Need Assessment for the Development of A Training Model for Coping Learning in Kindergarten

Muthmainah[1], Budi Astuti[2]
Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta[1]
Jl. Colombo No.1 Karangmalang, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Bimbingan dan Konseling, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta[2]
Jl. Colombo No.1 Karangmalang, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

E-mail: muthmainnah@uny.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Coping learning is critical for fostering children's ability to cope with their problems. This study explored the issues and requirements for creating a training model for coping learning in kindergartens in Yogyakarta. Following Borg and Gall's exploration stage of the research and development approach, this research analyzed four (4) principals' and five (5) educators' input. During the exploration stage, data on coping learning was collected through observations and interviews. Interactive analysis was employed as the data analysis technique. The findings revealed some issues, specifically: 1) educators lack the necessary knowledge and skills to implement coping learning effectively, 2) the lack of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for coping learning resulted in a haphazard approach to its implementation, 3) educators have limited knowledge and ability to manage children's emotional and behavioral problems, 4) insufficient coping-based learning resources, and 5) certain parenting practices prevent children from developing coping skills. The needs assessment results will then be used to create a training model, which will then be submitted for expert judgment and field testing to determine its effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

Kindergarten is a critical stage in a child's development where they face various challenges and responsibilities, such as learning to manage their emotions, establishing new social relationships, developing their academic skills and knowledge, learning new rules, and adapting to classroom norms and routines (Callear et al., 2019). Based on interviews with ten kindergarten teachers in the Sleman and Bantul regions, it was found that confident kindergarten children now face various challenges, such as excessive parental demands, children's desire to play with busy parents, peer pressure, environmental anxiety, and violence. These challenges can trigger anxiety and evoke intense emotions.

Emotional difficulties in children can manifest through their behavior. The results of the pre-research questionnaire showed that out of 154 children, 64% were still using negative coping skills. These were yelling (13%), temper tantrums (21%), physical violence (15%), swearing (9 %), and others (6%). In order to deal with these problems, it is essential to develop positive coping skills. Roll, Koglin, and Petermann's (2012) longitudinal research confirms that the inability to use coping skills is a risk factor in the development of aggressive behavior.

The results of distributing pre-research questionnaires showed that out % of 154 children, 64% still used negative coping. Negative coping included shouting (13%), tantrums (21%), hitting (15%),

harsh words (9%), and other negative coping (6%). Kompas Daily also reported that an 8-year-old child argued with his neighbor while playing. The two children ended up getting noisy and fighting, which resulted in the victim crying because he lost the fight with the perpetrator (Kompas, 2010). The results of research conducted by the Indonesian Child Welfare Foundation (YKAI) also show that 5% of children living in Palu engage in aggressive behavior when a conflict occurs; for example, children will be angry and do not want to apologize when they make a mistake. Also, 21.6% of these children responded with aggressive behavior if a friend made them angry because they thought that aggressive behavior was expected and normal (YKAI, 2010). Other data was obtained from research by Ashary, Rahamma, & Fatimah (2015), which showed that the most prominent emotional behavior of children in Biringkanaya Makasar was anger (80.36%), the reaction to anxiety was crying (48.21%), and withdrawal behavior was shown by does not talk much (48.12%). These emotional problems need to be overcome with problem-solving skills.

Children who experience emotional and behavioral difficulties are at greater risk of future problems that can disrupt everyday life, affect mental well-being, and cause behavioral problems that can affect academic performance. These difficulties affect children's overall quality of life and increase the likelihood of experiencing a range of psychological, physical, and socio-economic problems, as well as increasing the risk of future substance abuse and delinquency. To enhance psychological well-being and decrease the likelihood of mental health issues during the early years, emotional learning programs, specifically those focused on coping, are deemed imperative. According to research by Chalmers, Frydenberg, and Deans (2011), preschool children can attain coping skills through training. Furthermore, a study by Frydenberg, Deans, and Liang (2014) found that four-year-olds have effective coping strategies. Children can demonstrate coping skills by changing their tactics. For example, they might shift their attention to other games, engage in self-talk, or even avoid unwanted stimuli by averting their gaze (Berk, 2006).

Coping refers to actions or responses to challenging situations to prevent or reduce distress, loss, danger, or threat (Carver & Connor-Smith, 2010). Coping strives to regulate emotional stimuli while coping actions aim at regulating internal emotional experiences, behavior in response to stressors, and the source of emotional stimuli (Losoya et al., 1998). Children's adaptive behavior in the classroom, including coping strategies, may indicate their capacity to form relationships with peers, take on challenging tasks, and fulfill assigned responsibilities (McDermott et al., 2012).

