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The Effectiveness of Token Economy Counseling in Intervening Eye Contact and Sitting Behavior in Autistic Children at Sibolga State Special Needs School

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A B S T R A C T

The low ability of children with autism to maintain eye contact and remain seated during learning activities often becomes a major obstacle in the classroom learning process. These behavioral limitations reduce focus, interaction, and learning effectiveness, as observed among autistic students at Sibolga State Special Needs School. This study aims to determine the effectiveness of token economy counseling in improving eye contact and sitting behavior in children with autism. The research employed a single-subject research (SSR) method using an A–B–A design, with data collected through direct observation during baseline condition 1 (A1), intervention condition (B), and baseline condition 2 (A2). During the intervention phase, subjects who received token economy counseling showed a significant improvement in eye contact and sitting behavior, achieving a very good category. Furthermore, the improvement persisted in baseline condition 2 (A2), indicating that the positive effects of the intervention remained even after the treatment was discontinued. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that token economy counseling is effective in improving eye contact and sitting behavior in children with autism and can be applied as a behavioral intervention strategy in special education settings.

1. Introduction

Behavior is a series of actions displayed by an individual, organism, or system in relation to itself and its environment. This behavior can be observed directly, both by others and by the individual himself. According to Robert Y. Kwick (in Manalu, 2014), behavior does not appear suddenly, but is influenced by certain stimuli. He stated that new behavior will be manifested if there is a stimulus that elicits a response, so that certain stimuli will also produce certain behaviors (Kurniawan,

2022). This view emphasizes that human behavior, including children's behavior, can be shaped, directed, and modified through the right approach (Ehsan, 2024). Children exhibit a variety of behaviors that can emerge in their daily lives, both positive and negative. Parents and educators often cannot accurately predict a child's behavior because it is influenced by many factors, such as age, environment, experience, and the child's developmental stage. Every behavior a child displays will impact the formation of their personality, habits, and social interaction patterns. Therefore, children's behavior requires special attention to ensure optimal development according to their developmental stage (Noviyanti et al., 2020).

The environment has a significant influence on the formation and change of children's behavior. Family, school, and community environments are the primary factors shaping children's habits and responses to various situations. Without structured guidance and direction, children are likely to exhibit behaviors inconsistent with social norms and demands. Therefore, a direct, measurable, and continuous development process is necessary, one of which is through education (Gest, 2020). Education is the primary forum aimed at nurturing, guiding, and developing students' potential. Students, as subjects of education, are not only focused on academic aspects but also on social, emotional, and behavioral development (Chuing & Kutty, 2025). Education is designed as a conscious and planned effort to create a pleasant learning environment, enabling students to optimally develop their potential according to their talents and needs.

Education is a fundamental right for every Indonesian citizen, without exception. This right is guaranteed in Article 31, Paragraph 1 of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which states that every citizen has the right to receive a quality education. This principle applies to all children, including those with special needs, often referred to as Children with Special Needs (ABK). The educational process, as a right and a commitment of the state, must be provided without discrimination based on gender, age, or physical or mental condition (Lu et al., 2024). In the context of inclusive education, children with special needs have equal space and rights to develop (Handojo, 2021). Education is a primary need that helps individuals develop knowledge, skills, and adaptive mindsets. Therefore, the education system must adapt learning methods and approaches to the characteristics and needs of students, particularly those with special needs who require special education services (Mardiah et al., 2024).

The Islamic perspective also affirms the equality of human rights, as stated in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Hujurat, verse 13, which states that humans were created from male and female and made into nations and tribes so that they might know one another. This verse emphasizes that a person's dignity in the sight of God is determined by their piety, not by their physical condition, background, or limitations. Therefore, every child, including those with special needs, has equal standing before God.

QS Al-Hujurat Verse 13

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

It means:

O people, indeed We have created you from a man and a woman. Then We made you into nations and tribes so that you might know each other. Indeed, the noblest among you in the sight of Allah is the one who is most pious. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Knowing.

This verse provides a strong theological foundation for creating a just and inclusive education system for all children. Children with special needs are born pure and have the same right to education and the opportunity to develop optimally. This view emphasizes that there should be no discriminatory treatment of children with special needs, but rather the need for support and interventions tailored to their needs. Children with special needs have diverse characteristics and conditions, one of which is children with autism or autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Autism spectrum disorder is a neurobiological developmental disorder characterized by limitations in communication and social interaction, as well as the emergence of repetitive or repetitive behavior patterns (Afifah, 2024). This condition causes autistic children to have difficulty adjusting to their social environment.

