Empowerment of elementary school teachers on Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA)

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ABSTRACT

Natural disasters (floods) can cause psychological impacts and potential public health hazards. Children carrying out daily activities will be disturbed, including learning, fear, and remembering the flood under normal conditions. Children need mental health and psychosocial support, which are essential in creating and supporting states that allow optimal growth and welfare of children in disaster situations. Deket Sub-district, one of the sub-districts in Lamongan Regency, is a frequent flood. Sidomulyo Village has the highest flood height, with water levels between 15 to 37 centimetres in 2022. SDN Sidomulyo 1 is one of the schools affected by this annual flood. This activity aims to increase elementary school teachers’ knowledge and skills in providing Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) through empowering elementary school teachers. The method used is the first stage: training elementary school teachers, the second stage: assisting elementary school teachers in carrying out PSSA for elementary school students, and the third stage: evaluation and follow-up plans. The teachers and students were enthusiastic and active in participating in the various stages of the activity. There is an effect of training PSSA on the level of teacher knowledge (p = 0.014), and all teachers have good skills after being given training and mentoring.


1. INTRODUCTION

Children are the next generation of the nation in the future. Children need to continue to hone their psychosocial abilities to remain reasonable in ordinary life or disaster conditions to be ready to live the next life in psychological and social aspects (Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak Republik Indonesia, 2019). Disaster conditions are caused by Indonesia’s geographical location, where this location makes Indonesia an area prone to natural disasters (PPK Depkkes, 2008). Natural disasters threaten and disrupt people’s lives and livelihoods, resulting in human casualties, environmental damage, property losses, and psychological impacts (Kemenkes, 2019). The psychological implications caused by flooding cause a health crisis and has potential hazards that affect public health (Kemenkes,
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2019), where children carrying out daily activities will be disturbed, including learning, feeling afraid, and remembering the flood if in normal conditions (Mulyadi, 2012).

Children who are vulnerable need mental health and psychosocial support to maintain or promote psychosocial well-being and prevent or overcome mental disorders (Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak Republik Indonesia, 2019). Psychosocial support is essential in creating and supporting conditions that allow optimal growth and well-being of children in disaster situations. Psychosocial support follows the SDG’s objectives, namely, 1) the thirteenth, taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impact on the target to strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to the hazards of climate-related matters and natural disasters (Kementerian PPN/Bappenas, 2021a), 2) third, namely ensuring a healthy life and supporting welfare for all ages with the target of increasing mental health and well-being (Kementerian PPN/Bappenas, 2021b). However, at SDN Sidomulyo I Deket, Lamongan, this kind of psychosocial support has never been given to children affected by this flood.

Various natural disasters, including floods, landslides, tsunamis, liquefaction, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and forest fires, have struck Indonesia over the past five years. Indonesia has had 5,594 disaster incidents between the beginning of 2017 and the middle of 2019, according to data from BNPB (Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak Republik Indonesia, 2019). Deket sub-district, one of the sub-districts in Lamongan Regency, is a frequent flood customer (BMKG, 2022). Three villages in Deket Subdistrict were affected by the flood, namely Laladan Village, with water levels between 10 to 25 centimetres; Weduni Village, with water levels between 10 to 17 centimetres and Sidomulyo Village, with water levels between 15 to 37 centimetres in 2022. Sidomulyo Village has the highest flood heights routinely felt by villagers living along the Bengawan Njero stream when the rainy season comes (Arfah, 2022).

The central and regional government is the main person in charge of disaster protection and management based on Law no. 24 of 2007 concerning disaster management, including protecting vulnerable groups, such as children, pregnant and lactating mothers, and the elderly (BNPB, 2007). This situation is further strengthened by articles 59 and 59A of Law No. 35 of 2014 concerning amendments to Law number 35 of 2002 (JDIH BPK RI, 2017) regarding child protection. The government should provide special protection for children, including disaster victims. One of these protections includes efforts to provide psychosocial assistance, from treatment to recovery, to prevent children from experiencing a worse impact and avoid violent treatment.

