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Slow-Learners Assessment Training in Inclusive School

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Abstract—The good inclusive education services are based on assessment report. Most of special needs children in inclusive school are slow-learners. Teacher in inclusive school should know characteristic, strength and weakness of slow-learners in order to optimalize inclusive education services. This research aimed to know training for assessment of slow-learners in inclusive school. This research was a descriptive research. The subjects of the study were thirty-two inclusive elementary school teachers. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistic. The result of this study showed that the training improved inclusive elementary school teacher's knowledge, skills, and learning motivation about assessment of slow-learners. Thus, teachers can provide good inclusive education services.

Keywords—assessment; slow-learners; inclusive school

I. INTRODUCTION

Law No 20 of 2003, Article 5 states that "Every citizens have the same right to receive education, and citizens who have physical, emotional, intellectual, mental and/or social disabilities are entitled to special education. Related to this law, the Indonesian government has implemented inclusive education to facilitate and provide rights for children with special needs.

Bélanger, as in [1], defines inclusion as thorough integration for all students without exception students with special needs in regular classes tailored to the age of the student and the location of the school. Eripek and Kircal-Iftar state that inclusive education is a teaching system which implementation combines children with special needs with normal children and describes half or all of the learning time of students with special needs in a regular classroom, where the school environment gives freedom to support children with special needs [2].

In the framework of implementing inclusive education, teachers must understand the characteristics and abilities of children with special needs. This can be identified through the assessment. The majority of inclusive school teachers have difficulty in assessing children with special needs in the academic and non-academic fields [3].

Assessment is the process of gathering information about students that aims to make decisions [4]. Assessment is a process used to determine the needs and strengths of learning and to determine whether students need to receive special education services [5]. Assessment in educational settings serves five purposes: (1) screening and identification, (2) eligibility and diagnosis, (3) IEP development and placement, (4) instructional planiing, and (5) evaluation [6]. Things that ned to be considered include knowing what, who, and how children with special needs.

The number of Children with Special Needs each year shows an increase [7]. In 2007, the Directorate of PSLB (Directorate of Special School Development) mentioned the number of Children with Special Needs in Indonesia was 318,600 children [8]. Based on the National Socioeconomic Survey (SUSENAS) of March 1, 2011, the number of Indonesian children was 82,980,000. Twelve percent of the population were children with special needs [9].

Slow-learners are one of the children with special needs who need special education services in inclusive schools. Slow-learners have slower learning abilities compared to their peers [10]. Students who are slow in the learning process need more time than other students who have the same level of intellectual potential. Not only their academic ability, but other abilities are also limited, including coordination ability (difficulty using stationery, sports, or wearing clothes). In terms of behavior, slow-learners tend to be quiet and shy, and difficult to make friends. Slow-learners also tend to lack confidence [11].

Slow-learners can almost be found in every inclusive school. Ana Lisdiana states that approximately 14.1% of children were slow learners [12]. This number is more than the total number of children with learning disabilities, children with intelectual disabilities, and children with autism [13]. Slow-learners assessment is needed, so that their presence and strenghts-weaknesses in the academic and non-academic fields can be known as early as possible. Furthermore, a service program that suits their needs can be provided.

Glass & Meckler and Thousand & Villa say that training, in particular, has consistently been shown to have a positive influence not only on general philosophical views about mainstream teachers who are directly related to broad concepts of integration and inclusion, but also on perceived abilities to program and teaching in the special education domain [14]. Training and continuing education opportunities improve

teachers' attitudes and abilities to be able to work effectively with special needs students in truly inclusive classrooms [15].

In the learning process including training, motivation is very necessary, because someone who has no motivation in learning, will not be possible to do learning activities. Mc. Donald said that motivation is a change in energy in a person that is characterized by the emergence of effective and reactions to achieve goals. As for the opinion of Oemar Hamalik, the change in energy in a person is in the form of a real activity in the form of physical activity [16].

Therefore, training of slow-learners assessment was needed for inclusive school teachers. The purpose of this study were to describe the implementation of slow-learners assessment training to: (1) teachers' knowledge and skills, and (2) teachers' learning motivation.

II. METHOD

This research was descriptive qualitative. The data described in this study was data on the implementation of training to the knowledge, skills and learning motivation of inclusive school teachers in the assessment of slow-learners. The total training participants were thirty-two teachers from different elementary schools which is providing inclusive education. Twenty-one teachers were female and eleven teachers were male. The sample was determined by the purposive sampling technique.

Slow-learners assessment training for inclusive school teachers was held for 5 days. The first day was guided training; all teachers were in one place, got the material and did a simulation of slow-learners assessment. While the second, third and fourth day, teachers applied the knowledge and skills that had been acquired by practicing slow-learners assessment in each school. And on the fifth day, the teachers gathered again in one place for reflection. Details on the implementation of the assessment for slow-learners training can be seen in Table 1.

Data collection techniques include: (1) Observations; preliminary observation and final observation were conducted to obtain data on inclusive school teachers' skills, and observations during the session were carried out to obtain data on teachers' learning motivation (2) Tests; pretest and posttest (written test) were used to get data on inclusive school teachers' knowledge.

