

Independence of Autistic Children who Participate in the Daily Life Activities Program

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Abstract— Autism is a gray area in the field of medicine, which means that there are still unclear causes, mechanisms, and therapies. Autism is a developmental disorder in children characterized by behavioral disorders, communication disorders, and interaction disorders. Autism can be seen in children, before the age of 2 years. Problems faced by parents who have autistic children need solutions to adapt to the stress problems that befall them. Many autists have not been able to meet the needs of everyday life. Children with autism are generally more difficult to focus their minds on, so often children seem to change quickly and have difficulty completing tasks. This also makes autistic children often not independent. This literature study was created to illustrate how autistic children are trained to be independent, what are the factors that can affect autistic children. The environment, family, teachers, and people around autistic children have an important role to make autistic children become independent. The strategy is to provide daily activities that can be in the form of individual activities or group activities

Keywords— autism, children, activities

I. INTRODUCTION

The number of children with autism increases from year to year, in research shows that in 1987 the ratio of autistic sufferers was 1: 5000, this number increased sharply. The increasing number of people with autism should be accompanied by increased services for children with autism. In 1948, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights [1], the World Declaration on Education for All in [2], the Salamanca Statement and the UNESCO Framework for Action [3], Law on Disability Persons by Perlin in [4], Dakar Framework for Action in [5] and Declaration of the International Children's Congress, by Nansel, *et al.*. In [6], inclusive education is an alternative or a way to expand opportunities for access to education, especially for children with special needs. But in reality, handling for children with special needs (autism) requires a cost that is not cheap. In autistic children who are born from disadvantaged families, they do not get education that is not the same as other children with special needs who are born from families who have a better socioeconomic status, so that children with autism can not grow independence from not given education that suits the needs of autistic children like other autistic children, in contrast to parents who are able to provide education to autistic children so that by doing various kinds of therapy and education that are appropriate for autistic children so that children with autism will grow self-reliance.

Even though the future of autistic children depends on providing optimal therapy and education.

Therefore, this paper presents a study on independence of autistic children who participate in the daily life activities program.

The rest of this paper is organized as follow: Section II describes the literature review. Section III describes the materials and proposed methodology. Section IV presents the obtained results and following by discussion. Finally, section V concludes this work.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents the literature review.

A. Obstacles to General Education

Given the characteristics of autistic children who are low in learning ability because they are not focused, it is necessary to prepare a learning program. Parents need extra patience, longer time and regular and continuous training in teaching hand washing, eating and drinking to children. The approach used is individual and step by step. In addition, there needs to be cooperation between parents and family members in teaching hand washing, eating and drinking to children at home as studied by Febriani in [7].

B. Dependence on Others

Symptoms in autistic disorders vary greatly from child to child. Not all children exhibit the same type of symptoms, and not all children show symptoms as severe. Children with special needs need more help from those around them. The development of meaning and the formation of independence competencies occurs primarily by the way caregivers show, explain and guide children in their activities and experiences with the surrounding world as described by Ginanjar in [8]. The role of parents for children with autism is to foster communication with teachers at school. This is due to parents' cooperation with the teachers, parents' openness about the child's condition, and the willingness to participate in various programs suggested for the betterment of their children. Parents with teachers also play a role in evaluating specific programs for children with autism in this case the activities of daily living activities (AKS) to be appropriate and in accordance with the needs of children as described by Danuatmaja in [9]. While the teacher's role in school is to modify the school environment so that the implementation of the AKS program can be implemented optimally. Besides that, the teachers teach this

program gradually starting from the smallest part, repeating the material that has been given, preparing students for future material, helping with various practical tips and certain techniques as described by Mangunsong in [10].

C. *Bad Generalization*

Everyday life provides many examples of situations of order, one of which is for example regular meal times, which are suitable for this. The situation at meals not only teaches children how to eat but also explains where food comes from, discusses its various qualities, such as taste and color, and links current experiences with experiences at other times and elsewhere with others. Simple things related to eating activities can form associations and develop new concepts that are "raw materials" for cognitive development.

D. *Improve General Education*

The background of the independence of autistic children, among others, parents and teachers have understood the condition of the autistic child, so parents and teachers prioritize the provision of all kinds of education (therapy, training) for autistic children, and parents and teachers always participate in the learning process directly so that children with autism are motivated to carry out the learning process, and adequate facilities so that they increasingly care about children with autism by being provided with education that is appropriate for their children as described by Oktaviani in [11].

E. *Independence in Autistic Children*

Independence is the ability to carry out daily activities or tasks alone or with a little guidance, in accordance with the stages of development and capacity. The earlier the age of the child to practice independently in carrying out their developmental tasks, it is expected that independent values and skills will be more easily mastered and can be firmly embedded in the child as described in Hurlock [12].

Independent individuals, it is necessary for a process or effort that starts from doing simple tasks to finally being able to master more complex or more challenging skills, which requires a higher level of motor and mental mastery.

Independence is an individual attitude obtained during development, where individuals will continue to learn to be independent in dealing with various situations in the environment, so that individuals are able to think and act alone. Independence can choose the way of life to develop more steadily.

One important step in the child's development is the phase of autonomy. This phase marked the enthusiasm of children to do everything themselves and the emergence of a desire to be independent. Independence is not a skill that appears suddenly but needs to be taught in early childhood, if the child does not learn independently from an early age it will be very possible for the child to feel confused even do not know how to help himself. Habituation by autistic children will have an impact on children's independence, as well as research conducted by Ambarsari, *et al.* in [13] which says that the process of habituation in education is important especially for early childhood. Children are not aware of what is called good and not good in the sense of morality. Children's memories are not yet strong, their

attention is quick and easy to switch to the latest and preferred things. In this condition they need to be familiarized with certain behaviors, skills, skills and mindset.

