

Acceptability of Children with Special Needs in the Inclusive Elementary School

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ABSTRACT

The main obstacle of children with special needs to advance is access to education as high as possible not to the disability, but to social acceptance of the community. This study aims 1) To determine the acceptability of children with special needs in the inclusive elementary school environment. It includes principals, teachers, learners, and parents. 2) To determine the factors those influence the acceptance of children with special needs in the inclusive elementary school environment. This is an interactive qualitative research. The research site is Wirosaban Elementary School, Yogyakarta City. Data collection techniques are interviews, observation and documentation. Data analysis technique is analytic descriptive data analysis. The results show: 1) Acceptability of children with special needs in inclusive school environment is quite good after going through various processes. School trying to accept children with special needs even though the school realized its service on some things still not maximal 2) There are four factors that affect the school environment perception of children with special needs. These factors are: knowledge and insight factor on inclusive education, b. environmental support factor outside the school, c. facilities factor, d. the persistence factor of the guardians of the special needs students.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Children with special needs have special characteristics that different from children in general without always showing mental, emotional or physical disability. In Government Regulation no. 17 of 2010 article 129 paragraph (3) stipulates that learners with disabilities consist of learners who are sightless, deaf, mute, mental retardation, physical disabilities, emotional disabilities, learning disabilities, slow learning, autism, motor problems, become victims of narcotics, drug abuse, and addictive substances, and have multiple disorders. In Regulation of Ministry of National Education No 70 of 2009 article 3 stated that every learner who has physical, emotional, mental, and social disabilities or has the potential of special intelligence and/or talents is entitled to follow education in a specific educational unit according to their needs and abilities. Children with special needs is a term used to refer to children who have their own uniqueness in the types and characteristics.

According to the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Children Protection, the number of children with special needs that could be recorded in 2013 is about 1,5 million people. The number of children with special needs who have attended elementary school level is 0.00018% and at the junior high school level only 0.00012% of the total school age children. While the percentage of school for inclusive education for elementary school is 0.39% and junior high school level is 0.25%. Data from the Deputy Minister of Education and Culture, presented at the event of special needs children in Denpasar, stated that in

Indonesia education for children with special needs still about 35%, while the rest about 65% have not gained access to education [1]. From the data it can be concluded that very few children with special needs who get education services. While education is the right of every child including children with special needs. They have the same right to obtain quality education and not discriminated against it.

The World Health Organization in 2003 estimated the number of children with disabilities in Indonesia about 7-10% of the total population of Indonesia [2]. Most children with disabilities, about 295,250 children are in the community in the guidance and supervision of parents and families. In general, they have not received health services properly. Children with disabilities need to be protected for their health. Communities should not abandon children with disabilities and respect them. Communities provide support to obtain needed services according to their rights, such as decent education in special schools, regular schools, and other educational institutions.

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education provides an obligation for schools to accommodate all children including children with abnormalities of physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistics or other abnormalities. The Declaration was followed by the United Nations Convention held in 2006, declaring the children's right and affirming that all children are entitled to education without discrimination of any kind.

To date children with special needs can access education in special schools and in inclusive schools. One important factor in implementing inclusive education is the acceptability of children with special needs in the school environment. The main barriers to children with disabilities to progress including access to education as high as possible not to the disability, but to social acceptance. As long as there are instrument and gets special handling, then they can overcome the obstacles of the disorder. Precisely the one difficult to face is a social barrier. In fact, the obstacles within the special needs child are generally caused by negative social view of himself. Therefore, the education held should give assurance that every child will get the service to develop their potential individually.

Sopiatun stated that the phenomenon of children with special needs increase every year [3]. The increasing number of children with special needs every year is not in accordance to the perceived educational services. Inclusive education is the way to settle this problem [4]. While schools that have held inclusive education still have many obstacles in organizing inclusive education. One of the obstacles in the implementation of inclusive education is caused by the factor of educator. From the results of the research found that 83% of students are negative or rejected inclusive education based on knowledge factors about inclusive education concept.