TABLE I. SLOW-LEARNERS ASSESSMENT TRAINING FOR INCLUSIVE SCHOOL TEACHERS

Day	Activity	Description
1	Guided Training	• Pretest • Theory of children with special needs assessment concept • Theory of slow-learners characteristics • Theory of slow-learners assessment • Simulation of slow-learners assessment
2-4	Practice	Slow-learners assessment in each inclusive school
5	Reflection	• Presentation of slow-learners assessment result • Feedback from the experts • Postest

The instruments used in this study were instruments developed by the research team through the validation stages of the experts. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Implementation of Slow-Learners Assessment Training toward Teachers' Knowledge and Skills

The results of this study were an increase in knowledge and skills of inclusive school teachers in slow-learners assessment. Increased teachers' knowledge could be seen from the results of the pretest and postest, which increased from 62.5 to 86.25. While the improvement in teachers' skills could be seen from the results of the initial and final observations which increase the score from 65.63 to 85.42 (Fig. 1).

These results are consistent with Demore & Murray's opinion which states that training can make a difference [17]. Accordingly, the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education states that training and further education on special education topics can help staff to achieve better quality[18]. In fact, teachers who receive training appear to have a willingness to collaborate with others in helping children with special needs [19] [20]. This is corroborated by the opinions Forlin, Loreman & Sharma that training has a significant impact on the efficacy of teaching in inclusive practices[21].

Inclusive schools are educational institutions that accept children with special needs, so teachers in inclusive schools need to have good knowledge and skills regarding assessment of children with special needs. Thus the incidence of children with special needs can be detected early and can be intervened early too. Reference [4] conveys that assessment is a process of collecting data for the purpose of making decisions about students or schools. In line with the opinion of Fox, et al which states that teachers must have adequate knowledge about cognitive, behavioral, and social characteristics related to special needs to design learning experiences and learning strategies that are appropriate for the child [22].
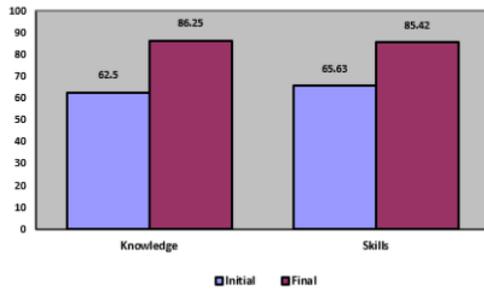
Fig. 1. Knowledge and skills improvement of inclusive school teachers in slow-learners assessment training.

B. Implementation of Slow-Learners Assessment Training toward Teachers' Learning Motivation

This training can provide motivation to teachers in learning about slow learning children's assessment. At the beginning of the training, most of the teachers were still looked passive and were less enthusiastic about attending the training. That is because the teachers still do not understand the importance of slow-learners assessment. After being given an understanding and some examples of real events, the teachers began to be enthusiastic and increasingly involved with this training. Even teachers also relate to the events they experience everyday in their respective inclusive schools. The more they see the connection, the participants become very active and enthusiastic. All participants asked questions and commented on each other.

All the teacher's behavior in this training is in accordance with Lestari & Suprayitno's opinion about learning motivation indicators [23]. Indicators of learning motivation are: (a) Aspects of learning attitudes include: happy/enthusiastic in the learning process, paying attention to the teacher when delivering material/information, showing curiosity, and diligently doing the task. (b) Participation aspects include: often ask questions during the learning process, answer questions from the teacher, express opinions when discussing, respond to the opinions or answers of friends, present the results of group work, do the tasks given by the teacher, conclude the material together with the teacher , compete to get a score or score as much as possible, use the opportunities given by the teacher to demonstrate the ability or knowledge possessed, and look for a solution to a problem (problem solving). (c) Interpersonal aspects include: behaving politely to the teacher, helping friends who have learning difficulties, respecting the opinions of others, working together in group discussions, giving equal treatment to everyone (not distinguishing between friends), and communicating well with others (the teacher and friends).

Increased teacher motivation in this training is also in accordance with the Theory of Drive by Woodworth [24]. According to this theory, a person's behavior is driven toward a particular goal because of a need. This need causes an internal urge that makes a person try to do something that leads to the achievement of these goals. The teachers in this training are driven by the need to have knowledge and skills on assessment slow-learners in their inclusive schools. Maslow strongly believes that human behavior is generated and directed by certain needs, such as physiological needs, security, love, appreciation, self-actualization, knowing and understanding, and aesthetic needs [16].

The increase in teacher motivation to learn in this training also has an influence on the achievement of improving the knowledge and skills of inclusive school teachers in the assessment of slow-learners. This is in line with the theory of Uno which states that if learning motivation increases, learning outcomes also increase[25].

Although this research resulted in an increase in the knowledge, skills, and learning motivation of inclusive school teachers in slow-learners assessment, there are some limitations. First, the study sample was determined using the purposive sampling technique. Second, this study was a qualitative research, so it is still necessary to test the effectiveness of slow-learners assessment to increase knowledge and skills of school teachers inclusive.

IV. CONCLUSION

The conclusions of this study are: (1) Slow-learners assessment training can improve the knowledge and skills of inclusive school teachers. (2) Slow-learners assessment training can increase inclusive school teachers' learning motivation. This increase in learning motivation plays a role in influencing the improvement of the knowledge and skills about slow-learners assessment.

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