

Painting Therapy In Adolescent Mental Health

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Abstract

Mental health in adolescents is the main thing as the fulfillment of the child's awareness of recognizing who he is and what he is for. Various disorders in adolescent mental health with various psychological problems make it more difficult for adolescents to communicate, lack motivation to study and lose concentration on learning. Painting art therapy based on a mindfulness approach is one of the solutions to eliminate mental health disorders in adolescents. Mindfulness painting therapy, namely through the combination of expressive art that focuses on the life of the 'now'. this therapy provide a neutral achievement level, which can contributes to individual development, among other things, in gaining social, emotional, and environmental regulation.

Key words: Therapy, Art painting, Mindfulness

INTRODUCTION

The current COVID-19 pandemic is starting to come to a bright spot where PPKM has been released and people are more free to travel without ignoring health protocols, even though the government has not fully provided free space to the community. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on all aspects of life, such as the economy, education, and health. The impact on health is not only taking a toll on physical health due to the COVID-19 pandemic but also affecting mental (psychological) health conditions. Social isolation, closing schools, and a child's lack of outdoor activities are affecting their mental health. As in the results of an analysis of the medical research literature that has been conducted by Silva Junior, *et al.*, (2020: 3) states that the main results regarding the prevalence and severity of psychological symptoms occur in young people and adults caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It was stated that during a pandemic, physical health and the struggle against pathogens from its people were the main focus of attention by the government so that the implications for mental health tended to be ignored or underestimated. As happened in India regarding psychological pressure on children and adolescents during a pandemic with the greatest levels of worry (anxiety), helplessness, and fear (Saurabh and Ranjan, 2020). Meanwhile in China, children, and adolescents aged 3-18 years

show symptoms of lack of attention, closeness, worry, and irritability during the pandemic (Jiao *et al.*, 2020).

The research results found cases of mental health (psychological) problems regarding psychological problems due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia including stress, anxiety, depressive symptoms, insomnia, anger, global fear, stigmatization, obsessive compulsiveness, psychosomatic, and cognitive bias (Puwoko and Sartinah, 2021: 141). The pandemic affects psychological well-being, with varying case symptoms. From the results of research on psychological conditions that have been carried out in several countries such as the US, UK, Italy, Germany (Leo Sher, 2020), Bangladesh, India (Sujita Kumar, *et al.*, 2021), Japan (Nomura Shuhei, *et al.*, 2021) it becomes countries that have experienced an increased number of potential suicides compared to before the pandemic.

The results of research on the COVID-19 pandemic endanger psychological health and exacerbate the risk of suicide in Japan with a high number occurring at the level of children and adolescents (49%) (Tanaka and Okamoto, 2021). The influence of mental health with high severity in adolescents at school and academic levels is a major concern of researchers, government and society. The various psychological problems of adolescents above

make it more difficult for adolescents to communicate, lack motivation to study, and lose concentration on learning.

Various psychological disorders of adolescent health need to immediately get an appropriate therapeutic treatment that is in accordance with the child's psychological condition. Therefore, an appropriate and effective approach is needed so that it can provide space for children to be more able and free to build their learning motivation, express themselves, develop their potential and increase their understanding of abilities in assessing themselves (self-concept). From the elaboration that has been described above, the problems are formulated as follows: 1) How is painting therapy in adolescent mental health?; 2) How is the application of painting therapy to adolescent mental health?; 3) What are the benefits of painting art therapy on the development of adolescent mental health?

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Mental health

Mental health is one of the discussions in the field of psychology, in its simplest form the science of psychology is mental health. Mental health is part of a field that is applied in life, as in counseling and guidance which is carried out in all aspects of life (schools, households, community institutions, and so on). To live life with happiness and meaningfulness, mental health is very necessary. When something appears negative in ourselves and in others, such as drugs, alcoholism, self-injury, and others that are often conceptualized as negative in our health status, we become 'mentally unhealthy' (Purba, et.al., 2021:4). Furthermore, in research (Prince, et.al., p.859) most of the global diseases are depression and other common mental disorders, alcohol use and substance use disorders, and psychosis. On the basis of these assumptions, it is necessary to increase attention to the importance of mental disorders for public health.

