

Special Teachers in Inclusive Classes: Assisting Patterns for Children with Special Needs in Inclusive Settings

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Abstract. Inclusive education allows children with special needs to get quality education services together with other regular students. One aspect that contributes to the success of education and development of children with special needs is the assistance given by the special teacher in the classroom. The study aims to determine the effectiveness of the mentoring pattern given to children with special needs in inclusive elementary schools in the city of Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan. This research is descriptive and data collection is done by interview, observation, and documentation. The results of the study are, first, the special teacher should have a bachelor's degree in special education or a bachelor of Education and should have attended training or seminars to acquire insight and skills in assisting children with special needs. Secondly, assistance is provided to one child with special needs and the maximum is two children. Third, special teacher activities in providing assistance include coordinating with class teachers or subject teachers and parents of students with special needs, helping children with special needs in completing assignments, providing assistance during class hours, giving remedial notes, making special notes on children's development, and together with class teachers providing an assessment of the learning outcomes of students with special needs.

Keywords: Assisting patterns, inclusive education, children with special needs

1 Introduction

Children with special needs are part of Indonesian citizens so they also need to obtain proper and adequate education, just as other citizens do. Educational services for these children can be provided at an Extraordinary School (ES) with a segregation education system, and in public schools with an integrated education system. An integrated or inclusive education system in public schools also provides educational services for children with special needs so that they get quality education services with other regular children of their age in schools located near their homes [1,2,3,4].

Learning is a system or process of educating students that is planned or designed, implemented, and systematically evaluated. Therefore students can achieve learning objectives effectively and efficiently. Learning for children with special needs requires a separate pattern according to their individual needs, which are different from one another. Therefore it requires special assistance.

Assistance for these children in the learning process in the classroom is one of the factors that contribute to the success of their education and the development. In order to provide special

assistance, inclusive schools should be able to present special teachers. A special teacher has the duty to serve students with special needs who have difficulty learning either because of physical, mental, emotional or intellectual barriers or deficiencies, so that their potential is harnessed optimally.

It is expected that special assistant teachers are capable and ready to handle children with special needs in inclusive schools, and not only in special schools[5]. But the reality is that special counseling teachers in inclusive schools are still not maximal in providing assistance. There are still many special teachers who are not graduates of the Extraordinary Education Department so that their insights and knowledge are limited to children with special needs. Previous research discussing the task of a special teacher found that there were several special advisory assignments that had been carried out and there were several tasks that had not yet been carried out because of existing obstacles. Some of these obstacles were; the obscurity of inclusion systems implemented by the government so that they had not shown the assertiveness of the task of a special tutor in inclusive schools, the lack of collaboration and attention from the classroom teacher, and students with special needs themselves with a variety of behaviors and conditions that are often changeable and unpredictable[6]. Luh Ayu Tirtayani examined the assistance efforts of children with special needs in Early Childhood Education (ECE) finding that the process of assisting learning specifically (individually) has not been implemented by ECE educators in Singaraja City, Bali. Educators have not accommodated individual children's learning needs in regular class settings. In addition, the results of preliminary studies in the field found that there were many children with special needs who had to be accompanied by a special teacher because the class teacher seemed troubled and found the children as a heavier burden. Class teachers and shadow teachers are less able to collaborate and utilize their expertise to facilitate the learning process[7]. So, the main question of this research is how to pattern the mentoring of special counselors that are effective for children with special needs in the classroom learning process so that their development is optimal[8].

2 Research Methodology

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach with a focus on the mentoring pattern provided by the guidance teacher specifically to children with special needs in the learning process. The research was conducted in five elementary schools that provided inclusive education in the city of Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, namely SDN Banua Anyar 8, SDN Banua Anyar 4, SDN Gadang 2, SDN-SN Sungai Miai 5, and SDN Kuin Selatan 3. The participants in this research consisted of five principals, six class teachers, nine special teachers, and ten parents of students. Participation is determined by purposive sampling technique, namely, the subject directly related to the education process of children with special needs. Data collection was done through documentation, direct observation when learning, and interviews for three months starting from January till March 2018. Data analysis techniques used are data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification[9]. Specific data analysis aims to determine the educational background of a special teacher, the number of students with special needs accompanied by a special teacher, and activities carried out by a guidance teacher specifically in providing assistance. The

researcher triangulated data sources and techniques to get valid data. The research data set can be accessed at <https://osf.io/pfjr8>[10].

3 Results And Discussion

The following are the results of the analysis of data based on specific objectives in five elementary schools that provide inclusive education.