Fulfillment of the disabilities people rights in the education context at least takes into account four indicators, there are: 1) availability indicators, 2) accessibility indicators, 3) acceptability indicators, and 4) adaptability indicators [5]. Some of these indicators emphasize that education-related disabilities are not only available for programs and equipment but also can be accessed easily and affordably even with no-discrimination principles. Based on the indicators of acceptability, education should be accepted by inclusive students and vice versa, the general education community may fully receive inclusive students. Yusuf assert that the phenomenon of inclusive education in Indonesia can be traced through two things 1) regulations that describe policies, and 2) field research that describes inclusive education in field practice [1]. Based on the importance of understanding the inclusive education implementation, especially related to the acceptability indicators, this field research is needed. This study was conducted to explore in depth and detail about the activities of factors influencing acceptability of students with special needs in inclusive school.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The aim of this research is to explore and map the level of acceptability of students with special needs in inclusive school. Therefore this research is conducted using field research type with qualitative approach. This research is a case study in Wirosaban Elementary School. The consideration of choosing Wirosaban Elementary School as the location is because it has been appointed by the Yogyakarta City government to be one of the Inclusive School since 2012. This research is rooted in a scientific background as wholeness and relies on humans as a research instrument. In this research, the researchers present the results of research as descriptive qualitative. The data collected in the form of narration, words, pictures, stories and even data in the form of numbers that compile into a conclusion in the form of description.

Sources to obtain valid and relevant data in this research is in the form of interviews from various speakers and supported by written data. Interview data were obtained from several speakers, which are: 1). Principal of Wirosaban Elementary School, as the leader and policy maker of the school, 2) Vice Principal of Curriculum, 3) classroom teachers, subject teachers and special mentors, 4) students of Wirosaban Elementary School, 5) parents or guardians of students of Wirosaban Elementary School. The written data sources are books, scientific journals, relevant research results, school documents, as well as personal

documents and other official documents relating to way of learning for students with disabilities. Written data or sources are used to support and strengthen data obtained from results of interview data examine.

Data analysis in this research is qualitative analysis. Each daily note of data collection derived from interviews, observations and document analyses are selected, analyzed and summarized into narrative description. The data that has been collected when considered less or incomplete, can be immediately searched again from relevant sources. Outfall of all qualitative data analysis activities lies in the depiction or narrative of what has been successfully researched

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Wirosaban Elementary School receives new students from children who do not have special needs and children with special needs. In receiving students with special needs, Wirosaban Elementary School do identification and assessment. Identification of children with special needs is an effort to identify the abnormalities of potential learners and the symptoms that accompany it. Identification can be based on observable symptoms such as physical symptoms, behavioral symptoms, and symptoms of learning outcomes. Identify potential learners in collaboration with the people asuch as: parents, teachers related to children, therapists, and psychologists.

Wirosaban Elementary School was appointed as an inclusive school since 2012. The appointment process of Wirosaban Elementary School departed from guardian of pupil who want to send their children with special needs in Wirosaban Elementary School but the school did not accepted. The school did not accepted because at that time the teachers still have very minimal information or did not know any knowledge about assisting students with special needs. From the ignorance, Wirosaban Elementary School at that time refused students with special needs to enroll. The school concern if accepted students with special needs, there will be malpractice education by teachers to their students.

3.1. Acceptability of Children with Special Needs in Inclusive Elementary School Environments

Systemically, the change of Wirosaban Elementary School from regular elementary school into inclusive school carries special note. There are several components that exist in the school that become the admission determinants of students with special needs who want to enroll in the school. Some of these components are committee component, guardian, and teacher.

First, from the school committee. With regard to support changes in school status there is no significant contribution from the school committee. However, the school committee commit that whatever the school does the committee will continue to support the process of Wirosaban Elementary School development. Although the committee give no financial support for the change of Wirosaban Elementary School into inclusive school, but the Wirosaban Elementary School committee tried not to hindrance the change status experienced by Wirosaban Elementary School. In other words, the existence of the committee is not an obstacle of the status change into inclusive school.

Second, from the pupil's guardian. Another component in the school is the guardian of the pupil. There is a similar response between the committee and the guardian, but there is little difference between the response of the committee and the student's guardians response to the change of Wirosaban Elementary School status into an inclusive school. The similarity is when the committee is committed to always support what will become the school policy, the guardian also does not prevent the change of school status into inclusive school. However, there are differences in attitude given by the guardian. One of the principles that the parents/guardians holds is whatever happens in school they do not mind as long as their children can learn well in Wirosaban Elementary School. Although there was no rejection from the guardians regarding the change in school status, there was no significant contribution to the change of school status into inclusive school. Although there is no obstacle from the guardians regarding changes in school status, there is also no special support from the students' guardians regarding this status change. In other words, the guardian also does not become an obstacle to the inclusive learning access for inclusive students in Wirosaban Elementary School.

