

Research Implementation of Special Detection Elementary School Service For Children with Special Needs in Banjarmasin

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Abstract: In order to shape the abilities and character of children with special needs, it is essential to provide early detection services in public elementary schools. This study, conducted in Banjarmasin, Kalimantan, examined six inclusive elementary schools with 102 children with special needs and 82 special assistant teachers. Using a descriptive qualitative approach with additional quantitative data collection through observations, interviews, and documentation, the study found that some public schools have implemented detection services for children with special needs. Special assistant teachers and coordinators were provided to supervise and support the activities of these children at school. The study concluded that detecting and providing services for children with special needs at an early stage is crucial as elementary school is the foundation for personality development. This is in line with the universal values and religious perspectives that every child has the right to equal education.

Keywords: Detection; services; characteristics of children with special needs.

INTRODUCTION

The education services provided for children with special needs in Indonesia are falling short of the desired standards. Numerous challenges have been identified in this field. In a preliminary survey conducted in March 2022 across six public elementary schools in Banjarmasin, it was discovered that the schools lacked precise knowledge about specific cases of children with special needs, relying solely on information provided by parents. Public schools do not establish personalized programs for these children, lack coordinators with specialized educational backgrounds, and do not have assistant teachers specifically trained to cater to the needs of students with special needs

Parents continue to aspire for their children to attend public schools due to the relatively high and burdensome cost of education in private schools, which is often unaffordable for most parents. While the government allows children with special needs to enroll in public elementary schools, there are limitations in terms of available quotas. As a result, parents resort to various measures, such as misrepresenting their child's condition, in order to secure admission for their son or daughter in public schools. This situation arises from the financial considerations, as the costs associated with private schools are comparatively higher and pose a greater financial burden (Suharsiwi et al., 2022)

The number of children with special needs varies across different regions in terms of population. In 2017, CNN data indicated that out of 4.6 million children in Indonesia, approximately 1 million children were both out of school and classified as having special needs (Susanto et al., 2019). The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection in Indonesia has recorded approximately 1.5 million children with special needs. Moving forward, the UN estimates that at least 10 percent of school-age children have special needs. Considering that Indonesia has a population of 42.8 million children aged 5-14 years, it is estimated that there are around 4.2 million Indonesian children with special needs (Darma &

Rusyidi, 2015). However, according to data from the Central Statistics Agency of Indonesia in 2017, the number of children with special needs was reported to be 1.6 million (Siahaan, 2022)

Children with special needs are children who have developmental disorders and disorders that require special services and treatment. Children with Special Needs are considered different by society in general (Minawati, 2015) Children with special needs are children who have physical limitations (blind and deaf) and psychological such as autism and ADHD (Budi et al., 2021) The definition of children with special needs can be interpreted based on the biological, psychological and socio-cultural context. The category of children with special needs usually has mental development deficiencies (Permata Sari & Paska, 2021), but the main symptom is underdeveloped intelligence (Shree & Shukla, 2016), characterized by a lack of skills during development (Stow & Selfe, 2018), thus affecting all levels of intelligence namely cognitive, language, motor and social abilities (Asep et al., 2020)

Problems in the implementation of inclusive education are very diverse. Starting from the factors of facilities and infrastructure (Ediyanto et al., 2023), curriculum modifications (Amka, 2017), school policies regarding services for children with special needs (Syifa Sofia, 2020), preparation of educational staff for students with special needs (Kartini & Aprilia, 2022), and academic assessment (Efendi, 2018). In fact, most teachers in schools have a negative perception of children with special needs (Arrah & Swain, 2014). This negative perception is related to the weakness of children in class and cultural values about the responsibilities that must be fulfilled by the family of the child with special needs (Prasetyo & Supena, 2021)

Implementing inclusive education serves as a strategy to enhance the quality of education, as it employs diverse learning methods that cater to all children while respecting their differences (Ashari, 2021). Currently, the education provided for children with special needs predominantly takes place in specialized educational units or schools. However, it is important to note that not all regions in Indonesia have access to such special schools (Susanto et al., 2019). This aligns with the findings of a survey conducted on 165 teachers and 35 parents of children with special needs in the Greater Jakarta area, where 79% of respondents expressed a lack of knowledge and skills in understanding the needs of children with special needs and handling their specific situations (Suharsiwi & S. Pandia, 2020).

It is very important to do assessment activities for children who are detected as having problems in the growth and development of children. The assessment carried out will provide accurate data to take a complete picture of the child's condition. This data is needed in order to develop a service program for children with special needs. However, not all schools in Indonesia carry out comprehensive assessment activities. This study focused on (1) the characteristics of children with special needs, and (2) early detection services for children with special needs at SD Negeri Banjarmasin. Quantitative data is also needed to see the percentage of types of children with special needs, the educational background of teachers, FGDs and expert opinions regarding the procedures for early diagnosis and detection of children with special needs in schools.

