

## The influence of art therapy media usage on guidance and counseling services in children of primary school

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### Abstract

Primary school-aged children are the development of middle and late childhood. The period in which children can verbalize emotional conflict experienced. But in elementary school-aged children, found children who have difficulty in verbalize feelings and understand emotions. To achieve the successful implementation of guidance and counseling services in primary schools, a media is needed to help the implementation of guidance and counseling services in terms of digging information on children who have difficulty in understanding emotions, such as the use of art therapy media. Art therapy is used as a tool in the implementation of guidance and counseling services. So children can express thoughts and feelings they can not express, such as physical violence or complex emotional experiences. Implementation of guidance and counseling services can be assisted by using art therapy media as a tool to dig information in children who have difficulty in verbalize feelings and understand emotions.

**Keywords:** Art Therapy Media, Guidance and Counseling Services, Primary School Children

**How to Cite:** Nenden Nurrohmah.(2017). The influence of art therapy media usage on guidance and counseling services in children of primary school. In Ifdil & Krishnawati Naniek (Eds.), *International Conference: 1st ASEAN School Counselor Conference on Innovation and Creativity in Counseling* (pp. 82-86). Yogyakarta: IBKS Publishing.

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### Introduction

Primary school-aged children are children 6-12 years of age, whereas they gains basic knowledge and skills to be able to recognize emotions or feelings experienced. Elementary School (SD) is the strongest socio-economic institution in human development (Gibson, Robert L. & Mitchell, Marianne H., 2011: 81). So the school becomes a place of children in interacting with many people. Therefore, the education of feeling is very important to be introduced to the children, so that they can socialize or share their feelings toward others.

Feelings education in children in school is closely related to the implementation of counseling and guidance services in elementary school where they can interact a lot with others. Counseling and guidance services in primary schools are more closely related and integrated with the learning process (Kartadianata, Sunaryo., Ahman, and Sugandi, Nani M, 2002: 2). In the learning process children see or learn from the experiences or events around them. So the interesting thing in the effort to help elementary school age children is a way or strategy in providing guidance and counseling services, especially in terms of extracting information.

Primary school-age children are in middle and late childhood, meaning that children in those ages can understand and recognize their emotional changes. Children who can understand and recognize emotions can affect the child's ability to learn, socialize, and behave with the environment. Especially in terms of development and emotional growth in children, which is an important role in human life.

The emotional development of children in primary school age is no longer controlled by emotions of self-interest but also contains elements of attention to the interests of others, although this trend is not yet a consistent pattern of behavior. The child is able to develop in understanding the more complex emotions, so it makes it easier for children to verbalize the emotional conflict they experienced. However, an undeveloped child in understanding emotions will have difficulty in verbalizing feelings and understanding emotions. According to Angger Bondan (2015) if the child is not able to recognize emotions, there is a possibility that the child is difficult to determine the emotional response when they interact or relate. So the child has difficulty in communicating with others.

Children who have difficulty expressing feelings can occur to they who experience violent acts or complex emotional experiences. So the child is difficult to express his/her feelings. So it is needed a media in digging information about children experiences to help communication with them.

According to The British Association of Art Therapists (in Neil Springham, 2015), art therapy is a form of psychotherapy that uses the media of art as the main capital to communicate. It offers the opportunity to express, communicate and can be very helpful to someone who feels difficult to express thoughts and feelings verbally. According to Pawitri (2014), art therapy has many advantages in helping and understanding children with emotional and behavioral disorders. The simplest art therapy to apply is painting, drawing and coloring.

Based on the above description, the purpose of this article is to explain about the influence of usage of art therapy media towards the implementation of guidance and counseling service at elementary school age. In this case art therapy media is used as a tool in digging information and recognize the emotions of primary school children.

## Discussion

Elementary School (SD) in Indonesia is the most basic level in formal education. Taken within 6 years, ranging from Class 1 to Class 6. As a basic education, elementary school students are generally aged 7-12 years. This age is called middle and late childhood, characterized by the beginnings of decision-making ability, understanding of causal relationships, social understanding, emotional control, and self-awareness.

Primary school-aged children have an increased emotional development. According to Santrock, John. W (2011: 248) that children in elementary schools develop improved abilities to understand more complex emotions. Developing the ability to recognize emotions can occur in children who are already able to understand the emotions that exist in him. In addition, children can recognize the emotional changes that are being experienced. As for children who have not been able to understand their emotions, it can affect the behavior or actions that appear in children. So that emerging negative

emotions such as moody, sad, and angry. It can cause children to have difficulty expressing their feelings toward others.

Problems in children in terms of expressing emotions of feeling is the impact of the child's ability to recognize the emotions that exist in him. It will have an impact on personal development. According to Ahmadi, Abu (2009: 111) emotions have an important role for human life because it affects the development and formation of the person. So that personal formation in this case recognizes emotions in children need to be helped and directed through media or methods that can aid stimulation in recognizing their emotions.

Art therapy is one therapy that uses images as a medium to identify and explore feelings. Through pictures, children will be able to describe and assess themselves. In other words, the image is a form of language. Hirawan (2014) states that through art therapy, such as painting or coloring activities, children can develop nonverbal expressions, emotions, channel ideas, show relationships and interactions with others and give children the opportunity to express verbal expressions spontaneously.

