
**THE APPLICATION OF MUTUAL STORY TELLING TECHNIQUE FOR CHILDREN
WITH ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (ADHD) TO IMPROVE THEIR
PROBLEM SOLVING ABILITIES**

¹Alif Nurjanah, ²Vrimadieska Ayuanissa Waluyan, ³Hanna Permata Hanifa, ⁴Raka Adhitya

¹*Guidance and Counseling, Faculty of Education, Universitas Negeri Semarang
Alifnurjanah0@gmail.com*

²*Guidance and Counseling, Faculty of Education, Universitas Negeri Semarang
Permatahanna6@gmail.com*

³*Guidance and Counseling, Faculty of Education, Universitas Negeri Semarang
vayuanissa@gmail.com*

⁴*Language and Literature, Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Negeri Semarang
Rakaadhith93@gmail.com*

Abstract

Childhood is the best period for someone to learn about skills which can immensely help them support their own lives. Since there are many limitations which hold back children in mastering those skills and each individual have their own conditions, each child would end up having different levels of skill mastery, including children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Children suffering from ADHD tend to have difficulties in putting and keeping their focus on one matter. They also tend to move constantly and find that it is difficult to stay put. 2 to 5% of elementary students suffer from ADHD, which means in there are 2 to 10 Indonesian elementary students are suffering from ADHD. Adults and parents would label these poor kids as “bad kids” for their inability to focus their attention and their tendency in making errors in their daily activities. Children who suffer from ADHD are more likely to be left alone by their peers, slow to learn, tend to ignore conversations, and they would go fend off people who attempt to converse with them. Thus, a directive problem-solving strategy would not work for them. But there is an effective alternative method by telling them a story with “moral value” which they accept into their psychic structure while inserting understanding and problem solving for the problems they are facing positively. So, counselors and teachers can apply this technique to help them solve their problems.

Keywords: *ADHD, Mutual Storytelling, Problem solving*

INTRODUCTION

Yusuf (2009) states that childhood is a time period of growth and the period when the aspects of growth changes. Hurlock (2013) explained that children have to achieve some growth through: 1) learning physical skills needed for playing. 2) positive attitude guidance as an improving individual such as the awareness of self-esteem and the self-limitation. 3) learning to socialize with their peers in line with the moral ethic of the society. 4) practicing their role of their genders. 5) improving their basic skills of reading, writing, and calculating. 6) improving concepts necessary to their daily lives. 7) improving their objective attitude towards group and society. 8) learning to achieve private independence or freedom to become their true selves through independent and responsible means. Yusuf also mentions that a child is already capable of improving and solve problems. But, every child has their own unique conditions which obstruct their growth and their problem solving abilities. This can be found on hyperactive children who lack of focus. The state of inattention and learning limitation also

have been reported to the BSM-IV (Gozal, 2005). ADHD refers to the chronic behavioral disorder which manifests early on during childhood and have unique characteristics in the form of hyperactivity. This disorder can result in difficulty in academic, emotion, and social function (Clayton et al, 2007). These difficulties cause ADHD children to have different abilities in solving their problems. Landau et al (), in Novita (), in Mahardika et al (2016) states that most of ADHD children suffer from social skill deficit.

In 1902, Prof. George F. Still, an English doctor, states that research involving a group of children shows an abnormal inability to focus their attention while feeling anxious and nervous. Biological factor also plays in children’s deficit of will. This disorder is the result of children’s intrinsic factor and not of their surroundings. They will have difficulties in focusing their attention in everything they do and move their bodies ineffectively. Often times they are considered as annoyance to the people around them and ended with them receiving punishment or scolded by adults who don’t

understand them. If these children receive the wrong treatment they might think that they are not loved by the people around them, resulting in their hatred and denial which will worsen their conditions.

Children lacking the ability to focus their attention and who are hyperactive have the potentials and skills which need attention and care. Thus, writers chose the method mutual storytelling utilizing stories with relevancy to their level of understanding so that they develop their positive thinking toward solving their problems.

