

Didi Tarsidi

(From Segregation Towards Inclusion
Reflection of a Person with Visual
Impairment)

Childhood

- Born in Sumedang in 1951
- Became blind at age 5
- Sent to a special school for the blind in Bandung at age 9
- Spent the first days crying over the separation from parents

Positive Aspects of Segregation

- Availability of special learning equipment for students with visual impairment
- Acquisition of specific skills: Braille, O&M, ADL
- A class does not exceed 8 students, making individualized teaching easier
- Friendly social environment
- Accessible physical environment
- Availability of models: adults with visual impairment

Problems in the Society

The society generally still see blind people as:

- “Alliens”
- Pitiful
- Sometimes frightening.
- Disproportional admiration.

Change of Societal Attitude

- Through inclusive socialization, the societal attitude gradually changes to be more positive.
- Realization that there are more similarities than differences.

People with visual impairment can be independent and contributive with:

- Optimal functioning of nonvisual senses
- Various kinds of alternative techniques
- Tolerance and understanding from the society

Negative Aspects of Segregation

- Meet academic needs but tends to separate children from their family and social environment
- Does not provide opportunities for social experiences
- Does not provide the society with opportunities to better know people with visual impairment
- This, in turn, tends to maintain discriminative attitude

Inclusive Education

- Inclusive education is an educational approach that
- Gives equal opportunity to all children, including children with disabilities, to learn together in the same learning environment, where all children
- Have equal access to available learning resources, and
- The special needs of all children are attended to and met.

Regular schools with (this) inclusive orientation are the most effective means of

- combating discriminatory attitudes,
- creating welcoming communities,
- building an inclusive society and
- achieving education for all; moreover,
- they provide an effective education to the majority of children and
- improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system.

(The Salamanca Statement)

Factors Supporting Successful Inclusion

- 1. Positive attitude and beliefs that inclusion will be successful
- 2. Availability of programmes to meet specific needs of students with disabilities. E.g.: Braille, O&M, ADL.
- 3. Availability of adaptive equipment and assistive technology to access curricular programmes.
- 4. Accessible physical environment
- 5. System support: adequate number of staff; staff development; assessment & evaluation policies
- 6. Collaboration among regular teachers, spec ed teachers, other specialists
- 7. Teaching methods: adaptive, collaborative, cooperative
- 8. Societal support – including from PWDOs

About the Author

- Lecturer at Special Education Department, UPI, Bandung
- Bachelor in English education
- Master in guidance & counseling for children with special needs
- Writing doctoral dissertation on rehabilitation counseling for adults with visual impairment
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