

# Identification of Problems and Needs of Professional Development of Special Education Teacher in Inclusive School

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**Abstract—** This study aims to identify the problems and needs of professional development of special education teacher (SET) in inclusive schools. This research is a survey research with quantitative approach. The research respondents consisted of 265 special education teachers in 242 inclusive schools in Central Java Indonesia. The research data was collected with questionnaire on the problems and needs of SET professional development in inclusive schools, consisting of 4 domains, namely (1) SET competence development, (2) SET performance appraisal, (3) SET work award, 4) SET career development. Data analysis technique used is descriptive statistical analysis. The result of the study shows that SET profession in inclusive schools in Indonesia still faces many problems and the level of requirement to get SET professional development tends to be high and very high. Thus, a clear program and a standard regulation regarding SET professional development are required.

**Keywords—** *problems; needs; professional development; special education teacher; inclusive school*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Many research in the world focuses on special education teachers (Johnson, E. & Semmelroth, C. L., 2013; Jones, N. D. & Brownell, M. T., 2013; McCall, Z., McHatton, P. A., & Shealey, M. W., 2013; Sledge, A. & Pazey, B. L., 2013; Vernon-Dotson, L. J., Floyd, L. O., Dukes, C., & Darling, S. M., 2013; Woolf, S. B., 2014; Douglas, S. N.; Chapin, S. E.; Nolan, J. F., 2016). Meanwhile, research on special education teachers has also been conducted in Indonesia by several researchers (Gunarhadi, Sunardi, Andayani, T.R., & Anwar, M., 2016; Gunarhadi, Sugini, & Andayani, T.R., 2012).

Special education teachers in inclusive schools are special education teachers who guide special needs children in inclusive schools. National Education Ministerial Regulation No. 70/2009 explains that each inclusive school must have at least one special education teacher. This regulation shows that the presence of SET in inclusive schools is important to note. Thus, SET in inclusive schools becomes an important profession as well as regular teachers.

However, the SET profession in inclusive schools still encounters many problems. Billingsley, B. S. (2004) explains that there are SET problems in terms of SET shortages, low qualifications and competencies of SET, uncertified SETs, and attrition of SETs. Those problems will affect the professionalism of the SET profession so that it will affect the quality of children with special needs education (Billingsley, B. S., 2004).

Therefore, SET requires clear regulation related to the existence of the profession just like any other regular teacher so that professionalism of SET as a profession in inclusive schools can be maintained. However, there is no clear regulation governing SET professional development in inclusive schools in Indonesia. Meanwhile, Dudzinski, M., Roszmann-Millican, M., & Sbank, K. (2000) explained that the issues to be considered in SET professional development are SET performance standards, license and certification of SET, and the need for competence development and career development. Therefore, this study aims to identify problems and needs of SET professional development in inclusive schools in Indonesia, related to competence development, performance appraisal, work award, and career development.

## II. METHOD

This research is a survey research with quantitative approach. The subjects of the research consisted of 265 special education teachers in 242 inclusive schools in Central Java Indonesia. This study examines the problems and needs of SET professional development in inclusive schools in Indonesia, with 4 domains: (1) SET competence development, (2) SET performance appraisal, (3) SET work award, and (4) SET career development. The research data were collected with questionnaire on the issues and the need for SET professional development in inclusive schools. Data analysis technique used is descriptive statistical analysis.

**TABLE 1.** The form of SET competence development

Forms of SET Competence Development	Total	Percentage (%)
Training/Upgrading/Workshop	201	75.8
Comparative study	17	6.4
Internships	4	1.5
Scholarship	1	0.4
Others	40	22.7

### III. RESULTS

#### Problems of SET Professional Development

The results show that SET career in Indonesia as a profession in inclusive schools still encounters various problems. These problems are described in more detail as follows.

#### 1. Competence Development of SET

The government has tried to develop for the competence of SET in inclusive schools through various programs. The form of competence development of SET includes training, upgrading, workshop, apprenticeship, comparative study, and socialization.

Table 1 shows the form of competence development of SET in inclusive schools. The form of SET competence development that has been done by the government, include training/upgrading/workshop (75.8%), comparative study followed (6.4%), internship (1.5%), provision of scholarships (0.4%) and get coaching in other forms (22.7%).

**TABLE 2.** The executor of SET competence development

Executor of SET Competence Development	Total	Percentage (%)
Central government	16	6.0
Provincial government	26	9.8
District/city government	178	67.2
School	26	9.8
Others	65	24.5

Table 2 shows of SET competence development from various institutions. Based on table 2 shows that the District/City government has a big role (67.2%) in conducting competence development of SET. The rest SET competence development comes from the central government, provincial government, schools, and others.

**TABLE 3.** The SET responds of SET competence development program

SET Response	Total	Percentage (%)
Already meet the needs	72	27.2
Not meeting the needs	157	72.8

Table 3 shows the SET response to the competence development that has been conducted by government. It appears that most respondents (72.8%) felt that the programs had not fulfilled their needs and only around 27.2% of SET felt that the programs had fulfilled their needs. It indicates that the SET competence development program has not been based on SET need assessment, but rather based on 'top down' program.

#### 2. Performance Appraisal of SET

Problems related to SET performance appraisal is there is no standard appraisal of SET performance, whether related to the time period and aspects of appraisal. The research found that 51.3% of SET were assessed for their performance by superiors (principals), while 44.5% were never assessed. Furthermore, there is a various time period of SET performance appraisals, which are once a year (19.6%), twice a year (16.6%) and more than twice a year (63.8%). Meanwhile, the parties who conduct the SET performance appraisal also vary.

