

The Implementation of Inclusive Education for Student with Visual Impairment in Three Schools in Jakarta

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I. OVERVIEW

Background of the Problems

In the big city like Jakarta that has various kinds and levels of educations, the attention to the visually impaired children recently is aimed to be more intensive toward inclusive education.

Based on a brief interview to the Principal of the SLB-A (Special School for the visually impaired) Pembina Tingkat Nasional (the national level of the exemplary school), in south of Jakarta, it is said that this kind of program has been implemented since 2002. However, the implementation is not yet optimum because many of the children, parents and teachers involved in this program are not completely ready to participate in the inclusive program. They are usually more ready to go to the regular school after they have graduated from the elementary school.

So far, those who go to regular schools are those whose intelligence is average or above and ready to participate in regular school activities. For those who are not

yet ready and whose intelligence is below average, they stay at the SLB-A (special school for the visual impaired).

The main obstacle in the inclusive education is the negative attitudes toward visually impaired children by the general public. They consider visually impaired children to be inferior or less capable than typical children.

According to the SLB-A School Principal, there are some itinerant teachers who have been prepared to provide consultation to regular teachers on how to deliver instructions to the visually impaired students. In south of Jakarta so far, there are 5 (five) itinerant teachers spread out among 6 (six) regular schools with visually impaired students. Those schools are: Sekolah Dasar (SD = Elementary School) 02 Lebak Bulus with 2 (two) students; Sekolah Menengah Pertama (SMP = Middle School) 226, South Jakarta; SMP 191, West Jakarta; SMP 115 Tebet, South Jakarta with one student; Sekolah Menengah Umum (SMU = High School) 66; and SMU 46. Unfortunately, the number of itinerant teachers is still inadequate and they required more training to deal with practical problems they encounter in schools.

The Provincial level of Department on Education is processing guidelines for schools implementing inclusive education. So far, very limited evaluation and research have been conduct on how regular schools with visual impairment students been implementing their educational system.

The Purpose of the Study

Theoretically, this study enhances the body of knowledge of the special education in Indonesia. Practically, this study is beneficial in terms of:

- having better understanding about the implementation of the inclusive education and knowing challenges and problems in implementing the inclusive education particularly for the visually impaired students,
- providing feedback and recommendations for improvement of the inclusive education to all parties involved, especially the schools, itinerant teachers, and visually impaired students.

Research Design

This is a qualitative approach study that employed interview and observation methods.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The definition of the inclusive education is cited from the Western Regional Resource Center (2002). Inclusive is defined as providing instruction which is specifically designed and providing supports for special-needs students in the context of regular educational settings.

It is because of several reasons included lack of interaction between special needs and regular students; teachers do not have sufficient skills in teaching techniques required to handle the inclusive program. In order for the inclusive program to take place successfully, it is required a regular classroom that is sensitive, and attended to the students needs and abilities.

Implementation of the Inclusive Education

Hallahan and Kauffman (2006) identify some issues to be considered in helping the participation of special needs students in a regular school. They included:

1. **The Teachers' competency and attitude**
The total number of students in a big class room, lack of skills in handling the special needs students, limited facilities or teaching aids to teach special needs students, result the inability of teachers to give sufficient attention to meet students' needs.
2. **Collaborative Consultation**
This collaborative consultation is usually involving the special education teacher or psychologist, and teacher of the regular school.
3. **Cooperation in teaching**
The cooperation in teaching means that instructions are delivered together by the special education and regular teacher in a classroom.
4. **Teaching Strategies and Existing Curriculum**
Two appropriate teaching strategies in inclusive education are cooperative learning and peer-mediated instruction or peer-tutoring. It is suggested to give special needs students a chance to be a tutor besides being a tutee.
5. **Accommodation and Adaptation**
Accommodation can be in a form of changes in the teaching instruction, the way of answering, the way of conducting an assessment without changing the content and difficulty level of the given materials, changing in time, input, output and participation in the level of help that is given.

