Analysis of Teachers' Understanding Level, Needs, and Difficulties in Identifying Children with Special Needs in Inclusive School in Surakarta

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Abstract

This research was aimed to determine teachers' understanding level of identification concept, needs, and difficulties in implementing the identification of children with special needs in inclusive school. It was a descriptive research with 40 special teachers as the subject taken by using purposive random sampling in 11 inclusive school in Surakarta. Data was cllected through interview and questionnaire. Data was analyzed by using percentage quantitative descriptive. Result of the research showed that: (1) teachers' understanding level of the identification of children with special needs was strongly uncomprehend (37%), uncomprehend (23%), and less comprehend (18%); (2) teachers' needs of the identification of children with special needs mostly need training program and digital identificatio instrument development, (3) problems found in the field about identification of children with special needs are identification instrument standardize, difficulty in applying identification steps, low competence of non-special-education teacher about identification and in detecting similar characteristics of children with special needs.

Keywords*: Teachers' Understanding, Identification, Inclusve School*

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Introduction

Education for all is an educateion implementation that accommodates all individual to receive education service. Inclusive school becomes one education model accommodating all children without exception in one class considering their ability and needs (UNESCO, 2000, Ahmad, 2015a). Inclusive school is a school giving education service that accommodates all students in the same class environment according to their age and development (Charema, 2010; Schmidt & Venet, 2012). Inclusive school gives education service providing children with special needs to study together in regular class (Sapon-Shevin, 2007; Ajuwon, 2008). Education service given should be suitable with the children's needs, characteristics, and ability (Ahmad 2015c).

Children with special needs have different characteristics for every disability they have (Salim, 2002), therefore, it needs intervention and curriculum modification for every disability (Salim, 2012). Children with special needs are the main focus in inclusive school to provide education service suitable with their needs and abilities. Children with special needs are children with disability compared with normal children in the terms of mental, sensory, physical, and neuromascular anilities, social and emotional behavior, communication ability, or more than one disability (Mangunsong, 2009: 4). By looking at their characteristics, it needs identification to determine their kinds of disability, so that they can receive suitable intervention based on their needs and abilities (Ahmad, 2015b). Identification is a process used to acquire information about problem face by children to set learning intervention, namely class placement and curriculum (Lebeer et al, 2010). Those who need identification are preschool children, those who want to go to school, and those in inclusive school. Children with special needs that need identification are (1) those in regular school, (2) new students in regular school, (3) those who are/not yet in school (Yusuf et al, 2013: 6-7). Appropriate identification is used to decide disability of a child, give options of suitable learning intervention based on their characteristics, decide class placement, and students' personal data (Guarino et al, 2010).

Identification is very important for children's development in inclusive school, however it is not fully understood by special teachers yet in inclusive school. Inclusive school, standing under government's command, has lack of fund and teachers (Tarnoto, 2013). From previous study done by Suryaningrum et al (2016), it is known that (1) 90% teachers do not own instrument to detect children with special needs, (2) 70% teachers were not helped by expert to do early detection for children with special needs, (3) 70% teachers have no understanding about doing intervention on children with special needs, (4) 60% teacher do not have undersatnding about assessment and early detection and also 60% teachers do not have any understanding about characteristics of children with special needs. Research conducted by Tarnoto (2013) showed that there are some problems faced by teachers related to service given by the school, like low level of teachers' competence in dealing with children with special needs. It gives a picture that most teachers teaching children with special needs in inclusive school have lo competence in doin identification and intervention. In line with study conducted by Bukvić (2014) there are 70% teachers from 100 teachers have no competence in teaching children with special needs. Teachers' readiness in giving education method is very needed (Zulfija, 2013). Based on the data, in 2011, there are 356,192 children with special needs, however, only 105,185 children receive services (Desiningrum, 2016: 3). It means that there are many children with special needs receive no education services. Meanwhile, to give them suitable services and interventions, it needs identification program and assesment. Do teachers in inclusive school have enough understanding about identification concept and assessment of children with special needs? This research is aimed to get a picture of teachers' understanding level and needs in identifying children with special needs in inclusive school and also their problems in identifying.
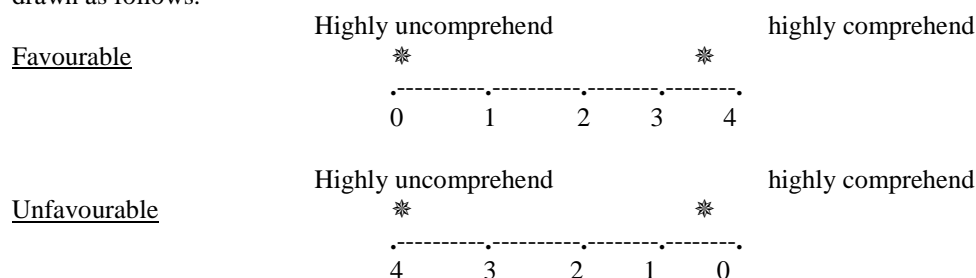
Method

This research is a descriptive research to explore data related to (1) teachers' understanding level in identifying children with special needs, (2) teachers' need in identifying children with special needs, (3) problems faced by teacher in identifying. In the terms of understanding level, it contains (a) meaning of identification, (b) background of the importance of identification activity, (c) goals, (d) tools, (e) time and place, (f) conditions of identification staff, (g) procedure, and (h) interpretation of identification result. In the terms of teacher's needs, it contains (a) training program needs, (b) identification tools/instrument, (c) digital identification instrument development, (d) education management of children with special needs in inclusive school. Problems faced by teachers are related to their difficulty in identifying those children in inclusive school.