The third component is the teachers. Response of changes is addressed differently from the teachers' component. At the beginning, before the change of status, some teachers had responded in disagreement over the change of school status into inclusive school. Such rejection departs from the condition of non-existent teachers who master the knowledge of inclusive education. Almost all teachers are general teachers. There is only one teacher who is an alumnus of Special Education.

Although there were teachers who at the beginning of the school status change objected to receive inclusive students, the education office still decided Wirosaban Elementary School to be an inclusive school. Such status changes bring consequences to the training of some teachers about inclusive education. Some of the teachers who were dispatched to attend the training on inclusive education were teachers who, on the

beginning objected to the change status into inclusive school. Nevertheless, after attending the training, some teachers who at the beginning object come to feel touch by the condition of inclusive students and strive to always support the government process on inclusive education.

The condition of the teachers' mindset changes from rejecting to supporting the status change no other because of the limited knowledge possessed by the teachers. It is acknowledged by principal and some teachers that their limited knowledge about inclusive education brings consequences to inappropriate assessment on inclusive students. Some teachers who became pioneers of training on inclusive education become knowledge conveyor to other teachers related to the implementation of inclusive education in Wirosaban Elementary School. The condition is as the result of Sunanto research which states that the change of acceptance behavior about inclusive school is influenced by science and knowledge about inclusive school and special needs students obtained by someone [6].

After five years become inclusive school there was no significant change from teachers competency input related to inclusive student handling. Teachers of the majority are either general teachers or teachers who are not come from Special Education Major. Related to the facilities, there are no special facilities owned by school related to learning for inclusive students. Nevertheless, all teachers continue to make effort to implement effective learning for inclusive students in Wirosaban Elementary School. One of the ways is teachers to be cautious in addressing the existence of inclusive students. Teachers do not want to rashly handle the existence of inclusive students in class.

If there are students with special needs who want to enroll in Wirosaban Elementary School but require extra assistance, school initially always recommend the inclusive student's guardian to send their children to a Special School. However, if the parents/guardians insist to send their children to Wirosaban Elementary School, the school requires the guardian of the student to involve a special assistant for the children. Some cases that require assistance is children with emotional disabilities.

After implementing inclusive education for 5 years, currently the school does not limit the type of inclusiveness that allowed to enroll in Wirosaban Elementary School. However, to be accepted or not based on the initial assessment of the school involving the experts. If the initial assessment results show that students can still follow the activities in Wirosaban Elementary School then students of any special needs type can be accepted. Vice versa if based on initial assessment made by teachers and experts say that the students are in severe category and can bring bad consequences in school then it is advisable to send the students to a Special School.

There are several activities that school do to conduct the assessment process or early assessment although very simple. The assessment begins by calling and bring together some of the teachers who will accompany the inclusive children. The principal asks for a direct consideration on the teachers' part to provide their response regarding the inclusive students enroll in the school. Furthermore, if the school has limitation conducting assessment of a child in particular, the school asks the guardian to conduct initial assessment for his child with the party who really expert in their field. Then the results submitted to the school. Based on the assessment analysis of the expert, the school has a decision on whether to accept or the child better be directed to a Special School. List of students with special needs for the academic year of 2017/2018 show in Table 1.