All aspects of a person's development in mental health lead to health in psychological and physical conditions. Various problems in life greatly affect his psychological condition (Fakhriyani, 2019, p.11). Mental health also interferes with the level of other mental conditions (Prince, et.al., p.864), described as follows:

1. Mental disorders are associated with risk factors for chronic diseases such as smoking, reduced activity, irregular eating patterns, hypertension, and obesity.
2. Depression has multiple biological effects on serotonin metabolism (altered cardiac function, platelet aggregation, and vasoconstriction); on cortisol metabolism (increased cortisol, causing inflammation, excessive clotting, and metabolic syndrome); in inflammatory processes (increased inflammatory markers, which also predict the development of cardiovascular disease); and on cell-mediated immunity (decreased T-cell-mediated function, reduced natural killer cell numbers, and cytotoxicity, with relevance to cancer, development of HIV, and other infectious diseases).

Mental health consists of various efforts made in dealing with stress, not easily adaptable, how to socialize, and how to control oneself with the environment. There are several characteristics in mental health put forward by Yusuf (in Fakhriyani, 2019, p.12-13), namely: 1). Safe from psychiatric disorders; 2) Ability to adapt to the environment; 3) Have the ability to develop their competence to the fullest; 4) The ability to achieve happiness for himself and others.

Often people ignore mental disorders or mental health because of the lack of discourse on forms of appreciation for health related to mental illness that are not detected frontally. There will be no health without mental health. Mental disorders can increase the risk of communicable and non-communicable diseases, and contribute to accidental and intentional injuries. However, many health conditions increase the risk of mental disorders, complicate seeking help, diagnosis, and treatment, and affect prognosis (Prince, et.al., p.864). Health services are provided unequally to people with mental health disorders, and the lack of quality care for mental and physical health conditions for people to improve. Mental health is one of the causes of death and an emphasis on oneself because it is difficult for people to know that they have a disorder. on his psyche.

Art painting

Painting art implies art in painting, painting is defined as an activity or activity in using the processing of drawing techniques that are scratched using a brush on canvas, paper, cloth, and so on. Painting is often misunderstood as any artistic activity using mediums such as crayons, pencils, markers, and so on. Because the point in painting activities is the use of techniques in brush processing, either by using watercolor, oil color, or acrylic paint. This activity requires skill and *passion* in painting. Painting is defined as art that is done by appreciating the artistic experience of an artist by using a two-dimensional field (Maftukha, 2017, p.327).

Painting is included in the field of pure art. Painting has artistic elements such as point, line, color, plane, texture, and space, all of which are governed by the principles of art, namely harmony, proportion, balance, rhythm, harmony, composition, and unity. The work of painting is in the form of a painting. Painting in a work of art expresses the state of mind and social culture of mankind which is classified by having several genres and artists (Zhong, Huang, & Xiao, 2020, p. 137). Painting also has various styles or schools of artists such as realism, naturalism, expressionism, impressionism, futurism, pointillism, dadaism, abstractism, and so on which use artistic techniques created by the artist, then we learn, adopt, and develop it as part of a painting that will be made or presented.

Teenager

Adolescence or youth comes from the Latin word *adolescere* which means to grow towards maturity. Maturity in question is not only physical maturity but also social and psychological maturity. The transitional period between childhood and then adulthood, with changes in sexual maturity, is called *adolescence*. *Adolescence* can be interpreted as growth in a mature direction. Adolescents can be said to be an unclear group because they are not included in the

childhood group but are not classified as adults either. Psychological development in adolescents is strongly influenced by environmental and social interactions (Aisyaroh,). With changes in sexual maturity, adolescents also begin to be confronted with environmental conditions or the need for adjustments to the changes that occur within them. Sexual maturity experiences changes in body shape in the psychological or mental life of adolescents. Teenagers also begin to be interested in the anatomy and physiology of their bodies. It also starts to get a feeling of being attracted to the opposite sex or friends of the same age. Adolescents are also very vulnerable to mental health disorders because of their unstable or changeable psychological condition. Juvenile mental disorders cause the emergence of several juvenile delinquents. Juvenile delinquency consists of any behavior that violates the norms of criminal law. There are many causative factors such as internal and external factors (Sumara, Humaedi, & Santoso, 2017, p. 346). In this case, to overcome all human mental or psychiatric disorders so that they don't continue, supervision is needed, especially for their parents to become friends to tell stories and provide space for complaining. All kinds of guidance from parents and their good and supportive environment can be a determinant for their development. New training and knowledge that provides attention and psychological needs are also needed, for example by skills training, sharpening hobbies that he likes, and other *passions* to make him continue to grow and stay *happy*, safe from mental or psychiatric disorders in adolescents.

