

GESTALT GAME TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' ADAPTABILITY IN PONDOK PESANTREN

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Abstract

This study aims at finding the effectiveness of guidance and counselling through Gestalt Game technique in improving students' adaptability in two Islamic boarding schools. The study was conducted by using a pretest-posttest nonequivalent group design involving four groups of students from two different Islamic boarding schools. The study considered the influence of gender and boarding school environment towards the effectiveness of Gestalt Game. It was conducted by controlling heterogeneity in students' adaptability before the treatment as well as students' religiosity. The study shows that Gestalt Game is effective in improving adaptability of the students in the two Islamic boarding schools involved in the study. Moreover, the study reveals that Gestalt Game does not affect gender and Islamic boarding schools' environment.

Keywords: Gestalt Game; students' adaptability; students' religiosity.

Introduction

Gestalt Game guidance and counselling is a therapeutic technique applying gestalt principles and therapeutic technique where the counselee is involved in a game (Bloom, 2006). Through the technique, the counselor tries to build a particular therapeutic relationship and contact, where the counselee is given a chance to affirm what he/she feels, either by using verbal or non-verbal language. He/she is also given a chance to express his/her ideas in order to maintain his/her own awareness.

Gestalt therapy, however, is not only a set of technique or games.

Though there is no involvement of game technique at all, as long as the therapy includes an interaction between the counsellor and the counselee that leads the counselee to have a better awareness, gives a chance to the counselee to experience an internal conflict, solves some dichotomies and passes through a dead-end situation, as well as faces and solves their unfinished problems in the past, it can be ensured that the therapy is a gestalt therapy (Woldt 2005).

The term of Gestalt Game in the study refers to the approach in guidance and counselling that uses games, which does not only involve

games offered in Perls' gestalt therapy (Cave 1999; Smith, 2010). Therefore, Gestalt Game is an approach created by the counsellor as to help the counselee that uses games as the technique based on the basic assumptions, principles, objectives, and phases used in Perls' gestalt therapy. Basic assumption in the Gestalt Game is that every person has his/her own capacity to manage him/her self as well as his/her environment, so that he/she can manage his/her own problems effectively.

The basic principles of Gestalt Game are holism, field theory, the figure formation process, and organismic self-regulation (Corey 2005). Pertaining to holism, Latner (1986), said that "all of nature is seen as a unified and coherent whole, and the whole is different from the sum of its parts". Field theory, however, is a principle seeing that "the organism must be seen in its environment, or in its context, as part of the constantly changing field". The figure formation process describes how an individual organizes his/her world from time to time, known as figure and ground principle (Latner, 1986). Organismic self-regulation is a principle seeing that an individual is able to take an action and build connection that may take them to the stabil condition. The stabilization process is carried out by determining priorities among various feelings or interests.

The aims of Gestalt Game is similar to what gestalt therapy wants to achieve, namely getting awareness. However, they are different in defining the terms of awareness. In this case,

awareness can be seen in a way that the counselee is able to choose. Within the process of getting the awareness, the counselee should not only understand his/her environment and his/her own self, but also accept his/herself and be able to build a relationship. The process to get the awareness is within the context of here and now, as well as based on immediate experience (Blom 2006; Brownell 2010; Mann 2010; Fagan and Shepard 1970; Hardy 1991; Magill and Rodriguez 1996).

In Gestalt Game, however, the awareness does not only comprise what has been defined before. In this context, the counselee, is eligible to make a decision if the options are based on his/her understanding towards his/her existence as a human creature in front of Allah and his/ her position as the messenger of Islam in the world. This awareness leads the counselee to maintain vertical and horizontal contact and to consider every decision and action he/she takes.

