Handling behavior problems of children with special educational needs based on teacher analysis

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Article Info

ABSTRACT

Handling of behavior problems in children with special educational needs (CSEN) in the classroom is urgent for the classroom's conducive atmosphere. Therefore, a review needs to be conducted to determine what steps the teacher may take for coping purposes in handling the behavior problems of CSEN, to determine the predictors for handling the behavior problems of CSEN, to identify the analysis basis for determining teacher predictors, and to figure out the effects of the behavior of CSEN based on the predictors chosen by the teacher. A survey was conducted on 109 teachers of CSEN. This research used a Google Forms questionnaire containing a list of statements to be chosen by teachers as instrument, and analysis was carried out by computing the frequencies at which the teachers chose the statements in percentage and by comparing teachers' statements on the way they handled behaviors. The results show that the teachers were more inclined toward problem-focused coping (PFC), the predictor chosen was intimacy control, the teacher directed the children to do a task at the time a behaviour problem arose, and in choosing predictors, the teachers would rather calm the children down and give them comfort, making the children calmed.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Handling of behavior problems of children with special educational needs (CSEN) in the classroom is urgent to support smooth learning [1]. Research proved that psychological acceptance of CSEN had an impact on the handling of behavior problems that arose. Another proof showed that the mental health of people closest to CSEN as well as the positive psychological support for CSEN provided a back-up for the formation of adaptive behavior [2]. This argument sets the grounds for teachers to acquire necessary competencies in handling behavior issues in the classroom for the sake of the CSEN [3].

Teachers' coping mechanisms, especially in handling behavior problems in the classroom attended by CSEN, are also of urgency [4], [5]. The problematic behaviors of CSEN will pose a challenge for teachers to cope when they arise because if they left without any coping attempt, they will cause a stress. Teachers must attempt coping to prevent the problematic behaviors in CSEN from resulting in issues in the classroom environment [6]. Problematic behaviors of CSEN in the classroom would be much of an interference to the course of learning. This is because these behaviors do not go along with the environment's expectation [7]. Problematic behaviors in CSEN are categorized as maladaptive behaviors which cause a reactionary response in an uncomfortable learning environment. Coping gives teachers an opportunity in a reciprocal manner to

deal with the social environment as a result of the rise of problematic behaviors. Hence, the ecological systems theory proposed by Bronfenbrenner [8] lays a foundation for teachers to perform coping.

Coping is necessary to overcome the stress problems in teachers, and to do it, teachers should determine effective predictors of behavior problems in CSEN. The effectiveness of the competencies in handling behavior problems in CSEN lies in the analysis of predictors carried out by teachers [9], [10]. Teacher predictor analysis is linked to the framework featured in the applied behavior analysis (ABA). This analysis is chosen as the handling of behavior problems in the classroom carries a social context in the classroom atmosphere. ABA is intended for behavior-focused interventions that are socially significant and has a clearly observable positive impact target [11]. ABA is explained by the antecedents of a behavior, the emergence of the behavior, and the consequences that follow as a series of teacher predictors in handling behavior problems. In the stage of consequences, teachers are focused more on determining predictors to take measures in handling the behavior. Behavior problems handling as consequence is a critical driver of other needs support in the education for CSEN [12], [13].

Needs support in the education for a child with special education needs is inclusive of paternal acceptance of the child, maternal role in encouraging positive behaviors, and the mental health of the whole family [14]–[16]. A review of the handling of behavior problems of CSEN in the classroom is thus necessary and highly recommendable. A study on the handling of behavior problems of CSEN in the classroom will be extensively impactful as it will have implications for handling mechanisms that support the undisturbed state during learning in the classroom, formation of adaptive behaviors, and sustainable character in family [17], [18]. This study should cover the way in which teachers attempt coping by determining predictors to handle behavior problems in CSEN, the basis for analysis of teacher predictors, and the effect on the behaviors of CSEN of the predictors chosen by teachers.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted by surveying 109 respondents, who were teachers of CSEN in schools that provided special education. The respondents were those who had teaching experience in special education schools and had the experience of applying interventions to handle behavior problems of CSEN. This research's determination of respondents was limited to only those who taught in special education schools, and it did not include those who taught in inclusive classes.

