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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PARENTING GUIDANCE ON THE EMOTIONAL ABILITIES OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the effectiveness of parenting guidance on the emotional abilities of children with special needs (ABK). Emotional abilities are an important aspect in the process of social and personality development of children, especially for ABK who have difficulties in managing emotions and social interactions. This study used a quantitative approach with a pretest-posttest control group design . The research subjects consisted of 20 parents of children with special needs who participated in a parenting guidance program at an inclusive school. Data were collected through a questionnaire on children's emotional abilities and analyzed using a t-test. The results showed that there was a significant difference in children's emotional abilities before and after parents participated in parenting guidance. This indicates that parenting guidance is effective in improving the emotional abilities of children with special needs.

Keywords: parenting guidance, emotional abilities, children with special needs

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui efektivitas bimbingan parenting terhadap kemampuan emosional anak berkebutuhan khusus (ABK). Kemampuan emosional merupakan aspek penting dalam proses perkembangan sosial dan kepribadian anak, terutama bagi ABK yang memiliki hambatan dalam mengelola emosi dan berinteraksi sosial. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain *pretest-posttest control group*. Subjek penelitian terdiri dari 20 orang tua anak berkebutuhan khusus yang mengikuti program bimbingan parenting di sebuah sekolah inklusif. Data dikumpulkan melalui angket kemampuan emosional anak dan dianalisis menggunakan uji-t. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat perbedaan signifikan kemampuan emosional anak sebelum dan sesudah orang tua mengikuti bimbingan parenting. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa bimbingan parenting efektif dalam meningkatkan kemampuan emosional anak berkebutuhan khusus.

Kata kunci: bimbingan parenting, kemampuan emosional, anak berkebutuhan khusus

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A. Introduction

The family is the primary and primary environment in a child's development. Parents play a crucial role in shaping a child's personality, behavior, and emotional abilities from an early age. Through appropriate parenting, children can learn to recognize, manage, and express their emotions effectively. According to Goleman (2018), emotional intelligence is a crucial component of emotional intelligence, determining a person's success in adapting to their environment. Therefore, the family's role extends beyond meeting a child's physical needs to fostering emotional and social development.

Children with special needs (ABK) have unique characteristics that require a different approach to care and guidance than children in general. They often experience challenges in emotional, social, and behavioral aspects, requiring special attention and intervention from parents and their environment (Somantri, 2019). Limitations in managing emotions often make it difficult for children with special needs to interact with peers and adults. Therefore, appropriate guidance for parents in educating and guiding their children is an urgent need.

Most parents of children with special needs still struggle to understand their children's emotional needs. Lack of knowledge and skills in dealing with children's emotional behavior can cause family stress and worsen the child's emotional well-being (Santrock, 2020). This situation is exacerbated by limited access to family guidance and counseling services specifically for children with special needs. Many parents still rely on personal experience without a scientific understanding of empathy-based parenting and effective communication.

Parenting guidance offers a solution to help parents understand and implement parenting styles appropriate to the characteristics of children with special needs. Through this guidance, parents are provided with an understanding of positive parenting strategies, emotional management techniques, and ways to effectively support their child's emotional development (Ningsih & Raharjo, 2022). Parenting guidance programs typically include training, family counseling, and reflection sessions that enable parents to identify their child's emotional challenges and find the best ways to address them.

The relationship between parenting guidance and children's emotional well-being. Effective parenting guidance can improve children's emotional well-being because parents are better able to create a warm and accepting family atmosphere. Children who grow up in environments with high emotional support tend to have better emotional regulation and more adaptive behavior (Hastuti, 2021). Previous research has shown that positive interactions between parents and children are a key factor in shaping the emotional stability of children with special needs (Yusuf, 2020).

Although numerous studies have discussed the importance of parenting styles for child development, few have specifically examined the effectiveness of *parenting guidance* on the emotional development of children with special needs. Many studies focus solely on behavioral or academic aspects, yet emotional development is a crucial foundation for successful social adjustment and independence (Rahayu & Sari, 2023). Therefore, this research is crucial to provide empirical evidence regarding the impact of parenting guidance on the emotional development of

children with special needs.

Based on the above description, this study aims to analyze the effectiveness of parenting guidance in improving the emotional abilities of children with special needs. Through this study, it is hoped that a relevant and applicable guidance model can be identified for parents and inclusive educational institutions. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of family guidance and counseling programs, while strengthening the role of parents as key partners in the emotional development of children with special needs.

Theoretical review

Children with Special Needs

Children with special needs (ABK) are children who experience physical, mental, intellectual, social, and/or emotional disorders or obstacles that significantly impact their growth and development compared to children their age. This definition encompasses a variety of conditions, such as intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorders (ASD), *attention deficit hyperactivity disorder* (ADHD), specific learning disabilities, sensory impairments, and physical disabilities.

Hallahan, Kauffman, and Pullen (2018) emphasize that children with special needs require specialized educational services and support to reach their full potential. These needs can vary significantly depending on the type and severity of the child's condition. Therefore, an individualized and personalized approach to education and intervention is crucial.

