

Effectiveness of Training on Constructivism Learning Methods to Improve Teaching Skills Self Help Material for Early Childhood Education Teachers

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ABSTRACT

The ability of teachers to teach children about self help is needed because it is closely related to the ability of children to live life independently and responsibly. Self help requires qualified skills from the teacher in teaching, but in reality not all teachers are able to teach self help skills appropriately to children. This study aims to prove the effectiveness of training in constructivism learning methods in improving the teaching skills of self-help material for early childhood education teachers. Constructivism learning method is a method that seeks to provide knowledge to students through students' understanding of observation and experience. The research design used was a quasi experiment with one-group pretest and posttest design on six early childhood education teachers who still used conventional methods of teaching. Interventions given to the subject in the form of training in constructivism learning methods. The data collection technique uses an observation guide with a reliability of 0.812 cohenn's kappa that measures teacher teaching skills. The research data were analyzed descriptively and used Wilcoxon test statistical analysis. The results of the descriptive analysis show that the teacher's teaching skills in teaching self help material can be improved through training learning methods with a constructivism approach. While the results of statistical analysis show that training in constructivism learning methods is effective in improving teacher skills in teaching self help material. The implication, this research can be a basis in developing teacher skills in the teaching and learning process.

Keywords: *Training in constructivism learning methods, teaching skills, early childhood education teachers, self help skills*

The existence of Early Childhood Education Programs (ECEP) services aims to develop the potential of children from an early age to prepare life independently and be able to adapt to

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the environment. This means that the teacher has a very important role in teaching children the various skills needed in living life as independent individuals. Therefore, teachers need to have quality skills in teaching so that children can optimize the basic skills needed through various activities designed by teachers (Wijana, 2014).

Willingness and willingness to teach children is a noble task assigned to ECEP teachers. ECEP has an important role in shaping the character of children who are moral, creative, and competitive. ECEP is not only improving children's abilities in terms of cognition but preparing children to overcome various challenges in the future. ECEP is actually a place for children to grow their potential as optimally as possible. ECEP is the basis for children in developing their knowledge, skills and attitudes. Therefore, children need teachers who are proficient in teaching skills needed by children in optimizing their development (Wijana, 2014).

Self help is one of the skills that must be owned by children in order to achieve the goal of education as an independent and responsible individual. Self help is defined as a person's ability to help or improve themselves without relying on others. This learning ability encourages children to become independent by stimulating children to learn to do things themselves in a simple way according to their abilities.

The survey results conducted by one of the ECEP services in Sidoarjo found that early childhood teachers who teach still use conventional methods in teaching. The results of in-depth interviews of researchers with the principal, it is known that the teachers do the teaching by giving examples on the board, the teacher explains to students the material that needs to be taught, asks whether students understand or not, then asks students to do the tasks according to the teacher's instructions. This shows that ECEP teachers do not allow students to find out for themselves the knowledge they want to teach. This conventional learning process is considered ineffective because students get knowledge not through a systematic process but purely the results of dictation from the teacher so that students are often found not to understand the explanation from the teacher and after being asked again the next day, students have forgotten the material taught in the day before and only a few students were able to remember the previous subject matter.

The school principal further stated that ECEP teachers really wanted to get trainings related to improving the quality of themselves as teachers, but the principal had difficulty accommodating the wishes of the teacher because of the difficulty of finding experts who were willing to provide training to teachers so that until now teachers have never received training that can improve their ability to teach.

From the results of the focus group discussion together with ECEP teachers in one ECEP school in Sidoarjo, it was found that ECEP teachers still considered that conventional methods were an effective way of teaching knowledge to students. The teacher assesses that with conventional methods, the teacher can provide understanding to students directly so that students get knowledge directly from the teacher. Although it is acknowledged by the teacher that most students quickly forget the lessons they have taught, there are even enough students who do not understand the teacher's explanation.

