

## THE APPLICATION OF REMINISCENCE THERAPY FOR THE ELDERLY IN OVERCOMING PSYCHOSOCIAL PROBLEMS IN THE SOCIAL REHABILITATION SERVICES UNIT KARAWANG

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### ABSTRACT

The elderly while in social services at the social rehabilitation service center, especially those who experience psychosocial problems, need to get special treatment including; increasing self-confidence, overcoming anxiety, and feeling optimistic about the life they live. One technique for dealing with social psychological problems is reminiscence therapy. This study aims to reveal the application of reminiscence therapy in overcoming psychosocial problems experienced by the elderly at the Social Rehabilitation Service Unit Karawang. The method used is action research in a qualitative approach. Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews, observation, and focus group discussions. The results showed that the application of reminiscence therapy to informants could reduce anxiety, loneliness, rediscover joy, and increase self-confidence.

### INTRODUCTION

The increasing trend of the elderly population indicates that more and more people are able to improve their social welfare. But in reality, not all elderly are able to enjoy their old age happily. This is due to, among other things; neglect due to family socioeconomic, personal problems of the elderly, disasters, and changes in the status of life in society, so that the elderly need to get help and services to improve their social functioning. Based on the results of an exploratory study at the research location, namely the Social Rehabilitation Service Unit (Satpel RSLU) Karawang, there were 64 elderly people, consisting of 27 men and 37 women as beneficiaries. Some of the elderly have psychosocial problems such as; lonely, anxious, feeling abandoned by his family, sad and disappointed with his current situation. Meanwhile, in terms of social relations, there are elderly who are less able to adjust to the social environment of the orphanage, have disagreements with other elderly people, and prefer to be alone. From the cognitive aspect, there are elderly who experience a decline in cognitive function such as; hard to remember, easy to forget, and not focus on things that require thinking.

The elderly while in social services at the social rehabilitation service center, especially those who experience psychosocial problems, need to get special treatment including; increasing

self-confidence, overcoming anxiety, and feeling optimistic about the life they live. One technique for dealing with social psychological problems is reminiscence therapy, a technique used to remember and talk about someone's life.

This study aims to reveal the application of reminiscence therapy in overcoming psychosocial problems experienced by the elderly at the Karawang Elderly Social Rehabilitation Service Unit. The rationale for conducting this research is based on the belief that the psychosocial aspect is related to the problems and needs of the elderly in daily life at social rehabilitation service, considering that the practice of social work assistance for the elderly is directed at improving the biopsychosocial condition itself. Academically, the scientific aspect of this research lies in the behavior of elderly individuals in an social rehabilitation service environment that requires a sense of security and psychological comfort.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This study's (1) purpose was to investigate the usefulness of reminiscence therapy for older women living in nursing homes during the COVID-19 pandemic. A sample composed of 29 older women was evaluated with the Purpose-in-Life Test (PIL), Sense of Coherence (SOC-13) and Brief Cope Inventory (COPE-28). Our reminiscence program consisted of 10 sessions lasting 60 min each. Reminiscence can lead to positive mental health and other elements of particular relevance to older adults. In each session, they worked on a different theme that promoted the memory of positive emotions: optimal experience, decisive moments, stresses, tensions, problems and solutions, memories of childhood, adolescence, maturity, significant people in life, sense of life, and future script. They are compared as an intervention group ( $n = 12$ ) with a control group ( $n = 17$ ) using a pre-post, single-blind design. Significant results were obtained and showed that reminiscence therapy was effective in increasing the meaning of life, sense of coherence, and coping in older women. The reminiscence therapy applied yielded positive effects in older female participants living in a nursing home during COVID-19 pandemic.

Research conducted by Akhmad, Sholihin, Rima and Sonontiko (2) aims to determine the differences between effectiveness of mindfulness reminiscence in reducing cognitive impairment in the elderly. This study used a pre-post test quasi-experimental design with a control group. Data collection of cognitive disorders was taken from the component of cognitive disorders questions on the MMSE questionnaire. Data analysis used paired and unpaired t-test. The results showed that reminiscence therapy was effective in reducing cognitive disorders in the elderly. Reminiscence Therapy has been proven to reduce cognitive disorders compared to the control group who did not receive the intervention.

