



# Social Ability of Inclusive Children to the Elementary School Social Environment

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## Abstract.

*Purpose:* This study describes and explores the differences between the three types of children with special needs in socializing with their friends at Muhammadiyah Alam Surya Mentari Elementary School Surakarta.

*Methodology:* This study uses a qualitative approach with the type with a phenomenological study approach study. Data collection techniques through observation, interviews and documentation. Data analysis techniques used are data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Collecting data using interviews through classroom teachers and assistant teachers at Muhammadiyah Alam Surya Mentari Elementary School Surakarta.

*Results:* The results of this study indicate that, the form of social interaction of children with special needs in Muhammadiyah Alam Surya Mentari Elementary School Surakarta. The better the influence given, the better the social skills of children with special needs. The effect resulting from the interaction between peers and students with special needs is very small, and the influence is not too significant, and the rest is caused by factors not examined.

*Applications/Originality/Value:* The implications of this study are: First, when a child with special needs has advanced to grade, this child should be given a re-assessment to find out whether there are changes and developments from the results of the previous assessment. Second, special assistant teachers know more about the basics in guiding children with special needs.

**Keywords:** Socialization Ability · Social Interaction · The Children with Special Needs

## 1 Introduction

Generally, humans are related to each other or interact, influence each other and help each other. This is called social interaction. Between social interaction and education is a right that is owned by each human being with no discrimination between ethnic groups, religions, races, and groups (SARA). Each of these individuals must have an interaction with the individuals around them. For example, when a student is at school, one student will interact with other students. Whether you are still in school or not.

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Schools are essentially implementing agents of the educational process that must have a friendly culture in carrying out their functions to achieve educational goals [1]. The right to obtain equity in education is realized through inclusive education, namely an education system that includes (CSN) to study together with peers at schools near their homes [2]. Residents with special needs and learning difficulties are included in the category of children with special needs (CSN) [3]. The existence of social interaction is not only important for regular students but also very important for children with special needs.

Children's ability to socialize in their environment can affect their academic improvement and self-confidence. Conversely, if a child has poor social skills, it will certainly affect his social and emotional problems. If a child can interact socially well, it will be very easy to be accepted by the social environment because he can create good friendships, but if the child cannot interact socially well, of course, the child will tend to have bad friendships, making it difficult to be accepted in society. Social environment. Adults or teachers have an important scaffolding role in children's involvement, not only in activities, but also in interactions [4]. In addition, the ability of teachers greatly influences the journey of inclusive education to develop children's abilities, especially children with special needs. The role of the teacher is very important, not only as an educator but also as a guide for children both during learning and playing activities carried out with other regular children [5]. This shows that the social skills of children with special needs are closely related to the social interactions that children develop with their teachers and peers [6].

The ability of students to interact and behave in a socially acceptable manner is important for students to live in a society. Several facts revealed in the preliminary study show that social skills are an important aspect for students, including students with special needs. Every student lives socially in a society, including students with special needs. This shows that students with special needs also need interaction with other people, such as with peers [7].

The social skills of students in inclusive schools are often a problem as well as a challenge to be addressed positively. The problem of social skills experienced by students in inclusive schools can be seen in various behaviors in learning and non-learning. Inclusive schools in general have made efforts to overcome the low social skills of their students [7].

Every individual needs to have social skills, as well as students with special needs to live life in the community, because life is always related to other people. Social skills can be obtained through the learning process by getting stimuli that are in accordance with their development [8].

The results of study related to the social skills of children with special needs have been carried out. Baddali's study examined slow learner children rarely responded to material and do assignments, while with their classmates, they were still unstable and like to annoy their friends [9]. Insani's study examined children with special needs in MIN 6 Ponorogo could socialize with their classmates, either groups or individuals in a subject [10]. The study of Rahayu stated that discussed the form of communication for autistic children in the form of one-way communication without giving reciprocity [11]. Non-verbal communication only through touch and body movements. The study of

Hotima explained that attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) children being able to interact with people around them such as sympathy and empathy [12]. However, during the learning process, Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder children tend not to focus on following the learning process in class. A study examined by Rifani stated that students in SD Negeri 1 Pandeglang can accept students with special needs children well [13].

According to Handayani's study, autistic children were in a stable condition, the interaction process could run through writing and saying something, whereas if autistic children were in unstable conditions, autistic children tend to speak incoherently [14]. Another study by Yuliasti explained that the social interactions of slow learner children the same as children in general [15]. The social interactions of autistic children experiencing development after being educated in inclusive schools. The child was able to make good social interactions with the environment [16]. The other study by Puspaningtyas stated that the children with special needs down syndrome, deafness and learning difficulties, both of whom have difficulty communicating with their environment but have different levels of ability [17]. Kusuma's study examined slow learner students and mentally retarded students at SD Negeri Jlaban showed the same social interactions as the average student [18].

