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## Inclusion School for Early Childhood in the Outdoor Classroom

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**Abstract:** Outdoor classroom learning for children with special needs in inclusive schools is very important because one of the characteristics of children with special needs is often needed. This study aims to provide learning about the outdoor classroom in one of the inclusive schools, FUN & Play Inclusion School, Semarang. This research uses the descriptive qualitative method. The data were collected using observation and interviews. Observations were made during the learning process, and interviews were conducted with teachers and principals of FUN & Play Inclusion School, Semarang. Data were analyzed through several stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, data conclusions, and data validation using triangulation. The results showed that the application of outdoor classroom learning in FUN & Play Inclusion School, Semarang had learning media, learning models, and learning made according to the characteristics of children. Learning media uses materials that come from nature and are around the environment. The learning model uses the concept of FUN & PLAY following the characteristics of children who love to play. The assessment is carried out every day, consisting of two aspects.

**Keywords:** children with special needs, inclusive education, outdoor classroom.

## 儿童早期户外全纳学校

**摘要:** 在包容性学校中, 特殊需要儿童的户外课堂学习非常重要, 因为经常需要特殊需要儿童的特征之一。本研究旨在提供有关三宝垄乐趣与游戏包容性学校之一的包容性学校的户外课堂的学习。本研究采用描述性定性方法。数据是通过观察和访谈收集的。在学习过程中进行了观察, 并与三宝垄乐趣与游戏包容性学校的教师和校长进行了访谈。数据通过几个阶段进行分析, 即数据简化、数据呈现、数据结论和使用三角测量的数据验证。结果表明, 户外课堂学习在三宝垄乐趣与游戏包容性学校的应用具有学习媒体、学习模式, 以及根据孩子的特点制作的学习。学习媒体使用来自大自然并围绕环境的材料。学习模式遵循有趣和玩耍的理念, 遵循爱玩的孩子特点。评估每天进行, 包括两个方面。

**关键词:** 有特殊需要的儿童, 全纳教育, 户外教室。

## 1. Introduction

Inclusive education has been implemented in the context of combating discriminatory treatment in the field of education. Inclusive education is education where all children can enter it. The needs of every child are accommodated or embraced and fulfilled, not just tolerated [1]. Inclusive education has developed in each country and has also formed the implementation of inclusive strategies, produced various education systems throughout the world, and various ways of signifying the concept of inclusion to implement inclusive education vary considerably in each country

[2, 3] because, indeed, every country has a different culture and tradition. In addition, [4] argues that inclusion is political. Inclusive education believes that each child is a unique individual [5]. It can be concluded that inclusive education is developed based on the belief that each individual can learn, develop, grow and cooperate with others despite having different backgrounds.

Inclusive education generally consists of regular children and children with special needs. They are a variety of disorders, namely visual impairment, intellectual intelligence disorders and adaptation to the environment, hearing loss, motor disturbances,

emotional disturbances, learning difficulties, behavior disorders, and problems in health. In comparison, a child with special needs special education services to meet their needs to develop according to their potential [6, 7].

Indonesia is working to implement inclusive education through various levels of education. One of them is early childhood education. Early childhood education is a coaching effort aimed at children from birth until the age of six carried out by providing educational stimuli to help physical and spiritual growth. In addition, Law Number 20 the Year 2003 concerning the National Education System, which regulates education in Indonesia, mandates the implementation of education to all Indonesian people without exception, including children with special needs who can be served in the Early Childhood Education program. Based on this law, the government has made a policy in holding Early Childhood Education inclusion.

Early Childhood Education allows children with special needs to go to school following their wishes [8]. Parents can choose the most appropriate education for their children. However, the reality is that not many PAUDs in Indonesia are ready to implement inclusive Early Childhood Education and accept special needs children. The reason is that there is no special equipment. Teachers do not have the knowledge and skills to teach children with special needs, interfering with learning. In addition, the needs of each student must be considered individually, on a case-by-case basis [9]. This makes the teacher overwhelmed in providing learning activities and assessing. Some of these things are often the reasons for not accepting children with special needs and not holding Early Childhood Education inclusions.

Students with and without disabilities will experience more balanced friendships in inclusive settings, and academically, students with disabilities will gain more academic knowledge through effective general education teacher instruction because general education teachers are certified to teach academics [10, 11]. According to [12], children with special needs often complain of boredom while studying in the room so that the interest in learning and absorption of children classified as children with special needs decreases and are unable to catch up with other children belonging to normal children. Boredom experienced by children with special needs occurs because in learning, only fixated on one component of the object so that the child is only able to imagine and imagine the material taught by the teacher. In line with this, [9] revealed that teaching arrangements, or placement of students with disabilities in public education or classroom resources, might not significantly contribute to academic achievement for students with disabilities.