The results of research conducted by Ridha and Lukman (2014) on early childhood shows that the learning process with conventional methods is less able to provide deep knowledge to

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children, on the contrary the varied learning methods, one of them is the use of ICT-based learning media, children are asked to watch videos and conclude own the essence of the video he watched, children can have better knowledge and have a higher evaluation value than children who learn with conventional methods. This shows that conventional methods are less effective in teaching children knowledge in depth. Conventional methods are less inherent in children's memories so that appropriate learning methods are needed and are appropriate for early childhood development.

The results of research conducted by Utami and Yunitami (2014) on children aged 4-5 years indicate that to teach children self help is not just verbal information to children but children need to be given the opportunity to try to do tasks independently without intervention from adults. This shows that for children to be able to develop self-help abilities, the child is left to learn through his own practice and observation. Musfiroh (2014) added that through playing activities, discovering, developing, imitating, and practicing daily life routines, early childhood can learn to develop self help abilities. Therefore, the teacher's main task is to improve teaching skills in order to be able to do variations in teaching that can optimize the development of early childhood through ECEP services.

One way to improve teacher teaching skills is to provide training related to various learning methods that can be used in teaching students. Constructivism learning method is a method that is considered effective and in accordance with the principles of early childhood development. With the method of constructivism, students try to understand events in the surrounding environment, create an understanding of the events around them, and learning becomes a very interactive process because it involves adults, peers, and the environment (Wijana, 2014). Ismaniar (2009) added that teachers as educators need to design a curriculum in ECEP services so that they are integrated with the content of daily life experienced by students so that the role of ECEP as a child development institution in preparing children to become independent individuals.

Muslich (Nizarwati, Hartono, & Aisyah, 2009) suggests that constructivism-based learning methods provide greater possibilities for students in developing their understanding through various activities. Constructivist learning is an approach to learning that emphasizes the creation of individual understanding independently through activity, creativity, and productivity based on prior knowledge and from meaningful learning experiences. Novak and Gowin (Nizarwati, Hartono, & Aisyah, 2009) added that one of the important things that affect children's learning is a combination of what they have known and experienced. This is in accordance with the constructivism learning method that the teacher should give students the opportunity to build their own knowledge actively by paying attention to the students' initial knowledge.

Children are not empty containers that need to be given information on knowledge but children can actively build their own knowledge through observation and experience in the surrounding environment (Stenlund, et al. 2004). Marienda, Zainuddin, and Nuriyah H. (2005) added that ECEP teachers are expected to develop learning strategies that not only convey information to students but also encourage students to learn freely and build knowledge based on their experiences. This is in accordance with the constructivism learning method that seeks so that students can interpret their own knowledge through daily experience around it.

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The results of research conducted by Indrawati (2017) show that constructivism-based learning processes can improve students' mathematics learning outcomes. Constructivism learning methods can be applied in every learning, because it can improve learning outcomes, students will also get a variety of learning so as to reduce saturation and increase the enthusiasm and activity of students in learning. The results of a similar study conducted by Rosiyanti (2016) showed that the learning method of constructivism can increase learning motivation. This is due to constructivism learning, individuals are asked to build their own knowledge based on direct learning experience so that it increases motivation to learn. The same thing was stated by Rohaeni (2014) that the method of constructive play in early childhood can increase creativity, ability to think, and train children to think in a structured manner.

The concept of learning activities for ECEP is developed based on the needs of early childhood namely the constructivism approach. Therefore, ECEP teachers need to improve their teaching skills by using constructivism learning methods (Indrijati et al. 2016). Teaching skills are basically special abilities relating to aspects of the implementation of learning activities that must be owned and applied by every individual who works as a teacher, tutor, trainer and facilitator in carrying out learning (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). Training is an effective way to improve the skills of ECEP teachers, as was done by Krisfida (2018) which shows that development screening training can improve the skills of ECEP/ kindergarten teachers in early detection of early childhood development.

Improving the skills of teachers in teaching is very important to do, because those who will provide assistance to children are ECEP teachers. Along with the development of children, it is better if there is continued assistance and guidance on the development of children. Without assistance, it will affect the mindset and behavior of children when they are adults (Hasanah, 2015). Data from UNICEF (2012) shows that the low quality of education starts from the teaching and learning process. Submission of teaching, teaching skills in the classroom are considered to need to be improved to optimize the quality of ECEP students.

