

STRATEGIES OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN BUILDING LEARNING INDEPENDENCE OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY

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Abstract : *This research discusses the learning independence of physically disabled students. This research was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Ulu Moro'o. The informants consist of classroom teachers and parents of the students. The purpose of this study is to obtain an overview of the learning independence physically disabled students and the obstacles experienced by these students themselves and teachers. The research method used is a descriptive method with a qualitative approach. This research method is used because it has the purpose of describing the situation of the problem objectively under natural conditions. The data collection techniques used are observations and interviews. In general, the results of this study illustrate that students can be independent in learning only in limited learning or activities that use physical so that it needs attention and help from an educator.*

Keywords : *Independence of Learning; Children with Special Needs; Physically Disabled.*

Abstrak : *Penelitian ini menyangkut tentang kemandirian belajar siswa tuna daksa. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan di SMA Negeri 1 Ulu Moro'o. Informan terdiri dari guru wali kelas dan orang tua siswa. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk memperoleh gambaran mengenai kemandirian belajar siswa tun daksa dan hambatan-hambatan yang dialami oleh siswa itu sendiri maupun guru. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah metode deskriptif dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Metode penelitian ini digunakan karena memiliki tujuan untuk menggambarkan keadaan permasalahan secara objektif dalam kondisi alamiah. Teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan adalah observasi dan wawancara. Hasil penelitian ini secara umum menggambarkan bahwa siswa tuna daksa bisa mandiri dalam belajar hanya saja dalam terbatas dalam pembelajaran atau kegiatan yang menggunakan fisik sehingga butuh perhatian dan bantuan dari pembimbing*

Kata Kunci : *Kemandirian Belajar; Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus; Tuna Daksa.*

INTRODUCTION

Equality in obtaining an education is the right of every child. This education is for typical children and persons with disabilities or children with special needs (ABK). The definition of ABK is a child with limitations or extraordinary physical, mental-intellectual, social and emotional abilities which significantly influence the process of growth and development compared to other children his age (Winarsih et al., 2013). Behind the limitations possessed by ABK, there are basic potentials that can be developed optimally and integrated through the educational process.

As already regulated in the 1945 Constitution, article 31, paragraph 1 reads, "every citizen has the right to receive education". Then education for children with special needs is emphasized by Law No. 20 of 2003 Article 32 concerning the National Education System, "Special education is education for students who have a level of difficulty in participating in the learning process due to physical, emotional, mental, social abnormalities and have potential or special talents".

Physical abnormalities or what is known as a disabled person. Physically disabled people are persons with abnormality or disability in the musculoskeletal, bone and joint systems, which results in impaired coordination, communication, adaptation, mobilization and developmental disorders. The level of impairment in the disabled can be categorized into three: mild, moderate and severe. The mild category has limitations in physical activities but can be trained through therapy. The moderate category is having motor limitations and experiencing impaired sensory coordination. At the same time, the heavy category has full limitations in carrying out physical activities and cannot control movements (Septian, 2016). This condition of impaired normal body function can be caused by hereditary factors or illness/accident.

Some social groups still need to realize that ABK is a vulnerable group, so they cannot carry out independent learning activities. Therefore, an SLB (Special School) formal education institution is intended for ABK to achieve this independent learning. The question then arises, are disabled children capable of being independent in learning? How do they learn to achieve independence and prepare for life in the future?.

Independence is the essential capital that determines the success of students. Independence means having a mental attitude dominated by one's potential and abilities without depending on others. Independence is a person's attitude in carrying out self-activities, opinions, taking attitudes or decisions and daring to take responsibility without being influenced by others (Utomo, 2007). Furthermore, learning is a change in attitude and behaviour due to practice and experience. Learning is part of human life, lasting a lifetime, anytime and anywhere, based on specific intentions and purposes (Sunarya et al., 2018). Learning independence is an individual's ability to change attitudes and behaviour to be responsible, take the initiative, and not depend on others. The potential and self-ability manifest this in the learning process.

Educating children with special needs certainly requires strategies and competent educators. An analysis of teacher interaction with children is needed in teaching and learning activities to determine the right concept. Effective communication is expected to form learning independence for children with special needs so that they can control their mental, physical, social and emotional feelings (Rosemberg & Silva, 2009).

Likewise, independent learning is one of the essential goals in the learning process. Independent learning abilities developed while studying in the formal education system can be a helpful provision for conducting lifelong learning after students leave the education system (Bethy, 2019). Indicators of learning independence in children with special needs include being responsible for their duties, being confident in doing something, adapting to the environment, and having the will to develop themselves (Hasanah, 2018).

