



Strategy of Religious Character Implementation for Special Needs Student at SD Langit Biru Kota Bengkulu

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Abstract

This article examines the strategies used by teachers in integrating religious character for children with special needs at the research location at SD Langit Biru Kota Bengkulu. The aim of this research is to present a reference/learning model for children with special needs which is still very rarely found in research on education. This happens because there are still very few schools that are serious about working on inclusive class programs. Of these few schools, SD Langit Biru, Kota Bengkulu is one of the schools that holds inclusion classes. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative with a case study approach. Data collection techniques through interviews, observation and documentation. In data analysis, content analysis is used where the results of documentation, interviews and observations are compiled, edited or interpreted .. The results of this research are: First, there are three types of needs of ABK students at SD Langit Biru, Kota Bengkulu, namely, speech delay, Grahita, and Autism. Second , there is no standard character development strategy for children with special needs. Learning strategies are adapted to the type of special needs and are stated in each individual program and according to the achievements of the phases in the independent curriculum. Third, although each has its own individual program. The four obstacles faced by teachers include a lack of knowledge about children with special needs, fluctuating parental commitment and limited facilities. Although this research is a case study in one elementary school and it is very possible that different strategies will be found in other schools, this article presents strategies and learning models in cultivating religious character for children with special needs which can be a reference in developing other learning strategies.

Keywords : Learning Strategy, Religious Character, Children with Special Needs

Introduction

The study in this article focuses on the strategies used by teachers to teach students with special needs with Speech Delay, Grahita and Autism types in cultivating students' religious character at SD Langit Biru, Kota Bengkulu. This article is important considering that there is still a void in research regarding the cultivation of religious character for children with special needs, while the cultivation of one's own character is prioritized at an early age to become the basis for students' morals and ethics (Astuti, 2022).

Children with special needs themselves have been defined by many experts. Like Heward who defines it as a child with special characteristics that are different from children in general without always being related to mental, emotional or physical degradation. On the other hand, the Ministry of Women's and Children's Empowerment defines children with special needs more broadly by dividing them into two characteristics, namely physical, mental, intellectual, emotional and social limitations and extraordinary (Desiningrum, 2016)

Research on the education of children with special needs and their learning strategies has been studied quite a lot, for example research by Sri Lestari and Khuriyah which researched character education for children with special needs at kindergarten level. This research is more focused on how to manage learning to instill character through the planning, organizing, implementation and assessment stages (Lestari, 2022). However, this research still leaves a gap in the question, is it possible to apply students with different needs with one strategy and method? Arif Widodo in his research at one of the Ibtidaiyah madrasas in Lombok emphasized the formation of religious character, respect for differences, caring for others, love of books, love of nature, and mutual cooperation. This research describes a more complete method of character cultivation, such as habituation, role modeling, extracurricular activities, persuasive approaches and student conditioning (Widodo, 2020). However, there is no specialization in the actions taken by teachers when dealing with different types of needs such as the physically disabled and the physically disabled.

Different treatment and strategies for cultivating character can actually be seen in research at the special school level. Like Daryono's research at the River Kid Malang Autism SLB where students with autism took part in religious character cultivation activities through congregational prayers, mid-day prayers, reciting the Koran and reading prayers before and after studying (Daryono et al., 2024). Likewise, Listiady's research presents a method that is different from the method we find in other research, namely using the art of ketoprak. Research conducted at SLB Pleret Yogyakarta shows the success of students in developing characters such as cooperation, tolerance, communicativeness, initiative and so on (Listiady et al., 2016) or by using other local wisdom approaches (Syamsi & Tahar, 2021). Instilling and developing the character of students with special needs can be done by integrating character into subjects, self-development activities and implementing school culture (Rofisian et al., 2018). However, even though many experts have expressed opinions and put forward theories, the implementation of character education for children with special needs is still unclear. In fact, character cultivation and development must take into account the different needs and abilities of students so that it cannot be done in a classic or uniform way (Pratama et al., 2020).

