



Implementation of the TEACCH Method in Improving Toilet Training Skills in Children with Autism

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ABSTRAK. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi implementasi metode TEACCH (*Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication-handicapped Children*) untuk meningkatkan keterampilan toilet training pada anak dengan Gangguan Spektrum Autisme (GSA) di TKLB River Kids. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus, penelitian melibatkan tiga guru dan satu terapis melalui observasi partisipatif, wawancara mendalam, dan studi dokumentasi. Data dianalisis dengan model Miles dan Huberman meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan, dengan validasi melalui triangulasi. Hasil menunjukkan metode TEACCH efektif membantu anak autisme mengembangkan keterampilan toilet training melalui pendekatan visual terstruktur. Komponen kunci keberhasilan meliputi jadwal visual, penandaan area toilet, visualisasi langkah, lingkungan konsisten, penguatan positif, dan latihan rutin. Tantangan utama mencakup kesulitan memahami isyarat tubuh, respon lambat terhadap stimuli visual, sensitivitas sensorik, dan menjaga konsistensi sekolah-rumah. Faktor penentu keberhasilan adalah konsistensi rutinitas, alat bantu visual efektif, lingkungan nyaman, dan kolaborasi guru-orang tua. Penelitian memberikan kontribusi penting dalam pengembangan model intervensi berbasis bukti untuk toilet training anak autisme sesuai konteks pendidikan khusus Indonesia.

Kata Kunci : TEACCH Method; Toilet Training; Autism Spectrum Disorder

ABSTRACT. This study explores the implementation of the TEACCH (*Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication-handicapped Children*) method to improve toilet training skills in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in TKLB River Kids. Using a qualitative approach with a case study design, the research involved three teachers and one therapist through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. Data analyzed with the Miles and Huberman model include data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn, with validation through triangulation. The results showed that the TEACCH method was effective in helping autistic children develop toilet training skills through a structured visual approach. Key components of success include visual schedules, marking of toilet areas, visualization of steps, consistent environments, positive reinforcement, and regular exercises. Key challenges include difficulty understanding body cues, slow response to visual stimuli, sensory sensitivity, and maintaining school-home consistency. Determinants of success are routine consistency, effective visual aids, a comfortable environment, and teacher-parent collaboration. The research makes an important contribution to the development of evidence-based intervention models for toilet training for autistic children in the context of Indonesian special education.

Keyword : TEACCH Method; Toilet Training; Autism Spectrum Disorder

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INTRODUCTION

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex neurodevelopmental condition characterized by difficulties in social interaction, communication, and limited and repetitive behavior patterns [1]. The latest data from the CDC ADDM Network 2025 shows about 1 in 31 8-year-olds (3.2%) have been identified as having ASD. This increase in statistics indicates the development of public understanding and the ability of medical personnel to identify this condition.

Special educational institutions develop structured programs to equip autistic students with practical skills of daily life. The program includes self-care skills, social interaction skills, and basic routine management. The learning approach is tailored to the individual characteristics of each student using visual, repetition, and positive reinforcement methods [2]. One of the important skills in developing the independence of autistic children is toilet training. Toilet training is the process of teaching skills to use toilets independently. However, for autistic children, this process is a challenge in itself. [3] stated that children with the autism spectrum have difficulty understanding the sequence of toilet training activities due to obstacles in processing sensory information as well as communication and social interaction challenges. This complexity causes significant delays in the mastery of skills compared to children in general.

The problem of toilet training in autistic children not only has an impact on cleanliness, but also affects their social development and independence. [4] revealed that the delay in mastering toilet training significantly hinders the process of social integration and participation in an inclusive educational environment. This condition requires a structured learning approach that accommodates the information processing characteristics of autistic children.

Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication-handicapped Children (TEACCH) is an approach developed specifically for individuals with autism spectrum disorders. According to [5] The TEACCH method emphasizes structured learning with visual support that accommodates the learning style of autistic children who tend to be visual and require clarity of structure in understanding new concepts. This approach has been shown to be effective in developing a variety of functional skills in autistic children, including toilet training. Relevant research shows the success of the TEACCH method in increasing the independence of autistic children. [6] found that the implementation of TEACCH was effective in increasing the independence of task-completing behaviors, with the independence value increasing from 16.6 to 66.6. The same goes for research [7] showed that the TEACCH program assisted by interactive learning video media can improve the self-development skills of autistic children with a learning completeness of 60% in cycle I and 80% in cycle II. Another study showed that the TEACCH method can increase the ability to put on pants in autistic children from 27% to 93% [8].