Educational institutions and schools are two social systems that significantly develop children's coping skills. Children receive education and training that enriches their knowledge and cognitive skills at school. Some schools, including kindergartens, have introduced Child-Friendly Schools (Sekolah Ramah Anak). These help to organize schools that are psychologically safe for children. Learning coping skills is an essential aspect of organizing child-friendly schools. The Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection (Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak)'s 2015 Child-Friendly School (SRA) Guidelines define a Child-Friendly School as an educational unit, both formal and informal, that maintains a safe, clean, and healthy environment. Such schools nurture and educate children and protect their rights, preventing violence, discrimination, or maltreatment. The SRA must also ensure that children are protected from the dangers that exist in educational institutions, such as violence and inappropriate behavior.

A child-friendly school adheres to several components, including a written commitment to the SRA policy, a child-friendly teaching and learning process, training of education professionals on children's rights, availability of appropriate facilities and infrastructure, promotion of child participation, and engagement of diverse members of society. Educational institutions are expected to cultivate intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligence. Acquiring coping skills is crucial to establishing child-friendly learning environments that promote violence-free spaces, feelings of safety and comfort, and the effective resolution of problems (Marroquín et al., 2017). The findings from interviews and observations during the pre-research indicate that teaching coping skills needs to be improved in child-friendly kindergartens due to the absence of specific training materials. Instead, the training primarily focuses on curriculum development, learning tools, cognitive development, and media production for

children's learning. This is a common problem faced by many educational institutions. Therefore, it is imperative to create a training program that addresses these concerns and provides a solution for kindergarten institutions (Mooney et al., 2017).

This study centers on the initial stage of the Borg and Gall model, which involves research and information gathering. This stage is a systematic search process conducted through a needs assessment from the early design stage. The needs assessment aims to identify and address the gaps between the current reality and the desired outcomes. Through this methodical approach to identifying the problem, scarce resources can be directed toward formulating and implementing practical solutions (Altschuld & Kumar, 2010). Needs assessment is necessary to determine the level of development required and the capacity of the parties to achieve it. Consequently, this study seeks to investigate the difficulties and needs in the field and formulate training objectives to ensure the expected outcomes for the trainees.

METHODS

This study forms part of a research and development project concerning the need assessment. Qualitative data were collected using non-participant observation techniques and interviews. This meant that the researchers observed the learning process without interfering. The research was conducted at four kindergartens, with data from nine sources of four principals and five educators. Data analysis using interactive analysis Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted, and the resulting instrument grids are presented in Table 1.

Tabel 1. Research Instrument Grids

No	ct	Sub-aspect	Technique	
	:h	Research focus	Interview, observation	'rincipal, teacher
		Scale of needs		
		Formulation of training objectives		

The data analysis technique uses interactive methods. Qualitative analysis is conducted interactively, unfolding continuously until it is completed. This process initiates with data collection and proceeds with its condensation, furthering its focus. Subsequently, the collected data is summarized, leading to conclusions and necessary verification. The analysis involved interpreting unstructured data, which was subsequently verified by comparing it with the data obtained from field notes or pre-existing documentation. Verification was conducted through discussions with promoters and colleagues, followed by review and consensus formation among informants.

Data validity testing employs source and method triangulation techniques. Source triangulation involves reviewing the findings of interviews conducted with multiple informants. All data obtained via these techniques are thoroughly described, categorized based on shared and differing views, and analyzed in greater detail. The data analysis results will yield a research conclusion, which shall then be submitted to the research sources for approval.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

Essentially, children demonstrate emotion management through the adaptation of strategies. When faced with challenging situations, they refrain from an immediate reaction. Children cognitively assess the circumstances, identify the skills needed, and then strive to overcome the problem. According to research by Chalmers et al. (2011), preschool children can use coping behaviours. The findings suggest that implementing a coping curriculum has been shown to enhance children's acquisition and use of genuine coping strategies. The study commenced with a literature review to create observation and interview tools for a needs analysis. The Coping Skills Development Model for Children (Model Pengembangan Keterampilan Koping untuk Anak/MPK2A) guidelines were referenced in the literature review. The selected indicators were planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning.

