

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Nowadays many people discuss autism. It is said that %Autism is a disorder of neural development characterized by impaired social interaction and communication, and by restricted and repetitive behavior+ (%Autism+). It seems that some parents who have autistic children have not yet found the best solution to deal with autistic children. Similarly, the school teachers also find it difficult to deal with autistic children in the class because they have special characteristics. The characteristics of autistic children are having %Impairments in social interaction; impairments in communication; and restricted interests and repetitive behavior (%Autism+). Accordingly, we must find a solution to deal with the autistic children in the classroom.

During my apprenticeship as a teacher assistant, there are three autistic children, one in each grade, that is, in grades 1, 3 and 5. I and the teachers in Yahya Elementary School found it difficult to teach

three autistic children, because it was their first experience in teaching autistic children. The teachers in Yahya Elementary School had to deal with three autistic children in the class and in other activities. For example, the teachers help them to understand the lesson, to do coloring activities and to identify the names of colors. Sometimes I also do not understand what the children say, due to the fact that %most people with autism have some impairment in language and many never speak at all+(%Autism+). At Yahya Elementary School, each autistic child has a special caregiver. The caregivers can accompany the autistic children in every situation at school and it can therefore be easier for the teachers to teach them.

It is important to discuss how to deal with the autistic children to get more knowledge about their behavior because it is hard for children with autism to talk with other people and express themselves using words. They cannot communicate without special help due to the fact that %they have difficulty interpreting what others are thinking or feeling because they can't understand social cues such as tone of voice or facial expressions+(%Autism Fact Sheet+). The support from the teachers will be helpful for the autistic children to help them to be able to follow every lesson in the class.

Based on the above explanation, I would like to analyze how to deal with the autistic children at Yahya Elementary School for my term paper.

B. Identification of the Problem

The analysis of the problem is formulated into two questions:

1. Why do the teachers at Yahya Elementary School have difficulty in dealing with the autistic children in their classes?
2. How is it possible for the teachers at Yahya Elementary School to teach and help the autistic children?

C. Objectives and Benefits of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To find out the causes and the effects of the difficulties of teaching autistic children at Yahya Elementary School.
2. To present the best solution for the teachers at Yahya Elementary School for teaching and helping autistic children.

The benefits of the study are, first, for the institution so that Yahya Elementary School can manage the behavior of the autistic children and this study can be a reference for helping other autistic children at the school in the future. Second, the readers can get more knowledge about how to deal with autistic children who are like the three autistic children at Yahya Elementary School. Lastly, the writer can learn the causes of the problems the teachers face in

dealing with autistic children and know how to manage their behavior in class for a successful learning process.

D. Description of the Institution

Yahya Elementary School is located at no. 4 Progo Street, Bandung. Yahya Elementary School was built in 1964. The name of the headmistress is Sri Wahyuni, S.I.P. There are 18 classes in the Elementary School, from grade 1 to grade 6. There are three classes for each grade.

Since the 2000-2001 school year, Yahya Elementary School has implemented a learning system of five days learning in class (Monday to Friday), while Saturday is specially devoted for the implementation of PKO (Pekan Kreativitas dan Organisasi), where the children can develop their talents, interests, and creativity.

E. Method of the Study

This term paper focuses on problem solving analysis. The problem is a real problem which I found during my apprenticeship at Yahya Elementary School. The data is taken from my journal and observation. In my journal, I wrote the report of my new experiences in teaching autistic children in grades 1, 3 and 5. In addition, the references are

taken from library research, both from printed publications and Online resources.

F. Limitation of the Study

The subjects of my research are three teachers at Yahya Elementary School who taught the autistic children in grades 1, 3 and 5, and the three autistic children I observed and taught during my apprenticeship. The focus of analysis is limited to the ways the teachers teach and deal with these three autistic children.

G. Organization of Term Paper

This term paper starts with the Abstract, which is the summary of the entire paper in Indonesian; it is followed by Declaration of Originality, which is the statement about the originality of the work. Next is the Acknowledgements, which contains the expression of gratitude to the people who have supported me, and the Table of Contents. This term paper is divided into four chapters. Chapter One is the Introduction; it contains Background of the Study, Identification of the Problem, Objectives and Benefits of the Study, Description of the Institution, Method of the Study, Limitations of the Study, and Organization of the Term-Paper. Next, Chapter Two presents the analysis of the problem,

explaining the causes and the effects of the problem. Chapter Three explains the possible solutions, along with the positive and negative effects. Chapter Four describes the best solutions to solve the problem. The Bibliography contains all the references used, both from printed sources and electronic publications. The last part is Appendix, which presents the Flowchart.