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# Anger Management in Adolescents Behind Romantic Breakup: Implementation of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy

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**Abstract.** Romantic relationship is a common phenomenon in adolescents. 112 of 263 adolescents aged 16-17 years old in this study had experienced in romantic relationship, 30 of them were breakup. This romantic breakup was positively correlated with anger ( $p = 0.64$ ). The study aims to test the anger management in adolescents behind romantic breakup through Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT). A single subject design was used with five participants. Data was collected by questionnaire which was adapted from BPAQ, then it was analyzed by using descriptive statistic. SFBT was conducted once a week for four meetings. The result revealed a significant decreased of anger and increased of anger management ability in adolescents who were in romantic breakup. About how anger management was established through SFBT will be discussed in this current research.

**Keywords—** *Management; Implementation of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Romantic relationship is a common phenomenon occurs in adolescents and tends to give a positive impact on adolescent development (Paul and White, 1990). Precisely, adolescents who do not have experience in romantic relationships are higher in social anxiety compared with adolescents involved in romantic relationship (La Greca and Harrison in Santrock, 2007).

In adolescence, romantic relationships usually do not run steadily and seriously. Carver, et al. (in Santrock, 2007) mentions that the average of adolescents has a romantic relationship for two months or more, then occurs romantic breakup.

This current study shows 112 of 263 students have romantic relationship experience, 30 of them experience romantic breakup. Between anger level and romantic breakup there is a real and significant relation by Spearman's rho 0.64 sig. 0.00. Base on previous study, the romantic breakup affects to negative emotions such as anger, sad, confused, scared, and even the worst is bareavement symptoms (Mearns, 1991; Sbarra, 2006; Perriloux and Buss, 2008; Field, 2011).

Among all these impacts, anger is what needs to be the most cautious because it is not only affected oneself but also to the people around. Anger is proven to disrupt the individual's social functions because of the stereotype's judgment in social

perception (Keltner, Ellsworth, & Edwards, 1993; Bodenhausen, Sheppard, & Kramer, 1994) and heart disease (Kam, 2009; Hendricks, et al., 2013).

Anger is not only defined as negative emotions but also a driver of aggressive behavior that is very harmful (Buss, 1961). Anger can have an impact on physical and verbal aggression (Nasir & Ghani, 2014) that can appear at any time even sometimes undetected (Becker & Anderson, 2011). Anger dysregulation is the main trigger of anger in dating aggression, therefore to prevent it, required good anger management (Reyes, et al., 2015; Sullivan, et al., 2016).

Several studies on anger management in adolescent using various approaches proved effective (Lench, 2004; Olatunji, et al., 2004; Larson, 2008; Tahmasebian, et al., 2014; Kim, et al., 2016; Mokhber, Masjedi, & Bakhtiari, 2016; Mani, et al., 2016; Kim, et al., 2016; Hojjat, et al., 2017). However, among all the approaches that are used mostly long time in consuming, so inefficient.

The previous program of brief anger management also proved ineffective because it uses offenders in its application (Howells, et al., 2005). Previously, brief therapy that proved effective for anger management in adolescents is in group setting (Synder, Kymissis, and Kessler, 1999). However, this study assumes that anger in romantic breakup is a sensitive, complicated, and individual problem so that is difficult to solve by group so as to go through individual treatment.

The Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) approach is chosen to make the therapeutic process efficient and problem-solving oriented. SFBT aims to assist students in anger management after romantic breakup.

**II. METHOD**

**2.1 Method**

This study was conducted in three senior high schools in Tuban Region; SMAN 1 Montong, SMAN 1 Singgahan, and SMK 1 Singgahan. For preliminary study, involved 263 students aged 16-17 years (M = 16.36). Further, found five students behind romantic breakup with the highest score in anger to be studied further. They were YN, SR, IR, YG, and SP.

