

## CHILD FRIENDLY SCHOOL UNDERSTOOD BY TEACHERS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: A HERMENEUTIC PHENOMENOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

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### Abstract

The research investigates how the teacher of elementary school perceive their experience and understand “child friendly school”. The research utilized phenomenological methodology to form descriptive themes. The participants were teachers of elementary school who were selected from a private elementary school SD Muhammadiyah Klaten Utara, Indonesia. The participants have been teaching for 7 years or more consecutive year. The semi- structured repeated in depth interview were employed to collect the data. The findings suggested two themes relating to how the teacher experience and understand the child friendly school: (a) an alternative definition of child friendly school (b) teachers and school are friendly, but it seems the curriculum is not friendly.

**Key words:** Hermeneutic Phenomenology, Child Friendly School, Teacher of Elementary School, Indonesia

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to investigate how the teacher of elementary school understand and experience child friendly school during their teaching experience. Particularly, this study focused on how the teachers understand child friendly school at SD Muhammadiyah Klaten Utara, Indonesia then later explore how the experiences reflected in the issue of child friendly school. This study addressed the following questions;

- a. Main question  
How teacher of elementary school understand child friendly school during their teaching experiences at SD Muhammadiyah Klaten Utara, Indonesia
- b. Sub question  
How the findings reflected in the concept of child friendly school as defined by Unesco?

### RESEARCH METHOD

The goal of phenomenological

research is to bring out the lived experiences by the person who lived the experience being investigated (van Manen, 1997). The research questions in this study were designed to explore how Teacher of Elementary School understand child friendly school during their teaching experiences at SD Muhammadiyah Klaten Utara, Indonesia. Hence, phenomenological approach is matched to the purpose of the current research.

Phenomenological research begins in lived experiences; the aim is to transform the lived experience of the participants into meaning making expressions to advance our understanding regarding the phenomenon (van Manen, 1997). Accordingly, this is in line with the aim of this study that is, exploring Teacher of Elementary School understanding on child friendly school during their teaching experiences at SD Muhammadiyah Klaten Utara, Indonesia. Therefore, the research used hermeneutic phenomenology as approach.

There are two important reasons why the investigation of how elementary school teacher understand and experience child

friendly school during their teaching experience is timely and worthy of research. The first reason centres on the issue of child friendly school which has not been well explored in the perspective of the teachers who practically lived the experience in the school in Indonesia. The second reason is grounded on the importance of reality check practise, specifically, child friendly school in Indonesia. Phenomenological investigation in this issue offers an alternative insight how we understand the child friendly school in practise.

This research design was also appropriate because this study is exploratory. There has been little research on the topic of child friendly school focusing on a specific school level particularly teacher in elementary school by using the perspective of the teacher who lived the experience , therefore, it is not well understood.

A hermeneutic phenomenological study intertwines the interpretations of participants and researcher about the lived experiences to uncover layers of details and to identify the core of essence that is lived experience (van Manen, 1990). By using hermeneutic phenomenology, the role of researcher is to collect and interpret descriptions of teachers experiences to reveal layers of details and to identify the center essence that made those experiences.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A number of tentative themes emerged from the research on how the teacher of elementary school understand and experience child friendly school during their teaching experience. This theme is predominantly noticeable throughout the participant's description.

The findings suggested mostly two themes relating to how the teacher experience and understand the child friendly school:

(a) an alternative defenition of child friendly school (b) teachers and school are friendly, but it seems the curriculum is not friendly. While child friendly school as defined by UNESCO focus on how school become a child-centred school in which school acting in the best interest of the children, ironically

the curriculum in elementary school in Indonesia is more demanding than of which in Higher education in terms of quantity. This appear not to accomodate the children in elementary level. The students are loaded with 16 modules or subjects weekly. Consequently, the teachers are forced to be more focus on the score of each subject rather than the need of each student in the class as they have limited time yet many subjects to teach. This bring an unideal condition to the student in terms of school hours. They have 16 subjects every week with homework almost everyday. This unlikely a healthy child-centred school proposed by UNESCO. In other words, the curriculum should be overlooked as it seems not friendly to the students.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Further study focuses on the lived experiences of different school level is recommended. However, the replication of the research can be done by expanding the number of sampling and the number of school to be investigated. This study raises new questions for areas of future study of understanding child friendly school in practise. The findings have implications as summarized below:

- a. For policy  
Expanding the urgency of the importance of curriculum review and improvement in elementary school level.
- b. For schools and teachers  
Setting up a more accomodating child friendly school which is not only focus on the physical and philosopical but also the curriculum appropriateness.

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