

Conference Paper

Perceived Organizational Support in Special Needs Education Teachers

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Abstract.

Special education teachers have more burnout than other teachers. In many cases, an unsupportive work environment led to stress, followed by burnout and a desire to quit the profession. The way they deliver services to special needs children, require different approaches and treatments than other children, will be impacted by the organization's lack of support. This study aimed to investigate how Indonesian special needs education teachers perceived organizational support. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), a qualitative methodology, were used in the study with 10 special education teachers from various regions. The Perceived Organizational Support Scale developed by Rhoades and Eisenberger's (2002) theory served as the basis for the participant's questions and discussions. The findings of this study suggested that their employers' assistance in terms of fairness, supervision support, organizational reward and job conditions was still lacking. Special needs education teachers in private schools and special needs education teachers in public schools have distinct regulatory approaches to staff welfare and health, which has an impact on the performance of taking care of children with special needs.

Keywords: Organizational support, Special needs education, Teacher

1. Introduction

According to the 2018 Riskesdas National Report, 3.3% of Indonesian minors between the school ages of 5 until 17 years old have a disability [1]. Data from Statistic Center or Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) shows that there are approximately 0.79% or 650 thousand children with disabilities among the 84.4 million Indonesian children in 2020 [2]. Meanwhile, education for children with special needs has been the focus of developments in the Indonesian government since 2009 in the inclusive education system [3]. Regulations and implementation are contained in the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia No. 70 of 2009, as a basis for implementing inclusive education for special needs children in Indonesia [4].

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Special needs education delivery is a system inclusive that allowing opportunities for normal and special needs students to participate in the learning process in the same environment. With this system, it is projected that the school environment will be appropriate to the growth and development of students with special needs and be able to arouse their enthusiasm for learning [5]. The existence of this program is expected to be a problem of a sense of education for students with special needs that can be resolved so that students are able to unleash their potential.

However, the implementation of special needs education is susceptible to many problems. The insufficient presence of student with special needs, along with the demand for special education teachers, gives rise to a range of persistent issues. Self-efficacy teachers' is lowered as a result of factors such working multiple jobs, dealing with procedural uncertainty, and paying insufficient attention to welfare[6–11]. Consequently, these factors contribute to increased levels of work-related stress and burnout. Because the students in special needs education have characteristics that are highly sensitive and challenging to uphold, becoming a special needs education teacher demands a great deal of patience and attention while working with these students[8,11]. These difficulties can be effectively handled by an examination of the support mechanisms implemented by the organization in issue, aimed at proactively mitigating potential problems [12].

The execution of roles and responsibilities assigned to special need education teachers is inadequate. It was found that teachers in special education are experiencing an increase in their workload[9–11,13]. This is due to the fact that they are not only responsible for teaching special education classes, but also for instructing conventional classrooms. In addition to the substantial workload, a lack of clarity on career progression for special education educators is identified as contributing factor to the shortage of such teachers in certain schools. The findings indicate that perceived support may play a significant role in mitigating emotional tiredness and enhancing the personal performance of special need education teachers [14]. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate how special needs education teachers perceiving support from their organization, specifically in Indonesia.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Special Need Education Teacher

Special needs education can be implemented through inclusive education to improve students' learning outcomes of their special needs [13]. Inclusive education is not just

another label for education; inclusive education takes a unique approach to recognizing and resolving problems in the classroom [7]. The inclusive education in Indonesia is stated in the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia No. 70 of 2009, that relating to Inclusive Education for Disabled Students with Potential Intelligence and/or Special Talents [4] is interpreted as a system of implementing education that seeks to provide opportunities for all students who have disabilities, potential intelligence, and/or special talents to participate together with students as in general in an educational environment.

According to the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Indonesia [15], special education teachers are expected to possess three fundamental competencies as outlined in their competency framework. The first aspect under consideration is the overarching capacity to provide education to all kids. Furthermore, it is essential to possess a fundamental aptitude for instructing kids with exceptional requirements. Lastly, it is crucial to possess a distinct proficiency in educating pupils who fall under the special disability category. Hence, in practical application, the roles and obligations of special education teachers encompass distinct tasks compared to those of general education teachers [11]. The realization of the ideal inclusive education requires the cooperation of all stakeholders [6].

2.2. Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived organizational support refers to "how much the organization values employees' contributions and cares about them" [16]. It is also thought to indicate whether the organization is prepared to reward increased work effort and to meet socio. Perceived organizational support (POS), according to Eisenberger and Rhoades [17], is also regarded as a guarantee that the organization will provide help when it is required to carry out one's job successfully and handle difficult situations. Fairness, supervisor support, organizational awards, and working environment are the three main ways employees feel they receive suitable treatment from the company, all of which should increase POS [17].

