

**THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF SHADOW TEACHER IN EMOTIONALLY GUIDING
CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AT MUHAMMADIYAH NOTOPRAJAN
PRIMARY SCHOOL YOGYAKARTA**

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the important role of shadow teachers in supporting the emotional development of children with special needs (ABK) at SD Muhammadiyah Notoprajan Yogyakarta. With a game-based approach and self-reflection techniques, shadow teachers help students recognize and manage their emotions, as well as develop social skills such as communication and cooperation. This study uses a qualitative method through a literature review to understand the strategies implemented by shadow teachers. The results show that collaboration between shadow teachers, regular teachers, and parents is vital to creating an inclusive learning environment. This research provides insight for educators and policy makers to improve support for ABK, and highlights the need for ongoing training for shadow teachers.

Keywords: shadow teacher, inclusive education, social skills

A. Introduction

Inclusive education is an approach that is receiving increasing attention in the context of modern education, especially in supporting children with special needs (ABK). In Indonesia, especially in Muhammadiyah school environments, the role of shadow teachers is very crucial in producing learning zones that support academic and emotional development. (Gülsün et al., 2023) This phenomenon arises from the need to overcome the barriers felt by children with special needs, who often

experience difficulties in adapting to school environments that are not fully inclusive.

Based on the research conducted, a number of problems were identified, including a lack of understanding of the role of shadow teachers, challenges in collaboration between regular teachers, shadow teachers and parents, as well as the need to promote more efficient teaching methods.

The aim of this research is to explore the role of shadow teachers in supporting the emotional development

of ABK, as well as to note the main applications that can be implemented in inclusive education. By understanding this role, it is hoped that methods can be identified to improve the quality of support provided to students, as well as creating consistency in educational approaches between school and home.

The benefits of this research are not only limited to the development of better educational practices, but also include contributions to more inclusive educational policies. By presenting empirical evidence about the effectiveness of shadow teachers, this research may encourage policymakers to consider providing adequate resources and ongoing training for educators.

In this context, theories about social-emotional development and educational inclusion provide an important basis for understanding how interactions between shadow teachers and students can contribute to the formation of students' social and emotional identities. Data and facts that support this research include the results of observations and interviews with shadow teachers, which show that an approach based on

compassion, tolerance and mutual respect can improve students' emotional well-being.

The focus of the problem in this research is how shadow teachers can help students overcome their emotional difficulties and create a safe environment for expressing themselves. To achieve this goal, it is hoped that this research will be able to make a significant contribution to the development of more holistic interventions, which focus not only on academic success but also on students' emotional well-being.

B. Research Methods

Literature review is the process of understanding existing knowledge and identifying research gaps related to a topic. The main goal is to provide theoretical background, summarize, and synthesize previous research findings and methods to avoid duplication and build a strong argumentative basis (Gorman, K & MacIntosh, 2016).

This research uses a qualitative approach, because it focuses on in-depth exploration of data in the form of relevant literature. This process places greater emphasis on interpretation, understanding and

synthesis of information to provide in-depth theoretical insight regarding the role of shadow teachers in supporting the emotional development of children with special needs.

In this research, the literature review was carried out with a systematic approach using a Randomized Controlled Trials (RCT) research design and English-language empirical research articles. Identification and data collection were carried out through searching for research articles in databases such as Google Scholar and ScienceDirect using relevant keywords, for example "shadow teacher," "emotional development" and "inclusive education". Screening and validation was carried out by selecting articles based on inclusion criteria such as year publication, topic relevance, and journal credibility. The validation process ensures sources come from credible and peer-reviewed publications. Data is analyzed through a simplified approach, which involves three stages: summarizing the literature, evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the study, and identifying and analyzing relevant themes -The themes were compared

to ensure consistency and relevance in answering research questions.

This method aims to understand the role of shadow teachers in supporting the emotional development of children with special needs (ABK) by identifying research gaps, compiling a theoretical basis, and highlighting effective approaches that contribute to inclusive education at SD Muhammadiyah Notoprajan Yogyakarta.

C. Research Results and Discussion

A systematic approach with a Randomized Controlled Trials (RCT) design was taken from research by Spilt, et al (2021) entitled Teachers' perceptions of emotional display rules in schools: A systematic review. In this literature review, the authors explore the role of shadow teachers in helping children recognize and manage their emotions through three stages of analysis: summarizing the literature, evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the study, and identifying and analyzing emerging themes.

Existing literature suggests that shadow teachers play an important role in supporting children, especially

in the context of emotion management. Techniques used by shadow teachers include emotion journaling, which helps children recognize emotional patterns and triggers. Relaxation techniques such as meditation and yoga, which reduce anxiety and improve emotional well-being, and deep breathing exercises help children calm themselves when stressed or anxious. These techniques have proven effective in increasing children's self-awareness and ability to manage their emotions more constructively.

