
**THE APPLICATION OF INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING USING
COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING TECHNIQUES TO REDUCE
STRESS IN CLIENT T, WHO IS PREGNANT OUT OF WEDLOCK*****¹Amy Chintiea, ²Suryati, ³Hartika Utami Fitri*****^{1,2,3}Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah Palembang**Email: *¹sintiaamy21@gmail.com, ²suryati_uin@radenfatah.ac.id,³hartikautamifitri_uin@radenfatah.ac.id**Abstract**

This research is entitled "Application of Individual Counseling with Cognitive Restructuring Techniques to Reduce Stress in Clients Who Are Pregnant Out of Wedlock". The background of this research is stress. Stress is defined as the inability to overcome threats faced by humans mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually, which at some point can affect the human's physical condition. Therefore, providing individual counseling using cognitive restructuring techniques will be very effective in reducing the stress experienced by clients. This research aims to determine individual counseling using cognitive restructuring techniques to reduce stress in T clients who are pregnant out of wedlock. This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study type of research. Data collection tools include interviews, observation and documentation. Meanwhile, data analysis techniques are data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions. The subject of this research was 1 teenage girl aged 15 years. The results of this research show that after carrying out the individual counseling process in 4 meetings using cognitive restructuring techniques, it can reduce the stress experienced by client T who is pregnant out of wedlock. The stages of individual counseling using cognitive restructuring techniques in reducing stress in T clients who are pregnant out of wedlock are using the initial stage, transition stage, activity stage and final stage.

Keywords: Individual counseling, cognitive restructuring techniques, stress**Abstrak**

Penelitian ini berjudul "Penerapan Konseling Individu dengan Teknik Cognitive Restructuring Untuk Meredakan Stress Pada Klien T yang Hamil Diluar Nikah". Latar belakang penelitian ini adalah stress, Stress didefinisikan sebagai ketidakmampuan mengatasi ancaman yang dihadapi oleh mental, fisik emosional, dan spiritual manusia, yang pada suatu saat dapat mempengaruhi keadaan fisik manusia tersebut. Maka dari itu pemberian konseling individu dengan menggunakan teknik cognitive restructuring akan sangat efektif untuk meredakan stress yang dialami oleh klien. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui konseling individu dengan teknik cognitive restructuring untuk meredakan stress pada klien T yang hamil diluar nikah. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian studi kasus. Alat pengumpulan data berupa wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Sedangkan teknik analisis data yaitu pengumpulan data, reduksi data, penyajian data, dan kesimpulan. Subjek penelitian ini yaitu 1 orang remaja perempuan yang berusia 15 tahun. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa setelah dilakukannya proses konseling individu dalam 4 kali pertemuan dengan menggunakan teknik cognitive restructuring dapat meredakan

stress yang dialami oleh klien T yang hamil diluar nikah. Tahapan konseling individu dengan teknik cognitive restructuring dalam meredukasi stress pada klien T yang hamil diluar nikah yakni menggunakan tahap awal, tahap peralihan, tahap kegiatan, dan tahap akhir.

Kata kunci : *konseling individu, teknik cognitive restructuring, stress*

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of promiscuity among teenagers is a social issue that continues to be a concern in modern society, particularly with the advancement of information technology and changes in patterns of social interaction. Casual dating is often understood as a form of social interaction that goes beyond the norms, values, and ethics prevailing in society. In the context of adolescent development, this phase is a crucial period because individuals are in the process of self-discovery, exploring values, and forming their personal identities. According to Sulaeman, adolescence is a transitional phase from childhood to adulthood marked by significant physical, emotional, and social changes, making adolescents highly curious about various new things (Lestari, 2023). This condition makes adolescents vulnerable to environmental influences, whether positive or negative. Therefore, understanding promiscuity is crucial as a preventive measure for the younger generation to avoid engaging in behaviors that harm themselves or their surroundings.