Autistic children generally struggle to understand others' feelings and exhibit limited social responses. Ineffective communication patterns and repetitive behaviors often make it difficult for those around them to interact (APS, 2022). Furthermore, autistic children tend to struggle with changes in routine, which impacts their learning and social adaptation. One common barrier is poor eye contact and poor sitting posture during learning activities (Megawati et al., 2021). Eye contact and sitting postures in autistic children are important focuses in the learning process. Eye contact and the ability to sit quietly are fundamental behaviors that support a child's concentration and engagement in learning activities. According to Powers, eye contact is a major barrier to social interaction in autistic children, who tend to avoid eye contact with others. Poor eye contact and sitting postures make it difficult for children to focus and engage less effectively in learning (Fikriyah & Diana, 2024).

Various techniques and methods have been developed to modify behavior, one of which is token economic counseling. Token economic counseling is considered effective because it uses tokens as a form of reward that can increase desired behavior and reduce undesirable behavior. Research by (Fhatri, 2020) shows that token economics is effective in increasing positive behavior in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, including concentration in learning. In line with that, research by (Juliyantika & Batubara, 2022) also proved that token economics can improve students' concentration in completing tasks. Therefore, this study focuses on the effectiveness of token economic counseling in eye contact and sitting behavior interventions in autistic children at Sibolga State Special School, as an effort to support the development of learning and social interaction in autistic children.

2. Methodology

This research was conducted at a special needs school in Sibolga, which was purposively selected due to its relevance to the research objectives and benefits. The focus of this study was to assess the effectiveness of token economy counseling in intervening in eye contact and sitting behavior in autistic children. The research was conducted over several months, starting with the initial visit, proposal seminar, research implementation, results seminar, and the munaqosah session. These stages were systematically arranged to ensure a planned and measurable research process (Sugiyono, 2021). The type of research used was experimental, with the aim of determining the effect of a treatment on changes in the subjects' behavior in a measurable and repeatable manner. This experimental study produced quantitative data that was analyzed to determine behavioral changes that occurred before and after the intervention. The experimental format used aimed to demonstrate the effect of token economy counseling services on the target behaviors studied, namely eye contact and sitting behavior in autistic children (Rukminingsih, 2020).

The research design used was Single Subject Research (SSR) with an ABA reversal design. This design consists of three phases: baseline 1 (A1), intervention (B), and baseline 2 (A2). In phase A1, the subject's behavior was measured without any intervention to obtain a picture of the initial condition. In phase B, the subject was given intervention in the form of token economic counseling, then behavior was repeatedly measured. Furthermore, in phase A2, the intervention was stopped and re-measurements were conducted to observe changes in behavior after the treatment was stopped. Measurements were made through direct observation by recording the duration of eye contact behavior and sitting behavior of autistic children.

The variables in this study consist of independent variables and dependent variables. The independent variable is token economy counseling, while the dependent variables are eye contact and sitting behavior in autistic children. The subject of the study was a 7-year-old autistic child who had difficulty maintaining eye contact and sitting properly during the learning process. Subject selection was based on behavioral characteristics that align with the research objectives, thus the study was conducted using a single-subject approach to document individual behavioral changes.

Data collection techniques were conducted through direct observation and documentation, using a recording sheet for the duration of behavior observed by two observers. To ensure data reliability, a measurement reliability test was conducted using the percentage of inter-observer agreement. Data analysis was conducted using visual graphic analysis, which included analysis within and between conditions, including directional trends, data stability, levels of change, and percentage of overlap. Through this analysis, researchers were able to interpret the effectiveness of token economy counseling in improving eye contact and sitting behavior in autistic children at Sibolga State Special Needs School (Sugiyono, 2020).

3. Results and Discussion

The classroom setting in which this study was conducted consisted of eight students with special needs, comprising five male students and three female students. All students were diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and demonstrated varying levels of learning abilities and support needs. The instructional methods commonly applied in the classroom included individualized instruction and limited classical learning, using a direct instruction approach tailored to each student's characteristics. Teachers frequently employed simple verbal instructions, visual aids, and intensive guidance during the learning process to help students understand the material and participate in classroom activities.