Students with disabilities will have difficulty moving freely and need special tools to carry out daily learning activities. Children with special needs usually have low independence (Thaibah et al., 2020). Therefore, children with special needs with disabilities need to achieve independence in learning. Many factors support the achievement of learning independence for children with special needs. The teacher communicates with students in a communicative manner and shows a flexible, open, sympathetic, understanding, patient, energetic, enthusiastic, and passionate attitude by using improvisations in delivering lessons to create a child's enjoyment of learning, in addition to providing a positive response to students when successfully carrying out a stage of learning activities (Idawati, 2014).

Research on independence has indeed been widely discussed. The role of religious education (Hidayati, 2020), optimization of character education (Syaifullah, 2016), traditional music therapy (Istiningsih, 2014), development of positive parenting module-based parenting in the millennial era (Anugrahani, 2019) to increase the independence of ABK. However, no research has focused on the forms of independent learning for children with special needs with disabilities and the obstacles that occur during the learning process, as it is known that the disabled in question are individuals who are average in intelligence but have deficiencies in their physique. Learning independence is guided by indicators, namely being responsible in learning, being able to motivate oneself, having self-confidence, being able to solve problems in learning, and continuous learning (Slavin, 2009). Therefore, the researchers further examined how physical limitations affect the process of independent learning, the factors that impede the learning process, and how resilience is for students with disabilities.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach. This study aims to reveal the learning independence of children with special needs, as for the research subjects, namely ABK with

physical disabilities who are in the mild-moderate category. at SMA Negeri 1 Ulu Moro'o. This research uses the type of Case Study Research. The researcher's presence in this study is a crucial instrument; the researcher acts as a planner, observer, and data manager, which is then used as a research report.

Data collection techniques were carried out by observation to obtain physical and activity data, in-depth interviews to obtain oral data, and documents to obtain written data. Checking and authenticity of the data found are done by triangulating data sources and methods. The data analysis carried out or used in this research is descriptive qualitative analysis. Data analysis was carried out by organizing, reducing, and presenting data. Data analysis in qualitative research generally begins with preparing and organizing subsequent data, reducing data into themes through coding and summarizing codes, and presenting data (Creswell, J. W., Creswell, 2017). The data analysis process aims to present data regarding the propositions from the findings relating to the learning independence of children with special needs. According to Hanurawan (2012), researchers make interpretations or conclusions in analyzing case study data as a result of research conducted by examining prominent patterns in the data obtained.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

SMA Negeri 1 Ulu Moro'o is one of the schools that has implemented an inclusion program. An inclusion program is a form of special education so that children with special needs can experience an education equal to their peers in comfort and develop self-confidence (Darma & Rusyidi, 2003). At SMA Negeri 1 Ulu Moro'o, some disabled students are in the mild-moderate category. Students with disabilities have damage or disorders in their muscles/bones/joints, so they need special education services to adapt to their environment (Halimah et al., 2019). Students with disabilities have physical limitations, but cognitive tend to be expected.

Based on the results of interviews obtained from informants, disabled students can follow the learning process like students in general. This is because disabled students do not have cognitive barriers and IQ, generally in the average category or even more. The results of measurements using the Binet IQ test for disabled students are 35-138 (Ikhwanudin, 2016). Regarding the willingness to learn, disabled students can learn without coercion and have the will and enthusiasm for learning. This is evidenced by disabled students being more enthusiastic and active in participating in learning. Students also have an awareness of the responsibility to do schoolwork and homework. This is supported by the discipline of these students in submitting weekly assignments.

Sometimes disabled students are less interested in following and doing assignments or lessons that are considered problematic. This becomes the basis for teachers to motivate students to have high fighting power to achieve achievements. Achievement motivation is

the desire to achieve a standard of success and keep trying, as shown by studying harder, being tenacious, diligent, and concentrating while studying (Guidance et al., 2022).

When participating in activities that require specific physical movements, students with disabilities have obstacles, so the role of the accompanying teacher is significant in providing exceptional services to these students. The importance of continuous motivation is also intended so that students can adapt and can participate in learning activities in a fun way.

Based on the results obtained, students with disabilities have good independent learning. This is shown by students who diligently record material that will impact the learning process and learning outcomes (Walidaini, 2022). Note-taking skills must be possessed to be supported by discipline and a willingness to learn. Relevant research shows that the learning motivation of students with special needs, internally and externally, is very high, seen from the desire to succeed, the need for learning, and future aspirations (Sunarya et al., 2018).

To analyze this problem, researchers use the perspective of self-directed learning theory as a term that is closely related to independent learning. *Self-regulated learning* can be defined as a process in which individuals take the initiative with or without the help of others, diagnose learning needs, identify learning resources that can be used, choose and implement strategies, and evaluate learning outcomes (Wongsri & Cantwell, R.H., Archer, 2002). This definition means that individual learning independence can be seen from the characteristics of directing and focusing on the desire to learn and being able to take responsibility for learning.

