

Urgency of Soft-Skill Development in Vocational Education for Children with Special Needs

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Abstract: This study aims to describe the relationship of striving for superiority as a soft skill to learning motivation. The approach used is a quantitative approach with descriptive methods in deaf students with a sample of Cerebral Palsy students in Bandung Regency. Correlative testing is performed using spearman correlation tests between striving for superiority variables and learning motivation variables. The results showed that striving for superiority has a very strong correlation to learning motivation so that it becomes an aspect that must be developed in vocational education as part of soft skills. Striving for superiority can help learners deal with various circumstances or problems through self-concept and coping strategies that are factors that influence striving for superiority. Self-concept and coping strategy will strengthen interpersonal and intrapersonal learners with special needs in undergoing the vocational development process as a form of post-school career preparation.

Keywords: Soft Skills, Vocational Education, Children with Special Needs

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the sectors that has been mandated by the Law as an effort to educate the life of the nation. In the opening of the Law it is clearly written that the government is mandated not only to educate but to educate life. The implication is that education not only has the goal to improve the ability of students academically but also has a task to form learners who are ready to live their daily lives. Law No. 20 of 2003 on the Education System states that education is the right of every citizen including children with special needs, namely those who have physical, emotional, mental, intellectual and/or social disorders. Education for children with special needs will certainly require various adjustments both in the planning process, implementation and evaluation, and follow-up learning.

Vocational education is a form of effort made by schools to combine practical lessons in the curriculum with the aim of forming learners who are competent in basic knowledge and skills (Aulia, Aprilia, Tarsidi, 2023). One of the goals of vocational education is to prepare students who have a way of thinking as skilled workers (Rosyidi, Junaidi, & Sunandar, 2022; Syamsi, 2022; Aini & Juhanaini, 2022; Ningtyas & Andajani, 2022). The integration of vocational education in the curriculum becomes one of the most important elements in vocational education development programs (Bacchus, 1988).

Good education is education that creates habits of thinking and reasoning so that students become more productive in dealing with all the problems they face. Okorie (2000) argues that the value of a person's productivity in his work in the social and economic fields

will depend on the habit of thinking and doing something necessary according to their work. Work awareness becomes one of the most needed factors in career education.

Chen (2003) is of the view that the factors that influence the career development process are usually influenced by the suitability of a person's personality to the demands of the work environment. This shows that soft skills have a strategic enough role in the work so that these aspects become an important part to be strengthened in vocational education as an effort to develop the character needed in the work environment (Li, 2013:47).

Previous research has discussed striving for superiority by taking qualitative data on the factors that influence the striving for superiority process, namely self-control as an internal factor and social support as an external factor. Sujoko (2009) Further research discusses the form of striving for superiority used by children with special needs, namely compensation and coping stress. Silvyana, F. (2018) In this study, researchers will discuss the relationship of striving for superiority with the motivation of learning children with special needs in vocational learning.

Mastery of soft skills (soft skills) is an element that is needed in work as capital in completing a job or solving problems. According to Alfred Adler, striving for superiority is an effort made by a person to overcome the feeling of inferiority that occurs in him. (Ansbacher and Ansbacher 1956), Striving for superiority is a soft skill that must be developed in vocational education. This skill will have a positive impact on the personality of students with special needs in overcoming problems that arise from their environment or problems that arise in him. Mc. Donald (Sardiman, 2006) developed the concept of motivation as a form of energy change in a person that has an impact on the emergence of positive behavior of a person towards a particular goal. The lack of research that discusses soft skills in vocational education encourages researchers to conduct further research on the aspects needed in the development of vocational programs.

METHOD

The approach used is a quantitative approach with descriptive methods. Research was conducted to look for correlations and prove the influence of striving for superiority on the learning motivations of children with special needs. The population taken was learners who experienced movement barriers (deaf) with research samples in learners who had Cerebral Palsy. The data collection process uses observation research instruments, documentation and questionnaires. The data is taken from the Striving for superiority variable as a free variable and the learning motivation variable as the bound variable. Free variable measurement refers to factors that influence striving for superiority, namely self-concept and coping strategy. Measurement of bound variables is carried out on factors that affect motivation, namely intrinsic factors and extrinsic factors.

Table 1. Striving for Superiority and Learning Motivation Research Instruments

Variable	Dimension	Sub-Dimension
Striving for Superiority	Self Concept	Knowledge Hope Assessment
	Coping Strategy	Problem Solving Focused Coping Emotion Focused Coping
Motivation	Intrinsic	Activity Retention
		Activity Frequency
		Persistence
		Devotion
		Fortitude
		Attitude Tendency
		Aspirations

Extrinsict	Grading Reward Competition Ego Involvement Assingment Praise Punishment Passion for Learning Interest Recognized Purpose
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The researcher then conducts a process of validity and reliability on the research instrument that has been developed. The processing of research data is carried out through spearman correlation coefficient tests with the aim of analyzing the relationship of striving for superiority with learning motivation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result(S)

Based on the analysis of the results of the research obtained, testing the hypothesis that states that striving for superiority has a relationship with learning motivation results in $0.93 < 1.0$. The results show that it is accepted, meaning that there is a relationship between $r_{hitung} < r_{(tabel)}$ H₁ striving for superiority and student learning motivation. The results of this study are in line with the results of Sujoko's research (2009) which states that the form of handling inferiority can be done through compensation where students cover their shortcomings with the advantages they have. The striving for superiority process is influenced by internal and external factors. Self-concept becomes an internal factor that affects the striving process for superiority. The external factor is social support. The more support you get, the more successful the striving for superiority process through coping strategy. (Sujoko, 2009).