Discussion

A. Painting Therapy in Adolescent Mental Health

Handling in eliminating psychological symptoms such as anxiety, depression, and so on related to adolescent mental health is used through art therapy treatment with *mindfulness practices* to reduce the burden of symptoms that can relieve anxiety, depression, and fatigue with chronic medical conditions. The medium in *mindfulness* is through art. *Mindfulness*-based art therapy according to Rappaport combines expressive art with attention in engagement in the present, so that attention regulation, body awareness, and emotions can be achieved (Newland and Bettencourt, 2020, p.1). Types of art therapy that are often performed include fine arts, drama, dance, and music (Chiang, et.al., 2019). The practice of *mindfulness* uses fine art in the field of painting as a therapy for adolescent mental health.

Painting art therapy is one of the solutions to provide awareness on mental health for adolescents. In this case, the approach to painting therapy is to combine painting with psychology. In the approach of using art psychology, the form of therapy used is called youth painting therapy. This youth painting therapy is based on artistic expression as an artist which is adopted as therapy. Among them are forms of art therapy that are often used in painting and the most useful is using art therapy in the form of painting.

Therefore, *mindfulness painting therapy* using painting is an approach in learning the development of adolescent mental health by meeting the needs of adolescents in applying it to visual artistic artists through their artistic activities by paying attention to the

psychological healing process itself so that it can provide space for adolescents to express themselves. and express their feelings and emotions in the form of visual works. Case & Dalley mentions that there are four basics in the application of art therapy, namely: (a) Expressing children's emotions; (b) Healing the mind; (c) Healing the body; (d) Change the spirit. Techniques in the application of art therapy are classified into structured and unstructured techniques by providing themes that stimulate children's psychological healing (Case & Dalley, 1992: 248). Therefore, painting therapy is also required in its application to use a variety of mediums with various themes so that teenagers are more motivated and do not experience boredom,

In research that has been conducted by Newland & Bettencourt (2020, p.4) in their research on the effectiveness of using *mindfulness-based art therapy* to treat symptoms of anxiety, depression, and fatigue, it shows a user feasibility, is easy to use and has mediating factors for symptoms that can used in a variety of clinical conditions. Because of the potential in *mindfulness art therapy* to relieve symptoms in people with chronic medical conditions, researchers have investigated the effects of integrating *mindfulness*-based practices with art therapy (Newland and Bettencourt, 2020). Therefore, *mindfulness painting therapy* is used as a way to reduce the level of disturbance in adolescent health.

Painting as a *mindfulness therapy approach* is very useful for reducing stress and can foster creative work in adolescents. As said by Francesco (1958) that in the process of learning art contributes to individual development, namely in helping mental health, emotional, creative, social, aesthetic, and environmental development. Working in art here is not just working in the arts, but is a stimulus for teenagers to return to their enthusiasm for work in any way because this art therapy makes a bridge for children to rediscover their identity from all the anxiety disorders and mental health disorders that make them to be like inferiors who seem to have no use and no enthusiasm to live again with a new soul and a new enthusiasm to face all the challenges in the future.

B. Application of painting therapy in adolescent mental health

The application of painting therapy in adolescent mental health is based on the practice of *mindfulness* as described by Newland & Bettencourt (2020, p.2) in their research that in practice it is a combination of expressive art that focuses on living in the present, so that body awareness, attention regulation, and emotions can be achieved. In its application, this therapy involves teenagers (participants in art therapy painting) to fully concentrate and focus on what they are facing at that time, namely painting, it is not allowed to see their dark or beautiful past or what the future will be like, but the practice focuses on activities in the future. that and at that hour without any load. Participants concentrate fully on what they are painting, we seem to express our feelings, emotions, and all our thoughts in the work without any burden on them. The overflow of loss, loss, sadness, pain, and all our burdens is removed and we focus on what we see and do now as if we were living only in that time. In the development of the process, emotional outbursts without any burden within him proceed to

become a regulation of attention, body awareness, and emotional regulation can later be achieved. So that self-regulation (self-control) can be achieved with full awareness.

