



Application of Cognitive Restructuring Techniques for Career Women with Anxiety

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INTRODUCTION



• Career women significantly contribute to the family unit, community, and nation. The majority of women in Malaysia possess an education and participate in the workforce. In actuality, in addition to attending to and completing their familial responsibilities, women must also perform numerous chores and dedicate themselves to their employment. Unsurprisingly, women exhibit signs of anxiety more frequently than males (McLean & Anderson, 2022). The anxiety disorder encountered can additionally impair daily functioning and occupational effectiveness.

• In counseling therapy, several strategies can be employed to assist persons with anxiety disorders, including Cognitive Restructuring Techniques (CRT). Cognitive Restructuring refers to the framework of change mechanisms delineated in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy. CRT denotes a framework for therapeutic collaboration in which individuals facing challenges are instructed in identifying, evaluating, and modifying erroneous beliefs, thereafter assessing and acknowledging that these thoughts contribute to their psychological problems (Hofmann et al., 2022).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

• In counseling therapy, several strategies can be employed to assist persons with anxiety disorders, including Cognitive Restructuring Techniques (CRT). Cognitive Restructuring refers to the framework of change mechanisms delineated in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy. CRT denotes a framework for therapeutic collaboration in which individuals facing challenges are instructed in identifying, evaluating, and modifying erroneous beliefs, thereafter assessing and acknowledging that these thoughts contribute to their psychological problems (Hofmann et al., 2022).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- to identify the level of anxiety experienced by the subject.
- to identify the symptoms of anxiety experienced by the subject.
- to determine the impact of CRT in reducing anxiety levels.



LITERATURE REVIEW

- The use of cognitive restructuring for individuals experiencing social anxiety is based on the rationale that it is not the situation itself that causes anxiety, but rather the individual's thoughts about the situation that generate anxiety (Beck & Emery, 1985).
- A study by de Jong et al., 2023 on social anxiety confirmed that cognitive restructuring remains highly effective, particularly in addressing the negative thought patterns that exacerbate anxiety. However, combining it with exposure therapy can yield even better results, particularly for long-term management of anxiety symptoms

METHODOLOGY

- The study uses a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative methodologies, focusing on a single case study. The sample was obtained using purposive sampling, where the subject was chosen based on specific qualities for the investigation. The Beck Anxiety Inventory-Malay (BAI-Malay) was used to assess the subject's anxiety levels during the pre-test, post-test I, post-test II, and post-test III administered after the counseling sessions. Qualitative data analysis included observation and transcription, while quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive analysis (percentage)

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RESULTS

Objective 1: Level of Anxiety

Table 1: Analysis of BAI-Malay Test Scores

Test	Score	Score Difference	Percentage Difference (%)	Anxiety Level
Pre-Test	27	-	-	Moderate
Post-Test I	21	6	9.52	Mild
Post-Test II	13	8	12.70	Mild
Post-Test III	8	5	7.94	Mild

Objective 2: Symptoms of Anxiety

Table 2: Transcription Analysis

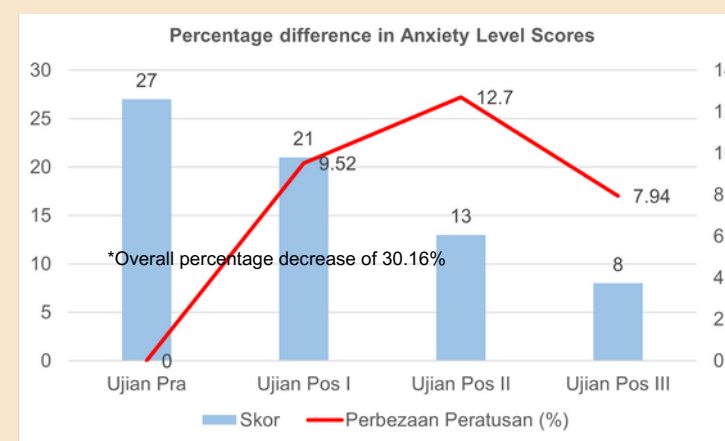
Category	Symptoms
Physical	Stomach pain
	Palpitations
	Feeling hot
	Neck pain
	Nausea
Emotional	Sadness
	Fear
	Worry
	Feeling lost
Behavior	Stress
	Inability to relax
	Lack of focus
	Loss of appetite
	Difficulty sleeping
	Frequent crying
	Phobias

Table 3: Observation Analysis (Using MSE)

Domain	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6
Appearance	32 years old, obese	Neat appearance	Neat appearance	Neat appearance	Neat appearance	Neat appearance
Behavior	Cooperative	Cooperative	Cooperative	Cooperative	Cooperative	Cooperative
Mood & Affect	Sad, minimal expression	Appropriate & congruent	Appropriate & congruent	Appropriate & congruent	Appropriate & congruent	Appropriate & congruent
Speech	Talks a lot, loud	Clear, spontaneous	Clear, spontaneous	Clear, spontaneous	Clear, spontaneous	Clear, spontaneous
Thought Process	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal
Thought Content	Simple phobia (fear of hearing news about death)	Normal (no delusions)	Normal (no delusions)	Normal (no delusions)	Normal (no delusions)	Normal (no delusions)
Perception	Normal (no hallucinations)	Normal (no hallucinations)	Normal (no hallucinations)	Normal (no hallucinations)	Normal (no hallucinations)	Normal (no hallucinations)
Cognition	Alert	Alert	Alert	Alert	Alert	Alert
Insight	True insight	True insight	True insight	True insight	True insight	True insight
Judgment	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good

Objective 3: The impact of CRT in reducing anxiety levels

The effect of CRT in reducing the anxiety experienced by the subject can be identified through data triangulation, which involves BAI-Malay test scores, verbatim (session transcripts), and observations. The percentage difference in scores for each BAI-Malay test is illustrated in Graph 1.



Graph 1: Percentage Difference in Anxiety Level Scores

Based on Table 4 below, a percentage amount of 26 - 50% indicates that the changes occurring are at a moderate level.

Table 4: Stages of Change Based on Overall Percentage

Percentage Amount	Change Level
< 25%	Low
26% - 50%	Moderate
51% - 75%	Moderately High
> 75%	High

Source: Mohamad Hashim Othman (2014)

DISCUSSION

- The subject exhibited a decrease in anxiety levels 30.16% following six counseling sessions. This indicates that, the application of CRT, the established positive rapport, trust in the researcher, and the therapeutic atmosphere fostered throughout the counseling sessions have contributed to a reduction in the subject's anxiety levels.
- Based on this data triangulation, it can be concluded that the CRT intervention is effective in reducing the anxiety levels of the subjects, albeit at a moderate level.

CONCLUSION

- Overall, it was found that CRT has been able to help reduce the anxiety levels of the subjects, albeit to a moderate extent. However, this technique needs to be supported by other factors, such as the establishment of a good relationship between the subject and the researcher, the trust built towards the researcher, as well as a therapeutic environment that indirectly contributes to the reduction of the subject's anxiety levels. This CRT application has raised awareness and understanding in the subject regarding how to deal with negative thoughts they face, and it has helped reduce anxiety, allowing the subject to lead a more positive daily life.