The problem with one of the ECEP services in Sidoarjo shows that ECEP teachers have minimal knowledge in teaching and tend to use conventional methods in teaching so ECEP students do not understand teacher explanations and are quite hampered in developing self-help skills. Based on this, the teacher needs to be given skills in teaching by using the constructivism approach in teaching as an effort to improve the quality and skills of the teacher. Therefore, researchers felt interested in proving the effectiveness of training in constructivism learning methods in improving teacher teaching skills related to self-help material.

METHODOLOGY

The research that will be carried out belongs to the type of quasi experimental research. The design used in this study was a quasi experiment with one-group pretest and posttest design or commonly referred to as before-after design. Using this design, researchers can use control techniques for proactive history, namely by using pretest and posttest, before and after training (Jackson & Mathis, 2009). The effect of giving constructivism (X) method training will be seen from the difference in the results of the pre-test (O_1) and post-test (O_2) scores.

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Hypothesis

Training on effective constructivism learning methods to improve the teaching skills of self-help material for early childhood education teachers.

Research Subject

The subjects in this study were ECEP teachers in one of the ECEP services in Sidoarjo which amounted to six teachers and all the teachers were willing to participate as trainees so that this study did not carry out a random sampling process because all the teachers who were participants experienced the same problems that is, they have never received training in constructivism learning methods and still use conventional methods in teaching. The subject criteria in this study are: 1) The teacher has never received training in constructivism learning methods; and 2) Teachers still use conventional learning methods in the teaching and learning process.

Research variable

Independent Variable (X) is training in constructivism learning methods. Training in constructivism learning methods is a process that facilitates teachers to improve their ability to do constructivism-based teaching. In this training, ECEP teachers will be taught strategies in implementing the constructivism approach in the teaching and learning process.

Dependent variable (Y) is teaching skills. Teaching skills are specific skills that teachers must possess that are useful in the teaching and learning process in the classroom. In this study, the skill of the teacher taught self-help material in early childhood. The self help material was chosen based on the needs that must be met in early childhood development and became the main aspect complained by ECEP teachers. The measurement of teacher teaching skills is obtained through observation of the teacher's teaching skills, namely questioning skills, strengthening skills, variation skills, and skills in guiding small group discussions.

Research Instrument

The instrument in this study used an observation guide to determine the level of teacher teaching skills before and after training in constructivism learning methods. Guidelines for observation along with training programs are prepared based on the results of the training needs analysis. Observation guidelines are used to determine the teacher's skills in teaching self-help material which is compiled based on four teaching skills indicators as suggested by Shoffa (2016), namely: questioning skills (9 items), reinforcement skills (2 items), variation skills (16 items), and guiding small group discussions (6 items), so that the overall number of items is 33 items.

The validity of the research instrument was estimated using the type of content validity. The research instrument in the form of observation guidelines along with training programs in constructivism learning methods has gone through a validation process by three experts. While the reliability of this research instrument is estimated using the cohenn's kappa (k) approach through the help of IBM SPSS Statistics 21. Based on the results of the analysis, we obtained reliability estimates for the observation guideline instrument which was equal to 0.812 cohenn's kappa.

Procedure

Before being given training, researchers gathered teachers who had never received training in constructive learning methods. The researcher conducted preliminary observations regarding

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the teaching skills of the teacher with self help material and provided questions to reveal the teacher's knowledge regarding the constructivism learning method. After that, the researcher gave treatment in the form of training in constructivism learning methods. At the end, the researcher returned to observing the teacher's teaching skills with self-help material and giving questions to uncover teacher's knowledge related to constructivism learning methods.