The research conducted by Juniarni, Lindayani, Nurdina and Hendra (3) used the literature review method. The purpose of evidence-based practice is to determine the effectiveness of reminiscence therapy on the level of depression in the elderly. Literature searches conducted through Google Scholar and Pubmed using a combination of keyword reminiscence therapy, depression, elderly. Inclusion criteria were studies published in English from 2010 to 2020. There were 535 journals obtained, but only 5 journals met the search criteria. The results of this review indicate that reminiscence therapy has an influence to reduce the level of depression in elderly and reminiscence therapy has no side effects compared to pharmacological therapy. It is expected that health workers can implement reminiscence therapy to reduce the level of depression in the elderly

Of the three studies above, each seeks to explain the application of reminiscence therapy for the elderly to address specific problems, namely; coping strategies for elderly women in

dealing with the impact of COVID-19, then increasing cognitive function, and effectiveness of reminiscence therapy on the level of depression in the elderly, while the research conducted by researchers was carried out in a social work perspective that specifically developed reminiscence therapy for the elderly who experience psychosocial problems, namely; anxiety, loneliness, and disappointment at being abandoned by his family.

The word ‘reminiscence’ has been derived from *reminiscentia* meaning the “act of remembering,” “remembrance, recollection,” “remember, recall to mind,” Thus ‘reminiscence’ is “are collection of something past” (4). The 8th edition of Mosby Medical Dictionary defines Reminiscence therapy as a psychotherapeutic technique in which self-esteem and personal satisfaction are restored, particularly in older persons, by encouraging patients to review past experiences of a pleasant nature. Meanwhile, Stinson (5) argued that reminiscence is a technique used to remember and talk about someone's life. This therapy is used for the elderly who experience cognitive impairment, loneliness and psychological recovery. Thus reminiscence therapy is a method of expressing feelings that can trigger the emergence of self-confidence and feelings of respect in the elderly which results in the emergence of positive coping that affects the perceptions and emotions of the elderly in looking at a problem.

Stinson (6) suggests the stages in the reminiscence process as follows:

**Table 1.** Stage in the reminiscing process according to Stinson (6)

Phase	Activity
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Facilitator will remind the group of the reminiscence meeting through a telephone call and a personal card one day before the scheduled meeting.</li> <li>● Work is done with staff (activity directors) to provide reminders for the reminiscence groups.</li> <li>● Assessment of each potential member for sensory deficits, level of cognition, and ability to verbalize will occur before the first meeting by the facilitator.</li> </ul>
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sessions will meet at the same time and in the same place each week.</li> <li>● Sessions will meet for 60 minutes twice weekly for 6 weeks.</li> <li>● Goals will be set for groups.</li> <li>● Group size will be no more than 15 members.</li> <li>● Researchers will facilitate group interaction.</li> <li>● Sessions will be structured with specific themes.</li> </ul>
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Give participants individual attention to limit attrition.</li> <li>● Expect to share a few memories.</li> <li>● Encourage discussion.</li> <li>● Remind members of confidentiality.</li> <li>● Remind members of the termination date.</li> </ul>
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Evaluate for benefits.</li> <li>● Offer feedback to the facility.</li> <li>● Make recommendations for future groups.</li> </ul>

Social work is the professional activity of helping individuals, groups, or communities enhance or restore their capacity for social functioning and creating societal conditions favorable to their goal (7). Meanwhile IFSW, 2000 and IASW Codes of Ethics, 2006 suggest that the social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilizing

theories of human behavior and social systems, social work intervenes at points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work (8). Based on this definition, social work as a profession that provides assistance to clients both individuals (elderly), groups and society is based on knowledge and skills, in this case using social work methods, skills, and techniques.

In the context of this research, social work can be applied in an effort to improve the social functioning ability of the elderly so that they can adequately carry out activities of daily life, so that they are able to maintain their functional capacity. Through this research, indirectly the practice of social work can be implemented by proposing alternatives to the parties regarding the handling of the elderly in a disaster situation which is directed at increasing functional abilities in daily life in their place of residence, so that the elderly obtain their welfare.