The research team employed the instruments to perform a needs analysis. Data was gathered by

three researchers who observed the learning process in the classroom four times. The observation process was documented through photography. Following the observation, further investigation was carried out through interviews to confirm findings and explore any issues. The research team subsequently gathered and analyzed the findings, identifying and addressing the prevalent issues before obtaining confirmation from the school principal. The entire research team conducted the confirmation process in an interview with the headmaster. This was backed up by documentary evidence and photographs. The documents included within this study comprise of:

1. Lesson plans or teaching modules,
2. Implementation of learning methods,
3. Inventory list of coping learning media, and
4. Children development assessment instruments.

The researchers concluded that the focus was on the prevalent issues, which served as a basis for conducting focused group discussions with educators to develop training materials and techniques where necessary. The findings of this study comprise an investigation of the research focus, the needs scale, and the design of training objectives. The subsequent sections present a comprehensive overview of each area.

Research Focus

Based on the findings from observations and interviews, it was discovered that:

1. Teachers lack the necessary knowledge and skills to implement coping learning.
2. There is no SOP for implementing coping learning, resulting in unplanned implementation.
3. Teachers' limited knowledge and skills in dealing with children's emotional and behavioural problems is a barrier to their ability to overcome challenges.
4. The availability of coping-based learning media is inadequate. It is restricted to a limited number of storybooks.
5. Some parents engage in parenting practices that impede the cultivation of children's coping abilities.

The findings demonstrate a number of challenges, including insufficient teacher expertise and proficiency in coping learning implementation. In the absence of such knowledge, teachers are unable to adequately teach children. Furthermore, due to the lack of knowledge about coping skills, teachers have been neglecting the training of children in this area. Therefore, there is a need for training of teachers in order to be able to teach children coping skills effectively. Essentially, teachers can introduce a range of adaptive coping mechanisms, differentiate between adaptive and maladaptive coping strategies, teach coping techniques, help children evaluate situations, and encourage productive ways of dealing with situations. This will build children's confidence and equip them with the skills to respond to real-life scenarios.

To enhance teachers' competence in coping learning, they can form communities, collaborate with other teachers, attend regular meetings and workshops given by university academics to gain insights into planning and conducting research, and receive ongoing mentoring from university academics, all gathered in a meeting or class (Ross and Bruce, 2012). These findings reflect the need to provide professional development opportunities for teachers to learn how to manage coping learning. Once teachers are proficient in the use of coping learning strategies, they will be in a position to expand their program of activities.

Scale of Needs

Based on the research, a scale of needs was developed with the following recommendations

1. Technical training for teachers is needed to implement coping learning effectively.
2. A specific SOP should be developed to support the implementation of coping learning.
3. Training is needed for teachers to enhance their ability to manage the emotional and behavioral difficulties that children experience as they cope.
4. Consideration should be given to the provision of coping-based learning media.
5. It is essential to provide parents with training on how to apply coping strategies to their children at home.

In order to guide and prepare children to deal with situations appropriately, teachers need to train them. The results of the interviews with teachers indicate that teachers expect the training program to have a technical and practical approach supported by straightforward SOPs that are easy to implement. The materials should meet the needs of teachers, particularly in developing lesson plans that incorporate coping learning, effective coping learning techniques, the use of different media to disseminate coping material to children, and strategies for evaluating children's coping progress. The training program includes a 40%:60% split between theoretical material and practical exercises to ensure teachers acquire enhanced coping learning implementation skills.

A key barrier is the need for an SOP for implementing coping learning, resulting in unplanned and sporadic implementation. Research by Chalmers et al. (2011) showed that preschool children aged four to five can effectively cope with challenging situations. The study highlights the need for education systems or preschool curricula to teach adaptive coping skills to help children cope with such situations. Adaptive coping strategies can help children gain valuable insights and fend off future stressful situations as they mature, increasing their resilience (Eisenberg & Sulik, 2018). Consequently, it is crucial to have a well-defined SOP in place. SOPs that can be implemented include practising 1-2 coping strategies daily in each class, providing teacher training, procuring learning materials that support coping skills, providing infrastructure that promotes coping skills, monitoring teacher performance, and implementing other strategies. School leaders should promote shared leadership by involving teachers, families and community members as partners in education.

Formulation of Training Objective

To attain optimal results, researchers and educators have formulated training objectives. These objectives consist of general and specific goals as follows:

1. General Training Objectives
2. Improve educators' knowledge, skills and attitudes in implementing coping learning.
3. Specific Training Objectives
a. Improve teachers' ability to teach both preventive and curative coping learning.
b. To enhance teachers' skills in creating coping-based learning resources and applying coping using different learning techniques.
c. Strengthen teachers' ability to analyze children's progress in coping and provide necessary follow-up.

