

# Development of Social Interaction Programs for Students with Special Needs in the Inclusive Education Environment

Nadya Muniroh, Tjutju Soendari, Didi Tarsidi  
 Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia  
 Bandung, Indonesia  
 nadyamuniroh@gmail.com

**Abstract**— The diversity that is acceptable to all schools is one of the key indicators in the success of inclusive education. Expanding meaningful social interaction opportunities for students with special needs in schools is important to develop. The school where this research conducted does not have systematic and optimal social interaction programs yet, it makes research becomes important to do. This study aims to obtain a description of the objective condition of the social interaction of students with special needs with other school members, and the description of the problem occurs in the social interaction of students with special needs in schools, and also obtaining an objective condition of social interaction program that has been implemented by the school to find out what is the need to be developed. The type of the research is research and development or R and D with ADDIE approach. "A Day Together" or "One Day Together" is a social interaction program for students with special education and education. This program contains activities of the member's school, especially regular students with special needs students for one day starting from the activities in the classroom during the learning process, at the rest time, until the end of the school time in a day.

**Keywords**— *inclusive education; social interaction; students with special needs.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The diversity that can be accepted by all school members is one of the important indicators in the success of inclusive education. Expanding opportunities for meaningful social interaction for special needs students in the school is important. Providing opportunities for students with special needs to interact in the learning process also has a positive impact on the emergence of sympathy from regular students [1], [2], [3], [4], [5]. One of the important indicators in the implementation of inclusive education is participation of all school members which we could be seen from learning process including the participation of students with special needs [6], [7], [8], [9], [10]. The participation of children with special needs can be seen through the meaningfulness of the social interaction process that goes through, both when learning in the classroom and outside of learning activities [11], [12], [13], [14]. Meaningfulness in social interaction is not automatically obtained by students with special needs that need encouragement from people around so that skills in building meaningful social relationships can be fulfilled. Other members

of schools in an inclusive education environment have an important role to help students with special needs develop, not only developing on the academic aspect but also on social aspects.

Inclusive education is about fulfilling rights including the right to be actively involved in learning accordance with the abilities and learning needs of each [13], [15], [16], [17], [18]. Integrating through meaningful social interactions that happen in various activities in schools with all the differences that students have in particular with other school members is the right that must be fulfilled. The results of other studies by Terpstra and adding or including social skills programs and strategies for social interaction into inclusive programs is very important for the successes of inclusive programs [19], [20], [10], [21]. Based on the importance of the participation students with special needs in social interaction in schools that provide inclusive education, it is necessary to conduct research for the effectiveness of preparation program [22], [23]. The program will contain an action plan that is able to integrate special needs students with the school community through social interaction more meaningful, both in the learning process as well as the other outside activity of learning.

## II. METHOD

This study used research and development (research and development). Development research was chosen with the aim of developing products in the form of social interaction programs for students with special needs with other school members in an inclusive education environment [24], [25], [26], [27], [28].

The development of this program applied ADDIE to conduct research and development (R & D) systematically [29], [30], [31], [32], [33]. This research was conducted at Hikmah Teladan Middle School in the Cimahi City West Java which school is a school that has had a vision and mission of inclusive education since its inception. Information obtained through the learning process and social interaction of students with special needs that occur in five different classes where there are two to three students with special needs in it, during breaks and in five extracurricular activities attended by students with special needs.

The school principal, inclusive education coordinator, deputy headmaster for program development, two special education teachers and two subject teachers were the sources of data in the interview process. The data obtained from these sources will be analyzed and become the basic of the program design [2], [34]. After the initial program design is prepared, the program is validated to experts to be developed. The next process is the implementation of the program through an implementation test to find out the relevance of the program to the needs of the school and to find out the ability of school resources to implement the program that has been prepared. Finally, the program was evaluated based on the results of the implementation to formulate the principles of using the program as signs so that when the program is implemented it becomes more effective [6], [32].

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

There are still limitation in objective conditions of social interaction special needs students with other school communities in an inclusive educational environment is still limited. Although forms of negative social interaction are rarely found, forms of associative or positive social interactions that appears less varied. Students with special needs still spend more time with special education teachers during the learning process. Beyond the learning process, for example during a break, students with special needs will gather automatically with other special needs students. Extending social interaction to other school members is still difficult to do by students with special needs. It takes expansion of social interaction of students with special needs with other school members so they do not only interact with others special needs students only or only with special teacher.

The problem of social interaction of students with special needs as mentioned in the first point implies that students with special needs are still like "guests" in school, because they are still passive when they have to interact with other school members and can only look more active, more cheerful when interacting with other special needs students. Problems like this can be minimized by providing opportunities for students with special needs to be stimulated more actively involved in various activities at school. Other problems that also arise are parents who are sometimes overprotective. Parental support is no less important, giving children the opportunity to be involved in many activities in school becomes a factor that determines the rate of development of children's social interaction skills.

