

## **THE APPLICATION OF CBT TO IMPROVE SELF-ESTEEM AND MOTIVATION TO LEARN FOR CHILDREN IN TANGERANG CLASS I CHILDREN'S SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTION**

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### **Abstract**

The level of children's learning motivation can affect juvenile delinquency behavior and result in children going to deal with the law and end up being referred to as fostered children who undergo a period of guidance at LPKA. Several studies have found that children who undergo a coaching period at LPKA experience various psychological impacts, one of which is a decrease in self esteem which is considered as a person's perception of himself. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is one of the therapeutic methods that has been widely applied for self esteem and motivation problems. This study aims to determine the application of cognitive behavior therapy in increasing self esteem and learning motivation of foster children at LPKA Class I Tangerang. This study uses an experimental qualitative method by providing CBT for six sessions to three foster children using the Rosenberg self-esteem scale (RSES) and Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) measuring instruments. The results showed an increase in the average self-esteem and motivation to learn of the research subjects before and after the CBT intervention. This study shows the potential of CBT to improve the self esteem and learning motivation of foster children.

**Keywords :** cbt; foster children; learning motivation; self esteem

### **INTRODUCTION**

Indonesia is currently experiencing educational problems in terms of the low quality of the learning process. The low quality of learning is influenced by several things, including the poor quality of teachers in Indonesia, ineffective curriculum and school rules, and the lack of motivation of students in Indonesia to learn. The reality in Indonesia shows that students are not eager to learn and indicates that students do not have a strong desire to learn. Children's motivation to learn in Indonesia has decreased every year, which is shown by the increasing number of children dropping out of school in the 2022/2023 academic year. In Indonesia there were 76.834 dropouts, with 40.623 students at the primary school level, 13.716 students at the junior high school level, 10.091 students at the senior high school level, and 12.404 students at the vocational school level. If children's motivation to learn is weak, they will be attracted to bad things. Weak learning motivation in children will make them imitate bad things. In addition to having a positive desire to learn about knowledge and art, children can also be attracted to things that tend to be bad and can be referred to as juvenile delinquency.

Children's behavior that is irresponsible and deviates from the prevailing norms is referred to as juvenile delinquency. Cavan said in his book entitled Juvenile delinquency that juvenile delinquency prevents children and adolescents from acting and doing what is desired by the society around them. Based on data provided by UNICEF that in 2016 about 50% of delinquency and crime that occurred in the world was committed by a child. Meanwhile, in 2017, the Indonesian Ministry of Health reported that 3.8% of students and university

students in Indonesia had tried narcotics of any kind. The Indonesian Child Protection Commission recorded 2.262 cases of children in conflict with the law from 2016 to 2020. Of these, 702 cases of children as perpetrators of sexual violence (rape or molestation) were the most common. This shows serious problems in child behavior in Indonesia, including violence, crime, and other deviant behaviors.

Based on a statement from Inspector General of Police Fadil Imran as Kapolda Metro Jaya, throughout 2022 there were 323 cases of juvenile delinquency that occurred in the South Jakarta area. According to Fadil, brawls, getting drunk until the early hours of the morning, wild racing, and hanging out are examples of teenage habits that are considered delinquency. Then the Director General of Corrections noted that in the period 2020 to 2023, cases of children in conflict with the law had increased. As of August 26, 2023, nearly 2.000 children were involved in legal conflicts with 1,467 of them still detained and undergoing trial, while 526 of them were serving prison sentences.

With a decrease in motivation in children, they are tempted to negative things that are classified as juvenile delinquency and result in children going to deal with the law and end up being referred to as foster children undergoing a period of guidance at LPKA. Fostered children who undergo a period of guidance in the LPKA experience various psychological impacts, including loss of self-identity, a sense of security, independence, limited communication, feelings of security and affection from family, self-esteem, and self confidence, causing psychological problems such as a soul that always feels depressed, afraid, moody, lazy, and lack of enthusiasm, as well as irritability and lack of confidence in acting. Self-esteem is considered an important component of one's personality which is defined as one's perception of oneself which can be positive or negative, and can be associated with certain factors, such as social skills, academic ability, and physical appearance.

One of the ways that can be used to improve one's confidence in themselves is cognitive behavioral therapy or CBT. In CBT, psychological problems can arise due to incorrect thinking, incorrect information and then lead to wrong conclusions, and a person's inability to classify between real and fantasy things. Cognitive behavioral therapy is a therapy that uses methods to change behavior and change one's beliefs. Cognitive behavioral therapy is understood as a fusion between cognitive and behavioral approaches that combine cognitive processes and behavioral strategies aimed at a person's way of thinking and behavior.