Promiscuity is often associated with juvenile delinquency, including high-risk premarital sexual behavior. In recent years, the phenomenon of teenage pregnancy has shown a significant increase, particularly in Indonesia. This is not unrelated to various factors, such as technological advancements that facilitate unlimited access to information, weak parental supervision, and the influence of unhealthy social environments. Adolescents' high curiosity, coupled with a lack of understanding of moral and religious values, often drives them to experiment with things that actually contradict social norms (Alifah, 2021). In certain situations, adolescent girls are the most vulnerable to the negative impacts of promiscuity, especially when involved in unhealthy relationships with the opposite sex.

Teenage pregnancy outside of marriage not only affects physical health but also carries serious psychological consequences. Adolescents experiencing pregnancy outside of marriage often face severe mental pressure, such as anxiety, stress, guilt, and social stigma from their surroundings. This situation is further exacerbated by adolescents' emotional immaturity in dealing with complex and high-pressure situations. Additionally, biologically, adolescents' reproductive organs, which have not yet fully developed, are at risk of health complications due to early pregnancy (Alifah, 2021). Thus, teenage pregnancy is a multidimensional issue requiring serious attention from various stakeholders, including families, schools, and the community.

Adolescent girls experiencing pregnancy outside of marriage generally face highly stressful life circumstances. Stressors affecting adolescents can be classified into two main categories: internal and external factors. Internal factors include individual emotional states, feelings of guilt, an inability to adapt to change, and internal conflicts

arising from the situations they face. Meanwhile, external factors include pressure from the social environment, societal stigma, economic conditions, and a lack of support from family and partners (Aini, 2022). The combination of these two factors can worsen adolescents' psychological condition, thereby increasing the risk of more serious mental health disorders.

This phenomenon is also evident in the results of the researcher's observations of a teenage girl identified as (T) in Meranjat Ilir Village who experienced an out-of-wedlock pregnancy. Based on the results of observations and interviews, it was found that the teenager experienced high levels of stress, manifested through symptoms of anxiety, shame, decreased self-confidence, and reluctance to engage in social interaction. Additionally, the teenager faced further pressure due to her partner's irresponsibility, which further worsened her psychological condition. Another consequence was dropping out of school, which indirectly hindered her future and personal development. This situation demonstrates that teenage pregnancy not only affects the individual personally but also has long-term implications for the teenager's social life and education.

The stress experienced by adolescents in such circumstances is a response to unpleasant environmental pressures. Stress can be understood as an individual's psychological and physiological reaction to demands or pressures that exceed their adaptive capacity. Prolonged stress can lead to various mental health issues, such as anxiety, depression, and even deviant behavior (Zikry, 2020). According to Selye's theory, stress is divided into two types: eustress and distress. Eustress is positive stress that can motivate individuals to grow, whereas distress is negative stress that has adverse effects on an individual's physical and mental condition (Kemala, 2007). In the context of unmarried pregnancy, the stress experienced by adolescents tends to be distress because it is triggered by heavy social and emotional pressure.

Furthermore, Lazarus and Folkman explain that stress is influenced by the presence of stressors—factors originating from the environment, social context, or the individual's internal state that are perceived as threats (Siregar, 2013). In the case of teenagers who become pregnant out of wedlock, these stressors may include social stigma, family conflict, uncertainty about the future, and fear of societal judgment. An individual's perception of these stressors also plays a crucial role in determining the level of stress experienced. If an individual lacks effective coping skills, the stress experienced may escalate and negatively impact psychological well-being.

The effects of stress experienced by an individual can be classified into several aspects: physical, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral. Physically, stress can cause sleep disturbances, increased heart rate, fatigue, and other health issues. Emotionally, individuals may experience feelings of anxiety, fear, irritability, and frustration. Cognitively, stress can impair thinking ability, concentration, and decision-making. Meanwhile, behaviorally, stress can trigger withdrawal, avoidance of social interaction, and loss of motivation (Sugiarti, 2018). In the case of teenagers who become pregnant

out of wedlock, these four aspects often occur simultaneously, thereby worsening the individual's psychological condition.

In an effort to address these issues, individual counseling serves as an effective intervention approach. Individual counseling is a face-to-face assistance process between a counselor and a client to help the client understand and address the challenges they face. Through individual counseling, clients are given the opportunity to express their feelings, understand their own condition, and develop more adaptive coping strategies (Masruroh, 2011). One technique that can be used in individual counseling is *Cognitive Restructuring* (CR), which aims to help clients identify and transform negative thought patterns into more rational and positive ones.