**TABLE 4.** The executor of SET performance appraisal

Executor of SET Performance Appraisal	Total	Percentage (%)
Local service	5	1.9
Headmaster	116	43.8
Supervisor	4	1.5
Not knowing	140	52.9

Based on table 4, it appears that 52.9% of SET answered did not know the party who conduct their performance appraisal; 43.8% of SET assessed by the Principal; 1.9% of SET assessed by the local service; and 1.5% of SET assessed by the School Supervisor. In the case of writing a report as an evidence of SET performance, the data also varied greatly. As many as 35.8% of SET claim to make a written performance report, and 48.3% of SET are not required to make a written performance report. Unclear job demands cause the unclear performance of SET. The survey results found that only 3.76% SET admitted his work was optimal and 89.85% SET admitted his work was not optimal. Some SET also claimed to have received complaints from parents of children with special need (32%) because they have not been able to work optimally. The above findings indicate that there is no standard of SET performance appraisal among regions.

#### 3. Work Award of SET

One of the impacts of the lack of SET professional development standards is the

various financial rewards of SET profession. Table 5 shows the financial reward data of the SET profession in inclusive schools in Indonesia.

**TABLE 5.** The financial rewards of SET profession in inclusive schools

Category	Total	Percentage (%)
Very adequate	6	2.26
Adequate	52	19.55
Inadequate	158	59.40
Very inadequate	49	18.42

The table above shows that most SETs stated that the financial rewards for SET profession are in the category of inadequate (59.40%) and very inadequate (77.82%). Only 2.26% SET stated that the financial rewards for SET profession are in very adequate categories, while 19.55% are in adequate categories.

#### 4. Career Development of SET

In terms of career development of SETs in inclusive schools, 87.55% of SETs do not have a certain employment status. SET with employment status of state employee or permanent employees have a clear career path, but non-state employee and non-permanent employees have no clear career path. There are 83% of SET that stated that no employment career enhancement program of SET. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is not any standard of SET employment status and SET career development. Meanwhile, career development programs existing in inclusive schools include the certification of SETs, competency test of SETs, SET communication forums, and trainings/workshops/seminars. Besides, the diverse employment status of SETs is also due to the education background of SETs.

#### Needs of SET Professional Development

According to the problems facing SET in inclusive schools in Indonesia, professional development of SET is needed. Table 6 shows the research results related to the need for professional development of SET profession in inclusive schools in Indonesia.

**TABLE 6.** Professional Development Needs of SET

Type of Needs	Level (%)			
	Very high	High	Low	Very low
Competence development of SET	24.5	37.7	28.3	9.4
Performance appraisal of SET	37.7	39.6	22.6	0
Work award of SET	75.5	24.5	0	0
Career development of SET	75.5	24.5	0	0

The table 6 shows that there are four SET requirements related to SET professional

development, which are SET competence development, SET performance appraisal, SET work award, and SET career development. Based on the table, it can be concluded that there is a high and very high need for professional development of SET.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The results showed that from four domains studied related to professional development of SET in inclusive schools (competence development, performance appraisal, work award, and career development) indicate problems to be overcome. In terms of competence development, SET has not benefited from the competence development programs by the government or the schools. The competence development programs still do not meet their needs. It shows that the forms of the competence development programs given to the SET are still more 'top-down' programs and have not been based on the results of prior assessment needs. Markelz, A., Riden, B., Scheeler, M.C. (2017) explains that the competence of SET needs to be prepared not only when teachers are still studying in universities but also through training related to teacher competence transition from university to teacher competence in-service in school, so that there is a continuity between knowledge gained from universities and knowledge in school.

In terms of performance appraisal, most SETs feel did not get performance appraisal by superiors. It shows that the SET profession has not been regarded as a demand of professional work. It was just considered as merely complying with the National Education Ministerial Regulation No. 70 of 2009 on Inclusive Education which requires that each inclusive school should be supplied at least one SET. Woolf (2014) also explains that there has been no a standard measurement of teacher performance evaluation developed for special education teachers. Therefore, it is necessary to standardize the measurement of performance evaluation of special education teachers, especially in inclusive schools.

In terms of work award, most SET get inadequate financial awards and only a few are adequately awarded according to the standard of teachers in general. According to Lawler (Conley, S. & Odden, A., 1995), salary rewards can be based on performance, job task, or knowledge and skills of a person. Therefore, the financial award for the SET also needs a clarity standard based on those criteria so that the SET profession has a guarantee in the future. Billingsley & Cross (1991) even explains that the issue of teacher salary for special education is one obstacle for regular teachers to teach in special education. It shows that salary rewards for special education teachers still do not provide guarantees for the future. Thus, SET professional development needs to pay attention to the SET financial rewards (Conley, S. & Odden, A., 1995).

In the term of career development, SET profession also does not have clear career path. SET status in inclusive schools also lacks of clarity. It is demonstrated by the varying status of the SET, ranging from volunteers, honorary teachers, permanent teachers, or civil servants teachers. Therefore, regulation related to clarity of SET role and status in inclusive school is needed. Shepherd, K.G., Fowler, S., McCormick, J., Wilson, C. L., & Morgan, D. (2016) also recommended the need for policies related to the clarity of the status and role of special education teachers.

Thus, it can be concluded that the SET profession in Indonesia still faces various problems. Therefore, a more professional, sustainable, and reliable SET professional development program is needed, based on the results of need assessment. In addition, the regulations of professional development of SET are needed for the existence of SET profession in inclusive schools as well as the profession of teachers in general.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that the condition of the SET profession in inclusive school in Indonesia still faces many problems, such as the absence of professional development related to the competence development, performance appraisal, work award, and career development of SET. Furthermore, the level of requirement for professional development of SET tends to be high and very high, including the competence development, performance appraisal, work awards, and career development of SET.

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