Data Analysis

This study was analyzed using Wilcoxon test statistical analysis with the help of IBM SPSS Statistics 21. Wilcoxon test is one method of nonparametric statistical analysis. Nonparametric statistics are used to analyze nominal / ordinal data from populations that are not normally distributed. The researcher used the Wilcoxon test to find out the differences in teacher teaching skills before and after being given training in constructivism learning methods. In addition, as an additional analysis, descriptive analysis was used to describe the research findings related to the effectiveness of training in constructivism learning methods presented in graphical form.

RESULTS

Descriptive Discovery

Overview of Research Subject Satisfaction with Constructivism Learning Method Training

Based on the results of the evaluation of the reaction, it is known that the research subjects were classified as satisfied with the implementation of the training. Subjects are very satisfied with the ability of the speaker to deliver and deliver the material appropriately. More details about the satisfaction of the research subject, can be seen in figure 1.

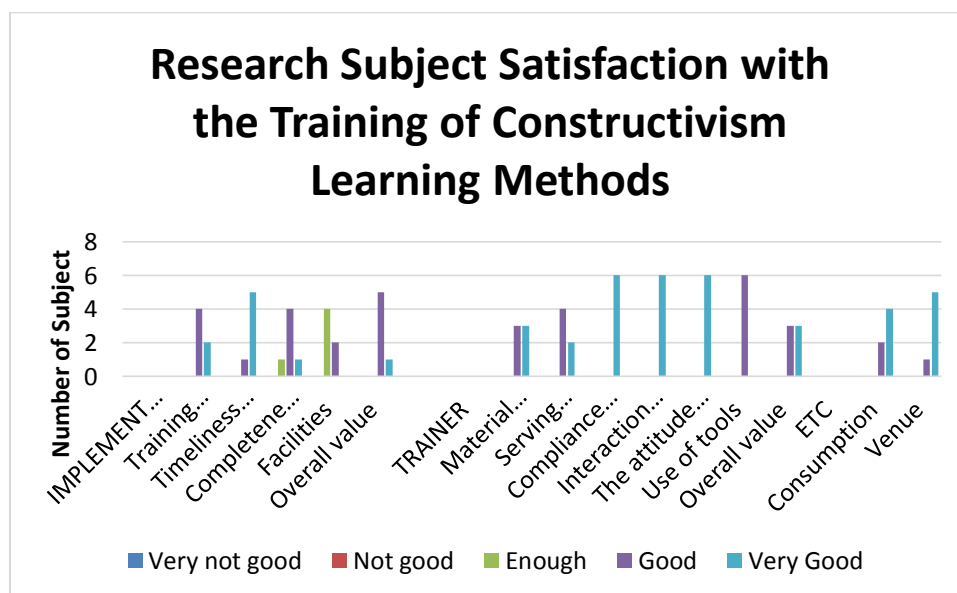


Figure 1. Research Subject Satisfaction with the Training of Constructivism Learning Methods

Overview of Knowledge on Constructivism Learning Methods

Before being given training in constructivism learning methods, researchers measured the extent to which research subjects had knowledge of constructivism learning methods. The multiple choice cognitive test results showed that before training, the research subjects had knowledge scores ranging from 4-7. After being given training in constructivism learning

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methods, measurements were taken using multiple choice cognitive tests and the results showed an increase in the knowledge possessed by research subjects with the acquisition of scores ranging from 12-18. The description of the increasing knowledge of constructivist learning methods of the research subjects can be seen in Figure 2.

