

The Effectiveness of Family Counseling Based on the Quality of Family Life to Increase the Independence of Cerebral Palsy Children During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Certain situations encountered by children with special needs might get the family struggling. The complexity of the issue affecting a family's quality of life in developing the potential of children with cerebral palsy occurs when the family lacks communication, relationship among the members of the family, and cooperation between family and school. To solve the issue, they need family counseling. This research is quasi-experimental research that examines the cause-and-effect relationship between Family Quality of Life-based family counseling as the independent variable and the development of children with cerebral palsy as the dependent variable. The population for this research is 10 children with cerebral palsy in Padang. Findings show that Family Quality of Life-based family counseling has significantly improved the independence of children with cerebral palsy and has reached its goal to guide the family in building a family with a quality environment where they can enjoy and work together.

Keywords: *Family, Children, Covid-19*

1. INTRODUCTION

Children's potential will have greater development in a great environment. The closest environment to children is family. Since family is the smallest unit and the closest to children, it has a significant impact on children's development [1] Family is the primary source that provides guidance and education for children. It functions as the agent of education, nurture, and socialization. The goal is to develop the potential of family members and ensure their function in society, so they can have a healthy environment and happy family [2].

Every family wishes for a child with appropriate development. Parents hope their children become the pride of the family. However, some families learn that their children are different from other children, who are

referred to as children with special needs [3]. Some situations encountered by children with special needs might get the family struggling. Some families even reject their children's situation which will have a negative impact on their children's development. If the environment does not provide a child with a good stimulus, it will delay their development [4].

The complexity of the issue affecting a family quality of life in developing the potential of children with cerebral palsy occurs when family lacks communication, relationship among the members of the family, and cooperation between family and school [5]. Hence, to solve the issue, they need family counseling.

Family counseling is one of the correct ways to help a family overcome their problems. Counseling helps to identify the problem, seek for solution, and remind that

every problem has its solution. Family counseling is a process of training for parents to control their actions [6].

This research used Family Quality of Life (FqoL) as the approach of family counseling. According to [7], Family Quality of Life is a dynamic perception of the well-being of a family, defined collectively and subjectively by every member of the family, in which individual and family needs interact. Family Quality of Life is important especially for the family of children with cerebral palsy because their potential needs to be developed with the support and participation from family members. The cooperation from every member of the family will later optimize their potential. Children with cerebral palsy are special. They need continuity and repetition in the learning process. Hence, family support will decide their success in learning.

2. METHOD

This research is quasi experimental research that examines the cause-and-effect relationship between Family Quality of Life-based family counseling as the independent variable and the development of children with cerebral palsy as the dependent variable. This research aims to identify the effectiveness of Family Quality of Life-based family counseling to improve the independence of children with cerebral palsy.

This research used pretest-posttest non-equivalent control group design of classes with similar conditions. Each control class and experiment class were given pretest and posttest and the treatment was only provided to the experiment class using Family Quality of Life-based family counseling. The purpose is to identify the influence of the treatment on the independence of children with cerebral palsy. Pretest-posttest non-equivalent control group design is illustrated below (Creswell, 2014):

Group A: O ----- X ----- O

Group B: O ----- O

A	=	Experiment group
B	=	Control group
O	=	Pre-test; Post-test
X	=	Treatment

Each group had been given pretest and posttest before the treatment was provided to the experiment group using Family Quality of Life-based family counseling. The purpose is to identify the influence of the treatment on the independence of children with cerebral palsy.

The population for this research consisted of 10 children with cerebral palsy in Padang. The samples were selected using non-probability sampling in which the respondents were selected on their convenience and

availability [8], and not randomly selected. The technique of sampling used in this research was purposive sampling.

Table 1

General Measures of Independence of Children with Cerebral Palsy

No.	Measure	Rate
1.	$X > 30$	Independent
2.	$15 < X \leq 30$	Less Independent
3.	$X \leq 15$	Not Independent

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

The results of the research from the pretest scores of ten children with cerebral palsy are outlined as follows:

- a. The rates found from the samples consist of three categories: independent; less independent; not independent.
- b. 60% of the 10 samples selected are categorized as less independent.
- c. 10% of the 10 samples selected are categorized as independent.
- d. 30% of the 10 samples selected are categorized as not independent.

