



The Role Of Inclusive Schools In Developing Social Interactions Of Children With Special Needs (Autism)

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Abstrak

Sekolah inklusi adalah layanan pendidikan yang diberikan kepada anak berkebutuhan khusus untuk memperoleh pendidikan yang layak. Kebijakan pemerintah sebagaimana tertuang dalam Undang-Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 dalam Pasal 32 dan Permendiknas Nomor 70 Tahun 2009 adalah memberikan kesempatan dan kesempatan kepada anak berkebutuhan khusus untuk memperoleh pendidikan di sekolah reguler. Di sekolah inklusi, anak berkebutuhan khusus dimungkinkan belajar bersama dengan anak normal, dan diperlakukan seperti anak normal. Hal ini menunjukkan dampak positif sekolah inklusi terhadap anak berkebutuhan khusus dari segi psikologis. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk memperoleh informasi tentang peran sekolah inklusi dalam mengembangkan interaksi sosial bagi anak berkebutuhan khusus (autisme). Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan menggunakan studi kepustakaan atau studi dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian ini menyebutkan pendidikan inklusi merupakan salah satu upaya pemerintah untuk mengoptimalkan kualitas pendidikan di Indonesia. Melalui penyelenggaraan pendidikan inklusi diharapkan mampu menanamkan rasa saling menghargai, kasih sayang, dan yang terpenting, saling menghargai terhadap peserta didik, sehingga anak normal dan anak berkebutuhan khusus dapat berkembang dengan baik.

Kata Kunci: *anak autis, guru, sekolah inklusif, interaksi sosial*

Abstract

Inclusive schools are educational services provided for children with special needs to obtain a proper education. Government policy, as stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 in Article 32 and Permendiknas Number 70 of 2009, is to provide opportunities and opportunities for children with special needs to obtain education in regular schools. In inclusive schools, it is possible for children with special needs to study together with normal children, and to be treated like normal children. This shows the positive impact of inclusive schools on children with special needs from a psychological perspective. The purpose of this study was to obtain information about the role of inclusive schools in developing social interactions for children with special needs (autism). This research was conducted using library research or documentation studies. The results of this study say inclusive education is one of the government's efforts to optimize the quality of education in Indonesia. Through the implementation of inclusive education, it is expected to be able to instill mutual respect, compassion, and most importantly, mutual respect for students, so that normal children and children with special needs can develop well.

Keywords: *autistic children, teachers, inclusive schools, social interaction*

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the efforts made to improve the quality of Indonesian human resources. Education can be obtained through educational institutions, both formal and informal or non-formal. Schools are examples of formal educational institutions. Schools are not only a vehicle for seeking knowledge but also place that can provide skills for life that are later expected to be useful in society. At school, children are also guided to socialize with other people. The existence of schools is not only important for normal children but also useful for children with special needs, who have limitations and shortcomings when they must interact with other people. Children with special needs are considered helpless and need to be pitied. Children with

special needs are often ostracized from the surrounding environment.

Children with special needs often receive discriminatory treatment from others. It is even difficult for them to receive an education. Some regular schools do not want to accept them as students. The reason is that the teachers at these schools do not have adequate qualifications to guide children with special needs. Sometimes special schools are located far from their homes, so many children with special needs do not receive an education. To overcome these problems, it is necessary to provide various educational or school services for children with special needs, both regarding the learning system and supporting facilities, as well as the very important role of teachers to provide motivation and constructive direction. Schools that are considered appropriate for children with special needs are inclusive.

Inclusive schools are regular schools that are adapted to the needs of children who have disabilities and have the potential for intelligence and special talents in a systemic unit. As time goes by, the implementation of inclusive schools faces various challenges both from within and outside the school. One of the challenges that come from within is the unpreparedness of teachers to teach children with special needs in inclusive classes. One of them, students with autism disorders, really needs special attention and handling. This disorder is characterized by not being able to interact with other people, having trouble with language as shown by delayed mastery, echolalia, mutism, sentence reversal, repetitive and stereotypical play activities, strong memory routes, and an obsessive need to keep the environment in order.

Children with autism have potential that needs to be explored. Despite having difficulty speaking, autistic children have very complex and severe neurobiological developmental disorders in their lifetime, which include disturbances in aspects of social interaction, communication, language, and behavior, as well as emotional disturbances and sensory perception, even in their motor aspects (Yuwono, 2009). They also have creative potential that can be channeled if they get the right help and opportunities for self-development. The skills of autistic children can be improved by helping them reach their basic potential, which means giving them the right kind of education and helping them improve their skills.

