

The Role of Education for Children with Intellectual Disabilities at SLB-C Beringin Bhakti

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Abstract: Education is essential for one's current and future success. Education provides a wealth of facts and knowledge that will improve a person's life and behavior. Everyone regardless of status, religion, ethnicity, race, or membership in a particular group, is entitled to a good education. Formal education is education that is carried out through education in schools. Non-formal education is an educational path that is carried out outside of formal education. Children with special needs (ABK) are entitled to education. Children with special needs have different characteristics from children who suffer from mental, emotional, or physical illnesses in general. Education for children with special needs has many benefits for children. The problem in this study is the lack of educational attention for friends with disabilities. Therefore, this study aims to find out how education for visually impaired children and to improve SLB education as a learning home for these children. This research method uses descriptive qualitative research. This research method aims to describe the phenomenon or event that is being studied in an in-depth and detailed way. The data collection technique is by means of observation of the research field, collecting data, interviews, and documentation.

Keywords: The Role, Education, Intellectual Disabilities.

INTRODUCTION

Education is crucial for an individual's success both now and in the future. It provides a wealth of facts and knowledge that enhance a person's life and behavior. Everyone, regardless of status, religion, ethnicity, race, or membership in a particular group, has the right to a good education. Education is a vital and primary sector in national development. The state bears full responsibility for education in shaping the next generation of the nation. Various educational policies and programs are continuously being implemented and pursued to build and improve the education sector (Alawiyah, 2017).

Formal education refers to education conducted through established educational pathways in schools. This pathway has a clear and structured educational hierarchy. Formal education begins with primary education, followed by secondary education, and continues to higher education. Non-formal education is an educational pathway that takes place outside of formal education. This type of education can be conducted in a structured and tiered manner. Common forms of non-formal education include those found in mosques, Islamic boarding schools, Sunday schools, churches, and others.

Children with special needs (CWSN) have the right to receive an education. These children possess characteristics that differ from those of children who suffer from general mental, emotional, or physical illnesses. Educating children with special needs is not an easy task; it requires a great deal of patience, love for the students, an understanding of child psychology, and specialized skills to support their growth and development. Collaboration with the parents of children with special needs is also essential. For instance, mastering Braille for visually impaired students and sign language for hearing-impaired students are two examples of the specialized skills needed.

According to Mohamad Takdir Ilahi (2013:18), education for CWSN is generally provided in special schools (SLB), but the locations of these schools are often not easily accessible. This is due to the uneven distribution of SLBs across various regions, including rural areas. Dedy Kustawan (2013:16) states that the function of inclusive education is to ensure that all CWSN have equal opportunities and access to education that meets their needs. Another perspective is offered by Efendi (2018), who explains that intelligent solutions are necessary to fulfill and address the educational needs of CWSN. A conference held in Thailand discussed education for all children, and since the declaration of "Education for All," there has been a reinforced commitment to this initiative, along with a work program aimed at providing education for CWSN, which is expected to serve as a guideline for society in implementing education for these children (Pratiwi, 2015).

Those with below-average intelligence are referred to by various terms, such as mental retardation, mental deficiency, mentally handicapped, feeble-minded, and mental subnormality. The diversity of these terms arises from the differences in academic disciplines being discussed and the interests of the participating experts. Nevertheless, all these terms refer to the same concept: describing a condition of delayed and limited intellectual development compared to the average or typical child, often accompanied by limitations in adaptive behavior. Children with intellectual disabilities, who experience cognitive delays, face various challenges in meeting their needs, and even if a few can meet them, it largely depends on the extent of the obstacles they encounter and the attention provided by their environment. Undoubtedly, this condition necessitates services tailored to the specific needs of children with intellectual disabilities (Widiastuti, N. L. G. K., & Winaya, I. M. A., 2019).

Education for children with special needs offers numerous benefits for these children. Their abilities can be cultivated through education, which can then be developed into valuable skills for their lives since many children with special needs possess talents that are not typically found in other children. Education is crucial for their social development as it allows them to interact with others and be treated equally alongside their peers. Children with special needs have the same rights to education as any other child (Alawiyah, 2017).

The concept of education for children with special needs (CWSN) encompasses a broader spectrum compared to the concept of exceptional children (Ikramullah & Sirojuddin, 2020). In the context of education for CWSN, more specific services are utilized due to the unique learning barriers and academic development challenges they face, such as those experienced by individuals who are visually impaired, physically disabled, emotionally disturbed, hearing impaired, speech impaired, or intellectually disabled. Consequently, their learning achievements differ from those of typically developing students, which also impacts their emotional processes and social control (Abd. Kadir, 2015 in Wijaya et al., 2023).

