Challenges and Role of Social Workers in Integrating Education Of Children With Disability Into Ordinary School Program

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Abstract: Children with disability sometimes need special education as their right in education. However, there is a lack of support and facility for them. It then raises the increasing gap between children with disability and other normal children. In addition, there is a growing discourse on how to support the children with disability through the mixing education among them and other normal children to build relationship and mutual respect. This study uses qualitative-descriptive approach to illustrate the disability management in the Indonesian education and the educational facilities for children with disability and their access to education. In addition, this study also expands the role of school and social worker to increase the service for the children. The results showed that it is important to do mapping of families profiles, suitable support and housing programs which suitable for them. For housing programs, there is a tendency that they must be reallocated and the children have higher risks of staying in their new accommodation such as overcrowded and miscommunication. In addition, they require higher competence of social workers as their facilitator in order to provide better services. In addition, the children needs higher support in their new neighborhood.

Keywords: disability, social worker, education, ordinary school, human rights

1. Introduction

Children with disability face quite complex challenge ranging from the lack of support and lower wellness. The lack of support for them also increase the risk of protection vulnerability due to they have different communication methods (Cardona, 2004). In addition, the difference in their physical and life experience also needs suitable social model. Therefore, it needed a support from facilitator such as social worker to improve the acceptance of the children in their social environment (Hepworth et al, 2016). In addition, it takes a perspective shift from their community to pay attention, time, and support for children with disability.

There are some aspects that are important to support children with disability such as facilitator’s existence in developing children welfare (Seligman, 2009). The facilitators can be social workers that can be trusted to give support and take care of them from abuse of environment. However, social workers also face an issue caused by their competence and lack of community support. The study by Hutzler et al, (2002) Considered that community tended to see the children with disability as children with "pity" factor. This makes the children feel as people who failed in the social environment and schooling life. A study by Hutzler et al, (2002) found that children who facing lack of social support such as racial discrimination or ignorance will get higher depression and lower social interaction. The effect can be compounded by the regulator perspective in their environment such as school administrators or their local social environment. Other studies
found that children need guidance in order to improve their skill to manage their social barriers to build positive life. This can be directed to build sufficient resources leads to better development of the children to prevent discriminatory and harmful practices to them. Greenberg et al (2003) showed that the children need improved development of confidence or competence to handle the emotional and psychological aspects. It can be bridged by social workers as the children facilitator in upgrading their development.

However, there is lack of research on to understand children with disability and their protection. There are many causes which make children protection and social worker competence are interrelated. A study of children social services in 1999 found the risk 3.8 times more likely for a child with a disability to experience sexual harassment and 3.1 times more likely to experience emotional maltreatment. This is due to lack of support for caregivers as well as the poor quality of child care facility which impacts on inadequate service.

In addition, the bad condition of parental supports and troubled relationship has led to negative experience and adaptation rejection including verbal abuse and comments. This is degrading to threats and social exclusion to the children with disability. Thus, it needs to shape of appropriate intervention for children with disability.

Chamba (1999) found that children with disability will have 8 times more likely to live away from their original families to seek for proper adequate social care programs. They have two possible times for abandoned their original family and live with social service providers than normal children. They are more likely to be away from their families and as many three times to live with their peer age. Worse, they tend to lack of support from residential educational institutions as complex effect that reduce the possibility they will be accepted in their new social environment.

For children with communication disorders may have difficulty in expressing their feelings and intentions. In addition, children with psychological disabilities often do not have access to people that they can trust tell honestly about their feelings. Thus, it is questioned about the provision of services to help the children with disabilities. In rural areas, the local children service system sometimes fail to take into account the suitable social services for the children with a disability. This is evidence from lack of distribution of social worker placement.

For example, the absence of an independent advocate for children with a disability can impact on their access to the real world. Compounded by lack of experience, the social worker can also lack of knowledge about the issues of child protection and welfare which extend the list of failure in recognizing the children needs.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Definition of Disability

According to Terzi (2005) disability is physical and psychological condition which people bear and needs special treatment to develop their talent and capability. Other expert defined disability as defect or lack of competence which prevent them to gain needs and must live with specific characteristics which different from normal peers. Since these characteristics require special care so that they must get access to the development and services as their rights to live normal.