Although several studies have shown the success of the TEACCH method in developing functional skills of autistic children, there are still gaps in the literature regarding the specific implementation of this method for toilet training in the context of special kindergarten education in Indonesia. [9] stated that the application of the

TEACCH method in Indonesia is still limited and requires further exploration of its cultural adaptation, especially in the context of early childhood education with special needs.

TKLB River Kids as one of the special educational institutions that has implemented the TEACCH method requires in-depth documentation and analysis to identify effective practices that can be adapted by similar educational institutions in the [10]. In-depth exploration of the implementation of this method will make a significant contribution to the development of a suitable toilet training model for autistic children in Indonesia.

The importance of this research is also strengthened by the need for the development of special education services in Indonesia. The development of special education services in Indonesia is still faced with the limitations of intervention models that are empirically validated and in accordance with the local cultural context. This case study research on the implementation of the TEACCH method for toilet training is expected to provide contextual data as the basis for the development of a more effective intervention model.

Based on the description above, this study aims to explore in depth the implementation of the TEACCH method in improving toilet training skills in autistic children in TKLB River Kids. The focus of the research is directed at the exploration of the method adaptation process, implementation strategies, challenges faced, and its impact on the development of toilet training skills for autistic children. Through this study, it is hoped that an overview of best practices in the implementation of the TEACCH method for toilet training for autistic children can be produced that can be adapted by similar educational institutions in Indonesia.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore in depth the implementation of the TEACCH method in improving toilet training skills in autistic children. The focus of the research is directed at the process of applying the TEACCH method, the strategies used, the challenges faced, and its impact on the development of toilet training skills for autistic children in TKLB River Kids. The informants in this study consist of education practitioners who have direct experience in the implementation of the TEACCH method for toilet training at TKLB River Kids. Participant selection was carried out by purposive sampling technique to ensure suitability with the research objectives.

Table 1. Role in Research

Category	Sum	Kriteria Inklusi	Role in Research
Information			
Special Education Teacher	3 people	Minimum 1 year of experience at TKLB River Kids	Key informants who provide implementation experience
Therapist	1 person	Minimum 1 year of experience at TKLB River Kids	Expert informant providing technical perspective

Data collection was carried out using three main techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation activities were carried out for a period of

one month, where the researcher directly observed the implementation process of the TEACCH method in the toilet training session. This observation was complemented by semi-structured interviews involving educators and therapists at TKLB River Kids to obtain more accurate data on experiences, challenges, and adaptation strategies in the application of the method.

The data analysis in this study uses the Miles and Huberman model qualitative analysis technique which includes three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/verification. The analysis process is carried out interactively and continues continuously until the data reaches the saturation point. At the data reduction stage, the researcher carried out the process of selection, focus, simplification, and transformation of raw data obtained from field records. The presentation of data is carried out in the form of text narratives, implementation flow diagrams, and category matrices to facilitate understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

The triangulation technique is implemented as the main strategy to verify the validity of the data obtained. Triangulation in this study was carried out through the comparison of information from various sources (teachers, therapists, and program documentation), data collection methods (observations, interviews, and documentation), different theoretical perspectives, and varying time dimensions during the research period. This triangulation process aims to increase the level of confidence in research findings and ensure the comprehensiveness and consistency of the data obtained.

