



Educational Services for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Autism Special School

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ABSTRACT

The right educational services will help children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) children to optimize their abilities. The purpose of this study was to analyze educational services for ASD children provided by a special ASD school in Bandung. This research uses qualitative methods in the form of case studies. Research instruments using interviews, observation, and documentation. The validity of the data is using the triangulation method. This study found that ASD special schools have provided optimal educational services according to the subjects' needs. The educational services provided follow the principles of teaching and learning, curriculum, approaches and methods, teaching and learning tools, and evaluation. Choosing the right educational service will help subjects optimally increase their potential. The implication of this research is program recommendations for teachers and parents in the continuation of the program that has been carried out to get optimal results for the subject.

Autism Spectrum Disorders, Educational Services, Autism Special School

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INTRODUCTION

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex developmental disorder involving problems of communication, social interaction, and behavior. Until now, there are still many people who do not know well what is meant by ASD, so ASD is often seen as a negative thing; not a few people even categorize ASD as a disease. ASD students have social communication disorders, both verbal and nonverbal. They experience obstacles in communicating with others, including expressing their desires. They often express unnatural behaviora (Abdullah, 2013; Aini et al., 2022).

These problems are caused by (1) hypersensitivity or hyposensitivity to sensory stimulation, (2) difficulty understanding social situations, (3) difficulty accepting changes in routine, (4) excessive anxiety, and (5) avoiding pain and situations that are not pleasant (Jeste, 2013). So it can be concluded that autism

spectrum disorder is a neurological disorder since the developmental period that persists for life and causes a person to experience obstacles in social interaction and communication and has problems with rigid and repetitive behavior (Nasiha et al., 2022; Setiawan, 2022).

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex developmental disorder. The American Psychiatric Association, in Diagnostic and Statistics of Mental Disorder V (DSM V), calls autistic spectrum disorders a spectrum characterized by persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction in various contexts. Autism is a spectrum disorder, meaning its symptoms and characteristics are expressed in various combinations and varying degrees of severity (Mash & Wolfe, 2010). ASD is a spectrum disorder, meaning its symptoms and characteristics are expressed in various combinations and varying degrees of severity (Mash & Wolfe, 2010). There are still many misconceptions about ASD. It must be emphasized that ASD is not a symptom of a disease but in the form of a syndrome (a collection of symptoms) where there are deviations in social development, language skills and concern for the surroundings so that children with autism live in their world. (Khairun Nisa et al., 2018; Rahmatih et al., 2020) In DSM V, ASD levels are divided into 3: level 1 for ASD that needs support; level 2 for ASD requiring major support; and level 3 for ASD requiring very large support.

ASD students can have varying levels of intelligence. There are ASD students who are born intelligent and gifted, some have normal intelligence, and some have intellectual disabilities. Another special often need comorbid with ASD are intellectual barriers (Dewi, 2021). One-third of ASD students have intellectual barriers (Wei et al., 2014). Therefore it is necessary to choose the right educational services for ASD students. Education is an important aspect of ASD students. Apart from the right of every child to get an education, through education, ASD students can maximize their potential. In society, ASD students will later be able to be more independent and develop their existing potential, which has been hidden so far because they cannot be independent. In this study, the strengths, weaknesses, and needs of the subjects were identified by using identification from DSM V, which can help identify children with ASD and find out the best services that can be optimized.

The provision of education is the right of every child, including children with special needs (Yell et al., 2003). The government provides various educational services for ASD students ranging from segregation and integration to inclusiveness. Parents are free to choose educational services that suit their child's needs. One form of segregation education services is a special ASD school. In this type of school, ASD students will be given various learning

programs that can help ASD to optimize its abilities. In addition, the characteristics of ASD, which tend to be alone, can be reduced by involving ASD students in socializing with other students. Schools become a bridge for ASD students before going directly into the community. Schools must provide the best service in terms of education and socialization with various teaching strategies, methods, facilities and infrastructure to maximize teaching and learning activities for ASD students. Ideally, schools will use teaching and learning principles with an adapting curriculum assisted by adequate facilities and infrastructure to maximize the education received by ASD students. There are several forms of education for ASD implemented in the United States, namely individual therapy, designated autistic classes, ability-grouped classes, social skills development and mixed disability classes . The application of this form of education will be balanced if it is supported by teaching and educational principles, curriculum, approaches and methods, learning and teaching tools, and good evaluation. Teaching and learning activities and therapy that are carried out properly will positively impact the development of ASD.