Psychosocial support in disaster situations can not only be carried out by professional officers. However, it can also be carried out by non-professional volunteers as long as they are trained through community empowerment which is an effort to prepare for the pre-crisis stage of health, predominantly psychosocial (Kemenkes, 2019). Moreover, psychosocial support for children is different from adults; unique approaches and techniques are needed that are suitable and easily understood by children, so volunteers who assist children need training first (Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak Republik Indonesia, 2019). Therefore, the teacher’s role is vital and strategic in providing comprehensive and quality psychosocial support for children in disaster situations because psychosocial support is essential in creating and supporting conditions that allow optimal growth and welfare of children in disaster situations.

The results of a preliminary study through interviews with school principals showed that the Sidomulyo area, especially the SDN Sidomulyo I environment, was a location that was constantly flooded (in a row) in the last three years, previously, it was only flooded once in 10 years. Sometimes schools are closed due to high flooding in the school environment and submerging classrooms, access to schools that are also submerged (roads and bridges), families also struggle to get to school by boat to take their
children to gain knowledge, and most of the residents lose their livelihood as farmers. Because the fish in the pond were dragged by the flood, causing the school to switch learning back online. Children also become sad and willing to be disturbed in their learning process even though online learning due to the pandemic in the last two years has made students enthusiastic about coming to school. Lamongan Regency is entering the level 1 community activities restrictions enforcement, where learning can be done offline, but online learning is being carried back due to flooding.

Psychosocial support activities in the form of Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) in elementary schools to increase resilience and psychosocial welfare of children during natural disaster situations, as well as create a comfortable and conducive learning atmosphere for children affected by the annual flood. Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) is a group mentoring activity for recovery. PSSA is not designed for children with severe psychological problems, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Activities within PSSA are aimed at prevention but not cure. PSSA activities consist of five phases, namely: (1) Phase 1 (safety); (2) Phase 2 (self-esteem); (3) Phase 3 (personal narrative); (4) Phase 4 (self-adjustment); and (5) Phase 5 (future planning) (Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak Republik Indonesia, 2019). Management of school-based Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) for conflict-affected children consisting of 15 structured sessions delivered over five weeks by trained school teachers. PSSA structure consists of opening, thematic, and closing. Thematic activities address safety and control issues, self-esteem, thoughts and reactions during danger, identification of resources, and coping. The PSSA method includes didactic presentations, reflection exercises, and playing plays and games. Children who receive the intervention experience increased well-being, emotional stability, and resilience (Ager et al., 2011). Trauma healing activities (play therapy) are carried out for children flood victims in Cemara Kulon Village and Puntang Village, Losarang District, Indramayu Regency. This activity includes snakes and ladders game media, colouring pictures, group exercise, counselling, fairy tales, and health checks. This activity focuses on physical, mental, social and intellectual health. Children and parents actively participate in activities, children are taught to work together in a team and are taught education about nutrition and waste to increase knowledge. Trauma healing has a positive impact on flood victims; namely, it can restore the psychological condition of disaster victims, both children and their parents (Fitriyah et al., 2021). This community service activity aims to improve the knowledge and skills of elementary school teachers in providing Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) through empowering elementary school teachers.

2. METHODS

This community service activity aims to empower elementary school teachers about Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) for flood victims at SDN Sidomulyo I Deket Subdistrict, Lamongan Regency, in August and September 2022. The population of partners for this community service activity are all teachers at SDN Sidomulyo I. The sampling technique is a total sampling; ten teachers participated in this activity. The method used in community service are: (1) The first stage: Elementary school teachers training; (2) The second stage: Assisting elementary school teachers to carry out Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) for elementary school students; and (3) The third stage: Evaluation and follow-up plans.