Another major challenge is teachers' limited expertise and skills in dealing with children's emotional and behavioral complications. Given that children spend most of their time at school supervised by teachers responsible for meeting their developmental needs, they act as surrogate parents. Furthermore, Dutta et al. (2014) emphasized that "teachers' attitudes, values, beliefs and practices towards children's mental well-being are closely related to children's childhood constructs". Therefore, there is a need to adopt a positive approach that supports development and fosters a child-friendly teaching and learning environment. Within their own beliefs and understandings, teachers' perspectives and attitudes towards children's well-being are crucial in shaping the practices used in their daily teaching. This is in line with the findings of Fatimaningrum et al. (2021) that this pedagogical competency needs to be improved because it will also influence the three other competencies possessed by teachers, namely professional competency, personality competency and social competency. To improve teachers' pedagogical competence, this can be done through training.

In reality, some teachers may lack the necessary knowledge and skills to resolve problems effectively, often resulting in undesirable behaviour such as shouting, staring or threatening. Some teachers still use aggressive verbal and non-verbal communication towards their students despite their significant influence on children's social and emotional well-being; one such example is shaping the learning environment within schools. Teachers can teach children how to handle their emotions amidst challenging moments. Durlak et al. (2011) provided strong evidence that teachers significantly impact the emotional development of the children in their care. Teachers can provide children with the skills they need to manage and express their emotions appropriately and introduce them to new emotions (Denham et al., 2002). Teachers can help students become aware of their emotions, enabling them to re-evaluate their internal cognitions and increase their self-confidence, ultimately leading to academic

achievement and responsible citizenship (Kong, Zhao, & You, 2012). Fatimaningrum et al. (2021) emphasizes that increasing a person's competence can be done through continuous and systematic learning efforts. Considering that not all TPA Dharma Yoga Santi teachers have the appropriate educational qualifications, efforts to improve pedagogical competence will be carried out through training. So that the intended training is appropriate targets and can provide real solutions to existing problems, then this training plan was prepared together with prospective training participants or in this case the teachers at TPA Dharma Yoga Santi.

Gartrell and Cairone (2014) found that the promotion and use of skills such as resilience, perseverance, and coping in social interactions by teachers can enhance a child's independence and create favorable prospects for development. Consequently, children's emotional development, particularly their coping skills, should be a priority in early childhood programs. Therefore, it is imperative to investigate preschool educators' perceptions and knowledge regarding children's coping strategies in difficult and stressful situations. Elias (2006) further noted that teachers develop students' emotional intelligence, leading to improved academic performance. By responding positively and offering support when children experience negative emotions, teachers help children understand their and others' emotional states (Morris et al., 2013). Through a social learning process, comfortable interactions between teachers and pupils facilitate the development of children's social skills and emotional understanding. These skills enable children to cope with challenging and stressful scenarios and are useful when interacting with others. Teachers should aim to model and teach children how to express their emotions appropriately in order to be accepted by their environment (Dutta et al., 2014). In addition, Decci suggests that motivating children is important in helping them to manage their emotions (Bellas, 2009). It is also important for teachers to provide children with an understanding of their emotions and to motivate them through praise and encouragement for their achievements. Furthermore, teachers can also provide children with practice in dealing with emotional problems to improve their understanding and management of them. For example, through role play or simulation.

Molinaro (Bellas, 2009) argues that it is essential for teachers to establish communication with parents about children's situation at home, which the teacher then uses to address the child's emotional problems at school. In addition, teachers also have a crucial role as evaluators in assessing children's and teachers' progress in the development of emotional management skills. Several strategies for teachers to address children's emotions are suggested by Lee and Burkam (2002). These include the importance of 1) showing children affection, 2) preparing them for socializing, 3) describing and acknowledging their emotions, and 4) providing appropriate examples of emotional expression.

The scarcity of coping-based learning media is a problem that needs to be addressed, as it is limited to a small number of storybooks. To maximize their effectiveness, teachers need access to support systems such as various learning tools, including lesson plans, instructional materials, learning media, worksheets for learners, and instruments, which facilitate the development of this model. The learning tools, objectives, and activities are designed to develop coping skills for managing negative emotions in children ages 4 and 6. Supporting media such as storybooks, movies, and posters are needed in addition to the learning tools that help children remember the coping skills they have learned. Interactive learning methods, engaging media, and the teacher's warmth contribute to children's emotional comfort and happiness. This aligns with Funk & Ho's (2018) research, which suggests that reading storybooks to children, asking open-ended questions, providing targeted positive reinforcement, and modelling exemplary behavior can facilitate children's development. Reading aloud and using open-ended questions effectively promotes various social-emotional skills. This exercise familiarizes children with expressing their feelings or experiences about books. Children's books provide an excellent opportunity to explore emotions, explore problem-solving techniques, and relate them to the children's own experiences.

