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# Training for Reducing Stress Levels on Race Ambassador Community of L High School Depok

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### Abstract

Race ambassador community is one of the groups of L High School Depok students who represent the school in participating in various competitions, both at national and international levels. Race ambassador community has stress problems that occur due to poor time management and emotional regulation skills. The purpose of this study was to reduce stress levels of the race ambassador community by using time management training, *Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT)* and progressive relaxation. The subjects in this study consisted of 13 members of the L High School Depok race ambassador community. The training is carried out by giving pre-test, conducting training, providing post-test and training evaluation. Pre-test and post-test in this study used three questionnaires, which are the time management questionnaire, emotional regulation questionnaire and stress level questionnaire. The results of this study are the increase of their time management and emotional regulation skills. The increase in ability ultimately tends to reduce the level of stress found in the race ambassador community. The training conducted for the community tends to be effective because of several things, such as the involvement of active community members, the training has a very important meaning, the suitability of the training with the problems being faced, the application of small groups, the existence of props and the application of several games during training takes place.

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## 1. Preliminary

Every school from various educational level certainly wants the school to be known of their excellent students. One of them is L High School Depok. L High School is a private school that has two main objectives. First, to become *Rintisan Sekolah Bertaraf Internasional* (RSBI) or International standard school, where English is the main language of instruction and learning media based on Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Second, being able to compete with international schools by improving the quality of the students, which is produced in a directed, integrated, and comprehensive manner. In order to achieve this goal, the main thing done by the school is to develop student's talents and interests. After knowing the talents and interests of each student, students are expected to be able to channel these talents and interests by participating in various competitions, both in academic and non-academic fields.

A group of students who always take part in the competition to represent L High School, is called the Race Ambassador Community. Race ambassador community is always given support by the school, especially when preparing for the competition. The main support provided by school is the guidance of the teachers in order to get good results in the competition. The competitions participated by the race ambassador community are national and international competitions.

When preparing for a competition, especially the competitions in the academic field, such as the olympics and scientific papers, the race ambassador community needs a long time to prepare. This long time is needed to create new work or research that will be presented in the competition. However, race ambassador community did not have enough time to prepare for the competition, due to some school works that they still need to undergo. Teaching and learning activities that must be taken by L High School students, from Monday to Friday is 07.30 - 16.00 WIB, and boarding activities for students who live in the dormitory starts from 18:00 - 21:00 WIB. Other than that, there are some activities that need to be carried out, such as the Intra-School Student Organization (*OSIS*), Boarding Forum (*FORSA*), and extracurricular activities. This makes the race ambassador community have limited time to prepare for the competition.

This intense activity pushes the students to have a good time management skill so that all activities carried out can run well. But, in reality, students still not be able to do good time management, especially race ambassador community. Due to this problem, L High School gives the race ambassador community a special time to prepare for the competition, where the race ambassador community gets permission for some time to not attending teaching and learning activities in class, boarding activities, or other activities. Although race ambassador community has extra time to focus on preparing for the competition, this raises new problems for the community. The race ambassador community must arrange their time well so that they can pursue lessons in classes left behind due to preparation for the competition.

This poor time management skill makes the race ambassador community tired and tends to not be able to do all activities well. As a result of this, the race ambassador community had difficulty managing their emotions. Most of the race ambassador community tends to have negative thoughts about problems that occur in themselves. For example, when preparing for a competition, the community has the idea that others will mock them or despise the community if they do not win the competition. The race ambassador community actually realizes that negative thoughts like these arise from self-thought alone. In reality, no one showed that attitude directly towards the competition race ambassador community.