This research was quantitative using ABA single subject research type design. The five students became research subjects that were measured on the development of anger score during ten times in ten weeks (ones a week); Meeting 1-3 to measure baseline condition (A1), meeting 4-7 times to measure SFBT intervention condition (B), and meeting 8-10 to re-measure baseline condition (A2).

**2.2 Materials**

Material consists of Instruments and models of SFBT. Instruments were two types of anger questionnaire and self-monitoring on anger management. While the SFBT model consisted in four meetings with various techniques.

The first instrument was adapted from Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire Scale (BPAQ) in anger aspect which was developed by Buss A.H. And Perry M. in 1992 (table 1). The instrument using the Likert scale 1-5, 1 = very unsuitable, 2 = unsuitable, 3 = somewhat appropriate, 4 = appropriate, and 5 = very appropriate. Instrument was weighed by experts and tested into the field. The instrument then proves to be valid and reliable (20 items,  $\alpha = 0.84$ ).

**TABLE I. ANGER BEHAVIOR QUESTIONNAIRE**

Aspects	Number of Statements
Feelings strong in anger pinned	4
Expressing anger	8
Expressing frustration	8
Amount	20

The second instrument was self-monitoring on anger management skills. Participants were asked to answer, "from 1-10, where your anger management positions". That way appeared to change the score of the ability.

Anger management through SFBT was conducted in four meetings (ones a week) and started from the fourth meeting in the study. Each meeting consumed about an hour and there experienced the development of individual competencies with themes, so that students can do anger management well. The details of SFBT implementation were in Table II.

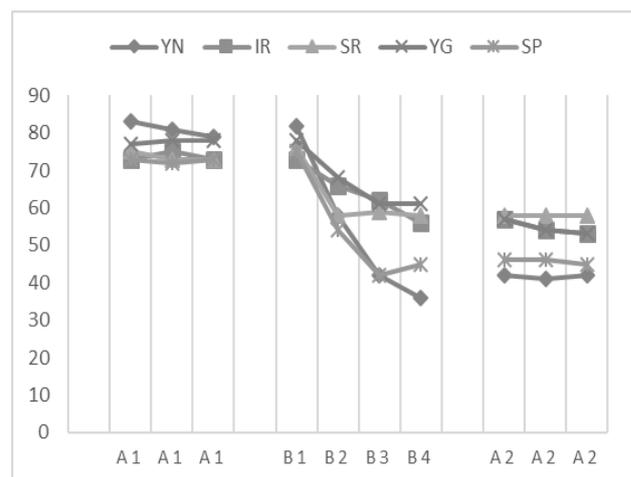
**TABLE II. MODEL OF SFBT**

Meetings	Theme	Main Technique	Focus
1	Searching anger behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing Collaborative Relationship</li> <li>Pre-Therapy Change</li> </ul>	Find the core and trigger factors of anger problem
2	Ready to change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scaling Question</li> </ul>	Supporting the behavior change by knowing potencies
3	Overcome frustration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exception Questions</li> <li>Miracle Questions</li> </ul>	Exploring potentials to address frustration
4	Establishing constructive behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exception Questions</li> <li>Miracle Questions</li> <li>Terminating</li> </ul>	Keeping the constructive behavior role and establishing

Techniques used in this study are establishing collaborative relationship, pre-therapy change, exception question, miracle question, scaling question, formula first session task, therapist feedback, and terminating (Corey, 2009).

**III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The result study showed decreasing in anger score in all participants after SFBT treatment and increasing in anger management score (See Fig 1.).



*Fig. 1. Condition's Length on Single Subject Research Type ABA in All Participants*

The line graph above depicts the process of Single Subject Research Type ABA on anger behavior changer through SFBT in adolescents behind romantic breakup. The effectiveness of SFBT appears in the intervention column decreases in scores on all participants. The highest decreasing

in anger score occurred in YN, which is about 40 points. While the decline of the lowest score occurred in SR that is not up to 20 numbers. All three other participants had on average decreased more than 20 points but did not exceed 30. Data tendency in the intervention condition tended to decrease, indicating SFBT was effective in reducing anger score in adolescents.