2.2. Education rights of person with disabilities

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) is the International convention to support the rights of the persons as endorsed by the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) on the 61st session of December 13, 2006. This convention is then adopted by many developed country including Indonesia. The Government of Indonesia has signed the

Article 24 paragraph (1) of the Convention regulated that "the states recognize the right of persons with disabilities to get proper education. In order to fulfill the right without discrimination and based on equal opportunity, the states shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels of nature and lifelong learning which directed to certain goals:

- a. Full development of potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, as fundamental freedoms and human diversity;
- b. Development on personality, talents and creativity, as well as mental and physical abilities of persons with disabilities to reach their full potential;
- c. Enable persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society.

2.3. Process of education inclusion

To comply with the rights described above, in paragraph (2), the states shall ensure that:

- a. Children with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the grounds of disability especially for children who not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disability;
- b. Children with disabilities can access primary and secondary education as inclusive, quality and free of charge services on an equal basis with others in the community in which they live;
- c. The provision of reasonable accommodation must be provided by state for the needs of the individual;
- d. Persons with disabilities receive the required support, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education;
- e. they have effective individualized support provided by state that maximize academic and social development which consistent with the goal of full inclusion.

3. Research Methods

To conduct the research, it is important to use the research methods. The method must be in accordance with the problem, purpose, usefulness and ability. According Goetschel, L., & Hagmann (2009), qualitative methodology is defined as research procedure to produces data while observing behavior. Therefore, this study used descriptive qualitative approach to understand the problems and find out the solution in integrating disability services into education in Indonesia. In addition, it is also will expand to the educational facilities for the children and explain the suitable access of education for them to develop their social competence through integration of social worker and school services.

4. Discussion

4.1. Local cultural challenges

In terms of cultural challenges, people tend to avoid do interaction with children with disability due to the differences in social perspective (Stern et al, 2011). In addition, it is also lack of the regulation to promote people with disabilities to live together with common community. This can be seen from the level of mistreatment and bullying that can reach 82% of children with a disability. They are twice as likely to be bothered as normal children. As many as 8 out of 10 children and young people with disabilities in school settings have been intimidated and suffered
bullying at school. In fact, 5 of the 10 children with learning disabilities have been compromised in more than one place. Combined with their inability to face physical or psychological situation, it makes them face barriers in accessing education rights and prevents them from a full and happy living.

As a result they are prone to be targets of violence and hostilities that affect their lives. In the long term this treatment causes a decreased mental well-being (Clifford et al, 2008). Therefore, it is necessary to restructure the way they live on a regular basis while minimizing the risk of repeated experience. They must be trained to gain control over their lives and minimize the risk of violence, inequality, and Inhumanity.

4.2. Facilities for children with disabilities

Equality and human rights commissions have mapped profiles of families to support their children. However, there is still rare support from the state and government to devise suitable education and/or proper housing programs for them. Such tendency can result in disadvantage for the children to live normal with other peers. Coupled with the lack of national service framework, the children with disabilities also restricted from access of suitable facility which impact on their development (Mosley, 1984). Therefore, it is important to build coordinated, high-quality and family-centered services. This is become worse in the rural setting which is lack of proper number of social worker. In addition, with the low level of competence, their performance is still difficult to be measured and assessed to promote social inclusion to support the children and their families to get their access to normal life.

4.3. Access to information and disability services

There is great variety of access to social services between rural and urban facilities (Gao et al, 2001). This can cause large problems in children with a disability (Rojahn et al, 2001). Besides lack of information and parental services for them, it is also often criticized for being too general and confusing in terms of the complexity of the language used and the social worker competence. Coupled with the social workers are not trained regularly, it impacts on the perceived trust and communication between the children and their social workers (Kadushin, 2014). In the long time, they are not always as trustworthy and easy to communication and impact on how they can bring in information gaps and uncertainties.

For urban setting, in connection with the service and support that is available, then the allocation of services requires the involvement of decision-making about treatment, care and support for children with special needs. Moreover, awareness of complaints procedures in all areas of service are considered not yet been formed by the parental experience. This condition causes the children and their families into despair even though the facility is yet competed. This requires the support of a social worker for support and maintenance while the parent is growing so busy in their economic life and business.

4.4. Social competence for children's services worker disability

There are number of people with a disability which requires competent social workers to provide services (Oliver et al, 2012). Social workers face the challenge to have the child welfare and suitable facility for the children education approach. However, social workers can open the access of education by combining the regular school with the social worker intervention (Oliver et al, 2012). To do so, there is another problem such as the children face both intrinsic and extrinsic challenges. In terms of their intrinsic issues, the social workers need to be able to increase their competence and understand which curricula will be suitable or not suitable for the
children. While the external side, the social worker have to improve their knowledge and absorb the development of global information which related to trends and issues that can encourage or inhibit future membership.

