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Application of CBT to Improve Self Esteem and Learning Motivation of Fostered Children

(Case Study of Special Development Institution for Children Class I Tangerang)

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Abstrak

Motivasi belajar anak mempunyai pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap perilaku remaja sehingga dapat menimbulkan kenakalan dan permasalahan hukum yang pada akhirnya mengakibatkan mereka menjadi warga LPKA. Beberapa penelitian menunjukkan bahwa anak yang menjalani rehabilitasi di LPKA mengalami berbagai dampak psikologis, salah satunya adalah penurunan harga diri yang dianggap sebagai persepsi seseorang terhadap dirinya. Terapi Perilaku Kognitif (CBT) merupakan salah satu metode terapi yang banyak digunakan untuk mengatasi masalah harga diri dan motivasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengevaluasi penerapan Cognitive Behavioral Therapy dalam meningkatkan harga diri dan motivasi belajar warga LPKA Kelas I Tangerang. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif eksperimental dengan memberikan CBT selama enam sesi kepada tiga warga, dengan menggunakan Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) dan Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) sebagai alat ukurnya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya peningkatan rata-rata harga diri dan motivasi belajar warga sebelum dan sesudah intervensi CBT.

Kata Kunci: *CBT, Harga Diri, Motivasi Belajar*

Abstract

Children's learning motivation has a significant influence on adolescent behavior, which can lead to delinquency and legal issues, ultimately resulting in them becoming residents of LPKA. Several studies have shown that children undergoing rehabilitation at LPKA experience various psychological impacts, one of which is a decrease in self-esteem, which is considered a person's perception of themselves. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is one of the therapeutic methods widely used to address issues of self-esteem and motivation. This study aims to evaluate the application of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in enhancing the self-esteem and learning motivation of residents at LPKA Class I Tangerang. This research used an experimental qualitative method by providing CBT for six sessions to three residents, using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) and the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) as measurement tools. The results of the study showed an increase in the average self-esteem and learning motivation of the residents before and after the CBT intervention.

Keywords: *CBT, Self Esteem, Motivation Learning*

INTRODUCTION

Low self-esteem and low motivation to learn are issues often faced by children in special development institutions (LPKA). Children in foster care generally have diverse backgrounds, such as family problems, experiences of violence, or other social problems, which can significantly affect their psychological and emotional conditions. For example, children who grow up in an unstable family environment or experience domestic violence tend to experience decreased self-esteem. They may feel worthless or unloved, which then leads to low self-esteem. In addition, repeated experiences of violence or social rejection can cause deep psychological trauma, which not only hinders their personal development, but also undermines their motivation to learn and develop.

In the context of education, low motivation to learn is a major challenge. Children with low self-esteem often feel incapable or unworthy of achieving good academic performance. They may show indifference towards learning, withdraw from academic activities, or even develop problem behaviors as a form of escape from the psychological distress they feel. As a result, they are at greater risk of academic failure, which further reinforces their feelings of inferiority and creates a negative cycle that is difficult to break. The impact of this problem is not only limited to the academic aspect, but can also affect their personality development, social abilities, and future prospects.

Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) is one of the effective psychotherapeutic approaches to help individuals, including children in LPKA, overcome various psychological problems such as low self-esteem and learning motivation. CBT focuses on changing negative thought patterns and behaviors that are considered to contribute to the problems

experienced by individuals. Through CBT, individuals are taught to identify and change negative thought patterns, such as beliefs that they are incapable or worthless, with more positive and realistic thought patterns. CBT techniques, such as cognitive restructuring, relaxation exercises, and problem-solving, can help foster children to better understand and manage their emotions, as well as rebuild lost self-confidence.

By implementing CBT in LPKA, the children can be helped to develop more positive and constructive ways of thinking. This is important because healthier and more optimistic thinking can encourage them to participate more in the learning process and cope better with academic challenges. In addition, increased self-esteem can also lead to increased motivation to learn, as children who believe in their abilities tend to be more eager and motivated to achieve their academic goals.

This study aims to analyze the application of Cognitive Behavior Therapy in improving self-esteem and learning motivation in foster children at LPKA Class I Tangerang. This research is expected to contribute to the development of more effective coaching methods in LPKA, so as to help fostered children reach their full potential. In addition, the results of this study are also expected to provide insights for educational and psychological practitioners in dealing with children with difficult backgrounds, as well as inspire the application of similar approaches in various other educational and coaching contexts. Thus, the application of CBT in LPKA is not only beneficial for the individual development of foster children, but also has the potential to improve the overall quality of the coaching program.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses qualitative methods that focus on observing phenomena or symptoms that occur around the research environment. The experimental approach was chosen to examine how certain conditions change after being given an intervention in a controlled situation. This approach aims to evaluate the effect of a treatment or action on the behavior of the object of research.

The research design used is One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design, where a pretest is conducted to measure the level of self-esteem and learning motivation of foster children before being given Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) intervention. The posttest was then conducted to measure changes in self-esteem and learning motivation after the CBT intervention was implemented. The existence of a pretest and posttest is expected to provide more accurate results, as it allows comparison between conditions before and after the intervention.