In the first stage, elementary school teachers’ training includes providing health education about psychosocial support, child resilience, and Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) to elementary school teachers. The resource persons in this activity were Irawati Sudiar, S.Psi., Psi. from the “Mutiara Hati” Psychological Service Institute, Lamongan Regency. Furthermore, providing a guidebook for psychosocial support for children victims of natural disasters, elementary school teachers and demonstrations and
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Simulations of Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) in small groups. The second stage is assisting. The community service team helps elementary school teachers carry out Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) activities for elementary school students from grades 1 to 6, including PSSA activities in phase 1, phase 2, phase 3, phase 4, and phase 5. The third stage is evaluation and follow-up plans. The evaluation was carried out by distributing pre-test and post-test questionnaires (Figure 1).

The equipment used in this community service activity is an LCD, laptop, Psychosocial Structured Activities kit, a guidebook for psychosocial support for children affected by natural disasters, pre-test and post-test questionnaires, and other supporting tools (speakers) used to provide material during training and assisting. The results of the evaluation of the knowledge of elementary school teachers about psychosocial support and Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) measured before (pre-test) and after (post-test) were given training. The evaluation of elementary school teachers’ skills in Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) was measured after training and assisting. The presentation of the data is in the form of a table containing the frequency and percentage. At the same time, the Wilcoxon signed rank test tests elementary school teachers’ knowledge level (Dahlan, 2013).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Community service activities begin by making preparations in the form of licensing and coordination related to the time, place, and stage of service to be carried out. Then the community service team prepares the necessary tools. The first stage in this community service activity is elementary school teachers training. This activity begins with registering and distributing a guidebook for psychosocial support for child victims of natural disasters to guide or guide elementary school teachers. Furthermore, there was an opening and remarks by the head of the community service team and the Headmaster of SDN Sidomulyo I. This training uses lectures, discussion, and demonstration/simulation methods. This training was attended by 10 participants: the headmaster, eight teachers, and one head of the elementary school committee. All training participants were given health education about psychosocial support to create a comfortable and conducive learning atmosphere for children who experience annual flooding, child resilience, and Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) by the resource persons, followed by an active discussion. Some participants asked questions during the discussion session. All participants were enthusiastic, attentive, actively discussing, and interested during the material presentation process, and participated in this activity until it was finished (Figure 2).
Before continuing the practicum, the community service team and the training participants did ice-breaking. This ice-breaking is given on the sidelines of the training to eliminate boredom, raise enthusiasm, and increase participants' attention and concentration (Marzatifa et al., 2021). Furthermore, the community service team conducted demonstrations and simulations on Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) in small groups. The tool used is the Psychosocial Structured Activities kit. All trainees were enthusiastic while doing the Psychosocial Structured Activities practicum (Figure 3).

The second stage is the assistance of the community service team to assist elementary school teachers in carrying out Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) for elementary students, including PSSA in phase 1 (safety), phase 2 (self-respect), phase 3 (personal narrative), phase 4 (adjustment), and phase 5 (future planning). The target of this PSSA in elementary school students from grades 1 to 6, led and facilitated by training participants, namely teachers. The training participants were enthusiastic when leading PSSA, and students from grades 1 to 6 were very enthusiastic, happy, and actively following the directions of the training participants’ teachers (Figure 4).
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The third stage is the evaluation and follow-up plan. The community service team provides an evaluation in the form of a pre-test to measure the level of initial knowledge and a post-test to determine the success of participants’ understanding of both theory and practicum about psychosocial support and Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA), both knowledge and skills (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Pre-test and post-test evaluation process

The level of teacher knowledge about psychosocial support and Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) was measured before (pre-test) and after (post-test) the training. The level of knowledge is divided into three levels, namely less (≤55%), sufficient (56-75%), and good (76-100%) (Arikunto, 2016). The data were tested using the Wilcoxon signed rank test (Dahlan, 2013).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Less</th>
<th>Sufficient</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Test</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Test</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Results of analysis of pre-test and post-test knowledge level

Table 1 showed that there was an effect of Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) training on participants’ knowledge level (p = 0.014). At the time of the pre-test assessment showed that a small proportion (1%) of the training participants had less knowledge, and none (0%) of the participants had good knowledge. At the time of the post-test assessment, none (0%) of the participants had less knowledge, and some (50%) had good knowledge. The skill level of teachers in conducting Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) is measured after (post-test) given the training and assisting, as shown in Table 2. All participants (100%) of the training have good skills after being given training and assisting.

