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Enhancing Teacher Competency Through Psychoeducation: A Study on Knowledge Improvement Regarding Children with Special Needs at Islamic Greens School Bekasi

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Abstract

This study aims to examine psychoeducation's influence on enhancing teacher proficiency in comprehending and assisting students with special needs at Islamic Greens School located in Tangerang City. The research employed a quasi-experimental method, utilizing pre-test and post-test measures to evaluate the level of teacher knowledge before and following the intervention. This study was conducted at The Inclusive Islamic Green School Bekasi, which caters to students from elementary, junior high, and high school levels. A total of 31 teachers participated in the survey. The results demonstrated a substantial improvement in teacher comprehension of the distinct difficulties and educational requirements of children with special needs, as indicated by an average pre-test score of 65.48 and an average post-test score of 87.42. The psychoeducational program successfully enhanced teacher proficiency equipped them with the necessary resources to cultivate an inclusive learning environment and offered continuous professional development to address students' requirements. Implementing psychoeducational efforts in schools can have significant repercussions, resulting in adopting more inclusive practices. This, in turn, benefits both instructors and students by creating a more inclusive educational environment.

Keywords: *Psychoeducation, ability, children with special needs.*

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Introduction

In modern educational practices, inclusive education has emerged as a crucial cornerstone, highlighting the imperative for schools to provide accommodation and assistance to all students, including those with special needs (Lindner & Schwab, 2020). Nevertheless, the effective execution of inclusive education relies heavily on the proficiency and preparedness of teachers to cater to the varied requirements of students (Wray et al., 2022). Teachers in educational institutions, particularly in environments that are moving towards inclusivity, frequently have difficulties in comprehending and addressing the requirements of students with special needs (Dignath et al., 2022). The lack of knowledge and skills in this area might impede the efficiency of inclusive education and result in insufficient support for kids in need of special attention (Lindsay, 2003).

This study aims to ensure that teachers³ at Islamic Greens School Bekasi possess sufficient knowledge and expertise in educating students with special needs. The individuals are anticipated to possess the ability to establish a comprehensive, encouraging, and efficient educational setting. Psychoeducation aims to equip teachers with a comprehensive comprehension of students' specific requirements, together with the appropriate techniques and resources to facilitate their learning (Dahl et al., 2020). By implementing psychoeducation to enhance teacher competency, the overall quality of inclusive education at this school will experience a substantial improvement, thereby guaranteeing successful learning for all children, including those with special needs (Powell et al., 2022).

The Islamic Greens School Bekasi acknowledges the significance of providing its instructors with the necessary skills to assist students with special needs, as part of its dedication to inclusive education. Despite the school's commitment to diversity, numerous teachers may have insufficient expertise and abilities to adequately educate and assist these pupils. This disparity presents a substantial obstacle in guaranteeing that every student obtains a high-quality education that is customized to their specific need (Messiou, 2017).

The actual circumstances seen in the field may suggest insufficient teacher skills, since certain teachers at Islamic Greens School Bekasi may lack adequate information on how to effectively educate children with special needs. They might experience less self-assurance or a lack of readiness to confront this obstacle. While psychoeducation programs exist, their execution may not be optimum. Some teachers may lack a complete understanding or fail to effectively implement the knowledge and tactics acquired from these programs in their day-to-day teaching (Dolan et al., 2021). Due to insufficient teacher competency, the level of inclusive education in this school may not meet the desired norm. Children with exceptional disabilities may lack sufficient assistance in their educational endeavours.

Psychoeducation, an intervention that focuses on enhancing knowledge and comprehension through educational methods, has demonstrated promise as a means of enhancing teacher proficiency (Dolan et al., 2021). Psychoeducation enhances instructors' capacity to comprehend and assist students with unique needs by offering them specific information and tactics, hence leading to improved educational outcomes (Ignacio Calderón-Almendros & Vila-Merino, 2024). This study is to assess the efficacy of a psychoeducational program specifically developed to enhance the knowledge and proficiency of teachers in dealing with students who have special needs at Islamic Greens School Bekasi.

This study is of utmost significance as it aims to ascertain the reasons behind instructors' failure to attain the anticipated level of competence despite their participation in the psychoeducation program. This may be attributed to insufficient additional training, disparities in information assimilation, or difficulties in classroom implementation. By identifying the existing gaps, this study aims to propose more efficient techniques to enhance teacher competency and optimize the implementation of the psychoeducation program.

The findings of this study are anticipated to enhance the standard of inclusive education at Islamic Greens School Bekasi, guaranteeing that all children, including those with special needs, receive a satisfactory education. Furthermore, the results of this study are anticipated to offer significant perspectives on how schools might enhance the training of their educators to effectively address the challenges of inclusive education, thus benefiting the broader education community.