After Family Quality of Life-based family counseling was given to the experiment class, children with cerebral palsy were ranked based on their independence score on each aspect, as described below:

3.1.1 Emotional aspect

Humans learn to control their emotions from an early age in various ways to be accepted in their environment. At an early age, a child begins to accept authority from other than parents, realize their task responsibility, obey the rules, and control their emotions. They start to realize that they cannot act on impulse but need to adapt to their parent's emotional needs. Therefore, they need to detach their emotional bonds with their parents to learn to make a decision [9].The independence scores of the emotional aspect are summarized below:

Independence Rate	Experiment Group	Control Group
Independent	20%	0%
Less Independent	50%	60%
Not Independent	30%	40%

3.1.2 Intellectual aspect

Every individual possesses different potential and cognitive abilities. Cognitive ability is started by understanding the simple definition of concrete objects and the process continues with the gradual changing of thought, intelligence, and language[9]. The independence scores on the intellectual aspect are summarized below:

Independence Rate	Experiment Group	Control Group
Independent	30%	0%
Less Independent	60%	70%
Not Independent	10%	30%

3.1.3 Social aspect

Children need the company of others or their peers. Social interaction will directly or indirectly influence their personality. They can adapt according to their age and development stage and they also can easily interact and socialize with others and accept others' weaknesses. It is shown from their ability to build interaction, establish self-reliance, and not interrupt others' actions [9], The independence scores on the social aspect are summarized below:

Independence Rate	Experiment Group	Control Group
Independent	20%	0%
Less Independent	60%	60%
Not Independent	20%	40%

The process *Family Quality of Life*-based family counseling is performed through several stages as described as follows[10].

3.1.3.1 Building Rapport

Counselor attempts to establish rapport. It means a conducive, friendly, honest, and trusted relationship with the client.

3.1.3.2 Building Emotional Appreciation

This process aims to create a respectful relationship between the counselor and every member of the family. It aims to avoid the emotional explosion that may occur during the interaction.

3.1.3.3 Building Alternative Behavior

Counselor attempts to create or change behavior through the process of a family counseling in pursuance of a happy family.

3.1.3.4 Building Relationship

To build a relationship, a counselor needs to develop the following attitudes:

- a. Acceptance, it means accepting client regardless of their gender, level, social status, and religion.
- b. Unconditional positive regard, it means giving unconditional respect, not judging, mocking, and criticizing the client.
- c. Understanding, it means counselor understands the client's condition.
- d. Genuine, it means counselor shows genuine and honest self and talks and acts appropriately.
- e. Empathy, it means the counselor understands the feelings of the client.

3.1.3.5 Accelerating Positive Action

This stage is a consolidation of the counseling process. Hypothesis testing was conducted using a non-parametric test to identify the effectiveness of Family Quality of Life-based family counseling in improving the independence of children with cerebral palsy. A non-parametric test was carried out using Mann Whitney U test because the samples of this research were not randomly selected. The following table describes statistical test analysis on the effectiveness of Family Quality of Life-based family counseling in improving the independence of children with cerebral palsy.

Ranks

	CLASS	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
SCORE	1	5	42.17	1672.00
	2	5	35.38	1245.00
	TOTAL	10		

	SCORE
Mann-Whitney U	521.000
Wilcoxon W	1.482E3
Z	-1.762
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.025

Grouping Variable: CLASS

The results from the statistical test show that Family Quality of Life-based family counseling is effective as a counseling service to help the independence of children with cerebral palsy. The conclusion was drawn after comparing the Sig (2-tailed) value of 0,025 with α value of 0,05. If Sig (2-tailed) value is lower than α value, it means H_0 is rejected. In other words, Family Quality of Life-based family counseling is effective to improve the independence of children with cerebral palsy.

4. DISCUSSION

The family of children with cerebral palsy is challenged with a multitude of issues [11]. Although both father and mother will experience physical and mental stress, a mother will significantly experience a higher level of stress [12]. One of the primary roles of parents of children with cerebral palsy is helping them to achieve optimal development. It achieves when the child is able to function their ability optimally with the level of their disability [13]. However, the reality portrays that many children with cerebral palsy still struggle to achieve their optimal development due to the lack of self-independence.

The failure to achieve optimal potential is not merely caused by children's disability; it is also the consequence of the incapability of education organizers to facilitate the children and failure to identify their challenges [14]. For this reason, guidance and counseling are important to help to solve the problems.

Family Quality of Life-based family counseling is an attempt to solve the problems that occur in the family of children with cerebral palsy. It offers a service to individuals, both head of family and members of the family, to create a harmonious family relationship, function productively, adapt to family norms, and actively participate to build a happy family.

Family Quality of Life-based family counseling is designed based on the assessment and objective condition of children with cerebral palsy and their family. Family Quality of Life-based family counseling is a program that guides the family to build a family with a quality environment where they can enjoy and work together.

Family Quality of Life-based family counseling has significantly influenced the independence of children with cerebral palsy. This research found the transformation between the initial condition and after-treatment condition. The family that did not understand the aspects of psychological development and self-guidance needed for children with cerebral palsy has now understood what needs to be done. Furthermore, the motivation and awareness of the family to participate in giving stimulation have helped to improve the independence of children with cerebral palsy.

5. CONCLUSION

Family Quality of Life-based family counseling has positively influenced the improvement of independence of children with cerebral palsy. The program aims to guide the family in building a family with a quality environment where they can enjoy and work together.

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