The focus of this experiment is to understand how CBT can improve the self-esteem and learning motivation of foster children. The measurement tools used were the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) and the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ). The subjects of this study involved three foster children who previously had low levels of self-esteem and motivation to learn.

The subjects in this study were children who showed low levels of self-esteem with scores in the interval range of 10-25, and were willing to participate in CBT voluntarily. The researcher selected three foster children as research subjects, with the following criteria :

- At least currently studying at the junior high school level in LPKA
- Aged between 15-19 years old
- Serving a criminal period of 1-7 years
- Children who are first time offenders
- Have a low level of self-esteem, as indicated by the pre-test results using the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSES) with scores in the range of 10-25
- Demonstrate very low, moderately low, or low levels of motivation to learn, as evidenced by the Motivated Strategies For Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) pre-test results with scores in the range of 30-93.

Intervention Procedure

CBT intervention was chosen because based on the literature, Cognitive Behavior Therapy or CBT is an intervention that can help improve a person's self-esteem (Wanders et. al, 2008). Murk mentioned that increasing one's self-esteem can be done through the help of a therapist in terms of linking the negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of someone who is indicated to have a low level of self-esteem. The therapist in this case serves as a party who assists a person in finding the advantages that exist in himself, as well as therapist support in building habits that can improve the relationship between a person's thoughts and feelings (Suci, 2019). The intervention module used was adapted from the CBT module for self esteem in young adults designed by Sarandria (2012). After distributing questionnaires to foster children at the Special Development Institute for Children Class I Tangerang, the researcher selected children who met the criteria, namely having a low level of self esteem (RSES score < 25) and a low level of learning motivation (MSLQ score < 93). From the selection results, three foster children were found who met the criteria for low levels of self esteem and motivation to learn. Furthermore, an introduction and explanation of the CBT program was given to three foster children who met the criteria. The CBT intervention program was conducted in 6 sessions with 4 intervention sessions for 60

minutes each session and 2 sessions as pretest sessions at the beginning and posttest sessions at the end.

Table 1 Therapy Activity Schedule

Session	Activity Session Content	Assignment
Session 1	Pre-Test and Program Introduction	Subjects were asked to complete the RSES and MSLQ questionnaires.
Session 2	Intervention (1)	Subjects were given the task "mind notes 1"
Session 3	Intervention (2)	Subjects were given the tasks "mind notes 2" and "rules and assumptions notes"
Session 4	Intervention (3)	Subjects were asked to fill out the "adjusting basic beliefs" form
Session 5	Intervensi (4)	Subjects were given the task of writing a positive journal and performing relaxation techniques in the block room
Session 6	Post-test, Evaluation and Program Closure	Subjects were asked to complete the RSES questionnaire and MSLQ questionnaire again.

The implementation of the intervention lasted for six sessions with one initial session used for pretest and one final session used for posttest and evaluation of the intervention provided. All sessions were conducted from March 25 to April 5, 2024 and were conducted directly at the Tangerang Class I Development Institute. The three subjects are male foster children aged around 18 and 19 years old with the last education in elementary school and continuing junior high school in the LPKA. The three foster children are children who have dropped out of school due to various backgrounds. One of the three children chose not to continue their schooling due to economic limitations, while the other two were influenced by socialization. After undergoing a period of guidance in the Child Special Development Institution, the three foster children experienced feelings of inferiority and did not believe in their respective abilities which resulted in their low level of self esteem. The following is the demographic data of foster children who take part in CBT group therapy sessions for individuals with low levels of self esteem and learning motivation.

Table 2 Participant Characteristics

Number	Name	Age	Pretest score	
			RSES	MSLQ
1.	AAS	19 years old	20	74
2.	MF	19 years old	21	67
3.	HS	18 years old	23	70

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the therapeutic process that has been carried out on children, it is found that there are cognitive distortions in the child's thinking patterns, including:

1. Subject AAS

In the pattern of thinking that AAS has, he experiences a mental filter or selective abstraction which is a thought that focuses more on out-of-context details and ignores more positive information. This shows that AAS has a mental filter where he is too focused on the incident of his parents' divorce and immediately assumes that they do not love and do not care about him. From this thinking, AAS prefers a social environment that makes him comfortable to brawl many times. Whereas in reality, AAS's parents still care and love AAS despite the condition of divorced parents. This is evidenced by the fact that AAS's mother often visits AAS for 2 weeks at LPKA.

2. Subject MF

MF's thinking pattern is based on MF's parents who experience selective abstraction, which is thinking that focuses more on out-of-context details and ignores more positive information where MF's parents only focus on MF's bad behavior and compare it with other siblings or neighbors and ignore MF's achievements and good things. As a result of her parents' selective abstraction, MF experienced cognitive distortion in the form of jumping to conclusions. Jumping to conclusions is a type of distortion characterized by direct inference by a person where MF considers that her parents no longer love her. This made MF lazy to continue school and difficult to listen to advice and orders from her parents.