The community has done many ways to manage their emotions well, such as by doing a hobby that they have, but that has not been able to overcome their problems properly. This unresolved problems eventually led to the emergence of stress conditions in the race ambassador community. The ambassador community is very aware that they are under stress, but the community feels that there is no appropriate way to reduce the stress level. This stressful condition increase due to new regulations at L High School which stated if there is a member of the race ambassador community of the competition who cannot maintain or improve academic grades, the member is not permitted to enter the competition. The regulation was done by the school due to the decline in the academic field of the race ambassador community. This decline in grades is considered to have occurred because the race ambassador community tends to set aside the academic field, after knowing that L High School will provide a reward in the form of additional grades to the competition. This newly formed regulation makes the stress level of the race ambassador community tend to increase, so that most of the race ambassador community of the competition become less eager to carry out activities.

When a community in a stressful conditions, the thing that makes a community survive is good support among community members. Each member of the competition race ambassador community who experiences similar problems is trying to provide support and ideas to help each other prepare for the competition. Other than the community members, support and assistance is also provided by mentors and other teachers. Even so, the race ambassador community hopes to find out the right way to solve the problems faced by them.

Based on the background above, it can be concluded that the race ambassador community of the competition needs to learn how to do good time management and emotional regulation in order to reduce stress levels on themselves. The purpose of this research is to reduce stress levels in the competition race ambassador community by using time management training, CBT and progressive relaxation.

Other than that, this research is expected to be useful theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this paper is expected to be able to broaden the knowledge about time management issues, emotional regulation, and stress levels especially happened in the race ambassador community. Practically, this paper is expected to be useful for students, the race ambassador community, and L High School. For students, it is hoped that they can improve psychological competence, and can become the basic knowledge for further interventions related to problems in the race ambassador community. For the race ambassador community, it is expected to have better time management and emotional regulation skill, so that it can reduce their level of stress. Finally, for L High School, it is hoped that the results of this writing can be an evaluation material for schools to make further interventions regarding time management issues, emotional regulation, and stress levels.

## 2. Method Research

The subjects in this study consisted of 13 members of L High School race ambassador community. All subjects of this study have joined the community of race ambassador for approximately one year. The subjects consisted of seven men and six women. The age range of research subjects is 15-17 years old and students in grades X and XI.

The training activities was done by giving pre-test, conducting training, and providing post-test. In addition, at the end of the intervention, an evaluation sheet about the implementation of the intervention

was also given to the research subjects, to find out what the research subjects thought about the intervention that had been given. Three questionnaires will be given to the research subjects to measure the pre-test and post-test variables to be measured. The three questionnaires are time management questionnaire, emotional regulation questionnaire, and stress level questionnaire.

The time management ability of the race ambassador community was measured by using a questionnaire developed by Fitriah (2014). The validity of this time management questionnaire ranged from 0.328 to 0.599, and the Alpha Cronbach reliability value of this gauge is 0.755 ( $> 0.70$ ). This time management questionnaire consists of 16 item statements and uses a Likert Scale. The assessment weights for each answer to the favorable item are "1 - never", "2 - rarely", "3 - often", and "4 - always". Whereas the weighting rating for each answer in an unfavorable item is "4 - never", "3 - rarely", "2 - often", and "1 - always".

The emotion regulation of race ambassador community was measured using a questionnaire developed by Febrianti (2005). The validity of this emotion regulation questionnaire ranged from 0.434 to 0.674. Then, the reliability value of the Alpha Cronbach questionnaire is 0.794 ( $> 0.70$ ). This questionnaire uses a Likert Scale. The assessment weights for each answer to the favorable item are "1 - never", "2 - rarely", "3 - often", and "4 - always". Whereas the weighting rating for each answer in an unfavorable item is "4 - never", "3 - rarely", "2 - often", and "1 - always". This emotional regulation questionnaire consisted of 36 items, which were formed from nine types of emotional regulation. Each type of emotional regulation has four items. Due to that reason, the questionnaire was divided into two, which are for the pre-test and post-test, so that each consisted of 18 items. In the pre-test and post-test questionnaires, each type of emotional regulation is presented by two items.