Overall, the classroom environment was relatively conducive; however, several behavioral challenges affected the effectiveness of learning. Most students exhibited short attention spans, limited eye contact, and difficulty remaining seated for extended periods. The students' characteristics also included low social responsiveness and repetitive behaviors, requiring teachers to provide repeated prompts and reinforcement. These conditions limited optimal interaction between teachers and students, indicating the need for structured intervention strategies based on positive behavioral reinforcement to improve student engagement during learning activities.

Research Results

The research process was carried out systematically using a single-subject research (SSR) design with an A–B–A structure, consisting of baseline phase 1 (A1), intervention phase (B), and baseline phase 2 (A2). During the baseline phases, the subjects' natural eye contact and sitting behavior during classroom learning were observed without any specific treatment. In the intervention phase, token economy counseling was implemented as a behavioral reinforcement strategy, where students received tokens each time they demonstrated appropriate eye contact and sitting behavior. The intervention was conducted consistently across several sessions to observe behavioral changes over time.

Data collection techniques in this study primarily involved direct observation of student behavior during learning activities. Observations were conducted by the researcher and supported by the classroom teacher to ensure objectivity and accuracy. The observed behaviors were limited to two target behaviors, namely eye contact and sitting behavior, which were clearly operationally defined prior to the study. Data were collected in each session across all phases to identify patterns, trends, and changes in behavior as a result of the intervention.

To support accurate and systematic data recording, a recording sheet was used as the main observation instrument. The recording sheet functioned to document the frequency and duration of eye contact and sitting behavior displayed by the subjects during each session. This instrument allowed the researcher to track behavioral changes quantitatively and compare performance across baseline and intervention phases. The use of a structured recording sheet ensured consistency in observation,

minimized bias, and facilitated data analysis in accordance with single-subject research procedures.

To document students' eye contact and sitting behavior during the learning process, the researcher employed a systematically designed observation recording sheet. This instrument was used to capture the frequency, duration, and consistency of the observed behaviors in order to obtain objective and measurable data, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Observation Recording Sheet of Eye Contact and Sitting Behavior

Session	Research Phase	Eye Contact (Frequency)	Sitting Behavior (Duration)	Token Earned	Notes
1	Baseline (A1)	Low	Short	–	Student frequently avoids eye contact
2	Baseline (A1)	Low	Short	–	Difficulty remaining seated
3	Intervention (B)	Moderate	Moderate	✓	Responds to token reinforcement
4	Intervention (B)	High	Long	✓✓	Improved focus and sitting behavior
5	Intervention (B)	High	Long	✓✓	Consistent positive behavior
6	Baseline (A2)	High	Long	–	Behavior maintained without tokens

This research was conducted at SLB N Sibolga located at Jl. Padang Sidempuan Km 4.5 Gg Prona. Aek Habil Village. South Sibolga District. Sibolga City. North Sumatra Province. The sample in this study were autistic children who were studying at SLB N Sibolga, namely autistic children who had low eye contact and sitting abilities. The research was taken using research in the form of observation instruments consisting of the baseline1 phase (A1) where the child was observed for his eye contact behavior and sitting behavior without using intervention in the form of economic token counseling, this phase was carried out for 3 sessions until the data was deemed sufficient, after which the child was given the Intervention phase (B) of 5 research sessions carried out using intervention using economic token counseling. And the last phase was the baseline2 phase (A2) where the child was observed for his eye contact and sitting behavior without using intervention. In this study, the subjects exhibited autism symptoms, with the signs discussed in chapter two: poor eye contact and poor sitting behavior. Many studies have shown that limited eye interaction can be an early indicator of autism (Ayuningtyas, 2023).

(Balley, 2021) categorizes autism into two types, namely classic autism and regressive autism. The subject in this study is classified as regressive autism because the autistic characteristics in the subject appeared when the subject was over one year old. According to the supervising teacher's statement which has been confirmed with the parents that before the age of one year, the subject (the autistic child studied) could still respond to his parents when the parents played the "Peek-a-boo" game. The beginning of this incident when the child was over one year old

began to be unable to respond or make eye contact. When called, the child usually turned his head but the child's difficulty in responding was not as good as before. Then the child was taken to a pediatrician and the doctor checked and said that the child had autism barriers (Cooper, 2021).