RESEARCH METHOD

This article is the literature study utilizing documents and records. The data used were from secondary sources such as textbooks, journals, and scientific articles containing relevant concepts.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Selekta (2013) did a research on 2 years old children who constantly change games from boredom. Although they are able to socialize when playing with their cousins of the same age but they don't last for a long period of time. When they demand something, they want it fulfilled immediately. Furthermore, they also suffer from inattention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity.

Adiputra et al (2015) states the factors responsible for the spreading of ADHD in Denpasar are genetic history, premature born, and sweet treats. While smoke exposure towards pregnant mothers, birth using forceps, and convulsion history from cold, and head trauma history are not considered as ADHD factors. This statement was supported by Flanagan (2005) who states that if an identical twin suffers ADHD, the other has 85% chance of suffering ADHD as well. While non-identical twins and siblings only have 30% chance. Other studies say that children whose parents suffer from ADHD and raised by foster parents still likely to suffer ADHD. This proves that parenting does not cause children to suffer ADHD.

There are numerous treatments for ADHD children. Hikmawati (2014) finds that writing therapy is effective in reducing children's hyperactivity and impulsivity from ADHD. Thus this cheap and harmless method may be used as an alternative therapy for children suffering ADHD. While Selekta confirms that ADHD can be reduced through behavior therapy, social skill training, diet intervention and speaking therapy.

Another method, namely mutual storytelling, can be applied as an alternative to treat ADHD. This method was supported by O'Brien (1992), in Erford (2017), which explains that mutual storytelling

technique for children suffering from difficulties in focussing their attention or hyperactive (ADHD). Iskandar and Rosales (2013), in Erford (2017), finds that mutual storytelling as an intervention affects their behavior at school which is the main target autism spectrum and ADHD. Study by Painter (1997) finds that mutual storytelling therapy combined with parents' behavior training in treating their children resulted in reduced rage and disobedience. Friedberg (2004) concludes that storytelling is useful for children's cognitive therapy. Although there's only a handful of research concerning this issue, hopefully this would evoke clinical heuristic which can stimulate controlled research results. Thus, storytelling can be one of the many cognitive therapy methods.

Kathy Stiles and Terry Kottman (1990) state that mutual storytelling technique can be used easily and effectively to intervene with children's suicidal intentions. Mutual storytelling can be used to teach new ways for children to positively and creatively express their angers and handle their conflicts. The relationship between school counselors and students manifests depression and suicidal thought which can provide contexts for children to express their feelings, the desire to save themselves, and the thought of little to no help for granting their hopes.

By using a relevant story told by a specific person at a specific time, the lesson through mutual storytelling is more probable to be accepted and be taken into the listener's psychic.

Storytelling is recognized as the oldest way of communicating across cultures. The narrative of a story captures attention. Evokes emotions, and transforms consciousness (Mills, 2015).

Storytelling method helps the subject in identifying, evaluating, and changing their cognitive gradually. Halford (1993), in Nabila (2015), states that through relevant stories, the subject will be attracted to match their experience and take meaning faster. Analogical reasoning has a role in this method in helping the learning process, transfer, and problem solving.

An Adaptation of Mutual Storytelling to Address Children's Problems, Steps in the Process: Phase 1:

The play therapists collaboratively tells the story of the child's problem including the child in:

- naming real or imaginary characters,
- describing how the behavior occurs,
- describing how the main character feels and or reacts during and after the problem scenario.

Phase 2:

The therapist helps the child create a new

version of the story with a better resolution and involves the child by:

- Selecting a fantasy helper or magical character to enter the story
- Retelling the problem scenario again but this time asking the fantasy character for a solution
- Using the solution to play out new choices in the story
- Ending the story with a better outcome
- And describing the child's feelings, beliefs, and other positive outcomes that occur after the problem is resolved.

