

Cultural Pattern of Children with Disabilities (Difabel) Study of Children with Special Needs (Tunagrahita) in Sekolah Luar Biasa (SLB) Biromaru

Muh. Abduh Dwi Putra¹, Sulaiman Mamar² and Rismawati²

¹Student in Postgraduate of Forensic Science, Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia

²Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Social Science and Political Science, Tadulako University, Palu, Indonesia

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Abstract: The cultural pattern consists of thoughts, ideas, and philosophies existed in the human mind and the most prominent culture to describe the character of concerned culture. Regarding to the difference ability or disabilities, then the cultural pattern perceives on the mind and the idea of children with disabilities. The aim of this study is to describe parenting problems towards children with disabilities, cultural pattern, characteristic, and teaching method in school. The research subjects were twelve people consisting of Children with Special Needs (*Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus/ABK tunagrahita*), parents, teachers, and staffs in Sekolah Luar Biasa/ SLB (special school) Biromaru. This descriptive research was done by observation, interview, discussion, and play with *tunagrahita* children, as well as dig up the information from parents and teachers. Data analysis was done by grouping data from observations, interviews, and field notes and then interpreted. The results obtained that each parent has different method in parenting their disabled children yet has the same perspective in providing the best education thereby it gives advantages for their self and the community even with their limitations. *Tunagrahita* children in SLB Biromaru are already able to socialize with friends, teachers, and their surrounding community proving that their existence can be well received by the environment. The conclusion was the cultural pattern of *tunagrahita* children in SLB Biromaru was varied depending on the parents' response of their disabled children condition, and the teachers' education method in school. Accordingly, the disabled children are able to socialize and well received in the community as well as have academic and non-academic education as normal children.

1 INTRODUCTION

Cultural pattern consists of thoughts, ideas, philosophies existed in the human mind as the order of culture elements that became the basic integrity of a particular culture (Soerjono, 1993). In the dictionary of Anthropology, cultural patterns are all sequences of elements becoming the most prominent culture features then it used to describe the character of concerned culture (Aryono, 1982). It is also mentioned in "Cultural Reciprocity in Special Education" by Kalyanpur and Harry (2012), the term *culture* denotes the shared implicit and explicit rules and traditions that express the beliefs, values, and goals of a group of people.

The latest term, *Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus* (ABK) defined as "child with special needs", has been used extensively in the international world. In addition, there are also several terms which frequently used, such as children with disabilities,

tuna child, deviant children, extraordinary children, and the developed widely used term namely *difabel*, abbreviated as "difference ability" (Mudjito, dkk., 2014).

Anak tunagrahita can be categorized as children with special learning difficulties. Specific learning difficulties are a disturbance in one or more basic psychological processes including the ability to understand and the use of speech or writing language. This disorder may manifest itself in the form of difficulty in listening, thinking, speaking, reading, writing, spelling, or arithmetic (Abdurrahman, 2003).

Sekolah Luar Biasa (SLB) Biromaru Sigi Biromaru District, Palu, Central Sulawesi is an institution providing educational services for children with special needs consisting of *tunarunguwicara* child, *tunagrahita*, and children with mild autism in form teaching and learning process.

Children are raised within a cultural framework that imposes rewards and sanctions for efficient learning of the group's norms and expectations. According to the traditional view of culture, most individuals have been brought up within one such framework (Kalyanpur and Harry, 2012). Regarding to children with special needs, then the cultural pattern perceives on the mind idea of children with disabilities. Smid (2016) also states that the arrangements of education of children with special needs are primarily influenced by the patterns of cultural values of capability and inferiority, as well as their stereotypical images. As it is seen in Indonesia, the fulfilment of the right to education for disabled children is very limited and not fully covered. This might be due to the perspective of society considering children with disabilities do not need to get the same education as other normal children. Whereas, they need special education system in form of subsystem within the social institution of education. It would be expected that the special education system would reflect the "beliefs, values, and ideas". Regarding to both the ends and the means of education, it reflects the national macroculture. Based on this fact, through this research, the writer would like to describe parenting problems of disabled children, cultural pattern, characteristic and teaching method in school.

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

The aim of this study is to describe parenting problems towards disabled children with, cultural pattern, characteristic and teaching method of *tunagrahita* children in SLB Biromaru.

The research subjects were twelve people consisting of ABK *tunagrahita*, parents, teachers, and staffs in SLB Biromaru. The data was collected by qualitative approach based on behavioural science approach by observing ABK *tunagrahita*, through playing and studying then interviewing accompanied by their teacher to be more focused on the interview.

Technique of collecting data was done through collecting data from various information, then it was done passive and active observation, and done interview to informant as the next procedure. Purposive sampling was used in selecting informant by choosing certain people who can provide data or in-depth information. The method of data analysis obtained by editing data of observation result, then interviewing and field recording. Thus, the data was

categorized according to problem formulation, followed by interpreting data before making conclusion.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results of this research were categorized into four sub-issues, which are:

▪ Patterns of Parenting to Disabled Children

The existence of children with disabilities initially often causes problems both in the family and in the community. It is because some parents are still difficult to accept the condition of the child as well as afraid of the friend's ridicule and inadmissibility from environment due to the condition of their child. Even though, the parents actually remain proud because they have been blessed with the child as the gift of the Almighty. In addition, there are some people who can accept the existence of disabled children but some are stay away from them because of their attitude that is slightly different from other children.

