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Opportunities Structure in Partnership Between Teachers and Parents in Creating Inclusive Culture at Play Group and Kindergarten

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Abstract

One of the indicators of creating inclusive culture is a good partnership between parents and teachers so that the expected objective of inclusive education can be achieved. However, schools do not have opportunities structure for teachers and parents to collaborate in establishing inclusive culture at schools. This research aims at giving an overview of opportunities structure of the partnership between teachers and parents to create inclusive culture. This research uses narrative method with qualitative approach. The data collection is conducted by examining a semi-structured interview with partnership indicators between teachers and parents adapted from Booth and Ainscow. The participants in this research are principal, teachers, and students' parents at playgroup and kindergarten in the region of East Jakarta. The result of the research points out that there is opportunities structure built by the school to establish the partnership between teachers and parents through parenting activity (an education for parents) and the involvement of parents in a grand meeting that aims at socializing the program and the decision making. However, the inclusive culture is not yet developing optimally, so that it still needs other strategy in establishing other opportunities structure to develop the indicator of partnership between teachers and parents in establishing inclusive culture at school.

Keywords: opportunities structure, partnership between teachers and parents, inclusive culture

1. INTRODUCTION

An inclusive culture is one of the dimensions in inclusive education which aims at creating a peaceful community, accepting the difference, and supporting each other. It is where all people are respecting each other, firming principles and inclusive values which guide all parties in determining policy and learning practice at school (Booth & Ainscow, 2002, p.8). One of the schools' indicators that has created inclusive culture is by making good partnership between parents and teachers so that the expected inclusive education goal can be achieved (Booth & Ainscow, 2002, p.46).

One of the obstacles in inclusive education which is often faced is a shallow understanding about inclusive education that solely accommodate children with special needs to regular school without giving appropriate accommodation (Sunardi, 2009). Furthermore, it will describe the obstacles in the environment in the inclusive education implementation at fifteen schools: lack of understanding 62,7%; school's community disagree of inclusive education implementation 43,1%; lack of parents' support 80,3% (Yusuf, 2014). Instead

of creating inclusive culture at school, there are teachers and school's personnel who still have negative perception, attitude, and behavior toward the existence of children with special needs (Al-Natour, et al. 2015; Doikou-Avlidou, 2015; Ghosh, Orellana, Jones, 2014; Holmberg, Nilsen, & Skogen, 2014; Johnson, Newton, & Johnaon, 2014; Elisa & Wrastari, 2013).

Good partnership between teachers and parents in establishing inclusive culture at school still meets many obstacles. In addition, some parents have negative perception toward children with special needs who study in inclusive school (Adiputra, 2019; Anggraini, 2013), so that the issue triggers parents' stress who have children with special needs (Alazemi et al. 2015). Parents who have children with special needs are basically experiencing much more problems in the interaction, facing a divorce often, and having a pathological attitude (Setiono,2011, p.158).

Establishing the inclusive culture cannot be conducted only by teachers, but it needs also the parents' role as part of microsystem where children will get in touch directly with agents who instill inclusive values (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p.21; Santrock, 2011, p.32; Conyne & Cook, 2004, p.15; Setiono, 2011, p.195). Teachers and parents will become as

agents of inclusive culture if they are given an opportunity by giving them stimulations, such as task device, problem or situation that enables teachers and parents studying collaboration's proficiency or partnership to build inclusive culture (Kartadinata, 2011, p.86).

In line with the above background, hence this research will give an overview of the opportunities structure in the partnership between teachers and parents to create inclusive culture at playgroup and kindergarten.

2. METHOD

The objective of this research is to identify empirical condition of opportunities structure for teachers and parents to collaborate in creating inclusive culture at playgroup and kindergarten. The method used in this research is a qualitative method. It is aimed to define a phenomenon which is difficult to be extracted through a more conventional method in detail (Creswell, 2015, p.97). In the beginning phase of this research, the activity conducted is the data collection through a semi-structured interview to principal, two teachers, and two students' parents about an indicator of partnership between teachers and parents in establishing inclusive culture at playgroup and kindergarten located in the region of East Jakarta. The interview protocol used in the first step of the research is adopted from indicators of partnership between teachers and parents in the dimension of establishing inclusive culture which is proposed by Booth and Ainscow (2002, p.46). The indicators is (1) Parents and teacher respect each other; (2) Teachers has a good communication with parental;(3) All parents well informed about school policies and practices; (4) Parents aware of the priorities in the school development plan; (5) All parents given an opportunity to be involved in decisions made about the school; (6) Parents fears for coming into school and meeting teachers, rcognized and steps taken to overcome hem; (7) Parents have variety of opportunities to involved in the school; (8) Parents can discuss the progress of, and concerns about their children with a variety of occasions; (9) Parents can make different contributions for the school that equally appreciated; (10) Staff values parents' knowledge about their Children; (11) Teacher encourage the involvement of all parents in their children learning; (12) Parents clear about what they can do to support their children learning at home; (13) All parents feel that their children are value by the school; (14) All parents feel that their concerns are taken seriously by the school.

The results from interview data are then analyzed by using interactive model (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.10-12; Emzir, 2016, p.129-135) through the phases of (1) data reduction: the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, transforming, and abstraction of raw data obtained from interview notes; (2) data display: the data presented is in the fond narration based on the results of triangulation of sources; and (3) conclusion: St The Ana of The stage, the researcher concludes the findings obtained in the field.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of interview to principal, two teachers and two students' parents, the opportunities structure given by the school aims at developing the partnership between teachers and parents in establishing inclusive culture, that is, through parenting activity which is held minimal at once of a semester and through a grand meeting that involve all teachers and parents in the big decision making. By those strategies, a well-developed indicator is identified by the achievement of respecting each other between teachers and parents, this becomes a main benchmark at school as affirmed by principal who serves a mutual respect becoming as content in the school's visions and mission:

"... in the vision and mission, it all includes everything must respect each other ..."

