

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ISLAMIC MUSIC THERAPY ON LANGUAGE ABILITY IN AUTISTIC CHILDREN AGED 6-11 YEARS

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Abstract

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) data in 2011 asserted that around 35 million people worldwide were autistic. In Indonesia, the Director of Mental Health Development under the Ministry of Health suspected that about 112,000 children ages 5-19 years were affected by this disease. This research aimed to determine the effectiveness of Islamic song therapy toward language ability in autistic children ages 6-11 years. This research method used a pre-experiment with one group pre-test and post-test design approach with autistic children with as many as 16 people. The research samples were eight respondents (purposive sampling technique). The method of data collection used in this research was Massey Language Test. Based on the results, Islamic song therapy effectively improves language ability in autistic children. Recommendations that the researcher delivered to readers, Islamic song therapy can be included in learning in schools and applied in the department of nursing, especially to children subject with special needs, further deepening the practice of providing Islamic song therapy to autism.

Keywords: *Islamic Music therapy, Language Ability, Autism*

Introduction

Over time, the prevalence of autism is increasing. For example, a survey from 2011 UNESCO data shows that about 35 million people live with autism worldwide. An average of 6 out of every 1,000 people worldwide has autism. Similarly, research conducted by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in the United States in 2008 showed that the ratio of 8-year-olds diagnosed with autism was 1:80. The 2012 CDC was 1:88, while the 2014 CDC increased by 30%, which is 1.5% (1:68) from American children (Handayani et al., 2018).

According to (Budiman, 2017), autism is a disease that is relatively often faced by many Indonesians. Although there has never been a genuinely formal survey in Indonesia itself, the Director of Mental Health Development of the Ministry of Health suspects that around 112,000 children aged 5-19 years were affected by the disease in 2013. Indonesia's Central Statistics Agency in 2010 had 66 million people under the age of 20, so in comparison, 1 in 590 children in Indonesia have autism. In the city of Mataram, West Nusa Tenggara, the prevalence of autism in 2004-2007 ranged from 2.8-3.3 per 10,000 children under the age of 10. At SLB Negeri Pembina Mataram, the number of autistic children is increasing yearly. On data obtained from SLB Negeri Pembina Mataram in 2016, the number of autistic children was 12 people. In 2017, it grew to 13 children, and the latest data in 2018 showed that there was autistic children total of 16 children.

Delays in communication and language are characteristic of autistic children, and they always belong to an autistic child. Communication and language development are very different from that of ordinary children. Communication difficulties experienced by autistic children are caused by language barriers (verbal and nonverbal), even though language is the primary medium of communication. The ability to communicate and speak is an essential part of everyday life. Through good communication and language skills, the child can understand, convey information, ask what he likes, and express his desire to meet his own needs. But this will not happen to an autistic child (Asri, 2013).

From preliminary study data at SLB Negeri Pembina Mataram, there are a total number of children with autism, as many as 16 children, and are grouped into "Autistic Classes." The class is divided into the SDLB Autistic Class of 10 children and the SMPLB Autistic Class of 6 children. Teachers at the school stated that every child with an autistic disorder has different ways and methods of teaching, and it is carried out with a different approach. Every autistic child has a distinct ability to capture and respond to the material presented by his teacher. Therefore, how to teach must also be adjusted to the skills of the child. The subject matter given to autistic children is almost the same as for children usually, such as eye-catching when speaking: reading, writing, counting, and so on, but what distinguishes it is more about how to communicate or convey messages to the child. An example of a teacher-teaching method is to train the child's numeracy skills by asking him to shop in the cafeteria. The child will be asked to buy something in the canteen, then the teacher will ask for change received by the child. The child will mention the price of the item or food purchased and return the difference by stating the nominal cost of the item. The teacher also said that autistic children tend to have behaviors that are unable to express their feelings, are slow in reacting, lack communication skills, and do not have eye contact when speaking.

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that one of the essential things for autistic children is that they can not focus on their world, tell stories and communicate and learn to establish relationships with others. Therefore, they need stimulation to develop their creativity and imagination to socialize. Autism therapy according to (Suteja, 2014), is a form of implementation in autistic children that are arranged and sustainable to control behavior and for changes in the child's adaptability according to their age and is multidisciplinary, namely: (1) biomedical therapy (medicamentous), (2) ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) or behavioral therapy, (3) and other therapies such as diet therapy, speech therapy, sensory integration, and music therapy. Music therapy is a complementary therapy that can be given today. Because music can affect the process of thinking, music can create a pleasant atmosphere. (Silvia & Monique, 2017).

