

## **Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education in East Java Indonesia**

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**Abstract:** Teacher's attitude towards inclusive education becomes an important variable for the successful implementation of the program. This research aims to examine whether there are differences of teachers' attitude toward inclusive education in terms of the duration of training and the teaching experience of students with special needs. The research was conducted in regular schools that provide inclusive education services in East Java, at elementary, junior high school, high school and vocational high school. Data were collected using a questionnaire and analyzed with Two Path Variant Analysis. The results showed that there were significant differences of teachers' attitude towards inclusive education. The more experienced and the longer the duration of the training, the more positive the teacher's attitude towards inclusive education.

**Keywords:** teachers' attitudes, inclusive education

### **INTRODUCTION**

The implementation of inclusive education in East Java was started in 2003, by piloting in three primary schools. In the improvement, in 2017 there were 319 primary schools, 59 junior high schools, 50 senior high schools and 38 vocational high schools. The amount above was only 0,02 % from the whole numbers of regular schools in East Java, in 2017 there were 27.888.

Many components determine the success of inclusive education. They are culture that grows in regular school to receive and appreciate the diversity, school policy that is non-discriminatory, and the implementation of learning that involves all students and accommodative toward student diversity. One of the significant components in the implementation of inclusive education is the teacher. Avramidis and Norwich (2002) stated that positive attitude from a teacher toward inclusive education specified the success of the inclusive education implementation. This argument was also supported by the research result of Bunch, Lupart and Brown (1997).

Attitude can be understood as assessment – positive or negative – toward an object. Petty and Cacioppo stated completely the definition of attitude is general evaluation created by human toward their self, other people, objects, or the problem (Azwar, 2007). The development of inclusive education in East Java that is accompanied by the increasing of the number of students with special needs became an interesting material to investigate. One of the attractive problems is about the teachers' attitude toward inclusive education,

because attitude is a predictor for behaviour. It means that if the teachers' attitude toward inclusive education is positive, it can be predicted that teacher will act positively in running the jobs related to the education for students with special needs.

The research of teachers' attitude toward inclusive education or students with special needs has been widely investigated. The research of Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996), concluded that most teachers believed that inclusion gives many benefits, but less than one third teachers feel that they have enough time, skill or resource to design the students with special needs in regular class. Moberg's research (2003) found that teachers in Finnish and Zambia generally agreed that the students with special needs in severe condition were placed in more limited environment than the students with special needs in moderate condition. Teachers in Finnish, Finland felt the most difficult is to receive and serve students with intellectual barriers or behaviour problem, and teachers in Zambia, felt the most problematic is when serving students with physical barriers. The research of teachers' attitude in a primary school in Jakarta showed positive attitude toward inclusive education, although the majority of participants felt that they have lack of knowledge and experience in inclusive education practices (Kurniawati et al., 2012).

This research aims to examine differences of teachers' attitude toward inclusive education based on the hours of training they attend, and the experience of teaching students with special needs. In more detail, the research questions are formulated as follows.

**Table 1. Two Ways ANOVA Summary of Teachers' Attitudes toward Inclusive Education Based on Teaching Experiences of Children with Special Needs and Training about Inclusive Education**

Source of Variances	DF	Sum Squares	Mean Squares	F <sub>Cal</sub>	F <sub>Tab</sub> 5%
Between Columns	3-1= 2	1353.58	676.79	10.49	3.13
Between Rows	3-1= 2	1191.44	595.72	9.24	
Interaction	2 x 2= 4	-121.64	-30.41	-0.5	
Within	77-(2x2) = 73	4383.72	64.47		
Total	77-1= 76	6807.09			

*First*, are there difference of teachers' attitude towards inclusive education based on differences in teacher experiences in teaching students with special needs? *Second*, are there difference of teachers' attitude towards inclusive education based on differences in the duration of training they attended in inclusive education? *Third*, are there interaction between differences based on the hours of training and the teaching experience of students with special needs on the teachers' attitude towards inclusive education?

## METHOD

The questionnaire was distributed by online, started from August 16<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> 2019. Overall respondents who filled out the forms were 80 and those declared as eligible were 77 from the number of respondents, 28 men and 49 women. The respondents came from 24 districts and cities in East Java Province, with diverse distribution. In terms of age, respondents aged over 50 were 19 or 24.7%, the ages between 20 to 30 years old were 6 or 7.8%, and 52 people or 67.5% have ages between 30 to 50 years old. Judging from the origin of the institution where the respondent works, 45% of respondents are elementary school teachers, 18.2% of respondents are junior high school teachers, and 36.3% of respondents are teachers in senior high school and vocational school.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts, the first part is about demographics and the second part is about inclusive education. To explore the attitudes of teachers about inclusive education, 16 questions were made, with details 9 positive questions and 7 negative statements. Likert scale model is used, with a range of 1 to 6, value 1 means strongly disagree and value 6 means strongly agree. Instrument reliability was tested on 38 teachers in Malang City. The reliability of the instrument was tested through split half technique and it was known the value of correlation coefficient 0.6. This means that the instrument used has high reliability. The data analysing of this research was carried out using the Two Path Variant Analysis.

## FINDING

The teacher experience of teaching children with special needs from all respondents of this study was grouped into three categories. First is teaching experience between 1 to 3 years. Second is the teaching experience between 4 s.d. 6 years. Third is more than 6 years of teaching experience. The duration or the length of the training hours that teachers participated was grouped into three categories, namely 10 to 30 lesson hours; 31 to 60 lesson hours and more than 61 lesson hours.