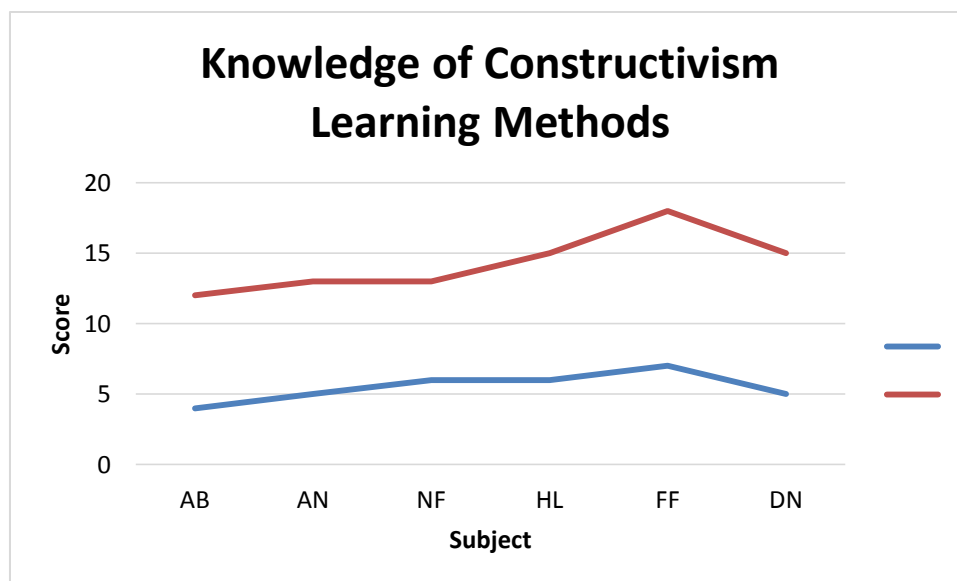


Figure 2. Overview of Knowledge on Constructivism Learning Methods

Overview of Teacher Teaching Skills

Before being given training in constructivism learning methods, researchers conducted observations to obtain information about the teaching skills possessed by research subjects. The material chosen is self-help material. Subject AB and AN teach self help material on how to dress. NF and HL subjects teach self-help material for eating skills. FF subject and DN teach self help material on bathing and brushing teeth. Then the research subjects were given training in constructivism learning methods. After the training, measurements were taken using observations to obtain data on changes in teaching skills possessed by research subjects after training in constructivism learning methods. The following are described one by one on the results of observing teacher teaching skills before and after training constructivism learning methods in graphical form.

Teaching Skills: Conducting Learning Variations

The results of the observation showed that before the training, the research subjects had scores of teaching skills in aspects of conducting learning variations ranging from 31-47. After being given training in constructivism learning methods, observations related to teaching skills were carried out, there was an increase in teaching skills in the aspects of conducting learning variations possessed by research subjects with the acquisition of scores ranging from 41-57. The description of the improvement in teaching skills in aspects of making variations can be seen in Figure 3.

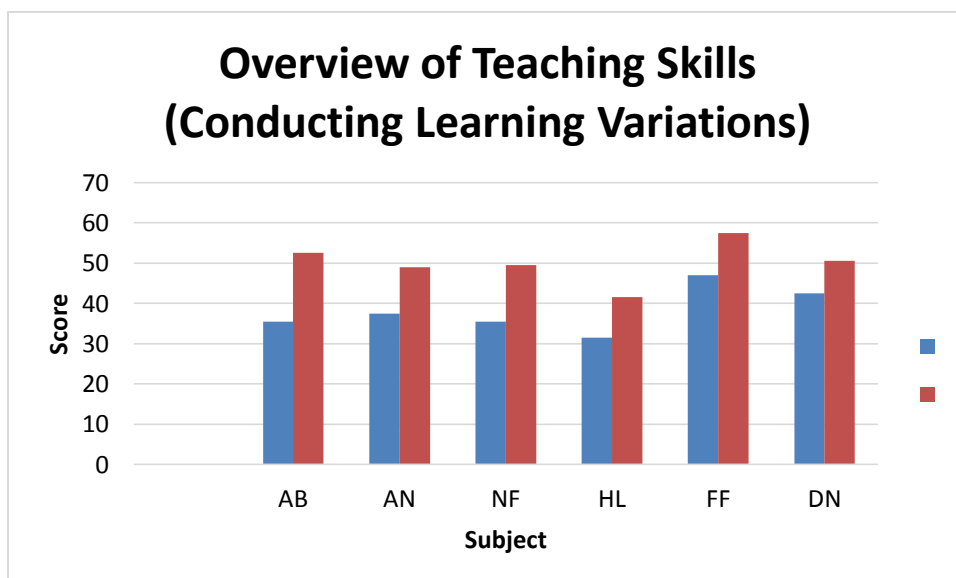


Figure 3. Overview of Teaching Skills (Conducting Learning Variations)

Teaching Skills: Giving Strengthening

The results of the observation showed that before the training, the research subjects had scores of teaching skills in aspects of giving reinforcement which ranged from 2-6. After being given training in constructivism learning methods, observations were made regarding teaching skills, there was an increase in teaching skills in the aspect of reinforcing the research subjects with scores ranging from 5-10. The description of improving teaching skills in aspects of giving reinforcement can be seen in Figure 4.

