

Reviewing The Basic Concept of Emotional Management of Children with Special Education Needs with Visual Impairment

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Abstract

In the release of the Main Findings for the 2019 National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS2019) by the Ministry of Health Malaysia (KKM), findings show that as many as 424,000 or 7.9 percent of children aged five to 15 in Malaysia have experienced mental health contributed by four The main domains include (i)problems interacting with peers, (ii)behavioral problems, (iii)emotional problems, and (iv)hyperactivity problems where emotional problems take 8.3 percent of all mental health problems in children (IKU 2020). In the same study, the data obtained showed that 4.7 percent of children aged 2 to 17 years in Malaysia have a disability (IKU 2020). In fact, children with special needs are more likely to face emotional problems than children of normal development. In a systematic literature review, findings show that children and adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) experience more disturbances in emotional management and use less effective emotion management strategies when compared to individuals with normal development.

Keywords: Special Education, Visual Impairment, Education, Emotional Management, Concept

Introduction

At the school level, the problem of emotional disturbances and management among students with special learning needs (SLE) is closely related to the level of knowledge of special education teachers so that problems that can affect the performance and engagement of these students can be identified and action taken. The level of teacher knowledge is important because the first step in emotional management is to identify the emotions that need to be managed Gross (2015) in order to trigger the implementation of emotional management strategies to increase or reduce those emotions (Cai et al., 2018). According to Spilt et al (2021), teachers play an active role in managing children's resulting emotions. Moreover,

MBPKP needs more help from external parties such as teachers to manage their emotions. The findings of Nuske et al (2017) stated that ASD children were found to be more dependent on others to manage their emotions when compared to typically developing children. Accordingly, the study of Cibralic et al (2019) suggested the development of emotional management such as the transition from external to internal emotional management strategies may be delayed in ASD individuals.

Emotional Management of Children With Special Education Needs

Emotional management underlines various key aspects of child development by being central to a child's ability to successfully interact with the social and physical environment around him (Berkovits et al., 2017). Indeed, an individual needs emotional management skills and strategies to control their situation based on the demands of specific social, academic, work, and family situations (Sánchez et al., 2019). The constraints of MBPKP in managing their own emotions make the teacher's role increasingly important, especially being knowledgeable in managing students' emotions as stated by Mainhard et al (2018) that teachers may be more important to students' emotions compared to previous studies. However, according to Idris et al (2019), lack of research on the emotional and behavioral problems of children in the Malaysian context. In addition, according to Murray and Rosanbalm (2017), studies on the emotional co-regulation ability of professional caregivers (not parents) such as teachers in middle childhood are limited. In other words, the level of teachers' knowledge about students' emotions, especially in Malaysia, is poorly known.

Emotional disturbances are closely related to emotional management where good management can prevent and reduce the frequency and duration of these disturbances. However, some studies have suggested that most of the individuals with special needs such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD; Banaschewski et al., 2012; Graziano et al., 2013; Petrovic & Castellanos, 2016) and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD; Mazefsky et al (2013); Samson et al (2012); Samson et al (2014) experience problems in emotional management. This is consistent with the findings of Schoorl et al (2016) who support the idea that emotion dysregulation is an important problem in children with defiant disorder or conduct disorder. As a result, the frequency of emotional disorders among individuals with special needs is higher than individuals of normal development.

According to Cai et al (2018), emotional disturbances are common in individuals with ASD and are associated with various mental and physical health outcomes. Ting and Weiss (2017) stated that individuals with ASD often face external emotional problems such as aggressiveness and hyperactivity as well as internal emotional problems such as anxiety and depression. In other words, emotional disorders can often be seen among MBPKP and include emotional disorders such as anxiety, anger, meltdowns, tantrums and aggression (Samson et al., 2014). Therefore, external emotional management through guidance, assistance or co-regulation of emotions by closely related parties such as parents and teachers becomes one of the requirements in the MBPKP learning process at the school level.

A person's level of knowledge about emotions determines his ability to recognize and manage his emotions effectively. However, most MBPKP are found to be less successful in recognizing their own emotions let alone identifying emotions that need management. For example, children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) experience delayed functions in facial-emotional recognition and socioemotional reciprocity resulting in disabilities in the development and practice of age-appropriate social communication (American Psychiatric Association, 2013; Bellini et al., 2007). In fact, awareness of one's own emotions is closely

related to one's performance. According to Arguedas et al (2016), when students are aware of their own emotions and are guided with specific teaching strategies, their learning performance is improved in relation to their motivation, involvement and self-regulation. Referring to that statement, teachers who play a role in the development and learning of MBPKP need to master a sufficient level of emotional knowledge in order to be able to use teaching strategies that suit the needs of students.

The level of teacher knowledge includes categories including content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, as well as knowledge about students and their characteristics (Hill & Chin, 2018; Ball et al., 2008; Shulman, 1987). In this context, the level of teachers' knowledge about their students in the emotional aspect has been prioritized. Special education teachers should always develop their own level of knowledge when faced with MBPKP who suffer from emotional and behavioral disorders. However, teachers are more likely to feel stressed, experience emotional exhaustion and express the intention to withdraw, especially when they have to spend more time outside of school to plan and refer to experts about the management of student disturbances (Bettini et al., 2020). Indirectly, those effects can affect the level of teachers' knowledge in the management of students' emotions because they become less enthusiastic and positive to improve their knowledge and subsequently make it difficult for them to get involved in the management of students' emotions.

Discussion

Emotional disturbances among MBPKP, especially learning problems, can always be observed during the learning and facilitation process. Through the researcher's daily observations in special education classes, it was found that emotional disturbances among students greatly affect the teaching process of special education teachers as well as their own and other students' learning. The damage worsens when emotional management is not effective. Based on the researcher's informal interviews with peers in the same field, they feel discouraged to continue the learning process when students' emotional disturbances continue after they try to control the situation.

In relation to that, the effects of students' emotional disturbances in terms of duration and severity are closely related to the teacher's role, especially their level of knowledge. Teachers, especially special education teachers, face various challenges when they are with MBPKP who are less able to express their needs and feelings clearly compared to students with typical development. In order to overcome these challenges, in addition to knowledge about academic and learning expertise, the level of special education teachers' knowledge of student management from various aspects such as physical, behavioral and emotional aspects also needs to be emphasized. There are special education teachers who express their inability to manage students due to lack of knowledge about disorders and emotional management of students.

Moreover, it was found that there are special education teachers who practice an attitude of running away from problems such as not caring when students face disruptions or relinquishing the responsibility of student management completely to classroom assistants. These teachers only focus on the academic aspects of the students where they only care about the equipment of activity books and student exercise books. The level of knowledge of such teachers about MBPKP emotions is doubtful. Thus, from the experience and observations above, the researcher focused this study on the special education teachers who are currently serving in the special education program of learning integration in public schools to review their level of knowledge about student emotions.

Conclusion

As education for individuals with special needs is increasingly considered, the admission of MBPKP to the special education program of school integration is increasing. However, the opening of special education classes is still insufficient compared to the number and needs of this group. This has resulted in the occurrence of MBPKP that are too many and compact in one class than suggested. For example, from the researcher's own experience, there is an integration program that has to bear 24 students in one class due to the constraints of the number of classes, the needs and level of the students, as well as the insufficient number of energy resources. However, issues related to student management and learning have also become difficult to control such as the frequency of emotional and behavioral disorders of students is higher, student learning is less effective, and accidents in the classroom are inevitable due to mismatched teacher-student ratios.

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