3. Subject HS

HS experienced cognitive distortion in the form of Negative Imperatives which is a firm idea about the necessity of everything encountered in life according to his wishes where HS thought that he had to quit school and change his activities to work to earn money to help his family's economy which he thought was more important than his school affairs. In

addition, HS committed the crime of sexual intercourse with his girlfriend because HS thought that he had to marry his girlfriend at a relatively young age. This thought made HS commit a wrong act, namely having sex with his girlfriend who had not yet legally become his wife. From these two thoughts, it can be concluded that HS experienced Negative Imperatives.

After the discovery of cognitive distortions in the three children, then the researchers conducted a cognitive behavioral therapy process through several assignments to change children's cognitive distortions to be more positive. Then after the therapy process has been carried out, then a posttest is carried out on the level of self esteem and learning motivation in the three children using the same instrument at the time of the pretest at the beginning of the meeting with the child.

Based on the results of the intervention and the results of the post-test conducted on the three fostered children, it can be stated that there was a change and increase in self esteem and learning motivation in participants after participating in the intervention. This shows that cognitive behavior therapy can increase the self esteem and learning motivation of children in LPKA. The results of the study are in accordance with Guindon's (2010) statement that cognitive behavioral strategies are the most appropriate intervention to improve individual self esteem. In addition, the results of this study also support previous research, namely Group Counseling with a Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) Approach to Increase Adolescent Education Awareness in Banaran Hamlet, Kulonprogo Regency with the results of an increase in educational awareness of adolescents in Banaran Hamlet, Kulonprogo Regency.

According to Guindon (2010), CBT is carried out by challenging cognitive distortions that ignore positive characteristics, thoughts that only focus on negative feedback, setting high standards of rules in the self, and exaggerating experiences related to unsuccess as evidence of failure. All these cognitive distortions lead to low self-esteem. CBT teaches problem solving, emotional control, and divergent thinking (Fairburn, in Guindon, 2010). In the implemented intervention, these have been applied to the participants where the exercises done by the three assisted children (thought notes, rules and assumptions notes, and adjusting basic beliefs) in the intervention lead to problem solving. In "mind notes", the child is asked to make alternative thoughts in viewing the situation or problem. The child also knows the effects that will occur if he applies these alternative thoughts in viewing the problem so that he can plan what behaviors can be done to react to the situation. In "record rules and assumptions" and "adjusting basic beliefs", children are also invited to challenge

and look at alternative ways of looking at evidence that supports negative basic beliefs or unhelpful rules and assumptions.

In addition to leading to problem solving, this intervention activity is also useful in controlling emotions where thoughts, rules and assumptions, or basic beliefs that have been changed also affect changes in participants' moods. In addition, finding new thoughts, rules and assumptions, and basic beliefs is a form of teaching participants in divergent thinking.

After the CBT intervention, all participants felt the positive impact of the intervention. The impact shown by each participant is in the form of understanding the thinking errors they have so that they can change them into more positive cognitive, able to understand the emotions that exist in themselves and can manage them by doing activities that support their confidence and motivation in learning. In addition, each participant is also determined to continue their schooling in order to become a better human being. This is indicated by the posttest results on the RSES and MSLQ scores conducted after the CBT intervention process was carried out.

Table 3 Participant Posttest Results

Number	Name	Posttest Score	
		RSES	MSLQ
1.	AAS	30	132
2.	MF	29	132
3.	HS	35	168

Based on the discussion that has been described, it can be seen that cognitive behavior therapy helps increase self esteem and learning motivation in subjects who are children who are carrying out coaching at LPKA because CBT is a type of therapy that is easy to teach and apply to young people. Cognitive Behavior Therapy provided in the form of exploring and straightening children's negative thoughts for 6 sessions can overcome cognitive distortions in children who experience decreased self esteem and learning motivation by eliminating wandering thoughts, improving cognitive function, changing self-perception more positively and reducing social anxiety..

CONCLUSION

Cognitive Behavior Therapy can significantly improve the Self Esteem of foster children, where subjects feel they have better self-confidence and self-efficacy, are able to view themselves with more positive appreciation and acceptance, and are able to plan their future lives by showing increased motivation to learn. Through CBT, the children can

learn to identify negative thought patterns that may hinder their development. They are also trained to change these mindsets into more positive and constructive ones. Thus, they can overcome their insecurities and feel more confident in facing learning challenges. In addition, CBT also helps foster children to develop the problem-solving and self-adjustment skills needed to deal with various situations in their learning process. This gives them a sense of control and the ability to manage stress and frustrations that may arise during learning.

To improve the self-esteem and motivation to learn of children in care through Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), several practical steps can be taken. First, it is important to establish a structured and sustainable program so that CBT techniques can be applied consistently and effectively. Furthermore, teachers and counselors need to be trained on the basic principles of CBT so that they are able to support the implementation of the program properly. Collaboration with parents or guardians is also important, as involving them can strengthen the application of CBT principles. Finally, it is important to periodically measure the progress of the children in terms of self esteem and motivation to learn, and evaluate the effectiveness of the CBT program. With this holistic and sustainable approach, the implementation of CBT can be an effective tool in helping the children to reach their full potential.

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