METHOD

Research Design

The research will adopt a mixed-methods design, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. The qualitative approach will be used for in-depth exploration and understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and challenges related to the special detection elementary school service. The quantitative approach will complement the qualitative

findings by providing statistical data on the prevalence of children with special needs and the number of special assistant teachers in the selected inclusive elementary schools (Group, 2021)

Research Setting and Participants

Research Setting: The study will be conducted in Banjarmasin, Kalimantan, Indonesia. Six inclusive elementary schools that offer special detection services for children with special needs will be selected as research sites. **Participants:** 102 children with special needs (or their parents/guardians) from the selected elementary schools. 82 special assistant teachers who are involved in providing support to children with special needs.

Qualitative Data Collection

- **Observations:** Researchers will conduct classroom observations to gain insights into the learning environment and interactions between children with special needs and special assistant teachers.
- **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with children with special needs, their parents/guardians, and special assistant teachers. The interviews will explore their experiences, perceptions, and challenges regarding the special detection elementary school service.
- **Documentation:** Researchers will collect relevant documents, such as school policies, curriculum materials, and individualized education plans (IEPs), to gain a comprehensive understanding of the special education program.

Quantitative Data Collection

Prevalence Data: The total number of children with special needs in the six selected inclusive elementary schools will be collected. **Special Assistant Teacher Data:** The number of special assistant teachers working in each school will be recorded.

Qualitative Data Analysis: The data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation will be transcribed and organized.

Thematic analysis will be used to identify recurring themes, patterns, and insights related to the special detection elementary school service.

Quantitative Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics will be used to analyze prevalence data and the number of special assistant teachers in the selected schools.

Integration of Findings

The qualitative and quantitative findings will be integrated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the special detection elementary school service for children with special needs in Banjarmasin. The results from both approaches will be compared and contrasted to gain a more holistic picture of the service's effectiveness and challenges.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval will be sought from the relevant institutional review board to ensure the protection of participants' rights and confidentiality. Informed consent will be obtained from all participants or their parents/guardians before data collection.

The research findings will be reported in a comprehensive research report, and the results will be disseminated through academic conferences, seminars, and peer-reviewed publications to contribute to the field of special education and support policy development for inclusive education in Banjarmasin, Kalimantan.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The results of the study found that the characteristics of children with special needs who were accepted at the inclusive elementary school in the Banjarmasin area consisted of

children with autism, ADHD, down syndrome, physical barriers, physically handicapped, and slow to speak. Information related to the diagnosis was obtained by the school from the parents with a psychological examination document. The mechanism for accepting children with special needs at SD N Banjarmasin is carried out by referring to parents' statements that their children are included in special needs and are entitled to services at public elementary schools according to the quota for accepting children with special needs. The parent's statement can be in the form of a certificate from the hospital or a psychological examination report, parents bringing their children to school or submitting videos of their children.

The results of the interview with one of the teacher informants stated that there was cooperation/involving psychologists, and some parents also brought an attachment to the child's history, for example having been to medical personnel, showing a video of the child or bringing the child directly to school before registering. (SD A) Early detection services for children with special needs use an IQ test attachment system when registering new students. (SD B). Early detection services through interviews with parents about how children communicate, recognize numbers, letters, etc (SD C).

According to the informant, the regulation from the local education office for the proportion of children with special needs in public schools is 10% (SD A, SD C) but in reality, in these schools more than 10% of the number of students or exceeds the stipulated capacity. (SD A) SD Negeri Pasar Lama 3 only accepts children with special needs in the mild and moderate categories. (SD B).

The mechanism stipulated in the admission of children with special needs in public schools is the same as for other students, but more specifically, starting from student admissions, parents observing first (consulting to schools). early detection by: first observation to the teacher, and the school provides an IQ test in collaboration with a psychologist. So schools require the attachment of IQ test results when registering new students. (SD A, B). Parents register the child and bring the child and then ask whether the child belongs to special needs or not and belongs to what category (SD C).

Based on the results of interviews with informants that there is no PPI curriculum because it adapts to school and the category of children is also not severe, except that the child cannot attend lessons at all (SD A). There is no special curriculum because it still uses the 2013 curriculum with improvements to the PPI curriculum. (SD B). The school has not yet implemented PPI, but there is an Individual Learning Plan (RPI) by a special assistant teacher (SD C).