Methodology

The research employed a quantitative methodology using a quasi-experimental design (Indrawati et al., 2021). The selection of this research methodology was based on its primary aim to assess the efficacy of psychoeducation interventions in enhancing teachers' understanding and proficiency in dealing with children who have special needs (Eka Mahendra et al., 2022). The objective of this study is to ascertain the alterations in teachers' knowledge prior to and following psychoeducation interventions, through the comparison of

outcomes across several groups. The research design employed was a pretest-posttest design with a control group (Indrawati et al., 2021). The design of this study was dividing the teachers at the Islamic Greens School Bekasi into two groups: an experimental group that received psychoeducation interventions, and a control group that did not receive any interventions. Both groups will undergo an initial test (pretest) to assess their level of knowledge prior to the intervention (Niswah et al., 2024). Subsequently, the experimental group will get the intervention, followed by a final test (posttest). The efficacy of the intervention will be assessed by comparing the pretest and posttest outcomes of the two groups (Salam et al., 2015).

Data collection techniques involve the use of a questionnaire that is specifically developed to assess teachers' knowledge and ability in relation to children with special needs (Weyant, 2022). This questionnaire will be administered to all participants prior to and following the intervention (Lisá et al., 2019). The questionnaire will encompass a wide range of topics pertaining to expertise in special needs, inclusive pedagogical approaches, and educators' perspectives on inclusive education (Sajedifard & Sajedifard, 2022). Furthermore, it is possible to conduct semi-structured interviews with multiple teachers to acquire a more profound comprehension of their perspectives and encounters regarding the intervention offered (Ocak & Yamaç, 2013). This study utilizes the one-group pretest-posttest design. The experimental study took place at the Inclusive Islamic Green School in Bekasi. The research subjects were selected based on predetermined criteria. A total of 31 teachers from Islamic Green School Bekasi, including those from Elementary, Junior High, and Senior High school levels, will participate in this research. These teachers will receive psychoeducation intervention.

The data obtained from the questionnaire will be subjected to quantitative analysis using statistical tests, such as the t-test, to see if there are significant differences between the pretest and post-test results in both the experimental and control groups (Alsharif et al., 2020). This statistical test will assess whether the psychoeducational intervention has a substantial impact on the knowledge and competence of teachers. The data analysis will involve a comparison between the experimental and control groups in order to assess the overall efficacy of the intervention (Cigdem & Yildirim, 2014). The qualitative data obtained from the interviews will be subjected to thematic analysis techniques to uncover prominent themes that arise in relation to teachers' impressions of the intervention (Abraham & Supriyati, 2022).

Table 1. Research Design

Participants	O1	X	O2
Group of Participant	Pretest	The Intervention of psychoeducation of special children in need"	"Identification of Posttest

The measurement tool used is the teacher's understanding test about special children in need, which consists of 10 multiple-choice questions. This test was arranged based on the material given. The materials given in this psychoeducation are the definition, types, and characteristics of special children in need and how to identify them based on their indication (Sumarni et al., 2022). The intervention design of this psychoeducation consists of several phases such: 1) **Preparation phase:** The preparation phase is the phase of the intervention planning and teacher's understanding assessment about the identification of special children in need. 2) **Implementation Phase:** The implementation phase is the phase where psychoeducation is given to the teachers in Elementary, Junior High, and Senior High school students at SMA Islamic Green School Bekasi. 3) **Evaluation Phase:** This phase is the phase to evaluate the success of the intervention seen from the post-test score. This phase can be seen in this table 2:

Table 2. Intervention Design

SESSION	MATERIAL	METHOD	DURATION
Session 1	Pre-Test	Data collected through Google Form	15 minutes
Session 2	Intervention: Identification of Special Children in need	Speech	90 minutes
Session 3	Study case	Discussion	30 minutes
Session 4	Discussion	Question and answer	30 minutes
Session 5	Post Test	Data collected through Google form	15 minutes

Result and Discussion

The Research Result

Psychoeducation training in this research is about the definition of special children in need, their types, and characteristics. Before the intervention was given, the researcher distributed the pre-test first to measure the participants' prior understanding related to the material. This was done to measure participants' basic understanding to be compared with their final understanding after being given the psychoeducation material. After answering the pre-test problems, Psychoeducation was distributed to the participants through the speech method. The next step is a post-test arranged from the same material as a pre-test.

