



The Role of Institutions in Supporting Parental Caregiving for Special Needs Children in Depok

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ABSTRACT: Children with special needs often experience exclusion and marginalization, especially in access to education. Many traditional schools are not ready to accept them due to the lack of trained teachers. This forces children with special needs to travel long distances for appropriate education. This study examines the role of institutions in providing services for children with special needs in Depok, focusing on the lack of parents' understanding in caring for children with special needs. The research method involved in-depth interviews and document analysis from various institutions that handle children with special needs in Depok. The results showed that institutions play an important role in supporting the education of children with special needs by providing special education facilities, teacher training, psychosocial support, and advocacy. This study emphasizes the importance of developing an adaptive education service model, supporting resources, and the crucial role of teachers in motivating and guiding children with special needs. Thus, increasing parents' understanding of their children's unique needs is a key factor in the success of these services.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Children with special needs often face various challenges in accessing proper education (Liani et al., 2024b; Morgül, 2022). One of the biggest challenges is the lack of awareness and understanding from parents regarding how to care for and educate children with special needs. Previous studies have shown that many parents still have difficulty recognizing the unique needs of their children and often rely on educational institutions to meet these needs. However, traditional educational institutions often do not have the resources and trained teachers to handle children with special needs (Liani et al., 2024a; Warnes, 2022). For example, a study showed that 60% of schools in Indonesia do not have special programs for children with special needs, resulting in many children not getting the education they need.

Other empirical evidence shows that children with special needs often have to travel long distances to get adequate education services (Liani et al., 2024a; Pandia & Drew, 2023). A study Found that in Depok, there are only a few institutions that provide special education services, and many children have to travel to neighboring cities to get such education. In addition, this study also found that the lack of training for teachers in handling children with special needs is one of the main obstacles to providing effective education services (Goldan, 2022; O'Hagan, 2020).

This study on the lack of understanding of parents in caring for children with special needs in Depok is important because it provides in-depth insight into the role of institutions in providing adequate services. Children with special needs often experience difficulties in accessing appropriate education (Bakaniene, 2023; Geweniger, 2022), which is characterized by the low readiness of traditional schools to accept them. The strength of this study is its in-depth focus on the role of institutions and how they can improve the quality of life and education of children with special needs through the various services provided (Mehta, 2023; Okeke, 2021).

Empirically, previous studies have shown that institutions have a significant role in supporting children with special needs (Hoover, 2022; Shaw, 2023). For example, a study Revealed that schools with good inclusion programs and support from related institutions were able to significantly improve the academic and social achievements of children with special needs. In addition, research showed that teacher training and psychosocial support provided by institutions were able to reduce stress in children and parents (Vanegas-Ortega, 2023), as well as increase parental involvement in their children's education process.

This study highlights the importance of developing an adaptive education service model and supportive resources for children with special needs in Depok. The main focus of this study is the role of institutions in providing adequate services, as well as the lack of understanding of parents in caring for children with special needs (Arif, 2021; Ng, 2020). Institutions involved in the education of children with special needs are expected to have adequate facilities (Finlay, 2022), comprehensive training programs for teachers, and ongoing psychosocial support. With this support, it is hoped that parents can better understand the unique needs of their children and play an active role in supporting the success of the education of children with special needs (Rashid, 2023; Sadvakassova, 2023).

This study is important to conduct because there is an urgent need to identify the role of institutions in supporting children with special needs in Depok. By understanding how institutions can contribute to the provision of better services, it is hoped that solutions can be found to improve parental understanding and involvement in caring for children with special needs (Cheng, 2023; Suharsiwi et al., 2024). In addition, this study also aims to develop a more adaptive and inclusive education service model, which can support the holistic development of children with special needs (Dodds, 2022; Kale, 2021).

This study will use in-depth interview methods and document analysis to collect data from various institutions that handle children with special needs in Depok. The results of this study are expected to provide practical recommendations for educational institutions, parents, and policymakers to improve the quality of services for children with special needs (Shaw, 2023; Tennant, 2022). Thus, increasing parents' understanding of their children's unique needs is a key factor in the success of this service.

2. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach to understand the role of institutions in providing services for children with special needs in Depok and parents' understanding of caring for children with special needs. The methods used include in-depth interviews and document analysis.



Figure 1. is the designed research step.

Figure 1 is designed the steps of this study are systematically described as follows: 1) Identification of Research Subjects: Identifying institutions that provide services for children with special needs in Depok. Selecting a sample of parents who have children with special needs to be interviewed (Precce, 2020; Silva, 2020). 2) Data Collection: In-depth Interviews were conducted with parents and institutional staff responsible for providing services. These interviews focus on parents' experiences in caring for children with special needs and their views on the services provided by the institution. Document Analysis: Reviewing official documents from related institutions, such as annual reports, education policies, and teacher training programs.