Even though there is a difference of parents' contribution in involving actively at school, but the school is effortful to keep respecting parents. This is strongly argued by all parties, one of them is an opinion from a parent who becomes as the school's committee leader:

"... parents don't have complaint, Ms. N (principal) doesn't differ from parental ..."

Not only teachers but also parents, all parents feel that their children are respected equally at school, principal and teachers feel that they have had an insight and a positive treatment toward students; one of the teachers makes a statement as below:

"We are sure that every student has potential can be developed, we must try to digging...yes, we treat everything fairly...".

Strongly supported by parents of children with special needs:

"I (the respondent's child) always talks when the teachers is good...".

This is in accordance to Karten's proposition (2005, p.287) that in establishing inclusive culture at school, a mutual respect is as the first and the main issue.

All parents have been asked to get involved in the schools' decision making through a grand meeting, this is firmed by principal, teachers and parents. In a grand meeting, all parties are asked to make big decisions of practice service of inclusive education at school. Explained by parents:

"It's good, make decisions like school fees, student placement, and other programs...parents are involved in the meeting".

Although the results are not yet optimal, but the school has done its best effort to give opportunities for all parents who are involved in parents' meeting which discusses about children's development and parenting, even preparing them to primary school. Here is the principal's opinion:

"We have parenting program in once semester that is minimal. But if there urgent one can be added. We discussed about child development but there are still many parental who do not understand".

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) is an educational reference for early childhood, teachers and parents to share knowledge about children in order to recognize children's development, in a meeting, so that teachers give support to family by motivating skill and

family's competence in making decision (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p.22). Principal and teachers have motivated all parents' involvement in their children learning although there are some parents who feel that learning at playgroup and kindergarten is at the academicals side. Said by one of the teachers:

"already motivated mam, such as reminding that in children there are aspects of development that have not yet developed. As in the case of F who still likes to tease friends, but his mother only focused on reading lessons, even though her child bas still sitting in A class".

This can be caused as parents are more worried about educational competition, so that they stress more on teachers' role to increase their children's basic skills (Gestwicki, 2007, p.415). Other indicator that comes up is about the contract of partnership at the first year between school and parents who made an agreement and all parents feel that the agreement is taken into serious by all parties. Conveyed by principal:

"we are serious, at the beginning there is a contract that must be blessed together".

In establishing the inclusive culture, all parents should be asked to get involved actively as the school's partner. All parents should pay attention to a plan in shaping a children's friendly inclusive environment (Schultz in Smith, 2014, p.400). Parents are also asked to get involved in making decision and in planning inclusive class activity (Smith, 2014, p.404). Parents are needed to be empowered to collaborate with teachers, in the decision making that is based on a shared service suited to children's needs (Karten, 2005, p.287).

Meanwhile, the indicator which has not been achieved is a good communication between teachers and parents and principal feel that the issue really inhibits the partnership between teachers and parents:

"... that's our biggest obstacle, we want good communications but it is very difficult, it has been conveyed at meeting, parenting activities, and communication books, but It has not been very effective. even parental seem scared when called to school".

This is in line with the proposition that an effective Collaboration with parents is identified by a good communication both at home and at school either formally and informally, meeting (dialog) between teachers and parents, an education for parents, and the parents' involvement in their children's educational practice (Friend & Bursuck, 2015, p.186-190). On the other hand, a maximum communication between teachers and family gives benefit for children (Gestwicki, 2007, p.414).

Communication interference becomes an obstacle from other indicator, such as not all parents get information about policy and learning practice. Many parents also do not recognize the priorities of school's development, most of them still assume that a main program from the school is about to develop the skills of reading, writing, and calculating. Parents can also benefit the opportunity to be able to consult with teachers if they have high concern about children, only few of parents who benefit those opportunities. Not all parents also benefit the opportunities to be able to discuss with teachers about children's development. Parents are also lack of understanding about learning support as what can be given to their children at home and at school. Because of the lack of parents' understanding on their children's

learning and development so that teachers and principal less accommodate parents' suggestion. Teachers admit parents' choice and goal for their children, and give a response with a sensitivity and a respect to their preference and focus without releasing their professional responsibility to their children (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p.22).

The opportunities structure given by the school aims at interweaving the partnership between teachers and parents in establishing inclusive culture through parenting activity which is held minimally at once of a semester and through a grand meeting which involves all teachers and parents in the decision making should be created to develop all indicators of partnership between teachers and parents. The new strategy that will be served can be implemented in line with the needs. Teachers at playgroup and kindergarten recognize that as a professional, they must give a response to all family's needs which gives an impact to all individuals in the circumstance. Giving a favor to family relationship with educational community resources is teachers' functions who take a role as companions (Gestwicki, 2007, p.415). In fact, serving program for children at home is as a respect to parents' role (Karten, 2005, p.287).

4. CONCLUSION

Giving the opportunities structure for teachers and parents has been organized by the school through parents' involvement by delivering them an education, however this involvement is still partial as some indicators of partnership between teachers and parents are not yet established. It needs other strategy to give opportunities structure in order to achieve all indicators of partnership between teachers and parents. The way of giving the supporting structure needs to be analyzed deeply, such as the policy from the school so that the opportunities structure can run well. Moreover, the reward system can be as a behavior amplifier of partnership between teachers and parents which can be as complementary in establishing inclusive culture at school.

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