Considering that inclusive education is a service characterized by distinct features, the professional capabilities of teachers are essential. Some necessary skills that teachers must possess in inclusive education programs include: (1) the ability to create a conducive learning environment where students feel comfortable; (2) designing and conducting assessments for all CWSN and regular students to measure their learning abilities; (3) developing Individual Learning Programs (ILP) collaboratively with special guidance teachers; (4)

implementing innovative and varied teaching methods and media; (5) preparing remedial learning programs, enrichment activities, and acceleration for students who need them; and (6) effectively managing classroom administration based on assigned tasks and areas of expertise (Purnomo, 2016 in Wijaya et al., 2023).

Based on the 1945 Constitution, Article 31, Paragraph 1, and Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, it can be concluded that the state fully guarantees children with special needs access to quality educational services. These laws reflect the development of education in Indonesia, which is closely linked to the concept of inclusive education, a term that emerged in 1990 during the World Conference on Education for All. Inclusive education is a system of educational services that requires children with special needs to learn in nearby schools in regular classes alongside their age-matched peers (Sapon-Shevin in O'Neil, 1994). This indicates that education does not recognize differences in physical abilities, race, ethnicity, or religion.

In 1990, not all regular schools in Indonesia were classified as inclusive due to a lack of qualified human resources in the field of inclusive education. Indonesia initially implemented integrated education and began moving toward inclusive education in 2000. This shift signifies positive progress for education in Indonesia. With the introduction of inclusive education, schools are required to undergo various changes, from perspectives and attitudes to educational processes that focus on individual needs without discrimination. As a result, children with special needs can receive an education tailored to their unique potential.

METHODS

This research employs a qualitative descriptive methodology. Descriptive research aims to examine and understand the state, condition, or other aspects that have been identified in the form of a research report (Sugiyono, 2017). The goal of this study is to describe the phenomena or events being researched in a detailed and in-depth manner. This approach focuses on understanding the context, processes, and meanings attributed by individuals or groups to a particular phenomenon. Data collection techniques can utilize various methods that are conducted progressively and continuously until data saturation is achieved in the research (Wijaya, 2019).

The techniques employed by the researcher to seek and gather data include:

Field Observation

This technique is conducted to obtain primary data by observing the research setting directly. It involves collecting data from relevant references related to the study. Field observations allow for firsthand insights into the behaviors, interactions, and environmental factors influencing the phenomenon under investigation.

Interviews

This technique is used to gather data by posing direct questions to respondents. Semi-structured interviews are particularly beneficial as they allow respondents to elaborate on their thoughts and experiences, providing rich qualitative insights. The interviews are designed to explore participants' perspectives in depth, ensuring that their voices are accurately represented in the findings.

Documentation Review

This technique aims to document essential information that needs to be recorded for analysis. It involves reviewing existing documents related to the research topic, such as reports, articles, and educational materials. This method helps triangulate data collected through observations and interviews, enhancing the validity of the findings.

Data Analysis Process

The analysis of qualitative descriptive data involves several key steps:

Coding

Initially, the researcher will code the collected data by identifying themes or categories that emerge from the responses during interviews and observations. This process helps organize the data into manageable segments for further analysis.

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis will be employed to identify patterns and themes within the coded data. This involves examining how certain themes recur across different participants' responses and observations, thus providing a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena being studied.

Field Notes

Throughout the observational process, detailed field notes will be maintained to capture contextual information about settings, participant interactions, and researcher reflections. These notes will serve as a critical resource during analysis, allowing for a richer interpretation of the data.

Data Interpretation

After analyzing the themes and patterns identified in the data, the researcher will interpret these findings in relation to existing literature and theoretical frameworks. This step involves making sense of how individual experiences contribute to broader understandings of educational practices for visually impaired students.

Validation of Findings

To ensure trustworthiness and credibility of the research findings, member checking will be conducted where participants review and confirm the accuracy of their contributions. Additionally, peer debriefing sessions may be held with colleagues or experts in the field to discuss interpretations and receive feedback.