According to Eduardus Pambudi (2016) benefits and advantages Art therapy, so it can help many clients and patients in the face of problems. Some of the benefits of art therapy are as follows.

1. Increasing your awareness or awareness of the present is one of the important things that must be had to be able to deal with social situations or psychological problems that interfere.
2. Identify the emotional response, and feel the connection between your body and mind (body and mind) is an emotional response to situations that are sometimes very difficult to feel and disclose.
3. Strengthen self image, so it can be easier to identify and reinforce positive self image.
4. Being able to feel the emotions that exist within the self is easier in managing yourself, so it can be more optimal in the move, without having to bother with emotional problems that are often troubled.

Soetjiningsih (2012) suggests that studies have shown that barriers in socio-emotional development result in the emergence of academic problems. In addition, Efendi (2008) states that some behaviors that are often exposed by children with emotional and behavioral disorders are part of their efforts to make adjustments to the social environment. However, it will cause problems, such as aggressive behavior, regression, projection, rationalization, compensation, destruction, etc.

Children have emotional impulses that need release. Excitement, sadness, anxiety, and other emotional states can be seen from the lines, shapes, themes, and colors the child uses in his picture. In the Ayahbunda Series books explained the meaning of the colors used by children, namely as follows.

1. Children generally use contrasting colors such as red, yellow, and orange, meaning free emotion, indicating the impulses to be released.
2. Cool colors like blue and green, tend to be used by children who are less spontaneous.
3. Whereas if the child uses a dark color, chances are the child is less happy or depressed.

Research conducted by Perkins (2007), entitled creating containment and facilitating freedom: group art therapy with children with emotional behavioural disorders, showed that through art therapy activities the animal art project provides media for children with attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) for pouring creativity as well as providing opportunities to explore the personal problems of ADHD children as well as looking at relationships and interactions within the group.

Researcher and psychologist from the Institute for Psychology University of Leipzig, Germany, Evelin Witruk, said that effective art therapy developed in Indonesia. This therapy also has a big impact because it is able to provide psychological services for those who are experiencing problems and

pressure of life (Olivia Levi Pramesti, 2012). The use of media art therapy is very effective applied to various settings, one of them in school. This is in accordance with some opinions and previous research. The research that has been done by Rifa Hidayah (2014) shows that art therapy has an effect on the improvement of children's self concept.

Counseling and guidance services for elementary school children are essential in dealing with child problem solving. Problem solving will not happen if the child is difficult to express feelings or emotions experienced. It is necessary to use media as an intermediary in digging the child's feeling information.

The main factors underlying the need for counseling and guidance services for elementary school-aged children are characteristic and developmental problems of students Kartadianata, Sunaryo., Ahman, and Sugandi, Nani. M: 2002: 2). Counseling services and counseling oriented approach to the development is more proactive compared with the remediative and preventive-oriented therefore the use of Art Therapy media in this approach in accordance with the approach of guidance and counseling services needed, especially in terms of excavation of emotional feelings exposure that occurred in children who have difficulty expressing their feelings.

Guidance and counseling services are indispensable in instructional implementation, because in practice not a few among students in following the learning process has difficulty in capturing and understanding the contents of the lessons delivered by the teacher. Students experiencing learning difficulties are certain to require specific services in the form of treatment that is able to awaken the spirit of learning, foster motivation of low levels so that the impulse to learn to catch up from his friends. In relation to the achievement of the task of the development of Guidance and Counseling services becomes urgent also for every student. The purpose of the implementation of guidance and counseling services in elementary school education is expected to school-age children to develop optimally.

In addition, according to Widada (2017) guidance and counseling services are needed to be given to elementary students with the consideration that every student is certainly never out of trouble in his/her life. The problem can sometimes be solved on themselves, but sometimes the problem is not easy to overcome by themselves. Failure to carry out this developmental task will cause disappointment, anxiety, rejection of society, and haunted failures in carrying out the next developmental task.

Thus, counseling and counseling services by using the Art Therapy media influential in digging information and understanding emotions in children ages. It is very helpful as a tool in implementing guidance and counseling services which can improve the development and growth the emotion or in understanding the emotion on the children of elementary school ages.

## Conclusions

Implementing counseling and guidance services for primary school-aged children requires the attention of counseling and counseling teachers (BK teachers) or child counselors especially in terms of exploring information on problems experienced by children that they can not verbally express. The use of language as a means of communication greatly affects the interaction of children with others.

The language used by BK teachers in Elementary School or child counselors is not like the language used by BK teachers at the middle level. BK Teachers at elementary school should be more active in implementing counseling and guidance services in children. Various media that can help the implementation of guidance and counseling services utilized by BK teachers especially drawing activities as an alternative way to express emotions and feelings buried.

## Acknowledgments

Alhamdulillahirobbal'alamin the writer has arranged this article by looking for various materials references, assisted by parents in selecting appropriate references to the prepared headings. The authors wish to thank as much as possible to parents who have provided funding in the preparation of this article.

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