With the increasing number of people with autism, there is a need for increased services for them. Education for children with autism is regulated in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System; Article 5 Paragraph 1 states that "every citizen has the same right to obtain a quality education." Children with autism are children with special needs who need and are entitled to education in public schools called "inclusive education" to improve their communication, interaction, and social behavior skills. The teacher's role in handling the maximum amount of information for them individually and in groups.

This research was conducted to understand the role of inclusive schools in developing social interactions for children with special needs (autistic). In addition, this research studies how to handle and cope with children with autism so that they can interact with the social environment, especially at school.

Definition of Autism Children

Autism was first introduced in 1943 by Leo Kanner. This disorder is defined as an inability to interact with others, a language disorder that is manifested by delayed mastery, echolalia, mutism, sentence reversal, repetitive and stereotypical play activities, strong memory routes, and an obsessive desire to maintain order in the environment. According to Wall (2004) in Yuwono (2009), it is written that autism is a lifelong developmental disability that prevents individuals from properly understanding what they see, hear, and otherwise sense. This results in severe problems with social relationships, communication, and behavior. Autism is understood as a neurobiological developmental disorder, which means that the disorder affects how children learn and communicate, where they are in the environment, their social relationships with others, and their ability to take care of themselves.

Another opinion suggests that autistic children perform unnatural actions, such as clapping their hands, making repeated sounds, or incomprehensible body movements such as biting, hitting, or scratching their bodies. Most of these actions stem from their lack of ability to convey their wishes and hopes to others (Mirza, 2008). Referring to the above opinion, it can be concluded that autistic children have neurobiological developmental disorders, which include interaction disorders, language disorders, and behavioral disorders. Developmental disorders in children with autism can be seen before the age of 3 years.

Nevertheless, in an act of educating children such as autism, Abu Bakar & Baijuri (2020) stated that the need for suitable tactics and a skilled attitude in doing the job is imperious because progenies are hard to

comprehend and be cultured. Moreover, the upbringing of a child is one of the most sacred gifts and a tasking endeavor that every parent faces (Abu Bakar & Baijuri, 2019; Abu Bakar, Al Smadi & Mohd Pauzi, 2022).

Characteristics of Autism Children

The characteristics of autistic children that occur in each child are different from one another. The differences seem very specific between them. However, broadly speaking, these characteristics included: (1) Communication skills. Children with autism experience several disorders, including the cerebellum, which functions in sensory, memory, attention, and language skills. About 50% of autistic children experience delays in language and speech (Yosfan, 2005). Many people do not understand the speech of autistic children when spoken to. Autistic children often babble meaninglessly, which is done repeatedly in a language that is not understood by others, in which speaking is not used to communicate, and they often like to imitate or parrot (Agus, 2004). Children usually communicate by showing an object so that other people take the object in question. In general, autistic children experience verbal and non-verbal communication disorders. Symptoms that often arise are as follows: Slow language development, preferring to imitate or parrot, appearing deaf, difficulty speaking, words used do not always match their meaning, babbles without meaning repeatedly, and speech is not used as a means of communication.

(b) Behavioral disorders, children with disorders in the limbic system, which is the centre of emotions, have difficulty controlling emotions, tantrums, anger, aggression, crying for no reason, and fear of certain things. Children like routines that are done without thinking and can have a bad effect if prohibited and arouse anger (Noor in Yosfan, 2005). Children with autism show patterns of behaviour, interests, and activities that are limited, repetitive, and stereotyped. This behaviour tends to form a rigid and routine attitude in every activity; subject often parrots, pulls an adult's hand when subject wants something, is indifferent when spoken to, injures subject, and is not interested in toys (Yuniar in Pamuji 2007). Negative behavior that appears in children does not occur for no reason. Disturbance in communication is one of the causes of this behavior. The ability to socially interact Disturbances in the parietal lobe makes it hard for children to pay attention to their surroundings.

(c) Social Interaction Disorder, disturbances in social interaction are shown by children avoiding or even refusing eye contact; not wanting to turn around when called; no effort to interact with others; preferring to play alone; being unable to feel empathy; often refusing to be hugged; and staying away if approached to play. In addition, children interact with other people by pulling other people's hands to do what they want. Based on the above opinion, it can be concluded that the characteristics of autistic children include autistic children who have difficulty communicating with other people, although autistic children who can speak ignore the social environment. In terms of behaviour, autistic children show repetitive movements or even stay silent and do not do many activities.

