

The Effect of Group Bibliotherapy in Reducing Social Anxiety of Gifted and Talented Adolescents

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One of the characteristics of gifted adolescents is being oversensitive when interacting with other people and this increases the possibility of feeling anxious in social situation. The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of group bibliotherapy in reducing social anxiety. Participants in this study were five adolescents who have social anxiety problems, with the age range of 11.9 - 13.3 years old and WISC IQ ≥ 130 . They had taken part in province and national mathematics competition in the Indonesian Science Olympiad (OSN: Olimpiade Sains Nasional) in 2008 and 2009. A one-group pretest-posttest design was used in this study. The treatment consisted of seven sessions and used *Asyik Belajar Matematika* 1-6 books that had been rated by three raters. These books contain values related to social issues. The result showed that group bibliotherapy was effective in reducing social anxiety of gifted adolescents. Treatment gains were maintained at a one month follow-up ($p = .021$, between posttest-pretest and $p = .021$, between follow up and pretest).

Keywords: gifted adolescents, social anxiety problem, group bibliotherapy

Salah satu karakteristik remaja cerdas istimewa adalah sangat sensitive saat berinteraksi dengan orang lain, hal ini menyebabkan kemungkinan tingginya rasa cemas dalam situasi sosial. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah menguji efektivitas perlakuan biblioterapi kelompok untuk menurunkan kecemasan sosial. Partisipan dalam penelitian ini adalah lima remaja, berusia 11,9 – 13,3 tahun, memiliki IQ ≥ 130 skala WISC, dan mempunyai masalah kecemasan sosial. Partisipan dalam penelitian ini telah mengikuti kompetisi tingkat provinsi dan nasional bidang matematika dalam Olimpiade Sains Nasional (OSN) 2008 dan 2009. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode eksperimen dengan rancangan one group pretest-posttest. Eksperimen dilakukan dalam tujuh sesi yang menggunakan buku *Asyik Belajar Matematika* jilid 1-6. Buku ini telah dinilai kelayakannya oleh tiga penilai (*rater*) dan diketahui bahwa buku ini berisi nilai-nilai yang berhubungan atau yang sesuai dengan problem partisipan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa biblioterapi kelompok efektif untuk menurunkan kecemasan sosial pada remaja istimewa. Penurunan skor kecemasan tetap dipertahankan hingga pengukuran lanjutan, satu bulan setelah *post-test* ($p = .021$, antara *posttest* dan *pretest* dan $p = .021$, antara penelitian lanjutan dan *pretest*).

Kata kunci: remaja cerdas istimewa, masalah kecemasan sosial, biblioterapi kelompok

Gifted children have different characteristics than typically developing children. This group of children has a high level of intelligence but it is not often followed by a well-developed social and emotional factor. This condition might create problems in their social and emotional adjustment. A previous study by the authors with nine gifted students, who passed mathematical challenges at the National Science Olympiad (OSN)

in 2008 and 2009 at the level of district, provincial and national, showed that the students had emotional or behavioural problems based on the indicators of emotional and behavioural disorder by Hallahan and Kauffman (2006) gathered from the interview with teachers, parents, and children, as well as child observation and behavioural rating or CBCL (Child Behavior Checklist) by Achenbach (Sattler, 2002). All participating students showed the symptoms of anxiety and specifically, there were seven students who experienced social anxiety. One student had behaviour problems in the form of verbal aggression.

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The results of the pilot study also showed indications of lack of visual organization in reality, impulsive tendencies, anxiety, inability to delay gratification, and failed to understand minimal instructions, lack of ability in planning and building relationships with other people. Gifted students in this study allocated most of their time either to learn independently or to learn under supervision. The students had only few friends and lack of the ability to develop friendship. Peterson, Duncan and Canady (2009) indicated limited opportunities for gifted students to focus on social and emotional development that potentially leads to psychological vulnerability.

Literature has indicated that gifted children have different social and emotional needs in comparison to non gifted children and therefore, they need to have a unique service. During pre-adolescent years, gifted children need a specific guidance due to psychosocial issues they experienced, such as perfectionism, boredom, hypersensitive, and overly adjust to rules, (Yoo & Moon, 2006; Robinson, 2008), self-withdrawn because of being labelled, not having friends, and feeling frustrated with school (Fornia & Frame, 2001). A study by Peterson, Duncan, & Canady (2009) indicated some events that potentially induce stress on gifted children. Academic problems, school transition, and making a decision for a major of study are considered as situations that could lead to stress. Other stressful events are peer relationships and being overly committed to a certain activity.

One of the characteristics that is often used to differentiate gifted children from typically developing children are the score of intelligence test. IQ score of 130 indicates an intelligence score at the percentile rank of 98 and this is used as a benchmark of giftedness (Sattler, 2002; Newman, 2008). Wechsler (1993) categorized IQ score above 130 in Wechsler scale as very superior. A different approach based on achievement (achievement oriented approaches) demonstrates that giftedness could be identified from the proficiency. This approach examines specific abilities or skills among prodigies or children that excel beyond their peers, for example in reading or writing, mathematics, music and art (Perleth, Schatz, & Mönks, 2000). In the previous study with children that passed the recruitment and selection process for the National Science Olympiads at the school, district and provincial level, the children might be identified as gifted students in mathematics.

Several characteristics in the cognitive aspect of gifted children are high levels of understanding and curiosity, and various interests leading to a need

for diverse knowledge and compatible friends. The possibility of problems arising from this condition is poor interpersonal relationships with peers. Other characteristics in the affective aspects are sensitive to the expectations and feelings of other people and experiencing overly emotional intensity and depth. This may trigger problems such as intolerant towards criticism, and lead to psychological vulnerability (Clark, 1992).

Numerous factors that influence development of potentials and problems experienced by gifted children are family, peers, and community. Stimulations, opportunities, expectations, demands, and performance recognition influence children's learning outcomes (Hallahan & Kauffman, 2006) as well as children's motivation, interest, and self-concept (Sattler, 2002). Whilst protective factors, such as self-concept, closeness to parents and the whole family, and support from school are considered as negative predictors of children's anxiety (Meuller, 2009).