The instrument used was developed in reference to functional behavioral assessment (FBA). The list of statements chosen by the respondents were developed based on the antecedent, behavior, and consequence categories, the interventions applied, and the impacts left to CSEN after the interventions were performed. Data analysis was conducted by computing the frequencies at which the statements were chosen by the respondents. The values obtained were then converted into percentage points to describe the proportion of each statement chosen by the respondents. The attempts to identify predictors were compared between behavior analysis components in gradation from the highest to the lowest percentage.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research results in the form of quantitative data are presented in Tables 1-3, respectively. It was found that teachers' coping attempt tended to be focused on overcoming the behavior problems of CSEN. Therefore, in determining predictors for handling behavior problems of CSEN, they would attempt to minimize the behavior problems that occurred. Teachers' attempts in an order from the highest to the lowest in percentage included intimacy control (18%), calming the child down verbally (16.5%), assigning a task (14%), verbal diversion (13.1%), calming the child physically (8.8%), and allowing the child to have a break, ignoring the problematic behavior, and peers' commentary with a laugh. The data on this is presented in Table 2.

The highest percentage of teachers was in the age range 31–40 years, and the lowest was in the age range 51–60 years. Most of the teachers were teaching at the elementary school level, and most of the students were in the age range 7–12 years. The special condition with the most prevalence was intellectual disability. The data on teachers' demographics can be seen in Table 1, and the data on intensity and intervention can be seen in Table 2.

Table 1. Demographics and types of problematic behaviors (n=109)

Variable	Group	n	Percent
Teacher age range	21–30	28	25.7
	31–40	31	28.4
	41–50	30	27.5
	51–60	20	18.3
Level of school at which the teacher was teaching	Elementary (SD/SDLB)	61	56
	Senior high (SMA/SMALB)	16	14.7
	Junior high (SMP/SMPLB)	29	26.6
	Kindergarten (TK/TKLB)	3	2.8
Student age	<7 years old	3	2.8
	>18 years old	6	5.5
	13–15 years old	24	22
	16–18 years old	18	16.5
	7–12 years old	58	53.2
Special condition	Autism	14	12.8
	Double handicape	39	35.8
	Intellectual disability	42	38.5
	Hearing impairment	4	3.7
	Visual impairment	1	0.9
	Slow learning	9	8.3
Events possibly causing the emergence of certain behaviors (behavior problems)*	The activity in which the child took pleasure being terminated	24	9.8
	Direction of task assignment	40	16.3
	Being asked to wait	19	7.7
	Being left alone (with no appropriate activity)	19	7.7
	Being left alone (with no individual attention)	24	9.8
	Observing others	30	12.2
	Attention being not given when it was desired	31	12.6
	Transition between activities	11	4.5
	A new task being introduced	19	7.7
	Difficult task	29	11.8
Type of behavior that occurred when the child was exhibiting a behavior problem*	Shouting	31	11.1
	Running around	25	8.9
	Spitting	5	1.8
	Making verbal threats	11	3.9
	The child hitting him-/herself	9	3.2
	Hitting others	11	3.9
	Crying/whimpering	33	11.8
	Disturbing the class order (specific)	34	12.1
	Scratching	7	2.5
	Biting	4	1.4
	Damaging property	9	3.2
	Causing things to fall	9	3.2
	Refusing to follow a direction	62	22.1
	Refusing verbally	27	9.6

*Note: a. Respondents were allowed to choose more than one category; b. Dichotomy group tabulation, numbering 1

Table 2. Intensity and Intervention (n=109)