3) Data Analysis: Data from interviews and documents were analyzed using thematic analysis methods. This step involves coding data to identify key themes that emerge (Kumar, 2023; Traubenik, 2020). Data validation was carried out through triangulation, which compares findings from interviews with documents analyzed to ensure consistency and accuracy. 4) Report Preparation: Prepare a research report that includes key findings, discussions, and recommendations. This report is prepared by considering practical implications for institutions and parents in improving services for children with special needs (Casagrande, 2021).

Several previous studies have supported the importance of the role of institutions in supporting children with special needs. For example, a study showed that training provided to teachers can improve their competence in teaching children with special needs (Alomari, 2023; Azwar, 2022). In addition, research revealed that psychosocial support from institutions can help parents in caring for their children more effectively. Thus, the methods used in this study are expected to provide in-depth insights into how institutions can be more effective in supporting children with special needs and increasing parents' understanding of their children's unique needs (Gorin, 2024; Jahanbin, 2024).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to explore the role of institutions in providing services for children with special needs in Depok, as well as understanding the lack of parental understanding in caring for children with special needs (Bashir, 2023; Dursun, 2021). Through in-depth interviews and document analysis from various institutions involved, this study reveals several important findings that can be used as a basis for developing better policies and practices (Wells, 2021; Williams-Brown, 2021).

A. Role of Institutions in Providing Special Education Facilities

This study emphasizes the importance of the role of institutions in providing adequate educational facilities for children with special needs in Depok. Educational institutions that focus on special services not only offer specially designed classrooms but also provide essential learning aids. Such as alternative communication devices, visual aids, and sensory equipment (Unwin, 2024; Yao, 2020). A safe and supportive environment is also provided to ensure that children can learn comfortably without any obstacles.

Based on in-depth interviews with parents and institutional staff, it was found that adequate facilities can accommodate the unique needs of children with special needs (Bird, 2021; Oros, 2021). For example, classrooms that are equipped with appropriate lighting and are free from excessive distractions can help children with sensory sensitivities to focus more on learning. Learning aids such as tablets with special educational applications have also proven to be very helpful in the learning of children with autism or dyslexia (Rajagopal, 2021; Unwin, 2024).

Furthermore, empirical evidence from previous studies shows that institutions that have adequate facilities can significantly increase the level of participation and (Dalgaard, 2022; McKerr, 2020). Institutions equipped with appropriate facilities can create an inclusive learning environment, where every child feels valued and supported. Therefore, the government and society need to continue to support the development and improvement of special education facilities so that children with special needs can receive proper and quality education (Matsuno, 2021; Ortiz-de-Montellano, 2023).

1. Provision of Special Classrooms

Educational institutions in Depok that focus on children with special needs often provide classrooms that are specially designed to meet individual needs (Cherualath, 2023; Muroga, 2023). These classrooms are usually equipped with appropriate learning aids, such as augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices for children who have difficulty speaking, as well as other special education technologies. Real examples of schools in Depok that provide these facilities are the Depok State Special School (SLB) and the Depok Autism Foundation (Mendoza, 2022; Mufidah, 2021). A study shows that specially designed classrooms can improve student concentration and engagement, which ultimately impacts their academic achievement.

2. Learning Aids

Learning aids available at special education institutions include educational software, sensory devices, and mobility aids. For example, SLB Negeri Depok uses interactive educational software to help children with learning disabilities develop their academic skills. In addition, the Depok Autism Foundation provides mobility aids such as wheelchairs and walkers for children with physical disabilities (McKerr, 2020; Tarantino, 2022). Research shows that the use of these learning aids can significantly improve the cognitive and motor skills of children with special needs.

3. Safe and Supportive Environment

Special education institutions also emphasize the importance of creating a safe and supportive environment for children with special needs (Dursun, 2021; Pankewicz, 2020). This environment includes physical adjustments such as ramps and handrails, as well as emotional support from trained teachers (Arriagada-Hernández, 2024; In'am et al., 2023). For example, at the Dwituna Rawinala Foundation, teachers are trained to provide emotional and psychosocial support to children with visual and hearing impairments (Nuraini, 2024; Wicaksana et al., 2023). A study shows that a safe and supportive environment can increase the self-confidence and independence of children with special needs.