This study aims to determine the educational services provided by an ASD special school in Bandung to one student with ASD barriers. The results of this study show that the provision of educational services provided by special schools for autism has fulfilled educational services for subjects that have a good impact on the subject's educational development. The implications of this research are recommendations for teachers and parents to help maximize the educational services provided to these students.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted using a qualitative approach, with the type of research used being descriptive. Namely, the research results are presented according to the findings at the research location directly, real, actual, and realistic. This research took place in one of the ASD special schools located in the city of Bandung. Determining the subject in this study used a sampling technique in the form of purposive sampling, which was carried out by considering the subject's knowledge of the aspects studied. Therefore, the subject in this study is a student with ASD barriers (Huberman & J, 2014).

The data collection techniques applied in this study were researchers' observations on students with ASD barriers during the learning process in class. Also, interviews were conducted with parents and homeroom

teachers. The validity of the data validity uses the triangulation method by describing the results of observations and interview results.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

One of the ASD special schools in the city of Bandung is specifically intended for ASD children, especially those who are not allowed to attend regular schools. However, as it develops, this school accepts several children with other disabilities, such as attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and Down syndrome, even though children with ASD have the most. In this school, there are various autistic spectrums with various displayed symptoms, not the same from one child to another, but all of them represent the characteristics of ASD. Educational services in schools are focused on functional programs such as development, self-development, talents and interests according to their potential.

Education for children with ASD is ideally provided as a treatment group to help them cope with their special needs. In a special ASD school in Bandung, subjects receive various educational services. In individual therapy services, the subject is given an intervention based on individual education. Through one-on-one handling, according to the needs of the subject where the subject does not like being in crowds. Subjects focus more easily and easily accept the various lessons given. The subject follows designated autistic classes as a transition from individual handling to classical class forms. In this form, the subject learns with a group of children who are all ASD.

A group is a small group of 2-3 children studying together following a typical type of instruction. In ability-grouped classes, the subject form requires an environment that provides peers who are socially better off even though they also have language development problems. At school, the subject is shared with other children with the help of learning media, such as making crafts. In addition to practicing communication, the subject also develops social skills. The final form is social skills development and mixed disability classes. In this class, the subject learns together with children with ADHD and Down syndrome who tend to have 'hyper-social' characteristics (excessive interest in building social relationships with others). This trait makes them tend to defend, command, and run around ASD children to get a response. It is very good for the social skills of ASD children.

Subject's teaching and learning activities in schools by the principles of teaching and education. Subjects get education and teaching that apply structural principles. It means that starting from the material is the easiest

and can be done in education or by providing teaching materials on the subject. After the subject masters this ability, it will be upgraded again to the material at the above level but is a series that is not separate from the previous material. The second principle of teaching and education is patterned. Subject activities are usually formed from patterned and scheduled routines, both at school and home (the neighborhood), from waking up to sleeping again. The subject has a patterned time, especially for toilet training, study, and meal time. Therefore, in education, the subject is conditioned by a regular pattern of subject study time. The third is programmatic. It has programmed basic principles that are useful for the subject to provide direction from the objectives to be achieved by the subject in the form of learning programs and make it easier to evaluate subject learning programs at school.

The fourth principle of teaching and education is consistency. In implementing subject behavior education and therapy, consistency is necessary. When the subject behaves positively and responds positively to a stimulant (stimulus), the teacher will also give a positive response (reward). On the contrary, when the subject behaves negatively, the subject will be given a negative response (punishment). Rewards given to subjects are carried out consistently regardless of other spaces and times in a fixed and precise manner. It is good for the subject's habits. Furthermore, the last educational principle is sustainability. The principle is similar to any other children in general. Subjects need continuity in their learning program not only at school but also must be followed up for activities at home and in the environment around the subject. The learning program implemented in special ASD schools has been agreed with parents to be one of the schools' ways for parents to implement the same program at home continuously, simultaneously and integrally (comprehensive and integrated).