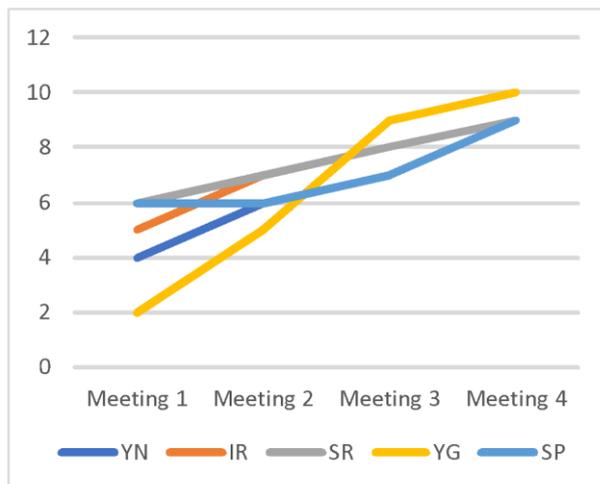


Fig. 2. Increasing Anger Management Score during Intervention Condition

The decreasing of anger score in intervention condition correlated positively to the increasing of anger management score. Based on Fig 1. and Fig 2. show that every score decreasing in figure 1 must be an increasing in score in Fig 4.

Although in a short period of time, SFBT was able to achieve its goal of enhancing anger management skills across all participating entities. In SFBT, all participant potentials are dug as a force against the anger behaviors within them. These extraordinary potentials are proven to be the main drivers of SFBT's success, in addition to their use of techniques.

The most important techniques in SFBT are exception question and miracle question. Not to forget, scaling questions play a role in determining the amount of change and achievement of each participant's target of anger management.

Anger behavior problems in the case of romantic breakup appear not only on the parties who decide the relationship, but also the "breaker". Of the five participants studied, 2 participants were the parties to break the relationship of SR and SP. While the other 3 participants are parties who disconnected the relationship.

In this study, the party that breaks the relationship of SR and SP are equally overwhelmed with feelings of guilt to ex-girlfriends so that became one of the trigger anger behavior. Even SP until the second SFBT meeting still has a constant anger management ability score with previous meetings. This is in accordance with previous research that in the romantic breakup, the "breaker" also experienced disturbing feelings of guilt (Wilson and Gilbert, 2005).

Although both get a negative impact due to romantic breakup, in research showed that the decision decided more difficult to move on from romantic relationship. The experience that IR continues to cry, YN must always avoid the situation associated with his ex-girlfriend, and YG is always remembered togetherness with his ex-girlfriend. Through the SFBT session, it was learned that the three did not think to start a new relationship. This is in line with previous research findings that individuals who are disconnected love their partner more so that it is difficult to start new relationships (Eastwick, et al., 2007).

A factor also become trigger in adolescent to change their behavior is peer pressure. All participant changed their anger behavior because of thinking about their friends thinking. They worry if their friends leave them. This is a power to support implementation of SFBT in adolescent. In school, SFBT can be applied in guidance and counseling service, which is one of part of education system and also essential. This research results supports counselor in school and therapist to have new knowledge about anger behavior, anger management, and implementation of SFBT.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This study aim is to test the anger management ability in adolescents behind romantic breakup after implementation of SFBT. Romantic breakup has essential power to trigger anger behavior either in whoever is broken up or breaker. Both of them have same problems, although the side who is broken up have more problems.

All participating in anger behavior after implementation of SFBT decrease in four meeting. It also correlates positively with increasing anger management ability during SFBT intervention conditions.

In the four meeting of SFBT are simple but not reduce the duration in the implementation if want to apply in other case. Romantic breakup has many negative impacts, so the future research needs to discuss about the appropriate intervention in the negative impact of romantic breakup. Reminding, this case is common occur in adolescent development

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