When the assessment was carried out by the supervising teacher, the conclusion obtained was that the subject had mild symptoms of autism, the characteristics are as follows:The subject still demonstrated eye contact and sitting posture, albeit briefly. He understood commands, such as command sentences, and displayed expressions of pleasure and displeasure. He was considered competent in two-way communication, meaning he understood the intent of what was being said. A single-subject experiment (SSR) was used for this study. The research design used was ABA. Graphs were used to describe the analysis of the data obtained. This study studied the duration of children's eye contact behavior at SLB Negeri Sibolga at baseline 1 (A1), during intervention (B), and at baseline 2 (A2). The results of the eye contact behavior observations were analyzed to identify patterns and variations in students' engagement during the learning activities. The collected data provide a clear description of the frequency and quality of eye contact demonstrated by the participants, which serve as indicators of their attention and interaction in the classroom, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Data from Eye Contact Behavior Research Results

Phase	Session	Duration Time (Seconds)		Average Deal Duration
		Observer 1	Observer 2	
A1	1	42	44	43
	2	46	46	46
	3	44	40	42
B	4	59	57	58
	5	59	59	59
	6	60	64	62
	7	58	60	59
	8	63	67	65
A2	9	54	54	54
	10	55	57	56
	11	57	57	57

The summary of eye contact duration data across baseline phase 1 (A1), intervention phase (B), and baseline phase 2 (A2) indicates notable changes in the eye contact behavior of autistic children at SLB Negeri Sibolga. During baseline phase 1 (A1), the duration of eye contact was relatively low and unstable. Following the intervention (B), a significant and more consistent increase in eye contact duration was observed. In baseline phase 2 (A2), the duration remained higher than in the initial baseline, indicating that the intervention was effective and that the results tended to be maintained over time, as illustrated in Figure 1:

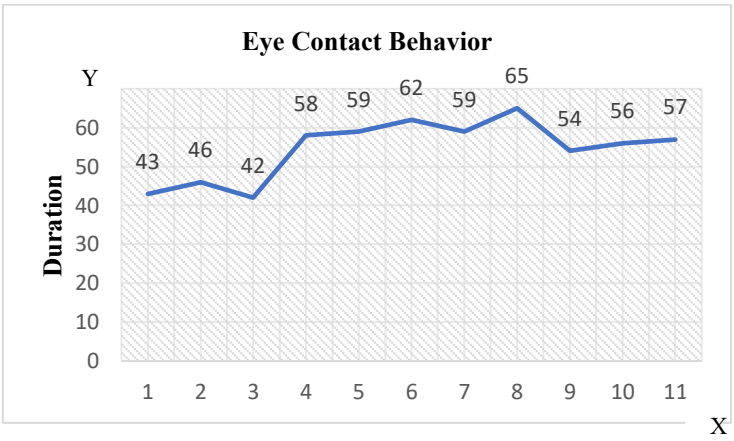


Figure 1. Graph of the trend in the direction of the ability of the duration of eye contact of autistic children at Sibolga State Special Needs School in baseline 1 (A1), intervention (B) and baseline 2 (A2) conditions.

The graph in Figure 1 illustrates a clear and progressive increase in the duration of eye contact displayed by autistic children at Sibolga State Special Needs School across the three research phases. During baseline 1 (A1), eye contact duration was relatively low and tended to fluctuate, indicating limited and inconsistent visual engagement prior to treatment. When the intervention phase (B) was implemented, the graph showed a steady and consistent upward trend, reflecting a significant improvement in the children's ability to maintain eye contact as a result of the applied treatment. This continuous increase suggests that the intervention was effective in stimulating attention, social responsiveness, and visual interaction skills. Furthermore, in baseline 2 (A2), although the intervention was no longer administered, the duration of eye contact remained noticeably higher than in the initial baseline phase. Table 3 summarizes the results of the visual analysis of eye contact ability in autistic children at Sibolga State Special Needs School across three research conditions, namely baseline 1 (A1), intervention (B), and baseline 2 (A2). This table highlights key analytical components such as the number of sessions, trend direction, data stability, data patterns, range of stability, and level of change in each condition. By presenting these elements, the table provides a comprehensive overview of behavioral changes and trends, enabling a clearer interpretation of the effects and consistency of the intervention on eye contact ability over time.