The stress level of the competition race ambassador community was measured by using a stress level questionnaire developed by Wulandari (2012). The validity of the stress level questionnaire ranged from 0.245 to 0.660. Then, the reliability value of the Alpha Cronbach questionnaire is 0.874 ( $> 0.70$ ). The assessment weights for each answer to an unfavorable item are "1 - never", "2 - rarely", "3 - often", and "4 - always". The stress level questionnaire consisted of 20 items and used a Likert Scale.

The interventions toward the community will be conducted using training methods. The training method is an educational activity to bring the current state of individual behavior to better behavior (TPIP FIP-UPI, 2007). This training method was given because the community was considered to be able to quickly learn new knowledge provided in a short amount of time. The training provided is training to conduct good time management and emotional regulation skills in order to reduce stress levels in community.

Time management training is conducted by teaching Covey's pickle jar experiments and the four quadrant theory. Pickle jar experiment theory, according to Njagi and Malel (2012), is a time management experiment that can help individuals to prioritize activities and achieve goals in real life. Whereas Covey's four-quadrant theory is a theory which states that an activity based on its characteristics can be classified as 'urgent' and 'not urgent', as well as 'important' and 'not important' (Covey, 2008).

Training to provide knowledge on how to regulate good emotions is done by using Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT), through ABC, Counter, Self-Talk and Thought Stopping techniques. First, the ABC technique is given so that the community understands that each individual will have different

reactions even though they are facing the same event. This is strongly influenced by individual beliefs (Lubis, 2011). Second, the Counter technique is a thought that challenges other thoughts and includes activities such as thinking or acting on the contrary, challenging in an assertive and convincing way of falsifying the beliefs (Free, in Lesmana and Saraswati, 2010). Third, the Self-Talk technique is a technique that can be used to refute unreasonable thinking and develop healthier thinking, so it can produce more positive self-talk (Erford, 2016). Fourth, the Thought Stopping technique is a step used to improve an individual's ability to block a series of negative thoughts cognitively (Erford, 2016).

Training to reduce stress levels is also done by using progressive relaxation. Progressive relaxation is a program to train individuals to relax the muscles as a whole when individuals feel anxious and stressed (Soewondo, 2012). Intervention evaluation was given using an intervention evaluation sheet, which consisted of 11 quantitative statements and two qualitative questions. In the quantitative statement, the race ambassador community was given four choices of answers, which are strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. The competition race ambassador community only needs to provide one of the four answer choices provided. Whereas on qualitative questions, the community was asked to provide written responses to the two questions contained in the evaluation sheet.

### 3. Result and Discussion

#### 3.1 Result

Based on the assessment that has been done, it is known that there are problems happened in the race ambassador community about their time management and emotional regulation that is not good, which results in increased stress in themselves. First, the results of the pre-test and post-test time management questionnaire are summarized in the following graph:

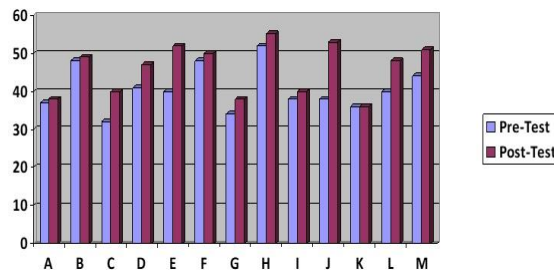


Fig. 1. Result of the pre-test and post-test time management questionnaire 13 members community

As we can see on the graph above, it can be concluded that 12 of the 13 members of the competition race ambassador community showed an improvement in terms of time management, while one member (K) showed a fixed score between pre-test and post-test.