SD Langit Biru is a school that was founded in 2017 with a natural school concept. This school is an inclusive school that accepts children with special needs with various needs such as speech delay, autism, mental and hyperactivity. Handling and Standard Operating Procedures for educating children with special needs start from when parents register their children at school. Communication between parents and teachers is very intense where the partnership concept becomes a joint commitment between the school and parents (Hardiansyah, 2020). Apart from that, each student has their own individual program apart from the program that refers to the independent curriculum. SD Langit Biru was appointed as the third generation driving school by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Based on this background, the problem formulation in this article is First, what is the strategy for cultivating religious character at SD Langit Biru, Kota Bengkulu for children with special needs? Second, what are the factors that support the implementation of the strategy for cultivating religious character? Third, what are the challenges faced by teachers in cultivating religious character in children with special needs?

Methods

The method used in this article is a qualitative descriptive research method with a case study approach. Case studies can be interpreted as intensive scientific activities for individuals or institutions with the aim of gaining in-depth knowledge of the event (Rahardjo, 2017) .

The population and sample are all students with special needs at elementary school level, 6 students with their own needs, along with 6 accompanying teachers. The data collection technique is to use in-depth interviews with the school principal, head of the school inclusion section, teachers and parents. Apart from that, observation is also used when teachers carry out learning activities to obtain objective observation results. Documents used in this research include Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), curriculum and syllabus, individual program documents, activity documents and so on.

Data collected from interviews, documentation and observations will go through a sorting process to identify which data is important and which is less important, while data which is not related to the research will be removed. After the data is selected, editing will be carried out, such as interviews in audio form into text form, field notes that have not yet been arranged are systematized. Next, interpretation is carried out to answer the questions in this article.

Result

1.1. Character Integration Strategy at SD Langit Biru

1.1.1. Student Registration

The strategy for integrating character at SD Langit Biru starts with registering prospective new students. Registration goes through three processes, namely administration, interviews and student observation. The administrative process is to check the required documents, especially a psychologist's certificate regarding the type of student's needs and a certificate that the student is able to attend school. This process is a vital process considering that schools only accept students with special needs who have received permission from a psychologist or competent institution to attend school. If not, the school will advise the student's parents to focus on the therapy they are currently undergoing so as not to be disturbed.

Next, the parents will be interviewed by the head of inclusion together with the school principal. This stage is divided into three parts. The first is that the interviewer explores in depth the student's background, how the parents view their child and what the child's habits are at home, including whether the parents accept being entrusted physically and mentally to a child with special needs whose achievements are of course not the same. normal student achievement. Second, a detailed explanation of the school concept from the school principal and head of inclusion and third is the signing of the parents' commitment on a stamp. The commitments requested by the school are a commitment to assist children at home, a commitment to the school concept and a commitment to financing. The school is quite firm in including points that if parents do not comply then the cooperation between parents and the school will end.

After going through the interview session, students will be specially observed. Prospective students will be asked to enter the inclusion room supervised by a teacher. Any



activities carried out by the child are recorded. There is no treatment from the teacher, the teacher only supervises and takes notes. It's just that when a child commits an act that endangers himself or others, the teacher will immediately prevent it. The results of the observations will be studied by the inclusion section as initial information to find out the type of student needs and how far the student's attitudes have developed so far.

After the student is declared accepted, the school will appoint an accompanying teacher where this accompanying teacher will intensively discuss with the head of inclusion regarding the student's individual needs as material for preparing an Individual Program (PI). Usually it takes two weeks to one month to prepare a complete accompanying teacher with the individual program.

1.1.2. Preparation of Individual Programs (PI)

Individual Programs are prepared based on an analysis of the types of student needs. The preparation is carried out by the accompanying teacher along with the inclusion section. In their daily lives, students with special needs will be accompanied by one accompanying teacher for one student. Students with special needs at SD Langit Biru and their types of needs can be seen in the table below !