The parents motivate and reveal to their children that there is a great advantage and special talent within their limitation leading them close to the Almighty so they will always grateful in all situations. One method to encourage their children is by showing inspirational videos about the success people with disabilities.

The parents always pay attention to whatever their child likes, and develop their child interest and ability. Parents also provide spare time to their children to get along with the environment so that their children do not feel alienated or different from others, but still under full supervision. Parents also provide nutrition and education like other children.

Based on the description above, it appears that the pattern of parenting provided to children with disabilities is more specific, in which parents provide more affection and attention with a lot of patience. The parents' expectation is that their children can achieve their dream, able to be themselves without feeling inferior, and become motivator to other friends in the same condition.

▪ Cultural Pattern of *Tunagrahita* Child in SLB Biromaru

Children with special needs have different attitudes in getting acquainted with their friends. *Tunagrahita* children in SLB Biromaru, some of them are easy to socialize and get acquainted naturally with their friends while others are still accompanied by their parents, their sibling, and even their teacher. It is because their mindset is different

from other normal children. Their attitudes to strangers are rarely greeted and embarrassed. They will be very nice to the known person although they tend to not talk and put smile if they meet.

Spiritual attitudes depend on habits in the family, school, and neighbourhood. For example, do the greeting with friends, shake hands to teachers and friends, and pray before eating and others. They respect each other as well as one religion and another. In religious terms, their parents and teachers always guide them to worship according to their beliefs, even though sometimes they do not understand.

In terms of social interaction, children with special needs considered their teachers and friends are friends without differentiation. This is because they do not yet understand the meaning of mutual respect for the elderly because they consider everyone around him is equal and same with their age. They frequently gather together with people they like which mean "picky" of friends.

In facing problems, *tunagrahita* children in SLB Biromaru tend to be alone, quiet, nervous, easy to cry, often singing alone to calm himself, and ask the liked people, teachers, friends as well as those around the school environment when encountered difficulties in the lessons.

The ability of *tunagrahita* children in SLB Biromaru in taking care of himself is very poor, due to the less responsive parents and the environment to their circumstances. Therefore, the teachers always teach and guide them to be able to take care of himself.

▪ **Characteristics of *Tunagrahita* Child**

Tunagrahita children has characteristics in which the head is larger and ear is smaller than normal size. They also have childish face or not appropriate with their age (baby face), have uncomfortable behaviour, and like walking around. Besides, they are shy, not confident, slow thinking, hard to control, emotional, and often shouting. However, they show good perseverance and empathy if they get conducive service or a treatment.

In addition, they tend to behave like a child and have unstable emotions looked from facial expression because of their changed feelings according to the mood. Their intellectual development is slow and difficult to concentrate in learning. The differences between *tunagrahita* children and *tunarungu* (deaf) children are they are easier to communicate even with minimal vocabulary. The emotions are more controlled but the concentration is lower than the deaf child.

Tunagrahita children still have obstacles in ability to speak and communicate because their vocabulary is limited which tend to produce the repeated word in communicating as well as they sometimes do not get into the conversation.

▪ **Teaching Method of *Tunagrahita* Child in SLB Biromaru**

The given education to *tunagrahita* children in SLB Biromaru has the same treatment as other SLBs, which concerned in terms of how to dress; how to speak; how to take action and how to interact between students and teachers.

Teachers teach based on the student's disabilities and provide learning subjects that always in accordance with their abilities. Teachers give more attention and patiently guide their students one by one using varied lecture methods, discussions, games, and held a study tour. Although with not adequate the facilities and infrastructure, this school is able to well educate children with special needs.

Teachers in giving lessons to *tunagrahita* children have to follow their mood. Without a good mood, children tend to get bored quickly and cause a sense of lazy in learning. The teacher gives repetitive lessons so that the *tunagrahita* children are able to repeat gradually the lesson studied.

In teaching, the use of props with various forms of visual is very necessary because it will make children understand the lessons taught. In addition, this kind of learning method is more fun for children.

In terms of spiritual and religious activities, teachers teach how to worship according to their religion, as well as show them appropriate places of worship. In terms of social life, teachers teach them to care about the surrounding and provide assistance if people requires help. Teaching and learning activities are sometimes done outside the classroom, closer to nature.

Evaluation of learning is also given to *tunagrahita* children. It should be done after studying one small part of the learning subject to find out the outcomes learning before continuing to the next lesson. Evaluation tools should be in the form of performance and the qualitatively processed results while quantitative assessment is made as required.

SLB Biromaru has implemented a curriculum from the education ministry tailored to the student's abilities related to children with special needs. The average age of *tunagrahita* learners are from 25 to 30 years. It shows that there is no existing age problems relating to children with special needs.

4 CONCLUSIONS

ABK *tunagrahita* have different cultural patterns. Each parent has different method in parenting their disabled children yet has the same perspective in providing the best education thereby it gives advantages for their self and the community even with their limitations. In addition, parents desire to give the right education for their children to be a better children. The result of this research about children with special needs especially *tunagrahita* children in SLB Biromaru, was that they were able to socialize with friends, teachers and even the surrounding community. The most important thing in the education of *tunagrahita* children is to generate self-esteem to involve them into society due to their capability of doing something. Thus, *tunagrahita* children can be associated in society, like others in general.

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