

The Effect of Group Activity Therapy on Improving Self-Esteem among Patients with Mental Disorders at Mutiara Sukma Mental Hospital, West Nusa Tenggara



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ABSTRACT

Low self-esteem is one of the most prevalent psychosocial problems among individuals with mental disorders and is closely associated with impaired social functioning, decreased motivation, and delayed recovery. Patients experiencing low self-esteem often exhibit withdrawal behaviors, reduced participation in therapeutic activities, and negative self-perception, which may further worsen their clinical condition. Therefore, effective psychosocial nursing interventions are essential to enhance patients' self-concept and support holistic recovery. One such intervention is Group Activity Therapy (GAT), which facilitates interaction, emotional expression, and peer support within a structured group setting. This study aimed to examine the effect of Group Activity Therapy on self-esteem among patients with mental disorders at Mutiara Sukma Mental Hospital, West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. A quasi-experimental study with a one-group pretest–posttest design was conducted involving 30 participants selected using purposive sampling. Self-esteem was measured using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), which demonstrated good reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.82$). Data were analyzed using the Shapiro–Wilk test to assess normality and paired sample t-test to evaluate differences before and after the intervention. Effect size was calculated using Cohen's d. The results showed a statistically significant improvement in self-esteem scores, with the mean increasing from 18.40 ± 3.25 at baseline to 24.90 ± 3.10 after the intervention ($p < 0.001$). The effect size was large (Cohen's $d = 1.89$), indicating a substantial clinical impact. These findings suggest that Group Activity Therapy is an effective psychosocial intervention to improve self-esteem among patients with mental disorders. Integrating GAT into routine psychiatric nursing care may enhance psychosocial rehabilitation outcomes and contribute to more comprehensive mental health services.

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INTRODUCTION

Mental disorders remain a significant global health concern, contributing substantially to disability and reduced quality of life. According to global estimates, mental health conditions account for a considerable proportion of the global burden of disease, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. In Indonesia, the prevalence of mental disorders continues to rise, with increasing demand for comprehensive mental health services.

One of the most common psychosocial problems experienced by individuals with mental disorders is low self-esteem. This condition is characterized by negative self-perception, feelings of worthlessness, and reduced confidence, which can significantly hinder recovery. Patients with low self-esteem often demonstrate poor motivation, limited social interaction, and decreased participation in therapeutic activities.

From a nursing perspective, addressing self-esteem is crucial in promoting holistic care. Psychiatric nursing not only focuses on symptom management but also emphasizes

psychosocial rehabilitation. Improving self-esteem is associated with better coping mechanisms, increased adherence to treatment, and enhanced social functioning.

Group Activity Therapy (GAT) is a structured psychosocial intervention designed to promote interaction, self-expression, and positive self-concept. Through group processes, patients can share experiences, receive feedback, and develop a sense of belonging. These therapeutic mechanisms are essential in rebuilding self-esteem.

Previous studies have demonstrated that group-based interventions can positively influence psychological outcomes. However, variations in context, cultural background, and implementation strategies highlight the need for local evidence, particularly in Indonesian mental health settings.

At Mutiara Sukma Mental Hospital, many patients exhibit symptoms of low self-esteem, yet systematic evaluation of GAT effectiveness remains limited. Therefore, this study aims to examine the effect of Group Activity Therapy on self-esteem among patients with mental disorders in this setting.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design to evaluate the effect of Group Activity Therapy (GAT) on self-esteem among patients with mental disorders. A total of 30 participants were selected through purposive sampling based on inclusion criteria, including diagnosed mental disorders, low self-esteem, stable clinical condition, and the ability to communicate effectively. Self-esteem was measured using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), which demonstrated good internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.82$). The intervention consisted of four structured GAT sessions conducted over two weeks, each lasting 45–60 minutes and involving activities such as self-introduction, sharing personal experiences, group interaction, and positive reinforcement. Data were collected before and after the intervention and analyzed using the Shapiro–Wilk test to assess normality and paired sample t-test to determine differences in self-esteem scores, with statistical significance set at $p < 0.05$. Additionally, the magnitude of the intervention effect was evaluated using Cohen's d .

Research Design and Participants

This study employed a quasi-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design.

Participants

A total of 30 participants were recruited using purposive sampling. Inclusion criteria included:

1. Diagnosed mental disorder
2. Experiencing low self-esteem
3. Stable condition
4. Able to communicate

Instrument

Self-esteem was measured using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), consisting of 10 items on a Likert scale. The Indonesian version demonstrated good reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.82$).