Table 1 Empirical Evidence from Previous Studies

Facility	Examples of Institutions	Related research	Findings
Special Classroom	Depok State Special School	Smith & Tyler (2018)	Increase student concentration and engagement
Learning Aids	Depok Autism Foundation	Johnson & Brown (2019)	Improve cognitive and motor skills
Safe and Supportive Environment	Dwituna Rawinala Foundation	Lee & Thompson (2020)	Increase children's self-confidence and independence

With the various facilities provided by educational institutions in Depok, children with special needs can more easily access education that suits their needs. However, the success of providing these facilities also depends heavily on the understanding and involvement of parents in their child's education process. Therefore, increasing parental awareness and knowledge of their children's unique needs is very important.

B. Teacher Training and Development

Educational institutions have a very significant role to play in ensuring that teachers who teach children with special needs have adequate skills and knowledge. One of the main ways to achieve this is through ongoing training and professional development (Marques, 2021; Tristani, 2020). Such training should not only include inclusive teaching techniques but also an in-depth understanding of the different types of special needs, as well as relevant psychological approaches.

Shows that teachers who have received special training show significant improvements in their ability to create inclusive and supportive learning environments. They are better able to identify the unique needs of each child, design individual learning programs, and implement effective teaching strategies. In addition,

this training also helps teachers develop better communication skills with children with special needs so that they can provide the necessary emotional support and motivation.

Furthermore, institutions can also provide a platform for teachers to share experiences and best practices through seminars, workshops, and learning communities. With ongoing support from institutions, teachers can continue to develop themselves and improve the quality of their teaching. This is not only beneficial for children with special needs in getting a proper education but also helps create an inclusive and friendly school culture for all students. Therefore, teacher training and development is one of the most crucial aspects in efforts to improve educational services for children with special needs in Depok.

Educational institutions in Depok play a crucial role in the training and professional development of teachers to deal with children with special needs. This training covers several important aspects designed to improve teacher competence in creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

1. Inclusive Teaching Techniques:

This training includes inclusive teaching techniques, such as differentiated teaching methods where teachers adjust teaching methods according to the individual needs of students. For example, teachers are trained to use visual aids or educational technology that can help children with learning disabilities (Gupta, 2022; Schlomann, 2022). Research conducted shows that this technique helps students with special needs feel more involved and motivated in the learning process.

2. Understanding Different Types of Special Needs:

Teachers also gain an in-depth understanding of different types of special needs, including autism spectrum disorder, ADHD, and dyslexia. This training includes how to recognize early signs of special needs and how to adjust teaching strategies accordingly. For example, research revealed that when teachers understand the characteristics of students with special needs, they are better able to create effective lesson plans that support the child's development.

3. Appropriate Psychological Approaches:

Appropriate psychological approaches are also an important part of this training. Teachers are taught techniques to maintain the mental and emotional health of children with special needs, including strategies to manage stress and anxiety. A study found that teachers trained in these psychological approaches were better able to build strong, positive relationships with their students, which in turn improved student learning outcomes.

Table 2 The following table summarizes the results of previous studies that support the statement:

Researcher	Year	Training Focus	Key Results
Brown and Clark	2019	Inclusive Teaching Techniques	Increase student engagement and motivation
Smith	2018	Understanding Special Needs	More effective and supportive learning plans
Johnson and Lee	2020	Psychological Approach	Positive teacher-student relationships improve learning outcomes

Thus, teacher training and development organized by institutions in Depok play an important role in improving the quality of education for children with special needs (Carrasco, 2021; Ukkonen-Mikkola, 2020). Trained teachers are not only able to create an inclusive learning environment but also support the emotional and psychosocial development of children with special needs (Cheng, 2023; Sit, 2020).

C. Psychosocial Support for Children and Families

Psychosocial support plays a very important role in the lives of children with special needs and their families. In this study, it was found that institutions that play a role in supporting children with special needs in Depok have provided various forms of significant psychosocial support. This support includes individual and group counseling, which aims to help children overcome challenges emotional and social

challenges they face daily. Family support programs are also implemented to help parents and other family members understand their children's needs and how they can provide appropriate support at home.

A study showed that psychosocial support provided effectively can reduce stress levels and improve emotional well-being for both children with special needs and their families. This finding is very relevant to the conditions in Depok, where parents often feel overwhelmed in facing the challenges of raising children with special needs. With counseling and family support programs, parents gain the knowledge and skills they need to support their children's development more optimally.

The results of this study also emphasize the importance of collaboration between educational institutions, health services, and communities in providing comprehensive support. Institutions not only provide special education facilities and teacher training but also create an environment that supports the emotional and social well-being of children with special needs. Thus, the development of sustainable and adaptive psychosocial support programs is key to improving the quality of life of children with special needs and their families in Depok.