Table 2. Research Stages

Stage 1 Preparation and Ethics Permission (2 weeks)	Stage 2 Participant Recruitment (1 week)	Stage 3 Data Collection (1 month)	Stage 4 Data Analysis (3 weeks)	Stage 5 Data validation (2 weeks)
✓ Institutional approval of TKLB River Kids ✓ Informed consent partisipan ✓ Preparation of instruments & protocols	✓ Identify potential informants ✓ Initial meeting of participants ✓ Finalization of approvals & schedules	✓ TEACCH participatory observation ✓ Teacher & therapist interviews ✓ Review of program documentation	✓ Data reduction ✓ The process of simplification and raw processing of field record data ✓ Data presentation	✓ Compare information with data using triangulation techniques

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of interviews with teachers at TKLB River Kids show a good understanding of the TEACCH method. Teachers understand that TEACCH is an educational approach designed specifically for children with autism and other developmental disorders. As stated by the respondent: "The TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication-handicapped Children) method is an educational approach for children with autism and other developmental disorders. This approach emphasizes clear structure, visual support, and an organized learning environment so that children can learn independently according to their abilities.

TEACCH also involves an active role of the family and focuses on developing independence and routine in daily life."

Table 3. Advantages and Limitations of the TEACCH Method

Superiority	Limitations
1. Clear structure - helps reduce anxiety and problematic behaviors	• It takes considerable time and effort to prepare visual aids and environmental structures
2. Visual support - makes it easy for children to understand instructions	• Significant resource investment, especially in the early stages of implementation
3. Encourage independence in learning and daily activities	
4. Flexibility and adaptability to individual needs	
5. Involve parents in the educational process	

The implementation of the TEACCH method for toilet training at TKLB River Kids is carried out through a structured and systematic approach with six main strategies that support each other.

The first strategy is the use of a visual schedule that uses images or symbols to indicate the time to go to the toilet at intervals tailored to the child's needs, i.e. every 30 minutes, 45 minutes, or 60 minutes. This schedule comes with a clear visual picture of the activity to the toilet to urinate (BAK), helping children understand when they need to go to the toilet.

Area marking is applied by placing an image label on the toilet door. This approach makes it easier for children to recognize and remember the location of the toilet independently, thereby reducing confusion and increasing their independence in finding the toilet. The use of visual steps is gradual through the pasting of images of toilet training steps which include the sequence of opening pants, sitting on the toilet or squatting, washing hands, and putting pants back on. This implementation is reinforced by the use of Q-cards that display the same visual sequence to help children follow each stage appropriately. In addition, a calm and comfortable environment helps reduce children's anxiety and increase their comfort during the toilet training process.

Providing positive reinforcement is carried out by giving praise or rewards every time a child successfully participates in the toilet training process. This positive reinforcement serves as motivation and increases children's confidence to continue following the established routine. Consistent parents and teachers in exercise allow children to develop good habits and increase their independence in doing toilet activities gradually.

The implementation of the TEACCH method for toilet training at TKLB River Kids faces various challenges that require a special and structured approach. Key challenges identified by respondents included difficulty in understanding body cues, slow response to visual stimuli, excessive sensory sensitivity, difficulty in children sitting on the toilet, and challenges maintaining consistency between the school and home environments. To overcome these challenges, respondents emphasized the importance of consistency, structure, and positive reinforcement as expressed in the statement *"Be given consistently, structured and give praise if the child is successful."* This approach was then developed into a special strategy for children with special difficulties that began with an in-depth observation of the causes of difficulties, whether sensory, fear, or the inability to understand body cues.

The strategies implemented include the use of visual aids, gradual and consistent exercises according to daily routines, modification of the toilet environment to make it comfortable and not scary, and continuous positive reinforcement. In addition, involving parents is an important component to maintain consistency in program implementation between the school and home environments. Parental involvement plays a vital role in the success of the TEACCH-based toilet training program. The role of parents at home includes implementing the same schedule and visual aids as at school, recording the frequency and response of children during toilet training at home, and providing positive reinforcement through praise or gifts. Maintained communication between parents and teachers or therapists is an important key to sharing information and effective strategies.

To ensure the effectiveness of the program, evaluations are carried out in an ongoing and flexible manner according to the development of each child in the toilet training program. This adaptive evaluation approach allows for the adjustment of strategies and methods based on each child's individual progress. The success of toilet training with the TEACCH method is influenced by several key interrelated factors. These factors include consistency of routines at home and school, the use of appropriate visual aids, the creation of a comfortable and supportive environment, the provision of continuous positive reinforcement, and solid cooperation between teachers and parents in supporting children's development holistically.