3.1 Special Teacher Education

Table 1. Background of Education Special Teacher

School Name	Description
SDN Banua Anyar 8	Nearly 90% of Special Teachers have a Bachelor's degree in Special Education
SDN Banua Anyar 4	60% of Special Teachers with a Bachelor of Special Education background
SDN Gadang 2	38% of Special Teachers with a Bachelor of Special Education background.
SDN-SN Sungai Miai 5	20% of Special Teachers with a Bachelor of Special Education background
SDN Kuin Selatan 3	20% of Special Teachers with a Bachelor of Special Education background

In the city of Banjarmasin, there are still many inclusive elementary schools lacking special teachers who have extraordinary educational backgrounds. The results of the research conducted by Elisa (2013) show that there are three background factors of being a teacher in the inclusive school of State Elementary School in Surabaya; first, because of the placement provided by the education office as the subject is a teacher who has a background in Teacher Education; second, because of economic needs and wanting to find experience, seeing that financial support in schools is still lacking; third, because of the curiosity about handling children with special needs and having experience with them long before working at the Elementary School in Surabaya[11].

The confidence of educators in planning and organizing learning is certainly largely supported by their understanding and skills related to the provision of interventions for children with special needs in class settings. Understanding and skills are very likely to be obtained through formal education. Therefore in the Governor of South Kalimantan Regulation Number 65 of 2012 Section 6 Article 19 paragraph (8) and in the Technical Guidelines for the Implementation of Inclusive Education in South Kalimantan Province, the minimum qualification of Special Advisory Teachers in general education units administering inclusive education is a bachelor of Education, Institution of Special Education (EISE) or Extraordinary Education Courses(EEC)[12]. According to

Movkebaieva Zulfija, Oralkanova Indira, and Uaidullakzy Elmira, skills in helping children with special needs to work with other friends, both regular children and fellow children with special needs, and foster responsibility for the efficiency of the entire learning process in the classroom can be learnt at university[13].

It is difficult to get a special counselor according to the qualification set because in South Kalimantan Province, only one university has an Extraordinary Education study program so that the number of alumni is limited, while the need for special teachers is very high. The solution taken by several schools to overcome this problem is to accept graduates from various departments who must attend training, workshops, and seminars to broaden their knowledge and skills to assist children with special needs. The results of the study of Francisca González-Gil, Elena Martín-Pastor, Noelia Flores, Cristina Jenaro, Raquel Poy, and María Gómez-Vela also show that teachers need training in the process of transforming public schools into inclusive schools, especially regarding inclusive methodologies and curricula[14]. In addition, there are also schools that require the newly received special counseling teachers to take an orientation or mentoring period for one to two weeks before going directly to assist the children in class. When educators have sufficient knowledge and experience, assistance or intervention for these children is optimal. Teachers who have teaching experience with such children will have good self-efficacy. Therefore in education or training, the need to practice dealing with children with special needs is not just a theory [14, 15, 16, 17].

3.2 Number of Students Accompanied

Table 2. Comparison of the Number of Students with Special Needs and Special Teacher

School Name	Description
SDN Banua Anyar 8	One special teacher accompanies 4 of the students with special needs
SDN Banua Anyar 4	One special teacher accompanies more than 3 crew members.
SDN Gadang 2	One special teacher accompanies more than 3 crew members.
SDN-SN Sungai Miai 5	One special teacher accompanies more than 1 crew member.
SDN Kuin Selatan 3	The lack of a special teacher. There are only 5 special teachers while the students with special needs are in 6 classes.

An average special teacher mentors 3 or more children with special needs. There are even schools that have to involve class teachers because they do not have a special tutor as needed. There is only one school that strictly applies one special guidance teacher to accompany one child. This shows

that the need for special teachers is still high and is required by schools providing inclusive education.

The absence of clear guidelines or rules about this makes different opinions and implementations arise. Some argue that the number of children with special needs accompanied by a special teacher depends on how light, moderate or severe the obstacles experienced by the students are. The lighter the obstacles, the more students the special teacher can assist. There are also those who argue that a special teacher can only assist a maximum of 2 students. However, in general, the number of children that must be accompanied by a shadow makes the teacher feel burdened and become less focused because sometimes the types of obstacles that these children have are different.

3.3 Special Teacher Activity

Table 3. Special Teacher activities

School Name	Make ILP	Coordination of Teachers and Parents	Accompaniment	Make Records of Child Development
SDN Banua Anyar 8	Not consistent in making ILP, depending on supervision from the principal or Special Education and Special Education Services	The teacher handed over all matters relating to children with special needs to the special teacher. Coordinate with parents of children with special needs in terms of student development and school assignments verbally, via SMS or WhatsApp.	Assisting children with needs in public classes, Providing additional lessons (tutoring) such as learning to read and recite if parents ask.	Special Teacher does not make special notes on child development.
SDN Banua Anyar 4	Not making ILP	Build coordination with teachers in terms of subject matter and learning evaluation results. Build coordination with parents verbally in terms of the learning process and the development of	Special teacher teaches children with special needs classes 1,2 and 4. In the 6th grade, the special teacher accompanies students with special needs in general classes.	Special Teacher does not make specific notes about child development.