The Cognitive Restructuring technique focuses on changing an individual's way of thinking about the situations they face. In the context of adolescents experiencing unplanned pregnancy, this technique can help clients reduce feelings of guilt, boost self-confidence, and build a more realistic understanding of their circumstances. Additionally, this technique encourages clients to set clearer life goals and make wiser decisions based on their values. Thus, individual counseling using the *Cognitive Restructuring* approach is expected to help adolescents cope with stress and improve their quality of life.

Overall, the phenomenon of teenage pregnancy is a complex issue influenced by various factors, both internal and external. Promiscuity, lack of supervision, and a weak understanding of moral values are the primary factors driving risky behavior among adolescents. The resulting impacts are not only physical but also psychological and social, which can affect an individual's future. Therefore, a comprehensive approach is needed to address this issue, one of which is through individual counseling using the *Cognitive Restructuring* technique, which can help adolescents develop a more positive and adaptive mindset in facing life.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study emphasizes meaning, processes, and interpretations of events or actions within their natural context. In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the primary instrument, directly involved in the data collection process through interaction with the research subjects. This study does not aim to manipulate variables but rather to understand the phenomenon holistically based on real-world conditions in the field. As explained by Moleong (2017), qualitative research yields descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from individuals and observed behaviors, thereby providing a comprehensive picture of the research object.

A case study design was employed because this research focuses on a specific case deemed unique and possessing distinctive characteristics warranting in-depth examination. A case study enables researchers to explore detailed information regarding the background, dynamics, and factors influencing a phenomenon within a specific

context. According to Basuki (in various methodological studies), a case study is a research approach that focuses on a specific problem with the aim of gaining a deep and contextual understanding of that case (Basuki, 2020). Therefore, the selection of this design is deemed appropriate for the research theme, which examines individual experiences in specific situations.

In the data collection process, the researcher employed triangulation techniques to enhance the validity and reliability of the data. The techniques used included observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to directly understand the subjects' behavior and interactions within their natural environment. Interviews were used to explore the experiences, perceptions, and meanings held by the research subjects, while documentation served as supporting data to reinforce the research findings. Through this combination of techniques, it is hoped that the data obtained will provide a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of interviews after 4 meetings by researchers and client T, the description of the Stress experienced by client "T" after individual counseling using *cognitive restructuring* techniques is as follows

a. Interview Results from the Biological Aspect

The following are the results of the research interview, which can be seen in table 4.15.

Table 1. Interview results about biological aspects (*sleep problems, diet, physical health and emotional changes*)

SUBJECT	INTERVIEW RESULTS	TRANSLATION
CLIENT "T"	<i>We have been counseling activities yesterday, thank God, raso lemak nian, it is easy to control the pattern of the tidok that is biasonyo saro tidok ikolah beguyur pacak on time.</i>	After we do counseling activities, thank God, it is delicious, we can control sleep patterns that are usually difficult to sleep, now it is time.
CLIENT "T"	<i>Eating jugo is regular for snacking has decreased and I also pay attention to the food I eat</i>	Eating regularly, snacking has decreased and paying attention to what is eaten
CLIENT "T"	<i>I'm no longer a fan of the idea of having to worry about baek bae bae bae</i>	It's not easy to get dizzy because I always think things are good
CLIENT "T"	<i>At the end of the day, you don't have to control your emotions anymore.</i>	Then there are no more emotions, you can control your emotions

From the results of the above interview, the researcher can conclude that the biological aspect shows that client "T" has shown positive changes and started to change himself for the better in the future.

b. Interview Results from a psychological aspect

Here are the interview results from the study, which can be seen in table 4.16:

Table 2. Interview results about psychological aspects (mind problems, inability to overcome problems and loss of interest, avoidant behavior and difficulty relaxing)