Emotional Ability

Emotional skills include self-awareness, self-control, empathy, and social skills (Goleman, 2018). In children with special needs, these areas often face challenges, requiring training and support from parents and teachers. Parenting guidance can provide a bridge for parents to understand and stimulate their child's emotional development (Yusuf, 2020).

Emotional intelligence refers to an individual's ability to recognize, understand, manage, and use emotions effectively. Goleman (1995) introduced the concept of emotional intelligence (EQ), which encompasses self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Good emotional intelligence enables individuals to build healthy relationships, cope with stress, make informed decisions, and achieve goals.

In the context of special needs children (ABK), emotional skills are often a challenge. Children with ASD, for example, may have difficulty understanding and responding to others' emotions. Children with ADHD may struggle to control their impulses and emotions. Therefore, developing emotional skills is crucial for children with special needs to improve their quality of life and social participation.

Parenting Guidance

Parenting is the process of raising and educating children, involving various aspects, including providing affection, support, guidance, and discipline. Baumrind (1991) identified three main *parenting styles*: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive. Authoritative *parenting*, characterized by warmth, responsiveness, and clear rules, is generally considered the most effective *parenting style* in promoting healthy child development.

Parenting children with special needs is often more complex and challenging. Parents of children with special needs may face increased stress, greater time demands, and limited financial resources. Therefore, parents of children with special needs require additional support and

guidance to provide effective *parenting* .

Parenting guidance is a program or intervention designed to help parents improve their *parenting skills* and overcome the challenges they face in raising children. *Parenting guidance* can cover a variety of topics, such as effective communication, positive discipline, behavior management, and children's emotional development.

Parenting guidance is the process of providing professional assistance to parents to develop the understanding and skills to effectively raise children. According to Prayitno (2021), parenting guidance aims to help parents understand their children's characteristics, manage parenting stress, and build empathetic communication within the family.

Webster-Stratton (2016) developed a *parenting program* focused on strengthening positive *parenting skills* and reducing negative child behaviors. This program has been shown to be effective in improving child behavior and reducing parental stress. *Parenting guidance* can be provided in various formats, such as group, individual, or *online* .

The Relationship Between Parenting Guidance and the Emotional Development of Children with Special Needs

Parenting guidance can play a crucial role in enhancing the emotional well-being of children with special needs. Through *parenting guidance* , parents can learn strategies to help their children recognize, understand, and manage their emotions. Parents can also learn how to create a supportive and responsive environment that promotes their children's emotional development.

parenting guidance is effective in improving the emotional well-being of children with special needs. For example, research by Lecavalier et al. (2006) found that a *parenting program* focused on behavior management was effective in reducing behavioral problems and improving the social skills of children with ASD. Other research has shown a positive correlation between parental participation in parenting guidance and improved emotional well-being in children. Ningsih and Raharjo (2022) stated that after participating in a parenting program, parents were better able to regulate their own emotions and serve as role models for their children in managing emotions in a healthy manner.

by Chronis et al. (2004) found that *parenting guidance* was effective in reducing ADHD symptoms and improving the social functioning of children with ADHD.

Specifically, *parenting guidance* can help parents:

- Increasing children's emotional awareness: Parents can learn how to help their children identify and name their emotions.
- Teaching emotion regulation strategies: Parents can learn how to help their children develop strategies for dealing with difficult emotions, such as anger, anxiety, or sadness.
- Improving emotional communication: Parents can learn how to communicate with their children about emotions effectively.
- Creating a supportive environment: Parents can learn how to create a safe and comfortable environment where their children feel safe to express their emotions.

Parenting guidance is a promising intervention for improving the emotional well-being of children with special needs. Further research is needed to identify the most effective types of *parenting guidance* for different types of children with special needs and to understand the mechanisms underlying *its effectiveness* .

B. Method

Research Type and Approach This research used a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design. This design was chosen because the researcher wanted to determine the effectiveness of a parenting guidance program on the emotional abilities of children with special needs, but it was not possible to group samples randomly. According to Sugiyono (2022), quasi-experimental research aims to test the causal relationship between independent and dependent variables under controlled conditions. The design used was a *pretest-posttest control group design* , where an experimental group received treatment in the form of a parenting guidance program, and a control group received no treatment.

Subjects and research location The subjects of this study were parents and children with special needs who attend an inclusive school in Banjarmasin City, South Kalimantan. The sample consisted of 20 parent-child pairs, with 10 pairs as the experimental group and 10 pairs as the control group. The sampling technique used purposive sampling, with the criteria being parents who have children with special needs aged 7–12 years and are willing to participate in all series of guidance activities. The study was conducted for three months, namely from February to April 2025.

