
**KNOWLEDGE OF SPECIAL EDUCATORS FROM NON- SPECIAL EDUCATION
DEGREE ON SOCIAL INTERACTION OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM IN INCLUSIVE
SCHOOL**

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Abstract

The focus of this study is the knowledge of special educators from non- special education degree on social interaction of children with autism in inclusive school. The purpose of this study is to determine the percentage of special educators knowledge from non- special education degree on social interaction of children with autism in inclusive school. This research used quantitative descriptive method. The setting of this research were several public and private inclusive schools in Surakarta. The data collection instrument used was essay. The subject was special educators from non-special education degree in inclusive school taken randomly. The results of the essay were processed by using a scoring system that has been validated by expert in the form of scale and percentage of knowledge. The conclusion of this study is that 40% of special educators from non-special education degree have fair knowledge to the social interaction of children with autism and 60% still have slight knowledge so that guidebook and training about social interaction of children with autism are needed.

Keywords: knowledge of special educator, social interaction, children with autism, inclusive school

INTRODUCTION

Some public schools have turned to be inclusive schools, especially for those that have understood about the definition of inclusive school. The definition of Inclusive Education based on Ministry of Education and Culture (2015) is an open and learning-friendly education by promoting respect and embracing differences. Therefore, inclusive education is an approach that seeks to change education system by eliminating barriers that may prevent individuals from fully participating in education equipped with support services (Mangungsong, 2009). Inclusion school aims to make education as a place to increase participation of children with special need and reduce its separation from local culture, curriculum and community. A logical consequence of the principle of inclusive education is to notice the rights of every child to receive education that does not discriminate it with disability, ethnicity, religion, language, gender, and ability (Tarmansyah, 2007).

In inclusive schools, every child with special needs is accompanied by a special educator during teaching and learning process at school. Besides assisting children with special need in learning, the other duty of special educators is also help classroom teachers to create a modified Individual Learning Program (PPI) and Lesson Plan (RPP) in accordance

with the profile of children with special needs. However, some inclusive schools acquire special educators with non-special education degree. This is a major problem since inclusive schools should own special educators with good knowledge of the characteristics of children with special needs.

There are various kinds of children with special needs in inclusive schools including children with autism. Marlina (2009) explains: "autism is a term used to describe a kind of pervasive developmental disorder in children". Most children with autism will show some symptoms such as, lack of response to others, experience severe constraints in communicating, and create strange responses from various aspects of the environment around them, and all of these signs develop in the first 30 months of his/her birth (Widiastuti, 2007). The opinion states that almost all children with autism have characteristics that lead to impaired communication and social interaction. Such behaviors may arise at any time according to the child's condition when receiving stimulation from the environment. In terms of behavior, children with autism tend to hurt themselves, be unconfident, be aggressive, respond less or even excessively to an external stimulus, and move the body unnaturally.

Interaction is a relationship between individuals with each other. Individuals can influence

other individuals or vice versa, in the other words, there is a mutual relationship. The relationship can be between individuals with other individuals, individuals with groups or groups with groups. The general form of social processes is social interaction, whereas the particular form is social activities, and social interaction as proposed by Mery (2013) is a relationship between two or more individuals, in which the behavior affects, change, or improve the behavior of other individuals or otherwise.

From the opinion of experts above, researchers are interested in conducting research on the social interaction of children with autism with special educators from non-special education degree in inclusive school environment. Therefore, researchers conducted research on the knowledge of special educators from non-special education degree in knowledge the social interaction of children with autism in inclusive schools. In addition to direct observation, researchers also made an assessment instrument in the form of essay that has to be filled with the special educators about the social interaction of children with autism.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research used quantitative descriptive method. Quantitative descriptive research is conducted to explain, examine the relationship between variables, test theories and determine generalizations that have predictive value (Dharma, 2008). After obtaining the numerical data gained from the sample population of the study, it was then interpreted or described by using good and correct sentences.

Technique of collecting data in this research used by researcher was essay. The instrument was based on the adaptation of the meaning of social interaction of children with autism and it was developed by Soekanto (2005).

Below is the outline used to special educators from non- special education degree in the preliminary study.