Social Interaction

Social interaction is the relationship between one individual and another individual. Individuals can influence other individuals or vice versa, so there is a reciprocal relationship. The relationship can occur between individuals and individuals, individuals with groups, or groups with individuals. Interaction, according to H. Bonner in his book "Social Psychology," suggests that social interaction is a relationship between two or more individuals. A human individual whose behaviour can influence, change, or improve the behaviour of other individuals, or vice versa. Social interaction in this study is defined as a relationship, involvement, and mutual interest in the personality of autistic children in something that is around them by using certain symbols or movements to express it to others.

In this social interaction, autistic children are not able to establish good relationships, either by showing behaviours or special characteristics, such as very poor eye contact, less lively facial expressions, directed gestures, crying or laughing for no reason, being unable to play with peers, being unable to feel what other people feel, and lack of social relationships (not able to socialize). Social interaction disorders in children with autism are divided into three groups, namely: (1) Aloof is often seen in children who withdraw, are indifferent, and will be annoyed when a social approach is held and show limited behaviour and attention (not warm); (2) Passive, subject can accept social approaches and play with other children if the pattern of play is adjusted to subject; (3) Active but strange, they will spontaneously approach other children, but these interactions are often inappropriate and often one-sided.

Some of the social interaction disorders in children with autism that have been mentioned cause social barriers for children with autism. The social barriers that autistic children face will change as they grow older. Usually, with increasing age, the barriers will appear to decrease. The obstacles experienced by autistic children are as follows:

Inclusive Education/Schools

Inclusive education is an educational service system that requires children with special needs to study in nearby schools and in general classes with peers of their age. Inclusion is a process of responding to the diverse needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, culture, and society and reducing exclusion from and from education.

This involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures, and strategies with a shared vision that includes all children of the right age range and the importance of responsibilities and arrangements for educating all children. The implementation of inclusive education means creating an environment so that students with special needs can learn, play, and interact with all other children. Each student with special needs has an individual learning programme that allows subject to develop all his potential according to his abilities.

Inclusive education is a government policy of seeking education that can be enjoyed by every citizen to obtain an equal distribution of education, regardless of whether they are children with special needs or children in general, so that they can go to school and obtain a decent and quality education for the future of their lives. Strategies, methods, or ways of implementing inclusive education in each country vary widely (Stubbs, 2002). This diversity of implementation is because each country has a different culture and tradition. In addition, these differences in implementation also occur at the provincial, city, and even school levels. Efforts to introduce and implement inclusive education in Indonesia have started since the 1980s.

Along with the growing demands of groups with special needs voicing their rights, the concept of inclusive education emerged. One of the international agreements that encourages the realisation of an inclusive education system is the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol, which was ratified in March 2007. Article 24 of this Convention states that every country is obliged to implement an inclusive education system at every level of education. One of the goals is to encourage the full participation of groups with special needs in people's lives. Education for children with autism is regulated in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System; Article 5 Paragraph 1 states that "every citizen has the same right to obtain a quality education".

Although, up to now, inclusive schools are still making improvements in various aspects, from an ideal perspective, inclusive schools are ideal schools for both children with and without special needs. The environment created is very supportive of children with special needs. They can learn from the spontaneous interactions of their peers, especially from their social and emotional aspects. Children without special needs, on the other hand, give them chances to learn how to be kind, help others, and take care of themselves.

The teacher is a position or profession that requires special skills as a teacher. This work cannot be done by people who do not have the expertise to carry out activities or work as teachers. The task of teachers in the field of humanity in schools must be able to make themselves second parents. The task of the teacher in society means that the teacher has a more respectable place in his environment. The community can therefore gain knowledge from a teacher. This means that teachers are obliged to educate the nation towards the formation of a complete Indonesian human based on Pancasila. Special assistant teachers have other tasks that cannot be carried out by teachers who are not from a PLB background.

Special assistant teachers are responsible for helping classroom teachers understand and deal with problems related to students with special needs. They are also responsible for advising regular classroom teachers or field of study teachers about how students with special needs should learn and how to teach them. As is well known, the achievement of the results of the teaching and learning process that is carried out depends on the role and competence of the teacher.