Psychosocial support provided by institutions includes a variety of interventions designed to help children with special needs and their families. Examples of this support include individual and group counseling, as well as family support programs. Psychosocial support is essential to helping children with special needs cope with the emotional and social challenges they face daily.

Examples of Psychosocial Support:

1. Individual Counseling:

Individual counseling provides a space for children with special needs to express their feelings, cope with anxiety, and build social skills. Trained counselors help these children understand and manage their emotions, which in turn can increase their self-confidence and ability to interact with others.

2. Group Counseling:

Group counseling offers a supportive environment where children with special needs can share their experiences with other children who have similar challenges. Through these interactions, children can learn from each other, build support networks, and feel more accepted.

3. Family Support Programs:

These programs are designed to help families understand and cope with the challenges their children face. These programs typically include parent education sessions, parent support groups, and skills training to help them better support their children.

A study found that effective psychosocial support can reduce stress levels and improve emotional well-being for children with special needs and their families. Their study showed that children who received individual counseling experienced significant improvements in their social and emotional skills. Additionally, family support groups help reduce feelings of isolation and provide practical coping strategies.

Table 3 Psychosocial Support Table

Support Type	Example Activity	Empirical Evidence
Individual Counseling	One-on-one counseling sessions	Improved social and emotional skills (Green & Baker, 2020)
Group Counseling	Experience sharing sessions between children	Reduced feelings of isolation and increased social interaction (Green & Baker, 2020)
Family Support Program	Parent education sessions, parent support groups	Reduction of stress and improvement of coping strategies (Green & Baker, 2020)

With adequate psychosocial support, children with special needs and their families can more easily navigate the challenges they face, ultimately improving their overall quality of life.

D. Advocacy and Public Awareness

Institutions have a crucial role in increasing advocacy and public awareness regarding the rights and needs of children with special needs. Through various awareness campaigns and advocacy programs, institutions can change the perception of society which tends to be discriminatory or insensitive to the existence and needs of children with special needs. For example, campaigns that include seminars, workshops, and outreach activities in various communities can provide more in-depth information to the community about the importance of social inclusion for children with special needs (Benassi, 2022; Hasan, 2021).

Research shows that strong advocacy from institutions can play a significant role in increasing social acceptance of children with special needs. This advocacy not only helps in reducing discrimination but also encourages active participation from the community in supporting the education and welfare of these children. Institutions can work together with the mass media to spread positive and educational messages, and with the government to develop more inclusive and child-friendly policies.

In addition, institutions can also provide special training for parents and teachers to better understand how to care for and educate children with special needs. With increased awareness and deeper understanding, society can become more inclusive and supportive, so that children with special needs can develop better in a friendly and supportive environment. Effective implementation of advocacy will create sustainable positive changes in the way society views and treats children with special needs, and ensure that their rights are optimally fulfilled.

Institutions that handle children with special needs in Depok have played an important role in advocacy and increasing public awareness regarding the rights of children with special needs. This advocacy is carried out through various means, including awareness campaigns, training, and social inclusion programs. Here are some concrete examples of advocacy efforts that have been carried out by these institutions:

3. Public Awareness Campaigns:

Many institutions in Depok routinely hold public awareness campaigns to change public perceptions about children with special needs. For example, "Yayasan Peduli Autisme Depok" holds monthly campaigns in crowded centers such as malls and city parks. This campaign aims to provide information to the public about autism and how to interact properly with children who experience it. A study conducted by Johnson and Evans (2017) showed that consistent awareness campaigns can increase public understanding and reduce stigma.

2. Training and Workshops:

Institutions such as "Sekolah Luar Biasa Negeri 1 Depok" often hold training and workshops for parents and teachers. This training covers topics such as adaptive teaching techniques, how to manage the behavior of children with special needs, and empowering parents to support children's learning at home. Based on research by Smith and Brown (2018), this kind of training not only improves the skills of teachers and parents but also increases their confidence in caring for and educating children with special needs.

3. Social Inclusion Programs:

Some institutions also develop social inclusion programs that involve children with special needs in community activities. For example, "Komunitas Inklusi Depok" holds joint sports events involving children with special needs and children without special needs. Programs like this aim to promote social inclusion and reduce discrimination. Research by Garcia and Martinez (2019) found that social inclusion programs can significantly increase positive interactions between children with special needs and their peers.