Second, the results of the pre-test and post-test emotional regulation are summarized in the following graph:

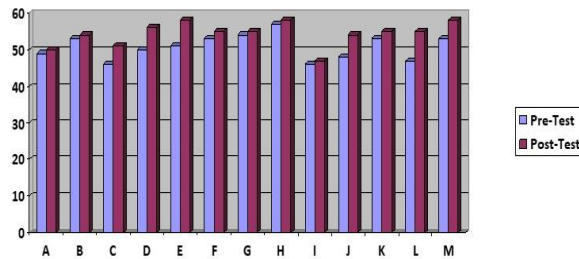


Fig. 2. Result of the pre-test and post-test emotional regulation questionnaire 13 members community

Based on the graph above, it can be concluded that there was an increase in emotional regulation in all members of the race ambassador community after the intervention was given. Last, the results of the pre-test and post-test stress level are summarized in the following graph:

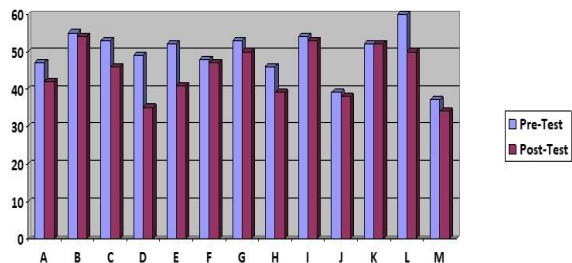


Fig. 3. Result of the pre-test and post-test stress level questionnaire 13 members community

Based on the graph above, it is known that after intervention, 12 out of 13 members of the competition race ambassador community had a decrease in stress levels. While 1 member (K) showed a fixed score, both before and after the intervention.

### 3.2 Discussion

For the race ambassador community, they do not know yet about having good time management, so that all their activities can run properly. According to Khanekshi (2014), the lack of knowledge about managing good time is one of the factors that cause stress in high school students. Therefore, to deal with stress in high school students, it is necessary to be given the right knowledge about how to do good time management.

Knowledge about having a good time management is given to the race ambassador community in the form of training to choose their priorities, using pickle jar theory and Covey's four quadrant theory. The results of this training show that 12 of 13 members experienced an increase in scores between pre-test and post-test, while one member showed a fixed score between pre-test and post-test. It shows that through this training, most of the race ambassador community experienced an improvement in time management. The result is also consistent with the results of research conducted by Nasrullah and Khan (2015), where by conducting training to determine priorities, it is known that students can manage time well, experience a decrease in stress levels and increase learning achievement.

Other than the time management issues, the community also has problems in emotional regulation. This emotional regulation problem occurs when the activities carried out by the race ambassador community are not in line with expectations. For example, the preparation is not mature because the community is unable to manage their time well. This makes the community irritable, anxious, blames the situation and makes relationships with others unfavorable. According to Khanekheshi (2014), the lack of knowledge about dealing with problems is a major factor of stress in high school students. When they are facing with the problem, especially academic problems, they do not know how to regulate emotions properly yet.

In this training, knowledge about regulating good emotions is done by using Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT), through ABC, Counter, Self-Talk and Thought Stopping techniques. According to Naar and Safren (2017), CBT is a technique that can be done so that individuals can learn about cognitive abilities, behaviors, and emotional regulation. Through this technique, it can be seen that the whole community has increased scores between pre-test and post-test. This shows that by using CBT, the race ambassador community can improve their ability to regulate self-emotion. This is consistent with research conducted by Berking (in Huggins, 2013), which stated that by using CBT, individuals can increase emotional awareness and have the ability to reassess the emotions that exist in themselves.

The success of using CBT to increase the ability of emotional regulation can also be seen from other studies conducted by Berking, et al, (2008). Based on these studies it is known that by using CBT, individuals can reduce depression and negative emotions significantly, as well as increasing positive emotions. Other than the ability to increase the regulation of emotions in themselves, CBT can also reduce stress levels in each individuals. This is also consistent with the results of research conducted by Khanekheshi (2014), where academic stress on high school students can significantly decrease by using CBT.