SUBJECT	INTERVIEW RESULTS	TRANSLATION
CLIENT "T"	<i>Alhamdulillah, I have participated in counseling, I am no longer tired of daydreaming, if I am alone I am bored or I listen to music, watch TV so that I don't have much thought, at least with this counseling I am trying to change my bad habits</i>	Alhamdulillah, now after participating in counseling, I don't daydream anymore, if I am alone in dhikr, listening to music, watching TV so as not to think about bad things. At least with this counseling, I have tried to change those bad habits.
CLIENT "T"	<i>Lah started to enjoy many activities such as cleaning the house</i>	Starting to enjoy doing activities such as cleaning the house
CLIENT "T"	<i>I started to be fierce and anxious with other people, even every afternoon I went out to sit at home with people, I realized that my behavior and actions were wrong when I was afraid to interact with other people</i>	I wanted to tell other people, every afternoon I went out to sit down to talk with my mother, I realized that my behavior and actions were wrong when I was afraid to interact with others.
CLIENT "T"	<i>I don't want to cry anymore and I don't want to cry anymore because I don't want to talk about what I want to say.</i>	No more crying, no more thinking about what people say, and being very stupid.

From the results of the above interviews, the researcher can conclude that the psychological aspect of the client shows good changes, starts new habits and learns from the mistakes made.

DISCUSSION

Individual counseling is one of the most effective approaches in addressing psychological problems experienced by individuals, particularly those related to stress arising from complex life situations. In this study, individual counseling was implemented using cognitive restructuring techniques to reduce stress experienced by client T, a teenage girl who became pregnant out of wedlock. Based on the results of observations and in-depth interviews conducted prior to the intervention, client T exhibited significant psychological distress characterized by anxiety, fear, shame, and withdrawal from social interactions. These emotional responses were further compounded by negative self-perceptions, feelings of guilt, and uncertainty about the future. Such conditions are consistent with the understanding that unintended pregnancy in adolescence often triggers intense psychological pressure due to social stigma and internal conflict (Alifah, 2021).

After the implementation of individual counseling sessions using cognitive restructuring techniques, notable changes were observed in both the psychological and physical conditions of client T. The counseling process enabled the client to gradually identify and challenge irrational beliefs and negative automatic thoughts that contributed to her stress. According to Beck's cognitive theory, emotional distress is largely influenced by maladaptive thinking patterns, and restructuring these cognitions can significantly improve emotional well-being (Beck, 2011). In this context, client T began to replace self-defeating thoughts such as "I am worthless" or "My life is ruined" with more rational and constructive perspectives. This cognitive shift played a crucial role in reducing the intensity of her stress.

From a physical standpoint, improvements were also evident following the counseling intervention. Initially, client T experienced disrupted sleep patterns, loss of appetite, and general physical weakness—symptoms commonly associated with prolonged stress (Sugiarti, 2018). However, as counseling progressed, these symptoms gradually diminished. The client reported better sleep quality, improved eating habits, and increased energy levels. These changes suggest that psychological interventions such as cognitive restructuring not only affect mental health but also contribute to overall physical well-being. This finding aligns with the biopsychosocial perspective, which emphasizes the interconnection between cognitive, emotional, and physiological processes (Engel, 1977).

In terms of psychological aspects, the client demonstrated increased emotional regulation and reduced anxiety levels. Initially, she found it difficult to relax, frequently experienced intrusive negative thoughts, and showed a lack of interest in daily activities. Through the counseling process, she developed greater self-awareness and learned coping strategies to manage stress more effectively. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) explain that stress can be mitigated when individuals are able to appraise situations more positively and adopt

adaptive coping mechanisms. The cognitive restructuring technique facilitated this process by helping the client reinterpret her situation in a less threatening manner.

Furthermore, the success of the counseling intervention can also be attributed to the establishment of a positive therapeutic relationship between the counselor and the client. The counseling sessions provided a safe and supportive environment where the client felt comfortable expressing her thoughts and emotions without fear of judgment. Rogers (1983) emphasizes that empathy, unconditional positive regard, and genuineness are essential components in building an effective counseling relationship. In this study, the counselor's ability to demonstrate these qualities contributed significantly to the client's openness and willingness to engage in the therapeutic process.

