

Abstrak

Tantangan neuroperkembangan dapat menimbulkan kesulitan yang kompleks pada aspek sensorik, motorik, emosional, dan sosial pada masa kanak-kanak, yang memengaruhi cara anak berinteraksi dengan lingkungan terapeutik. Studi kasus kualitatif ini menelaah pengalaman psikologis seorang anak laki-laki berusia 11 tahun yang minimal verbal dengan diagnosis Autism Spectrum Disorder yang berkaitan dengan infeksi Cytomegalovirus kongenital selama partisipasinya dalam Horse Riding Therapy jangka panjang. Data dikumpulkan melalui foto elisitasi, komunikasi berbantuan PECS, photovoice, wawancara orang tua, dan observasi naturalistik, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik reflektif. Empat tema dihasilkan, yaitu (1) Pembentukan Keamanan Tubuh dan Emosional melalui Keterlibatan Ritmis, (2) Munculnya Agensi dan Partisipasi yang Intensional, (3) Kontainmen Relasional sebagai Kondisi Keterlibatan Terapeutik, dan (4) Reorganisasi Pengalaman Secara Bertahap Lintas Waktu dan Konteks. Temuan menunjukkan Horse Riding Therapy sebagai proses yang bermakna secara psikologis, yang dibentuk oleh regulasi tubuh, keberlanjutan relasional, dan rutinitas yang dapat diprediksi dalam konteks keluarga, pendidikan, dan terapi..

Kata kunci: Autisme, Terapi Menunggang Kuda, Tantangan Neurodevelopmental, Perkembangan Anak

Neurodevelopmental challenges can give rise to complex sensory, motor, emotional, and social difficulties in childhood, shaping how children engage with therapeutic environments. This qualitative case study examined the psychological experience of an 11-year-old minimally verbal child with Autism Spectrum Disorder associated with congenital Cytomegalovirus during long-term Horse Riding Therapy. Data were generated through photo elicitation, PECS-assisted communication, photovoice, parental interviews, and naturalistic observation, and analysed using reflexive thematic analysis. Four themes were developed: (1) Establishing Bodily and Emotional Safety Through Rhythmic Engagement, (2) Emerging Agency and Intentional Participation, (3) Relational Containment as a Condition for Therapeutic Engagement, and (4) Gradual Reorganisation of Experience Across Time and Context. The findings illustrate Horse Riding Therapy as a psychologically meaningful process in which bodily regulation, affective engagement, and participation were supported through rhythmic movement, relational continuity, and predictable routines, shaped by family, educational, and therapeutic contexts. The study contributes qualitative insight into equine-assisted intervention processes for children with complex neurodevelopmental profiles.

Keywords: *Autism, Horse Riding Therapy Neurodevelopmental Challenges, Child Development.*