Table 2. Frequency distribution of post-test results of teachers’ skills in conducting PSSA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good skills</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Discussion

This community service activity facilitates the community, namely a headmaster, teachers, and the chairman of the SDN Sidomulyo I committee, to carry out Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) targeting children who are victims of the annual floods in grades 1 to 6. Every natural disaster certainly leaves victims. Preparedness and rapid response to handling become a significant focus after a disaster to
accelerate adaptation and improve the quality of life, mainly for children who perform child development tasks according to the developmental phase, including learning, playing, and going to school (Hartini, 2017). Developmental failure and trauma in post-disaster children will produce a negative self-concept that requires mutual support from teachers, parents, other family members, the health team, and the child’s involvement (Hidaayah, 2014). School teachers positively influence children and adolescents because they can help students believe more in themselves and achieve their goals (Dhital et al., 2019). Post-disaster interventions must emphasize community empowerment because the presence of volunteers outside the community certainly has limitations; on the contrary post-disaster management will be more effective if the community continues the comprehensive and sustainable management process (Kloos et al., 2021). Providing interventions with teacher mediation can also be sustainable and feasible in a post-disaster environment with low resources and prone to disasters (Dhital et al., 2019).

The results of this community service activity obtained data that there was an effect of Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) training on participants’ knowledge level. This knowledge includes psychosocial support and Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA). At the time of the pre-test assessment, it was shown that a small proportion of the training participants had poor knowledge, and none of the participants had good knowledge. The post-test assessment showed that none of the participants had poor knowledge, and some already had good knowledge. Knowledge is everything that is known regarding certain things (Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa, 2016). A knowledgeable person has a basis for making decisions and determining actions to deal with problems (Pakpahan et al., 2021). A person’s knowledge will change if the person gets new information (Nursalam & Pariani, 2010). Knowledge, awareness, and positive attitudes will affect the acceptance of a new behaviour or the adoption of a behaviour (Notoatmodjo, 2012).

This increase in knowledge may occur because the resource persons and facilitators explain the material clearly, demonstrate and simulate activities, and provide modules that can facilitate teachers’ understanding of Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) to increase teachers’ enthusiasm to learn and discuss actively. Health education aims to influence, activate, and encourage voluntary behaviour that is beneficial to the health of individuals, groups, or communities to facilitate processes that enable individuals, families, and groups to make well-informed decisions about health practice. Health education increases knowledge, changes attitudes and behaviour, and enhances the surrounding environment (physical and non-physical) to maintain and improve health with full awareness (Pakpahan et al., 2021). The results of outreach activities in Permata Village, Boalemo Regency, Gorontalo Province showed that before being given counselling, the level of community knowledge was categorized as sufficient; after being given counselling, the level of community knowledge was categorized as good and showed the effect of counselling of community knowledge about flood disaster preparedness (Yusuf & Mangile, 2019).

In addition to knowledge, the evaluation of the teacher’s skill level in carrying out Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) measured after (post-test) were given training and assisting showed that all training participants had good skills after being given training and assisting. The training participants were enthusiastic when leading PSSA activities, and students from grades 1 to 6 were enthusiastic, happy, and actively following the directions of the training participants’ teachers. Psychosocial support is essential in creating and supporting conditions that allow optimal growth and well-being of children in disaster situations. Psychosocial support services can be provided in the form of Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA), with the main target being children aged 5-18 years involving teachers and the community. Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) is a form of therapy that uses psychological and social approaches to help disaster victims, individuals, families, and groups change their behaviour and situation. This group mentoring activity is aimed at prevention but not at healing. PSSA activities consist
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of five phases, namely phase 1 (safety), phase 2 (self-esteem), phase 3 (personal narrative), phase 4 (adjustment), and phase 5 (future planning) (Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak Republik Indonesia, 2019). School-based Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) can also be conducted on conflict-affected children consisting of 15 structured sessions delivered over five weeks by trained school teachers. PSSA structure consists of opening, thematic, and closing. Thematic activities address safety and control issues, self-esteem, thoughts and reactions during danger, identification of resources, and coping. The PSSA method includes didactic presentations, reflection exercises, and playing plays and games. Children who receive the intervention experience increased well-being, emotional stability, and resilience (Ager et al., 2011).

