

Application of Child-centered Play Therapy to Increase Empathy in School-Age Child with Conduct Disorder who Lives in Orphanage

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to get understanding of the effectiveness of child-centered play therapy to increase empathy in school-age child with conduct disorder who lives in an orphanage. Empathy in this research is defined as an emotional response experienced by the individual as a result of his/her understanding of the emotional, psychological, or physical conditions of others, and then he expressed it in the same or in tune as the other's emotional response. The sample in this study is one child who was recruited by using purposive sampling and the data were analyzed using qualitative methods.

The results showed that the application of child-centered play therapy can increase empathy in school-age child with conduct disorder that lives in an orphanage. This is indicated by the increase in Griffith Empathy Measure scores that were administered before and after the intervention, although the raise is not prominent. However, qualitatively, there were some behavior changes that observed during intervention session, such as the subject became more cooperative, play fairly, and not tried to control the therapist. These changes in behavior were difficult to generalize beyond the therapeutic context by the subject.

As the result was analyzed by the theories used in this study, the result is related with the lack of support from the environment to implement behavior that develops in therapy. Beside that, the subject show avoidant attachment and has less exposure to empathy behavior model that make him difficult to show empathic behavior in daily life.

Keywords: child-centered play therapy, empathy, school-age child, conduct disorder, orphanage