

Efforts to increase junior high school students' confidence through assertive training

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Abstract

One of important aspects of personality in human life, especially teenagers is confidence. Counseling teachers can increase student confidence through assertive training. Through the training, students are expected to understand that everyone has the right to express their feelings, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes to do a thing without a doubt, but do not hurt other people's feelings, so that confidence can be increased. This study aims to improve students' confidence through assertive training using classroom action research. Subjects in this study were students of SMP Brawijaya Smart School Malang who have low-confidence criteria.

Keywords: Assertive Training, Problem, Confidence

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Introduction

Teenagers' ability to understand other people began to develop. It allows them to be able to decide how to establish relationships with others. In adolescence there is a change in social development, in which adolescents are more likely to spend time together with the external environment such as peers than their family. Therefore, adolescents should have a good self confidence, in order to be able to adapt to the social environment.

Adolescence is a transition period in which a young man began to move from dependence to independence and maturity both physically and mentally (Santrock, 2003). It allows a person to be able to decide how to build relationships with others (Kathryn Geldard and David Geldard, 2011). Muhammad Al-Mighwar (2006) says that the more involved a wide range of social activities, then the confidence of adolescents have also increased. General self-confidence is developed during the age of childhood and emerges from the accumulation of inter and intrapersonal experiences (Kaur, 2009; Brown, 2000)

Self-confidence is an aspect of personality that is important in human life, especially teenagers. They will easily adapt and socialize with other people if they have a good sense of confidence (Risnawati, 2011). The more often they involved in various social activities, the more confident they are. Bandura (2006) states that there is a correlation between the society the individual is in and the individual's self-confidence. Self-confidence is the main condition of an individual in achieving success, so that the task of development to create new relationships with other people can be achieved. Self-confidence can play an important role not only in school life but in personal and social life as well, and therefore, at every stage of life towards success. It is evident that self-confidence students are enthusiastic, study harder, have higher motivations, and do not quit when difficulties confront them (Bong, 2008; Pajares, 2006; Zimmerman, 2005)

Self-confidence is one of the aspects of personality that is very important in human life. Anita Lie (2003) explains that confidence is one factor for someone to be able to consider and make certain decisions themselves. Barbara De Angelis, Ph.D. (2005) in his book *Confidence* explained that confidence is something that is able to deliver what is known and worked by an individual. According to Barbara, true confidence is not grow from the absence of fear in the individual, but grew out of the conviction to continue despite the fear inside. In relation with other individuals, confidence is a major supporter to be able to express ideas even though there is a fear that disturbing.

Iswidharmanjaya Dery (2004) says the attitude that showed someone did not have the confidence in doing something, especially in doing an important and challenging task, they always feel a sense of hesitation, anxious, uncertain, tend to avoid, do not have the initiative, easily discouraged, do not dare to appear ahead of the crowd and other psychiatric symptoms that impede to do something. So that makes the teenager could not develop optimally. The correlation between self-confidence and academic achievement is a dynamic one. As levels of self-confidence rise, academic achievement increases. As learners suffer from low self-confidence, academic achievement decreases. (Alatorre, 1993; Al-Enezi, 2005; Apollo, 2005; Bankston & Zhou, 2002; Lavoie, 2002; Lockett & Harrell, 2003,)

Past research has shown that there is a positive correlation between achievement and confidence. In a number of research conducted by different researchers, both positive (Lawrence, 1996) and negative (Roy, et al., 2003) correlation between self-confidence and foreign language learning achievement were found out. Rubio (2007) explains this situation by claiming that concept of self-confidence is hard to understand semantically or it can be understood differently. Rubio (2007) states that self-confidence has both psychological and social aspect. Low self-confidence may have a negative effect on foreign language learning alongside with many other possible themes. According to Rubio (2007), low self-confidence may lead to some psychological conditions such as sense of insecurity, fear, anxiety, and antisocial behaviors.