This different concept encourages the emergence of a new technique as a creation of the counselor in a form of game known as SDBHSM card game (SDBHSM card game is an interactive game between a counselor and his/her counselee as to encourage the counselee to enter a weaker awareness leading to a full awareness on here and now principle. SDBHSM is an abbreviation of five slogans, namely: (S) *siapakah anda?* (who are you?); (D) *dari mana anda berasal?* (where are you from?); (B) *berada di mana anda saat ini?* (where are you now?); (H) *hendak kemana tujuan anda?* (where

will you go?); (S) sedang apa anda saat ini? (what are you doing now?); and (M) manfaat apa yang anda peroleh? (what can you get?). The technique is conducted as a basic service in Gestalt Game guidance and counseling before the counselee uses Perls gestalt therapy technique approach.

Within boarding school environment, students get guidance and counseling by using the pattern and tradition of Islamic boarding school. The dynamics and problems experienced by the students that change from time to time should be accompanied by the development of a systematic guidance approach. Previous studies found that there were some students who had some problems with adaptation that often time lead the students to move or drop out from school.

The study aims at (1) finding the effectiveness of Gestalt Game in improving students' adaptability in Islamic boarding schools; (2) finding the influence of gender and school environment towards the effectiveness of Gestalt Game in improving students' adaptability in pondok pesantren.

Method

The study on the effectiveness of Gestalt Game in improving students' adaptability in Islamic boarding school was conducted in pondok pesantren Salafiyah Miftahul Huda Islamic boarding school, in the regency of Tasikmalaya and Amanah Muhammadiyah Sambongjaya Islamic boarding school in the city of Tasikmalaya. The test effectiveness

of Gestalt Game was conducted by answering the following four hypotheses (1) by controlling adaptability of pretest score, there is any difference in the adaptability level, that is between the students having guidance and counselling through Gestalt Game and the group of students guided through the Islamic boarding-school-style guidance; (2) by controlling students' religiosity variable, there is any difference in students' adaptability level, that is between the treatment group and the control group (3) gender influences the effectiveness of Gestalt Game in improving students' adaptability in pondok pesantren; and (4) the environment of the school influences the effectiveness of Gestalt Game in improving students' adaptability in the school.

This experimental study used pretest-posttest nonequivalent group design (Heppner, Wampold and Kivlighan 2008:183-186). Variables in the study were students' adaptability as the dependent variable (Y), gestalt game technique as the independent variable (X_1), religiosity as the control variable (X_2), gender and school environment as the first (X_3) and second moderator variable (X_4).

The research instruments used to measure each variable were previously tested in the terms of validity and reliability before being used in the study. The students' adaptability instrument resulted from validity and reliability test included 102 question items, developed from the dimensions of crisis, culture, work stress, interpersonal, learning,

physics, creativity, uncertainty, skills related to the care of one’s belongings, skills related to the maintenance of the environment, and skills related to the completion of routine activities. Students’ religiosity instruments included 86 question items developed from the dimensions of ritual involvement, ideological involvement, intellectual involvement, experiential involvement, and consequential involvement.

Result and Discussion

Table-1 shows the result of the analysis of Covariance of effectiveness of Gestalt Game in order to improve students’ adaptability in the Islamic boarding schools, by controlling the students’ adaptability before the treatment. The table shows that Gestalt Game was significantly effective in improving students’ adaptability at $p < 0,01$.

Table-1 Result of the First Hypothesis Test
Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Adaptabilitas Pasca Perlakuan

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	20862.292 ^a	2	10431.146	15.735	.000	.227
Intercept	35487.812	1	35487.812	53.531	.000	.333
Adaptabilitas_Pra	16190.267	1	16190.267	24.422	.000	.186
Kelompok	8451.961	1	8451.961	12.749	.001	.106
Error	70934.699	107	662.941			
Total	9470253.000	110				
Corrected Total	91796.991	109				

a. R Squared = .227 (Adjusted R Squared = .213)

The different level of students’ adaptability, between those who are in the experimental group and the control

group by controlling religiosity, can be seen in the table-2. The table shows that H_0 is rejected at $p < 0,05$.

