

Toward Inclusive , Inclusive Education in Indonesia a Country Report

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1. Toward Inclusion, Inclusive education in Indonesia

Back Ground

The Government of Indonesia made political commitments at the World Education Forum(2000)for achieving Basic Education for All (EFA).In the broader context , national level reflections were engaged for developing a new vision of education, as part of the Political Reform in Indonesia, which emphasize the implementation of the principles of democracy , autonomy , decentralization and public accountability. The reforms in education give prominence to enhancing its performance in the framework of equal and even distribution of educational opportunities. This reform process has a fundamental impact on the National Education System and its mission to meet various challenges of the present. Guided by the mission of education and educational strategies , the Republic of Indonesia enacted a new Law on National Education System(Act N0. 20/ 2003). The Law has its roots in the 1945 Constitution of Indonesia , Article 31 , Section (1) , which states that each and every citizen have the fundamental right to education. The Law creates a legal framework for the major educational goal , policies and plans. The key targets include expansion and equity , the improvement of quality and relevance , and the implementation of autonomy in higher education. Its main thrust is to make education relevant to societal needs; to further the development of community - based education; and to enhance participation by the community in supporting basic education. The Law also provides the rights and obligations of citizens , parents , community , and Government. in adopting the new legislation, the Government of Indonesia is fully conscious of the need for creating equality of opportunity in education and to ensure that basic education is made available to all including those belonging to the economically disadvantaged or the socially marginalized groups , and those living in remote areas. One of the main purpose of the Law is to inculcate in young minds - among others- the respect for human rights ,for cultural Pluralism and learning to live together (A. Malik Fadjar , 2003) .

As stated in the 1945 Constitution , that every citizen has the right to obtain education , the citizens with disabilities also have the right to education designed to their special needs. It is realized with the establishment of various types of special education for children with special needs , such as Special Schools , Special Elementary Schools , Special Secondary Schools, but unfortunately it still exclude the children with special needs from the mainstream.

The publication of The Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities by The united Nations in 1993 based on Human Rights and Convention of the Rights of the Children (1989) , have a big influence on the approach toward children with special needs. The meaning of the term ‘ equalization of opportunities ‘ means the process through which the various systems of society and the environment ,such as services , activities , information and documentation , are made available to all , particularly to persons with disabilities (Introduction , art.24). It is further specified that “ Persons with disabilities are members of society and have the right to remain within their communities. They should receive the support they need within the ordinary structures of education , health , employment and social services (Introduction , art. 26).Education is put forward as one of the important target areas for equal Participation. This education is clearly conceptualized as allied to the Principle of Inclusion.

The " World Conference on Special Needs Education , Access and Quality" held in Salamanca(1994) , which was described as a milestone in the evolution of the thinking and Practice regarding the education of

children with special disabilities or special needs , addressed the fundamental changes to be made in educational policy and Provision in order to create the conditions for inclusive education , which is seen as the most righteous and effective form of education for ALL children.

The new orientation on education as stated above , motivated Indonesia to reform its educational system for children with special needs as stated in Act No 20/2003 on National Education System Article 15 and Article 32 and in the Explanation to Article15 describing Inclusive education: "Special Education is provision of education program for the disabled and/or the gifted learners, organized inclusively or exclusively at basic and secondary level of schooling".

In Indonesia, integrated education is now directed toward inclusive education as an ideal vessel which is expected to accommodate education for all.

For Indonesia inclusive education are as follows:

1. a continuous process and effort to discover the means to cope and respond to the various individual needs of children
2. pay serious attention on the methods to demolish the obstacles to a child's learning process
- 3.with the understanding that small children present (at school) , participate actively and obtain knowledge that is essential for his/her future life, and
- 4.designed and directed primarily for children who are marginal , exclusive and need special education.

Inclusive education access in the sense that “ each and every disabled child should be enrolled in regular schools ” like in the basic principle of inclusive schools that “ all children should learn together , wherever possible , regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have” is still very difficult to implement.. That is why equal and even education opportunities for children with special needs is still in the very early stage of inclusive education

Education for children with special needs, especially children with mental retardation, in Indonesia

Up to the present time , most of the children with special needs , such as the blind , the deaf , the mentally retarded , and the physically handicapped are still enrolled in special schools for each disability (SLB),or in special schools for several disabilities (SDLB).Only a very small number of regular schools are willing to admit children with special needs. Even this few , are only willing to accept blind , deaf and the autistic children who are without any intellectual disorder. Their refusal to admit mentally retarded children, is the cause that children with this disability are sti11 enrolled in special schools(SLB or SDLB). The difficulty of admitting mentally retarded children in regular schools is due to several reasons, namely, the teachers are not trained to educate the mentally retarded, the lack of facilities and the absence of special teachers in the schoo1. Furthermore, the teachers have the opinion that special children require a special curriculum individual educational program, a class with a very limited number of students , and the parent's approval to integrate their child in a regular class.

The problem for Indonesia is the number of special schools are still very limited and mostly are located in the capital city of regencies while most of the mentally retarded children are in villages in the rural areas , quite a distance away from the regency capital cities. The record at the present shows that only 29.104 mentally retarded children go to school the 32 provinces of Indonesia compared to the total number of children with disabilities which is 1.460.333. The number of 29.104 is very small indeed , considering that the number of mentally retarded children are relatively larger than the other disabilities. Another problem is that the cost of sending children to special schools is higher than sending them to regular schools , whereas most of them are from the low social-economic level.