Variable	Group	n	Percent
Intesity	Low	56	51.4
	Medium	49	45
	High	4	3.7
Attempts made to minimize the behavior problems that occurred*	Physical assistance/confirmation	29	8.8
	Assigning a task/another activity	46	14
	Leaving the child alone	6	1.8
	Allowing the child to have a break	24	7.3
	Peers' commentary with a laugh	10	3
	Calming the child down physically	29	8.8
	Calming the child down verbally	54	16.5
	Ignoring the problematic behavior	12	3.7
	Intimacy control	59	18
	Verbal diversion	43	13.1
	Feeling disturbed and diverting	6	1.8
	Keeping on demanding	10	3
Teacher intervention*	Letting the child have a break	5	4.5
	Giving calming words	5	4.5
	Giving reinforcement	2	1.8
	Giving comfort by physical touch	25	22.7
	Fulfilling the child's desire	1	0.9
	Calming the child down verbally	20	18.2
	Diverting the child's attention	19	17.3
	Communicating the problem with family	5	4.5
	Individual approach	23	20.9
	Ignoring the child	5	4.5
The child's condition when he/she receives teacher intervention*	Being pleased	12	11.5
	Being calmer	42	40.4
	Willing to follow the teacher	11	10.6
	Listening to the teacher and obey him/her	23	22.1
	Being open about the problem	2	1.9
	Looking sorry	1	1
	Being unresponsive	13	12.5

Note*: a. The respondents were allowed to choose more than one category; b. Dichotomy group tabulation, numbering 1

Based on the teacher predictor analysis, a comparison between the antecedents, behaviors, and consequences was performed. In the Table 3, there will be present the component of phenomenon of behavior problems in CSEN. The teacher predictors in handling behavior problems in CSEN using applied behavior analysis. The data presentation of the phenomenon of behavior problems in CSEN follows the order from the component of antecedents and behaviors to consequence and from the highest to the lowest frequency at which the respondents chose statements on the behavior analysis components.

Table 3. Teacher predictor analysis using applied behavior analysis

Antecedent	Behavior	Intensity	Teacher intervention	Consequence
Direction provided for a task	Refusing to following the direction	Highest low	Giving comfort by physical touch	Being calmer
Attention being not given when it was desired	Disturbing the class order	Medium	Calming the child down verbally	Listening to the teacher and obeying him/her
Observing others	Crying/whimpering	High	Individual approach	Being unresponsive
Hard Tasks	Verbal rejection		Distract	Happy
The activity the child took pleasure in being terminated	Shouting		Letting the child to have a break	Willing to follow the teacher
Being left alone with no attention paid	Running around		Giving calming words	Being open about the problem
A new task being introduced	Making verbal threats		Communicating the problem with family	Looking sorry
Being asked to wait	Hitting others		Ignoring the child	
Being left alone with no appropriate activity	The child hitting him-/herself		Giving reinforcement	
Transition between activities	Damaging property		Fulfilling the child's desire	
	Causing things in his/her proximity to fall			
	Scratching			
	Spitting			
	Biting			

The data presentation of the phenomenon of behavior problems in CSEN follows the order from the component of antecedents and behaviors to consequence and from the highest to the lowest frequency at which the respondents chose statements on the behavior analysis components. Interpretation was based on the teacher statements with the highest frequencies. As a result, the teacher predictors in handling behavior problems in CSEN are: i) The antecedents to some behavior problems were the direction given by the teacher for a task, no attention being paid, and difficult task. The teachers must be able to predict that such events would trigger the occurrence of some problematic behaviors; ii) The predictors for the occurrence of problematic behaviors in CSEN were the children refusing to follow the direction given by the teacher and disturbing the class order, but the intensity was considered low. This implies that the occurrence of behavior problems in the CSEN in the classrooms was frequent but at a low intensity. Such problems were repetitive, and the teachers were accustomed to facing them; and iii) The teachers tended to predict that calming the CSEN and giving them comfort would lead to the consequence of the children being calmer.

The effect of the behaviors of CSEN following the predictors chosen by the teachers depended on the antecedents and the occurring behaviors. The predictors tended to be chosen were giving comfort by physical touch, calming the children down verbally, individual approach, and diverting attention. The teachers were oriented toward implementing intervention to loosen tension.

The coping mechanism attempted by the teachers tended to be problem-focused (PFC) rather than emotion-based (EFC). The challenge was more about dealing with problems since the stressors that came were from the behavior problems of CSEN. One of the problems the teachers should try to solve was the children's refusal to do a task [4]. In doing so, the teachers should determine the predictors appropriately.