In the previous study, social and emotional problems experienced by gifted students required an adequate intervention. Intervention studies by Fornia and Frame (2001) aimed to overcome social and emotional problems experienced by gifted children through family counselling. Other studies demonstrated that an intervention in the form of an individual counselling could promote social and emotional health of gifted children (Yoo & Moon, 2006; Peterson & Moon, 2008). A class intervention conducted by teachers to create learning environment that is responsive to the needs of gifted students can also be used to develop self-confidence and trust to others (Clark, 1992).

The previous study conducted by the authors was focused on gifted adolescents having emotional and behavioural problems, specifically on social anxiety. A definition of emotional and behavioural disorders by Hallahan and Kauffman (2006) is extreme and pervasive behaviour that is socially and culturally inappropriate. Behavioural disorders include two categories: externalizing and internalizing. A group of behaviour related to internalizing problems is short-attention span, poor concentration, sadness, excessive shyness, immaturity, and social withdrawal. Whilst a group of behaviour related to externalizing problems is fighting, disruptive behaviour, and neglecting peers or other people (Hallahan & Kauffman, 2006; Herbert, 2006). According to Teachman and Allen (2007), the characteristics of social anxiety are feeling fear to have negative evaluation, feeling doubtful if their friends would like them, avoiding social contacts, feeling stressed in dealing with novel and everyday situations.

The onset for social anxiety is usually at early to late adolescence. Peer relationships provide an impact on social, emotional and interpersonal development. Disturbances in interpersonal relationships would create a risk for further development (Morris, 2004). One way to overcome anxiety problems experienced by children is through bibliotherapy (Gladding, 2000). This study is focused on the potentials of gifted adolescents, particularly on their high level of intelligence and interest on reading fiction and non-fiction books. This type of readings can be used as a medium for bibliotherapy.

Bibliotherapy can be defined as the usage of books to help individuals to solve their problems (Shechtman, 2009). Bibliotherapy is a therapy conducted by giving books or stories with a certain theme related to private and social problems, in order to help individuals or groups to acquire insight for their personal problems and to learn other healthier ways on facing problems (Heath, Sheen, Leavy, Young, & Money, 2005; Cook, Earless-Vollrath, & Ganz, 2006). Pardeck (cited in Cook et al, 2006) stated the six potential objectives of bibliotherapy, namely to give information, to give insights in terms of experience or specific situations, to give alternative solutions to problems, to stimulate discussion about an actual problem, to communicate new values and attitude towards a problem, and to help students understand that they are not the only ones facing their problems. According to Burns (2004) the stories presented for the purpose of therapy should be ethical, full of morals, and responsible. In order to achieve the therapeutic function, stories should be helpful, constructive, and practical and containing accurate methods to solve a problem, unleashing life experience, or improving life quality.

Bibliotherapy may focus on remedial bibliotherapy or development bibliotherapy. Remedial bibliotherapy was aimed on the usage of clinical intervention to guide readers who experience emotional and behavioral problems, whereas development bibliography was aimed to guide readers to experience dynamic interaction between the readers' personality and the reading. Gladding (2000) stated that bibliotherapy could be used as a form of remediation counseling aiming to correct, such as helping individuals with low self-esteem and high level of anxiety. Books or other media such as movie as counseling tools are very helpful if counselors summarize the story, openly discuss the feelings of characters, explore the consequence of characters' actions, and sometimes create a conclusion.

There are two forms of bibliotherapy, the cognitive bibliotherapy and the affective bibliotherapy. Cognitive

bibliotherapy helps client to identify distorting thoughts and to learn more realistic ways through reading and exercising. The basic assumption of this model is that every behavior is a result of learning experience (Bilich, Deane, Phipps, Barisic, & Gould, 2008; Shechtman, 2009), whereas the basic assumption of affective bibliotherapy is that individuals use the defense mechanism in order to protect themselves from something painful and allows them to be unattached to their emotion, to be unaware of their true feelings, and therefore unable to constructively solve their problems. Stories will help them by giving individuals the opportunities to acquire insight, assuming that identification, exploration, and emotional reflection are important components in the therapeutic process (Shechtman, 2009).

Most of bibliotherapies given to children is the affective bibliotherapy. The affective bibliotherapy uses fictional books in order to help readers to relate their emotional experiences in social situations (Shechtman, 2009; Regan & Page, 2008). When used correctly, this therapy can be applied for students' development and emotional recovery (Heath dkk, 2005; Cook dkk, 2006), as well as the socio-emotional learning in children with emotional and behavioral problems (Regan & Page, 2008; Mihalas, Morse, Allsopp, & McHatton, 2009).

Bibliotherapy can be applied individually, in a small group or large group inside classroom or in the school environment including the library or counseling room (Cook et al, 2006). Downing (as cited in Cook et al, 2006) emphasized that the best practice to do bibliotherapy are towards individual or small group settings. Stone (2007) said that effective group intervention towards children and adolescents consider three things: participant, therapist, and setting. The characteristics of participants include age, sex, education, level of development, culture, ethnic, and social economic status, psychosocial strengths and weaknesses, problems faced, level of cooperation, and motivation. The characteristics of therapists are include skills, personalities, and the approach towards their role as therapists such as progressive interaction, as well as the performance of intervention in an appropriate place.

Pardeck (cited in Cook, 2006) stated four basic stages to implement bibliotherapy, namely (a) identifying problems, situation, behaviors, or skills needed, (b) selecting the right book or literature, (c) presenting the book, and (d) implement the reading session followed by a discussion. According to Shechtman (2009) the books chosen for affective bibliotherapy must cover the problems faced by the children, present the difficulties faced and the behavioral dynamics.

