

The Impact of Therapeutic Group Therapy on Parents' Capacity to Encourage Preschoolers' Social and Emotional Growth

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ABSTRACT

Parental knowledge and ability in providing stimulation for preschool children is very important to have, because preschool age is a critical period for children who need growth and development stimulation. Therapeutic group therapy is a promotive action to improve children's development to be optimal. This study uses a pre-experimental design research type with a one-group pretest-posttest design approach. The sampling technique uses a purposive sample technique, namely by determining certain criteria. Data were collected using a questionnaire sheet, bivariate analysis using the Paired Sample T-Test with the help of SPSS. Based on the statistical test, it is known that the sig. (2-tailed) value is $0.000 < 0.05$, so it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the ability of parents to stimulate child development before and after therapeutic group therapy. So that therapeutic group therapy can be applied in improving the ability of parents to stimulate the development of preschool children properly and can be maximized.

Keywords: Parenting Skills, Stimulation of Children's, Therapeutic Group Therapy

BACKGROUND

Parents' knowledge and ability in providing stimulation for preschool children is very important to have, because preschool age is a critical period for children who need growth and development stimulation (Yunalia Endang Mei, 2013). Problems that are still encountered by mothers in providing developmental stimulation include: mothers provide excessive stimulation only on cognitive development elements so that they do not allow children to play outside the house (Spielfogel, Leathers, Christian, & Mcmeel, 2011). According to Conference & Psychology, (2012) providing stimulation is supported by the mother's knowledge of child growth and development so that stimulation can be given according to the developmental stage.

During the preschool stage, namely at the age of 3–6 years, relationships with parents are the basis for children's emotional and social development. Experiences during preschool form the basis for children's subsequent growth and development. Children who are less stimulated most of their time will miss many opportunities to gain new experiences from their surroundings (Yunalia, 2016). The first aspect of development that must be considered is children's emotions. Emotional regulation is the most important aspect in interacting with the surrounding environment. This is where parents play a role in understanding and controlling the emotions of preschool children (He, Lim, Lecklitner, Olson, & Traube, 2015). The development process from aspects that do not run optimally will result in disorders and affect children's mental development.

The prevalence of emotional mental disorders in preschool children is quite high. The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) states that the prevalence of emotional mental disorders in preschool children is around 10-15% in the world (KMHO, 2019). Emotional mental disorders are a condition where a child's behavior and emotions are very different from the behavior and emotions of other children of the same age and background which can cause decreased social interaction and relationships, self-care, and learning processes and behavior in class (Maria S, 2015). Untreated emotional mental disorders will have a negative impact on a child's development, especially on the maturation of his character, this results in emotional mental disorders which can be in the form of high-risk behavior (Farida, 2014).

The last developmental aspect that must be considered in preschool children is psychosocial development. According to Erikson, psychosocial development in preschool children is better known as initiative vs guilt. Initiative is used to have and pursue various goals and also to suppress or postpone a goal. Goals that must be inhibited will cause feelings of guilt (Xing et al., 2017). Psychosocial aspects will affect other aspects of development in children. In other words, these seven aspects of development will affect children's growth and development. Based on data from UNICEF (United Nations Emergency Children's Fund) in 2019, it showed that the incidence of growth and development disorders in children was still high, as much as 27.5% or equivalent to three million children experiencing disorders. (Ramadhani et al., 2017). As many as 50% of children aged 4-6 years in developed countries show several antisocial behavioral disorders which if continuously ignored will become permanent behavioral disorders in the future (Suyami et al., 2016).

Based on Riskesdas data (2018), in Indonesia the phenomenon of social development disorders in preschool children reached 69.9%. Problems in preschool children who experience social development disorders often occur, this can be seen when a child does not want to play with their peers, does not want to share with others, there are also children who are unable to play cooperatively with their friends (Sukatini et al., 2020). Based on data from the National Population and Family Planning Agency (2013), 90% of Indonesian mothers rarely provide continuous stimulation to their children. Mothers are unable to provide stimulation according to the aspects of child development. So that the child's development is completely left to school or other educational institutions (Feil et al., 2017).

The results of observations and interviews conducted with 10 parents who took their children to school said that they left their children's development entirely to the kindergarten. It was found that 4 out of 10 parents knew about children's development in terms of language, morals and spirituality. However, they did not know about other aspects of development. Meanwhile, the other 6 did not know about the development of children aged 3-4 years. Of the 10 mothers, almost all of them did not know how to stimulate children's development in terms of social and emotional aspects. One way to stimulate children's social and emotional development is to use therapeutic group therapy carried out by parents.

Therapeutic group therapy is a promotive action to improve children's development to be optimal so as to prevent mental health problems (Nugter & Engelsbel, 2015). Therapeutic group therapy is used in groups that are appropriate to a certain age development to increase the potential to achieve optimal growth and development according to age such as in groups of pregnant women, babies, toddlers, preschoolers, schools, adolescents, adults, and the elderly.