In the adaptation, on the other hand, changes that are made usually are more significant included writing a teaching objective for special needs students that is different from typical students.

Western Regional Resource Center (2002) wrote that teaching method which prioritizes best practice is needed in order to implement inclusive education. Best practice emphasizes individualized instruction in its implementation.

Lessening some things are recommended in doing best practice, such as :

- Less whole class, teacher directed instruction, e.g. lecturing
- Less student passivity: sitting, listening, receiving, and absorbing information
- Less prizing and rewarding of silence in the classroom
- Less classroom time devoted to fill in the blank worksheets, workbooks, and other “seatwork”
- Less rote memorization of facts and details
- Less stress on the competition and grades in school
- Less tracking or leveling students into “ability groups”
- Less use of pull out special program
- Less use of and reliance on standardize tests

In another side, increasing some things are needed, such as :

- More experiential, inductive, hands-on learning
- More active learning in the classroom, with all the attendant noise and movement of students doing, talking and collaborating
- More emphasis on higher order thinking, learning a field’s key concepts and principles
- More time devoted to reading whole, original, real books and non fiction materials
- More responsibility transferred to students for their work: goal setting, record-keeping monitoring, evaluation
- More choices for students; e.g. picking their own books, writing topics, team partners, research projects
- More enacting and modeling of the principles of democracy in school

- More attention to affective needs and the varying cognitive styles of individual students
- More heterogeneously classroom groups where individual needs are met inherently individualized activities, not segregation of bodies
- More varied and cooperative roles for teachers, parents and administrators
- More reliance upon teachers' descriptive evaluation of student growth, including qualitative/anecdotal observation

III. METHODOLOGY

There were 2 (two) different methods, interview and observation, employed in this study in order to get needed data and information.

Interview Method

Interviewing those who involved in the implementation of the program. Based on the type of information required in and the subjects of the study, a semi-structured interview was chosen.

Observation Method

In this study, observation was conducted more toward observing the teaching learning activities for visually impaired students that took place in the classrooms.

Indicators used to design the interview and observation guidelines

Those indicators included:

- How is teacher's (both regular and itinerant) attitude toward inclusive education for the visually impaired students in Jakarta?
- How is teachers' perception on their competencies in handling visually impaired students in regular schools (included training that they had attended)?
- Do the school conditions support the implementation of the education for visually impaired students in the regular schools (for examples, the number of students, facilities, etc.)?
- How is the collaborative consultation implemented in the inclusive education for visually impaired students in Jakarta?
- How is the cooperation in teaching implemented in the inclusive education for visually impaired students in Jakarta?
- How is the teaching strategies and existing curriculum implemented in the inclusive education for visually impaired students in Jakarta?
- How is the accommodation and adaptation implemented in the inclusive education for visually impaired students in Jakarta?

- What other parts of the best practice which have and have not yet implemented in the inclusive education for visually impaired students in Jakarta?

Included also in the interview and observation guides all the reasons of why something has been done sufficiently and some other things have not been done optimally.

Subjects to be Interviewed

The population of the itinerant teachers are five (source: the interview with the SLB-A Pembina Tingkat Nasional, School Principal). Based on the number of the population and limitation of other facilities, interviewed was conducted to 3 (three) itinerant teachers of the SLB-A and 3 (three) classroom teachers who are implementing the inclusive education in the regular schools. Each teacher represented each level of education, they were SD (elementary), SMP (Junior High), and SMU (Senior High).

Object of Observation

The observation took place during teaching learning activities in the classroom where the inclusive education is implemented. The observation had been conducted for several days to gather sufficient ideas about teaching learning process in the classrooms.

Instruments

Instruments employed in this study consisted of an interview guide and an observation sheet. Researchers were equipped themselves with a tape recorder and some audio cassettes to record the interview process, especially the subjects' responses. During the observation process, a video recorder was used to record the observation activity.

Research Procedures

Preparation

In the preparation stage, the researchers designed the interview and observation guides with considering the purpose of the study, the problems and other related theories.