METHODS

The method of writing in this scientific paper is library research or documentation study. A literature study was done to get an idea of the theoretical or doctrinal policy, conceptual thinking, and writing that came

before this writing study that was related to the object of this writing study. Library research only uses materials from the library, while interview data is used to confirm and clarify the information found in the library. This piece of writing is both descriptive and analytical. It describes and analyses what social workers do about problems in children's social lives as well as what they do to help children learn social skills. The data analysis used is comparative descriptive analysis. The collected data is then put together and reported as is. Logical conclusions are drawn, and the data is then analyzed. The analysis does not use numbers and formulas.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The implementation of inclusive schools in Indonesia is motivated by the right of children to obtain an education. Human needs in general include physical or health needs, social-emotional needs, and educational needs. Children with special needs also have the same needs as normal people. To meet their educational needs, children with special needs have the same rights as other children. Article 31 of the 1945 Constitution states that all citizens have the right to education. This is further elaborated in Chapter IV, Article 5 of Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. throughout life. Extraordinary children here are not only those who have physical, social, emotional, and intellectual disabilities, but those who have the potential for intelligence and special talents are also entitled to special education.

The right to education is not only protected in domestic law but is also stated in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was later updated at the 1990 World Conference on Education for All (the 1990 World Conference). Conference on Education for All), which aims to ensure that these rights are for all, regardless of individual differences.

Based on the explanation above, a teacher is obliged to provide opportunities for children with special needs to actualize themselves through education in schools. Education for children with special needs is not limited to special schools but also includes integrated education, which allows extraordinary children to study together with normal children. This education system is called inclusive education. In Indonesia, the implementation of inclusive education is described in National Government Regulation Number 70 of 2009 concerning inclusive education for students who have disabilities and have the potential for intelligence and/or special talents.

Discussion

Children with Special Needs and Inclusive Schools

Inclusive schools are educational services for children with special needs regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and other conditions to study together with normal children in regular schools. The presence of inclusive schools is an effort to erase the boundaries that have emerged in the community, namely that children with special needs must attend special schools as well. With the inclusion of an inclusive school, children with special needs can attend regular schools like normal children.

The impact of inclusive schools on the psychology of children with special needs is to provide opportunities for the development of self-confidence for children with special needs (self-esteem). Self-esteem is part of the self-concept or self-concept. Self-esteem is a person's feelings about the discrepancy between subject and what subject wants to be in the future. Thus, it can be said that self-esteem is a person's assessment of subject, including both the advantages and disadvantages that exist for subject. Children with high self-esteem usually feel like they are important, so they can respect themselves and accept the flaws they have.

Forms of teaching services at Inclusive Schools

In inclusive education, there are a variety of students covering backgrounds, abilities, and capacities, so its implementation requires serious efforts to be able to provide a friendly environment for learners, where all students can learn comfortably and pleasantly (Kadir, 2015). The placement of students with special needs must pay attention to the potential, type, and level of abnormalities or needs. The placement is only temporary. Students with special needs will move from one service alternative to another with the alleged change in their special needs. The philosophy of inclusive education provides various alternatives according to the abilities and needs of students. Students in inclusive education can be grouped into two categories: namely, students with special needs who receive special education without being accompanied by cognitive

and intellectual barriers, and those with cognitive and intellectual barriers. Each category of students with special needs will receive services that are tailored to one of the learning models that are tailored to their needs.

Learning models for inclusive education that meet the needs of all students, including those with special needs, include: (1) Students with special needs (PDBK) and regular students (PDR), with the distinction that PDBK students do not have significant intellectual impairment. In this class, there is no special treatment or service; all students are treated the same; (2) In the Cluster Model, students with special needs (PDBK) are grouped separately but still study together with regular students (PDR) in one class. Students with special needs (PDBK) are accompanied by assistants so that these students can learn like regular students. The role of the companion in this model provides special services when students with special needs (PDBK) experience difficulties and obstacles in their learning; (3) This learning model places students with special needs (PDBK) in a separate room to obtain certain subject matter with special assistance from special teachers. There are certain components in the subject matter that require special delivery to Peseta Learners with Special Needs (PDBK) due to inequality when they have to study together with other students. Students with special needs (PDBK) are moved out of the regular class at a certain time to get services, materials, strategies, methods, and media that are better suited to their needs; (4) The Cluster and Pull-Out Model is a combined learning model between the cluster model and the pull-out model. At certain times in this learning model system, special-needs students (PDBK) are grouped separately but still in one regular class with special assistants. Then at other times, students with special needs (PDBK) are placed in special classes or rooms to be given special services with materials, strategies, methods, and media that are more suited to their needs (Minasih, 2019); (5) The special class model is the model used by schools that hold special classes for students with special needs (PDBK), but there are other activities in which certain learning outcomes are combined with regular classes. This model is a learning model that only provides classes for students with special needs (PDBK) in full without any normal students, even in one class. However, at certain times, the students with special needs (PDBK) are combined with the regular students (PDR). This special class model has its uniqueness where classes for students with special needs (PDBK) are in the same complex as the regular classes. In this special class model, students with special needs (PDBK) can interact with regular students (PDR) indirectly in the classroom and interact directly outside of the classroom; (6) The full special model is the model used by schools that hold special classes for students with special needs (PDBK). In this model, students with special needs (PDBK) learn together with other students with special needs (PDBK) fully and are not mixed with regular students (PDR), even though it is carried out in regular schools.