Some parents engage in parenting practices that impede the cultivation of children's coping abilities. Research has shown that children's social-emotional learning can be achieved through competent teacher guidance, student participation, parent involvement and community participation in the design and implementation of classroom programs (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor and Schellinger, 2011). The coping behavior of children is influenced to a large extent by their own initiative and the level of support they receive from their parents. It is important that parents have the necessary knowledge to meet this challenge. Education can be provided by attending Parent-Teacher Association

(PTA) meetings or by accessing relevant material on social media platforms that best suit their needs and preferences.

Bandura, A., & Walters (1977) posits that a person's behavior is influenced by, and in turn influences, their social world and personal characteristics. The environment shapes the behavior, and vice versa. In addition, when it comes to coping skills, children choose and use skills familiar to their environment. A child's coping behavior, in turn, can create a calm and pleasant environment with positive effects such as happiness and comfort. In this scenario, parents act as coaches and mentors for their children's coping skills. They also serve as role models for their children to emulate. Hurlock (1998) suggests that children's emotional responses vary depending on the parenting style. Authoritarian parenting induces fear and anxiety in children, whereas permissive or democratic parenting promotes enthusiasm and affection. Children often encounter unpleasant situations and emotions in their daily lives. Children can learn positive coping skills if parents set a good example and manage their emotions effectively. For example, parents try to calm their children down when they are angry rather than reprimanding them. Occasionally, it has been observed that some parents show their anger to their children. As a result, the children may emulate their angry behavior. Ideally, parents should provide a secure attachment for their children and act as social models.

Kerr and Schneider (2007) state that psychological problems often persist into adulthood. Therefore, parents must engage in responsive parenting to help their child manage their emotions and promote feelings of safety and responsiveness. Exploratory and interactive experiences with family members and educators provide learning opportunities for children to learn about social relationships and emotions. Additionally, it is essential for adults, including caregivers, parents, and teachers, to display sensitivity towards children's emotions, recognize emotional cues, and assist in identifying and managing their emotions and behaviour (Maschi et al., 2009). In addition, a study by Hamama & Arazi (2011) suggests a link between family relationships and children's aggressive behaviour, which includes manifestations of anger, hostility, physical violence and verbal aggression. Negative family relationships, such as family separation and divorce, have been linked to long-term feelings of disappointment, depression and frustration, which can ultimately lead to increases in feelings of anger and aggression.

A secure parent-child relationship is essential for optimal emotional development. Katz & Windecker-Nelson (2004) highlight the importance of parents who recognise and value emotions and use their children's emotional experiences as training opportunities. Such parents have been found to have children who have more positive attitudes towards peer play by helping them label their emotions and solve their problems. It has also been found that parents who demonstrate warmth and positivity in their parenting style can contribute to developing children's emotional regulation skills (Eisenberg et al., 2005). In addition, parental guidance in children's problem-solving activities related to emotional experiences has been found to promote the growth of emotional competence. For example, constructive coping demonstrated by parents has been linked to children's active coping mechanisms (Smith. J. D, 2006). However, some parents could be more cooperative due to various factors such as busyness and lack of openness from parents to teachers.

CONCLUSION

The needs assessment identified inadequate teacher knowledge and skills in implementing coping learning, the need for dedicated SOPs for implementing coping learning, and the inadequacy of coping-based learning materials, which are currently limited to a small number of storybooks. In addition, the needs assessment results were used to determine the level of need and to set training objectives in collaboration with teachers. The development of this training model will progress through the creation of comprehensive training designs, which will be evaluated by experts and tested in more extensive settings. The training program will focus on technical and practical aspects. It will be supported by well-defined SOPs that can be easily implemented. The materials should meet the needs of educators, particularly in creating lesson plans that integrate coping learning, appropriate teaching methods for coping learning, various media to facilitate the dissemination of coping material to children, and techniques for evaluating children's coping development. The training program will include theoretical material and practical exercises structured in a 40%:60% ratio to provide teachers with the necessary

skills to implement effective coping learning.

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