As for the curriculum for children with special needs in schools, it is the supervising teacher who coordinates with the homeroom teacher. Meanwhile, special coordinators for children with special needs (special assistant teachers) also exist in schools from Guidance and Counseling graduates. The number of special assistant teachers at SD Negeri Teluk Dalam I is 15 people, of which 1 assistant teacher holds 1-2 students (SD A). There are 3 special assistant teachers, and a coordinating teacher for children with special needs (SD B). School C already has a teacher [special assistant, but the school has not implemented an individual mentoring program so no one has developed an PPI curriculum (SD C).

The task of the special assistant teacher is to accompany the child according to the needs in class, but sometimes outside of study hours they are still accompanied, such as during recess or when students come home from school where students have not been picked up. (SD A). The teacher's job is to supervise the activities of children with special needs (SD B, SD C).

For parents who have not checked with a doctor or psychologist when they enter school, the school provides a psychologist referral for their child to take an IQ test. The reports obtained are not only the results of children's IQ but also reports related to behavioral

assessments of children with special needs so that from these results a diagnosis of children with special needs is obtained. The results of the FGD and expert opinion resulted in a study both in terms of experience and expertise on what ideal conditions should be implemented, and how to overcome the limitations of parents so that they can examine their children in the right way.

The results of the questionnaire on the level of early detection of children with special needs in public schools in Banjarmasin, Indonesia are presented in table 1 below.

Table 1. Development of children with special needs at public elementary schools in Banjarmasin

No	Aspect	Average
1	Attention/Concentration	76,1
2	Expression/Emotion	78,1
3	Effective Communication	85,3
4	Independence	91,15

Table 1 shows that the level of early detection of children with special needs at elementary schools in Banjarmasin explains the level of attention/concentration with an average of 76.1 percent, aspects of expression or emotion at 78.1%, aspects of effective communication at 85.3%, and aspects of effective communication. children's independence reached 91.15 percent. Thus, it can be concluded that the early detection of children with special needs at public elementary schools in Banjarmasin can be categorized as quite good.

Discussion

Based on the research results, the discussions related to Inclusive Education Theory can be as follows:

Collaboration and Cooperation

The findings indicate that there is cooperation and collaboration between school professionals, such as teachers and psychologists, to support the early detection of children with special needs. This aligns with the principles of inclusive education, which emphasize the importance of multi-disciplinary collaboration in providing tailored support and services for all students, including those with special needs. By involving psychologists, the schools can gain valuable insights into the cognitive and behavioral aspects of children, which can guide the development of appropriate educational interventions.

Parental Involvement

The involvement of parents in the early detection process is crucial. Inclusive Education Theory recognizes the significance of engaging parents as active partners in their children's education. Parents who bring attachments related to their child's history, such as medical reports or videos, demonstrate their commitment to ensuring their child receives the necessary support in the school environment. This collaboration fosters a supportive and inclusive school culture where parents and teachers work together to address the diverse needs of students.

Individualized Assessment

Each school (SD A, SD B, SD C) appears to use different methods for early detection services. SD A uses an IQ test attachment system, SD B uses an interview-based approach, and SD C focuses on observing communication skills and cognitive abilities. This reflects the importance of adopting individualized assessment methods to identify the specific needs of each child accurately. Inclusive education emphasizes the use of diverse assessment tools

to cater to the unique strengths and challenges of children with special needs, promoting personalized learning plans.

Holistic Approach to Early Detection

The different early detection approaches used by the schools (IQ test, interviews, observation) collectively demonstrate a holistic approach to identifying children with special needs. This aligns with the principles of inclusive education, which advocates for comprehensive and multi-dimensional assessments to understand a child's abilities comprehensively. A holistic approach ensures that various aspects, including cognitive, social, emotional, and communication skills, are taken into account in the early detection process.

Promoting Access to Inclusive Education

Early detection services are an essential step toward promoting access to inclusive education. By identifying children with special needs early, schools can tailor their educational strategies and provide necessary accommodations to create a conducive and supportive learning environment. Inclusive Education Theory highlights the significance of early intervention and targeted support to enable children with special needs to fully participate and thrive in mainstream educational settings.

In conclusion, the research results demonstrate the implementation of early detection services for children with special needs in the context of Inclusive Education Theory. The collaboration between school professionals and parents, the use of diverse assessment methods, and the holistic approach to early detection reflect the commitment of the schools to create inclusive learning environments for all students. These findings contribute to the understanding of the significance of inclusive education practices in Banjarmasin and can serve as a basis for further enhancing support services for children with special needs in the region.