Implementation of Inclusive Education in Indonesia

The implementation of inclusive education in each country varies greatly. This is due to the existence of different cultures and traditions. The difference also lies in the implementation that occurs at the provincial and city levels and extends to the realm of schools (Darma & Rusyidi, 2015). The success of the implementation of inclusive education is influenced by several factors, namely: cultural factors, politics, and human resources. Until now, inclusive schools were still making improvements in several areas. The implementation of inclusive schools is not as simple as the implementation of public schools, because the implementation of inclusive schools requires curriculum flexibility, professional educators commonly called "special supervisors," the environment and school administrators, educational facilities and infrastructure, and evaluation of learning.

The implementation of inclusive learning in schools must have sufficient facilities and infrastructure. This is done to improve the quality of the students (Lisinus & Sembiring, 2020). Besides that, it can be traced more deeply starting from the beginning of student admissions in inclusive schools, which is not much different from other regular student admissions, but in inclusive schools, there is more emphasis on children's abilities in terms of cognitive, emotional, social, and behavioural. Some of the things involved in inclusive education (Masitah, 2016). Some things involved in inclusive education include: (1) Learners, inclusive education is highly expected to be able to back up all children to get an education in public schools, regardless of conditions or limitations, whether related to disability (specificity), gender, regional origin, etc. Most importantly, children who require special education do not face significant barriers to receiving an education in public schools at first. (2) Curriculum or educational program, the curriculum or educational programme for all students and children with special needs, is flexible at the level of implementation so that it can be applied to all people

with special needs. Therefore, individualised educational programmes (IEP) can be regarded as an approach that has a high relationship and effectiveness. 14 Qualified guidance and counselling services will make institutional goals move comprehensively so that they will make students excel in terms of career, social, and most importantly, individual growth. (3) Educators and Education Personnel, educational educators and teachers are very important in achieving success in the organisation of an institution. Generally, the most popular teachers are those who have professional skills to understand individual differences and develop materials related to educational interests and educational activities in their ability to use methods. (4) Infrastructure, the existence and procurement of facilities and infrastructure are very crucial factors, especially for children with special needs. 15 Students can do fun and interesting learning and educational activities when the facilities and infrastructure are up to par (Rahmayani, 2020). (5) Evaluation, evaluation is included as the most important aspect of a teaching and learning activity (Sofyan, 2021). Evaluation in inclusive education is expected to contribute in the form of a meaningful contribution by encouraging students to be visionaries and not be a boomerang in conducting evaluations, which, of course, extinguishes the spirit of learning (Widyanti, 2017). The evaluation is expected to be an evaluation that is evaluative, not judgmental. (6) Supervision, supervision basically means getting an accessible position to manage educational institutions and educational personnel to provide services that are in accordance with minimum standards of service. In terms of the usefulness of inclusive education, continuous monitoring is needed as part of the implementation of inclusive education. It is intended to be assigned to performance oversight rather than administrative oversight. Therefore, supervisors need insight into the diversity of students with special needs. (7) Society participation, to ensure the sustainability of the implementation of inclusive education, various aspects of participation are needed, especially from parents, professional organizations, and the community. The burden of implementing inclusive education can therefore be easily glimpsed.

CONCLUSION

Based on the description that the author has provided above, it can be concluded that inclusive education is one of the government's efforts to optimise the quality of education in Indonesia. Through the implementation of inclusive education, it is expected to be able to instil mutual respect, compassion, and most importantly, mutual respect for students. So, in its implementation, it is necessary to pay attention to the education or learning model that will be applied to inclusive schools. Inclusive education models are adapted to the needs and circumstances of students to create effective and efficient learning.

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