According to Regan and Page (2008), relevant values can be developed through bibliotherapy for children

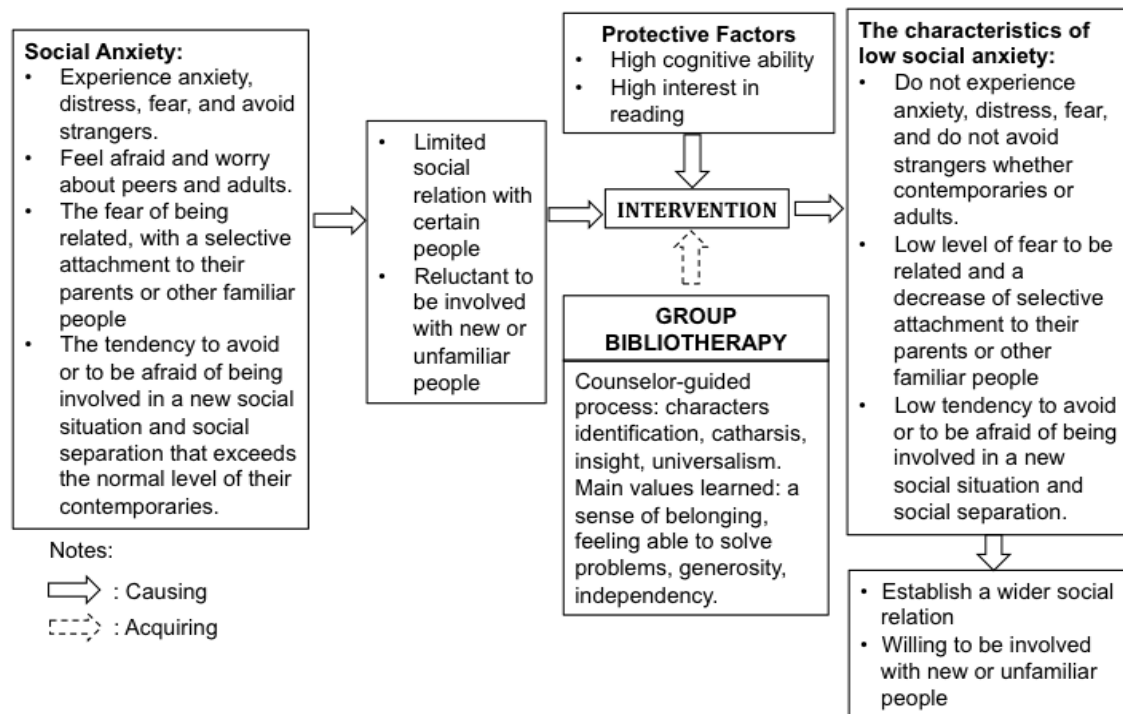


Figure 1. Research scheme

and adolescents who experienced emotional and behavioral disorders, such as belongingness, generosity, independence, and mastery. The authors apply group bibliotherapy as a form of counseling and utilized books containing the values of generosity, self-efficacy, independence, and the sense of ownership and responsibility towards something. There were several parts of the book containing the emotional suspense especially the anxiety in social situation and the reduction of emotional stress of the story characters. Figure 1. reveals the research process.

As depicted in Figure 1., the symptoms of anxiety shown by subjects in this study were being worried, nervous, afraid, and avoiding strangers. Being afraid and anxious was not only experienced towards adults but also towards peers and they showed a selective attachment towards certain figures. The displayed anxiety related to their involvement in a new social situation exceeds the normal rate of their contemporaries. The outcomes of these social anxiety symptoms lead to the limitation of social relations with certain people and the unwillingness to relate with new individuals. The problems experienced by this group of subjects were then treated or dealt with group bibliotherapy intervention. Subjects were given an illustration about the book that will be read to create interest; after-

wards the next steps were as proposed by Regan and Page (2008): identification, catharsis, insight, and universalism, each of which involved a group discussion process and were guided by a counselor.

Though bibliotherapy can be performed independently (self-help model) to increase personal growth, the most effective bibliotherapy should be conducted through an interactive process in which guidance through discussion is administered in order to attain therapeutic objectives (Cook, et al., 2006). Therefore in this study, the counselor's role was very important. A counselor in bibliotherapy should have the professional basics in psychology, such as the knowledge of child development, maturity, psychopathology, and stressors faced by children (Heath, et al., 2005). According to Cook, et al. (2006) through the sharing of experience faced by others in the form of reading, individuals can attain the determination in confronting problems. The implementation of discussion from the process of identification to universalism in a group guided by a counselor was expected to reduce the social anxiety encountered by the subjects in this study.

This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of group bibliotherapy treatment to reduce social anxiety in exceptionally gifted adolescents who experienced social anxiety. The hypothesis of this research was:

the implementation of group bibliotherapy can reduce social anxiety in exceptionally gifted adolescents who experienced social anxiety.

Method

Design and Procedure

The design used was the one-group pretest-posttest design. The measurement used the pretest scale that was taken from subject (O^1), intervention (X), the measurement used the posttest scale after the intervention (O^2) (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002).

Research preparation. The preliminary survey was conducted by interviewing school staff, interviewing and observing students, interviewing parents and administering the CBCL form. Students and parents were asked for their consent to be involved in the study. The social anxiety scale was tested in three schools, sixth-grade students from two elementary schools and one middle school; the age range was 11.9 - 13.3 years old, consisting boys and girls ($N = 205$). Subjects for the test of measuring instrument was taken through cluster random sampling.

The construction of module consisted of identification, catharsis, insight, and universalism (Regan & Page, 2008); the availability of therapeutic interactive process (Cook, et al., 2006), including identification, exploration, and emotional reflection (Shechtman, 2009); the stories presented were ethical, full of moral values and responsibility (Burns, 2004); counselor summarized stories, discussed the feelings of characters openly, explored the consequences of behaviors, and sometimes created a conclusion (Gladding, 2000). The proper qualifications

of a counselor should be a very good knowledge of child development, maturity, psychopathology, and all kinds of stressors (Heath, et al., 2005).

Content validation of the group bibliotherapy module was done by using rational analysis performed by two psychologists and a graduate student from the Master of Psychology and has had performed bibliotherapy intervention. Assessment over viability and suitability of the story was done by two clinical psychologists and one student from the Master of Professional Psychology.