Based on table 1, it can be explained the conclusions of the two-way ANOVA test results, including tests of differences between columns, between rows and interaction tests. For the column test, examine the difference of teachers' attitude towards inclusive education based on differences in teacher experiences in teaching students with special needs. The F<sub>Tab</sub> price is sought with DF between columns as a numerator = 2 and DF in as the denominator = 73. Based on DF (2:73), the F<sub>Tab</sub> price = 3.13 for errors of 5% and 4.92 for error 1%. Because the F<sub>Cal</sub> value (10.49) is greater than the F<sub>Tab</sub> (10.49 > 3.13), H<sub>a</sub> is accepted and H<sub>o</sub> is rejected. This means that there are differences in the attitudes of regular teachers towards inclusive education based on differences in the teaching experience of students with special needs.

For the row test, examines whether there are differences in the attitudes of teachers toward inclusive education based on the duration of training hours that teachers participated. The F<sub>Tab</sub> price is sought based on the numerator DF = 2 and the denominator of 73. The F<sub>Tab</sub> price = 3.13 for errors of 5% and 4.92 for errors of 1%. The F<sub>Cal</sub> price (9.24) turns out to be greater than the F<sub>Tab</sub> price for 5% and 1% (9.24 > 3.13 > 4.92), thus H<sub>a</sub> is accepted and H<sub>o</sub> is rejected. This means that there are significant differences in the attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education based on differences in the duration of the training they attended.

Interaction test examines whether there are interactions between differences in teaching experience and difference in the duration of training in teacher

attitudes toward inclusive education. The  $F_{Tab}$  price is determined by the numerator  $DF = 4$  and the denominator  $DF = 73$  ( $DF$  interaction and  $DF$  within). Based on this  $DF$ , then the price of  $F_{Tab} = 2.50$  for errors of 5% and 3.50 for 1%. The  $F_{Cal}$  (-0.5) is smaller than the  $F_{Tab}$  (-0.5 < 2.50), thus  $H_a$  is rejected and  $H_o$  is accepted. The conclusion is there are no significant interaction between differences in the duration of the training that teachers follow with the teacher's attitude towards inclusive education based on differences in teacher experiences in teaching students with special needs.

## DISCUSSION

The experience of teaching students with special needs becomes a variable that influences teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education. Teachers who are actively involved in the learning process toward students with special needs have a more positive attitudes compared to other teachers who do not have the experience of teaching children with special needs (Avramidis and Kalyva, 2007). This is in line with the research of Parasuram (2006), concluding that if teachers have acquaintances of persons with disabilities or make contact with persons with disabilities, then they have more positive attitudes.

The research from Leatherman and Niemeier (2005), concluded that teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education were influenced by their experience of teaching students with special needs in inclusive classes, by involving all children in learning activities including students with special needs. Research from Avramidis et al. (2000) showed that teachers who have actively implemented an inclusive education program for several years, have a significantly more positive attitudes compared to teachers who have little experience and even no experience in implementing inclusive education.

Research by Boyle et al. (2013) showed the opposite finding, where teachers who teach in the first year show a more positive attitudes compared to teachers who have taught several years. This was done in Scotland, where 68% of respondents had never previously received full training in inclusive education

In term of teachers take part in training in the field of inclusive education, is in line with the research of Avramidis and Kalyva (2007). They conclude that teachers who have attended training in special education have a more positive attitudes compared to teachers who have little training or have never attended training. Likewise, Pancofar and Petroff (2013) found that teachers who more often attend in-service training, they are more confident in their ability to teach, more interested and have more positive attitudes. The research from Avramidis, et al. (2000) showed that

teachers who had attended training on the substance of special education had significantly more positive attitudes than teachers who had little or even no training on inclusive education.

Research by Haegele, et al. (2018) showed the opposite result. The participation of Physical Education teachers in the two days of professional development workshop did not succeed in increasing teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education to be more positive than before participating in professional development activities.

Avramidis and Norwich (2002), conducted a literature review and concluded that there was sufficient evidence of teacher attitudes toward inclusive education, but not enough evidence about teacher acceptance of total inclusion or the 'zero reject' approach to special education provision. Teachers' attitudes are strongly influenced by the variables of conditions of students with special needs, in this case the level (severity) of their disabilities.

Horne and Timmons (2009) explored attitudes, beliefs and concerns for the inclusive education of teachers in primary schools on Prince Edward Island. They concluded that the teacher showed a positive attitude and the teacher agreed that the regular class was the best place for all students, including students with disabilities. Horne and Timmons (2009) also found that teachers suggested the training they needed was related to effective strategies for integrating students with special needs in regular classes. Through interviews, teachers at least need knowledge about children with disabilities, and how to teach them. The teachers feel frustrated and feel guilty when they can't do the best for all their students in class.

The importance of training for regular teachers was also shown in the research of Van-Reusen, et al. (2001). He concluded that teachers who attended training at a high level about special education had a positive attitude compared to teachers who took training at a minimum level. On the other hand Van-Reusen et al. (2001) reminded that teacher attitudes about the negative impact of the existence of students with special needs on the learning environment, learning strategies and delivery of material, and broadly impacted on the quality of learning in the classroom. It is understood that teachers in regular schools lack the ability and readiness to run inclusive education programs, especially at the secondary education level. It also suggested the importance of teachers being well prepared through training or professional development.

## CONCLUSION

There are differences of teachers' attitude towards inclusive education, based on differences in the duration of training and based on differences in the experience of

teachers teaching students with special needs. That is, the longer the training duration that teachers participate in inclusive education, and the more experienced the teacher is in teaching students with special needs, the more positive their attitude towards inclusive education.

Suggestions for further research in the field of inclusive education include: (1) Assessment of the competencies of teachers in regular schools in dealing with children with special needs; (2) Cooperation between regular teachers and special education teachers in inclusive class settings; (3) Construction training or professional development needed by regular teachers in handling children with special needs.

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