Data based on the results of observations conducted on July 23, 2015 in class VIII C SMP Brawijaya Smart School Malang, shows that most of the students lack of self-confidence. This was seen when the teacher refer students to come forward to work on the problems or reading, many students are shy and tend to be less confident when speaking in front of their classmates. In addition, when the teachers ask something to the students, most students just silent and smile. Ideally when students are assigned to come forward the class, they should move forward immediately to the front of the class without embarrassment, as well as when they are asked by the teacher they should have answered without hesitation. Bandura (1997) states that self-competence is a sense that is inclusive of individual's beliefs in their abilities to accomplish any mission they are assigned to.

Data from interviews with counseling teachers of SMP BSS on July 23, 2015 showed that most of students in SMP BSS especially in class VIII C lack of confidence. According to the counseling teacher, most students were shy when speaking in public. Students will begin to be silent when the teachers say "who would come forward to do it? " This condition is often difficult for the teachers, where they have to point and sometimes persuade the students beforehand so that they are willing to come forward the class.

Students' confidence issues in class VIII C SMP BSS may also occur when a student has a problem; many students do not want to come to counseling rooms to tell their problem to the guidance and counseling teacher. Students do not tell their problems not only to counseling teacher, but also their classmates. This situation is often difficult for guidance and counseling teacher to help the students who seem to have a problem. Most students feel shy and not confident to tell the problem to the guidance and counseling teacher or their classmates.

Besides the problem above, according to the counseling teacher, there are still many students' classic problems which are not confident in doing their task. Students often being seen looking at their friends' answer when they had a test and an assignment. From some information of the teachers, it is found that many students do not believe in their own ability thus they choose to look at their friends' work.

Confidence issues in class VIII C SMP BSS can also be seen at the social interaction between students, especially the interaction with the opposite sex. Most students still grouped between boys and the girls and if there are friends who are interacting with the opposite sex, other friends often cheered them, these conditions make friends who interact with the opposite sex were embarrassed and chose to go. Other cases

were also seen when there are boys and girls were talking, they mostly look stiff and rarely looked at each other and they looks awkward.

Based on the results of the observations above, it shows that the lack of confidence become an issue that should receive attention. One way to increase the confidence of students is by assertive training. The basic assumption of assertive training is that every person has the right to express their feelings, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes to do a thing without a doubt, but do not hurt other people's feelings (Corey, 2003). Assertive training itself is actually a technique to improve assertive behavior, but if it is understood more assertive training can also be used to increase the confidence of students.

Assertive training is a process to help someone in order to develop them so they can convey their feelings and desires. Assertive training aims to improve the effectiveness of social life and the ability to express themselves in various social situations that exist especially confidence.

Method

This study aims to increase the confidence of students using spiral model action research design developed by Kemmisdan Mc Taggart (McNiff, 1991) The cycles consist of the discovery of the problems, develop action plans, implement actions, observations, personal reflections followed by re-planning, implementing actions and so on.

The focus of actions that will be given in this study is students of class VIII C SMP BSS Malang as many as 26 students. Data on the subject were obtained from observation, interviews and discussions between researchers and the counseling teacher and the results of the pre-action.

In this study, researchers conducted a pre-test before carrying out the action in order to measure the level of confidence. Pre-test data were taken using a scale of confidence which contains 35 items of statement, where the statements have been tested for validity and reliability. After the pre-test, actions were carried out and then post-test is conducted to measure the level of confidence after the action. The success rate of assertive training is a reduction in the students' level of anxiety and an increase in students' ability to express themselves in various social situations, especially confidence.

The procedures in the implementation of assertive training consist of four cycles; the first is explaining the difference between assertive, aggressive, non-assertive and polite. The counseling teacher tried to explain and give an understanding to the students about the meaning of assertive, aggressive, non-assertive and polite. The second cycle helps students identify and accept their own personal rights and the others. The third cycle reduces the barriers which become the problems in the actualization of assertive behavior, so that students are able to bring confidence in them. While in the fourth cycle, after the students understand the assertive itself, then it is followed by developing the skills of assertive behavior directly through practice in training, so that confidence increases.

Results and Discussions

Based on the results of pre-test, it determines the level of confidence of students, those with a scores below 88 considered to have low self-confidence, those with a score of 88 up to 101 were categorized in medium-confidence, and those with scores above 101 were categorized in high-confidence.