Table-2 The Second Hypothetical Test
Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Adaptabilitas Pasca Perlakuan

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	28716.782 ^a	2	14358.391	24.355	.000	.313
Intercept	13613.688	1	13613.688	23.092	.000	.178
Religiusitas_Pasca	24044.757	1	24044.757	40.786	.000	.276
Kelompok	3965.003	1	3965.003	6.726	.011	.059
Error	63080.209	107	589.535			
Total	9470253.000	110				
Corrected Total	91796.991	109				

a. R Squared = .313 (Adjusted R Squared = .300)

Table-3 shows that gender and school environment do not influence the effectiveness of Gestalt Game in improving the students' adaptability in Islamic boarding school.

Table-3 The Influence of Gender and School Environment towards the Effectiveness of the Treatment

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

	Type III Sum					Partial Eta
Corrected Model	8168.065 ^a	7	1166.866	1.423	.204	.089
Intercept	7190906.146	1	7190906.146	8770.559	.000	.989
Eks_Kntrl	4735.579	1	4735.579	5.776	.018	.054
JKelamin	1676.941	1	1676.941	2.045	.156	.020
Asal_Pst	60.495	1	60.495	.074	.786	.001
Eks_Kntrl * JKelamin	87.341	1	87.341	.107	.745	.001
Eks_Kntrl * Asal_Pst	123.888	1	123.888	.151	.698	.001
JKelamin * Asal_Pst	.867	1	.867	.001	.974	.000
Eks_Kntrl * JKelamin * Asal_Pst	631.708	1	631.708	.770	.382	.007
Error	83628.926	102	819.891			
Total	9470253.000	110				
Corrected Total	91796.991	109				

a.

Hinksman's study (2009) on gestalt therapy through theological approach entitled "*The Compatibility of Feminist Theology and Gestalt Therapy: A Study of Practical-Values*", shows that the combination between gestalt therapy and feminism theology has a significant influence in improving the acceptance towards practical values. The convergence between gestalt therapy and feminism theological approach indicates that the gestalt therapy is able to be integrated into religious field and education.

Gestalt Game experimental study in improving students' adaptability in Islamic boarding school is a combination of Perls gestalt therapy and the awareness concept of Islamic lesson. Gestalt Game is effective in improving students' adaptability in the two Islamic boarding schools

in the study. The empirical evident shows that Gestalt Game guidance and counseling can be implemented in Islamic boarding school, either in that of salafiyah or the modern one.

The findings also proved that the students, either those of salafiyah Islamic boarding schools (represented by students of Islamic boarding school of Miftahul Huda Manonjaya Tasikmalaya) or of modern Islamic boarding school (represented by the Islamic boarding school of Amanah Muhammadiyah Sambongjaya Tasikmalaya) were open to guidance and counseling through a new approach, therefore, the thesis stated that salafiyah students are different from the modern ones in terms of openness towards new things and outside world (luar (Hidayat, 2009) was not proven in the study.

Testing the effectiveness of Gestalt Game in improving students adaptability in Islamic boarding school should consider other variables predicted to influence the students' adaptability. Table 4.9 shows that after controlling the first covariate, the effect of treatment of Gestalt Game guidance and counseling towards the adaptability of the students is as much as 10.6 %.

Besides students' adaptability level before the treatment, religiosity was also one controlling factor. Assegaf (2005: 154) conveys that boarding school environment is full of efforts in developing religious awareness. In the similar tone, Rahim (2001: 32-35) asserts that Islamic boarding schools always try to teach knowledge, attitude and skill related to religion. Three Main Missions of Islamic boarding school are belief and obedience to Allah Swt; development of useful knowledge; loyalty towards religion, nation and country (Noor 2006: 19). It is then undisputable that religiosity is the main factor to be maintained in Islamic boarding school environment.

The relationship between students' religiosity and adaptability can be seen in Zalfa's study (2010) that there is any significant correlation between the level of religiosity and students' coping strategy. Other studies indicate that there is also any significant influence of religiosity towards self control (Rahmawati, 2005); self resilience (Monterde 2007); and attitude towards environment (Widianta 2005).