To provide a comprehensive overview of the visual analysis results, the findings related to the eye contact ability of autistic children at Sibolga State Special Needs School were systematically summarized across baseline phase 1 (A1), intervention phase (B), and baseline phase 2 (A2). This summary highlights changes in level, trend, and stability of eye contact behavior observed throughout the research phases. The analysis reveals that during baseline phase 1 (A1), eye contact ability tended to be low and inconsistent, indicating limited initial engagement. Following the implementation of the intervention (B), there was a clear improvement characterized by an upward trend and increased stability in eye contact duration. In baseline phase 2 (A2), the improved eye contact ability was maintained at a higher

level than the initial baseline, suggesting that the intervention had a lasting effect. A detailed summary of these visual analysis findings is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Summary of findings of visual analysis research on the condition of eye contact ability of autistic children at Sibolga State Special Needs School in baseline 1 (A1), intervention (B), and baseline 2 (A2) conditions.

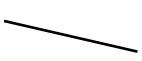
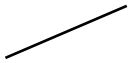
No	Condition	A1	B	A2
1	Condition Length	3 Sessions	5 Sessions	3 Sessions
2	Directional Tendency Estimation			
3	Stability Tendency	100% stable	100% stable	100% stable
4	Data Trace	(-)	(+)	(+)
5	Range Stability Level	Stable (42-43)	Stable (65-58)	Stable (57-54)
6	Level of Change	(42-43)(-1)	(65-58)(+7)	(57-54)(+3)

Table 3 shows that the eye contact ability of autistic children at Sibolga State Special Needs School in each condition was stable with a 100% stability level. In baseline condition 1 (A1), eye contact ability was still low with a decreasing data trace. Then, in the intervention condition (B), there was an increasing trend indicated by a positive data trace and a fairly large level of change. In baseline condition 2 (A2), eye contact ability remained stable with a positive direction, indicating that the increase in eye contact behavior could be maintained after the intervention was stopped.

Table 4 presents a summary of the visual analysis findings comparing eye contact ability across research conditions at Sibolga State Special Needs School, namely baseline 1 (A1), intervention (B), and baseline 2 (A2). This table focuses on between-condition analysis to examine changes in level, trend, and data patterns as the research transitioned from one phase to another. By comparing these conditions, the table provides a clearer understanding of the magnitude and direction of behavioral changes, thereby supporting the interpretation of the intervention's effectiveness in improving and maintaining eye contact ability in autistic children.

To examine the differences in eye contact ability across research conditions, a visual analysis was conducted between baseline phase 1 (A1), intervention phase (B), and baseline phase 2 (A2) for autistic children at Sibolga State Special Needs School. This analysis focuses on changes in level, trend direction, and variability of eye contact behavior as participants transitioned from one condition to another. The results indicate a noticeable improvement in eye contact ability from baseline phase 1 (A1) to the intervention phase (B), marked by an increase in duration and greater behavioral stability. Furthermore, the comparison between the intervention phase (B) and baseline phase 2 (A2) shows that the improved eye contact ability was sustained after the intervention was withdrawn, suggesting the persistence of intervention effects. A concise summary of these between-condition visual analysis findings is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Summary of findings of visual analysis research between conditions of eye contact ability of autistic children at Sibolga State Special Needs School in baseline 1 (A1), intervention (B), and baseline 2 (A2) conditions.

No	Condition	A1/B	B/A2
1	Number of Variables changed	1	1
2	Change in Directional Tendency	(-) (+)	(+) (+)
3	Stability Tendency	Stable to stable	Stable to stable
4	Level Change	(60.6-43.66)(+16.94)	(55.66-60.6)(-4.94)
5	Overlap Changes	100%	0%

The analysis table between the conditions illustrates this. From phase A1 (baseline) to the intervention phase (B), sitting behavior showed an increasing level of change, with an average increase of +16.94 seconds. From the intervention phase (B) to the Baseline 2 (A2), an average decrease of -4.94 seconds was observed. However, the level remained significantly higher than the baseline 1 (A1) phase, and there was no overlap with the A1 phase. This indicates that the effects of the intervention persisted even after the intervention was discontinued, indicating maintenance. This study examined the duration of sitting behavior at Sibolga State Special Needs School at baseline 1 (A1), during intervention (B), and baseline 2 (A2). To assess students' sitting behavior during the learning process, observational data were systematically collected and analyzed to identify patterns of posture, duration, and consistency while seated. This data provide insight into students' ability to maintain appropriate sitting behavior as an indicator of attention and behavioral regulation in the classroom. The results of the sitting behavior observations are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Data from the Study of Sitting Behavior

