can resolve that negative behaviors, feelings, and thoughts when speaking in public. Thus, hypnotherapy is effective for reducing public speaking anxiety

It is consistent with experimental research conducted by Schoenberger, Kirsch, Gearan, Montgomery & Pastyrnak (1997), who used hypnotherapy as an intervention in overcoming public speaking anxiety. Hypnotherapy provides relaxation exercises through induction and suggestion. The experimental results showed decreased public speaking anxiety in the experimental group compared to the control group. It proves that hypnotherapy is effective for reducing anxiety in public speaking. The same study results by Lory (2012) stated that hypnotherapy could help as an intervention to overcome anxiety disorders.

Second, the subjects in this study had easy and moderate levels of suggestibility. In addition, they are also teenagers who are more easily suggested than adults. It follows the opinion of Saadat & Kain (2007), which states that children are easier to get suggestions (hypnotizable) than adults. It is due to the high curiosity and desire to accept new things such as games, fantasy, and imagination.

Third, the hypnotherapy process runs according to established procedures. Practitioners who are experienced and competent support the operation of hypnotherapy effectively. The research subjects were also cooperative, willing to involve, present on time at each intervention session, and enthusiastically participated in the hypnotherapy process. The research subjects could understand the language of hypnotherapists as the requirements for doing hypnotherapy. It follows the opinion of Spiegel (2020) and Rogovik & Goldman (2007), which states that a person's needs to be able to accept the hypnosis process are consciously not rejecting, being able to communicate in the same language, the ability to focus coupled with creativity and fantasy visualization.

The results of qualitative analysis in this study indicate that positive changes in research subjects after hypnotherapy are seen in biological symptoms that arise when facing public speaking situations, such as a racing heart, body shaking, cold sweats, and shortness of breath. However, after hypnotherapy, these biological symptoms can be controlled and do not even appear again. From the aspect of the subject's mind that previously tended to be negative, such as considering himself incapable, feeling that other

people would laugh at him when speaking in public, feeling judged, seeing that speaking in public was a scary thing. The subject is also unsure that he could develop a conversation and other negative thoughts. After hypnotherapy, the subject's mind becomes more positive. The subject considers himself able to speak in public with confidence, feels that other people will not laugh at him when speaking in public, does not feel judged, and sees that speaking in public is a fun thing.

After the practitioner gave behavioral hypnotherapy, the subject became more adaptive such as not avoiding or refusing to speak in public. The subject was willing to appear speaking in public, more calm and relaxed when speaking in public. After the practitioner gave hypnotherapy, the subject mood changed for the better. The subject is not feeling anxious anymore, being brave to speak in public, not feeling worried anymore, enjoying more, relaxing, not panicking, and not feeling nervous anymore when facing a speaking situation in public. In addition, the subject also becomes excited and motivated to add to the experience of appearing to speak in public.

These results indicate that the goal of hypnotherapy to overcome the problem of public speaking anxiety, both to overcome the causative factors and overcome the symptoms through suggestions, has been achieved. In addition, hypnotherapy has also provided rapid and effective changes. Positive suggestions given to the hypnotic condition have a strong influence on the subject. It follows the opinion of Gunawan (2007), who stated that hypnosis is the fastest and most effective way to enter the subconscious mind. When the conscious mind/mental filter becomes passive or inactive, each suggestion has nine times more power than an ordinary situation.

Suggestions, like new programs and hypnosis, make it possible to modify programs, deactivate programs, or install new programs quickly without distraction from the conscious mind in the form of frequently asked questions. It makes change happen more effectively and rapidly. Practitioners give suggestions in a hypnotic situation much more potent than when the client is in a conscious state. If the conscious mind implements these suggestions, the new behavior will eventually become habitual, permanent, and automatic.

Hypnotherapy in this study aims to overcome public speaking anxiety, both to overcome the causative factors and overcome the symptoms. To overcome the causative factors, the practitioner conducts a screening first to determine the factors causing the subject to experience public speaking anxiety. From the screening results, practitioners know several factors that drive public speaking anxiety, namely negative experiences or failures, lack of expertise or experience, feeling valued, and being the center of attention.

The subject overcomes the causative factors and becomes material for suggestions in the hypnotherapy intervention. The material suggestions are forgiving negative experiences or failing when appearing to speak in public. The subject is eager to improve skills, adding expertise to appear in public speaking, feeling comfortable being the center of attention when speaking in public, keen to prepare knowledge and other materials before speaking in public. In addition to providing suggestions to overcome the causative factors, the practitioner gave suggestions to overcome the symptoms of public speaking anxiety which refers to the component of public speaking anxiety based on the theory of Monarth & Kase (2007). The material suggestions are being able to calm the body, mind, and feelings when appearing to speak in public, increase courage and confidence when appearing to speak in public, and increase reasoning thinking and other potentials when appearing to speak in public.

The findings in this study were from 44 subjects who took the suggestibility test, six people with the category of easy suggestion level, five women and, one man. Based on gender, practitioners suggest women more easily than men. It follows the theory that women have a higher hypnotizability value than men (Spiegel, 1985; Rogovik & Goldman, 2007). McFarlane, Powell, & Dudgeon (2002) state that it is easier to suggest women because women are more cooperative in carrying out orders from authority figures. Men are more aggressive, resisting behavior, and finding it difficult to follow orders from authority figures.

Another opinion says that it is easier for women to capture information in audio, while men are easier to capture information visually (Loftus, Banaji, Schooler & Foster, 1987). The cortical areas of the male brain are more sucked up to perform spatial functions and tend to give a minor portion to the cortex areas for producing and using words. The two regions in the frontal and temporal lobes (Broca and Wernicke) associated with language are significantly more prominent in women, causing women to excel at language than men. The volume of gray matter in the cortical area 17 in women is greater than in men. Women have 23% (in Broca's area, in the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex) and 13% (in Wernicke's area, in the superior temporal cortex) with more volume than men (Schlaepfer, Harris, Tien, Peng, Lee, & Pearlson, 1995).

The strength of this study is the reliability of the scale of public speaking anxiety in this study is classified as very reliable, which is 0.933. The next strength is that the research subjects have passed several screenings, including screening with the TMAS scale, which aims to eliminate subjects who have persistent anxiety disorders (traits) so that the research subjects involved in this study fit the criteria for the dependent variable in the study design. In addition, the researchers also conducted a suggestibility test screening so that the research subjects selected in this study could well receive suggestions from hypnotherapy-certified professionals. This study does not look at how much the hypnotherapy intervention contributes to each component or aspect of public speaking anxiety quantitatively.

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