Children who are victims of landslides and flash floods in North Sulawesi Province, receive play therapy (singing together, playing with balloons, playing with marbles, playing with snakes and ladders, and colouring) to help them recover from their trauma. Singing together can channel the expression in children and build connections with other people. Colouring games increase creativity and are also a relaxation therapy for children because the colours that often appear in an image have many emotions. It can divert the sense of trauma, and children get a relaxing effect from these activities through the pleasure of playing games. These games can create a fun atmosphere for trauma healing because children can laugh together (Pramardika et al., 2020). Children experiencing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) following the flood were the subjects of a three-week study on play therapy as a trauma-healing technique. The children were asked to draw and describe a bad experience during the first week of play therapy. In the second week, the children were offered challenging puzzle games. The third week also featured a plasticine game where children had to create shapes using their ideas. Trauma healing is provided for children to lessen the strain on their minds, reduce anxiety or fear, remove memories that trigger trauma related to disasters, smudge children’s recollections of actual tragedies, and relax their moods. They are free to speak their minds and emotions (Pertiwiwati et al., 2021).

Strengthening the knowledge and skills of teachers at SDN Sidomulyo I play an important role in improving psychosocial well-being. Psychosocial support is essential in creating and supporting conditions that allow optimal growth and well-being of children in disaster situations. This community service can improve teachers’ knowledge and skills at SDN Sidomulyo I Deket Subdistrict, Lamongan Regency, to provide psychosocial support for Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) for students when the annual flood hits.

**Inhibiting and supporting factors**

This community service activity indeed cannot be separated from the obstacles faced. The obstacles faced are not used as a problem in realizing these community service activities. Coordination and communication are the main things in implementing this community service. The inhibiting factors that became obstacles in the implementation of this activity were the preparation of activities and the determination of the schedule for the performance of activities that took almost more than one month because it coincided with the new school year of elementary school, school activities in commemoration of the Independence Day of the Republic of Indonesia, as well as adjusting the schedule of the resource persons. This activity is carried out offline while still prioritizing health protocols.

The supporting factors for this community service activity are the excellent response and enthusiasm of the headmaster, teachers, and all students so that the activities run smoothly. Partners also provide contributions and support related to implementing this activity so that it is carried out correctly, preparing and conditioning students, training rooms, and other supporting tools (speakers). This activity has also received a permit from the Lamongan Regency Investment and One Stop Service
Office Number: 070/3076/SKP/413.111/VIII/2022 regarding recommendations for community service activities.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

These community service activities at SDN Sidomulyo I Deket Subdistrict, Lamongan Regency, can increase the knowledge and skills of elementary school teachers related to psychosocial support and Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) after receiving training and assistance related to Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA). There was an effect of Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) training on participants’ knowledge level. Before receiving training and assistance, a small proportion of the training participants had poor knowledge, and none had good knowledge. After being given training and assisting, it showed that none of the participants had poor knowledge, and some already had good knowledge. All teacher’s skill levels also had good skills after being given training and assisting.

Preparation, schedule, and coordination of activities are expected to be more intense by communicating with the school. Periodic refresher courses on psychosocial support activities and Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) in the context of disaster causes and disaster mitigation education in flood-prone elementary schools are also necessary. After participating in this community service, it is hoped that all teachers will be able to provide psychosocial support services for rapid assessment and carry out Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) well at SDN Sidomulyo I.

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