Setting of this research is an inclusive school in Surakarta, in the level of elementary, junior, and senior high school. 40 teachers chosen by using purposive random sampling in 11 inclusive schools. Data was collected through interview and questionnaire. Interview was used to dig their personal

problems they faced in doing identification of children with special needs in inclusive school questionnaire was set from understanding level to teachers' needs.

Instrument used to explore teachers' understanding is question list with 5-ponit-scale, from 0 to 4. For favourable questions, 0 point = "highly uncomprehend" and 4 point = "highly comprehend". For unfavourable questions, 0 point = "highly comprehend" and 4 point = "highly uncomprehend". It can be drawn as follows.

	Highly uncomprehend				highly comprehend
Favourable	❋			❋	
	.----------.----------.--------.--------.				
	0	1	2	3	4

	Highly uncomprehend				highly comprehend
Unfavourable	❋			❋	
	.----------.----------.--------.--------.				
	4	3	2	1	0

Before the questionnaire were distributed, filed testing was conducted first. Data analysis result showed that 20 items were valid with 0.910 coefficient and P for 0.000. It means that those 20 items are valid.

Result and Discuccion

From the research involving 40 teachers of inclusive school in Surakarta as respondents, it can be elaborated as follows.

Teachers' understanding level of identification of children with special needs

First objective of this research is to determine teachers' understanding level of identification program for children with special needs. In the terms of understanding level, it contains (a) meaning of identification, (b) background of the importance of identification activity, (c) goals, (d) tools, (e) time and place, (f) conditions of identification staff, (g) procedure, and (h) interpretation of identification result.

The result of data taken from 40 respondents showed that:

Table 1. Teachers' Understanding Level of Identification Program for Children with Special Needs

Understanding Level	Percentage
Highly Comprehend	4%
Comprehend	18%
Less Comprehend	18%
Uncomprehend	23%
Highly Uncomprehend	37%
Total	100%

From table 1 above, it can be known that from 40 respondents answering about (a) meaning of identification, (b) background of the importance of identification activity, (c) goals, (d) tools, (e) time and place, (f) conditions of identification staff, (g) procedure, and (h) interpretation of identification result, 4% respondents are highly comprehend, 18% respondents are comprehend, 18% respondents are less comprehend, 23% respondents are uncomprehend, and 37% respondents are highly uncomprehend. From the data, it can be presented in the form of diagram as follows.
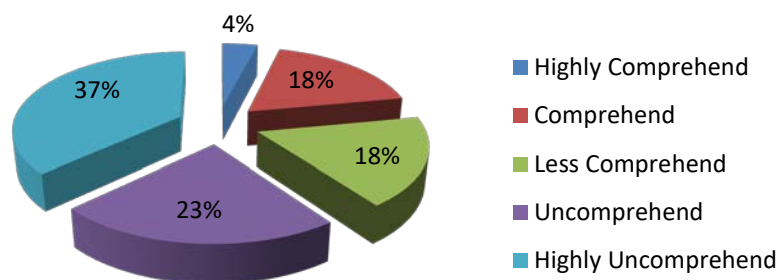
Figure 1. Teachers' Understanding Level of Identification for Children with Special Needs

Teachers' needs level of identification

Second objective of this research is to determine special teachers needs to identify children with special needs. Teachers' needs to identify are divided into (a) training program needs, (b) identification tools/instrument, (c) digital identification instrument development, (d) education management of children with special needs in inclusive school. From the result, it can be ellaborated as follows.

Table 2. Identification Needs in Inclusive School

No	Needs	Total	Percentage
1	Children with special needs (CSN) Identification training program	17	42,5 %
2	Identification tools/instrument and the usage	5	12,5 %
3	Digital identification instrument development	10	25 %
4	Childrens' learning management in inclusive class	8	20 %
Total		40	100 %