The paired sample t-test was used to examine the pre-test and post-test scores for the difference test. This was conducted to determine if there are any disparities between the pre-test and post-test. The result is found = a -6,297 score and based on the output the significancescore is 0,000 which is smaller than α which is 0,05, which means there is a difference score of teacher's understanding in identifying special children in need after being given the psychoeducation.

Table 3. Difference Test

Pair 1	pretest ABK Identification - posttest ABK Identification	Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
		21.935	19.394	3.483	-29.049	-14.822	-6.297	30	.000

The comparison between pre-test and post-test scores can be seen from the gained score through the total score. The before-after psychoeducation comparison or intervention can be seen in table 4.

Table 4. Gain score

Participant	Pre-Test	Post Test	Gain Score	Results	Participant	Pre-Test	Post Test	Gain Score	Results
1	70	80	10	Improved	17	100	100	0	Consistent
2	90	100	10	Improved	18	20	40	20	Improved
3	60	80	20	Improved	19	60	90	30	Improved
4	60	90	30	Improved	20	70	40	30	Improved
5	80	90	10	Improved	21	60	80	20	Improved
6	60	100	40	Improved	22	70	90	20	Improved
7	80	100	20	Improved	23	80	100	20	Improved
8	0	80	80	Improved	24	80	100	20	Improved
9	50	90	40	Improved	25	80	100	20	Improved
10	50	60	10	Improved	26	60	80	20	Improved
11	50	100	50	Improved	27	80	90	10	Improved
12	80	90	10	Improved	28	80	90	10	Improved
13	90	100	10	Improved	29	90	100	10	Improved
14	50	70	20	Improved	30	40	100	60	Improved
15	50	90	40	Improved	31	60	90	30	Improved
16	80	100	20	Improved					

Based on the descriptive analysis, the mean pretest 65,48 score and the mean posttest 87,42 score were gained. The post-test score is higher compared to the mean pre-test, which means there is an increase in teacher's ability to identify special children in need after being given psychoeducation. Therefore, psychoeducation affects The Inclusive Islamic Green School Bekasi's teachers' understanding related to special children in need, significantly.

Table 5. Descriptive Analysis

Pair		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
1	pretest ABK Identification	65.48	31	21.109	3.791
	posttest ABK Identification	87.42	31	16.118	2.895

Researchers also analyzed the data by using the Wilcoxon test to see the range mean. From the result, it is shown that the range mean before psychoeducation was done was 15,26 and after that, it increased to 22,50.

Table 6. Wilcoxon Test (Mean Range)

		N	mean rank	sum of ranks
Post-test ABK Identification - pre-test ABK Identification	Negative Ranks	1 ^a	22.50	22.50
	Positive Ranks	29 ^b	15.26	442.50
	Ties	1 ^c		
	Total	31		

- a. posttest ABK identification < pretest ABK identification
- b. posttest ABK identification > pretest ABK identification
- c. posttest ABK identification = pretest ABK identification

Discussion

According to the data shown in Table 2, after carrying out five sessions in a series of psychoeducational programs in the form of interventions, surgical cases, and discussions, the average pretest score was 65.48. After being given psychoeducation, it showed that 96.77% of teachers experienced an increase in their grades, and only 3.23% got constant grades. The average score was from 65.48 to 87.42. According to the assumption test in Table 5, the results of a significance value of less than 0.05 indicate a difference in teacher understanding after being given psychoeducation. The increase in test scores obtained is evidence of increased understanding regarding children with special needs. Thus, psychoeducation succeeded in increasing understanding of identifying children with special needs at the Islamic Green School Bekasi Inclusion School. The findings of this study align with the findings of the research conducted by (Putra & Neviyarni S, 2023), which indicated that there were notable disparities in the comprehension of inclusive kindergarten educators following psychoeducation pertaining to children with special needs. Furthermore, based on the findings of a literature analysis conducted by (Melania et al., 2023), it has been determined that providing training to teachers on the identification of children with special needs is highly helpful in enhancing their capacity to recognize such children in inclusive school settings.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the psychoeducation intervention had a substantial positive impact on the knowledge and competence of teachers at Islamic Greens School Bekasi. The pretest and posttest findings demonstrated a substantial improvement in the experimental group when compared to the control group, thereby proving the efficacy of the psychoeducation program. This study elucidates that while this intervention yields positive results, its implementation is hindered by variances in teachers' past experience and digital proficiency. This implies that training programs should be customized to meet the specific requirements of teachers, including offering assistance to those who have little experience or lack proficiency in digital skill. In summary, this study highlights the significance of psychoeducation in equipping teachers to address the difficulties of inclusive education, particularly in providing assistance to children with special needs. The findings of this study are anticipated to serve as the foundation for the creation of other training programs that are more organized and enduring in other inclusive schools.

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