The educations in the special schools for mildly retarded children are different from that for the moderately retarded. Each has a different curriculum taught by special teachers with a class management suited to the

individual child's needs. The levels of education for the special teachers are also different. There are special teachers whose level of education is equal to senior high school, to Diploma or Strata I (Bachelor Degree) and also other specializations. The levels of education for the mentally retarded children in special schools (SLB) are, Preschool, Elementary, and Secondary.

Most of the special schools are private schools, with only a few public schools (governmental). These are the reasons why the school fee are expensive compared to governmental regular schools, and why most of the special schools are located in the capital cities of the districts, resulting in uneven distribution of special schools.

Towards inclusive education for Mentally retarded children

Considering the above mentioned conditions, the pursuit of a compulsory nine years primary education, and the Government's commitment to UNESCO Call "Education For All", a strategic solution has to be constructed to cope with the problems of education for children with special needs including the mentally retarded.

One method is by encouraging and empowering inclusive education for children with special needs including the mentally retarded children. More over, at 11 August 2004, in Bandung West Java, "Indonesia towards Inclusive Education" was formally declared. The declaration of inclusive education is expected to motivate regular schools to provide education for all children with special needs including mentally retarded children. At the present, a government regulation draft on special needs education is being elaborated and debated in the parliament to be passed as a regulation in education. One of the salient features of this regulation suggest that special education could be administered through: 1) a segregated, 2) an integrated, or 3) an inclusive system. Another feature suggest that students with intellectual disability could attend education in regular schools.

The importance of inclusive education not only fulfill the target of education for all and compulsory nine years elementary and secondary education, but inclusive education has other much more valuable benefits. Not only conforming to the demands of basic human rights, but also increase the welfare of the student, because inclusive education begins to induce a change in societal belief system on the meaning of inclusion itself which is 'to become part of something' or 'to be united with the totality'. By becoming part of something, a mentally retarded child will feel

safe, have self-confidence, feel respected, well liked, accepted, supported, loved, happy and responsible. A community that is convinced about inclusive education, believe that living and learning together is a better way of life, that is provitable for every one, because this type of education can accept and respond to every student's individual need, so that the school become a learning — friendly environment for the students. In the special school with such an open attitude, a mentally retarded child is expected to be able to optimize his/hers potentials. Furthermore, a regular teacher who did not receive special teacher training, can learn how to teach these disabled children.

Finally it can be concluded that inclusive education is an education system that enables each and every child to fully participate in regular class activities, without considering disabilities or other characteristics. Beside that inclusive education also involve the parents in a significant way, in various educational activities, especially in the planning process. While in the teaching-learning implementation, the teacher approach is child centered, utilizing many Individualized Educational Programs (IEP) with a heterogen curriculum, implementing flexible multilevel and multimodality curriculum.

Indonesia's Experience

The Indonesian Department of National Education, move cautiously in the implementation of inclusive education, because of the many controversies arising in the community. There are some dissenting opinions in society, mostly from the parents of mentally retarded children. Because of it, several implications have

to be considered , such as student input, the curriculum , teacher and trainer, facilities , funds , the management and the environment (the school , the community and the family). Socialization about inclusive education towards the public is now under way. Besides that, at several localities try-outs are conducted , to include slow learners and children with learning difficulties first, before including mentally retarded children.

However , there are several regions that with their own effort have the initiative to conduct inclusive education in their regular schools , such as in Gunung Kidul , Yogyakarta Province , that since 2001 implemented inclusive education in 12 schools , where 2 schools admitted mentally retarded children. While in DKI Jakarta Province , 35 schools provided inclusive education and 5 regular elementary schools are appointed as models for inclusive education . Because these projects are still in the Pioneering stage and have just been officially appointed on 27 May 2005, there is still no significant information on the Process or results of inclusive education from the 5 regular model schools.

The inclusive school for the mentally retarded children in Gunung Kidul mentioned above is the Muhammadiyah elementary School. This school has 120 students and 2 boys among them are mentally retarded children (Down's Syndrome).The 2 boys were enrolled in the school by their mother since the first class because the special School for mentally retarded children is located too far away from their home in the mountains , The family is poor. By enrolling their sons to the Muhamadiyah Elementary School, the parents feel comfortable, happy and proud that fact their children are admitted in the school. One of the boys is still a bit shy and withdrawn, but the second one is very cheerful and happy, and even like to dance and enjoy music. He is also very friendly , and is fond of playing along with other classmates who are without disabilities. More over , the teachers also very fond of them , and actively teach and educate them using a modified curriculum for Mathematics and other Academic subjects , while the subjects of Art , Religion ,and Sport/Physical Exercise are given together (integrated) with the other students. Academic evaluation is adjusted to their level of ability , which according to the teachers is not so important anyway. The most important thing according to the teachers is , that both mentally retarded children are well adjusted , are happy and enjoy being at school. Here are several photographic pictures showing both mentally retarded children among their classmates and while studying.

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