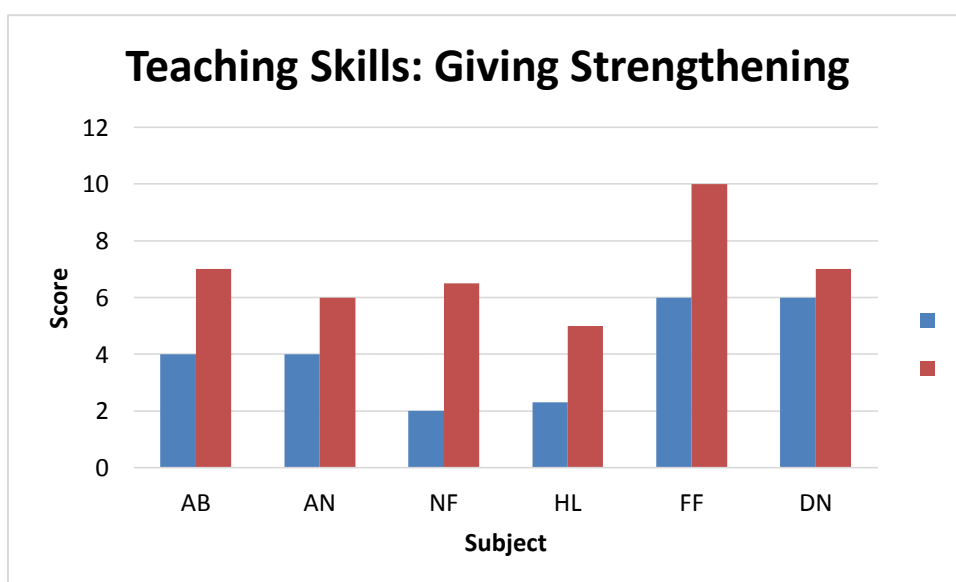


Figure 4. Overview of Teaching Skills (Giving Strengthening)

Teaching Skills: Ask Questions

The results of the observation showed that before the training, the research subjects had a score of teaching skills in the questioning aspects ranging from 13-24. After being given training in constructivism learning methods, observations were made regarding teaching skills, there was an increase in teaching skills in the question aspects of the research subjects

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with scores ranging from 22-32. The description of improving teaching skills in the questioning aspect can be seen in Figure 5.