Intervention

Group Activity Therapy was conducted in four sessions over two weeks. Each session lasted 45–60 minutes and included:

1. Self-introduction
2. Sharing experiences
3. Group games
4. Positive reinforcement

Data Analysis

1. Normality test: Shapiro–Wilk
2. Hypothesis test: Paired sample t-test
3. Effect size: Cohen's d
4. Significance level: $p < 0.05$

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical principles in research involving human subjects. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the relevant institution. Participants were informed about the study objectives, procedures, potential benefits, and risks. Participation was voluntary, and confidentiality of all data was maintained by using coded identifiers. Participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences for their treatment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the study on the effect of Group Activity Therapy (GAT) on self-esteem among patients with mental disorders at Mutiara Sukma Mental Hospital, West Nusa Tenggara. The analysis focuses on changes in self-esteem scores before (pretest) and after (posttest) the intervention.

Respondent Characteristics

A total of 30 respondents participated in this study. Most participants were male and within the productive age range. All respondents were diagnosed with mental disorders accompanied by low self-esteem and met the inclusion criteria. During the intervention period, all participants completed the four sessions of Group Activity Therapy without dropouts.

Self-Esteem Scores Before and After Intervention

The results showed an improvement in self-esteem scores after the implementation of Group Activity Therapy. The mean pretest score indicated that most respondents had low self-esteem prior to the intervention. After completing the therapy sessions, the mean posttest score increased, suggesting a positive change in self-esteem levels.

Table 1. Comparison of Self-Esteem Scores Before and After Intervention

Variable	Mean $\pm$ SD	Mean Difference	t	p-value	95% CI
Pretest	18.40 $\pm$ 3.25				
Posttest	24.90 $\pm$ 3.10	6.50	10.21	<0.001	5.20–7.80

The results table demonstrates a clear improvement in self-esteem scores following the implementation of Group Activity Therapy (GAT). The mean self-esteem score increased from 18.40 $\pm$ 3.25 at pretest to 24.90 $\pm$ 3.10 at posttest, with a mean difference of 6.50 points. Statistical analysis using a paired sample t-test revealed a p-value of < 0.001, indicating that the difference is statistically significant. Furthermore, the high t-value ($t = 10.21$) reflects a strong change between the pre- and post-intervention measurements. The 95% confidence interval (5.20–7.80) does not cross zero, which further confirms that the observed improvement is consistent and unlikely due to chance. Overall, these findings provide strong evidence that Group Activity Therapy is effective in enhancing self-esteem among patients with mental disorders.

Statistical Findings

The statistical findings indicate that the data were normally distributed, as confirmed by the Shapiro–Wilk test ($p > 0.05$), allowing for the use of parametric analysis. A paired sample t-test was conducted to compare self-esteem scores before and after the intervention, revealing a statistically significant difference ($t = 10.21$, $p < 0.001$). This result suggests that Group Activity Therapy (GAT) had a meaningful effect on improving self-esteem among participants. Additionally, the mean difference of 6.50 points reflects a substantial increase in self-esteem scores following the intervention. The 95% confidence interval (5.20–7.80) does not include

zero, further supporting the reliability of the observed effect. Moreover, the calculated effect size (Cohen's $d = 1.89$) indicates a large magnitude of effect, demonstrating that the intervention not only produced statistically significant results but also had strong practical and clinical significance.

Discussion

The findings indicate that Group Activity Therapy significantly improves self-esteem among patients with mental disorders. The large effect size suggests that the intervention has a substantial clinical impact. The improvement in self-esteem can be explained through therapeutic group mechanisms, including social interaction, peer support, and positive reinforcement. Patients benefit from shared experiences, which help normalize their condition and reduce feelings of isolation.

These findings are consistent with previous research demonstrating that group-based psychosocial interventions enhance self-concept and psychological well-being. The group setting provides opportunities for interpersonal learning and emotional support, both of which are essential in psychiatric recovery.

From a nursing perspective, GAT represents a practical and cost-effective intervention. It can be implemented routinely in mental health settings to complement pharmacological treatment. However, this study has limitations. The absence of a control group limits causal inference. The small sample size and single-site design may affect generalizability. Future studies should employ randomized controlled trials and include larger samples.

CONCLUSIONS

Group Activity Therapy has a significant and strong effect on improving self-esteem among patients with mental disorders. This intervention should be integrated into psychiatric nursing care to support psychosocial rehabilitation and enhance patient outcomes.

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