By employing these comprehensive methods—field observation, structured interviews, and document reviews—this study aims to provide rich contextual insights into educational practices tailored for visually impaired students while maintaining rigorous standards throughout its methodology phases. Ultimately, this approach will contribute valuable knowledge towards enhancing inclusive education practices within the studied context.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Individuals with intellectual disabilities, as described by Kustawan (2016), are children who possess intelligence quotients (IQs) significantly below the average and are accompanied by deficiencies in adaptive behavior appearing during developmental stages. Despite these challenges, they can still cope with environmental demands. One of the goals of special education should be to prepare children with disabilities to enhance their integrity. Individuals with intellectual disabilities are also referred to as those with mental impairments. Their condition necessitates continuous attention, support, and specialized services from others. Significantly, this refers to weakened cognitive abilities accompanied by declining skills during child development processes. Here are three categories defining individuals with intellectual disabilities: low levels of intellectual ability, tendencies towards weak adaptive behaviors, and typically occurring during developmental stages (Putri, 2014). Several definitions provided by experts regarding children with intellectual disabilities include: (Apriandani, 2018)

Individuals who have general intelligence below average (IQ 84 or lower) before age 16 years. Those whose intelligence levels range from mildly mentally retarded (IQ between 50-70). These conditions are characterized by visible developmental delays that become more

apparent with increasing age. Children with mild mental retardation may experience difficulties such as being quiet or having trouble remembering numbers and speaking to anyone (Widiastuti & Winaya, 2019). The use of flashcard media can affect their ability to recognize numbers effectively.

According to AAMD (American Association on Mental Deficiency), intellectual disability is characterized by general intellectual functioning below average, with an IQ of 84 or lower, and appears during developmental stages before the age of 16. In line with this, the AFMR (Asian Federation for the Mentally Retarded) states that a child is categorized as having an intellectual disability if their intellectual ability is clearly below average and they face difficulties adjusting to their current environment. Whereas. According to Endang Rochyadi and Zainal Alimin, intellectual disability is closely related to low intellectual intelligence and is considered a condition. This statement is supported by Kirk, who states that this intellectual disability is a condition that cannot be cured with medication.

Thus, it can be concluded that a child with an intellectual disability is one who has low intellectual intelligence, struggles to adapt, and finds it challenging to perform tasks typically done by children of the same age. This disability commonly occurs during the child's developmental period. According to Indonesian regulation PP No. 72/1999, children with intellectual disabilities are classified into several levels:

- a) Children with mild intellectual disability (IQ 50-70);
- b) Children with moderate intellectual disability (IQ 30-50);
- c) Children with severe and profound intellectual disability, with an IQ below 30.

The results of interviews with SLB C Beringin Bakti teachers (Mrs. Lina)

The teacher's strategy for conditioning children with disabilities when learning is that if for children with donsindromes, the children are difficult to condition because they sometimes change their mood, so we as teachers must be able to adjust the children's mood well. Then sometimes the children often oversleep, but they can already sit neatly, how to pray, but donsindrome children themselves are very difficult to learn. donsindrome children themselves are very difficult to condition. The learning method used by the teacher is the classical method, but for learning the teacher uses the individualized method. individualized method, if using the classical method all, it cannot be done, because the children's abilities are different. can be done, because the children's abilities are different if the teacher uses the classical method, then the children will not be able to learn. using the classical method then the children will not catch what the teacher has explained, explained by the teacher. The learning tools used in the learning process are, if the material is recognizing the parts of plants, we bring the plants directly, then show and explain this is the name of the plant and its parts are leaves, stems and flowers so that children can see directly and know the parts of the plant directly. Because in learning to children this should not be abstract so it must be neatly organized.

The development of students is difficult to overcome, there are those who have no development at all, and there are those whose development looks significant back again to parental supervision and education of their children at home, because children at school only from 7 to 9 or 10 have gone home. Therefore, if the child's education at home is lacking it will affect the development of the child himself, besides that in the presence of his child to school, if the child rarely goes to school it will take longer to develop. If the child rarely comes in, it will take longer to develop, unlike children who always come in, it can be seen how their development is, sometimes we give material, a few minutes later the child is asked again, the child will forget. The involvement of parents at school is also very important, thankfully parents can work together in the learning process, and always support the learning process. Because the school always tells parents what activities they want to do at school so that parents can adjust well. During the teaching and learning process there are no major

challenges experienced by the teacher, the students can still be handled well. Mrs. Lina herself has been a teacher in SLB for approximately 14 years, from 2010 in Bandung, then now in Beringin Bakti for 3 years. SLB Beringin Bakti Cirebon itself still uses the KTSP curriculum, because SLB C schools are not yet adequate to follow the independent curriculum, because it is seen from the human resources of its students. My hope for SLB Beringin Bakti in the future is that the educators will be more competent, the teachers must learn more modern sciences that are developing at this time, more modern sciences that are developing at this time.