Cognitive behavioral therapy looks at a person's thoughts, assumptions, and beliefs that help them recognize and correct their mistakes. It also identifies the relationship between problem situations and the habits formed to handle or respond to problems. Therefore, foster children are expected to learn to formulate a more balanced and realistic view of themselves, and develop a sense of self-worth without neglecting responsibility for their actions through the CBT therapy process. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is expected to be used to change the perspective and behavior of foster children who are adolescents aged between 14 to 18 years. This is in line with the ideas of Piaget's developmental psychology, which states that the formal operation period is the peak level of development of cognitive structures, including in children aged fourteen to twelve years. At this time, teenagers are able to think logically about verbal problems and hypotheses, use scientific reasoning, and learn to accept the opinions of others.

## **METHOD**

This research was conducted using a qualitative method which is a research method that is oriented towards phenomena or symptoms that occur around or in the environment. While the approach used in this qualitative research uses an experimental approach that aims to find certain conditions after being given influence in controlled conditions or in other words that this experimental approach is used to assess the effect of a treatment / action / treatment on the behavior of an object.

The design used in this experimental qualitative research is One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design where the pretest is used to measure the level of self esteem and learning motivation of foster children before being given CBT intervention. While the posttest is used to measure the level of self esteem and learning motivation of foster children after being given CBT intervention. With the pretest and posttest in this study, it is expected to provide more accurate intervention results because it can compare the condition of self esteem and learning motivation of children before and after being given CBT intervention.

The focus of this experimental research is to find out how cognitive behavior therapy can improve self-esteem and motivation to learn for foster children. The measuring instruments used in the pre-test and post-test in this study are the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSES) and Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ). The subjects in this study were three foster children who had low levels of self esteem and learning motivation.

## **Participants**

The subjects in this study were foster children who had low levels of self-esteem who scored in the interval range of 10-25 and expressed willingness to take CBT voluntarily. So the researcher used three foster children as research subjects with the following criteria:

- Minimum junior high school education / still attending junior high school level
- Age 15-19 years old
- Length of sentence between 1-7 years of criminal period
- Children who first committed a criminal offense
- Have a low level of self esteem, as evidenced by the results of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) pre-test and obtained a score in the interval range of 10-25
- Have a very low, moderately low and low level of learning motivation as evidenced by the results of the Motivated Strategies For Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) pre-test and scored in the range of 30-93.

## **Measurement of Intervention Effectiveness**

The method used in this study is an experimental qualitative method so that the data collection process is carried out through observation, interviews and questionnaires used to measure the level of self esteem and learning motivation of foster children before and after being given CBT intervention. The questionnaire instrument used to measure the level of self esteem of foster children is the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSES) created by Morris Rosenberg (1965) and has been adapted and translated by Anzwar (2012) with a reliability value of 0.778. Meanwhile, the questionnaire instrument used to measure the level of learning motivation of foster children is the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ)

developed by Paul R. Pintrich, Smith, Garcia, and Mc Keachie (1991). This questionnaire was translated and adapted by Lisiswanti (2015), with a reliability value of 0.846 and the validity value of each question item  $> 0.142$ , which means that all question items on this questionnaire are valid.

### **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 carried out in 4 intervention sessions with 60 minutes in each session and 1 closing session filled with posttest and program evaluation.

**Table 1.**  
Therapy Activity Schedule

Session	Session Content Activity	Assignment
Session 1	Pre-Test and Program introduction	Subjects were asked to fill out the RSES and MSLQ questionnaires.
Session 2	Intervention (1)	Subjects were given the task “mind note 1”
Session 3	Intervention (2)	Subjects were assigned “thought notes 2” and “rules and assumptions notes”
Session 4	Intervention (3)	Subjects were asked to fill out the “adjusting basic beliefs” form
Session 5	Intervention (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 fill out the RSES questionnaire and MSLQ questionnaire again.	Subjects were asked to fill out the RSES questionnaire and MSLQ questionnaire again.

The implementation of the intervention lasted for four 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 30, 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.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Before the therapy process is carried out, the assisted children are given pretest questions as an assessment of the level of self-esteem and learning motivation of the assisted children before being given intervention with the following scores :

**Table 2.**

Pretest results of participants

No	Name	Pretest Score	
		RSES	MSLQ
1.	AAS	20	74
2.	MF	21	67
3.	HS	23	70

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 thinking pattern is based on MF 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 bad behavior and compare it with other siblings or neighbors and ignore MF 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 encouraged 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, these intervention activities are also useful in emotional control where the thoughts, rules and assumptions, or basic beliefs that have been changed also have an effect on changes in the participant's mood. 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.**

Posttest results of participants

No	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 children to reach their full potential.

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