Table 1 Pre-test Result of Subject of the Study

Name	Score	Category	Name	Score	Category
DA	105	HIGH	GAS	74	LOW
MA	92	MEDIUM	NRF	87	LOW
AFS	95	MEDIUM	DAL	95	MEDIUM
IDN	86	LOW	ATA	100	MEDIUM
NK	87	LOW	ANK	91	MEDIUM
AT	95	MEDIUM	DP	85	LOW
YTS	87	LOW	ACW	99	MEDIUM
MNF	85	LOW	SI	87	LOW
AM	99	MEDIUM	AWN	100	MEDIUM
AP	87	LOW	AR	102	HIGH
SYH	102	HIGH	HE	98	MEDIUM
FT	86	LOW	ATS	96	MEDIUM
DS	96	MEDIUM	HP	93	MEDIUM

Based on the table above it can be categorized students who have low self-confidence were 10 students, the medium-confidence were 13, and three students had high confidence level.

Cycle I

Conclusion on the first cycle of activity, from the observation, the students were enthusiastic in training and do a debriefing, it was seen when students actively argue. The students' understanding of the assertive behavior was still lacking; it was seen from the opinions delivered when they did a debriefing. However, students are able to understand the meaning of the activities performed.

Cycle II

Results of the observations indicate students have enthusiastically followed the activities, but still do not understand the meaning of the given case studies so that the advisor had to straighten them up. From the reflections made by the advisor, students expressed that they were very interested, but it was less in the activity time, every student should be able to express their opinions about the given situation. Evaluation for the next activity is more effectively in using the time so that all students can be actively involved.

Cycle III

From the observations, the students were enthusiastic in listening to each role play that was shown, but students do not understand the purpose of the role play. In discussions prior to the role playing performance, there are some less active participants in the group. From the reflection conducted by the advisor, the students expressed their happiness in role playing activity. But according to the students', the discussion of the role that will be performed was too fast so that what was performed were less maximum. Evaluation for further action; students should be given sufficient time to prepare for the role that will be performed. Reward for the best group also needs to be given to encourage the students to be more serious in displaying the role.

Cycle IV

Students actively participated in the activities; the students' behavior indicated that students have started to understand the assertive behavior. In this activity, students look boldly volunteered to give examples without designated by the advisor. Evaluation of the activity this time is the needs to set the example of modeling using audio-visual media in order to have more interesting activities. In selecting the students to give example, a more interesting way should be used so that the classroom atmosphere becomes more lively.

After four cycles of assertive training activity methods, researchers conducted a post-test to determine students' confidence level after the action. From the results of a scale that is spread by the researchers, a change in the confidence shown by the students.

Table 2. Post-test Result of the Subject of the Study

Name	Score	Category	Name	Score	Category
DA	121	HIGH	GAS	113	HIGH
MA	108	HIGH	NRF	109	HIGH
AFS	107	HIGH	DAL	107	HIGH
IDN	104	HIGH	ATA	110	HIGH
NK	115	HIGH	ANK	97	MEDIUM
AT	100	MEDIUM	DP	93	MEDIUM
YTS	90	MEDIUM	ACW	111	HIGH
MNF	98	MEDIUM	SI	97	MEDIUM
AM	106	HIGH	AWN	110	HIGH
AP	104	HIGH	AR	111	HIGH
SYH	112	HIGH	HE	104	HIGH
FT	96	MEDIUM	ATS	98	MEDIUM
DS	101	MEDIUM	HP	104	HIGH

The average score of the confidence pre-test class VIII C SMP BSS Malang is 95.69 and it categorized as medium confidence. Then the average score of the confidence post-test has risen to 106.33 and it categorized as high confidence. Thus the students' confidence scores increased from pre-test to post-test that is equal to 10.64.

Some improvements were also seen from confidence indicators which are visible when the action was being conducted. Through reflection conducted by the advisor to the students, the students have understood what is called assertive behavior and the benefits of assertive behavior which is the increasing confidence of students. Students are motivated to keep behave assertively and felt that assertive behavior is helpful in daily life, especially in terms of confidence. Students also expressed that through assertive training students can learn to dare to say "no", dare to express their opinions and able to express their feelings. Students also showed a desire to get a high achievement which is seen through the courage to show their skills. The results obtained in this study are in accordance with the success criteria set out by the researchers which is increased the confidence of students and the average score post-action reached 106.33 (high confidence category).