Phase	Session	Average Deal Duration	Duration (Minutes)
A1	1	3:08	3.13
	2	3:04	3.06
	3	3:08	3.13
B	4	3:54	3.9
	5	4:08	4.13
	6	4:21	4.35
	7	4:15	4.25
	8	4:32	4.53
A2	9	3:54	3.9
	10	3:58	3.96
	11	4:08	4.13

Table 5 demonstrates a clear change in sitting duration across the three research phases. During baseline phase 1 (A1), sitting duration was relatively low, indicating difficulty in maintaining a seated position prior to the intervention. Following the implementation of the intervention phase (B), a noticeable and consistent increase

in sitting duration was observed, reflecting improved behavioral control and attention. In baseline phase 2 (A2), although the intervention was withdrawn, sitting duration remained higher than in the initial baseline. The trend and stability of these changes in sitting behavior across phases are further illustrated in Figure 2.

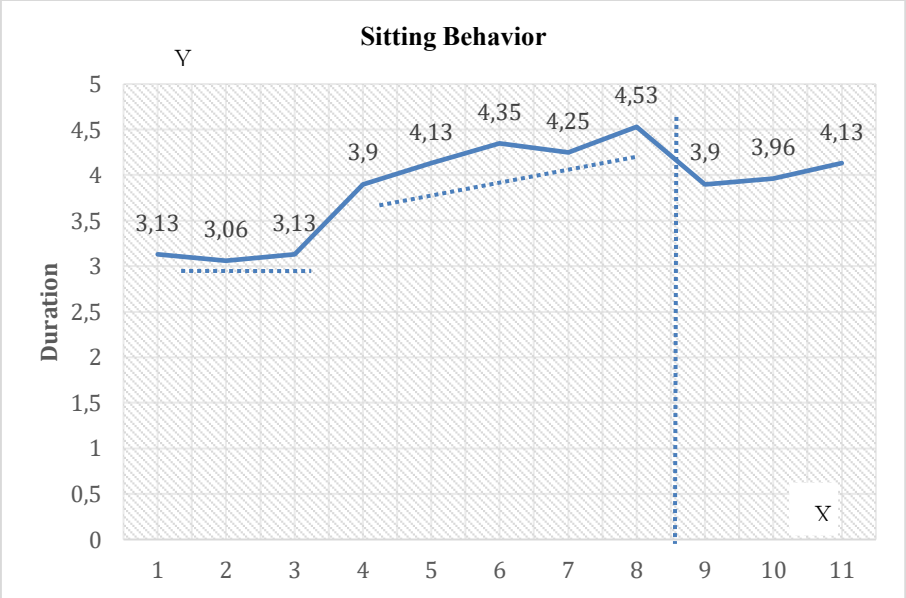


Figure 2. Graph of the trend in the direction of the sitting duration ability of autistic children at Sibolga State Special Needs School in baseline 1 (A1), intervention (B) and baseline 2 (A2) conditions.

The graph in Figure 2 shows a trend toward increasing sitting duration in autistic children from baseline phase 1 (A1) to the intervention phase (B). In the intervention phase, the graph consistently increased, indicating a positive effect of the treatment. In baseline phase 2 (A2), sitting duration remained at a higher level than the initial baseline, indicating that the intervention effect was relatively sustained. To provide a comprehensive overview of the visual analysis results related to sitting ability, the findings for autistic children at Sibolga State Special Needs School were summarized across baseline phase 1 (A1), intervention phase (B), and baseline phase 2 (A2).

This summary highlights changes in level, trend, and stability of sitting behavior observed throughout the research phases. The analysis indicates that during baseline phase 1 (A1), sitting ability tended to be low and less stable. After the intervention was implemented (B), there was a clear improvement characterized by an upward trend and increased stability in sitting duration. In baseline phase 2 (A2), the improved sitting ability was maintained at a higher level than the initial baseline, suggesting that the intervention effects were sustained. A detailed summary of these visual analysis findings is presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Summary of findings of visual analysis research on the sitting ability of autistic children at Sibolga State Special Needs School in baseline 1 (A1), intervention (B), and baseline 2 (A2) conditions.