An important aspect of this school's subject teaching and learning activities is the learning curriculum. The curriculum is an educational program and lessons provided by the school to fulfill the learning that the subject will receive in the implementation of education and teaching for subjects based on an educational curriculum that is oriented towards the ability and disability of the subject. The curriculum provided is based on the needs of the subject obtained from the assessment results. Subjects received three learning programs, namely development, pre-academic, and non-academic. The developmental aspects of the subject program are training cognitive, gross motor, fine motor, social-emotional, and language. In the pre-academic aspect, the subject is given initial reading programs such as

letter recognition and initial arithmetic programs such as counting. On the non-academic aspect, the subject is given a program of independence and focus.

One special school for autism uses an individual approach and program. The methods used a combination of existing methods, where the application is adjusted to the subject's conditions and abilities and the material from the teaching given to the subject. The method of teaching the subject is a method that gives a concrete picture of "something". Subject learning is assisted by using concrete learning media to make it easier for the subject to capture messages, information, and understanding of "something". These learning media are included in the teaching and learning facilities provided by schools to help smooth the learning process and help form a concrete understanding of the subject. The provision of infrastructure, for example, individual classes, also exists in this school to help the smooth learning of each student. The last principle is the evaluation of learning. All the subjects' learning activities following the learning program are evaluated. Subjects will receive process evaluations, monthly evaluations, and semester evaluations. The evaluation aims to measure the success or failure of the education and teaching given to the subject at school.

Similar research on the education of children with special needs provides an explanation for that Parents in both groups reported children were diagnosed after the age of 3 and experienced challenges accessing services, trained professionals, and educators. Parents from rural areas reported significantly more difficulty accessing trained physicians and professionals in their areas. The implications of this study and needed future research are discussed (Murphy & Ruble, 2012). Secondary school students had lower odds of receiving speech/language or occupational therapy and of having a behavior management program, but higher odds of receiving mental health or social work services than their elementary school peers. Disability severity and demographic characteristics were associated with differences in special education service receipt rates (Wei et al., 2014). Because of the complexity of ASD and the costs of litigation related to the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act, ASD has become a high-stakes issue for parents and school districts. The purpose of this article is to extrapolate principles from the ASD litigation to provide guidelines to assist Individualized Education Program teams in developing appropriate special education programs for students With ASD (Yell et al., 2003).

CONCLUSION

Autism spectrum disorder is a pervasive developmental disorder characterized by disturbances and delays in communication, social interaction, and behavior. ASD is not a disease. The subject is at level 2 based on DSM 5. The educational services provided to the subject must be according to their needs. Therefore, it is important to conduct an assessment of the subject. Subject teaching and learning activities in schools have followed the principles of teaching and education: structured, patterned, programmed, consistent, and continuous. The learning curriculum is adapted to the subject's needs using an individual approach and concrete methods. The provision of teaching and learning facilities in the school provides the subject in the learning process. Subjects will receive process evaluations, monthly evaluations, and semester evaluations to determine the program's level of success that the school has implemented.

ASD special schools have provided full service to the subject. It is intended to maximize the potential of the subject. By choosing the right educational process, children can also help children's independence which is useful for their future. Participation and support from parents are very meaningful for the subject-learning process. Parents and teachers at school can work together to create learning programs for children with the aim that children not only study at school but the subject can also study at home, assuming that the more often they are repeated and trained, the child will also become accustomed to and independent.

The recommendation for parents is to be consistent in providing education and learning at home. Following the continuous principle, it is expected that the education the subject receives at school and home is the same to help the subject's development. For schools, teachers are given recommendations to provide information and understanding to parents on the school learning program given to children to ensure the sustainability of programs carried out at school and consistently at home. It is important for teachers to establish good communication with parents and to help inform things that happened to the subject while at school, including the learning that the subject received.

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