From table 2 above, it can be known taht from 40 respondents about special teachers needs to identify children with special needs, 17 respondents (42%) need children with special needs identification training, 5 (13%) respondents need identification instrument and usage, 10 respondents (25%) need digital identification instrument development, and 8 respondents (20%) need learning management training in inclusive class. The data can be presented in the form of diagram as follows.
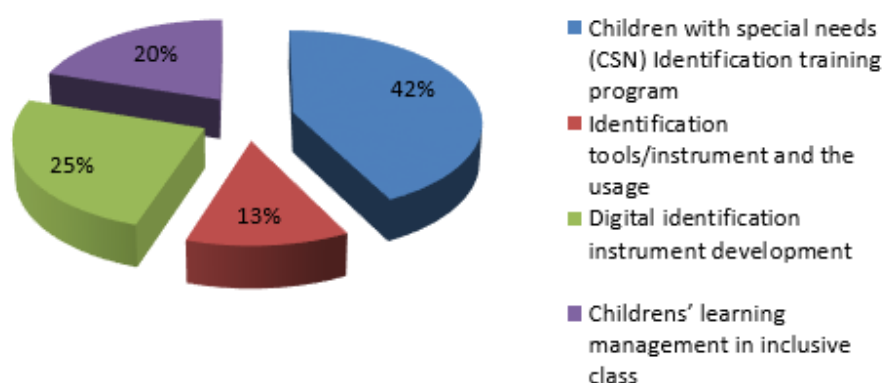

Figure 2. Children with Special Needs Identification Needs in Inclusive School

Teachers' problem in identifying children with special needs

To explore bout teachers' opinion about problems or difficulties in the field about children with special needs identification, 6 opinions were taken.

Table 3. Problems faced related to children with special needs identification

No.	Teachers	Problems faced related to children with special needs identification
1.	Teacher 1	In identifying, it is still manual and do not fully understand yet of how to identify in the right way, so i make mistakes in giving intervention
2.	Teacher 2	Identification instrument in every elementary inclusive school is not standardize, so we decided to take third person, but it takes long time for it
3.	Teacher 3	I face difficulty in identifying, where those children which i have identified changed, so i think that it is not standardized.
4.	Teacher 4	I face difficulty in understanding steps to identify, so as a teacher, i cannot give suitable service for my students.
5.	Teacher 5	My difficulty is becasue my educational background which is non-special-education. It is hard for me to identify and my school has no identification form yet.
6.	Teacher 6	Similar characteristics among children with special needs makes it hard to identify, for example, slow learner with difficult in learning

The result showed that teachers' understanding about identification of children with special needs in inclusive school is 37% (very low), meanwhile, there are only 22% teachers with good understanding. It is in line with research by Suryaningrum et al (2016) that (1) 90% teachers have no instrument in detecting children with special needs, (2) 70% teachers have no expert to help them in detecting those children, (3) 70% teachers understanding about doing intervention on children with special needs, (4) 60% teacher do not have undersatnding about assessment and early detection and also 60% teachers do not have any understanding about characteristics of children with special needs. Tarnoto (2013) showed that there are some problems faced by teachers related to service given by the school, like low level of teachers' competence in dealing with children with special needs. It gives a picture that most teachers teaching children with special needs in inclusive school have lo competence in doin identification and intervention. In line with study conducted by Bukvić (2014) there are 70% teachers from 100 teachers have no competence in teaching children with special needs. Teachers' readiness in giving education method is very needed (Zulfija, 2013). Based on the data, in 2011, there are 356,192 children with special needs, however, only 105,185 children receive services (Desiningrum, 2016: 3).

Result of this research showed that special teachers in inclusive school need children with special needs identification training program to increase their understanding and skill of identifying those cildren. Difficultes faced by teachers is that they need supporting tools to help them in identifying and doin intervention in inclusive school. Identification is a process used to acquire information about problem face by children to set learning intervention, namely class palecement and curriculum (Lebeer et al, 2010). Appropriate identification is used to decide disability of a child, give options of suitable learning intervention based on their characteristics, skill and disability on them (Guarino et al, 2010).

The result about teachers' needs of identifying children with special needs is to decide disability of a child, give options of suitable learning intervention based on their characteristics, decide class placement, and students' personal data. This is in line with research from Peterson,et al (2011) and Ahmad (2015c) that identification for children with special needs is used to classify according to their disability and giving suitable services based on their characteristics. With suitable service, children with special needs have no difficulty to study in the inclusive setting. Basically, learning intervention is important to optimize children's ability because all children born with ability even those with special needs (Karsidi, 2015: 81). Proper intervention for children with special needs solve the problem faced by them when they study in class. It is poven by previous study that intervention can improve language ability, counting, and behavior problem (Meaden,et al.,2016; Kilgus.,2015; Ahmad, 2015b). Early intervention gives positive side for their education development in inclusive school (Kaminski & Powell-Smith., 2016. Zheng et al., 2015).

Conclusion

From the result of the research, it can be concluded that (1) teachers' understanding level of the identification of children with special needs was strongly uncomprehend (37%), uncomprehend (23%), and less comprehend (18%); (2) teachers' needs of the identification of children with special needs mostly need training program and digital identification instrument development, (3) problems found in the field about identification of children with special needs are identification instrument standardize, difficulty in applying identification steps, low competence of non-special-education teacher about identification and in detecting similar characteristics of children with special needs.

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