

Volunteerism for Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN): Social Inclusive Education Project in Indonesia

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Abstract— This study aims to describe the development of the SIEP program and child development from batches 1-3. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method. Data collection techniques using direct observation to glean information about the learning program improvement for children with SEN in SIEP Community. The data analysis technique uses the Miles and Huberman model. The data was obtained from September 2020 to November 2021 followed by the batch opened by SIEP. The SIEP program focuses on facilitating children with SEN who live in rural areas based on their needs. This research resulted in two major themes namely the SIEP development program and child development from batches 1-3. The SIEP development program has increased in every batch. It can be seen in the number of regions, children with SEN, initiators, and volunteers. Children with SEN who SIEP mentored have developed independence, skills, and knowledge. It is supported by the stimulation provided by volunteers and the learning media used. Volunteering activities in the SIEP community still need to be improved in many aspects. However, with the support of the government, community, and parents of children with SEN, the SIEP community will continue extending its impact to other rural areas in Indonesia.

Keywords: children with special needs, Indonesia, social inclusive education project, volunteerism

I. INTRODUCTION

Volunteerism plays a central role in strengthening people-state relationships. It promotes better governance, helps build more equal and inclusive societies, and fosters stability [1]. Based on the United Nation Volunteers (UNV)'s report there are 109 million full-time-equivalent volunteers across the globe [2]. In terms of composition, UNV estimates of volunteering activity by region as in the following graphic:

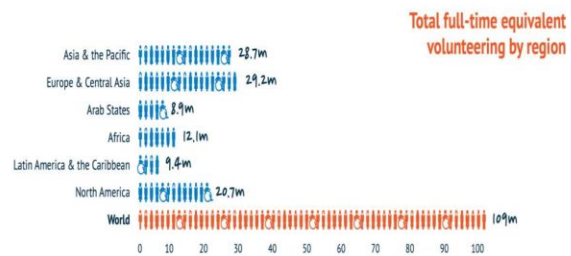


Figure 1. Full-time-equivalent volunteers across the globe

Figure 1 shows the full-time equivalent volunteers per region, from nearly 29 million in Asia and the Pacific to around 9 million each in the Arab States, Latin America, and the Caribbean. In Asia Continent, Indonesia has become the highest volunteer activity run in the

country based on the World Giving Index (WGI) [3]. It shows Indonesian enthusiasm for gotong-royong (communal work), a practice of mutual aid across islands, ethnicity, religions, and age. A study found a positive relationship between Indonesian youngsters in increasing civic participation in society. The positive engagement of youth bulges in helping their communities in contributing to the collective progress of Indonesian society [4]. These communities are rooted and spread across the country and diversify with the program that they focus on to create sustainability and resiliency in the community.

One of the most important challenges in its development is the complex diversity of the population in terms of creating sustainability and resiliency, among others, ethnicity, geography, education, religious beliefs, as well as cultural traditions. However, some of the most important challenges in achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) are narrowing the gap between education in remote areas its accessibility for educational equality.

Education inequality especially regarding accessibility has been one of Indonesia's prioritized development agendas, and Indonesia's Voluntary National Report (VNR) states that the school completion rate from 2015 to 2020 has shown an increase occurred at the primary and junior secondary education levels [5]. There was a slight decrease for the senior secondary education completion rate from 2017 to 2018, but then the data increased from 56.25% (2018) to 63.95% [6]. Data shows that the higher the education level, the lower the completion rate. It is also aligned with the gross enrollment rate (GER) of tertiary education was only 30.85% in 2020, but it is in contrast with GER of higher education for people with disabilities was 13.85%; this was half the proportion for those who did not have disabilities (30.99%). The wide gap in access to higher education needs special attention since it is essential to increasing equality of education for every individual.

Based on the situation and the data displayed, it initiates numerous communities across Indonesia contribute to solving this issue through volunteerism activity, and one of them is Social Inclusive Education Project (SIEP). SIEP is a community service program for children with special needs in rural areas. SIEP has a tagline that becomes the reference for the implementation of the program, namely Equitable Educational Opportunities for Everyone, which means that the SIEP provides fair educational opportunities for all [7]. The program that SIEP has is to ensure the children's growth and development of being independent in terms of cleanliness, safety, health, skill, and adaptably involved with the community in rural areas.

This paper discusses the development of the SIEP program and child development from batches 1-3. It will also suggest possible solutions to design activities and programs to bring it to volunteerism activity for children with SEN in rural areas.

II. METHODS

The methodology used in this study is a qualitative method. This study aims to describe the development of the SIEP program and child development from batches 1 to 3. The data was obtained from September 2020 to November 2021 followed by the batch opened by SIEP. Data collection techniques using direct observation to glean information about the learning program improvement for children with SEN in SIEP Community. Participant observation was used in all three batches and was done on 12 children with SEN in Purwakarta, Subang, Bandung, and Bali areas.