SDN Gadang 2	MakeILP	students with special needs. Coordinate with teachers in the preparation of ILP. Coordinate with parents in terms of social development, emotions, and student academic tasks.	Special teachers and class teachers are teams in the class.	Special Teacher makes special notes on child development.
SDN-SN Sungai Miai 5	Not making ILP	Coordinate with class teachers and parents of students with special needs verbally in terms of academic development for students with special needs, activities, and needs of students at the school.	Special teacher provides assistance in class and outside the classroom.	Special Teacher does not keep track of children's development.
SDN Kuin Selatan 3	Not making ILP	Build coordination with teachers in the subject matter. Build coordination with parents of students in terms of the learning process and the development of students with special needs.	Special teacher provides assistance during the learning process in the classroom.	Not all special teachers make special notes about child development.

The role of the special teacher is to understand the various difficulties of learning and how to handle children with special needs well and allow children to receive the special attention that they need. Teacher tutors are specifically trained to help children interact with others and help them understand the lesson. According to Sari Rudiwati, the task of special supervisors includes organizing special administration, conducting assessments, arranging individual education programs (ILP), organizing a plus curriculum, compensating teaching, disseminating student

communication, procurement and management of teaching aids, family counseling, and program development[18]. In the guidelines for the implementation of inclusive education in the Province of South Kalimantan, there are also several basic special teacher tasks, but researchers focus on four things: compiling the Individualized Educational Program or Individual Learning Program (ILP), establishing a system of coordination with classroom teachers and parents of children with special needs, providing assistance and academic learning for the children, as well as making special notes on children's development.

Fannisa's research results in Yogyakarta illustrate that the duties of special teachers that have been carried out in schools are special administration, conducting assessments, arranging ILP, providing remedial services, conducting and managing learning media, and providing family counseling[6]. However, the results of this study show that there are still many special teachers who have not compiled the Individual Learning Program due to lack of knowledge and skills on how to compile it, and the absence of special teacher independence to develop ILP. Yet, ILP is very necessary so that learning is more directed according to the needs and abilities of these children.

All special teachers build coordination with class teachers and parents of children with special needs. This coordination is carried out in terms of the learning process, subject matter, and assessment of student learning outcomes. Coordination with parents of the children is done in terms of providing information about children's development, learning processes and materials in class, assignments, or children's needs in the learning process so that children's development is more optimal. Some special teachers coordinate with parents through contact books, SMS, WhatsApp, or verbally when picking up or delivering children. In line with the results of Chih Nuo Grace Chao's research, Francisco Tsz Tsun Lai, Mingxia Ji, Sing Kai Lo, and Kuen Fung Sin state that parents can be involved in their children's education process by forming collaborations with professional experts or consultants, teachers, and fellow parents of children with needs specifically so that the support given to children is more effective[19].

In general, special teachers assist children during the learning process in the classroom. They help children to be able to understand the material delivered by the teacher by doing repetitions or remedials, as well as helping in completing the tasks given by the teacher. However, sometimes special teachers can also provide instructions for children in special classes if children cannot take general classes together with regular students. Outside of school hours, there are special teachers who keep accompanying the children who are their responsibility until parents pick them up, but there are also those who release them; in the sense that the special teacher only accompanies them during the learning process.

The parents of these children need simultaneous information about how their children are developing while in school, what their duty is, how their emotions and attitudes are today, and what needs to be prepared to facilitate the learning process in the classroom. For this reason, the special teacher keeps a diary of students in relation to their behavior during the learning activities inside and outside the classroom and the abilities that have been achieved in a connecting book. If this is done, it will show the child's development process and make it easier for the special teacher to report child development at the end of the semester. However, it turns out that there are still many special teachers who have not carried out this task on the grounds that it takes a lot of time, they are not diligent, sometimes they do it and sometimes they don't, or there is no order from the principal to do so. This is related to the professional competence of special teachers which is still low.

4 Conclusions And Suggestions

4.1 Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that in the city of Banjarmasin there was a uniform pattern of assistance provided by special teachers to children with special needs in schools, especially in terms of establishing a coordination system with class teachers and parents of the children, and providing assistance during the learning process in the classroom. What still needs to be built is the special teacher's willingness to hold a special administration, namely, making special notes on children's development as information for parents which will make it easier to write reports on the children's progress in each semester. Special teacher needs according to the qualifications determined by the regional government are still high. There are still many schools that lack special teachers both in quantity and quality.

4.2 Suggestion

Based on the results of the research that has been carried out, researchers can suggest more intensive coaching, coordination, and evaluation from the City Education Office or Banjarmasin City Inclusive Education Communication Forum so that there are similarities in understanding, perceptions, and in the actions of those in charge of schools providing inclusive education. Considering that there are still many special teachers who are not from exceptional educational backgrounds, it is necessary to carry out the implementation of technical guidance, training, workshops, and seminars, not only on the introduction of students with special needs but also on special administration such as the preparation of ILP. Also, how to provide intervention so that the optimal development of children and human resources in schools is constantly improved. Finally, clear rules regarding the maximum limit of a special teacher need to accompany children with special needs.

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