Based on the description that has been described in previous study, study has differences. The difference lies in the object and study to be studied by researchers in this study. Researchers discussed the social skills of children with special needs at SD Muhammadiyah Alam Surya Mentari, forms of social interaction and factors that influence the social interactions of children with special needs. Therefore, this study aims to describe the forms of social interaction and the factors that influence children with special needs at Muhammadiyah Alam Surya Mentari Elementary School Surakarta.

## **2 Method**

### **2.1 Type and Design**

This type of study uses qualitative study with a phenomenological study approach. According to Nasution in Sarwoedi [19], qualitative study was naturalist study in which the researcher becomes the main instrument who went directly to the field to obtain data by observation and interviews without any manipulation. The analysis in this study was conducted inductively. The data obtained through interviews with several teachers and students were described in detail by looking at cases or problems that exist in reality. Phenomenological study looked for the reveal and describe the psychological meaning of an individual's life experience of a phenomenon through in-depth study by means of interviews and observations in terms of daily life experiences [20]. The case in this study was the social interaction carried out by children with special needs at Muhammadiyah Alam Surya Mentari Elementary School Surakarta

### **2.2 Data and Data Source**

The data from this study were in the form of descriptions obtained through interviews, observations, and library studies regarding social interactions carried out by children

with special needs at Muhammadiyah Alam Surya Mentari Elementary School Surakarta. There are two types of primary data sources obtained by direct observation and interviews and secondary data through library studies derived from articles, journals, and the internet related to the title taken.

### 2.3 Data Collection Techniques

#### Observation

The observation used in this study was direct observation. The study observed directly at Muhammadiyah Alam Surya Mentari Elementary School Surakarta. This observation activity was carried out to observe the social interactions that take place side by side that occur between regular students and children with special needs in the school's social environment. How the abilities and forms of social interaction that occur in children with special needs with other students at Muhammadiyah Alam Surya Mentari Elementary School Surakarta are.

#### Interview

This interview used a semi-structured technique. Researchers conducted interviews with resource persons regarding the abilities and forms of social interaction that occur in children with special needs with other students at Muhammadiyah Alam Surya Mentari Elementary School Surakarta. With the following questions:

##### *Special Assistant Teacher*

- How clear is the child when communicating in speaking?
- How is the child's ability to respond to communication after listening?
- What activities do children do when communicating?
- How is the child's ability to respond when interacting?
- Does the child pay attention to the source of the sound when invited to interact?

##### *Classroom Teacher*

- Do you know students with special needs?
- Can the student adjust to his friends during the learning process?
- Is the student able to participate well in the environment around the teacher and his friends?
- What do teachers do so that children with special needs can blend in and not feel ashamed and angry?
- What does the teacher teach so that regular children can mingle with their inclusive friends without any differences?

### 2.4 Literature Review

Literature studies are carried out to obtain ideas, as well as findings from previous books and journals that are relevant to the chosen title.

## 2.5 Data Validity

In this study the author uses triangulation techniques including interviews, observation, and documentation. Source triangulation is from class teachers and accompanying teachers for children with special needs, as well as time triangulation in the morning and afternoon. In addition, triangulation techniques in this study were used to check back the data from the interviews with the data from observations.

## 2.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis techniques used are data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. At the data reduction stage, namely summarizing, selecting important things, looking for themes and patterns, and discarding unnecessary ones. While the data presentation is some information data that has been obtained then arranged logically and systematically and presented in the form of a series of sentences. And finally, drawing conclusions is to conclude the results that have been obtained with strong evidence to support these results.

# 3 Result

## 3.1 Observe the Behaviour of Students

This is the statement of the special assistant teacher related to observation activities.

“On average, first-grade children can be invited to communicate but there are some children with special needs with the Speech Delay type but the problem is not in communication but in the learning process.”

“When invited to communicate, the average child with special needs looks blank and there is no eye contact with the interlocutor, one of the characteristics of children with special needs is in eye contact, especially in children with special needs with a type of focus disorder, slow learner autism.”

“On average, children with special needs here are of the type of low focus disorder depending on age development, if first and second-grade are usually not able to respond and understand the context, but over time with the therapy provided by the school they experience development they can understand the context.”

Based on the statements of the informants supported by the results of observations, it can be concluded that some teachers have observed their students, both regular and children with special needs. Some of the others just watched for a moment. In addition, during breaks, several teachers are often in their rooms, so they rarely observe social interactions between children with special needs and their friends.

This is the result of an interview with a special assistant teacher

“So, when they talk to them, they have to bring their faces to our faces and clarify the commands or prohibitions that are emphasized repeatedly. If the child’s speech is not clear, the teacher will instruct the child to repeat the words by looking at the face of the interlocutor.”