This conclusion from the interview with the teacher at SLB C Beringin Bakti illustrate the challenges and approaches in the education of children with intellectual disabilities at SLB C Beringin Bakti. Flexibility, parental involvement and the use of concrete learning tools are key to overcoming the challenges. Improved teacher competence and support from external parties such as psychologists are also urgently needed for further progress.

Interview results with SLB C Beringin Bakti student (Sifa)

Based on the interview with Sifa, Sifa is a student who has a positive experience at school. She enjoys the learning process, especially math, and feels happy and excited when learning because she has many friends. The comfortable, clean classroom atmosphere and good friends make her learning experience enjoyable.

learning experience. The learning process in class focuses on learning without being interspersed with games. Her teachers teach in a way that is easy to understand. Besides math, Sifa also enjoys art lessons. She is active in group activities and plays with her friends during breaks. Sifa aspires to be a teacher and prepares herself by studying hard, doing her assignments, and being disciplined in collecting assignments. Sifa goes to school by herself and often snacks in the canteen during breaks. School activities run from Monday to Friday, with Saturday and Sunday used for extracurricular activities. The school schedule starts in the morning and ends at 09:30, with a break at 09:00. There are special activities such as Quran recitation on Wednesdays and sports on Fridays. Sifa also participates in a cracker-eating competition during the August 17 celebration. She plans to continue her junior and senior high school education at the same school, indicating her satisfaction and comfort with the current school environment.

Overall, the conclusion of the interview with a student named Sifa at SLB C Beringin Bakti provides a clear picture of the learning environment at SLB C Beringin Bakti from the students' perspective. Sifa feels comfortable and happy with the school atmosphere and the learning provided. Social activities and participation in extracurricular activities show positive support from the school environment. Despite having some more passive habits at home, Sifa remains focused on her goals by studying hard and being disciplined in her assignments.

Interview results with parents of SLB Beringin Bakti students

1. Why did you choose to send your child to SLB Beringin Bakti?

Student guardian answer: Because the children are polite, the brotherhood is close, The teacher is good at teaching his children, because he was once sent to school in gegunung but the child is like being ostracized, because the teacher takes care of 37 children, but here the teacher supervises 5 children. but here the teacher supervises 5 children so they can be monitored properly.

2. During the move, what changes did your child get?

Student guardian answer: the child is more polite, if there are guests the child often gives water and speaks softly.

3. How is the communication between the teacher and the child?

Answer from the student's guardian: Alhamdulillah, he is very polite, he never gets angry and his communication with the parents who look after him is also good, keep in touch with the parents who look after the children and the teachers. to parents who look after their children and the cooperation is good.

4. Is there any additional program at school?

Student guardian's answer: held a coloring competition in Tegal and won, then a mask dance competition, thank God. won, then a mask dance competition, thank God this school is very often participate in competitions so that I am very grateful to send my child here. here.

5. How do you contribute when the school holds an event?

Student guardian answer: parents often help children prepare what they want to perform, such as the what they want to show, such as chasing their children and chasing the environment around them. environment.

6. Are there any school decisions that are not in line with your expectations?

Student guardian's answer: Alhamdulillah, nothing, in fact I am very grateful because school that I used to pay for, which was promised to be returned but was not, but in this school it is free and uniforms are given. But in this school, the school is already free and uniforms are given, that's why I'm very happy that my child goes to Beringin Bakti SLB.

The conclusion of this interview with parents of SLB C Beringi Bakti students illustrates the positive experiences of parents of students at SLB Beringin Bakti. The reason for choosing the school is based on the quality of interaction and attention provided by teachers, which has a positive impact on children's behavior. Good communication between teachers and parents and the existence of additional programs that develop children's talents also add to parents' satisfaction. add to parents' satisfaction. Parents' involvement in school activities shows good collaboration between school and family, providing a supportive learning environment for children. supportive learning environment for children.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that education for tunagrahita children at SLB-C Beringin Bakti Cirebon involves the use of lesson plans (RPP) that are tailored to the needs of students, such as reducing the level of difficulty of the material or eliminating irrelevant material. In the learning process, teachers implement efficient classroom management by starting and ending lessons on time and providing active assistance to students. Parental support also plays an important role in improving the quality of education, and interview results show parents' satisfaction with their child's progress, both in speech and behavior, after attending SLB-C Beringin Bakti.

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