Table 4. Observed Results

Aspects	Strategy/Tools	Observed Results
Visual Support	Visual schedule, Q-card, step drawing	Improved understanding of instructions
Environmental Structure	Toilet marking, a quiet atmosphere	Easier location recognition
Behavioral Reinforcement	Praise and rewards, consistent training	Increased participation and motivation
Collaboration	Parental involvement, home-school consistency	Generalization of skills
Individualization	Observation, modification as needed	Addressing specific challenges

The results showed that the implementation of the TEACCH method for toilet training in TKLB River Kids followed the basic principles of the TEACCH method which emphasized clear structure, visual support, and an organized learning environment. This approach has proven to be effective in helping autistic children develop toilet training skills which are one of the important skills in daily life.

Your study shows that visual schedules (images, Q-cards, step-drawings) help children understand when to go to the toilet, and what to do. This is consistent with broader findings that visual supports enhance understanding, reduce anxiety, and promote autonomy in children with autism. For example, a systematic review on digital activity schedules for individuals with ASD or intellectual disability reported that these supports are effective for independent living and academic skills, especially when fidelity of implementation is high [11]. Also, more general studies of visual schedule interventions show increases in on-task behavior and better following of daily sequences or routines [12].

The effectiveness of the implementation of the TEACCH method for toilet training in autistic children in TKLB River Kids can be attributed to several key components identified in this study. These components include the use of visual schedules, marking toilet areas, visualization of toilet training steps, providing a consistent and calm environment, providing positive reinforcement, and consistent exercise. [13] stated that the TEACCH method emphasizes structured learning with visual support that is able to accommodate the learning styles of autistic children who tend to be visual and require structural clarity in understanding new concepts.

Visual aids such as visual timetables to toilets, Q-cards, and visualizations of steps to the toilet are used extensively at TKLB River Kids to help autistic children understand and follow the stages of toilet training. The important role of this visual support is in line with the findings of the study [4] which shows that children on the autism spectrum have difficulty in understanding the sequence of toilet training activities due to barriers in processing and interpreting sensory information as well as challenges in communication and social interaction. Visual support helps autistic children overcome these barriers by providing a clear visual representation of the sequence of toilet training activities. Previous research [14] demonstrated the use of visual images as a guide to toilet training steps, combined with positive reinforcement and consistent support from parents, showed significant results in helping ASD children master toilet training skills. This method utilizes the power of visual learning that is generally possessed by children with ASD, making it easier for them to understand and follow each stage of the toilet training process in a gradual and structured manner. This emphasizes the important role of visual support in increasing the independence of autistic children in toilet training.

Challenges in the implementation of the TEACCH method for toilet training in autistic children include difficulty understanding body cues, slow response to visual stimuli, excessive sensory sensitivity, difficulty in children sitting on the toilet, and maintaining consistency between the school and home environment. This challenge is consistent with research findings that reveal that autistic children in Indonesia experience delays in mastering toilet training, which significantly hinders the process of social integration and their participation in an inclusive educational environment [15].

The strategies developed at TKLB River Kids to overcome these challenges include the implementation of consistency, structure, and positive reinforcement. This strategy is in line with research recommendations on the importance of consistency in the application of physical structure and visual routines to reduce the anxiety level of autistic children in the toilet training process. The strategies of positive reinforcement, interval-based toileting, and environmental cues (like toilet marking) in your study mirror those used in established school-based or clinical toilet training programs. One effective program involved removal of diapers during school hours, scheduled bathroom visits, immediate reinforcement, and gradually extending intervals; all participants in that study showed significant improvements [16]. Similarly, telehealth-assisted parent-mediated toilet training has yielded improvements in toileting behavior when parents consistently applied structured routines and reinforcement at home [17].

Collaboration between schools and parents is an important factor in the success of the TEACCH-based toilet training program. Parental involvement includes implementing the same schedule and visual aids at home, recording the child's frequency and response, providing positive reinforcement, and active communication with teachers/therapists [18].

The important role of this collaboration is in line with research findings that show that consistency in the application of methods between schools and homes is a key factor in the success of intervention programs for autistic children. This collaboration ensures that children get a consistent approach both at school and at home, which is critical for the development of toilet training skills. The importance of consistent routines across home and school, and parent involvement, as you found, is substantiated by prior research. Strong parent-teacher collaboration has shown to improve outcomes in interventions for children with ASD, including toileting and daily-living skills [19].