Implementation of the research. The implementation of the study involved pretest, intervention, posttest, and follow up measurement. The pretest used the social anxiety scale. The group bibliotherapy consisted of seven sessions, conducted 2-3 times of meeting per week, each varying between 80-120 minutes, with a total time of 660 minutes. The counselor for the group bibliotherapy was a student from the Master of Professional Psychology that has passed the professional work practice (*Praktik Kerja Profesi* or *PKP*), interested in emotional and social issues of exceptionally gifted students, mastered the basic techniques of group counseling, having an adequate interpersonal skill as counselor, and mastered the module material. Observers in this study were bachelors in psychology and graduate students of the Master of Professional Psychology.

There were five stages (summarized in Table 1) applied to this group, designed in the form of group counseling. First was involvement, in which participants were involved in the script-reading process. Second, identification in which participants could identify the story characters or figures and understood the storyline and wrote it in the identification sheet. Third was catharsis, subjects identified themselves with the characters, understand them better and underwent vicarious experience and

Table 1
Stages of Group Bibliotherapy

	Stage	Activity
1.	Involvement	Subjects are involved in the process of reading by presenting the content and main character of the story at a glance
2.	Identification	Subjects identify the story characters or figures and understand the storyline as well as able to write it in the identification sheet
3.	Catharsis	Subjects identify themselves with characters, understand them better and undergo vicarious experience and feelings of the characters, also feel the tensions experienced by characters. When characters of the story succeeded to overcome their problems, subjects then feel the relieve of their emotional tension
4.	Insight	Subjects think about what happened and acquire new perspectives on how to apply them as characters of the story gain the steadiness to face their problems, so subjects were expected to acquire some hope to find the solutions to their problems.
5.	Universalism	Subjects think beyond their egocentrism trap and gain broader perspectives about other people's emotions.

Table 2
Description of Subjects

No & Initial	Sex	Age	Full IQ	Category of social anxiety
1.LO	Male	11 yo	136	Medium
2.GL	Male	12.3 yo	134	Low
3.CW	Female	13.0 yo	131	Medium
4.XX	Male	13.3 yo	144	Low
5.AN	Male	13.0 yo	130	Low

feelings of the characters, and also felt the tension experienced by characters. As the characters succeeded in overcoming their problems, participants then could relieved their emotional tension associated with the problem experienced. The fourth stage was insight, in this stage subjects thought about what happened and acquired new perspectives on how to apply them, like characters of the story who obtained steadiness to face problems, subjects were expected to acquire hope to find the solutions to their difficulties. The fifth stage was universalism, subjects strode across their traps of egocentrism and acquire broader perspectives about other people's emotions, tensions experienced, and understood that there were other people who may experience the same problems.

The evaluation results reveal that subjects had a greater interest to review the *Asyik Belajar Matematika 1-6* book rather than the short story; subjects felt that this program was useful and fun. Subjects was willing to participate in this kind of program, but with a different book.

The book used for group bibliotherapy was the comic *Asyik Belajar Matematika* written by Kim Rin and translated by Aprilia Ruby Wikarti. The values existed within the book were belonging, generosity, independence, and mastery as recommended by Regan and Page (2008) to be used in bibliotherapies of children and adolescents who experienced emotional and behavioral problems. Other values existed in the book were cooperation, patience, sacrifice, and modesty. The books used were volume 1 to volume 7. In the last session they were presented a short story about a character that experienced social anxiety and succeeded to overcome his problems. In the first session, counselor introduced the program and book that would be discussed. The counselor used approximately 300 words to share about the content of the story at a glance, the characters involved and the conflict. The sharing of story at a glance was an effort of involvement, which was the first stage, with the intention to make subjects interested to find out more and more detailed, as well. The time provided to finish the comic book was about 45 minutes for a book with 200 pages in average. In each session one book was

presented and all subjects had the opportunity to experience all stages from the involvement to universalism.

The posttest was done after the intervention was declared finished and a follow up measurement was conducted one month after the posttest. The follow up measurement was done by using the same scale that was used in the pretest and posttest.

Research Subjects

Subjects were seven exceptionally gifted students in mathematics, four boys and one girl, aged between 9-13 years, from five (5) different schools with an IQ \geq 130 WISC scale. The WISC IQ test was administered by the same tester. Involved and ranked 1-3 in the competition of National Science Olympiad in mathematics at the level of district/city and became the representative of the district/city at the provincial level competition, and national level in 2008 and 2009.

Two subjects were terminated for not following the entire process of group bibliotherapy conducted by researchers. That happened because both of the participants were out of town. One of the participants visited his relative, while the other participated in an extensive preparation program for the national level of mathematics competition. The reasons for using five different schools were because the students recruited in this research had to fulfill the criterion of exceptionally gifted students in mathematics and have ever competed in provincial and national level of NSO.

The basis for selecting adolescent subjects as the focus of the study was that negative affect increase from pre-adolescence to adolescence (Galambos & Costigan, 2003). Besides that, adolescence is a stage of development in which adolescents experience the highest period of the beginning of social anxiety symptoms (Teachman & Allen, 2007). Several characteristics of exceptionally gifted individuals in mathematics, which are the ability and interests that may surpass their contemporaries for several years, the need for tasks that introduce mathematical concepts that exceed the materials suitable for their age, and the interest in tasks that enrich their learning experience (Diezmann & Watters, 2002). These characteristics became a consideration for the book selection that would be used in this group bibliotherapy. As for the characteristics of subjects, see Table 2.

The independent variable in this study was a group bibliotherapy used as intervention and the dependent variable was social anxiety. Instruments used were Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL), interview guide and social anxiety scale. CBCL was administered to parents and children in order to find out the availability of emotional

or behavioral disorders, and was developed by Achenbach (Wenar & Kerig, 2000; Sattler, 2002). The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient reliability was .942 (Wimbarti, 2010).

The interview guide was developed from the internalization problem assessment (Merrel, 2008). The social anxiety scale was developed based on the characteristics of anxiety stated by Merrel which includes subjective uneasiness, fear, high anxiety of something, behaviors such as avoidance, self-withdrawal; and physiological response such as sweating, nausea, chest distress, and tension. Besides that, the characteristics of social anxiety according to Teachman and Allen (2007) were also used, such as afraid of being assessed negatively by others, not being sure if their friends like them for real, avoiding social contact and being stressful in new or everyday situations.