As educational programs developed by the government, children with special needs, such as the physically disabled, can choose to study in special schools (SLB) or traditional schools that have implemented inclusive programs as formal educational institutions. *Inclusive education* is an education delivery system that provides opportunities for all students who have disabilities and unique talents to participate in learning together with students in general.

Physical limitations are also not a significant barrier for disabled students to show self-confidence. They can participate actively in giving opinions, have average abilities, and are responsible for the class and home assignments. This can be seen in students who check and complete daily assignments well. Based on observations, it was also found that disabled students were less orderly in participating in the learning process in class. Acceptance from the peer environment makes them more adaptable, but this is also the cause of a lack of discipline in the class due to being influenced by the behaviour of classmates who could be more orderly. This resulted in these students needing more initiative or desire in the learning process. Students with disabilities also follow the learning behaviour of their friends, who sometimes do not pay attention to the teacher and lessons.

As for the steps of activities that can be carried out by supervisors/educators to help individuals become more independent in learning, namely; 1) preplanning (activities prior to the learning process); 2) creating a positive learning environment; 3) develop lesson plans; 4) identify appropriate learning activities; 5) carrying out learning and monitoring activities; and 6) evaluating individual learning outcomes (Erni, 2020). Not only that, learning skills are closely related to the process and output (outcome) of learning. This means that learning skills are a prerequisite for creating the learning process. Learning activities are carried out by applying various skills, which include the basic skills of reading, writing, counting, skills in following lessons in class, taking notes, asking and answering (both oral and written), as well as the ability to do assignments (Walidain, 2020).

These steps are supported by the motivations given by the supervisor to disabled students every time learning begins. Teachers are expected to play an active and creative role in using learning media as support for fostering student learning independence. Learning using modules is an effective medium that can foster student study habits, responsibility, and positive behaviour (Dulay et al., 2021). Not only modules, the use of the internet as an informal learning resource allows students to have high collaboration (cooperative) skills, easily share and direct themselves to continue learning (Walidaini & Muhammad Arifin, 2018).

Quoting from Cikal Surabaya Inclusive Education (Cikal, 2021), there are three patterns of appropriate learning arrangements to train the independence of children with special needs, including; 1) Individual or called the one-on-one pattern. This pattern is used to train endurance and focus attention; 2) Small groups. Consists of 4-6 students per class. In this pattern, the way of giving instructions, the form of assignments, and learning materials will be adjusted to the characteristics and needs of the children; and 3) large groups. In large classes, students still apply to learn accommodation, starting from giving instructions, forms of assignments and learning materials that are more conceptual and related to everyday life. The application of the above pattern is also adjusted to students' learning achievements and self-development and is followed by a discussion of ongoing evaluation.

The obstacles experienced by disabled students include lessons that require physical movement, such as sports lessons or picking up items that are difficult to reach during learning. The difficulties experienced certainly vary depending on the physical disability experienced. Students with disabilities will have difficulty making free movements and need special tools to carry out daily activities (Kusumawardhani, A., Hartati, S., & Setyawan, 2010). Therefore, the supervisor will give special attention and assessment in particular activities. Using values in the surrounding environment, such as family and society, can also provide its spirit (Saputra & Zubaidah, 2021). In addition, the term concept of independent learning has recently become a challenge for counsellors of children with special needs (disabled). This means that supervisors can work with school counsellors to

apply this concept so that students learn about various social phenomena that occur in society without feeling inferior to different physical conditions (Kurniawan et al., 2020).

Every child needs to be taught independent learning, especially children with special needs. The essence of independence is to form individuals responsible for themselves. An independent attitude in the individual child is essential to help him survive until adulthood. More specifically, when the individual builds a household with his new family, he will be independent, standing on his own feet. For this reason, parents must provide lessons about being independent and wise in shaping the growth and development of the independence of children with special needs. Of course, teaching independence to children with special needs requires more effort than to non-disabled children. Knowing the modalities of children is essential for parents and accompanying teachers because each ABK has different characteristics and needs, both emotionally and socially. ABK has the possibility of often throwing tantrums or being unable to control emotions that affect the learning mood, so they need to be coaxed into calming down. If it is calm, parents can give rewards as reinforcement. Likewise, with the social aspect, interactions with peers encourage ABK to have a passion for learning and join study groups (Thaibah et al., 2020).