According to Flanagan (2002), ADHD will stay until adulthood without being treated or given any therapy. The patients will continuously suffer in handling their hyperactivity, impulsivity, and distractibility. But, he also states that many ADHD victims who became academics, artists, athletes, and writers by undergoing critical times of ADHD since childhood. Dr. Gabor Mate even wrote a book entitled *Scattered Minds: A New Look at the Origins and Healing of Attention Deficit Disorder*.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

According to many researches we had attached previously, ADHD children have limitations in focussing their attention, easily bored and disturbed, impulsive, and hyperactive. Those symptoms cause inability to solve problems. Mutual storytelling provides interesting stories which evokes emotion and transform or revert their consciousness. Thus we can conclude that mutual storytelling technique can be used as one of the many alternatives in treating children suffering ADHD and help them solve their problems. This technique makes children gain control over their focus and grants them better social relationship. The energy surplus then can be directed for other skills and interests so that they can independently solve their problems and can contribute to the society.

With this article we hope that parents and teachers do not judge children negatively anymore. Instead, they would help them develop their abilities despite all limitations.

Children suffering ADHD are to be treated. One of the treatments is mutual storytelling.

Parents are expected to be supporting figures who will help in maximizing mutual storytelling treatment after being given by a therapist or a professional. In this case, parents can give their children empathy and concentrate fully in conducting talks with them.

REFERENCES

- Adiputra, I.M.S, dkk. 2015. "Faktor Risiko Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) pada Anak di Denpasar" dalam *Jurnal Public Health and Preventive Medicine Archive*, vol 3, no. 1, hlm 43-48.
- Erford, B.T. 2016. *40 Teknik Yang Harus Diketahui Setiap Konselor (Edisi Kedua)* Terjemahan oleh Helly Prajitno Soetjipto & Sri Mulyani Soetjipto. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Belajar.
- Flanagan, Robb. 2005. *ADHP KIDS: Attention Deficit Hiperactivity Disorder* Terjemahan Bambang Pamungkas. Jakarta: Prestasi Pustaka Raya.
- Friedberg, Robert D. 1994. "Storytelling and Cognitive Therapy with Children". *Wright State University: Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy: An International Quarterly*, no.3, vol. 8.
- Gozal, David dan Dennis L Molfese. 2005. *Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder From Genes to Patients*. Totowa : Humana Press Inc.
- Hikmawati, Iffa Dwi dan Erny Hidayati. 2014. "Efektivitas Terapi Menulis Untuk Menurunkan Hiperaktivitas dan Impulsivitas Pada Anak dengan *Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)*" dalam *Empathy Jurnal Fakultas Psikologi*, vol.2, no. 1, hlm 9-16
- Kottman, Terry and Kathy Stiles.1990. "Mutual Storytelling: An Intervention for Depressed and Suicidal Children". *American: The School Counselor*, no. 5, vol. 37, hlm. 337-342
- Mahardhika, A, dkk. 2016. "Proses Atensi Pengetahuan Pada Siswa Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) dalam memecahkan masalah matematika materi aritmatika sosial" dalam *Jurnal Edu-Sains*, vol.5, no.1
- Nabila, Anisa Ismi. 2015. "Penerapan metode Storytelling Untuk Mengurangi Rasa Takut pada Korban *Bullying* Siswa Sekolah Menengah Pertama (SMP) X. Bandung" dalam *Jurnal Fakultas Psikologi Universitas Padjajaran*.
- Painter, Laura T. 1997. "Effects of Therapeutic Storytelling and Behavioral Parent Training On The Problem Behaviors of Children and On Parental Stress". *Theses*. Professional Papers: University of Montana ScholarWorks at University of Montana
- Reynold, Jol.ynne, dkk, 2016. *The Power of Mutual Storytelling In Play Therapy. A Workshop*

*Presented at The Colorado Association For
Play Therapy February*

Selekta, MC. "Attention Deficit Hyperactivity
Disorder (ADHD) Pada Anak Usia 2 Tahun"
dalam Jurnal *Medula*, vol.1,no.3, hlm 19-25

Yusuf, Syamsu. 2009. Psikologi Perkembangan Anak
dan Remaja. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.