Research procedures and treatments The research procedure began with a pretest to measure the children's emotional abilities before receiving treatment. Afterward, the experimental group participated in a parenting guidance program for eight sessions. The guidance material covered understanding the characteristics of children with special needs, empathetic communication techniques, positive reinforcement strategies, parental emotional control, and the application of positive discipline in parenting. Each session lasted 90 minutes and was facilitated by a professional counselor. Meanwhile, the control group simply participated in routine school activities without any special intervention. After the program concluded, both groups were given a posttest to determine changes in the children's emotional abilities.

Data collection instruments and techniques The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire on children's emotional abilities developed based on Goleman's theory (2018) covering five aspects: self-awareness, self-control, motivation, empathy, and social skills. The instrument was tested for validity and reliability through *expert judgment* and statistical testing using Cronbach's Alpha, with a reliability result of 0.87, indicating that the instrument has high internal consistency. Furthermore, observations of children's behavior in social situations and brief interviews with parents were conducted to strengthen the quantitative findings.

Data analysis techniques The data obtained were analyzed using parametric statistical tests Paired Sample t-test and Independent Sample t-test to measure the differences in pretest and posttest scores between the experimental group and the control group. Statistical tests were conducted with the help of SPSS software version 26.0. The decision-making criteria were based on a significance value (p) <0.05 which indicates a significant difference between before and after treatment. The results of this analysis are expected to provide empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of parenting guidance programs on improving the emotional abilities of children

with special needs.

C. Results and Discussions

This study aimed to test the effectiveness of a parenting guidance program on the emotional well-being of children with special needs. Based on data analysis, it was found that there was a significant increase in the emotional well-being scores of children in the experimental group after participating in the parenting guidance program. Meanwhile, the control group showed no significant changes. This indicates that parenting guidance significantly contributes to improving children's emotional aspects, including self-awareness, self-control, empathy, motivation, and social skills.

Statistical test results The results of the *Paired Sample t-test* showed that the average score of children's emotional abilities in the experimental group increased from 62.3 at the pretest to 84.5 at the posttest, with a significance value of $p = 0.000 (<0.05)$. In contrast, in the control group, the average score only increased from 63.1 to 66.4 with a p value = 0.112 (> 0.05), which means it is not statistically significant. The *Independent Sample t-test* also showed a significant difference between the two groups ($p = 0.001$), so it can be concluded that parenting guidance is effective in improving the emotional abilities of children with special needs.

Analysis of emotional competence aspects: Based on the indicators, the highest improvement occurred in self-control and empathy, while the lowest improvement was in internal motivation. Parents who participated in the parenting guidance program reported a better understanding of how to calm their children when they were angry, provide emotional support, and implement positive communication. Observations also showed that children became better able to recognize their own feelings and adapt to social situations at school and at home. These findings align with Goleman's (2018) opinion that children's emotional competence develops through warm and consistent patterns of interaction with parents.

In addition to impacting children, parenting guidance programs also have a positive influence on parenting behavior. Prior to the guidance program, most parents still employed authoritarian or permissive parenting styles, but after participating in the program, they were more likely to adopt democratic parenting styles that are full of support and understanding. This suggests that improving children's emotional abilities is inextricably linked to parents' increased understanding of the importance of empathetic communication and positive reinforcement (Ningsih & Raharjo, 2022). Thus, parenting guidance serves not only as technical training but also as a means of emotional learning for parents.

The results of this study support the theory proposed by Yusuf (2020) and Santrock (2020) that the family plays a primary role in shaping children's emotions. Children who grow up in a responsive and empathetic family environment will have better emotional regulation skills. This finding also aligns with research by Hastuti (2021) and Rahayu & Sari (2023), which states that parenting training can improve children's empathy and self-control through positive interactions between parents and children. In other words, parenting guidance is a key factor in optimizing the emotional development of children with special needs within the family environment.

Conclusion

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that parenting guidance has been proven effective in improving the emotional abilities of children with special needs. Children whose parents participated in the guidance program showed significant improvements in self-awareness, self-control, empathy, motivation, and social skills compared to children in the control group. This suggests that active parental involvement in guidance can strengthen the emotional bond between parents and children, thereby helping children develop better emotional regulation and more adaptive social behavior.

Theoretical and Practical Implications Theoretically, the results of this study support Goleman's view that emotional intelligence can be developed through a positive and supportive family environment. Practically, these findings suggest that parenting guidance programs can be an effective intervention strategy for school counselors, psychologists, and inclusive educational institutions in helping parents face the challenges of raising children with special needs. With structured guidance, parents can gain new insights into how to build empathetic communication, provide positive reinforcement, and create an emotional climate conducive to child development.

Recommendations for future research and program implementation: For further research, it is recommended that larger samples be conducted and that various types of children with special needs, such as autism, deafness, and intellectual disabilities, be included to ensure more representative results. Furthermore, parenting guidance programs should be developed in the form of modules based on specific family needs, with follow-up support provided to monitor long-term changes. Educational institutions and local governments are also expected to collaborate with professionals in providing ongoing family guidance services as an effort to build the emotional well-being of children with special needs holistically.

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