The problems of time management and emotion regulation in the race ambassador community tend to increase stress conditions in the community. Therefore, this study also provide training to reduce stress levels in themselves through progressive relaxation exercises. Through this exercise, it was found that 12 out of 13 members of the competition race ambassador community had scores reduced between pre-test and post-test. While one other member has a fixed score between pre-test and post-test. It shows that with progressive relaxation exercises, stress levels in the competition race ambassador community can decrease. These results fit with research conducted by Joy, Jose and Nayak (2014), where the results of the study show that there is a decrease in stress levels and social anxiety in high school students after progressive relaxation exercises.

After knowing the results of the interventions that have been done by the race ambassador community, we know that by conducting training in this study, the race ambassador community has experienced an increase in time management and emotional regulation, as well as a decrease in stress levels. The community of ambassador also gave a positive response to this training, where the community felt that the training was very useful to solve everyday problems and changing mindsets so that they could become better individuals. Whereas the thing that needs to be improved in this training according to the community is that more games, stories and practices need to be provided, as well as the duration of the training that needs to be longer.

The training conducted for the competition race ambassador community tends to be more effective due to some reasons. First, the involvement of the community who were very active during the training. This active involvement is an important aspect because it can increase better

understanding in the community. Second, training has a meaning or benefit that is very important towards the community. This is due to some trainings that has never been provided by schools or other parties to the race ambassador community before. Third, there is a match between training and the problems faced by the community daily. This suitability motivates the community to learn, because the community feels that training has benefits and can make it easier for the community to do their daily activities. Fourth, the application of small groups in training where this technique is used so that the community is more focused in understanding the material provided. Fifth, there are properties provided to capture the attention and sharpen the community's memories. Sixth, the application of games so that the community can learn the material provided with more fun.

The training conducted towards the competition race ambassador community showed good results. However, this training must always be applied in daily life by the competition race ambassador community. Because the continuous repetition will make the material that has been given during the training can be memorized easily.

#### **4. Conclusion and Suggestion**

##### **4.1 Conclusion**

The race ambassador community of L High School has several problems such as poor time management and emotional regulation, so the level of stress increases in each individual. Due to that reason, researchers gave three questionnaires to the race ambassador community which are time management questionnaire, emotional regulation and stress level. These questionnaires were given to obtain data on time management, emotional regulation and the stress level of the race ambassador community. After obtaining the data, intervention in the form of training is given to the race ambassador community to train them how to have a good time management and regulation of good emotions, in order to reduce stress levels on themselves. This training was given to 13 members of the competition race ambassador community with an age range of 15-17 years old.

Interventions were given for four consecutive days. Evaluation of the training is done using pre-test and post-test. Through the evaluation of the training it was concluded that the race ambassador community experienced an increase in time management and emotional regulation, as well as a decrease in stress levels.

After the intervention has been done, it was found that there was an increase in time management and emotional regulation capabilities of the race ambassador community. The increased in ability ultimately tends to reduce the level of stress found in the race ambassador community.

##### **4.2 Suggestion**

For the race ambassador community, it is recommended to apply the knowledge that has been obtained from the training that has been done continuously. Because the continuous repetition will make the knowledge given during the training can be memorized easily and become a habit. This knowledge is expected to help the race ambassador community in handling their problems in daily life.

For the guidance of race ambassador community, it is recommended to help the race ambassador community to create a daily schedule. It is expected that the community will get used to

doing time management properly, so that the community can have an organized life. Other than that, the supervisor also needs to do 'circle time', where the race ambassador community can have a special time to discuss problems that exist as members of the race ambassador community. This 'circle time' is also expected so that community members can provide mutual solutions to existing problems.

For L High School, it is expected that the school can provide rewards in accordance with the efforts that have been done by the race ambassador community in preparing the competition to represent the school. One of the rewards expected by the competition race ambassador community is by giving them certain percentage points in each subject as compensation for the effort they put into school performance.

Other than that, it is expected that L High School can provide training to students, especially to the race ambassador community about dealing with the problems that exist in daily life. This training will be better if it can be done often, so that the students know the proper ways to deal with a problem. This training can be done by doing discussions between teachers and students, or bring experts to provide that knowledge.

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