

Education for children with special needs in Indonesia

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Abstract. The current paper discusses the issue of educational programs for children with special needs and its implementation in Indonesia. Education for children with special needs is provided because such category of children needs specific treatment or assistance from schools to ensure that would develop optimally overcoming their limitations. This study describes the pattern of special-needs education in Indonesia which allows implementation of the inclusive as well as the segregation approaches, though there are pros and cons for each side. The reality is that in Indonesia, the policy of education for all has not been fully accommodated. However, at least there has been an effort to answer the rights of individuals with special needs through regulation and its implementation in schools in communities. Various factors have caused the inequality of education programs for children with special needs including the paradigm by parents about the importance of programmed educational assistance for family members. In addition, provision for schools that provide programs for special needs still need to be constantly activated or revitalized, especially with regard to the fulfillment of national education standards. Revitalization can be carried out by building new schools, considering the ratio of the number of children with special needs and schools that organize special needs education is still disproportional. Furthermore, education for children with special needs must be planned, organized, monitored and evaluated based on existing quality standards.

1. Introduction

Every individual is unique, having differences from one another. Uniqueness is a reality that must be welcome in order that every person can be appreciated based on each person's existing unique traits. The acceptance and appreciation is a fundamental right that ought to be given to every person and must be implemented in social relations. Thus, every individual, including children, has the right to be treated equally on the basis of human rights. The right to be accepted and respected is not limited by social or economic status, nor by racial, cultural, ethnic, age, gender and even religious background. Neglecting equal rights can be equated as an act of not recognizing that humans have the potential to be transformed to have a better life. Setiawan[1] described Maslow's theory on human nature, where humans must be encouraged to actualize their potential to an optimum level. Thus, humans ought to be perceived as having potential to be able to achieve optimum fulfillment of life goals and consequently, having impact on others. Actualizing potential must be encouraged or each individual empowered to reach ideal totality or integrity.