Table 1. Guidance of knowledge instruments of special educators from non-special education degree

Theory	Aspect	Operational Definition	Scope	Chosen technique
Social interaction is a set of skills used to interact with each other in everyday life within the family, school, and society. (Septyasih, 2014)	Communi-cation	Ability to have a clear conversation or interrelation between children with autism and special educators.	1) Knowledge of teachers in understanding the characteristics of children with autism 2) Knowledge of teachers in verbal and non-verbal communication with children with autism.	essay
The forms of social interaction can be in the form of communication, cooperation, and behavior (Soekanto, 2005)	Co-operation	Ability to conduct activities together between children with autism and special educators	Knowledge and ability of teachers to do activities with children with autism	essay
	Behavior	The ability of children with autism with polite behavior and follow the rules provided by special educators	Teachers' knowledge in directing behavior of children with autism	essay

There were 5 essay questions as the assessment to measure knowledge of special educators with non-special education degree. The results of this research data are distinguished by using a scale. The scale used was based on Periantalo (2015), ordinal scale is a scale with the symbol of numbers arranged in accordance with the level of objects measured by certain characteristics

Table 2. Ordinal Scale

Final Score	Classification
86 – 100	Good knowledge
71 - 85	Fair knowledge
56 - 70	Slight knowledge
< 55	Poor knowledge

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Instruments essay of knowledge of special educators with non-special education degree were filled by special educators with non-special education degree selected randomly from several inclusion schools in Surakarta. The results of the essay are rated by 3 raters who have knowledge of the social interactions of children with autism. The average results by 3 raters is as follows:

Table 3. Average results of the essay

No	Initial of Teacher	Total score	Final score: Total score x 5
1.	LS	13	65
2.	NR	18	90
3.	FT	13	65
4.	LG	16	80
5.	FR	13	65

The data above shows that there are only 2 special educators with score more than 70 and 3 others have score below 70. From the percentage of special educators with non-special education degree knowledge, it can be concluded that:

$$\frac{\text{teachers with the score } <70}{\text{total teachers}} \times 100\%$$

then $\frac{3}{5} \times 100\% = 60\%$. It means that 60% of special educators with non-special education degree have slight knowledge of the social interaction of children with autism, while 20% have good knowledge and 20% have fair knowledge of the social interactions of children with autism in inclusive schools.

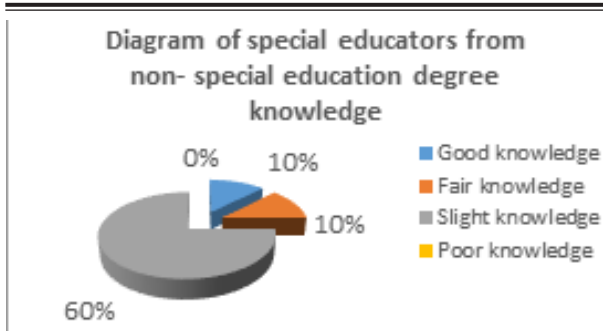


Diagram 1. Special educators from non-special education degree knowledge

Some special educators with non-special education degree taken by researchers have listed as new teachers who have not been trained and had recent teaching experiences. The result above is in accordance with the journal Haimour (2013) entitled *School Teachers' Knowledge about Autism in Saudi Arabia* that school teachers had an acceptable approaching to weak level of knowledge about Autism disorder. The results also indicated significant differences in the teachers' knowledge about Autism depending on teachers' (position, education level, teaching experience, and contact with students with Autism) favoring special education teachers, more advanced, level of education and teaching experience, and those with previous contact with students with Autism. There are several aspects that affect the teacher's knowledge, namely uncomprehensive level of education, teaching experience, and the teachers' knowledge of children with autism.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The conclusion is that there are 40% special educators with non-special education degree who have fair knowledge about the social interaction of children with autism while 60% other slight knowledge about the social interaction of children with autism in inclusive schools. There are several aspects that affect the teacher's knowledge namely, uncomprehensive level of education, low teaching experience, and the knowledge of special educators of children with autism.

There are some suggestions if that researchers can recommend for inclusion schools who receive special educators with non-special education degree are expected to provide training and learning models on various characteristics of children with special needs, especially children with autism and how to interact with children with autism. The trainings and learning models will give them knowledge to be implemented at school and it is expected that special educators with non-special education degree can assist and guide children with autism based on their needs.

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