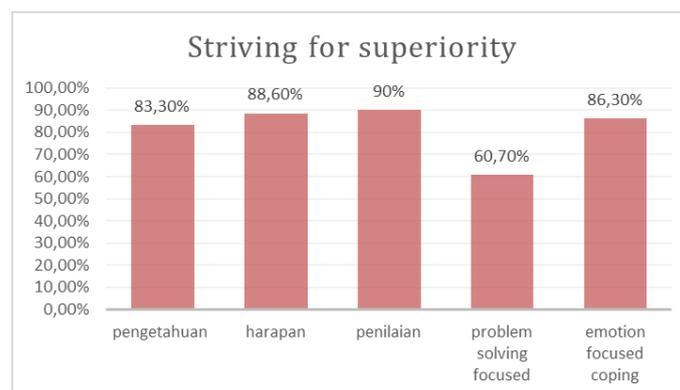


Figure 1. Striving for superiority

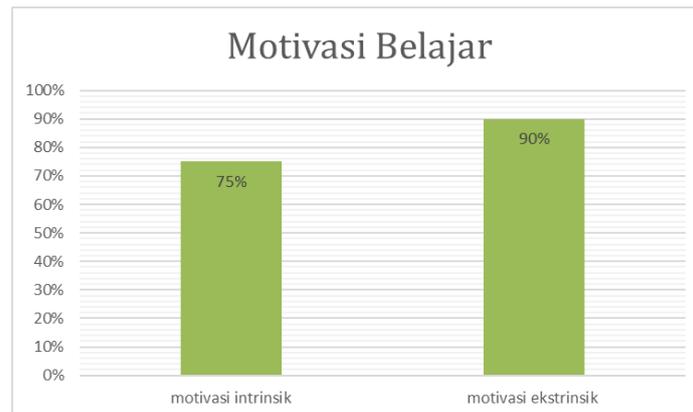


Figure 2. Motivation to Learn

Discussion(s)

In Alfred Adler's view of the theory of personal psychology, a person's personality is formed from childhood and begins to realize that children can do nothing, especially when compared to older children and adults. The condition is a natural reaction of a person who does not function as expected. For Adler, human life was motivated by a desire to overcome inferiority and a desire to dominate. The feeling of inferiority and the desire to be superior is the drive of each individual to be as perfect as possible (Alfred Adler, 2012). Feelings of inferiority for individuals in general do not have too complex impacts and simply find a balance between feelings of inferiority, the need to be a part of something, and the need to be an important person (Alwisol, 2007). The more individuals who are overcompensated, the stronger the feeling of inferiority (Arief, at al., 2021). These conditions will be different in children with special needs so they need stronger reinforcement and development to overcome their sense of inferiority by developing self-concept and coping strategies.

Self-concept is a process of finding out and judging about himself. In Hattie's view, 2014 on self-concept, states that "The self-concept is defined as the set of perceptions and feelings that and individual holds about himself. It also includes self-esteem with all of its parts considered as a whole". The opinion can be interpreted that self-concept is a series of perceptions and feelings that a person has about him. These perceptions include knowledge, understanding, interpretation and judgment.

Children with special needs have various obstacles that cause problems that require special or individual handling. These problems can have a negative impact on themselves both individually and in community life. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) say that circumstances that cause discomfort will have less impact on both physiological and psychological individuals. This situation will encourage someone to take action as a step to find a solution called a coping strategy. The way a person performs coping strategy is more influenced by cultural background, experience in dealing with problems, environmental factors, personality, self-concept, social factors, and others. Strategies that are usually often done by someone in coping strategy are to solve problems, seek social support and try to avoid problems (Amirkhan, 1990) According to Stuart and Sundeen (1991) there are two types of coping mechanisms carried out by individuals, namely problem-centered coping (problem-focused form of coping mechanism / direct action) and coping centered on emotions (emotion-focused of coping / palliative form).

Coping strategy has the benefits children with special needs to overcome situations and demands that are felt to be stressful, challenging, burdensome, and exceed their abilities. The coping experience that a person has will affect the Coping strategy that will be done in solving various problems. Skills in overcoming problems through coping strategies are not easy for children with special needs. Children with special needs need educational services that can

develop and familiarize them with facing various problems simply and precisely through attitudes that suit the needs of the surrounding environment. Coping strategy has an important role in helping students to be ready to live their daily lives with various problems that may arise from themselves or others.