The criteria of item selection was based on the total item correlation by using the limit of $r_{ix} \geq .25$. Five out of 36 items were eliminated, and as the result 31 items were used for the research. The result of scale reliability analysis has shown an alpha coefficient of .863. This scale used four possible responses namely SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), D (Disagree), and SD (Strongly Disagree) with the score moving from 4-1 for the favorable item and vice versa. An example of item used in this measurement was "I am anxious when I am with a new friend (favorable item)" and "I can speak fluently to my peer even though I have just known him (item unfavorable)". The design used was one-group pretest-posttest design.

Data Analysis

The data analysis was conducted using Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. Also a qualitative data analysis was taken concerning the social anxiety, comprising resources from parents, teachers, and research subjects which were collected through observation and interview conducted before, during, and after the intervention.

Results

Statistical Analysis

The Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test with the criteria of H_0 rejected if the Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) $< \alpha$, the results reveal (see Table 3.)

Based on the difference test as presented in Table 3 for the pretest-posted and pretest-follow up, it can be concluded that there was a significant difference in the social anxiety scale score of the study subjects before

and after the treatment, and up until one month after the treatment. Thus group bibliotherapy has the effect in reducing social anxiety and still efficient until up to one month at a significance level of 95%. Meanwhile the result of the difference test of the posttest-follow up reveals no significant difference of the subjects' social anxiety scale score. This meant that there was no significant difference of the subjects' social anxiety after the posttest up to one month after the treatment.

Qualitative Analysis

The objective of the qualitative analysis was to discover the psychological process and experience of the subjects before, during, and after the group bibliotherapy. In general, the study subjects received significant support from their parents to join the group bibliotherapy. The results of the qualitative analysis are as follows.

Subject 1

The subject was a first child with a single sibling, living together with both parents and the younger male sibling in a housing complex where each house had a two metre high fence. The subject was almost left alone at home daily and never played in the environment around the house. The subject's parents rarely brought the subject to various social situations. This was one of the reasons the subject had limited social relations. At school, the subject's social relation was also limited. The subject feared going in front of the class or speaking publically. The subject often did not go to school if there were no learning activities. Before the intervention, the subject had social anxiety, shown by avoiding new situations, not starting conversation with acquaintances, having over-the-top behavior, and having no focus in conversation, such as being nervous, awkward, being more focused to what-ever the subject's doing, feeling stiff, speaking as if mumbling with confusing tone, looking down, responding with short sentences, and avoiding strangers.

During the intervention the subject showed high social anxiety on the first and second session. The subject was passive in the interaction and showed multiple social anxiety symptoms, such as having a stiff expression and

Table 4
Wilcoxon Pretest – Posttest - Follow up Difference Test Results

Source	Z	p (1-tailed)
<i>Pretest with posttest</i>	-2.032	.021
<i>Pretest with follow up</i>	-2.023	.021
<i>Posttest with follow up</i>	-1.656	.049

purposeless movements. On the third session the subject obtained response from the other subject and the subject started to look at the other subject. On the fourth session the subject started to relax and smile after finishing a game and on the fifth session the subject started to open contact with the other subjects without a push from the counselor, though still with short sentences and small voice.

On the sixth session the subject was willing to share his similar experience with the character fluently even though with low voice. There was a lot of involvement non-verbally as well. Nonverbal responses was also shown. On the seventh session the subject entered the room smiling and response on the greeting the counselor and answering the questions quickly. The subject always smiled before answering questions from the counselor. In this session the subject invited the counselor and the other subjects into interaction and jokes, while asking and giving comment. Subject also laughed a lot. The subject shared a lot of response on the task form regarding the subject's feelings such as panic, confusion, fear, anxiety, and also insight like having to be brave, calm, and respectful to others.

The subject's pretest score was in the medium category; after the posttest the category was at the low category and stayed as such on the follow up measurement. During the group bibliotherapy the subject was enthusiastic in retelling the story, discussing and responding the stories of the other subjects. Subject was willing to share personal experience on the third to seventh session, letting feelings and thoughts out, getting insight, letting the pressure out, and getting response from the other subjects. Subject also obtained an understanding about how others had similar problems, also known as universalism, causing the social anxiety to decline after the subject finished the group bibliotherapy. Based on parental report, the subject looked more relaxed after the group bibliotherapy, being able to show the subject's feelings such as happiness, sadness, and annoyance. The subject was also more willing to be in a new environment among strangers.

Subject 2

Subject was the first child with a single sibling, living together with both parents and the younger female sibling in a crowded area. Subject was passive in interactions, lacked attention to others, and avoided interacting in different situations even with acquaintances. Subject also rarely looked at the conversation partner in the eye, was not really active in movement and awkward. Subject had limited social relations at school, frequently

being tougher with three to five particular friends. During holidays or free time, subject preferred to stay at home to read books.

During the group bibliotherapy process, subject looked stiff during the first and second session when he entered the room. Subject did not care much of the other subjects and often looked the other way or down. During the introductory session through throwing balls, the subject's stiffness decreased. Throughout the session the subject looked unenthusiastic with the body leaned on the chair and the legs stretched out. Subject often looked down as well. Peculiar behaviors of the subject were awkward bodily movement, non-existent eye contact, talking in short sentences, passive in interactions, and small voice. On the third session and the fourth session, indications of the subject's social anxiety had decreased. Subject's voice increased on the fifth and sixth sessions even though there was still no eye contact. When the group bibliotherapy session finished the subject was already able to relax in interactions while being cooperative during discussions. Subject 2 listened well to Subject 1 and vice versa, sometimes accompanied with laughter. The subject obtained the insight that he must be brave in trying and be courageous.

There was a decrease in the social anxiety score from the pretest-posttest-follow up, but the decrease was still in the same category which was low. Observation during the group bibliotherapy showed behavior change in the interaction with other people. Subject 2 started to be willing to share personal experiences not relevant with academic problems starting the fourth session, willing to give advices to the other subjects even though with the support of the counselor. Other than the process of letting the emotional pressure go and insight related to the experienced problem, the subject obtained the understanding that there were others with similar problems. This caused the subject's social anxiety to decrease after the group bibliotherapy. Based on the parents' report after intervention, subject was still passive in interactions and required support to interact with others or in social situations. Subject still had the fear of others' perception though the subject was already willing to share non-academic problems.