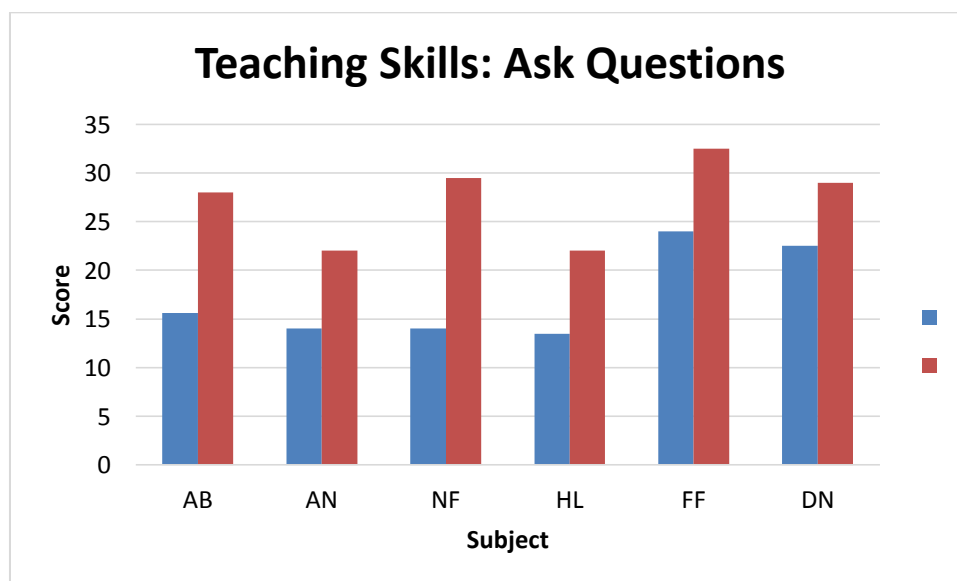


Figure 5. Overview of Teaching Skills (Asking)

Teaching Skills: Guiding Discussions and Small Groups

The results of the observation showed that before the training, the subjects of the study had a score of teaching skills on aspects of guiding discussion and small groups ranging from 2-6. After being given training in constructivism learning methods, observations were made regarding teaching skills, there was an increase in teaching skills in aspects of guiding discussion and small groups of research subjects with scores ranging from 5-10. The description of improvement in teaching skills in the aspect of guiding discussion and small groups can be seen in Figure 6.

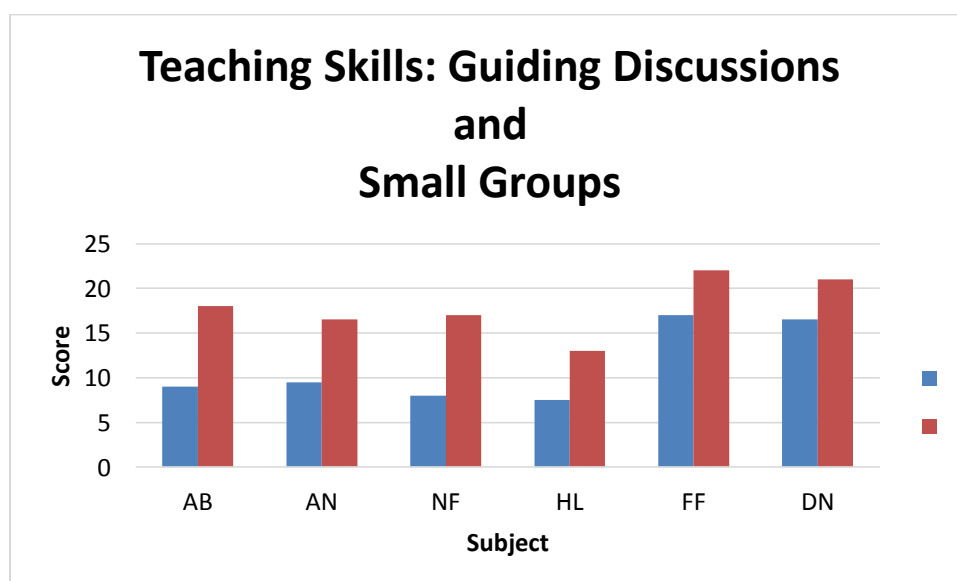


Figure 6. Overview of Teaching Skills (Guiding)

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Results of Statistical Analysis

The hypothesis in this study was tested using The Wilcoxon T test with the help of IBM Statistics SPSS 21. The results of data analysis showed $p = 0.028$, ($p < 0.05$), which indicated that there were significant differences in teacher teaching skills before and after training intervention was given constructivism learning method.

DISCUSSION

The results of descriptive data analysis showed that there was an increase in knowledge possessed by research subjects regarding constructivism learning methods after being given training in constructivism learning methods. This is also reinforced by observations of the teaching skills of the research subjects. There are three aspects that are observed in teaching skills, namely the skill of making variations, giving reinforcement, asking questions, and guiding discussions and small groups. The material brought by the teacher while teaching was self-help material in the form of dress skills, eating skills, and bathing and brushing teeth skills. The three aspects observed with the self help material taught showed an increase after being given training in constructivism learning methods. The results of statistical data analysis confirmed that training in constructivism learning methods proved effective in improving teacher skills in teaching, especially in self-help material.