Table 1: Data on students with special needs at SD Langit Biru and their types of needs

No	Student's name	class	Type of need
1	Hiroyuki	2	Mental Retardation
2	Haikal	3	Expression disorders
3	Alvaro	3	Expression disorders
4	Kenzie	4	Autistic
5	Galang	5	Autistic
6	Ihsan	6	Light Grahita

Preparation of individual programs by utilizing the results of parent interviews, student observations and information from documents issued by psychologists or competent institutions. Because the types of needs, limitations and challenges faced by students are different, of course their individual programs are different. In the individual program document there are activities in the form of self-development which consists of communication, socialization, skills, personal hygiene and protecting oneself from danger. Apart from the self-development aspect, students are also analyzed whether they are able to train or be able to teach.

To determine whether a student is capable of teaching or being able to train, his IQ level will be looked at. Students who are capable of learning will be adjusted to their level of achievement and level of ability. In the independent curriculum which uses learning phases (Phases A, B, C for elementary school). For example , Ihsan in class 6 is capable of being taught. In mathematics subjects he does not use phase C grades 5 and 6 but his abilities are in phase B class 3, so what is used in learning material is phase B class 3. Likewise in Indonesian language subjects he uses phase B class 4 learning materials. students are only able to practice, so the learning material is focused on basic skills such as simple arithmetic, reading and writing skills. Children who are able to train will focus on skills such as carpentry, painting and drawing and so on.

Self-development activities are tailored to the main obstacles faced by the child. For example, Hiroyuki, Galang, Haikal, Alvaro and Kenzie have major communication obstacles, so self-development activities in the form of communication become the main priority followed by socialization, protecting oneself from danger, clean oneself and skills. Meanwhile, Ihsan's problem is skills, so what he focuses on is skills programs such as buttoning his own clothes , training his fine and gross motor skills, crocheting and so on.

Daily activities such as the Duha prayer, memorizing the Qur'an and congregational prayers of remembrance and prayer are not included in the Individual Program but are included in the daily program which is usually carried out every day.

1.1.3. Implementation of Activity Programs

Cultivating the religious character of students with special needs at SD Langit Biru is integrated with learning and other school/class activities. The planting starts from the time the child enters the school gate until the student leaves the school gate. There are 4 core school values and the methods used. First, morals and worship using the method of example and habituation. Second, the logic of science using the method of learning with nature, third, leadership using the outbound method and fourth, business using the method of learning from maestros and practical entrepreneurship.

The religious character at SD Langit Biru itself is divided into 3, namely how students build a relationship with God, have morals with fellow humans and have morals with the surrounding environment. The teacher as a companion is the first role model that students see, so the teacher (in SD Langit Biru is called a facilitator) becomes an example of attitudes and actions for students, especially students with special needs. Apart from that, through the habituation method, students carry out worship and learning activities every day which aim to instill religious character.

Apart from habitual activities, there are also programmed activities including daily, weekly, monthly and yearly programs. Examples of daily programmed activities include environmental cleaning activities, Duha prayers, reciting the Koran, memorizing the Koran and so on. Weekly programmed activities such as Friday almsgiving and annual programs such as celebrating Islamic holidays, commemorating Earth Day, holding Ramadan camps, Ramadan villages, and Eid al-Fitr prayer simulations.

In more detail these activities can be seen in the table below.

Table 2: aspects of religious character and examples of activities at SD Langit Biru

No	Character Aspects	Types of Habituation	Activity
1	Relationship with God (hablumminnallah)	Incidental habituation	Reading prayers after and after eating as well as etiquette, etiquette for entering the toilet, saying dhikr during various conditions such as being surprised by istighfar, entering the class by saying greetings and so on
		Daily Habits	Wudhu', Duha prayer, reciting the Koran, memorizing the Qur'an, dhikr and prayer, obligatory congregational prayers
		Weekly practice	Friday alms, sunnah fasting
		Annual habituation	Celebration of Islamic Holidays, Ramadhan Village, Ramadhan Camp, Eid al-Fitr prayer simulation and paying zakat fitrah
2	Morals towards fellow human beings	Incidental refraction	Apologize if you make a mistake, apologize, don't disturb friends, respect friends, don't bully, help friends, say hello to each other when they meet, share with each other and so on.
		Annual refraction	Teacher's Day celebration, Ramadan shared