The teachers determined predictors to handle behavior problems in CSEN by conditioning to minimize the behavior problems that arose. The conditions chosen were predicted to be able to reduce behavior problems of CSEN in the classroom. This supports previous research that teachers should have the competencies to handle behavior problems in CSEN [1]. These competencies would support smooth learning of CSEN, maintain the mental health of people closest to them, and the acceptance of their presence in their social environments [2].

The teachers' use of the predictor analysis basis was deemed appropriate as they took into account the conditions that drove the occurrence of a behavior, the behavior that occurred, and the consequences of such a behavior. Predictors were used as intervention to lead to calmness in the CSEN as consequence [9]. Interventions by giving comfort and calming the children down verbally and physically were the highest-frequency predictors chosen by the teachers. This finding indicates that the behavior problems in CSEN came from the learning problems the children were facing [3].

The teacher's predictor to calm the CSEN down would have a vast effect on the families of the CSEN too [16]. Therefore, support and training for the parents of CSEN should be provided at all time. This effort also supports the predictors that the teachers undertook effectively and sustainably. Coping is a way to mitigate a situation that triggers the occurrence of a problem through cognitive and behavioral changes to gain a sense of comfort in one's self. Other than internal factors, external factors such as the environment also affect students' coping. Strong support from the environment, as from the teacher and parents, is extremely needed. The teacher's expectation and behavior that is displayed in the classroom will influence the behavior of the class [12].

It is important for teachers to be responsive to any event that possibly triggers a certain problematic behavior in students. Problematic behaviors may arise from students with special education needs when they are given tasks at school. The anxity that develops in the students would drive the emergence of the problematic behaviors. Anxiety about something like a difficult task would spur the rise of other problematic behaviors during learning [13].

Communicating with effectiveness, empathy, and politeness with students is one of the pedagogic competencies a teacher must possess [19]. The coping mechanism undertaken by teachers to solve behavior problems is largely focused on individual approaches and heavily uses effective skills upon students. Calming CSEN verbally and giving them positive affirmation through calming words are effective in keeping down the problematic behaviors in them. Communicating with parents is another way in which teachers solve behavior problems in students.

Social support for coping may be given through the involvement of others in problem-solving [17]. Communicating with family may be done for coping purposes. Family is part of the resources for coping that belongs to the category of external social support. One may take action and seek others' support because social resources provide such support. This support may take the form of information assistance, moral support, and emotional support.

Character building for students to exhibit calm behavior also supports a condusive class climate, hence building an atmosphere suitable for a smooth course of learning. Peer tutoring that can support such a class climate for a smooth course of learning can also be realized if the teacher directs the students that

exhibit problematic behaviors to be calm [18]. One may also take the teacher predictor analysis to handle behavior problems in CSEN into considearation to manage an inclusive class. A sense of comfort through intimacy with the teacher and the teacher's acceptance of the condition of the CSEN under any situation could also support an inclusive class. This depends on the teacher's ability to analyze the predictors to solve behavior problems in CSEN.

Coping strategies that individuals use in dealing with identify stressors [20]. Dealing identify stressors are hypnotized to function as important determinan individual identity. Coping strategies used by represent both problem-focused and emotion focus [21]. Problem-focused coping including the use of physical activity, interpersonal coping, acceptance and giving reinforcement. Coping strategies makes CSEN help manage behavior and increased children well being in order to relieve stress. When individuals are subjected to a stressor, they dealing with it are termed "coping styles" that determine the individual's behavior in response to stress [22]. Coping mechanism prove useful in certain situations that are associated with poor mental health outcomes and higher level of psychopathology symptoms.

The implementation of coping mechanism in line with theoretical framework that focuses on both types of coping mechanism: problem and emotion focused coping that aimed as intervention in reducing or managing stress [23]. To handle behavior problem of CSEN also need the social support considered as on of the most important sub-types of problem and emotion focused coping. Social support can also come from CSEN close environment like parents or teachers even their classmates. By making the learning process collaborative among educators and student also sustainable collaboration with parents at home grow the good behavior and positive attitudes [24]. Parents or other family should be support not only had a direct impact on intensifiying adaptive and non adaptive strategies but also influenced coping with the use of personal resources [25]. Every kind of resources can be use to support the coping mechanism for handling problem behavior for CSEN.