According to the World Music Therapy Federation (WMFT), music therapy is given by music therapists who already have experience using musical elements such as sound, rhythm, melody, and harmony given to consumers or groups to be able to communicate with others or foster relationships with others, be able to express feelings or express themselves according to mood, establish good relationships, learn to control emotions and various other goals. And Islamic music therapy has a peculiarity seen from the type of music used as therapy, for example, spiritual or spiritual music, which is very beneficial for the body; for example, it can make the soul calm peaceful, make sense of happiness and calm because it makes the body secrete happy hormones and release pain (Anam et al., 2019) with the existence of music therapy, it is hoped that it will be by Herman's explanation (1996) as a form of implementation used is a music therapist because making pleasant conditions can improve the thinking process. The child will focus on the information provided and record it in memory if the atmosphere outside is excellent; that makes him interested, and his brain is aroused to store the information. A person's level of concentration will be influenced by several things, namely external strength, kinds of information, and desires. The use of music during learning is not new; music in certain types is known to stimulate the hypothalamus to secrete endorphin hormones so that the brain becomes open and readily receptive to information. Piece eliminates anxiety, reduces tension, improves morale, and strengthens memory (Suwanti, 2011).

The description of the problem above makes researchers interested in research on the Effectiveness of Islamic Music Therapy on Language Skills in Autistic Children Aged 6-11 Years at SLB Negeri Pembina Mataram. This research aims to determine the effectiveness of Islamic music therapy on language skills in autistic children aged 6-11 years at SLB Negeri Pembina Mataram.

Methods

This study used the pre-experiment method with a group pre-test and post-test design approach. This research was conducted at SLB Negeri Pembina Mataram in May 2019. The sample used was an autistic child at SLB Negeri Pembina Mataram. The sampling technique uses a purposive sampling technique with a total piece of 8 people. The data collection tool uses the Massey Language Test observation sheet (2003). The analysis used is a bivariate analysis using the Paired Samples T-Test. The ethics to conduct the study were obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of Poltekkes Kemenkes Mataram No. 78/UN32.04.3/KEP/EC/2022.

Results

An overview of language skills before and after islamic music therapy is depicted in Table 1.

Table 1. Analysis of univariate Before and After Islamic Music Therapy

Variable	Results	
Language Skills		
Before Islamic Music Therapy	Frequency N=8	Percentage (%)
Active	0	0
Medium	2	25.0
Passive	6	75.0
After Islamic Music Therapy		
Active	2	25.0
Medium	3	37.5
Passive	3	37.5

Table 1 shows there is no language ability in autistic children with an active category, while respondents with a moderate type two respondents (25.0%) and with a passive sort of six respondents (75.0%). The language skills of respondents after being given Islamic music therapy showed that respondents with the active type amounted to 2 respondents (25.0%), respondents with the medium category totaled three respondents (37.5%), and the passive class totaled three respondents (37.5%).

Table 2: The Effectiveness of Islamic Music Therapy on Language Skills in Autistic Children Aged 6-11 Years

Pre Test/ Post Test	N	Mean	Mean Difference	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pre Test	8	14.13	8.00	10.021	3.543	0.003
Post Test	8	22.13		14.436	5.104	

Table 2 shows the value of Sig from the statistical test results paired samples T-Test. (2-tailed) is $0.003 \leq \alpha (0.05)$? There was an increase in the average value (Mean) from 14.13 to 22.13, with an average indigo difference (Mean) of 8.00. There is an increase in the average value (Mean) of language skills before and after Islamic music therapy, so it can be concluded that H_a is accepted, which means that Islamic music therapy effectively improves language skills in autistic children.

Discussions

Respondents' Language Skills Before Being Given Islamic Music Therapy

Based on the results of observations, of the eight items of language proficiency, the lowest value was aimed, which is where it is difficult for respondents to follow the command to write. Question items that show similar values are also where autistic children are less able to copy words. This can be seen when the observation process is in progress; when asked to write and copy words, respondents tend to need clarification and help understand what is instructed. Respondents kept silent and even did something undeterred several times, such as drawing and playing with pencils. There are even respondents who don't know how to hold a pencil. Unlike when the respondent is instructed to repeat the words of others, such as imitating some words or sentences that the respondent must repeat, the respondent is much easier to understand and follow what is being ordered, although it must be guided first. This is in line with research conducted by (Bariyyah, 2018) revealed that Teaching writing skills to autistic children show teaching achievements to other non-disabled children. In general, autistic children experience confusion due to several factors, including difficulty holding a pencil, inconsistency in writing, lack of imagination, and understanding of abstract and symbolic objects. Some autistic children up to 8 in specialized schools may not always be able to write one alphabet symbol. Elementary school children can count a lot, string letters, string words, write, count, measure high and low, and big and small, based on developmental tasks, but so in a fun game. Note. Found in autistic children.