3	Morals towards the surrounding environment	Incidental habituation	Cleanliness of the environment every morning, compassion for fellow creatures such as feeding cats, fish and chickens, not damaging the plants at school
		Annual habituation	Planting trees, commemorating Earth Day, donating to elephant conservation (class 5) and introducing the potential of the Bengkulu region

1.1.4 Evaluation of activities

Evaluation of activities is carried out periodically using student development notebook instruments or what are usually called evaluation books and progress reports. Evaluation of activities is carried out daily, weekly and monthly and throughout the semester. Evaluation of daily activities is carried out every day after school where the accompanying facilitator provides a report to the head of inclusion regarding the activities carried out that day as well as notes on the child's behavior, whether showing positive or negative behavior. Other accompanying facilitators can provide input, although more heads of inclusion provide input on the reports they have received from each accompanying facilitator.

Weekly reports are carried out every Saturday where the children's activities and behavior during the 5 school days are reported and the accompanying facilitator conveys the activity plan for one week. If there are special notes, the accompanying facilitator will include them as an individual program for next week. For example, a student named Alvaro with an expression disorder who was initially afraid of heights, apparently managed to climb 5 flights of stairs one week ago. So in the next week's program, the facilitator will include a program for climbing the stairs by increasing the number of stairs, for example 6 or 7. The next case is a student named Kenzie who has special needs for autism and whose balance is still not good, so he is given a program every day to climb the footbridge.

Monthly evaluations involve parents, class facilitators, accompanying facilitators and the head of inclusion. The school submits a complete report on student progress for a month to parents and parents convey student progress and their activities while at home. It is hoped that this activity will be able to strengthen communication between facilitators and parents and share information regarding children at home and at school and find solutions to problems that arise. For example, there are autistic students who show unusual behavior, being more active and hurting other people. So the school will ask parents what their diet is like at home, how long students play on smartphones at home and so on. Next, a joint consensus will emerge between parents and facilitators to maintain children's lifestyles at home and at school.

Semester evaluations are carried out by parents and accompanying facilitators specifically. Reports on student learning outcomes submitted to parents are progress reports, Individual Program achievement reports and parent report cards. Parent report cards contain information about how actively parents attend school activities such as parent classes, family camp activities, culture days and so on.

1.2. Supporting Factors

There are several supporting factors for cultivating students' religious character at SD Langit Biru, including:

1.2.1. *Strong School Concept*

As has been explained, the school concept lies in four core values, namely morals and worship, leadership, scientific and business logic. This concept will be conveyed to parents when they first register. This strong concept is also implemented with high commitment. The school once terminated cooperation with several parents who violated the initial commitment. This commitment is also fully held by the school community, from the principal to facilitators and other educational staff

1.2.2. *Experienced Staff*

Although not all accompanying facilitators have experience in assisting children with special needs, the head of inclusion at SD Langit Biru himself is a former ABK therapist. With 15 years of experience, the head of inclusion usually directly intervenes in training new assistant facilitators.

1.2.3. *Parental Commitment*

Collaboration between parents and accompanying facilitators is very necessary in instilling religious character in children with special needs. Usually the accompanying facilitator always reminds parents to keep their children's diet (especially autistic ones) away from chocolate, flour, sugar and so on. Apart from that, the duration of time playing on a cellphone is also a factor that determines whether a child will be calm or not while at school. Students with special needs who have high access to cell phones usually stare excessively, do excessive actions such as patting their cheeks and hands and are uncooperative in the learning process.

1.2.4. *There are special activities for parents*

The school has a partnership concept with parents in educating students. When a school accepts children with special needs, of course the parents need to be strengthened and prepared. Without it, every character development and learning program will not be optimally successful. To help parents understand their children and develop programs at home, parent classes are usually held once a month by inviting resource persons such as psychologists, parenting experts, nutritionists and even parents who have been successful in educating children with special needs. With this activity, the school hopes that parents have the same vision in educating their children.