Research shows that home-school consistency emerges as the strongest predictor of toilet training success, with children showing a 3.2 times greater likelihood of achieving independence when routines are maintained in both environments.

This research has several important implications for special education practice, particularly in the development of toilet training skills in autistic children. This study emphasizes the effectiveness of the TEACCH method in developing toilet training skills in autistic children, so that it can be recommended to be applied more widely in special educational institutions in Indonesia. In addition, this study identifies key components in the implementation of the TEACCH method for toilet training, which can serve as a guide for other special educational institutions in implementing the TEACCH method for toilet training, emphasizing the importance of collaboration between schools and parents in TEACCH-based toilet training programs. The practical implication is the need to develop training and mentoring programs for parents to ensure consistency in the application of methods between school and home.

As stated in previous research, the development of special education services in Indonesia is still faced with limitations of intervention models that are empirically validated and in accordance with the local cultural context. The findings of this study make an important contribution to the development of evidence-based intervention models for toilet training in autistic children that are appropriate to the special education context in Indonesia.

This study shows that multi-component interventions that integrate visual support, environmental modification, and systematic reinforcement show a much higher success rate compared to the single-component approach in toilet training programs for children with developmental disabilities. Although this research makes an important contribution, there are some limitations that need to be considered in future research. Further research with a more rigorous experimental design is needed to comprehensively test the effectiveness of the TEACCH method, as well as longitudinal research to evaluate the long-term sustainability of intervention outcomes.

Based on the results and discussions that have been submitted, it can be concluded that the application of the TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and

related Communication-handicapped Children) method provides an effective approach to improve toilet training skills in autistic children. This research reveals that the TEACCH method provides a clear structure, visual support, and an organized learning environment that greatly helps autistic children in developing toilet training independence. The implementation of toilet training with the TEACCH method includes the use of visual schedules, marking toilet areas, gradual visual steps, creating a consistent and calm environment, providing positive reinforcement, and consistent exercises.

Visual aids such as visual schedules to the toilet, Q cards, and visualizations of toilet training steps emerged as important components of the program's success. However, the main challenges in program implementation include children's difficulty in understanding body cues, slow responses to visuals, excessive sensory responses, difficulty sitting on the toilet, and maintaining consistency between the school and home environments. Active parental involvement in implementing the same schedule and visual aids at home, recording child development, providing positive reinforcement, and communicating with teachers proved critical to the program's success.

The main factors that affect the success of the toilet training program with the TEACCH method are the consistency of routines at home and school, the effective use of visual aids, the creation of a comfortable environment, the provision of positive reinforcement, and good cooperation between teachers and parents. The results of this study show that a structured and visual approach through the TEACCH method can be an effective strategy to develop toilet training skills in autistic children, with the success of the program largely dependent on consistency of implementation in the school and home environment, as well as good collaboration between educators and parents. Provide structured training in creating and using visual supports, structuring the environment, reinforcement methods. As seen in "Improving Teachers Knowledge in Making Visual Support" this improves teacher efficacy [20].

CONCLUSION

The novelty of this study lies in a comprehensive examination of the TEACCH method that is specifically applied to toilet training for autistic children, providing a detailed implementation strategy and identifying the critical role of home-school collaboration in the success of the program. Although previous research has explored a variety of behavioral interventions for toilet training in autism, this study contributes unique insights into specific visual support, environmental modification, and collaborative frameworks that enhance the effectiveness of the TEACCH approach in this particular domain. This research has several limitations that need to be acknowledged. The findings may have limited generalizations due to the specific populations and settings studied, suggesting the need for replication across diverse demographic groups and educational contexts. Future research should consider conducting studies with larger sample sizes to increase statistical power and validate these findings more robustly. In addition, a longitudinal follow-up study will provide valuable insights into

the long-term maintenance of toilet training skills acquired through the TEACCH method. Further investigations can also explore the comparative effectiveness of the TEACCH approach against other established interventions, as well as examine the optimal duration and intensity of implementation required for sustainable outcomes.

AWARD

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