Subject 3

Subject was the second child with two other siblings, living in a community area that was not too crowded. Subject preferred to stay at home playing the rubix cube. Subject was passive in interactions and preferred to be alone at home or at school. This is the reason that the subject did not have any friends around the house.

Subject had a lot of fears, such as the fear of being alone at home, the fear of animals, and feeling nervous and disliking crowded situations. Subjects could not really mingle with the other students at school.

Subject looked passive and frequently looked down during the first session. Subject introduced himself with a small and short voice. Throughout the session the subject seemed not to be too involved and looked down most of the time. During the identification stage the subject wrote longer than the other two subjects for more than 15 minutes, doing the same during the verbal response period. Subject looked confused when subject was asked to respond, usually staying silent and playing with his own fingers. During the sixth and seventh session subject started to be willing to share experiences without being pushed by the counselor and also being cooperative in discussing problems with the others, in both discussing the books or the personal problems of each subject. Subject was able to share the identification and reflection fluently, with longer sentences. Subject also looked relaxed and not awkward when the subject was sharing about similar experiences with the character in the story and during discussion about the other subjects.

During the second session, subject obtained the insight and shared that “we will always encounter new situations which is why we have to get used to adapt starting now”. While during the fourth session, subject obtained another insight after reading the book and shared that “sharing and discussing with others will make facing problems easier for us”. It seemed that the insight obtained by the subject, the chance to share experience, being able to release emotional pressure regarding the problem, and being able to share with others in this group bibliotherapy resulted in the decrease in the subject’s social anxiety score.

Observations during the group bibliotherapy showed behavior changes related to interaction with others. Subject on the fourth session started to show openness regarding personal problems and started to be active in responding to the other subjects. Based on teacher’s report, subject looked more relaxed and calm in discussions with friends during class. Subject also stated that in his class VIII the subject was trying to be friends with classmates including new classmates.

Subject 4

Subject was the second child with two other siblings, living in a wide but still housing area with around two meters high fence. Subject did not have friends around the house and spent the subject’s free time reading books, playing games, and playing with siblings.

Subject was considered to be passive in interactions, lacking interest to others, and lacking the ability to be involved in light discussions. Subject often showed serious facial expressions and awkward bodily movement. Subject was also emotionally sensitive and felt fear, avoiding interaction with the other that bothered the subject’s emotionally. Subject also had a concern regarding the evaluation of others towards the subject.

Subject was passive and often looked down during the first session of the group bibliotherapy. On the introductory session, subject’s introduction was said with a low and short voice. Subject looked clumsy and confused during the emotional reflection, needing a long time. On the second session, when the counselor asked the subject about similar experiences with the character in the story in the book, subject was silent and played with the subject’s tie, later on responding with short sentences.

On the first session subject obtained the insight that if the subject put effort in changing, then the condition would change. Then on the fifth and sixth session the subject obtained more insight, which was “people that help will get help as well” and “if we are afraid in cooperating, then we will miss the benefit”. Generally, on the sixth and seventh session, the subject was willing to share experiences without much support from the counselor and was being cooperative in discussing the problem, and also in giving response and advice. Subject looked relaxed and was able to convey the identification fluently, also regarding the subject’s feelings when reading a book and the feeling when the character experienced problems. This situation was similar when the subject was giving alternative solution for the character in the story and reflection. Subject also used longer sentences.

There was a reduction in the social anxiety score on the pretest-posttest-follow up, but still in the same category which was the low category. Observation during the group bibliotherapy showed behavior change related to interaction with others. The willingness to retell the story of the book, share personal experience, and respond to others’ with similar experience could be one of the sources of change in the subject. The reduction of social anxiety score in the subject after intervention was also caused by the insights and the reduction of the emotional pressure on the experienced problem. Subject stated that he did not need to be scared or worried with peer evaluation.

Subject 5

Subject was one of the twins in the family with five other siblings living in a crowded area. During free time, subject read books, play games, play with siblings,

play soccer, and become a member of a youth organization. Subject was quite active in interaction compared to the other subjects but subject felt awkward when he is in new situations and having difficulties in communicating with old friends who rarely met the subject. Subject was also afraid of others' perception.

On the first session, subject was active even though subject looked stiff. During introduction, subject introduced first, even though shortly and with a trembling voice after no other subjects was willing to start. Subject looked awkward and confused when asked to do an emotional reflection, needing a lot of time. When asked to respond on the character's experience or the favorite character, subject was willing to answer. On the first session, subject often moved pointlessly and awkwardly, speaking in short sentences. On the second session, subject often moved pointlessly and without an attentive position towards the conversation partner. On the second and fourth session, the subject often shared about the experiences and feelings compared to the other subjects and was active in responding and giving advices to the other subjects. In general on the sixth and seventh session, the subject was willing to share experience without being pushed by the counselor and was cooperative in discussions, giving responses and advices.

Subject was able in sharing identification, feelings when reading the book, feeling when the character he liked have problems give alternate solutions to the character in the story, and offering reflection. Subject also looked relaxed and not stiff like previously when the subject was thinking about similar experiences

with the character and when asked for opinion towards the other subjects. A behavior that was indicative of social anxiety on the last session was over-the-top movements.

Subject obtained insights during the second, third, fifth, and seventh session, which were as follows: "avoid having negative thoughts about what we have not known"; "problems will be solved sooner with discussion"; "helping others can be done anytime and with anyone"; and "if you are able to tame your desire then you will be able make your dream come true". The subject seemed to be particularly astonished with the insight from the seventh session that came from a character in the story.

The subject's score reduction during pretest-posttest was still in the same category, which was the low category; while the social anxiety score reduction on the pretest-follow up was in the very low category. Observation during the group bibliotherapy showed behavior change, such as stiffness. The willingness to retell the story, sharing personal experience, releasing emotional pressure related to the problem, obtaining insight, and being active in responding to others' similar experience could be the reasons for the subject's social anxiety score reduction. Subject stated that he would try to be involved in conversations with friends, even the ones who were not too close or old friends.