The results of this study support previous studies that examined the effectiveness of constructivism learning methods. The results of the research conducted by Kurniawati, Muin, and Miftah (2015) show that constructivism-based learning methods are appropriately used so students are actively involved in various learning activities. Constructivist learning is useful for overcoming the weaknesses of conventional learning methods that are fully teacher-centered. The results of research conducted by Novia and Kusumo (2012) show that the application of constructivist learning models assisted by concept maps can improve student learning outcomes. The results of Afify's research (2018) show that exploration of constructivism-based learning methods increases the effectiveness of the implementation of learning programs which ultimately can improve thinking capacity and self-regulating skills. This further shows the existence of constructivism learning methods as an effective method applied in the learning process.

Different things from this research with previous studies that examined constructivism learning methods, namely previous research linking constructivism learning methods with increasing learning outcomes obtained by students. While this study seeks to examine the effectiveness of constructivism learning methods provided as training for ECEP teachers in improving the ability of ECEP teachers in teaching. The results showed that training in constructivism learning methods proved effective in improving teacher skills in teaching. This is a new finding in the study of constructivism learning methods that in addition to being beneficial in improving student learning outcomes, training in constructivism learning methods is also useful for improving teacher skills in teaching, especially for teachers who have been using conventional approaches to teaching.

Demirtas (Ozgul et al. 2018) suggests that with the implementation of constructivism learning methods, the teacher is obliged to take part in training in creating a constructive learning environment. This is in accordance with the research conducted by researchers, namely training the teachers in applying constructivism learning methods. Sopamena (Indrawati, 2017) suggests that teachers in constructivism learning are expected to act as facilitators for students. The teacher does not directly provide knowledge information to

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students, but must facilitate and direct students so that students can be actively involved in discovering their own knowledge.

The training provided is not only about constructivism learning methods. The researcher first provided an initial foothold in the form of early childhood education material, the role of the teacher and the teacher's skills in teaching. Then given the material about the method of constructivism learning as an alternative approach that proved effective in improving learning outcomes compared to conventional methods. Research subjects were also given the opportunity to do roleplay in teaching using a constructivism approach. The training provided was not only effective in increasing subject knowledge regarding constructivism learning methods but also improving teacher skills in teaching. This can be seen from the comparison of observations before and after training. During the observation process, it was determined that the material taught was self-help material that was in accordance with the characteristics of constructivism learning methods. Descriptive analysis and statistics show that this training is effective in improving teacher skills in teaching.

The limitations in this study are the lack of literature that discusses the teacher's skills in teaching. Previous studies conducted by previous researchers mostly reviewed the benefits of constructivism learning methods on student learning outcomes rather than teacher benefits. This research also only provides training in constructivism learning methods in general, not yet specific to teaching methods that do use a constructivism approach. The existence of this research is expected to be an input for certain parties in providing training related to constructivism learning methods for teachers so that the teacher's skills in teaching can increase and of course have a positive impact on student learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the results of the research that has been done, it can be concluded that the training of constructivist learning methods is effective to improve the teaching skills of self-help material for early childhood education teachers. The results showed that after getting an intervention in the form of training in constructivism learning methods, early childhood education teachers experienced an increase in teaching skills. Subsequent researchers who wish to conduct similar research related to constructivism learning methods and teaching skills, it is recommended that: 1) Be more specific in providing training so that the subject of research becomes more applicable in applying constructivism learning methods in the teaching and learning process; 2) The subject of this study consisted of early childhood education teachers at one school in Sidoarjo but the teacher's educational background was quite different so that it influenced the results of research that was not maximal. Therefore, the next researcher can control the teacher's educational background so that the teacher who is given the training has the same basis regarding the method of learning constructivism and the same understanding of early childhood; 3) The next researcher is advised to use classroom action research methods in applying constructivism learning methods so as to maximize the benefits obtained by the research subject.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interests.

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