There is a common barrier that caused social workers to experience a lack of knowledge of children associated with disability. Research Oliver et al, (2012). Shows that social workers face common problems such as 18.7% rarely interact with a disability 16.0% lack of specialization, and 9.3% less understand best practice, while 12% are not willing to be placed in rural areas with limited access and coordination of services.

According to Kernaghan, K. (2009) these problems can be overcome by collaboration to establish the coordination of services, increase creativity and innovation while improving community involvement especially through holistic relationship approach with the client and family.

In practice, only 15% of social workers of children who've tried this way, whereas, 15% are still struggling to overcome individualistic and customize services. While the external side, they face social challenges which people tend to underestimate the role of social workers in empowering children with disability. It's been examined by (Kernaghan, K. 2009) which provides an assessment that only 9.1% were willing to respect people with a disability while 12% are willing to provide support facilities and social strength-based approach to do communication with them.

4.5. Parental support in disability learning

Style education of parents has been a major influence on their children's development (Grolnick, 1989). Parenting style is also considered to be associated with the children learning and their response to social environment.

Parental support vary has great impact to form a lifelong condition. Research by Gurian, M. (2010) has linked parental support with learning disability which includes the ability to understand new information through intelligence-based learning. Disruption to this factor would prevent children with disabilities to become more independent and impaired social function which started before adulthood with effects that last a lifetime.

When they grow to adulthood, the children with better parental support can understand their condition and have better learning ability. This means that they require a level of support which must be planned for each person. When they lack of such support, their development will be blocked and continue to adult life.

Parental support is also important for early stage to foster their self-learning ability to help the children to recognize the source of their disability (Sloper, 1999). In addition, it is also important for them to know their talent and looking for more support to develop and learn themselves in a supportive environment. The next main skills which important is to foster a culture of responsibility to allow them to self-development. At the first stage, they need extra help and support social services in order to increase their ability. As they have various physical and psychological conditions, social worker must have their passion to foster admiration and independence to reduce the risk factor of abuse or intentional negligence.

4.6. Measuring progress in learning ability

Their learning ability becomes an important factor to measure even though the children have both physical and psychological disability (Coles, 1978). This becomes main challenge for social worker in the empowerment of children with disability. Research by Coles (1978) Identified that a child with a disability face concerns related to their inability to understand conversation with peers. In addition, they also have different needs
compared to normal people. In this case, the measurement of progress in learning must be based on the consultant and or social worker experience. Thus, it is important for social worker to know the method of measurement of learning progress especially for the children with mental disability and psychological pressures (Rubin, 2016). The competent social worker can help them to hinder the learning, thinking, and concentration. However, comparing the condition and situation for each child can impact negatively if the social worker does not set the proper limit among the children. Coupled with the lack of experience, social worker can face struggle and blockage from the children which can result on the children’s negative inability to learn new things and making them vulnerable of negligence and improper emotional response. Such low level of child care will impact on their development when children become teenagers and make them become more excluded from their social support.

Therefore, social worker must understand the factors that hinder learning in a child with a disability (Rubin, 2016). This is because the wrong method can impact on how the children can understand the instruction and what they should be looking for. This method and approach must be measured to know the effectiveness and what role must be built to drive them to participate in social inclusion which helps their social peers to understand what support they can give to the children with disability. Thus, the education inclusion must be based on the two-way approach e.g. educating the children and also educating their social peers (Westwood, 2007). To do so, it requires good practice guidelines so that they can measure and outline the positive ways of their social environment to learn and engage with the children to achieve better results. The children needs must be assessed with the right services and support to measure how far an institution can give support to the children with disabilities.

However, there is a difficulty to measure how a child with disability can explain their desire and feelings and who can be trusted. For certain case, this can be done through rapid assessment and provision of appropriate support. Whereas, for other case, it needs secure link and attachment which very important and must be maintained as social intervention especially from social worker to understand the best ways to improve the children learning capacity from time to time.

4.7. Early intervention teams

As children with disabilities having different needs and condition, they need intervention teams to understand and measure their needs (Sloper, 1999). Their intervention result is then planned as a program and guidance for both social workers and the people around them. However, there is a problem in the early intervention, such as weaknesses in the policy and also understanding social worker or child facilitators to intervene in accordance with professional standard (Thompson, 2015). In addition, for those do not understand the local and national trends, they can be lagged behind in implementing the intervention model, policies and collaborations as proper intervention and counseling for the families and children.