## METHOD

The research was carried out at the Karawang Elderly Social Rehabilitation Service Unit Karawang which was held from May to September 2022. Research conducted using action research methods in a qualitative approach. Through action research, researchers and participants seek to make changes, namely, together with research subjects, they carry out reminiscence therapy as a technique to overcome or reduce psychosocial problems in the elderly. The research workflow can be briefly described as follows:



**Figure 1.** Research workflow

The source of data in this study were the elderly who were in the Karawang Elderly Social Rehabilitation Service Unit Karawang as beneficiaries of social service programs. The data sources were determined purposely, with the following criteria: a) Older people who receive social services, b) Older people who have psychosocial problems, and c) Aged 60 years and over, both men and women. Data collection techniques using interviews, observations, and questionnaires in the form of the ADL index. The data analysis technique is qualitative analysis; data reduction, data display, and conclusion.

## RESULT

Characteristics and psychosocial problems faced by informants (research subjects)

The research subjects in this study were elderly people who received social services at Satpel RSLU Karawang, had psychosocial problems, aged 60 years and over, both men and women. The number of informants is 5 (five) people, with details as follows:

**Table 2.** Research subject

No.	Name (Initial)	Age (year)	Sex	Marital status	Initial Residence
1	Ar	68	Male	Widower	Karawang
2	Is	69	Female	Widow	Karawang
3	Ed	71	Male	Widower	West Java
4	Sr	70	Female	Widow	Central Java
5	Na	75	Male	Widower	Central Java

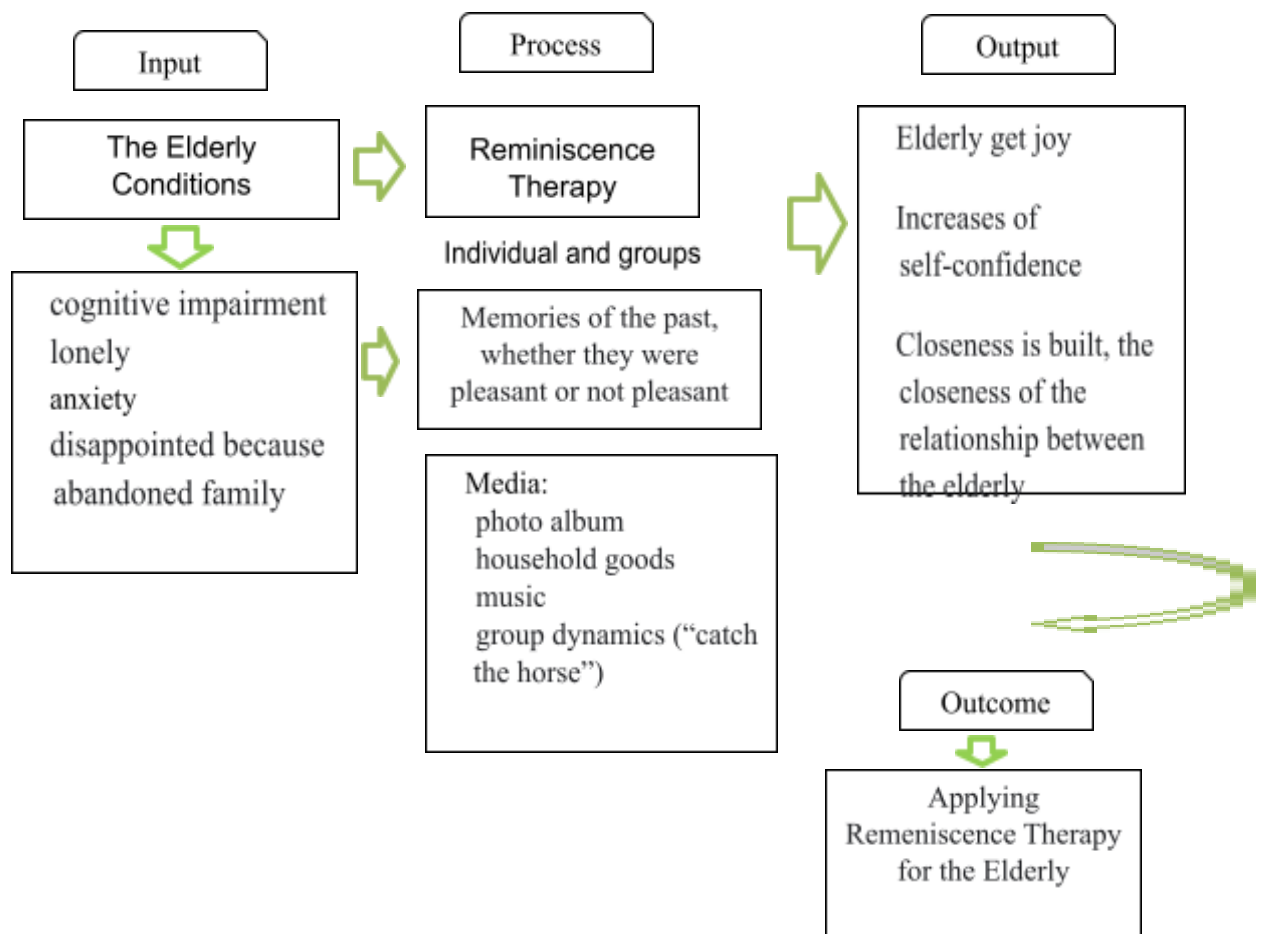
Based on the results of interviews and observations with informants, some of the psychosocial problems experienced were; sad and disappointed with his current situation, feeling abandoned by his family, and worried about his life in the future. Cognitively, some elderly people experience a decrease in cognitive function such as; difficulty to remember, easy to forget, and do not focus on something that requires thought.