Children with autistic disorders tend to have problems with nonverbal cognition that are more disturbed, strategies that can be done so that children can become independent is to make Daily Activities. Although the benefits of AKS are made early in childhood but not all autistic children can do well, this depends on the severity of the autism itself. However, AKS must still be the focus of treatment plans for children with autism so that children can carry out activities without the help of others.

F. *Daily Life Activity Program (AKS)*

Self-reliance behavior will be formed as the process mentioned above with activities related to the AKS (Activity of Daily Living). This behavior needs to be stated in a special program, namely the AKS program. The description for children with autism who do not take part in the AKS program is that these children do not have the development of their own skills for eating, dressing, toilet activities, personal hygiene, home and community activities as described by Mc Eachin, *et al.* in [14]. They become individuals who are very dependent on those around them and often also become individuals who have maladaptive behavior as a result of the lack of independence that develops in them.

The AKS program is a systematic and multilevel teaching approach to explore skills in conducting AKS as a whole. In this program each student is taught gradually in each time period as described by Mc Eachin, *et al.* in [14]. Through training that starts in mid-childhood, students with autism can live independently. The independence meant is that children can help themselves in routine life every day, such as eating, drinking, bathing, going to the toilet, wearing and removing clothes, wearing and removing socks, and so on. In addition, with this independence the child can use telephone, fax, ATM, to the post office and so on. Children are also expected to be able to independently carry out AKS as a source of life later such as sweeping, washing, ironing, cooking, typing, arranging beds, cutting grass, cleaning services and others by Handojo in [10]. Not all students with autism have high academic abilities, so all the above skills can be applied to independent living without relying on others.

Self-reliance standards are meant in more detail such as at the time of eating, namely the ability to use a spoon / fork, drink from a glass, drink with a straw, and cut food using a knife. The standard when dressing is removing clothes, wearing clothes, attaching buttons, zippers, buttons, zippers, shoes, and shoes. Standard toilet activities such as practicing the habit of throwing water into the toilet and the introduction of taste to the toilet. Independence standards of personal hygiene activities such as hand washing, hand

washing, toothbrushing, hair combing and bathing. Standard independence of home activities such as putting things back in place, preparing food in the form of polishing butter on bread, heating food with a microwave, arranging tables, disposing of trash, arranging beds, washing clothes, cleaning tables, cleaning windows and cleaning walls. Standards of independence in the community such as being able to carry out purchasing activities, able to use public transportation facilities, can correspond with letters, be able to maintain personal security, and can act if in an emergency. Autistic spectrum disorders are characterized by deficits in social and cognitive functions. Many individuals with autism have poor executive functions that hinder their ability to start a task, to remain attentive, and to organize and sort information. Poor executive functions can also make it difficult to generalize learned skills. As a result of this developmental weakness, individuals with autism spectrum disorders struggle to function independently. The use of pictorial activity schedules, videos, work systems, and social stories can be implemented to help individuals with autism spectrum disorders become increasingly independent, while reducing the need to seek assistance from adults as described by Schack in [15].

Research conducted by Schack in [15] says that children with autistic disorders can perform tasks independently with very limited. As a result, they often rely heavily on teachers and caregivers to complete their daily skills. Dependence on adult encouragement can create a barrier for children to become independent. However, using schedules for daily activities, autistic children can learn to be more independent.

Activities of daily life (AKS) are very important for the life of independence in children, as well as for children with autism. Previous research said that everyday life skills should be the focus of treatment plans for individuals with autistic disorders, especially for the future of children as described by Ball, *et al.* in [16].

III. MATERIAL & METHODOLOGY

This section presents the material used and the proposed methodology.

A. Data

The data used in this journal is data from various studies that have been done before, so that the data obtained is not data obtained directly from the field. Four studies conducted in various countries have previously described independence in children with autistic spectrum disorders with varying ages.

B. Method

The method used in this study is literature review. This literature review is a summary of pre-existing studies. In previous studies used were individual activities, but in this literature, review discussing the daily activities of children can make children with autism spectrum disorders become more independent, regardless of individual activities and group activities carried out by children.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results obtained and following by discussion.

A. Result

Activities provided to see changes in children, consisting of independent food, independent toilet activities, self-dress, personal hygiene (aspects of dependence on others), organization of daily household life (self-improvement aspects), ability to live in community-days (aspects of social integration). These three aspects are combined, thus giving a positive impact on autism of autistic children.

B. Discussion

The role of parents, caregivers, siblings and therapists is very supportive of the AKS program to improve autism of children with autism. The good communication and information relationship between teachers and parents is the main factor of success for the continuous implementation of the AKS program to develop aspects of the independence of autistic children

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of several previous studies, it can be concluded that the AKS program can help autistic children improve some aspects that are less developed. These aspects are dependence on others, aspects of self-function development and aspects of ability to facilitate social integration. So that with the development of these three aspects can be realized the independence of children with autism. The aspect that changes the most when children take part in the AKS program is the aspect of dependence on others. Where if these children become more dependent on others then the child can do the activity by itself and can be said that the child is independent.

The role of parents, caregivers, siblings and teachers is very supportive of the AKS program to increase the independence of children with autism. The good communication and information relationship between the teacher and parents are a major factor in the success of the ongoing AKS program to develop aspects of the independence of children with autism.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research is fully supported by Affiliation Research Grant.

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