Therapeutic group therapy for preschool children consists of 5 sessions, namely: Assessment of preschool child development and stimulation of gross and fine motor skills, stimulation of cognitive and language development, stimulation of emotional and personality development, stimulation of moral, spiritual and psychosocial development, and evaluating child development. This therapeutic group therapy can educate and develop the potential of

members and improve the quality of the group in overcoming problems both individually and in groups. (Enns et al., 2016).

Based on the description above, the researcher is interested in conducting a research proposal entitled "The Effect of Therapeutic Group Therapy on Parents' Ability to Stimulate Social and Emotional Development in Preschool Children". The aim is to determine whether there is an effect of therapeutic group therapy on parents' ability to stimulate social and emotional development in preschool children.

METHODS

This study uses a pre-experimental design research type with a one-group pretest-posttest design approach. This study was conducted with a population of 65 people. The sampling technique uses a purposive sample technique, namely by determining certain criteria. Data were collected using a questionnaire sheet, bivariate analysis using the Paired Sample T-Test with the help of SPSS.

RESULTS

Respondent Characteristics

Based on the research results, it is known that the most respondents are in the age range of 31-40 years 13 people (40.6%), respondents in the age range of 21-30 years as many as (25%) 8 people, respondents in the age range of 41-50 years as many as 8 people (25%), and respondents with the least number are in the age range of 51-60 years as many as 3 people (9.4%). The last education of the respondents is the most high school as many as 18 people (56.3%), junior high school 8 people (25%), college 5 people (15.6%), and the least elementary school as many as 1 person (3.1%). More than half of the total number of respondents work as housewives as many as 25 people (78.1%), and the others work as traders as many as 2 people (6.3%), and the rest are private employees as many as 5 people (15.6%). It is known that 14 people (43.8%) of the respondents have 2 children, 11 people (34.4%) of the respondents have 1 child and 7 people (21.9%) of the respondents have 3 children.

Variable Characteristics

Based on the results of the study, it is known that some respondents before therapy had sufficient ability to stimulate the development of preschool children as many as 19 people (59.4%), 11 people (34.4%) had insufficient ability to stimulate the development of preschool children, and the remaining 2 (6.3%) people had good ability to stimulate the development of preschool children. Some respondents after therapy experienced an increase, namely no respondents had insufficient ability to stimulate the development of preschool children, 27 people (84.4%) had good ability to stimulate the development of preschool children and 5 people (15.6%) had sufficient ability to stimulate the development of preschool children.

Statistical Test Results

Based on the results of the paired sample t-test statistical test, it was found that the difference in the average value between the parents' ability to stimulate children's development before the intervention was 30.2188 and after the intervention was 49.5625, which was -19.34375 with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. This means that H_0 is rejected, H_1 is accepted, so it can be concluded that there is an effect of therapeutic group therapy on increasing parents' ability to stimulate the development of preschool children.

DISCUSSION

Parents' Ability to Provide Stimulation of Social and Emotional Development to Pre-School Age Children Before Therapeutic Group Therapy

Based on the research results, it is known that some respondents before the therapy had sufficient ability to stimulate the development of preschool-age children, as many as 19 people (59.4%), 11 people (34.4%) had insufficient ability and the remaining 2 (6.3%) people had good ability to stimulate the development of preschool-age children.

This study is in line with previous research conducted by Hasanudin (2019) which obtained pretest scores of low ability of 7 (25%) respondents, moderate 12 (42.9%) respondents, while high 9 (32.1%) respondents. This means that most of the responses have moderate abilities with a value of 42.9%. Meanwhile, Yunalia's research (2016) stated that the ability of mothers as single parents in providing developmental stimulation for preschool children before therapeutic group therapy was carried out was an average of 17.14. This means that the average cognitive ability of mothers is in the good ability range.

Before therapy, parents often forbid their children from helping with housework because they feel that children are not allowed to do heavy work, children are prohibited from playing with the opposite sex often, and are not allowed to play with kitchen utensils, parents are also often insensitive to children's desires, lacking in training children to recognize and express feelings they are experiencing (happy, sad, afraid, proud). The ability of parents to stimulate the social and emotional development of preschool children is also due to the age of the parents, the number of children, the last education and the parents' occupation. The more mature the age of the parents, the better their ability to stimulate child development because they get more information and experience. The number of children parents have is related to the ability to stimulate child development because the more children they have, the better the parents' ability based on the experience they have when taking care of previous children. The better the education parents have, the better their knowledge of the child's development process. The work of parents also affects the ability to stimulate children's social and emotional development because the more time parents spend with their children, the more they can give all their energy and abilities to the maximum.

Social development is essential for the development of early childhood. Because one day they will live in a community environment where everyone will definitely need each other. By fostering or accustoming children to live socially, it will make it easier for them to live or interact with others when they are adults and live in society (Purnawati, 2020). Meanwhile, emotional development is very dependent on what is around them. Children learn to develop their self-confidence, control themselves when alone or with others. Emotions are one of the important aspects, both positive and negative, that help children find new ideas in dealing with a problem (Sari, 2016). The better the parents' ability to provide stimulation for social and emotional development in preschool children, the better the development experienced by the child and can develop optimally.