#### Handling of clients who experience psychosocial problems by "Satpel RSLU" Karawang

At the Satpel RSLU Karawang there are three social workers, whose duties include providing psychosocial assistance. Based on the explanation from social workers, several psychosocial intervention techniques for clients include: therapy expressing feelings or vent, nourishment, matching cards, art therapy and other techniques. However, according to social workers, reminiscence therapy has never been applied.

The model of reminiscence therapy in overcoming psychosocial problems experienced by the elderly in the "Satpel RSLU" Karawang

Figure 2 is an overview of the therapy-Reminiscence model for the elderly:



**Figure 2.** Overview of the therapy-Reminiscence model for the elderly

#### Results of the Application of Reminiscence Therapy for Research Subjects (Informant)

The application of reminiscence therapy in the research process was carried out both individually and in groups, but even though it was carried out in the target group the target of change remained in elderly individuals (informants).

##### a. Informant "Ar" (Male, 68 years)

Informant "Ar" while at the "Satpel RSLU Karawang" is known as a person who diligently deepens religion (Islam). Researchers dig up information from "Ar" as well as a form of reminiscence therapy, namely remembering pleasant or memorable past events or experiences. Informant "Ar" told a story before entering the "Satpel RSLU Karawang", "Ar" often traveled to various places to meet the recite teacher. Next, "Ar" invited the researcher to discuss religion while showing several books about religion, namely a book entitled "Buku Tanya Jawab Masalah Agama" by author A. Hassan, and the book "Tarjamah Bulughul Maram" by Ibnu Hajr Al Asqalani.

Through a transcendental communication process, namely individual communication with God the Creator of Nature, the informant "Ar" found peace while at the "Satpel RSLU Karawang", dramatically "Ar" said that if someone else wanted to replace himself in this service institution and replace it with money of 50 million rupiah, he will refuse it.

##### b. Informant "Is" (Female, 70 years old)

Informant "Is" lives in "Satpel RSLU Karawang" because there is no family to take care of her, she has an adult son but does not know his whereabouts, this situation causes "Is" to feel sad while she is in "Satpel RSLU Karawang". Through the process of reminiscence therapy, "Is" told the story that before entering this elderly service institution, she had attended small-scale productive economic business training, and when "Is" entered the "Satpel RSLU Karawang", she developed her talents and skills, namely making connectors masks for women with material from plastic granules.