Behavior problem that happens to the CSEN in the class needs to be solve by teacher by doing analysis of the problem and find a mechanism to solve that. Prior to intervention with CSEN in the class, the key to solve the problem of behavior problems needs teacher prepararation. Teacher ought to know how to manage the behavioral problems of CSEN and emphasize good behavior of CSEN in order to build a good environment to learn. One of the solutions that can do by teacher is using the coping mechanism to handling behavioral problem of CSEN based on their analysis. Based on the teacher predictor analysis, a comparison between the antecedents, behaviors, and consequences was performed. The coping mechanism attempted by the teachers tended to be problem-focused (PFC) rather than emotion-based (EFC).

Throughout the teacher analysis related to their experience handling CSEN, they use coping mechanism that focus on problem solving with some intervention like giving reinforcement, physical touch, communicating the problem with family of CSEN. Previously, the teacher needs to be determined predictors to handle behavior problems in CSEN by conditioning to minimize the behavior problems. It orders that to supports previous research that teachers should have the competencies to handle behavior problems in CSEN. Based on that problem-focused coping mechanism give positive effort in reducing stressors associated with the intervention that can be chosen. The findings in this research show that using many positive interventions in coping mechanism help manage CSEN's behavior.

The influence of coping mechanism focused on behavioral and emosional problem that minimize distress by reducing or eliminating the stressor. Coping, that is emotion-focused is positively correlated distress, whereas focused on problem-solving [26]. The effect of the behaviors of CSEN following the predictors chosen by the teachers depended on the antecedents and the occurring behaviors. The predictors tended to be chosen were giving comfort by physical touch, calming the children down verbally, individual approach, and diverting attention. The teachers were oriented toward implementing intervention to loosen tension. Support from the family be the most important thing to communicate the problem of CSEN as part of the intervention option. Therefore, support and training for the parents of CSEN should be provided at all time. This effort also supports the predictors that the teachers undertook effectively and sustainably.

4. CONCLUSION

There are many kinds of behavior problems that's faced by teacher who handling CSEN especially intellectual disability. Based on the teacher predictor analysis, a comparison between the antecedents, behaviors, and consequences was performed. The teacher predictors in handling behavior problems in CSEN so the teachers must be able to predict that such events would trigger the occurrence of some problematic behaviors. The predictors for the occurrence of problematic behaviors in CSEN were the children refusing to follow the direction given by the teacher and disturbing the class order, but the intensity was considered low. This implies that the occurrence of behavior problems in the CSEN in the classrooms was frequent but at a low intensity. Such problems were repetitive, and the teachers were accustomed to facing them. The teachers' use of the predictor analysis basis was deemed appropriate as they took into account the conditions that drove

the occurrence of a behavior, the behavior that occurred, and the consequences of such a behavior. Predictors were used as intervention to lead to calmness in the CSEN as consequence.

Coping is a way to mitigate a situation that triggers a problem through cognitive and behavioral changes to gain a sense of comfort in one's self. It is important for teacher to be responsive to anythings that can possibly triggers a certain problematic behavior in student. Sometimes problematics behaviors arise from student with special needs when they are given tasks at school. When they feel cannot do the task well, the anxiety comes and develop int the students who would drive the emergence of problematic behaviors. The coping mechanism doing by teacher to solve behavior problem that focused on individual approaches and heavily uses effective skills upon students.

Teachers' coping and identification of predictors to solve behavior problems in CSEN is problem-focused (PFC). The predictors used intimacy control. The event preceding the emergence of a problem behavior was the teacher's direction on a task. In determining predictors, the teacher tended to calm the children down and give them comfort. Consequently, the children became calmer. The implication of this research is that support that is given by parents in choosing predictors to solve behavior problems in their children at home is much required. The family should be empowered to carry out a variety of methods to add to the effectiveness of the predictors chosen by the teacher.

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