Children with SEN have different disabilities namely down syndrome, dyslexia, slow learners, cerebral palsy, children with intellectual disabilities, and others. The data analysis technique uses the Miles and Huberman model. There were three stages introduced in this model which were data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions. The results obtained from batches 1 to 3 in this project were then validated by using data triangulation.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The SIEP community provides care for children with special needs in rural areas through various programs such as independent development programs, knowledge development programs, and skills development programs. This program is given to developing the potential of children with special needs in rural areas. The three programs are illustrated in figure 2 below:



Figure 2. SIEP Programs

The following is an explanation of each program:

- (1) Independent development program. This program deals with activities of daily life skills. The purpose of this program is for children to understand the steps and the importance of maintaining cleanliness, safety, health, and being able to interact and adapt to the community. According to Putra & Suyanto, Independent character building can be manifested using a good strategy to instill independent character in children with SEN [8]. There are five strategies to instill independent characters in children with SEN such as learning activity, direct guidance, spontaneous activity, exemplary, and habituation.
- (2) Knowledge development program. This program aims to provide academic activities such as writing, reading, and arithmetic to stimulate children's taste and knowledge in these fields. This program is important to be taught to children with special needs because according to Buli-Holmberg & Jeyaprathaban, the lack of knowledge in children with special needs can lead to neglect of children with SEN [9].
- (3) Skills development program. This program aims to help stimulate children's self-interest and develop skills in various fields such as communication skills, playing musical instruments, painting, dancing, and other skills needed by children. In addition, skills education is a special ability that is held so that children with special needs have skills that are useful for themselves as provisions for their life in society [10].

A. SIEP Development Program

The SIEP community experienced various developments in each batch, both during batches 1, 2, and 3. In the results of this study, the author only describes the SIEP

development program and SIEP development child. This is because these two points are important things to explain. The development program is shown in figure 3 below:

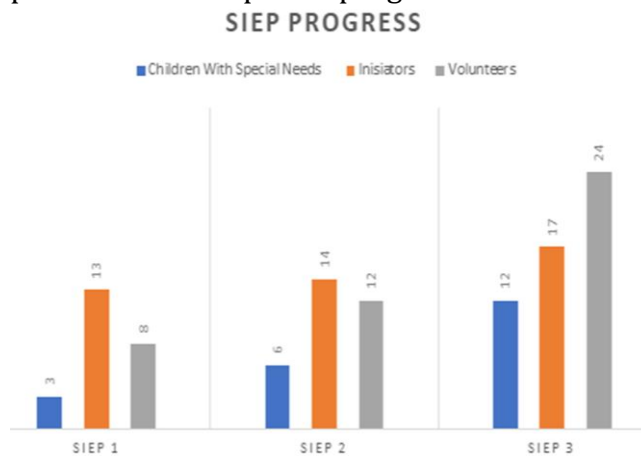


Figure 3. SIEP Development Program

Figure 3 above shows that there is a quantitative increase in the number of children, initiators, and volunteers in each area. The number of areas is also increasing. SIEP 1 is only available in the Purwakarta area. SIEP II is in the Purwakarta and Subang areas. SIEP III is in Purwakarta, Subang, Bandung, and Bali. In addition, the number of children with SEN in SIEP is also increasing, batch 1 has 3 children, batch 2 has 6 children, and batch 3 has 12 children. Likewise, the number of initiators in batch 1 has 13 people, batch 2 has 14 people, and batch 3 has 17 people. While the number of volunteers in batch 1 has 8 people, batch 2 has 12 people, and batch 3 has 24 people.

The data shows a very significant increase as we also provide capacity building for the volunteers, support local authority programs in terms of education, conduct webinars, and provide guidance & counseling for parents. Especially regarding the engendering of volunteer numbers and the volunteers from the previous batch who are loyal to being a part of SIEP volunteerism activity. The increase reflects how SIEP has gained more trust from the community, including the local authority, parents, initiators, and volunteers as the key driver of organizational performance and success because it facilitates social exchange among stakeholders [11].

The SIEP community also provides guidance for children with special needs in rural areas through various programs such as independence, knowledge, and skills development programs. The program is given in accordance with the conditions of children with special needs. For instance, to improve the independence skill of the kids, SIEP provides better daily living skills as it is associated with increased independence and positive functional outcomes for children with disability [12]. There are children who are only given the independence program, there are children who are given 2 programs at once, and there are also children who are given all the programs.