This is an explanation for each aspect of POS. First, fairness, the fairness of the methods used to allocate resources to employees is a problem of procedural justice [18]. Consistently displaying fairness in decisions regarding the distribution of resources should have a significant cumulative effect on POS by demonstrating consideration for the welfare of employees [17]. Formal guidelines and procedures govern choices that impact employees, such as ensuring that they have sufficient notice before being adopted, correct information, and voice. The effectiveness of interpersonal treatment in

resource allocation is one of the social dimensions of procedural justice, also referred to as interactional justice. Social factors include treating employees with respect and dignity and informing them of the methods used to generate results. Procedural justice is a strong candidate for convincing employees of the company's good view of them, according to the statistics showing a high correlation between procedural justice and POS. Aspects of procedural justice, including as objectivity, openness, consistency in decision-making, and employee involvement in the process, have a significant impact on procedural fairness ratings and can be used to enhance POS [19].

Employees' perceptions of their importance to the organization and how much their supervisors value their contribution and care for their well-being, both factors can be defined within the dimension of supervisor support in POS [20]. Because employees interpret a supervisor's favorable or unfavorable orientation towards them as a sign of organizational support since supervisors serve as corporate agents and oversee and evaluate subordinates' work [17].

Third, organizational rewards and job conditions. POS should positively correlate with human resources procedures demonstrating employee contributions [17]. Regarding POS, various incentives and working conditions have been investigated, including promotion, payment, recognition, promotions, autonomy, job security, training, and role stressors. According to organizational support theory, promotions, payment, and recognition, positive reward opportunities convey a positive assessment of employees' contributions, which supports POS. In particular research, workers were asked to assess how fair their results were compared to a reference group [18]. Autonomy, means the sense of control workers feel over the details of their workday, such as task diversity, scheduling, and working conditions. Western society has historically valued independence [17]. High autonomy should boost POS by demonstrating the company's faith in its workers to make informed decisions about their duties [21]. Regarding job security, strong evidence of POS is anticipated to come from confirmation that the company wants to keep the employee's membership in the future, especially in recent years when downsizing has been typical.

Job training is a choice that communicates an investment in the employee and raises POS [22]. The majority of workers consider the organization's options for developmental training to be highly discretionary, yet its implementation may greatly increase POS. Stressors are environmental demands people struggle with [23]. Stresses should decrease POS to the degree that workers ascribe work-related stressors to factors the organization can manage rather than aspects that are part of the job or brought on by external forces. Role ambiguity, which is the lack of precise details regarding

a person's duties at work; role conflict, which relates to job responsibilities that are incompatible with one another; and work overload is defined as demands that are greater than what a worker can reasonably do in a given amount of time, have all been studied as antecedents to decreased POS. Role ambiguity and conflict were sufficiently differentiated in studies for the meta-analysis to separate them.

3. Method

The present study used the qualitative method of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) in four sessions. The Focus Group Discussion approach was chosen because it allowed for a more in-depth exploration of the participants' experiences and personal viewpoints, as well as whether all of the participants had similar or differing ideas [24]. The topic and questions during FGDs were derived from the Perceived Organizational Support Theory of Rhoades and Eisenberger [17]. Subjects or participants in this study are ten special need education teachers consisting of teacher in public inclusive school and also teacher in private inclusive school from various region in Indonesia. The FGDs were conducted in four sessions online via Zoom; each meeting lasted around 90 minutes. Transcripts of the audio and video sources were used to analyze the collected audio and video data. The transcripts (audio and video record) sources were processed and categorized according to their coding and classifications for each dimension of Perceived Organizational Support theory.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1. Result

4.1.1. Perceived Organizational Support in Fairness

Consistently displaying justice in resource allocation decisions and showing consideration for employees' needs, this should have a significant cumulative impact on POS [19]. Meanwhile, teachers experience the ever-changing curriculum which creates obstacles in developing learning material. Teachers also have difficulty adjusting to rules that are frequently changing, such as teaching procedures, designing learning materials, and student assessments. One of subject that work in the public schools' teachers in rural areas, Lampung, said that the regulations from the ministry are still neglecting the context and needs in the area. This ineffective regulation talks about the list of attendees that will be changed with an application.

Moreover, all of the participants from public and private schools agreed that there is still inadequate facilities and infrastructure in the workplace which needs to be developed to improve the learning process for special needs students there. Besides that, there's also another problem like teachers' shortage and suddenly they receive more responsibility than they ought to. Because of this, despite the teachers' best efforts, the inclusive students were slightly overlooked and did not receive the proper attention.

Some teachers and therapists from private schools whose background is not an education or health major, complain that they still lack job training which owners need to provide. This can create confusion and insufficient understanding to design an IEP or implement the teaching process. On the contrary, teachers from public schools receive thrice job training related to their competence to teach special needs children in schools. Job training is a choice that communicates an investment in the employee and raises POS [19]. It is crucial to provide employees with professional development training and assignments from organizations that support professional development as a way to demonstrate to them that the company supports their career and competence. [19].