Therefore, the centeredness of goals for early intervention is important to support them to achieve the purpose for the welfare (Westwood, 2007). The study suggested that interventions useful to promote children's involvement, independence and mastery of learning strategies so that they can quickly grow and develop their talent and/or cognitive domain. Intervention is important and useful for promoting development especially to gain social competence while promoting additional skills to normal life (Elias et al, 1991). However, there is a varied experience in children with a disability that facilitator must understand. To do so, the facilitator (social worker) must measure their behavior and therapy
services to generate the proper development activities which centered on early intervention.

Some type of early intervention is a family-centered service. It starts with the normalization method which provides regular services to children and their families. The next step was the development of functional programming and introduction of educational orientation to help the children to choose which school or education facilities can give them comfortable life. In practice, there is a quite complex aspect where the classroom teacher may avoid and lack of competence to help the child in order to align with other normal children.

The facilitator can recommend new practices in early intervention to the school by way of inclusion or blending in naturalistic assessment and orientation of the individual and the group. However, there is a focus on interaction and activity-based intervention that process lightly structured so that children feel supported and gain integrated therapy in collaborative / consultative manners. However, a social worker which interested to be a facilitator of children with disability can face problems and challenges such as accountability and institutionalization of programs to provide necessary support for the child and family.

There are several indicators to determine the success of the interventions themselves. An important component is the commitment of all members of their social environment to share goals and tasks to work together and function as an intervention team here. The function teams are formed with decision-making consensus. In addition, the consistency of the team must direct the team to implement the decision together with openness and communication. At the final stage, the team assesses their ability in conflict handling, self-evaluation, decision-making ability, and participation as a form of responsibility of intervention team.

In early intervention, it needs to be balanced with the presence of an assessment to measure the effectiveness of the intervention to the children welfare. There are several approaches such as unit-disciplinary evaluation, intra-disciplinary, multi-disciplinary, and inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary. For multidisciplinary evaluation team, they can consist of two or more members who are working independently towards the same goal. The assessment must be conducted by evaluating children and families separately. Here, a team must be consisted of specialist interventions to provide results of the evaluation and goal setting to improve the interaction among team members, especially parents and counselor to learn together, work, sharing, and provide insight.

4.8. The role of family

Since the main purpose is to work with a family member, it is required consultation with a professional such as experienced social worker either through co-intervention (treatment, teaching) as well as share information and teaches skills to children with disability (Carr, 2011). Family members should be prepared to be a member of the team which can cooperate with social worker to better serve children with disabilities.

They should be trained to share and develop a role to enrich the skills of other family members and learn from each other. The family-social worker relationship will improve the flow of information, skills and understanding to take decisions together (Van Auken, 2006). However, raising the knowledge must avoid that the members share their perceptions about the ability of there is a situation that family members can learn a different perspective of the child as the children condition become worse or the approach must be changed. The interventions and strategies decided by all members of the family must be under the guidance of the social workers as the leader of the
intervention team. Even though all team members are responsible for their activities and role, they must act based on the planned, agreed and integrated consultation to achieve the goal children welfare.

4.9. External educational services

The needs of children with disability have been challenges for the children specialist and families (Sloper, 1992). Even though the education law in many countries has started to consider this issue as important in their litigation. However, the criteria for those who were entitled to receive the service are still questionable. In addition, the children who need education are also considered to have not been accommodated entirely in the service of formal education for their diverse needs and characteristics of learners. The same thing is also experienced by children with special needs as their inability can stop them to enter ordinary school due to the teacher or school facility limitations (Allan, 1999).

Thus, it is questioned whether modified education or ordinary school to fulfill their unique needs. In addition, as children with disabilities need proper instruction format and costs to meet the education goal, then managing these issues are important for both school educator and the children. In addition, as the children also needs special facility from home to school, then, there is other concern which the transport and the development of must be planned to help the child with the disability (Allan, 1999). However, there are problems in measuring the benefits gained from such provision especially for both the children and the normal peers. The concern is about the response of other students about the modification of their ordinary school into special education which accepting the children with disabilities to join their class and do interaction with the children with disability.

Although many researchers suggest that ordinary school can be modified into special education, the process should be based counseling as psychological services, but other researchers propose that this task is left to the social workers in collaboration with school administrator and teachers. Whereas, suggested that it also depended upon the participation of parents to hold training counseling and therapy for children with disability and to decide which school is suitable for their children. This is due to the diversity of the conditions of children with disabilities ranging from mild to emotional disorders and also the additional condition such as mental retardation, autism, traumatic brain injury or sensory impairments that hinder the development process. This will impact on their decision making to place their children into certain school or ordinary school.