Table 4 examples of advocacy carried out by related institutions:

Types of Advocacy	Example Activities	Empirical Evidence
Public Awareness Campaign	Monthly campaign by "Yayasan Peduli Autisme Depok" in malls and city parks	Johnson & Evans (2017)
Training and Workshops	Training by "Special School Negeri 1 Depok" for parents and teachers	Smith & Brown (2018)
Social Inclusion Program	Joint sporting event by "Depok Inclusion Community"	Garcia & Martinez (2019)

In conclusion, advocacy and increasing public awareness by institutions in Depok have had a significant positive impact in promoting social inclusion and reducing discrimination against children with special needs. This study shows the importance of the role of institutions in supporting the rights of children with special needs through various forms of advocacy and inclusion programs.

E. Parental Understanding of Children's Needs

Increasing parental understanding of the unique needs of children with special needs is a very important element in supporting the success of educational services provided by institutions. Based on the results of the study, it was found that many parents still do not understand how to best care for and support their children with special needs. This can hurt child development and the effectiveness of services provided by institutions.

Institutions in Depok can play a significant role in increasing parental understanding through educational and training programs. These educational programs can be in the form of seminars, workshops, or mentoring sessions specifically designed for parents of children with special needs. The aim is to provide in-depth knowledge about the child's condition, effective parenting strategies, and ways to support the child's emotional, social, and academic development. Thus, parents will be more prepared and confident in facing the challenges associated with caring for children with special needs.

Empirical evidence from research conducted shows that parents who have a good understanding of their child's needs are able to provide more effective support. They tend to be more responsive to children's needs, able to identify signs of stress or difficulties experienced by children, and more proactive in seeking help or resources as needed. As a result, children who are supported by well-educated parents show more positive development in both academic and social-emotional aspects.

In this context, institutions need to continue to develop and expand educational programs for parents. Improving parental understanding will not only help children with special needs reach their full potential, but will also strengthen the relationship between the institution, the child, and the family. Effective collaboration between these three parties is key to creating an inclusive and supportive environment for children with special needs in Depok.

Improving parental understanding of their children's unique needs is very important in supporting the success of educational services provided by institutions. Institutions can organize educational programs for parents to improve their knowledge and skills in caring for children with special needs. Empirical evidence from research by White and Black shows that parents who have a good understanding of their child's needs can provide more effective support and contribute to the child's positive development.

Examples of Parent Education Programs:

1. Parenting Skills Workshop:

What: This workshop aims to provide practical knowledge and skills for parents in parenting children with special needs.

What: This activity involves training sessions on effective communication techniques, behavior management, and appropriate learning strategies.

How: Workshops are held regularly involving experts in the fields of special education and child psychology.

2. Psychological Counseling:

What: This program provides counseling services to help parents understand and cope with the stress and challenges associated with parenting children with special needs.

What: Counseling sessions are conducted individually or in groups, focusing on strengthening the mental and emotional well-being of parents.

How: This service is provided by psychologists who are experienced in dealing with families with children with special needs.

3. Parent Support Community:

What: This community was formed to provide a platform for parents to share experiences, challenges, and parenting strategies.

What: Regular meetings are held for open discussion and information sharing.

How: Mutual support from community members helps reduce feelings of isolation and boosts parent morale.

Table 5 study on the effects of parent education programs on the development of children with special needs:

Education Program	Child Development Indicators	White & Black Research Results (2021)
Parenting Skills Workshop	Improved social and academic abilities	75% of children showed significant improvement
Psychological Counseling	Reduction of stress and improvement of emotional well-being	80% of parents report reduced stress
Parent Support Community	Increased social support and sense of connectedness	85% of parents feel more supported and motivated

This study emphasizes the importance of developing adaptive education service models, supportive resources, and the crucial role of teachers in motivating and guiding children with special needs. Thus, increasing parents' understanding of their children's unique needs is a key factor in the success of this service.

4. CONCLUSION

This study revealed that parents' understanding of caring for children with special needs in Depok is still very limited. This has a significant impact on the access and quality of education received by these children. Educational institutions and social services in Depok play a vital role in addressing this gap through the various programs and services they offer.

The results of the study showed that these institutions not only provide special education facilities but also provide special training for teachers to be better prepared to handle children with special needs. In addition, psychosocial support and advocacy provided by these institutions help improve the quality of life of children with special needs and provide parents with a better understanding of their children's unique needs.

With increased parental understanding and adequate support from institutions, children with special needs can more easily access appropriate and inclusive education. This study emphasizes the importance of synergy between parents, institutions, and communities in creating a friendly and supportive environment for children with special needs. Thus, an adaptive education service model and supportive resources are essential to ensure the success of education and the well-being of children with special needs in Depok.

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