4.1.2. Perceived Organizational Support in Supervision Support

At the public school level, the principal acts as a supervisor. Whereas in a private school, it could be a senior psychologist, owner, or manager in the institution. Subject D, who is a teacher in a public school, stated that the current supervisor or principal is able to listen and receive input well, and always gives appreciation and recognition to teachers who show good contributions. Thus, teachers become more enthusiastic to show their best performance. In some other situations, the teachers rarely receive positive feedback and clear directions. Most of the time, special education teachers design their own methods for instructing or teaching the students with disabilities in each class and grade without guidance from the supervisor. Employees interpret their supervisor's favorable or unfavorable orientation toward them as an indication of the organization's support because supervisors serve as the organization's spokespeople and oversee and evaluate subordinates' performance [19]. Most participants stated that the institutions they're in often overlooked the complaints of special needs education teachers, which made them feel less supported by the school.

4.1.3. Perceived Organizational Support in Organizational Reward and Job Condition

All participants have agreed that teacher salaries are still relatively far from the minimum wage, besides that in several institutions there is still a lack of teaching facilities with only a small number of teachers. This later causes lowering job satisfaction, performance, and creates stress among special needs education teachers, because they have to meet the curriculum target with limited facilities and overwork themselves. Perceived Organizational Support should positively correlate with human resources procedures demonstrating employee contributions. Regarding POS, various incentives and working conditions have been investigated, including promotion, payment, recognition, promotions, autonomy, job security, training, and role stressor [25].

Moreover, participants also approved that there are risks that a special needs education teacher faces. They often receive unexpected treatment from their students. Five out of ten interviewees stated that they had received unexpected treatment from special needs students, such as punches, scratches, and thrown objects. However, there are no regulations governing this and there is no compensation whatsoever from the school/parents. In public schools and some private schools, the teachers get government insurance but not all of them. As a special needs educational teacher, this happen quite often and is considered normal. In fact, in some instances if something goes wrong with the child then all forms of mistakes become the responsibility of the therapist and may be considered negligence on the part of the therapist. POS is a significant component of the overall workplace experience that affects workplace safety [26].

4.2. Discussion

The purpose of this study is to explore how special needs education teachers perceive support from their organization. Perceived Organizational Support (POS) are organizational fairness, supervisor support, and organizational rewards and job conditions [17]. The POS dimensions from Eisenberger & Rhoades in 2002 [17] were utilized to analyze the responses. Based on three dimensions of POS, dimension of fairness, supervisor support, and organizational rewards and job conditions we concluded that the special education teachers' POS is still lacking. More than half of the teachers implied that they are experiencing some inconsistency in the system regulations which cause role ambiguity and role conflict in the field with day-to-day tasks and lead to negative experiences such as stress, burn out, and low performance. These conditions

affected their motivation at work, intent to remain, and role-based performance to carry out their lesson plan properly. This will impact the teachers' performance significantly, as procedural and distributive fairness are strongly linked to POS [19].

Moreover, the result demonstrated the subjects' experiences and statements about how they felt unsupported by the school management. Not only about the salary, but also how some teachers are unable to share ideas and aspirations to the supervisor about school facilities or teaching methods for special needs students. It has been discovered that disregarding an employee's welfare and failing to fulfill its exchange obligations causes anger in the workplace [25]. Accordingly, all subjects agreed that the negative emotions caused by the lack of support from the organization in this case will impact on the implementation of IEP and the learning objectives might not be achieved.

The result discovered that external conditions also affect the participants' perceived organizational support, which is the teacher shortage in schools with special needs children. As a result of this shortage, teachers increasingly have more tasks, responsibilities, and workloads. Considering the execution of IEP relies on the teachers' lesson plans, this lack of human resources will impact the learning process. This situation causes special needs education teachers' attention given to the students with special needs become very limited. Additionally, the pressure in the workplace has increased the chance of burnout and low job satisfaction in teachers.

There are several implications of this research. Even though the government has in fact regulated it by laws, the implementation of those regulations in public and private schools remains the same, that is, it returns to the individual school institutions. In terms of the fairness of the decision-making process and procedural justice which has been found to be particularly relevant for POS [17,27]. Secondly, the importance of Perceived Organizational Support for special needs education teachers' is related to their performance in implementing IEP and handling job stress. Third, the issue of teacher shortage must be solved quickly because it is affecting the teachers' workload and how it's creating role conflict and confusion because some teachers' needs to do a lot of tasks that aren't included in their original roles.

Improvement in teachers' support such as job training and facilities such as better teaching media and proper or private rooms for special needs students and teachers are needed. Finally, the result revealed that most teachers perceived low support from their organization. This ineffectiveness is caused by inconsistency of the regulation in each school (private and public school) for special needs education teachers, also the lack of concern from the supervisor, and some conditions that are not favorable for

the learning process. Thus, if there are expectations of improvements in special needs education, schools might need to prioritize strengthening the Perceived Organizational Support for special needs education teachers at school.

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