Maslow (1943, 1970) believed that human behavior is driven by certain needs, such as physiological needs, sense of security, love, appreciation, self-actualization, knowing and understanding, and aesthetic needs. This need will encourage someone to do something. The impulse that arises due to the consciousness that arises from him is intrinsic motivation. However, the impulse that arises from outside him is an extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation has a significant relationship to the system that a person will build on striving for superiority in living life and solving the problems they face.

Each individual has a different character in living their lives, as well as in the life of organizing and working. Overcoming existing differences, can be addressed well if the individual mastered the soft skills needed to overcome these differences. Striving for superiority is part of soft skills that help children with special needs in dealing with various conditions. In organized life, the environment will require each individual to have skills that can build good relationships with colleagues and also be able to organize themselves so that they can be accepted in the surrounding environment. Soft skills play a role in improving the competencies possessed by children with special needs in managing their personality and individual readiness to overcome tasks or problems. This is in line with the results of research conducted by Chery Novita Sari (2012) that soft skills have a tremendous impact on the work performance of an individual. Hariyanto (2016) also concluded in his research that the stronger a person's soft skills, the better one's commitment. This has an impact on the quality of work they do, the fewer mistakes that arise from the employee.

Soft skills are interpersonal skills that develop and serve to maximize the role of children with special needs in working such as effective communication skills, honest personal, have strong motivation in all conditions and have self-management in completing various tasks or problems. In the development of vocational programs, schools can organize programs that seek to form hard skills as well as soft skills that can help students live their lives and solve problems appropriately. Self-concept development is one of the efforts that can be made to develop soft-skills. The development of the concept of learners can be done by building positive relationships that are full of acceptance, empathy, affection and appreciation, getting material support in the form of infrastructure so as to increase the possibility of students with special needs feel success and can increase their confidence. The success of an educator in building a positive self-concept will help students in achieving independence and being able to actualize themselves (Crain, 2007: 480). Self-concept development in the learning process can be done by building a passionate learning atmosphere, challenging and collaboration with friends. (Surna, 2014:62)

Intrapersonal and interpersonal skills are part of soft skills that can develop various aspects in a person such as personal development, social participation and success in the workplace. This was revealed by kechagias in 2011. The statement further strengthens the importance of strengthening the development of soft skills in vocational education. Laker and Powell (2011) explain that intrapersonal skills will help children with special needs in managing themselves to adapt to various conditions. Interpersonal skills will help children with special needs to be able to socialize and solve problems, make decisions (Marando, 2012), and think conceptually (Spencer & Spencer 1993). Martino et al. (2011) stated that soft skills will have a positive impact on the child's learning process because it will help children to learn quickly.

Efforts to develop soft skills through self-concept development will automatically develop coping strategy skills in learners. Schools can encourage the creation of a character

building climate for all students to help improve self-esteem, responsibility, critical thinking, empathy, problem solving that will affect the ability of adaptive coping strategies to overcome problems both in school and outside the school (Vaart et al., 2003; Syofiyawati et al., 2017). Adler believes that the more often learners cooperate and contribute to community activities, will improve their ability to solve problems faced through strategy coping and develop positive self-concepts against them. (Magaldi & Berler, 2020)

The importance of developing soft skills in vocational education is part of the school's efforts to improve the competence of students with special needs according to the standards applicable in the business industry and the world of work. Soft skills have an important role for students in living their daily life roles individually and socially. Soft skills development seeks learners to be acceptable and can easily adjust to the rules and norms that apply in organizational and community life. In the process of working life, the things that will be faced by children are not just about work. They should be able to carry themselves with where they work, both how to communicate, how to manage time and many other things (Sitanggang, 2020). Soft skill becomes an important part of vocational education because in fact many jobs require the involvement of others in everyday life so that the ability to interact and cooperate is absolutely needed by children. Soft skills can make a person easily adjust to the environment, manage work stress, work together in teams and encourage good relationships with colleagues, superiors, to other external parties. Good interpersonal skills will also be useful when undergoing the job interview process to achieve success in work (Sandroto, 2021).

CONCLUSION

Striving for superiority is one of the efforts that can be done by students with special needs in living their daily lives including in undergoing the learning process. In line with the results of the study, learning motivation is closely related to self-concept and coping strategy. This skill is closely related to soft skills that are needed by a person to complete tasks and problems that arise due to himself or others. A person's mastery in completing tasks will increase their motivation in learning including in vocational learning. Schools need to strive for a comprehensive system in vocational education. The comprehensive system includes a hard skills development system and a soft skills development system where children with special needs get the opportunity to develop intrapersonal and interpersonal skills through communication development, personal development and self-management in solving various tasks or problems. The implication is that children with special needs will have work readiness through the development of soft skills and work skills through the development of hard skills simultaneously. Schools will have different views in preparing vocational development programs that include hard skills and soft skills reinforcement. The hope for further research is to conduct research on learning models for children with special needs who can develop hard skills and soft skills.

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