No	Condition	A1	B	A2
1	Condition Length	3 Sessions	5 Sessions	3 Sessions
2	Directional Tendency Estimation	—	↗	↗
3	Stability Tendency	100% stable	100% stable	100% stable
4	Data Trace	(=)	(+)	(+)
5	Range Stability Level	Stable (3.13-3.13)	Stable (4.53-3.9)	Stable (4.13-3.9)
6	Level of Change	(3.13-3.13)(0)	(65-58)(+0.63)	(4.13-3.9)(+0.23)

Table 6 shows that the sitting ability of autistic children at Sibolga State Special Needs School was stable throughout each phase of the study. At baseline 1 (A1), sitting duration tended to remain unchanged, then in the intervention phase (B), an increase in sitting duration was observed with a positive data trail. At baseline 2 (A2), sitting ability remained stable with an increasing trend, indicating that the intervention had a positive impact and that the results were sustainable. To examine differences in sitting ability between research conditions, a visual analysis was conducted across baseline phase 1 (A1), intervention phase (B), and baseline phase 2 (A2) for autistic children at Sibolga State Special Needs School. The results of this between-condition analysis are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7. Summary of findings of visual analysis research between conditions of sitting ability of autistic children at Sibolga State Special Needs School in baseline 1 (A1), intervention (B), and baseline 2 (A2) conditions.

No	Condition	A1/B	B/A2
1	Number of Variables changed	1	1
2	Change in Directional Tendency	(-) (+)	(+) (+)
3	Stability Tendency	Stable to stable	Stable to stable
4	Level Change	(4.23-3.10)(+1.13)	(3.99-4.23)(-0.24)
5	Overlap Changes	100%	0%

Table 7 shows that there was a clear change in the sitting ability of autistic children between the study conditions. Comparison between baseline 1 (A1) and intervention (B) showed an increase in sitting duration levels with conditions

remaining stable, while comparison between intervention (B) and baseline 2 (A2) showed a slight decrease but remained stable. The low overlap indicates that the intervention had a significant impact on improving children's sitting ability. Based on the research above, the sitting behavior that occurs where what can be discussed is the child's ability to perform sitting behavior can but is not good, because the child only does sitting behavior such as standing, and sitting positions that bend the knees, but it can be said that the child is more stable in performing this sitting behavior compared to making eye contact. In phase A1 (baseline), eye contact behavior shows an average of 3.10 minutes with a trend or direction of the graph that tends to be flat and range (0). The data shows high stability reflecting that without intervention, sitting behavior does not increase.

Following the implementation of the Token Economy Counseling intervention in phase B, there was a significant increase in sitting behavior. The average increased to 4.23 minutes, with a consistent upward trend from the beginning to the end of the phase (+0.63 minutes). Although there were slight fluctuations between sessions, the data remained within a high range and showed stability. In phase A2 (baseline 2), the intervention was stopped, but eye contact behavior still showed a higher average than baseline 1, namely 3.99 minutes in the range (+0.23). This indicates that the intervention effect still partially persisted, although not as high as when the intervention was fully implemented. and the trend remained stable or slightly increased.

The analysis table between the conditions illustrates this. From phase A1 (baseline) to the intervention phase (B), sitting behavior showed an upward change, with an average increase of +1.13 minutes. From the intervention phase (B) to the Baseline 2 (A2), an average decrease of -0.24 minutes was observed. However, the level remained significantly higher than the baseline 1 (A1) phase, and there was no overlap with the A1 phase. This indicates that the effects of the intervention persisted even after the intervention was discontinued, indicating maintenance.

4. Conclusion

Based on the research findings, in baseline 1 (A1) condition before treatment, the eye contact ability of autistic students at Sibolga State Special School was still relatively low and sitting behavior had not shown good stability, so that appropriate intervention was needed. During the intervention condition, subjects were given treatment in the form of counseling using token economy techniques, and the results showed a significant increase in eye contact ability and sitting behavior, so that both were in the very good category and more consistent than the initial condition. Furthermore, in baseline 2 (A2) condition after the intervention was stopped, eye contact ability and sitting behavior remained at a higher level than the initial baseline, which indicates that the effects of the intervention were not temporary, but tended to be persistent. Thus, it can be concluded that token economy counseling is effective in improving and maintaining eye contact behavior and sitting behavior in autistic students at Sibolga State Special School.

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