

Elementary Level Tutor's Understanding on Inclusive Education at Homeschooling Global Lentera Kasih

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Abstract. Homeschooling as one of the alternative educational in addition to formal educational is starting to be in great demand by students who cannot follow the flow of learning in formal schools. The objective of this paper is to describe the understanding of Elementary Level tutors on inclusive education at Homeschooling Global Lentera Kasih. The method adopted in this research is study case with qualitative-descriptive approach. Research participants were the principal and academic staff of Homeschooling Glo Lenka as well as all elementary level tutors at Homeschooling Glo Lenka. Data were collected by interview, questionnaire, and observation methods. The indicators of understanding consist of: an understanding of student's condition, an understanding of inclusive education, and an understanding of how to apply inclusive education in the classroom. The findings showed that teacher's understanding of student's conditions and teacher's understanding of inclusive education was good while teacher's understanding of how to apply inclusive education in the classroom was still lacking. The conclusion is tutor's understanding of how to implement inclusive education was still lacking and can be improved.

Keywords: Teacher Understanding, Inclusive Education, Homeschooling

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INTRODUCTION

In the context of education, we know the term children with special needs. This term is addressed to children who differ from the average condition of normal children in general, in terms of their physical, mental and social behavior (Abdullah, 2013). The differences that these children have will certainly result in different learning patterns that adapt to the child's condition. In the past, the practice of education for children with special needs that occurred in various countries was carried out by placing these children in separate schools. Even in some cases, these children with special needs lose the opportunity to study at school. Smith (2012) recounts the case of a child with cerebral palsy in Wisconsin, who was expelled from school by court decision simply because he made teachers and other students feel depressed and disgusted. These events show that there is discrimination against children with special needs.

Along with increasing public awareness regarding the rights of children with special needs, there are also increasing efforts to provide proper education for them. The idea also emerged that placing ABK in a special class would only create a very destructive stigma against their self-concept (Lloyd Dunn, 1986, in Smith, 2012). This ultimately led to an inclusion concept in education where normal students and students with special needs can study together in the same class. Thus, globally inclusive education exists with the spirit to fight discrimination for children with special needs in obtaining quality education.

In Indonesia itself, inclusive education has become a concern of the government with the issuance of Permendiknas No. 70 of 2009 concerning Inclusive Education was then strengthened again with PP no. 13 of 2020 concerning Adequate Accommodations for Students. Inclusive education in Permendiknas No. 70 of 2009 is defined as an education delivery system that provides opportunities for all students who have disabilities and have the potential for special intelligence/talent to learn together with students in general.

The existence of a legal basis for inclusive education encourages both formal and non-formal educational institutions to transform into inclusive schools. Community homeschooling as a form of non-formal education cannot be separated from the need to organize inclusive education. Homeschooling is an alternative education for children with special needs because learning tends to be flexible and focuses on the needs of students (Hatimah, 2020). Homeschooling

is also an option for students who have experienced bullying to the point of being traumatized at formal schools (Ariefianto, 2017) or students who have other activities outside of academic activities. The diversity of students in the homeschooling class is inevitable and demands the implementation of inclusive education in it. Similar conditions can also be found at Homeschooling Global Lentera Kasih (Glo Lenka), where students with special needs study with other normal students in the same class.

In the implementation of inclusive education in homeschooling institutions, tutors have a very significant role. This is because they translate the concept of inclusive education into learning. Tutors are required to understand well the meaning of inclusive education itself, the learning obstacles faced by students and the various kinds of learning strategies needed in inclusive classes. Tarnoto (2016) revealed that one of the problems faced in implementing inclusive education in elementary schools is the teacher's lack of understanding about children with special needs and inclusive schools.