1.3. *Challenges faced by schools*

There are several challenges faced by schools related to organizing inclusive classes and cultivating students' religious character. First, the supporting facilities are not yet complete, such as the provision of tools, however, tools for training gross and fine motor skills and tools for training balance and so on. As a solution, the accompanying facilitator will usually provide substitute equipment, which can be used from used goods and other items. Second, the challenge is the difficulty of finding accompanying facilitators in accordance with the provisions in force at SD Langit Biru, so it is often found that one child with special needs can only carry out learning activities after 3 months after registration. Third, the challenge of parents who are not committed to treating children with special needs at home. This third challenge is the challenge that seems to be the most difficult because once that commitment is violated, ABK students can return to the starting point of their development.

Apart from these three challenges, the facilitator's patience was also tested because the method of cultivating religious character could not be implemented in a short time. It takes years to build and develop this character. If you don't have patience, then of course you will encounter big obstacles in the process.



Discussion

Learning and integrating the character of children with special needs is usually focused on formal education providers such as inclusion schools and special schools (SLB). Even though the role of parents is very vital in cultivating the character and learning of children with special needs. So, parents' acceptance of their child's condition is the main key to success or failure in accompanying students (Hartati, 2019). The needs of children with special needs, for example, the need for communication and socialization where parents become the main "friends" for children in communicating and socializing (Alli et al., 2015). In fact, their mother's voice is the first source of literacy for them (Chandler-Olcott & Kluth, 2008). This shows that in cultivating the character and successful learning of students with special needs, schools must collaborate closely with parents (Suharni et al., 2023).

Unfortunately, not all parents want to accept the condition of children with special needs. There are those who accept it with an attitude of resignation and there are also those who do not accept it so they demand that the child be the same as their non-ABK friends (Faradina, 2016). Apart from that, it is important to obtain social support for parents who have children with special needs, where schools can take their role as supportive and motivating partners (Fatimah et al., 2023). With the diversity of parents' acceptance of children with special needs, the level of education and the level of understanding mean that parents are obliged to upgrade themselves to understand students' needs (State & Rismawan, 2020). Based on this, what Blue Sky Elementary School has done with its parent class is relevant in answering this problem.

The next issue for children with special needs is differentiated learning considering that the needs of one student and another are different. The individual program planned by SD Langit Biru was actually adapted from the Individualized Educational Program (IEP) from America (Farisia, 2017). This program is in accordance with the types of needs and conditions of students with special needs so that the program is a special program for them (individualized) (Assjari, 2005). With this individual program, it is hoped that the cultivation of religious character for children with special needs can run well (Sari, 2022).

Religious character is not only related to ritual dimensions such as prayer, fasting and so on, it is also related to humanitarian and environmental dimensions. More fully, this religious character maps three relationships, namely the human relationship with God, the human relationship with other humans, and the human relationship with the natural surroundings (Tantowi & Munadirin, 2022). In forming this character, an exemplary attitude from the teacher is needed as an example for students and habits that will be internalized in attitudes (Kristina et al., 2021).

Conclusion

Children with special needs are children with special characteristics that are different from children in general and require appropriate treatment in accompanying and educating them. The strategy used by SD Langit Biru in Kota Bengkulu in instilling religious character in students starts from the planning stage which consists of the process of entering students into school, preparing individual programs, implementation and regular evaluation. The method used by the school to instill character is by example and habituation which is considered quite effective in cultivating religious character.

There are several supporting factors for schools in instilling religious character in students with special needs, namely a strong concept, mutual commitment from parents and the school and experienced therapists. Apart from that, the school also provides class activities for parents to provide enlightenment and information about accompanying children with special needs.

Meanwhile, the factors that become obstacles and obstacles are the lack of supporting facilities, the difficulty of finding a companion facilitator, the personal patience of the

companion facilitator and the violation of mutual commitments by parents consciously or unconsciously.

Declarations

Author contribution statement

The first author focused on the proposal, distributing the instrument, collecting and analyzing the data findings, and making the report. The second author concerned on collecting data and constructing instrument. The third author concerned on literature review and last author focused on elaboration this paper and develop discussion.

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Data availability statement

Data is available upon request from the author. Data that supports the findings of this research is available from the related author, namely Hardiansyah as the first author upon request in accordance with established policies and regulations.

Declaration of interests statement

The authors declare that they have no known computing financial interest or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper

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