Table 1. List of students with special needs for the academic year of 2017/2018

No	Disabilities	Category	Assessment (Yes/No)	Total
1.	Mental Retardation	Mild	Yes	3
2.	Physical Disabilities	Polio, epilepsy	Yes	2
3.	Superior	Gifted	Yes	1
4.	Slow Learning	Border line	Yes	9

Various types of learners with special needs are welcomed in Wirosaban Elementary School which includes physical disabilities and learning difficulties. Identification and assessment is done by Dinas Pendidikan dan Olah Raga (Youth and Sports Education Office) Yogyakarta province with expert involvement. The school entrusted to the Dinas Pendidikan dan Olah Raga (Youth and Sports Education Office) to do assessment for the students who indicated to have specificity. To maintain consistency of inclusive education in this school, one of the strategies applied is the pattern of habituation. Inclusive class learning activities for slow learner children show in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Inclusive class learning activities for slow learner children

Habitual activities undertaken in addressing students with special needs is using ceremonial activities with a special design. Ceremonies unlike usual ceremonies. The ceremony begins with a neat march coordinated by each class leader followed by praying and reading short *surah* for the Muslim. All activities are done outside the classroom. This is conducted on Tuesday and Thursday, because Monday is for flag ceremony. For Wednesday, there is a special religious literacy activity, the example is for Muslim students to memorize short *surah*. In Friday, the children train with pray *dhuha* together. Teach children to discipline in praying. In Saturday there is a joint sports activity or morning gymnastics in order to familiarize the pattern of discipline for children. Because some of the students inclusiveness are related to discipline aspect.

Another process of habituation by the teacher starts at the beginning of the lesson since the beginning of the semester. Teachers give positive values related to the difference, also to politeness of attitude and speech. Teachers also teach religious values related *mendholimi* (hurting/aggravating other people) and *didholimi* (to be hurt/aggravate by other people). For students who feel hurt by other, it becomes a means to think and reduce sin. Vice versa for those who hurting his friend will increase sin. But for those who feel erroneous can get *istighfar* (apologize to Allah) and not repeat the action. These values are instilled early on by the teacher so that students are increasingly reducing the bullying activities that exist in school with high diversity.

Through these habituation activities school have target that students increasingly accustomed to face differences. Activities between students with special needs and those who do not are very normal. No mock-jearing activity. This condition, according to the school principal, is because the students are already accustomed to live differently from their friends. Different friends (friends with disabilities) are not a deficiency but a distinction that must be respected. According to the principal it is one of the values foster in the inclusive school. This value, according to the principal, is indicated to make students of different competencies respect each other. Not merely respecting, even children are not feel awkward to interact with students with special needs. For example, students will be sensitive to their wheel chaired friends during their daily activities. When should they help encourage their wheel chaired classmate and when they let them be independent. This indicates that the acceptability of inclusive students in Wirosaban Elementary School is quite high. According to Bullock, Wong, Gable peer relations play a critical role in both the social and academic performance of children with special needs and that there are a complex mix of factors that – individually and collectively–impinge on the socialization process [7].

In the learning process, some of these special needs students, especially inclusive students who are related to IQ limitations, receive special treatment from the teachers. Special treatment is in the form of media materials and learning strategies. In the learning process, students who need special treatment are usually assist individually in order to accelerate their understanding. The special treatment is a form of acceptance of inclusive students in learning activities.

Although it has been running for five years, there are still some concerns felt by the teachers and principal components. Some of the teachers' concerns regarding the inclusive education process are the increasing knowledge of inclusive. One of the teachers and principal's concerns is that teachers feel worried of a mistake in handling the students, therefore the school hopes that there will be training and socialization related to the inclusive students handling. One that the principal realize about the inclusive implementation is related to teachers' emotion mastery in facing inclusive students. Teachers are required to be more careful in maintain emotional quotient in facing of these inclusive students. This is the key answer to the teachers' limitations of knowledge related to inclusive students handling. The teachers' prudence and patience is the key to teachers' readiness to face inclusive students.

Based on the statement of teachers and principal regarding of these concerns, it indicates that there is a good pattern in the internal school. Teachers are increasingly aware of the knowledge development. On the other hand, teachers also increasingly aware of the inclusive students' character development. In other words knowledge really becomes the reason teachers to reject or accept the presence of inclusive students in Wirosaban Elementary School.

To facilitate the acceptance of inclusive students in the wider community, the school also undertakes some activities. Several times school invites parents in order to teach them the meaning of inclusiveness and differences. One of the activities related to the treatment of parents to children, the school equip from both sides, the children and parents. Even for some parents whose children are indicated to have special needs teachers also equip some treatment records for their children. On the other hand teachers also provide children to not follow the ways of their parents if it is unwise and not good. One example is angry, if there is an angry parent, the teacher tries to convey to the child it is not good example, and if necessary children ask to remind the parents. To the parents, several times teachers try to convey messages related to children's education at home, especially for parents who have inclusive children but not aware if their child is a special need.