Understanding in Bloom's taxonomy is the second level in the process of human thought after knowing/remembering. Bloom states that understanding is the ability to master understanding, where at this stage humans do not just receive and know all the information received, but have arrived at capturing meaning (Darmawan and Sujoko, 2013). At this level of understanding, humans are able to deconstruct the initial construction of the knowledge gained (Tulasi, 2010). Some of the cognitive processes that fall into this category of understanding are interpreting, exemplifying, classifying, summarizing, concluding, comparing, and explaining (Krathwohl, 2010).

This lack of understanding ultimately makes teachers find it difficult to carry out appropriate learning in inclusive classes. This shows the importance of the tutor's understanding of inclusive education for the succession of the implementation of inclusive education in homeschooling institutions. With this background, this study aims to describe the understanding of elementary level tutors on inclusive education at Homeschooling Glo Lenka.

METHOD

The research method used in this article is case study research with a descriptive qualitative approach. Yin (2002) defines case studies as research that aims to investigate a phenomenon in a real-life context. Then, the selection of a descriptive qualitative approach was carried out in order to get a deeper picture of the understanding of elementary level tutors on inclusive education. The research was conducted at Glo Lenka Homeschooling located in Pamulang, South Tangerang City. Homeschooling Glo Lenka itself is a non-formal educational institution that implements inclusive education in learning because it accepts normal students and students with special needs.

Participants in this study were selected using a purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling technique is sampling data sources that are carried out with certain considerations (Sugiyono, 2017). One of the considerations referred to is that the participant is considered to know the most about the conditions to be studied. This study aims to get an overview of the understanding of elementary level tutors on inclusive education. Therefore, the relevant participants to obtain the information needed are the Principal, Academic Staff and all elementary level tutors at Homeschooling Glo Lenka, totaling 4 people.

Indicators of understanding of inclusive education in this study are divided into three aspects, namely: understanding the special conditions/needs of students, understanding the meaning of inclusive education, and understanding how to implement inclusive education in the classroom. Questionnaires and interview questions were prepared taking into account the following indicator formulations:

Operational Words for Understand Level	Indicator	Sub-Indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpreting • Exemplifying 	Understand student condition	-Explain the problems and barriers to student learning.

Operational Words for Understand Level	Indicator	Sub-Indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classifying • Summarizing • Concluding • Comparing • Explaining 		-Can distinguish between normal students and students with special needs. -Explaining the need for inclusive education at Homeschooling Glo Lenka.
	Understand the notion of inclusive education	-Explain what inclusive education is. -Explain why there is inclusive education.
	Understand how to implement inclusive education.	-Explain learning strategies for students with special needs. -Explain appropriate learning patterns for inclusive education. -Set an example of how to deal with students with special needs in class.

Data was collected through a questionnaire to find out an overview of the tutor's understanding of inclusive education. The results obtained through the questionnaire were then cross-checked and deepened again through interviews with several tutors and observation of learning activities in the inclusion class. The data were analyzed and tested for validity by using data source triangulation techniques.

RESULTS

Elementary Level Tutor's Profile

From the data collected through questionnaires and documents regarding tutors at Homeschooling Glo Lenka, the profiles of elementary level tutors are known, which will also help with the data analysis process. Based on gender, there were 3 female tutors and 1 male tutor. In general, almost all tutors at Homeschooling Glo Lenka are still students. Especially for elementary level tutors, there are 3 tutors who are currently still in college and 1 tutor who has graduated. Then, judging from the suitability of the college majors with the subjects taught at Homeschooling Glo Lenka, only 1 tutor taught according to their major while 3 other tutors taught not according to their majors.

Findings

From the data obtained through a questionnaire, the results of the tutor's understanding of inclusive education can be seen in the following table:

Indicator	Tutor 1	Tutor 2	Tutor 3	Tutor 4
Understand student condition	Very Good	Very Good	Good	Very Good
Understand notion of inclusive education	Very Good	Good	Good	Very Good
Understand how to implement inclusive education	Good	Good Enough	Good Enough	Good Enough

It can be seen in the table above, in general all tutors have a good understanding of the conditions of students and the notion of inclusive education. However, it shows sufficient results on the indicator of understanding how to implement inclusive education in the classroom. Only one tutor got good results on these indicators. Where the tutor in question has the longest teaching experience at Homeschooling Glo Lenka, which is for 6 years.