Previous studies corroborate the findings of this research, indicating that teaching methods for children with special needs, known as "special education," differ from those employed for typically developing children. Research demonstrates that effective instruction for students with disabilities necessitates an individualized, explicit, systematic, and intensive approach. These approaches vary in terms of class size, the extent of corrective feedback provided, and the use of reinforcement techniques (Hallahan et al., 2020).

The reality on the ground is that the characteristics of children with special needs who are accepted in public elementary schools (regular) are not in accordance with the policy (at least 10%), such as in terms of acceptance of specific types, the level of intelligence is still below average, there is no set limit for the number of students with special needs. Inclusive students are accepted, and do not yet have special infrastructure facilities, and there are no accompanying teachers (Ningtyas, 2017). Support from parents of children with special needs, parents of regular students, and new communities in the form of moral support (Darma & Rusyidi, 2015)

The actual situation indicates a disparity between the characteristics of children with special needs enrolled in regular public elementary schools and the policy requirements, which state a minimum inclusion rate of 10%. These disparities include the acceptance of specific types of disabilities, below-average intelligence levels, the absence of set limits for the number of students with special needs, the lack of inclusive education practices, insufficient infrastructure facilities, and a scarcity of accompanying teachers (Ningtyas, 2017). The support provided by parents of children with special needs, parents of typically developing students, and newly formed communities is primarily in the form of moral encouragement (Darma & Rusyidi, 2015).

Special services for children with special needs in public elementary schools are still lacking because they are still experiencing discrimination (Rochmansjah, 2020), the number of human resources is still limited both in terms of quantity and quality, the training provided for inclusive school teachers is still rare (Dewi & Subanda, 2017). Therefore, education for children with special needs in public schools must also be a priority no longer as a complement (Suryadarma & Jones, 2013), according to a religious perspective that all God's creations are equal and have the same rights in education, whether they have advantages or those who have deficiencies or abnormalities such as: the child with special needs (Irdamurni, 2015), and education is a primary need for all citizens. The results of this study are in accordance with research that found that the application of identification to primary school children with specific learning disabilities has had a beneficial impact (Nadiyah et al, 2022).

In conclusion, the research results demonstrate the implementation of early detection services for children with special needs in the context of Inclusive Education Theory. The collaboration between school professionals and parents, the use of diverse assessment methods, and the holistic approach to early detection reflect the commitment of the schools to create inclusive learning environments for all students. These findings contribute to the understanding of the significance of inclusive education practices in Banjarmasin and can serve as a basis for further enhancing support services for children with special needs in the region.

Some potential limitations of the research results on the implementation of early detection services for children with special needs in Banjarmasin include:

- **Sampling Bias:** There may be potential sampling bias in the selection of schools or participants. For example, certain schools or groups of children may be overrepresented or underrepresented, leading to a skewed perception of the overall situation.
- **Subjectivity and Social Desirability Bias:** The qualitative data collected through interviews and observations may be influenced by the subjectivity of the participants and social desirability bias. Participants may provide responses they believe are expected or favorable, which can affect the accuracy and reliability of the data.
- **Limited Scope of Data Collection:** The research results may be limited by the scope of data collected. For instance, the study may focus on certain aspects of early detection services, while other relevant factors that could impact the implementation and effectiveness of inclusive education are not explored.
- **Time Constraints:** Time constraints may limit the depth of data collection and analysis. In-depth qualitative research often requires considerable time to build trust with participants, conduct thorough observations, and analyze data comprehensively.
- **Context-Specific Findings:** The findings may be context-specific to Banjarmasin and may not be directly applicable to other regions with different sociocultural, economic, or educational contexts.
- **Lack of Longitudinal Data:** The research results may lack longitudinal data, which would provide insights into the long-term impact of early detection services on the educational outcomes of children with special needs.
- **Limited Quantitative Data:** While the research includes both qualitative and quantitative data, the quantitative data may be limited to basic statistics, such as prevalence rates, without deeper statistical analyses that could offer more insights.
- **Response Rates:** In the case of surveys or questionnaires, low response rates could introduce bias and affect the overall representation of the participants' views.
- **Ethical Considerations:** Ethical considerations, such as privacy concerns and informed consent, may impose limitations on data collection and analysis.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study are the developmental characteristics of children with special needs from early detection at public elementary schools in Banjarmasin City are included in the fairly good category, (2) Early detection services for children with special needs in public elementary schools in Banjarmasin are available although still limited. The results of this investigation can be information for stakeholders related to improving services for children with special needs in elementary schools, one of which is early detection services for children with special needs in schools. This information is also input for researchers to conduct many studies related to the topic of the accuracy of the examination of students with special needs, and it is necessary to study the assessment service model, the assessment service model needed to make it easier for teachers to provide intervention services for them.

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