

# Framework of Independence Guidance to Students with Moderate Mental Retardation Based on Behavioral Approach

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**Abstract:** Independence for mental retardation students is leading to the development of adaptive behavior skills, especially the skills to take care of themselves in daily life activities and the skills to adjust to the environment (social adaptive skills). The fact is that at present there are many children with mental retardation who have completed their education at special school for mentally retarded children that cannot be independent. This research aimed to discover the working framework guidance to develop the independence of students with moderate mental retardation based on behavior approach, as teacher's reference to facilitate the acquisition of behaviors in performing the activities of daily life to fulfil their own needs. Research method is descriptive – qualitative, and research subject is students with moderate mental retardation. The framework guidelines were constructed based on the data obtained through interview, observation, questionnaire and documentation instruments. This research used qualitative approach. The research result showed that the feasibility indicators are characterized by: (1) the acquisition of student's new skills, (2) the fulfilment of self-care needs or taking care of themselves in everyday life, and (3) the enthusiasm of students during the guidance process or learning for independence. This working framework guidance designed for students with moderate mental retardation based on behavior approach is recommended to be implemented by teachers or counsellors at special schools for mental retardation students.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Based on preliminary study in SLB C through observation, interview, and document analysis, it is found that for mental retardation students whose education is more directed to the mastery of basic skills to fulfil their daily needs through special program of self-development. But in reality, there are many students who are not yet independent, such as in carrying out activities of daily life. This shows there is still gap in the implementation of learning, so that the impact of them on the acquisition of learning outcomes or achievement of independence.

Based on the result of the analysis of the plan and the implementation of the learning of the students, it can be described that basically the teachers apply the principles of learning based on behavioral approach, such as formulating learning objectives, individualization teaching, giving reward and punishment, but not optimally, consistently and proportionally.

Educational activities (teaching, training, and guiding) of students with moderate mental retardation will basically involve teachers in the process of analyzing their students' behaviors, which include: (1) establishing or maintaining positive behaviors in students (among other things, daily activities: self-development, communicating and adapting to the environment, and (2) reducing, preventing or excluding negative behaviors that are not wanted by the environment (Sunanto, 2005).

SLB teachers have a very important role in the process of guidance or learning independence of students with moderate mental retardation, therefore they are required to be able to reorient or synergize between the approach of instruction (Instructional Approach) with psycho-educational approach (Alimin, Z., 2006), namely that facilitate the acquisition of the skills of the moderate mental retardation students has to be done appropriately, systematically and procedurally designed. It refers to an independence guidance framework that is appropriate to the characteristics of the learning

needs of students with moderate mental retardation (between behavior-based approaches).

Based on the description, the researcher intends to examine: “What kind of independence guidance counsel of behavioral approach-based can SLB teachers use to facilitate the acquisition of students’ skills in daily life activities?”

## 2 METHODS

Descriptive with a qualitative approach, with the consideration that the research findings are assumed to provide more actual and meaningful results, so they are considered to be more convincing and acceptable. Data collection techniques use observation sheets, interview guides, and documentation studies. Qualitative data analysis is done inductively through activities: (1) unitising, (2) categorizing, (Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, 2011, page 31), and (3) interpretation. The steps of the research can be seen figure 1.

Research procedure: first stage, preliminary study, theoretical study (mental retardation, characteristic of learning requirement, self-development program, independence of moderate mental retardation, guidance and behavioral perspective in learning), describing the objective condition of independence of moderate mental retardation students, objective conditions of independence learning implementation, developmental environment learning of students, as well as obstacles faced by teachers and efforts to overcome them. Further formulated construct framework of independence guidance.

The second phase; providing content validation (construct) of framework independence guidance (counselling experts and education experts of children with mental retardation) through Forum Group Discussion (FGD). Further revisions are made - to be an operational independence guidance framework.

The third stage, the application of self-reliance guidance framework based on behavioral approach in collaboration with teachers. The application procedure uses a self-service guidance unit. The results of its application for the improvement of the independence guidance framework that is operationally feasible for teachers to implement in schools.

The fourth stage, the socialization of the framework of independence guidance to students with moderate mental retardation based on behavioral approaches to be implemented by teachers in schools.

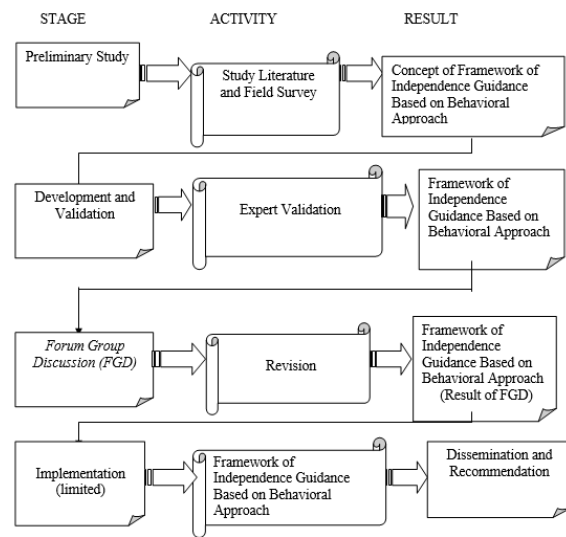


Figure 1: Steps of the research.