The situation is aggravated if there is no suitable medium for them. Media is a tool that can support activities in the educational and learning process. Media is a tool that can be used as a message channel to achieve educational goals. Unfortunately, the number of teaching media from both the government and the learning media market for autistic children, including the creation of leading media, is not large. Even in autistic schools, it is difficult to find suitable

writing learning media(Bariyyah, 2018).

Respondents' Language Skills After Being Given Islamic Music Therapy

Based on the results of observations, out of 8 items of language proficiency, a significantly increased value was where respondents seemed to be able to repeat words said by others. When given Islamic music therapy, respondents are first given material in terms, and respondents are required to imitate these words. When the therapy process was in progress, respondents seemed more relaxed and happy and welcomed the words that came out of the music several times. In addition, one of the causes of the increase in language skills in respondents was due to guidance from observers and parents/guardians at home; this allowed respondents to study intensively, causing respondents to more easily imitate the words ordered after being given Islamic music therapy. As a result, the articulation of the words spoken by the respondents is getting better and better.

In addition, after receiving Islamic music therapy, the overall language skills of the interviewee have improved. After receiving Islamic music therapy, respondents who initially had poor expression skills, slow response, lack of communication, and inability to make eye contact while speaking, experienced development. Respondents had stronger expression skills, faster responses, more vital communication skills, and more frequent eye contact.

Music therapy can help children improve their oral skills, especially in conceptualization, symbolization, and comprehension. According to experts, both types of music are hemispherical. Therefore, music therapy can support autistic children in improving their thinking and language skills. In addition, it is believed that children with autism communicate only through music when they participate in listening activities, despite doing so. This causes music therapists to realize that an autistic child's response to musical sounds is faster and easier than with verbal commands or physical methods.

The results above are the opinion (Sari 2013), which says that music will improve thinking, psychological, physical, behavioral, and social skills in autistic children and has been shown to improve the human brain and intellectual function. In addition, music affects the development of memory in children, especially those with a general developmental disorder otherwise known as autism.

The Effectiveness of Islamic Music Therapy on Language Skills in Autistic Children Aged 6-11 Years

Based on the results of the evaluation, Islamic music therapy can have a positive influence on improving language skills in autistic children. Judging from the results of observations, several items of the eight articles of language skills have increased, including expressing yourself when speaking, understanding other people's speech, repeating words spoken by others, recognizing the names of objects around them, reading, drawing, and copying words. However, the concern here is that respondents have not been able to write. This is evidenced by the results of pre-tests and post-tests that show respondents cannot express words in written form. The teacher's statement also reinforces that the respondent has yet to be able to write if the word is spoken by someone else; some respondents can only write if the respondent is asked to copy the word from the writing.

According to researchers, there is the effectiveness of Islamic music therapy on respondents' language skills because it is known that music is effective in helping cognitive development in autistic children. The atmosphere created during the therapy process attracted respondents' attention with the presence of Islamic music. The atmosphere during therapy that is pleasant and comfortable with the company of Islamic music can create a focused concentration in listening to the instructions given by researchers and facilitators. Music therapy can help stop withdrawal using establishing relationships with objects, in this case, islamic music, since respondents see music as something pleasant. Autistic children are usually easier to recognize and more open to sounds than verbal approaches. This is an intermediary to build relationships between respondents, researchers, and facilitators who provide instructions.

It is by the objectives of music therapy set forth (Yuanda, 2014) that It is in accordance with the goals of music therapy that music therapy is focused on developing language skills, both verbal and non-verbal. However, the improvement is only in some of the components the researcher has established.

Respondents in this study were autistic children aged 6-11 years. The age of 9-11 years is the age that has the most active language skills. This age is an elementary school age group where children's abilities have begun to develop by gradually developing language and thinking skills in a symbolic form. (Bawono, 2017) states that children's language skills towards the end of childhood are usually carried out by absorbing various lessons at school through communication with teachers, conversations with other children, and reading books. This shows that the magnitude of age plays a role in children's language skills development.

Participants in this study were autistic boys and girls. In this study, more participants were men than women. This depends on the number of respondents whose gender is more dominant. Research shows that boys and girls absorb language differently. Most studies show that girls are slightly more advanced than boys in the early stages of speech and language development. Girls speak more clearly than boys, and girls use names, naming games, role-playing games, and abstract voices more.

Based on the results of this study, Islamic music therapy has an impact on improving language skills in autistic children. This is because the language skills of autistic children have improved after being given Islamic music therapy. The results of this research align with (Yuanda, 2014)(and Bawono, 2017) that music therapy can improve language ability and reduce symptoms of language barriers in autistic children.

Conclusions

There are differences in language skills in autistic children before and after being given Islamic music therapy. So it can be concluded that Islamic music therapy is effective in improving language skills in autistic children. It is hoped that the school can provide music therapy on an ongoing basis before learning at school and applied in the field of nursing, especially to the subject matter of children with special needs.

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