The problems can be more complex if the school did not have a counselor or mentor as a reference in a special education consulting and management of environmental social behavior. In addition, the unpreparedness of normal children in cooperation with the social workers then the common students will lose orientation to accept the children with disability into their class. Thus, the counselor of education must understand how to integrate the disability and help other normal student to understand how important to accept the children with disability to develop their morale and characteristics as part of human right education for all students. The school administrator and teacher can continue to coordinate with the social workers and facilitator to ensure the evaluation of that the school can fulfill the child's needs. For certain case such as children with cognitive disabilities, there must be involvement of the evaluation by the public health and mental health as intervention in special education.

If the evaluation showed that the school can fulfill the child needs of ordinary education and related services, the school must accept the children as their students. However, school also has their rights to open individualized education program by implementing special education blueprint. In
this case, the education counselor and parents should ensure which special education program has been implemented consistently. If the parents have submitted to special education counselor, the counselor's task is to respond to the request of parents and coordinate with schools to conduct the evaluation.

There are several indicators of readiness of external education services such as schools to accept the children with disability. The first indicator is the training for school faculty to provide adequate instruction in guiding children with disability. The second indicator is to measure the teacher and school community to understand the situation and condition of children with disability to develop their characters. The school eligibility is also determined by their existence of the school curricula to increase social interaction between children with disability with normal peer children. Schools must have procedures in oral and written communication, including "chain of command" for parent communication, parental foster, homeroom, and those who act in the place of parents or with whom the child interacts including anyone who is legally responsible for the children welfare in school. In this case the counselor can be bridged by setting a surrogate parent in childhood, in school or in a classroom environment. The third indicator is the readiness of schools and the school communities that they have been given the knowledge and skills necessary to interact with the children. The fourth indicator is independent living programs and outreach programs in child care to support the children to grow independently. In children with disabilities (including developmental delays, physical or mental, and those at risk of safety problems, the school needs to provide more frequent evaluations that early intervention services are supported by assistive technology devices and services.

In some children with a particular disability, sometimes there are aspects of secrecy because they are prone to problems of social and legal issues. The child may require placement in a particular local school that is willing to modify the teaching procedure and curricula by providing staff counselor or team to accompany the child to gain cognitive and psychological growth. However, this is still an issue for the children who have been victims of violence or becoming perpetrators of violence as they need the involvement of protection and advocacy centers to identify their rights, limitation and needs.

5. Conclusion

Supporting children with disability to gain access to their education is main challenge for social workers as facilitator of education for disability children. As the equality and human rights are becoming more important for democratic community, there is a discourse to integrate the education for normal with disability children. However, it needs the involvement of many parties including the school, parent, and social workers as educational commissions to do mapping the profiles of families, children and school through many program including housing programs. Alternatively, if the housing programs are not provided, then, the social workers can influence ordinary school to modify their school curricula to accept children with disability.

For housing programs, however, there is a tendency that the children must be reallocated and the children are more likely to live in overcrowded accommodation. Thus, the alternative to modify the ordinary school into integrated school with disability education program is important solution to give access to the children. However, there is another challenge on how to measure the result and what kind of competence will be required especially for social workers to be able to provide services and monitoring/ evaluation of the idea.

Even though the schools have their goal to practice human right and democratic life,
however, the schools may face the challenge of denial by their community and their students to modify their curricula into integrated children welfare model. This needs training for both school and social workers to integrated and modify their treatment and curriculum while preparing the school community to accept the children both intrinsic and extrinsic approach. Therefore, it is facilitator of children with disability with their school members in order to mitigate the challenges through the involvement of social workers. This can be done by improving their accountability, capabilities, modeling and institutionalization of programs to provide necessary support for the child and family.

Furthermore, to create and support services, the allocation of services can be used. However, it can result in higher complaints among the school members if they are not prepared well in all areas of service which considered not yet trained by professional consultants in disability. This condition will cause the children and families trauma into despair. This requires the higher competence of social worker for support and maintenance.

6. Suggestion

There are several indicators of readiness for the school as external education services to be integrated school with disability program. The first indicator is the ability of the school faculty to provide adequate instruction in guiding children with disability. The second indicator is how to measure the school eligibility and determination of which school program can increase social interaction between children and with their peers. Schools and their members must have standardized procedures in both oral and written communication in order to do effective interaction. In addition, they must be trained well to be involved in "chain of command" for to do communication while providing better education support for the children with disability.

References