The application of *mindfulness-based therapy* has a strategy in emotion regulation as in the research of Yusainy, et al (2018, p. 174), that *mindfulness therapy* finds a strategy in regulating emotions (emotional regulation) which is maintained by attention (attention) which is stimulated in individuals towards experience that is accompanied by an *acceptance* of that experience as a stage in his life to not respond and assume excessively so that it can facilitate functioning in his personal orientation by approaching a neutral effect. Adapted from the theory and research results above, the application of *mindfulness-based painting therapy* can be described in the following stages:

- 1) Special therapists who handle adolescent psychology guidance, provide counseling guidance to patients with mental health disorders, and check all the conditions they face, then analyze them.
- 2) The results of the recap analysis of each individual patient are analyzed with the help of an artist/artist who is a painting therapist, then grouped according to the patient
- 3) Determine the painting class according to the patient's symptoms.
- 4) The therapist provides a theme or object to be painted, previously given a demonstration from the artist as a stimulus for the patient with painting therapist material.
- 5) *mindfulness* instructions to the painting class.
- 6) Patients who have been provided with basic materials such as canvas for painting with their tripod, brushes and paint for painting, painting palettes, and other painting materials according to the technique and type of paint when painting.
- 7) The therapist has classified several painting tools according to ability, level of difficulty, and stress or psychiatric disorders in the patient.
- 8) The patient paints according to the instructions of the psychologist therapist and artist therapist. In the process requirements of this stage, the patient is required to focus and concentrate on his painting. It is as if the patient is living in that time without seeing and thinking about the future and the past. Happy life, in those days.
- 9) The therapist checks every progress of his patient, every meeting, and how his psychological condition changes.
- 10) The therapist always gives a speaking room to the patient according to the hours set by the painting therapy institute.
- 11) After practicing every day and finding progress in the psychological development of the patient and seeing that the patient has been able to get 'emotional regulation' and achieve a good level of consciousness, the patient can be considered returning to neutral (normal) and leaving his mental health disorder.

The following is a description of the art therapy performed by the artist to improve his mental health condition. Like celebgram and

beautiful model Anya Geraldine, who is taking her painting class. As for among others, such as Julian Jacob, Justine Bieber, Rebecca Colpper, Cut Syifa, and so on. *Mindfulness Painting Therapy* in its application is to give the patient as if he were an artist at that moment, focusing on what is facing him and not giving room for movement in the past or the future. 'Live in those days'. There are also various types of therapy, some use painting canvases such as celebrity program @anyageraldine, *painting by number*, & *coloring book*. For singer Justin Bieber using *coloring books* as a therapy to improve his mental condition.



Figure 1. Application of Painting Art Therapy
Source. Screenshot @anyageraldine

Through various activities in this painting, art therapy provides motor skills that can educate emotionally on adolescent mental health. Another benefit of this therapy is the development of creativity for teenagers in the future. Not only painting but for

other forms of artistic expression is directed to the development of creativity, increasing verbal communication because some teenagers are shy and have difficulty expressing themselves and face challenges from outside, but this painting art therapy, those who have practicing it can release creativity, emotionally neutral.

In recovering mental health in adolescents it will also give a feeling of happiness after practicing because by joining the class they can get entertainment, relaxation, peace, and also fun. So that there is an increase in their self-control, their laziness, their emotional regulation, social and environmental regulation, self-confidence, stress, thoughts, and skills.

Conclusion

Painting therapy based on mindfulness is a therapy in psychology by using art as a tool for acceptance. The application of painting as a mindfulness therapy approach is very useful for reducing stress and can foster creative work in adolescents. As said by Francesco (1958) that therapy patients will get a contribution to their individual development, namely in helping mental health, emotional, creative, social, aesthetic, and environmental development. This painting therapy focuses on individual practice to live in the 'now' as an artist, without the burden of looking towards the future or life in the past. The application of mindfulness painting therapy is given access to consultation with a therapist, then the therapist classifies the types and media given in his painting practice according to the results of his mental condition. The therapist checks every development on the results of meetings and practices until he finds the patient's psychological condition neutral and the patient can achieve emotional, social, and environmental regulation.

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