Parents' Ability to Stimulate Social and Emotional Development in Pre-School Age Children After Therapeutic Group Therapy

Based on the results of the study, it is known that some respondents after therapy experienced an increase, namely no respondents had poor ability in stimulating the development of preschool children, 27 people (84.4%) had good ability in stimulating the development of preschool children and 5 people (15.6%) had sufficient ability in stimulating the development of preschool children. A questionnaire sheet to find out how the development of parents' ability in providing social and emotional development stimulation to preschool children was given after therapeutic group therapy was carried out.

This study is also in line with previous research conducted by Hasanudin (2019) which obtained the results of the posttest score of low ability 0 (0%) respondents, medium 11

(39.3%) respondents while high 17 (60.7%) respondents. This means that most of the responses have high abilities with a value of 60.7%. Meanwhile, Yunalia's research (2016) stated that the ability of mothers as single parents in providing stimulation for the development of preschool children before therapeutic group therapy was carried out was an average value of 19.93. This means that the average cognitive ability of mothers is in the good ability range. After therapeutic group therapy was carried out, parents more often freed their children to explore themselves, by training children to recognize and express the feelings they were experiencing (happy, sad, afraid, proud), training children to be more independent, and training children not to force their wishes.

Therapeutic group therapy is one of the specialist psychiatric nursing therapies as an effort to promote mental health to improve mental health conditions at each stage of development so that it becomes more optimal. Therapeutic group therapy is a promotive action to improve child development to be optimal so as to prevent mental health problems (Nugter & Engelsbel, 2015). The definition of a group in therapeutic group therapy is individuals who have relationships with each other, are interdependent and have the same norms (Stuart, 2013).

The Effect of Therapeutic Group Therapy on Parents' Ability to Stimulate Social and Emotional Development in Pre-School Age Children

Based on statistical tests, it is known that the sig. (2-tailed) value is $0.000 < 0.05$, so it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the ability of parents to stimulate child development before and after therapeutic group therapy. So that therapeutic group therapy can be applied to improve the ability of parents to stimulate the development of preschool children well and can be maximized. Based on the results of cross tabulation, it is known that 7 parents (63.6%) before therapeutic group therapy still have less ability to stimulate the development of preschool children after therapeutic group therapy the parents have good ability to stimulate the development of preschool children.

This study is supported by previous research by Damayanti (2014) that the results of the statistical test obtained a result of $0.000 (p < 0.05)$ then the hypothesis is accepted, meaning that there is an influence before and after being given therapeutic group therapy. The results of the study conducted by Yunalia (2016) showed that there was a difference in development scores before and after being given therapeutic group therapy at a value of $p = 0.000 (p < 0.05)$. Based on the results of the study, it is known that there is an influence before and after being given therapeutic group therapy. Hasanudin (2019) in his study also found that $p = 0.000 (p < 0.05)$ meaning that there is a difference before and after being given therapeutic group therapy. The results of this study indicate that therapeutic group therapy is very effective in increasing the ability of parents to stimulate the social and emotional development of preschool children. According to Garaigordobil & Berrueco in the Yunalia journal (2016) therapeutic group therapy is carried out to help families overcome problems, where problems are solved together in groups and share experiences. Stuart (2013) stated that there are small group components in therapeutic group therapy which include; structure, group size consisting of 6-10 members, length of session, communication and feedback, roles, power, norms, and cohesion.

Therapeutic group therapy conducted in this study is very helpful to improve parents' ability to stimulate social and emotional development in preschool children. The research conducted in the field received good enthusiasm from parents because with this research they know what needs to be done to help children's social and emotional development optimally. In addition, they also get new experiences with the experience sharing session so they can find out and analyze what treatments or activities parents do to help children's social and emotional development.

The social and emotional development of preschool children helps children in their daily lives. A good social life for children will have an impact on their ability to socialize outside the home, such as at school and in the community. Children can interact comfortably without fear of the outside world and meet new people. Meanwhile, good emotional development for children can help in expressing the feelings they feel such as sadness, disappointment, feeling happy, angry and so on. In addition, children can also control their anger well without expressing it excessively.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, several conclusions can be drawn. Before the therapy was administered, the majority of respondents 19 people (59.4%) had a sufficient ability to stimulate the development of preschool children, while 11 respondents (34.4%) had an insufficient ability, and only 2 respondents (6.3%) demonstrated a good ability in this regard. After therapy, there was a noticeable improvement: none of the respondents were categorized as having insufficient ability, 27 people (84.4%) showed good ability, and 5 people (15.6%) had sufficient ability to stimulate preschool child development. Furthermore, based on the results of statistical testing, the significance value (2-tailed) was 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This indicates a statistically significant difference in parents' abilities before and after receiving therapeutic group therapy. Therefore, it can be concluded that therapeutic group therapy is effective and can be applied to enhance parents' ability to stimulate the development of preschool children in an optimal manner.

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