The first way to develop an independent attitude in children is to develop creativity. Never forbid children to try new things, which parents can observe which activities children are more inclined to like. Creativity can also be developed by supporting children's hobbies, letting them work on their hobbies, helping them and providing motivation for themselves because hobbies can foster independence in children (Rohani & Syaifullah, 2012). The second way is to expand networking. According to Bong Chandra, networking can be used as an activity which can expand the network and add connections. Thus, parents should encourage Children with Special Needs (ABK) to develop children's mentality so that they are solid and robust so that they can add connections to introduce to the public the advantages and abilities that exist in children so that the wider community can recognize them. The results of their creativity and hobbies that they develop so that children with special needs (ABK) will grow independently (Rohani & Syaifullah, 2012).

On the other hand, if we examine further, forming the independence of persons with disabilities certainly requires a long process. People with disabilities may have experienced a downturn in accepting their condition. The process of self-acceptance that the disabled go through is not easy. It is influenced by internal factors (such as feelings of inferiority, helplessness, lack of confidence, shame, and even depression), while external factors (such as family support, stigma and discrimination from the environment) (Virilia & Wijaya, 2015). Therefore, persons with disabilities, whether congenital or accidental/ill, must learn to accept their condition as they are and have an optimistic attitude towards themselves.

Understanding the needs of children with special needs will help provide learning for them through self-developmental learning. Self-development learning in schools plays

a vital role in increasing independence for children with special needs who experience delays in developing intelligence or abilities below standard size, so they need unique guidance. *Mental retardation* is a chronic condition that starts from birth or childhood with the characteristic of showing a delay in mental development, so the ability to learn is very disturbed and cannot adapt to societal norms. In this case, children with special needs need to be provided with services, guidance, and teaching that can help them to adapt to society. However, unlike normal children, self-development learning helps children with special needs so that self-development learning will be given to children. Mental retardation focuses on aspects of self-help such as bathing, dressing, decorating, wearing shoes, and cleanliness of the surrounding environment, as well as social adjustment in society and communicating with other people.

Children with special needs are said to be independent if they can do certain things without the help of others or at least with a small amount of help from others. They also learn independence (Thaibah et al., 2020). Children with special needs are expected to have the ability to complete learning and be responsible for their learning process. In this case, children with special needs can complete assignments given by teachers or parents and always do them without coercing anyone.

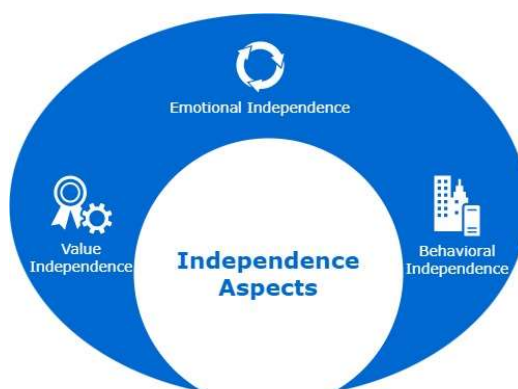


Figure 1: Independence Aspects

The independence aspect of Steinberg and Lerner quoted from Desmita, as shown above, shows three crucial aspects of independence, namely; 1) emotional independence, which is a process of independence measured from the emotional level, can be seen from changes in the relationship between the level of emotional maturity between individuals; 2) independence of behaviour in the form of a person can be said to be independent in behaviour when he can take responsibility and make every decision for himself; and 3) value independence in the form of independence about values if an individual can sort or provide an assessment of which one should come first and which one can come later, can sort out which is essential and which is not necessary (Desmita, 2016).

Thus, one's independence is not neutral from within but the result of environmental influences or coaching. Fostering children with specialities is, of course, the primary key is

patience, skill and painstaking. After that, they can become coaches who can learn much from the child. This coaching can be done at home with parents or at school with teachers. This coaching activity leads to the ultimate goal of independence. Independence in children with special needs can be trained and developed through activities of daily living or daily activities. Children's independence training is carried out through daily activities because children often meet with teachers and parents and because children with special needs do not know much about activities in their environment, whether for themselves or those carried out with others.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings regarding the analysis of learning independence for children with special needs with disabilities, it can be concluded that overall, students with disabilities have relatively good independent learning. Especially now that disabled students can choose ordinary schools that have implemented an inclusion program and carry out the learning process together with standard students. Learning independence possessed by disabled students can be seen in participation in class, timely completion of school and home assignments, and willingness to learn without coercion. The obstacles experienced are usually in activities that use physical. With independent learning, these obstacles can be minimized, and achieving achievements in academic and non-academic fields is possible.

In addition, schools also need to pay attention to and create a conducive atmosphere and support the ability of each individual to learn independently, including students with special needs. Students with special needs have the potential to excel in academics like students in general. This research is limited to the independent learning of students with special needs with disabilities at the high school level so that other researchers can conduct further research on self-development for students with special needs.

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