Several indicators in the implementation of inclusive education in Wirosaban Elementary School mention that there are still obstacles in the implementation of inclusive education. Obstacles encountered are the limited resources that really understand the special education and constraints of facilities and infrastructure for some students with special needs. Nevertheless, in the spirit of acceptance aspect, Wirosaban Elementary School as inclusive school gives an indication that there is a good acceptability effort. This good acceptability also departs from the experiences faced by the education community components in Wirosaban Elementary School related to the implementation of inclusive school. As expressed by Elisa and Wrastari that one of the factors in increasing the acceptability of inclusive students is the experience factor consisting of the experience of teaching children with special needs and contact experience with children with special needs [8].

3.2. Factors That Influence the Perception and Attitude of School Environment to Children with Special Needs

Related to school environment's perception of children with special needs, there are several factors that support its existence. Some of the determinants of accepted or rejected inclusive students in a school environment are: 1) factors of knowledge and insight on inclusive education, 2) external environmental support factors (committees, guardians and related agencies), 3) facilities factors, 4) persistence factors of the inclusive student's guardian.

First, knowledge and perception factor. Knowledge and insights about inclusive education are the main determinants of school environments to accept, reject, or accept but allow unhealthy processes to occur in schools, including bullying among students. Insight and knowledge factor are the main factor seen in teachers perception change before getting training on inclusive education and after training. Prior to training on inclusive education some teachers insisted not to accept inclusive students in Wirosaban Elementary School. Nevertheless, after some teachers who refused to accept inclusive students get knowledge and enough insight then the teachers become the middleman of inclusive education knowledge in Wirosaban Elementary School. In addition there is a sense of empathy that emerged from some teachers after getting knowledge about inclusive education. In relation to this knowledge and perception factor Elisa and Wrastari find the factor of teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education, consisting of positive attitudes of acceptance to inclusive education and negative attitude of rejection [8]. One of the factors influencing the attitude is the view of the children with special needs, the type of teachers, the grade level, the teacher's beliefs, the socio-political outlook, the empathy of teacher, and gender.

Another positive contribution of the knowledge factor is when students are provided continuously about the beauty of difference, students are better equipped to deal and behave with their peers who have difference in competence or abilities. With habituation done by the school to students who do not have special needs then make them not confused and awkward when interact with students with special needs.

The next factor is facilities factor. Facilities aspects remain a consideration for teachers and school to accept the presence of inclusive students. However, the facilities factor is not the main factor. If there are no facilities that qualified, the school still considers accepting the existence of inclusive students. However school expect facilities to be a factor in increasing acceptance of inclusive students in regular school or in inclusive school.

The third factor is the support factor from outside the school environment, including from the committee, parents and education office. These three external factors become the determinant factor after the internal factor of the teacher through his or her knowledge. In the case of Wirosaban Elementary School, the committee and guardians do not really contribute, however, the committee and the parents also did not

provide any obstacles or did not reject the existence of inclusive students in Wirosaban Elementary School. Thus, at the very least, school outsiders do not become an obstacles to the implementation of inclusive education in regular school.

The last factor of acceptance determinant of inclusion students is from the persistence of the inclusive student's guardian. If the guardian is ready with all the consequences to keep his children in inclusive school, or not in a Special School, then the school will give special consideration. There is some persistence shown by some guardians in Wirosaban Elementary School, the inclusive student's guardian ready to bring in the personnel/expert to assist the inclusive students during the learning process. School requirement asks assistance for some of inclusive students is because the school does not have special personnel to assist students with special needs. In addition the number of teachers in Wirosaban Elementary School only enough for regular learning.

4. CONCLUSION

The acceptance of special needs children in the inclusive school environment is quite good after going through various processes. School is trying to accept children with special needs even though lacking in some of their services. This can be seen from the teachers' competence about inclusive education which is still minimal, infrastructure-facilities, and support from various parties. This study found 4 factors affect the school environment perception of children with special needs. These factors are: 1) factors of knowledge and insight on inclusive education, 2) external environmental support factors (committee, guardian and related agencies), 3) facilities factor, 4) persistence factor of the inclusive student's guardian.

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