The informant "Is" was happy because the mask connectors he made were selling well, she had participated in an exhibition at the supermarket, and guests who came to the "Satpel RSLU Karawang" generally bought "Is' work".

c. Informant "Ed" (Male, 71 years)

While the researcher was communicating with "Ar", the informant "Ed" came and joined the conversation. When it was "Ed"'s turn to speak, he told a story before entering the "Satpel RSLU Karawang", "Ed" likes gardening and cultivating land for small farming. The next day the informant "Ed" was seen working on farming land alone in the "Satpel RSLU Karawang", and the researcher came to him asking him about what he was doing, "Ed" proudly showed that all plants, namely chillies and cassava were the result of yes. When the chili and cassava harvests were distributed to his friends in the "Satpel RSLU Karawang", and "Ed" felt happy and happy because they could share the agricultural produce. Through the reminiscence process, the informant "Ed" revealed that he felt at home in the "Satpel RSLU Karawang" environment, and did not think too much about the fate of his life far away from his family.

d. Informant "Sr" (Female, 70 years)

Informant "Sr" was accepted as a client at the "Satpel RSLU Karawang" in 2019, he came from Central Java. During the reminiscence session, the informant "Sr" who is a retired teacher, told a long story about her experience as a teacher, there were many fun and happy stories for "SR" during her time as a teacher, besides there were unpleasant stories. Personally the informant "Sr" seemed wise, her character as an educator was seen in a structured way of speaking, still enthusiastic about talking about education both past and present. She also stated that she was happy to be able to chat with researchers discussing the world of education.

e. Informant "Na" (Male, 75 years)

Informant "Na" who came from Central Java, came and was received at the "Satpel RSLU Karawang" three years ago. In the reminiscence session, the informant "Na" told a long story about his past experience living in a transmigration location in West Sumatra. According to "Na", with his skills in cultivating agricultural land at the transmigration site, he succeeded in developing dry land into fertile paddy fields for planting rice. The success of "Na" in cultivating agricultural land at the transmigration site was transmitted to other members of the transmigrant community, so that "Na" was known by many people.

The informant "Na" recounted his past experience when he was at the transmigration location with pride in front of other elderly friends and researchers. Now "Na" lives in the "Satpel RSLU Karawang" to live his daily life in peace and he sees it as a period of rest from work.

The application of reminiscence therapy was carried out by researchers and assisted by three social workers in the "Satpel RSLU Karawang" as research participants (Widha, Derina, and Mustafa), not only carried out individually for the five informants mentioned above, but also carried out in groups. , but the targets were focused on the five informants. The group dynamics that the researcher first applied in reminiscence therapy was the "catch the horse"

game, where several group members who made a "mistake" in the "catch the horse" game, were asked to tell about their most enjoyable and happiest life experiences in front of other group members. From this session it is hoped that the self-confidence of the elderly will increase because they feel proud to have told their happy past to other elderly colleagues. On the next day the group activities in the reminiscence session were in the form of art (traditional art), namely tambourine music. Unexpectedly by the researchers, the informant "Is" turned out to appear as a singer in this traditional art, as well as the informants "Ar", "Ed" and "Na" who seemed skilled at drumming/playing musical instruments, while the informant "Sr" did not take part in the group reminiscence session.

Through reminiscence therapy in the group, the researcher observed the informants enjoying playing music, they looked like one family and seemed to have forgotten that they lived in a social service institution.

## **DISCUSSION**

The elderly who live and live in social service institutions are not an option to live their old age, but rather a situation that forces them to live in social protection services from the government, because in fact the best service for the elderly is in the family. While in social service institutions, the elderly experience psychosocial problems such as loneliness because there is no family, anxiety about their future life, and decreased cognitive function. One technique for dealing with psychosocial problems experienced by the elderly is reminiscence therapy, which is a technique for expressing feelings, which can trigger the emergence of self-confidence and a feeling of being valued in the elderly which has an impact on the emergence of positive coping, which affects the perceptions and emotions of the elderly in viewing something problem.

The process of reminiscence therapy provides an opportunity for elderly individuals to talk about the past and the conflicts they faced, this process gives the elderly a feeling of security to reunite past memories, and fosters self-acceptance which will be useful for therapeutic purposes

## **CONCLUSION**

Reminiscence therapy as part of memory therapy which is constructed to rebuild the memory of elderly people who have decreased cognitive function, is a deliberate process of remembering oneself in the past, namely the use of a written, oral, or both curriculum vitae to improve psychological well-being. This therapy is often used for the elderly." This form of therapeutic intervention respects the lives and experiences of individuals, with the aim of helping elderly clients to maintain good mental health. However, reminiscence therapy is not the only intervention technique in helping older people overcome psychosocial problems. , because the intervention technique is not single, but multi-technique. Therefore the use of other techniques is highly recommended in dealing with psychosocial problems, which can be integrated with the reminiscence technique.

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