“When invited to communicate, the average child with special needs looks blank and there is no eye contact with the interlocutor, one of the characteristics of children with

special needs is eye contact, especially for children with special needs with low focus disorders, slow learner autism. So, when they talk to them, they have to bring their faces to our faces and clarify the commands or prohibitions that are emphasized repeatedly.”

“When invited to communicate with the special assistant teacher for children with special needs, some of them responded to the interaction, but some did not respond and only played with their own world.”

“No, children with special needs When invited to communicate they cannot focus on one thing only, so if they want to talk to them, their face must be faced with the teacher’s face and speak repeatedly”

This is the result of the interview with the class teacher

“Of course, because in terms of behavior, it has been seen that these students need special assistance and students who do not need special assistance, besides that this is an inclusive school so it is easier to distinguish these students from other public schools.”

“Yes, because in terms of learning, the methods and handbooks used by children with special needs are distinguished from regular children. This is because it has been adapted to the abilities of each child with special needs. And also, every child with special needs cannot be equated.”

“There are some children with special needs who can participate in their environment, for example by participating in outbound and certain sports. However, there are also children with special needs who do not want to participate in the activities that have been provided.”

“Teachers help children with special needs to socialize with their friends. For example, by inviting them to play together or asking their friends to involve children with special needs in playing”

“By saying and explaining that all friends should not discriminate. All children have their own privileges and advantages. So, we have to get along and love each other.”

Based on the results of interviews and observations, it can be concluded that some special assistant teachers and classroom teachers know and understand the social interactions that exist between children with special needs and their friends.

## 4 Discussion

Based on the researchers’ findings related to observations and interviews regarding the social skills of children with special needs at Muhammadiyah Alam Surya Mentari Elementary School Surakarta, the authors found that teachers observed social interactions that occurred between non-children with special needs and students with special needs during class activities and activities outside the classroom. But the teacher does not do it every day and every time. According to [21] Social interaction is social relations involving the relation between individuals, individuals (someone) with groups, and groups with groups, without social interaction, it is impossible for us to live together. Soerjono Soekanto, argued that social processes are defined as ways of relating that can be seen when individuals and social groups meet each other and determine the system and form of social relations.

There are two social processes as a form of social interaction, namely the interaction form of the associative process and the dissociative process. (1) The associative process

that children with special needs have done is that some of them are able to group together with their friends, even though not all of their subjects can follow. Basically, children with special needs can mingle with their friends, not infrequently they also often communicate and make joke with their friends. Besides that, their social spirit is also high, it can be seen from how when they have food, they always offer it to their other friends. (2) The dissociative process carried out by children with special needs when someone disturbs them, usually what they do is to fight back in the form of crying, shouting or hitting their friends.

In the case of a child with special needs with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) when he or she does not like a friend's behavior, taunts him by using the word he often uses "No" the child shows his displeasure by piercing the eye of a friend who mocks him. This is in line with the results of the study [9] which states that a child with special needs shows his dislike of something, for example when he is disturbed by his friend or is uncomfortable with the treatment he dares to fight. In the case of slow learner children themselves, these children can interact with other normal children, play together and have a high sense of concern and empathy for their friends. This is also in line with the study of [18] which examines slow learner students can interact socially with their friends. While the Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) child has not been able to interact with his friends, it can be seen that during break time he is just busy with his own world while his other friends are playing ball and running around, but the child is not affected at all. This is in line with the study of [17] that children with special needs with Down syndrome, deafness and learning difficulties both have difficulty communicating with their environment but have different levels of ability. Autistic children are still less able to interact socially.

Therefore, the child with special needs has carried out two social processes, namely the associative process which is marked by the children with special needs being able to socialize with other friends. As for the dissociative process that can be carried out by children with special needs, namely they can fight when there are friends who disturb them. This is included in the process of social interaction which is carried out in a simple manner considering that children with special needs usually have a closed, quiet nature and tend to have their own world.

## 5 Conclusion

Previous study related to the social skills of children with special needs was only limited to one type of children with special needs. This study reveals the social skills of children with special needs in the social environment of the school by examining three types of children with special needs. The findings of this study will be important for all parties to basic education to create an effective solution to this problem.

This study has several limitations. At first it was related to the diversity of informants. Only a few informants were selected so that the data were less diverse and varied. Informants who provide less detailed answers. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct further study related to the social skills of children with special needs with their friends.

This study has three suggestions. First, when a child with special needs has advanced to a grade, this child should be given a re-assessment to find out whether there are changes

and developments from the results of the previous assessment. Second, special assistant teachers know more about the basics in guiding children with special needs. Third, the government needs to develop and increase the existence of inclusive schools. What we know is that inclusive schools are very limited so that some children with special needs have not received learning services in schools that suit their needs.

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