Conclusion of the Qualitative Analysis Results

The process in the group bibliotherapy experienced by the subjects is presented in Figure 2.

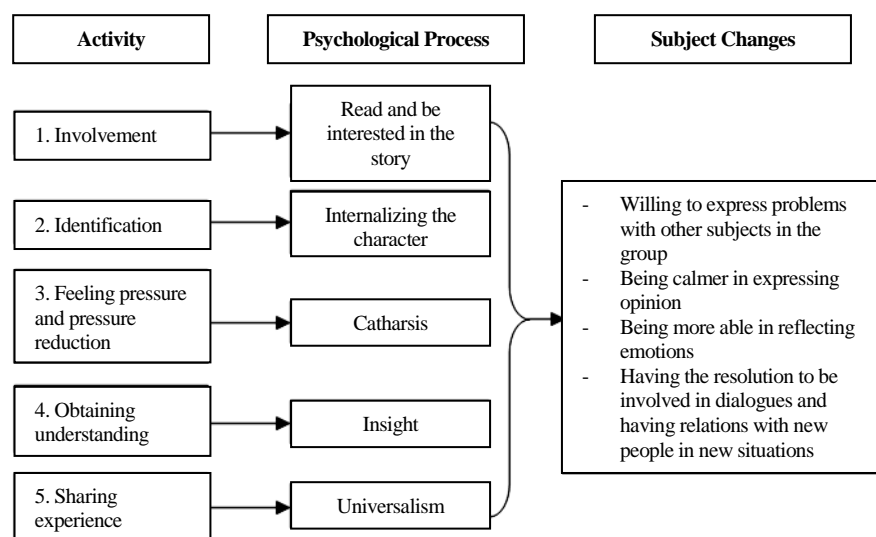


Figure 2. Qualitative analysis results

Qualitative dynamics. The first activity in the bibliotherapy was the counselor explaining briefly about the book to be read and the characters inside the book. Then the subjects were given time to read the book and internalize the story. After reading, the counselor asked about the characters in the story and the experiences of the characters.

Then the subjects were asked to identify the characters' feeling on the experience, such as fear, sadness, anger, fury, and others emotions. They also identified what the characters did when the characters were dealing with a problem; then the subjects also chose their favorite character and the reason of choosing their respective characters.

On the next stage, the subjects were guided into conducting a reflection on their own personal experience that was similar to the characters' experience in the story. In this reflectional stage the subjects were given the freedom to convey their emotions on the similar experience with the one experienced by the story characters.

For example, the emotional expression in the case of Subject 1, was feeling furious, fear, and sadness when the subject was accused of lying and stealing by the subject's friend. The subject wasn't able to say anything during the experience and then ran away home. A similar experience was also experienced by the character in the story during the bibliotherapy process.

Subjects chose a particular character that the subject liked. The character was accused as someone who was going to kill. This story character must solve a puzzle about the height of a pyramid even though the character hated mathematics and calculations. The character had no other option but to solve the problem to shed the accusation given to the character, and if the character was unable to solve it the character's life would be in danger.

The subjects felt that what was being felt by the character was similar to what the subject was feeling when the subject was accused of lying and stealing. When the subject retold the story of the character in the story, the subject was gripping hands tightly with watery eyes. The subject felt the fury that was felt when the he was accused of lying and stealing. When the subject retold the story about the character's effort in mastering the mathematical problem, the subject looked enthusiastic and the subject felt satisfaction when the character in the story managed to solve the problem.

The silver lining obtained by the subject during the discussion of the story in the bibliotherapy was that when experiencing uncomfortable situations (accusations), it was a must to find a way to proof that the accusation

was incorrect. If the correct way was found and implemented, it would make the self comfortable and others would know that the accusation was incorrect.

Discussion

Results of this study showed that group bibliotherapy had an effect on reducing social anxiety. Qualitative analysis using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test results showed that there was a significant difference between before and after the group bibliotherapy was conducted. Every subject in the study experienced a reduction in the social anxiety score. Subject 1 experienced reduction in the categories from medium to low on the pretest-posttest measurement; and Subject 5 experienced a reduction in score but the category reduction was in the posttest-follow up measurement from low into very low.

The results of this group bibliotherapy study supported the results of the study conducted by Leong, Cobham, de Groot, & McDermott (2009) in children aged 7 to 14 years old who experienced anxiety, such as general anxiety disorder, social phobia, and separation anxiety using the bibliotherapy intervention model. The study result was efficient up to 3 to 6 months of the follow up measurement. In this group bibliotherapy, the subjects were encouraged to conduct an emotional reflection through the characters in the comic *Asyik Belajar Matematika* 1-6 and two short story scripts. The subjects were also guided through stages such as catharsis, insight, and universalism or realizing the possibility of another person having similar experience.

This study also supported the study conducted by Campbell (2007) regarding the treatment of children with excessive anxiety but had not been categorized as an anxiety disorder. The story scripts and bibliotherapy was beneficial for counseling of children who experience anxiety. It could also be used to treat flying phobia, social phobia, and anxiety before tests or evaluations.

Bibliotherapy can also be used for adult subjects to treat anxiety problems, either general or related to social anxiety. This is supported by the results of the study conducted by Kupshik and Fisher (1999) about bibliotherapy treatment to treat medium level anxiety on adult subjects, showing significant results to reduce the symptoms of anxiety up to three months after the follow up measurement. Another similar study was conducted by Chung and Kwon (2008) on individuals with phobia by implementing treatments such as bibliotherapy with feedback, bibliotherapy without feedback, and waiting list. Study results showed a significant reduction on the experiment group.

Significant anxiety reduction in the subject group in this study by using group bibliotherapy could be supported by the characteristics of the subject with high intelligence and emotional intensity, giving them the ability in understanding, feeling, and evaluation the characters and events in the story well. This is in accordance with the study conducted by Hebert and Kent (2000) that high emotional intensity on intellectually gifted individuals and high ability in identifying characters in the story and affection towards books promote bibliotherapy to become an effective therapeutic intervention.