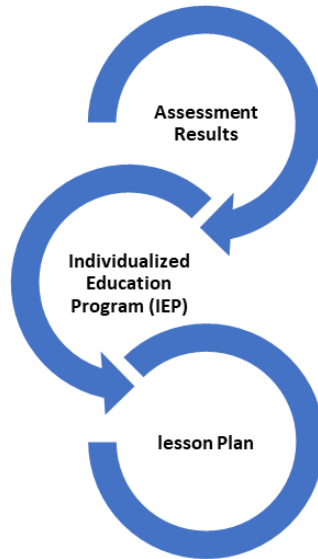


Figure 4. SIEP Implementation Flow

Figure 4 above illustrates that the program provided is adjusted to the results of the assessment carried out prior to the implementation of SIEP. It is essential because the assessment process helps achieve coherence on what is taught, what is evaluated, and how it is evaluated [13]. Based on SIEP's program, assessments are carried out to look at various aspects of children's development ranging from moral and religious values, cognitive, social emotional, physical motor, language, and art. After getting the results of the assessment, SIEP initiators and volunteers design an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for each child to provide a framework for guaranteeing a quality educational program for students with disabilities to provide a framework for guaranteeing a quality individual educational program for students with disabilities [14].

The IEP was simplified again through the preparation of lesson plans for each meeting. Each lesson plan uses different learning media. But still adjust to the child's learning goals. This is so that children get play activities and appropriate learning materials. According to Mohaned & Shackelford, playing and learning the right material is important for the successful development of children, especially in the early years [15].

B. SIEP Development Child

The development of the program that has been described previously shows that SIEP has prepared the program carefully. This has an impact on child development starting from the initial assessment, providing interventions based on the IEP that has been prepared, and the results of child development. Child development can be seen in Table 1 below:

Table 1. SIEP Child Development

No	Name	Assessment	Intervention	Development Results
1	SR	Requires fine motor stimulation to be	Provide pre-writing activities through	SR began to be flexible in using writing tools such as

No	Name	Assessment	Intervention	Development Results
		able to write and hold stationery properly	matching, collage, painting, and writing on the board	pencils, brushes, and markers. This affects the results of SR's writing to be neater and patterned
2	JR	Requires gross and fine motor stimulation	Train gross and fine motor skills through swimming and grasping objects	JR's gross motor skills are more flexible because they are often stimulated through swimming activities. JR is also starting to be able to hold objects both small and larger objects
3	FR	Need help to be able to read each sentence in its entirety	Practice reading each sentence in its entirety through a story book	FR began to fluently read every sentence in its entirety. FR is also starting to enjoy reading books
4	AZ	Need help with number recognition	Introducing numbers through the activity of scoring numbers using sand media	AA begins to recognize the numbers 1,2,3,4, and 5
5	SI	Need help with number recognition	Introducing numbers through coloring activities and putting together numbers puzzle	SI begins to be able to recognize some number such as 0, 1, and 2
6	NL	Need help pronouncing vowels clearly	Practice pronouncing vowels through flashcards	NL began to be able to pronounce vowels clearly. The vowels that can be pronounced are the letters A, I, U, E, O

The child development presented in the table consists of the results of the assessment carried out prior to the implementation of the program, the intervention carried out by volunteers, and the results of the development of each child. Not all SIEP children are described in the table above. Only 5 children were chosen because these children participated in 2-3 SIEP programs, namely in batches 1, 2, and 3. It aims to provide a clearer picture of the development of each child from the beginning before the SIEP intervention was given until the SIEP intervention was completed.

SIEP has children with various types, namely Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, slow learners, and communication disorders. Children with Down syndrome, namely SI and AA based on the results of the assessment, still need help in recognizing numbers. Therefore, volunteers intervened by introducing numbers through various media such as coloring, puzzles, and sand. In addition to the knowledge development program, SI and AA also receive independent development programs, such as knowing how to pray. In line with the results of Kirana & Dewi's research, the aspect of providing understanding in learning for children with Down syndrome is exploring the potential of each child, stimulating various activities to achieve developmental tasks, especially basic independence in life to shape the child's personality [16].

Children with cerebral palsy, namely SR and JR, are given gross and fine motor stimulation such as matching, collage, painting, writing on the board, swimming, and grasping objects. The goal of management of cerebral palsy is not to cure or to achieve normalcy but to increase functionality, improve capabilities, and sustain health in terms of locomotion, cognitive development, social interaction, and independence [17].

Children with slow learners are given intervention practice reading each sentence in its entirety through a storybook. This is given because their ability to deal with abstract and symbolic materials, that is, language, numbers, and concepts are very limited and their reasoning in practical situations is inferior to that of an average student [18].

Children with communication disorders are given the practice of pronouncing vowels through flashcards and are now able to pronounce the letters A, I, U, E, O. This is done to help children pronounce each word clearly because communication is said to be successful when both interlocutors have reached a mutual understanding of the topic of discussion [19].

CONCLUSIONS

The SIEP program focuses on facilitating children with SEN who live in rural areas based on their needs. This research resulted in two major themes namely the SIEP development program and child development from batches 1-3. The SIEP development program has increased in every batch. It can be noticed in the number of regions, children with SEN, initiators, and volunteers. Children with SEN who SIEP mentored have developed independence, skills, and knowledge. It is supported by the stimulation provided by volunteers and the learning media used. Volunteering activities in the SIEP community still need to be improved in many aspects. However, with the support of the government, community, and parents of children with SEN, the SIEP community will continue extending its impact to other rural areas in Indonesia.

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