The approach of outdoor learning for children with special needs in inclusive education is very important. Children with special needs often experience burnout in the classroom during the learning process. The outdoor learning approach is very appropriate because it uses an open natural setting as a means [13]. In addition, according to [14], the learning process using nature as a medium is very effective in knowledge management. In Central Java, only one inclusive Early Childhood Education uses outdoor classes in the learning process, namely the FUN & PLAY Inclusion School. This kindergarten is in the city of Semarang, Central Java. The author is interested in researching the FUN & PLAY Inclusion School regarding the learning process using outdoor classes for regular children and children with special needs.

"Education for All" emphasizes that it is indeed the right of all children to be included in the mainstream education system, regardless of their incompetence. Since then, the education system in many countries has sought to reduce practice discrimination and provide additional support to help each student reach their potential [15].

Inclusive education provides optimal services by making various modifications. In other words, inclusive education requires schools to adjust to the demands of students' individual needs. In addition, inclusive education is a strategy to promote universal education. It is effective because it can make schools responsive to diverse characteristics and needs that uphold the core values, beliefs, and principles [16]. In line with this, [17] revealed that inclusive education schools accommodate all students in the same class. Inclusive education is implemented at all levels, including early childhood education (PAUD), respecting diversity and not discriminating against all students. It is responsive, enables curriculum development, provides opportunities for children with special needs to interact with other children and improve their abilities, and provides opportunities for children with special needs for academic learning from peers [18].

The implementation of inclusive education has an advantage and consequences that must be borne. It makes special needs children and normal children interact naturally, following the demands of daily life in the community. While the consequences of implementing inclusive education are that schools are required to carry out various changes, starting from the perspective, attitude to the educational process, oriented towards individual needs without discrimination. Children with special needs have different conditions than children in general [19]. Law No. 8 of 2016 describes the types of specificity: physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, mental disabilities, and sensory disabilities.

The diversity of specificities in children with special needs shapes the way they learn, interact, and

communicate with the environment in their way. Despite the obstacles, the right to education for children with special needs is still mandatory. Because many children with special needs can develop their potential to become children who excel in both the academic and non-academic areas. The selection of learning classes within indoor and outdoor classes is very important to consider during the learning process.

The outdoor learning approach is very appropriate because it uses an open natural setting as a means [13]. The learning process used nature as a medium seen as very effective in knowledge management on natural experience can be felt, translated, developed based on the capabilities possessed [14].

Realizing inclusive education in Early Childhood Education is not a simple thing. It needs careful planning and preparation, including creating a warm class community, accepting diversity, and respecting differences; fundamental changes in curriculum implementation; teacher preparation for interactive teaching; providing continuous encouragement for teachers and classrooms and removing barriers related to professional isolation; meaningful parental involvement in the planning process. In addition, teachers in inclusive classroom settings must master teaching strategies appropriate to their students' specific characteristics [20].

According to [21], five themes were identified through focus group sessions involving teachers, administrators, and support staff that show the importance of sustainability in inclusion. In addition, each student's academic success and social skills depend on the strong feeling of empowering their teacher to teach curriculum all abilities and disabilities [22]. Therefore, collective teaching practices can bring more trust and strategy into successful teaching from all students in inclusive classrooms and make the inclusion school for early childhood in the outdoor classroom.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Students Performance in University

This study applies descriptive qualitative to provide an overview of the implementation of outdoor learning in one of the inclusive education namely FUN & PLAY Inclusion School, Semarang. Qualitative research seeks to dig up information in-depth and is open to all responses, and not just yes or no answers are used in this research.

### 2.2. Research Subjects

The subjects of this study were children, teachers, and the principal of the FUN & PLAY Inclusion School, Semarang. FUN & PLAY Inclusion School consists of two classes, namely A and B. TK A in children aged 4-5 years and totaling 16 children. TK B is children aged 5-6 years and totaling 11 children. This research was

conducted in FUN & PLAY Inclusion School with fun (happy) and play (full of games) methods with actual holistic outdoor. The FUN & PLAY Inclusion School has the foundation chair, the person in charge of the school, the principal, and six teachers.