The application of cognitive restructuring techniques in this study was carried out systematically through several stages. Initially, the counselor assisted the client in identifying negative thoughts and beliefs related to her condition. These thoughts often revolved around self-blame, fear of social rejection, and hopelessness. Subsequently, the counselor guided the client to examine the validity of these thoughts by exploring evidence for and against them. This process helped the client realize that many of her beliefs were irrational or exaggerated. According to Erford (2015), cognitive restructuring involves modifying dysfunctional thinking patterns to promote healthier emotional responses and behaviors.

In the next stage, the client was encouraged to develop alternative, more rational thoughts. For example, instead of perceiving her situation as a complete failure, she began to view it as a challenge that could still be managed with appropriate support and decision-making. This cognitive shift not only reduced her stress but also increased her sense of control over her life. Bandura's concept of self-efficacy supports this finding, suggesting that individuals who believe in their ability to cope with challenges are more likely to experience positive psychological outcomes (Bandura, 1997).

Another important aspect of the counseling process was helping the client become aware of her lifestyle and behavioral patterns. Prior to the intervention, client T exhibited avoidance behaviors, such as isolating herself from others and neglecting daily responsibilities. Through counseling, she gradually became more engaged in her environment and began to rebuild social connections. This behavioral change is consistent with cognitive-behavioral principles, which emphasize the reciprocal relationship between thoughts, emotions, and behaviors (Corey, 2013). As her thinking patterns improved, her behavior also became more adaptive.

In addition to reducing negative self-assessment, the counseling process also addressed the client's feelings of inferiority. These feelings were largely influenced by societal stigma associated with pregnancy out of wedlock. Social stigma often leads to internalized shame, which can significantly impact an individual's self-esteem (Goffman, 1963). Through cognitive restructuring, the client learned to separate her self-worth from

societal judgments and began to develop a more positive self-image. This transformation was evident in her increased confidence and willingness to interact with others.

The effectiveness of cognitive restructuring techniques in this study also highlights their relevance in addressing stress-related problems among adolescents. Adolescence is a developmental stage characterized by heightened emotional sensitivity and vulnerability to external influences (Santrock, 2011). Therefore, interventions that focus on cognitive and emotional regulation are particularly beneficial for this age group. The findings of this study support previous research indicating that cognitive-behavioral interventions are effective in reducing stress, anxiety, and depression among adolescents (Hofmann et al., 2012).

Moreover, the role of individual counseling in this study extends beyond problem-solving to include personal growth and self-understanding. The counseling process enabled client T to gain insight into her thoughts, emotions, and behaviors, which is a fundamental goal of counseling (Masruroh, 2011). By understanding the root causes of her stress, the client was better equipped to make informed decisions and set realistic goals for her future. This aligns with the humanistic perspective, which views individuals as capable of growth and self-actualization when provided with the right support (Rogers, 1983).

In conclusion, the implementation of individual counseling using cognitive restructuring techniques proved to be effective in reducing stress experienced by client T who was pregnant out of wedlock. The intervention successfully addressed both cognitive and emotional aspects of stress, leading to significant improvements in the client's psychological and physical well-being. The findings of this study underscore the importance of using structured and evidence-based counseling techniques in addressing complex psychosocial problems. Furthermore, the study highlights the need for supportive environments that enable individuals to openly discuss their challenges and receive appropriate guidance. Future research may explore the application of cognitive restructuring techniques in different contexts and populations to further validate their effectiveness.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research that has been conducted by researchers on "The Application of Individual Counseling with *Cognitive Restructuring* Techniques to Reduce Stress in Pregnant Clients Who Are Pregnant" it can be concluded as follows:

1. Before carrying out the process of counseling services to clients, the researcher first conducted interviews with clients regarding the aspects of stress they experienced. There are several types of stress experienced by clients before the implementation of the counseling so that counseling services are needed to reduce the stress they experience, then after completing the necessary data, the researcher uses cognitive restructuring techniques to regulate the process of providing individual counseling services.

2. Application To determine whether the use of individual counseling with *cognitive restructuring* techniques in this study was successful or not, the researcher conducted follow-up interviews with the client after the counseling service process so that the researcher could conclude that by applying *the cognitive restructuring* technique The client can have a positive impact on the client and be able to understand that stress is not good and make the client in the future able to control themselves better.

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