The results of this questionnaire are in line with the data obtained through interviews and observations. During interviews, all tutors were able to explain well about the conditions of the students being taught including the special needs or learning barriers they experienced. Even all of them can explain well when asked about what inclusive education is. However, some expressed confusion and difficulties when they had to teach in inclusive classes. One of the difficulties referred to is related to appropriate learning strategies for students with special needs. This was also seen during the observation of learning in class, where tutors seemed less agile in handling class situations when students experienced tantrums.

DISCUSSION

As previously mentioned, teachers play an important role in the implementation of inclusive education. A good understanding of inclusive education owned by teachers will make learning in inclusive classes run effectively and have a positive impact on students with special needs and normal students. The findings obtained among elementary level tutors at Homeschooling Glo Lenka show quite surprising results. Where all tutors, even though they are still students, have a good understanding of inclusive education. Even all of them have a good understanding of the condition of the students being taught.

When explored further, there are several things that can explain why the tutor's understanding of the first and second indicators is said to be quite good. Glo Lenka's Homeschooling academic staff in an interview once mentioned the criteria for the tutors they choose to teach, as follows:

"In fact, what we see the most here is that this person can get close to the students. Because that's what matters. Otherwise it's not a problem. Here too, most of the tutors are still students."

Although there are no written qualifications to become tutors at Homeschooling Glo Lenka, the school tends to look at the tutor's ability to get close to students rather than their academic abilities. Besides that, it is easier for tutors who are still students to access various information about inclusive education on campus.

Another thing that needs to be discussed is that homeschooling as an alternative education is indeed in demand by students with special needs where the learning patterns are more flexible compared to formal schools. The principal and academic staff of Homeschooling Glo Lenka confirmed that every year there are always students with special needs who enter and are registered as students there. This condition causes homeschooling institutions to tend to be more accustomed to dealing with normal students and students with special needs in inclusive classes compared to formal schools. Even though there is no special training for tutors regarding children with special needs and inclusive education, in an informal setting there are always discussions between tutors regarding students' conditions. This also supports research findings showing that tutors have a very good understanding of students' conditions.

Meanwhile, related to the poor results on the third indicator, namely understanding how to implement inclusive education in the classroom, some tutors indicated that they were still confused in teaching inclusive classes. This is understandable considering that the tutors are not from special education majors and lack experience in teaching students with special needs. The tutors who obtained good results did not come from the special education department, but had taught for 6 years at Homeschooling Glo Lenka. That is, his understanding of how to implement inclusive education, how to teach students with special needs and how to deal with diverse students in inclusion classes comes from experience.

From the findings above, the tutor's understanding of how to implement inclusive education can be further improved through formal training or through non-formal discussions between tutors. The training provided can be in the form of learning strategies to deal with students with special needs and how to conduct learning that can accommodate the learning needs of normal students and students with special needs in the same class. Institutions can also prepare adequate references on how to teach students with special needs to strengthen the tutor's understanding.

CONCLUSION

From the data that has been obtained and analyzed, it can be concluded that the understanding of the elementary level tutor at Homeschooling Glo Lenka regarding inclusive education is as follows: the tutor's understanding of the student's condition is very good, the tutor's understanding of the notion of inclusive education is good, and the tutor's understanding of how to implement education inclusion in the class is quite good.

Several things can be attempted to increase the tutor's understanding of how to implement inclusive education in the classroom. These efforts are: (1) conducting training on learning strategies for children with special needs; (2) conducting training on learning patterns to accommodate normal students and students with special needs; (3) promoting discussion among tutors regarding the implementation of inclusive education; and (4) provide adequate references to support the tutor's understanding of the implementation of inclusive education.

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