## 3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Independence for moderate mental retardation students is more focused on functional living skills, especially independence in terms of taking care of themselves (Wehman, et al., 1985). In doing daily activities begins with guidance continuously and must be through habituation. They can be trained in the skills of eating and drinking, toilet training, communicating with the environment, doing service work, and simple vocational skills.

The procedure of the activity is; (1) assess the children’s ability to identify their abilities and inabilities in various aspects, (2) create learning programs tailored to the needs and abilities of children, (3) meet the parents to discuss programs to be provided to children, 4) implement the program (in a guided and independent manner), and (5) evaluation and follow-up.

The framework of guidance on the independence of the students is based on behavioral approaches (Macmillan, 1973) includes the components: (1) rationale, (2) vision and mission independence guidance based on behavioral approach, (3) characteristics, (5) behavioral approaches in the context of guidance of students’ self-sufficiency independence, (7) setting and form of intervention, and (8) application framework of independence guidance based on behavioral approach, (9) the guidance unit of independence of students with moderate mental retardation based on behavioral approach. (Kartadinata, S., 2010, page 170).

Basically, teachers in the learning of independence for moderate mental retardation students in school have applied the principles of guidance based on behavioral approach. However, in the implementation has not done optimally, consistently, and systematically as a professional service, both in terms of preparation of learning, learning planning, the teacher's procedures do it. In this regard, it takes a medium that is framework of independence guidance based on behavioral approach that has been tested the feasibility of its application in the field, in an effort to help develop the potential of students with mental retardation achieve optimal independence, that is facilitate the acquisition of student skill to do daily activity to fulfil their own needs.

From the perspective of guidance whose implementation is integrated in the learning of the independence of the moderate mental retardation students, the implication for the teacher apart of being able to carry out its function and professional duties as educator and facilitator of student learning, also should have high personal superiority in patience, awareness, attitude and optimistic view accept the child's condition as it is, cheerful and be creative, so the teacher does not feel bored or feel bored to face the students. In facilitating the acquisition of the students' skills through exercising a behavior (daily life activity), there are three important factors teachers need to have: patience, tenacity, and affection.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

The research has resulted the formulation of framework of independence guidance of students with moderate mental retardation based on behavioral approach appropriate for the implementation of teachers in SLB C schools.

The framework independence guidance is a specially designed and operational procedure which describes a systematic procedure in organizing a learning experience in the form of a series of activities arranged in systematic stages, and carried out by orientating to the characteristics of students' learning needs, student learning development environment, - the value or principle of learning, and the required teacher competence that aims to facilitate the formation and acquisition of new behaviors (skills) of students in performing activities of daily life to meet their own needs.

The framework of independence guidance includes components as a whole, including: (1) rationale, (2) vision and mission of independence, (3) why and what is the approach of behavior in the

guidance of self-reliance, (4) aims of independence guidance (5) the setting and form of intervention, (6) the framework of the application of independence based guidance on behavioral approaches, (7) the competencies that teachers or supervisors need to have, (8) self-service guidance counselling units, and (8). Closing.

The implementation refers to the independence guidance unit of moderate mental retardation students based on behavioral approach, individual service, the form of quantitative and qualitative assessment, with application procedures as follows: (a) determine the conditions of individual entering behavior through the assessment process before guidance begins; (b) a comprehensive analysis of the tasks for the students to perform, (c) determine the objectives by orienting the students' abilities and formulate it clearly, specifically and operationally; (d) prepare the sequence of task analysis required for the achievement of the students; (e) carry out the learning process of independence based on behavioral approach procedures (individualization, habituation, repetition and practice, reward and punishment, task analysis, and modelling, and (f) evaluate student performance as learning outcomes, criteria refer to task analysis.

The data indicate that the framework of guidance to develop independence of students with mental retardation is based on behavioral approach is feasible to be applied, with indicators: (1) the competence of students with moderate mental retardation, which possesses a number of new skills of self-development or self-care in daily life. (2) the fulfilment of needs according to individual needs of individual students in daily life, and (3) students seem enthusiastic about learning a behavior (skills, tasks) associated with daily activities.

In order to maintain the positive behaviors that the students have, they need to pay attention to, for example: (1) prior to learning a field of independence should routinely conduct prior assessments to obtain initial student capability, (2) apply the principles completion of the mastery of an aspect of the field of independence, (3) creating an atmosphere of learning environment that stimulates students to learn and eliminate stimuli that can interfere with or break learning concentration, (4) consistent and sustainable in applying behavioral approaches. (5) routine re-assessment and follow-up to maintain consistency of learning outcomes, (4) rewarding: reinforcement and punishment in behavior building process, (3) communicating and cooperating with parents / family related to independence learning program given in schools to be followed up in daily life in a family or home environment.

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