The bibliotherapy was conducted in two groups each consisting of three subjects in order that results would be more effective; even though bibliotherapy could be implemented in larger groups. The benefits of group bibliotherapy was that subjects could share their knowledge from the story and the character internalization that was chosen could be different. There was also the understanding regarding the personal problem and other people that were similar in the group could provide the realization to the subject that the subjects were not the only one with the problem. The characters and their fellow subjects also had similar problems. This allowed the subjects to share their feelings, thoughts, and experience regarding problems of social anxiety. The counselor in the discussion session – that started with character identification to universalism – continued to explore various emotions and the experiences in daily lives. In this sub-session subjects were starting to be able to reflect their emotions and the subjects became more able in stating it in the following sessions. McCarthy and Chalmers (as cited in Cook et al, 2006) stated that the most effective session was when the counselor explored types of problems in daily lives, such as getting angry, sneering, or getting mockery or criticism, and problems related to the concept of self. While Colangelo and Assouline (as cited in Robinson, 2008) stated that counseling—especially in groups—could help intellectually gifted children to normalize their feelings and develop positive coping techniques.

The facilitator or the counselor must plan the following discussion in the bibliotherapy process by giving simple and guiding questions that were more critical in the follow up. Facilitators provide the chance for interpretation, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the characters, problems, and solution or coping strategy in the story. Facilitators must be careful in considering the developmental stage and the reading ability of the students. Students with high intellectual function are more able to think abstractly (Cook, Earles-Vollrath, and Ganz, 2006). It is very important for the counselor in presenting group bibliotherapy to consider the deve-

lopmental stage and the reading ability in intellectually gifted subject group.

Subjects in this study had variants in the pretest-posttest-follow up social anxiety score. There was a peculiar difference between Subject 1 and Subject 5. Based on the qualitative analysis, it was found that Subject 1 grew and developed in a family that did not provide enough room for children to interact socially. There were no friends in the subject's house area and there were no groups of children or adolescent that could be followed by Subject 1. This was different with Subject 5 who scored the lowest when compared to the other subjects. Subject 5 had friends around the subject's house and the subject was fond of soccer. The subject often played soccer after class. Robinson (2008) stated that intellectually gifted students who mastered sports well will show better group attachment compared to peers that do not master sports well. This group attachment experience would affect the ways of interaction with others.

Furthermore Subject 5 became one of the members of the team chosen for competitions several times, becoming the representative of the school. Robinson (2008) stated that participating in team competitions, such as the debate team, mathematics team, and soccer team can increase the sense of belonging and better coping strategy of intellectually gifted students. It is different when the students participate in individual competitions even as representatives of the school. On the other hand team competition can be just a requirement but it is identified with the school and each member is pushed to strive together for the team's success.

Subject 3 in this study was the only female subject and was a secondary school student. Compared to the other two subjects in the same group, Subject 3 showed higher social anxiety. Subject often looked down and did not look at the discussion partner, with low voice, short sentences, and long reaction time. During discussion about the book, Subject 3 tend to be more passive and looked scared in sharing the subject's opinion. However, after the fifth session of the bibliotherapy the subject look more active and smiled easier when the story had funny experiences as was experienced by the other subjects. This condition seemed to be in accordance with the results of the study conducted by Kerr (as cited in Kao, 2007) stating that a lot of intellectually gifted female adolescents experience social anxiety, decrease in aspiration and self-confidence.

Subject 3 also had the tendency to look as if the subject is thinking hard before responding or expressing the subject's opinion. When someone responded to the story the subject is sharing, either from the book or from

personal experience, Subject 3 suddenly looked at the counselor as if the subject was waiting for a response. Kao's (2007) study result of two intellectually gifted females showed that both of them were emotionally sensitive. This was shown through being sensitive to the choice the words of the dialogue partner and being able to sharply feel how others treat them, being fragile adolescents. They also get angry on their selves easier if they were being clumsy or making a mistake.

Besides the factors of intelligence, emotional intensity, high reading interest, counselor, and facilities such a comfortable place, the other factors affecting this study was the role of parents. Parents of subjects in this study supported the involvement of the subjects in the program.

Based on the CBCL that consisted of two parts: the potential detection and the problem detection; there were response differences from the parents and the children on the problem detection part. Every subject parents except the parents of Subject 1 who tend to value the problem experienced by their children as lower compared to the evaluation the subjects gave about themselves. However, in the end the parents realized the problems experienced by the subjects and supported the subjects in joining the group bibliotherapy. This could affect the treatment results for the group bibliotherapy.

It can be concluded that group bibliotherapy can be implemented on intellectually gifted early adolescents in mathematics who also has social anxiety. A wider implementation with larger subjects is also possible considering that bibliotherapy can be implemented in a class setting by considering the degree of the problem experienced and correct literature choice. Besides that the counselor's ability in controlling the group is also needed during the discussion process to ensure that it would be effective, though some limitations still exists, such as difficulties in choosing subjects, especially demographically, so the participants of the study were few in number. A controlled group was also lacking.

Conclusion and Suggesttions

The aim of this study was to find out the effect of group bibliotherapy in reducing the social anxiety of intellectually gifted adolescents. The materials used in this study were two short scripts and the comic "Asyik Belajar Matematika" 1-6. The conclusion of the study results was that group bibliotherapy could reduce social anxiety of intellectually gifted early adolescents, so group bibliotherapy could help intellectually gifted early adolescents reduce social anxiety problems.

Several points that should be perfected for group bibliotherapy to produce optimal results are: 1) A more intensive rapport between the counselor and subjects are needed so subjects are more open during the group bibliotherapy session. 2) Group bibliotherapy can be administered by psychologists at school as remedial counseling to treat intellectually gifted early adolescent problems. 3) For the effect to be more optimal after the administration of group bibliotherapy, parents need to follow up by providing reading materials that can develop children's emotional and social abilities, especially related to social anxiety. Then they should conduct a discussion with the child regarding the book, in relation to the character's experience in the book and relating it with daily lives.

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