Findings from Duffy and Blustein's (2005) study show that there is any solid correlation between spirituality, religiosity and one's ability in carrier adaptation. Broenen's study (2006) supports the previous study that there is any significant correlation between adaptability and spirituality of western people in United States. The main findings of the study show that religiosity is a factor that may influence students' adaptability.

The result of Ancova test shows that after controlling students' religiosity, Gestalt Game is proven effective in improving students' adaptability in the two Islamic boarding schools. The effect of the game is as much as 5.9%.

Besides students' religiosity, it is suggested that any other factors influence students' adaptability called gender and school environment where the students live and study. The assumption is based on the fact that in traditional Islamic boarding school, male students' adaptability is better than the female ones (Hidayat 2009); female students tend to be more adaptable with the hope of adult people than the male ones (Bashori, 2003: 89-90)

The findings from Roinson in several schools in District of Oklahoma show that there are any differences in the term of adaptability between female and male. Males tend to have a higher adaptability with themselves and the environment compared to the females. The similar findings can be found in Mendez's study (2005) which shows that in the school, male students

have a better adaptability than female ones.

Based on the Two-way Anova test result, it was proved that gender does not influence the effectiveness of Gestalt Game in improving students' adaptability. The empirical facts are as follows: First, the two different Islamic boarding schools, either salafiyah or the modern one, do not use gender issue as an important variable in determining policies or in the process of teaching and learning. Though policies and educational practices still involve different treatment towards female and male, the policies and educational practices are in accordance with the nature and the existence of female and male. Gender issue is not accentuated since there are bigger issues such as education, knowledge mastery on classical Islamic knowledge, and etc. Therefore, the problems faced by female and male students are relatively same, including requirements/challenges in knowledge mastery, time management, obedience towards rules, etc. It shows that students' adaptability in Islamic boarding school does not depend on given factor such as gender, it is rather to be an acquired factor.

Second, the development of communication and information technology such as computer, internet, telephone, handphone has bridged the gap of the differences between the male students and the female ones, so that knowledge, insight, attitude and behavior of female and male students are hard to define.

Besides religiosity and gender, school environment is also assumed

to be a variable that may influence the effectiveness of Gestalt Game in improving students' adaptability. This assumption is based on the theory stating that the uniqueness of boarding school is based on the three elements that build the school, namely (1) leadership pattern, (2) referenced text books, and (3) grading system. Hidayat's finding (2009) shows that students' adaptability in salafiyah boarding school is better than those of the modern one.

The result of a Two-Way Anova shows the effectiveness of Gestalt Game was not influenced by the school environment. The empirical facts cannot be separated from the influence of informational and communicational technology that has bridged the gap between salaf boarding school and the modern one. Television, computer, internet, telephone and other communication tools have cut the gap and broken the border that differ students of salafiyah boarding school from those of modern one. Therefore, it is logical that the effectiveness of Gestalt Game in improving the students' adaptability in boarding school does not depend on the school environment.

Though the study shows that guidance and counseling through Gestalt Game is effective in improving students' adaptability in Islamic boarding school, there are also some other factors that may influence students' adaptability such as IQ, the level of motivation, and bilinguality, which were not tested in the study. It is the limitation of the experimental study.

Conclusion

The findings of the study conducted in Islamic boarding school of Miftahul Huda Manonjaya in the Regency of Tasikmalaya and Islamic boarding school of Amanah Muhamadiyah Sambongjaya in the City of Tasikmalaya shows that guidance and counseling by Gestalt Game is effective in improving students' adaptability in pondok pesantren.

Based on the finding, It is suggested (1) to the head of pondok pesantrens to consider the use of the idea of guidance and counseling through Gestalt Game in improving students' adaptability in order to support the guidance commonly used in boarding school; (2) to counselors to have Gestalt Game as an alternative in guidance and counseling; (3) to researchers in guidance and counseling to develop the study to use the Gestalt Game in different boarding schools or in the same boarding schools but considering other factors that may influence the effectiveness of Gestalt Game which were not included in the study, such as IQ, motivation, bilingual factor, or other factors such as a longer guidance and counselling time period.

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