### 2.3. Research Procedure

The data were collected using observation and interviews. Techniques that can be used to collect data can be divided into two, namely, techniques that are interactive and non-interactive [23]. This research uses interactive techniques, which include in-depth interviews and participant observation. Through observation, the researcher learns about the behavior and the meaning attached to those behaviors. Interview as one of the data collection techniques gives some questions and answers systematically based on specific objectives. Interviews were conducted with teachers and principals of FUN & PLAY Inclusion School, Semarang. Through interviews, it is sought to dig deeper information about the learning process in the outdoor classroom. Interviews were conducted in a structured and face-to-face manner.

The analysis model used in this study is an interactive analysis [24]. The components we used include the reduction of data, data presentation, and concluding. Data reduction was obtained from observations and interviews. The data are then grouped into various categories determined as the focus of the study. The data presentation, which presents information obtained from the data reduction process, is then organized and presented with a narrative text model. The next stage is the conclusion of data that has been patterned, focused, and arranged systematically.

The data validation uses triangulation /combination that combines various existing data collection techniques and sources of data and compares answers between participants and experience among fellow researchers conducting data collection [25, 26]

## 3. Results

Early childhood education focuses foundation towards growth and six aspects of development, namely moral and religious development, physical (fine and gross motor coordination), cognitive (cognitive and creative thinking), social-emotional (attitudes and emotions), language, and art according to the uniqueness and stages of early childhood development. According to the National Association for Education Young Children (NAEYC), early childhood is from zero to eight years. That age is a golden age or golden period. The period in which the growth and development of children take place very rapidly and the child will easily absorb all the information he gets. Children are unique. They express their behavior spontaneously. Children are also active, energetic, egocentric, enthusiastic about many things, exploratory and adventurous, generally rich in fantasy, and still

So, the Fun and Play learning model is a learning model that is designed so that the child feels comfortable because then the results will be effective. After all, it follows the characteristics of the child itself. The following author shows outdoor learning implemented in FUN & PLAY Inclusion School:



Fig. 2 Outdoor learning in Fun and Play Inclusion School

Learning models are used in outdoor classes such as playing in the playground to train children's gross motor skills, scratching sand and soil to train children's fine motor skills. In addition, children can also choose the teacher that they want to learn from. For example, one child wants to learn with one of the teachers, even though the teacher does not hold the activity, the teacher must teach the child according to the activity being taught. This is one of the advantages of the FUN & PLAY Inclusion School because not all schools applying the concept of learning may choose teachers during the learning process in outdoor classes.

### 3.3. Assessment of Learning in Outdoor Classes

After finishing school children, the teacher conducts a daily assessment on each child. The assessment consists of cognitive and behavioral assessments of children on that day. Assessments at the FUN & PLAY Inclusion School are different from other schools because there are behavioral assessments for each child that children do every day. The goal is that students can have good behavior, attitudes, and character. The standard level of achievement of developing an inclusive service early childhood education program refers to national education standards as regulated in government regulation number 19 of 2005, which is subsequently formulated in Minister of Education Regulation number 58 of 2009 focusing on early childhood education standards.

Child growth, which includes monitoring health and nutrition conditions, refers to the card guide to health (KMS) and early detection of child development. The purpose of assessment for non-children with special needs refers to the level of child development achievement that has been set, whereas for special needs children with the level of achievement is based on the child's ability. In addition to these three points, the teacher's existence as the executor of the learning process becomes very important for deeper review. The FUN & PLAY Inclusion School has six teachers who come from different backgrounds.

Although the level of early childhood education, not all teachers come from the education department of early childhood education teachers. Although not from the relevant majors, the FUN & PLAY Inclusion School teachers received much training on the learning process in the outdoor classroom. There are substantially two main components in developing the competency of inclusive education teachers. First, it has standardized teacher core competencies and developed into PAUD / TK / RA teacher competencies, covering (a) pedagogic, (b) personality, (c) social, and (d) professional (Permendiknas No. 16 the Year 2007). Second, specific competency in inclusive education for kindergarten, which is to have an understanding and ability in terms of; (a) the characteristics and learning needs from special needs children; (b) assessment of learning for special needs children; (c) creating a friendly learning environment; (d) individual learning programs; and (e) evaluation of learning for children with special needs.

## 4. Conclusion

The results showed that in the application of FUN & PLAY Inclusion School outdoor classroom had to learn media, learning models, and assessments made according to the child's characteristics. Learning media uses materials that come from nature and are around the environment. The learning model uses the concept of fun and play with the characteristics of children. The assessment is carried out every day consisting of two aspects of assessment, namely cognitive assessment and behavior/attitude assessment.

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