Social interaction programs that have been run by schools have not been able to make the social interaction of students with special needs with other school members more meaningful and widespread. This is because activities in the program are carried out only once to twice per year, such as outbound and fieldtrip activities. However, to stimulate the expansion of social interaction students with special needs in their daily lives is also difficult to do because of the closes of special needs students with special education teachers or at this school. Program is also need to conduct the program more often so the stimulus for expanding social interaction of students with special needs can be maintained every day.

"One Day Together" is a social interaction program for students with special needs developed by researchers in an inclusive education school environment where research is conducted. This program has passed the validation process to developing program design and has been implemented through an implementation test to strengthen the school's realization of the program. "One Day Together" contains activities of school members, especially regular students with special needs students for one day starting from activities in the classroom during the learning process, during breaks until they go home from school. Students who are on duty to accompany students with special needs will help stimulate students with special needs to be able to interact more actively with the people around them. This program contains interrelated activities starting from activities in the classroom as an effort to make students with special needs participate more actively in the learning process, then there is also an activity at rest which will help students with special needs not only interact with other special needs students but extends to all school residents in an inclusive education environment.

The aim of inclusive education is that if there is concern and cooperation from all parties that can be measured through how all school members in inclusive education environment can interact with each other [6], [35], [36]. This was revealed by with the importance of attendance, participation and achievement of all students [37], [38], [39]. The participation of students with special needs can be seen from how they interact with other school members both inside and outside of school hours [40], [18], [41], [42]. Based on the results of the social interaction of students with special needs with other school members is still limited. There are three main of social interaction happened during research namely during the learning process in class, when taking breaks and in extracurricular activities in general are still not found.

The phenomenon of gathering students with special needs with others special needs students when taking a break at this school again shows the limited form of social interaction. Students with special needs are more comfortable when gathered with each other, students with special needs feel more welcome by their fellow students with special needs, and they seem to have a space that is able to give them the freedom to express feelings when gathered with students with special needs. The limited activities carried out by students with special needs actively with other school members make the forms of social interaction that occur between them less varied. This will make students with special needs who have limitations in social interaction increasingly alienated in schools that should be able to provide wider opportunities to stimulate the development of various aspects of development including aspects of social development.

Most inclusion schools only think about how to process a friendly academic curriculum for students with special needs without taking part in designing a program to develop their social aspects [43], [44], [45], [46], [47]. The characteristics of children who have social competence include: being able to perceive others appropriately, assertive, responsive, and empathetic, having a sense of humor, friendly to peers and polite to adults [8]. These characteristics can be proofed by

children who have good cognitive function, language function and of course social skills [48], [8], [49], [50], [51].

The limitation of social interaction of students with special needs with other school members is also due to the personal experience of school members who have not received sufficient information regarding students with special needs and inclusive education in general. This research also showed the knowledge on the importance of the need for students with special needs to attend public schools or inclusive schools, and its positive impact if regular students are able to help students with special needs to interact, is still limited, even though regular students are the majority who interact with students with special needs [52], [1], [53], [54], [55]. Students with special needs should spend more time interacting with regular students, some of whom seem unable to establish positive interactions with students with special needs who have many differences with them.

Positive attitudes of school members, especially regular students who interact more with students with special needs, are important because this is one indicator of achieving the goals of inclusive education. This positive attitude can be built and constantly improved through open knowledge of students with special needs will also be programmed.

School is an environment where children not only get academic lessons, but are a place where they gain experience of social and emotional interaction with adults and peers that enable them to foster self-esteem and develop their social competencies [44], [56], [57], [58], [59]. This experience is very important to improve the prospects for success in the future in fostering social relationships, career, and personal achievement [60]. Therefore it is also important for schools to support children's development needs widely [60],[61]. Despite the limitation of social competencies that students with special needs have, schools should be able to accommodate the obstacles [62], [63], [64], [65], [66], [67].

Even though program for students with special needs of stimulating the expansion of their social interaction with regular students have proven effective [64], [68], [69], [70] [20]. The goal of program is able to really make other school members actively interact with students with special needs so that students with special needs no longer feel like guests or riding in school is what the school should do. Modifying existing programs needs to be done to achieve this.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The results of this study concluded into several things: first the conditions of social interaction of students with special needs with other school members are still very limited. Second, students with special needs still feel as guests at school and are less able to establish social relations with other school members than to fellow students with special needs. Third, the social interaction program that has been implemented by schools is cannot to make the social interaction of students with special needs widespread and more meaningful because the frequency of the program so the development of this program is needed. Fourth, "One Day Together" is a social interaction program for students with special needs that have been

developed by researchers in the school environment of inclusive education where research is carried out. This program held the activities for school members, especially regular students with students with special needs for one day starting from activities in the classroom during the learning process, during breaks until the students go home from school.

#### V. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the finding of the research, the school's willingness and sincerity was needed in implementing *One Day Together* social interaction program, which systematically stimulated expansion and maintained the continuity of regular students' social interactions with special needs students every day. The program that strives for many school members, especially regular students as majority school members, is involved in interacting with students with special needs.

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