The implementation of assertive training methods in order to increase the students' confidence have been performed well and have been run in accordance with its objectives because the average score result shows an increase from pre-test to post-test. The increasing confidence in this study was conducted with four acts in four cycles through group discussions, lectures, role playing, case studies and filling of worksheet. The discussion was attached in the attachment of guidance and counseling services unit on assertive training methods.

Quantitatively, the confidence of students has increased after cycle 4. The pre-action average score is 95.59 included in the medium average category. While the post-action average score is 106.33 and it is included in the high average category. The score improvement after 4 cycles was 10.64.

Qualitatively, the students' confidence also increased. This can be seen from the increasing knowledge, abilities, and active participation in every training. The students' confidence was also being seen from their ability to express their opinions and independence of students in the classroom. Students also showed a high understanding of the assertive behavior shown by the implementation of assertive behavior by each student. Many students start applying assertive behavior in the classroom and followed with confidence.

The increasing of students' confidence score is supported by several things. Technically, good collaboration between researchers, teachers, advisors, and students has a positive influence on the implementation of the action. High enthusiasm of the students in assertive training participation, making the training runs smoothly. The material submitted by the advisor make the students understand the purpose of the assertive training methods. These factors indirectly affect the outcome of the actions which aimed at improving students' self-confidence.

Substantively, through reflection conducted by counseling teacher, students admitted that they feel happy to participate in the training activity, because it is not just listening to a lecture, but also directly learn to solve problems and practice doing what is given (Latipun, 2003). Based on the result of the reflection, it is known that through assertive training students not only learn the theory to improve the cognitive abilities, but also affective and motor actively participated in the conducted training.

The explanation above states that hypothesis of assertive training can increase the confidence of students of class VIII C BSS Malang academic year 2014/2015 can be accepted. The results of the observations made by researchers and observers resulted in findings that fit between theory and observation; assertive training is a method that aims to improve the ability to express themselves with a variety of social situations (Barbara De Angelis, 2005).

After assertive training methods are applied to the students of class VIII C SMP BSS Malang, it turns out that students can express their feelings and ideas better. This finding is in accordance with the purpose of assertive training by Corey (2003) which is to help someone who is unable to express feelings of anger, have excessive politeness, difficulty in saying no and difficulty in expressing feelings or ideas of their own.

Selection of assertive training methods towards increased self-confidence of students of class VIII C SMP BSS Malang is seen from the methods in each training act in accordance with the opinion of Barbara De Angelis (2005), which is a component in every assertive training action consists of role playing, modeling and social reward.

In accordance with the opinion of some experts about confidence, students of class VIII C SMP BSS Malang have shown increased confidence after getting action with assertive training methods. This is proved by the increase in the students' ability to express feelings, students' courage to express their ideas and behaviors that show attitude of confidence in the classroom.

Conclusions

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion, the conclusion that can be drawn from this research is the assertive training method can increase the students' confidence of class VIII C SMP BSS Malang. It can be seen from the changes in the initial conditions of the pre-test, post-test, and observation.

The results were as follows:(1)The students' confidence initial condition of class VIII C SMP BSS Malang still lacking. Such a condition is shown from the pre-test with an average score of 95.69 and the confidence is categorized as medium confidence.(2) Furthermore, treatment was given in the form of the use of assertive training methods which include 4 cycles of activity through group discussions, lectures, role playing, case studies, modeling and filling of worksheets, so the confidence of class VIII C SMP BSS Malang can be increased. Increased self-confidence of these students is shown from the post-test with an average score of 106.33 and categorized as high confidence. The increase in the average confidence score of the pre-test to post-test in the amount of 10.64 points.(3) Based on researcher's observations at the time of the action, the increasing of self-confidence is supported by the students who showed great enthusiasm in assertive training methods from the first activity which is the provision of understanding of assertive behavior, the second activity in the form of case studies, the third activity in the form of discussion and role playing and the fourth activity which is the provision of a correct example of assertive behavior (modeling).

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