Implementation

The study started after the researcher contacted teachers and regular schools, which implemented the inclusive education and recommended by the School Principal of the SLB-A Pembina Tingkat Nasional. The interviews then were conducted to the classroom and itinerant teachers, and also the observation to the teaching learning process in the inclusive classrooms.

IV. Result of Study

	ELEMENTARY SCHOOL		JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL		SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	
	Itinerant Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Itinerant Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Itinerant Teacher	Classroom Teacher
Initial	Mrs. C	Mrs. S	Mr. A	Mrs. M	Mrs. O	Mrs. K
Period of teaching in SLB-A	21 years		21 years		26 years	
Period of being itinerant teacher	3 years		2 years		1 year	
Period of teaching in regular school		22 years		25 years		8 years
Period of teaching in class with visually impaired students		6 years		11 years		4 years
Teachers' attitude toward inclusive education	Positive, students become more motivated and more able to develop their academic achievements					
Teachers' point of view about competency in inclusive education for visually impaired students	Inclusion training in India has helped her in understanding a good inclusion	Experiences in teaching visually impaired students since 1999 has quite helped her	Training about ways of socialization in regular school was useful enough	Still need training about inclusion		
	Lack of material about Arab Braille and music notation	Need training about inclusion	Experiences in teaching help them.	Facing difficulty in learning new things because of age factor	Used to handle visually impaired students	
	Visiting regular school (\pm two days per week)	Teaching class	Visiting regular school (\pm one day per week)	Teaching class	Visiting regular school (\pm one day per week)	Teaching class

Roles and tasks	Giving consultation for classroom teacher	Assessing students	Giving consultation for classroom teacher	Assessing students	Giving consultation for classroom teacher	Assessing students
	Helping providing educational aid tools for visually impaired students	Making report for parents	Helping providing educational aid tools	Making report for parents	Giving consultation for visually impaired students	No remedial, giving additional tasks if there is problem and consulting it with itinerant teacher
	Translating Braille writing if needed	Giving remedial for students	Giving consultation for visually impaired students	Giving remedial for students		
	Giving evaluation for visually impaired students		Giving consultation for parents			
	Giving consultation for parents					
Accommodations and Adaptation	Visually impaired students sits in front of class with normal students / according to their needs					
	Visually impaired students and normal students have the same academic achievement target					
	There are some accommodations such as writing in Braille, painting is changed with plaiting.					
Implementation of best practice	Curriculum based on competency makes students more active, visually impaired students learn together with normal students, cooperation with parents, number of students is still not ideal					
Obstacles in practicing inclusive	Itinerant teachers and classroom teachers feel lack of training about inclusive education and still need that training					
	Itinerant teachers have difficulty in some lessons	Some normal students treat visually impaired students badly			Age factor is a problem for itinerant teachers in studying new things	
	Facilities in regular school, such as books, classroom, educational tools, are still not appropriate for inclusive education					

education	Some teachers do not support inclusive education		
	Some parents are not communicative		
	Introduction of itinerant teachers to classroom teachers is not facilitated well		

The three schools have tried to and still need to understand the change of integrative education to implementation of inclusive education. The struggle need to be facilitated with all means.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Theoretical Recommendations :

1. Interview with visually impaired students and their parents are needed to get more understanding about the effect of inclusive education for their development
2. Due to financial, time and human resources limitations, information about the implementation of best practice is still not adequate. Therefore, in depth interview about it is still needed in the future.

Practical Recommendations :

1. There should be a special training about inclusive education especially for regular school teachers so they can get deeper understanding and support the implementation of inclusive education
2. Facilities, such as sport facilities, books in Braille and room for meeting between classroom teachers and itinerant teachers, for visually impaired student in regular school should be increased more in order to get an optimal implementation of inclusive education
3. Regular schools should be more active in socializing the roles and tasks of itinerant teachers to regular teachers. It can make them easier to socialize with regular schools.

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