Table 1.1 Table of Supporting Techniques by Shadow Teacher

Technique	Description	Expected impact
Emotion Journal	Help students record daily feelings	Increase self-awareness
Training Breathing	Techniques for calming yourself when you are anxious	Reduces anxiety and stress
Game Based Approach	Teaches social skills through play	Increase social interaction
Reflection	Discussion of feelings and experiences	Increase emotional understanding

The results of the analysis showed several main themes related

to the role of the shadow teacher, including increasing children's emotional awareness, developing emotional regulation skills, and self-reflection. Shadow teachers play an important role in helping children recognize their emotions more accurately and develop the skills to respond to emotions in a healthy way. Through techniques such as emotion and breathing exercises, as well as self-reflection sessions, children can develop practical skills that can be applied in everyday life, strengthen self-understanding, and support better emotional management.

At SD Muhammadiyah Notoprajan Yogyakarta, shadow teachers play a significant role in supporting the emotional growth of children with special needs. They help children recognize and manage emotions through techniques such as emotion journaling, breathing exercises and establishing a solid relationship of trust with the child. In addition, shadow teachers facilitate self-reflection and personal discussions to increase children's emotional intelligence. Islamic values such as compassion, tolerance and mutual respect are integrated into their approach, creating an inclusive

environment that supports children's social-emotional development. Collaboration with regular teachers and parents ensures consistent emotional support for children with special needs. Overall, the role of shadow teachers at SD Muhammadiyah Notoprajan Yogyakarta is vital in ensuring that children with special needs develop not only academically, but also emotionally, with more constructive feelings management skills and more harmonious relationships with peers.

Shadow Teacher technique in teaching social skills to children, as explained in the journal Spilt, et al (2021) *Teachers as co-regulators of children's emotions: A descriptive study of teacher-child emotion dialogues in special education*, relies on three main approaches: game-based approaches, social interaction mediation, and social situation simulation. A game-based approach involves using games to teach communication, sharing, and cooperation skills. Studies reveal that children who participate in structured play experience significant improvements in their social interactions and communication, as

play creates a fun and motivating learning environment.



Figure 1.1 "ABK children playing angklung"

Musical games can be an effective tool in teaching social skills to children with special needs (ABK) through a shadow teacher approach. By using music-based games, such as playing musical instruments together, children learn to communicate, share and work together in a fun and motivating environment. Shadow teachers act as mediators, helping children understand social dynamics and manage their emotions. Structured music activities increase social engagement and communication for children with special needs, and build empathy and social skills that are important in everyday interactions.



Figure 1.2 "ABK children practice motor skills"

Mediating social interactions is an important role played by shadow teachers as a bridge that helps children interact with their peers. Based on the findings in the study, children who received support from shadow teachers showed improvements in the quality of their social interactions, including the ability to initiate and maintain conversations. This reinforces the role of shadow teachers as important facilitators in the development of children's social skills.

Simulating social situations is also used as a technique to teach empathy and how to deal with conflict. Through simulating real situations, children can understand other people's perspectives and learn how to resolve conflicts constructively. This research reveals that this approach not only helps children understand the concept of social skills, but also provides them the opportunity to practice them in real situations, improving their ability to interact effectively in social life.

At SD Muhammadiyah Notoprajan Yogyakarta, shadow teachers use various techniques to help children with special needs develop their social skills. Game-based approach (*game-based*

learning) is proven to be effective in teaching communication, sharing, and cooperation skills. In research conducted, children who engaged in structured play showed improved social interactions and communication skills compared to those who did not use this approach. In addition, shadow teachers act as mediators in social interactions, helping children interact with peers and build conversation skills. Another technique used is simulated social situations, which helps children understand other people's perspectives and develop skills in dealing with conflict. Studies show that these techniques improve children's ability to interact socially and solve social problems more effectively. Although there are several limitations in the research, such as limited generalization of the results, these findings show that shadow teacher techniques can have a positive impact on the development of children's social skills, especially for those who need more support in social interactions.

Collaboration between shadow teachers, regular teachers and parents is an important element in supporting the development of children with special needs. Based on

research from Almalki, et al (2021), there are several similarities in the approaches used to ensure the effectiveness of this collaboration. On the one hand, both studies emphasize the important role of shadow teachers in designing inclusive teaching strategies together with regular teachers. Shadow teachers function as individual mentors who can provide insight into a child's specific needs, as well as support the implementation of appropriate teaching strategies, such as differentiation of instruction or use of learning aids. Both studies also highlight collaboration with parents, which is critical to creating consistency in educational approaches, as well as supporting emotional management at home.

The difference between the two journals lies in the research focus and implementation context. Almalki, et al (2021) emphasize the challenges faced by teachers in involving parents in transition planning for children with special needs in Saudi Arabia, where cultural and social factors also influence this collaboration. They indicate that parental involvement in supporting children emotionally at home is a key aspect in ensuring continuity and consistency of support

at school and home. Meanwhile, Yin, et al (2019) focus more on the impact of this collaboration in the context of managing emotions and preventing burnout among teachers, suggesting that effective collaboration can reduce stress for regular teachers, while increasing their satisfaction at work.

Overall, these two studies confirm that collaboration between shadow teachers, regular teachers and parents is crucial in creating an inclusive learning atmosphere and supporting the social, emotional and academic growth of children with special needs. However, the challenges faced in building this collaboration need to be overcome with adequate training for all relevant parties, as well as open and continuous communication between school and home.

Shadow teachers face several challenges in the emotional guidance of children with special needs, such as high emotional burden due to demands to hide negative emotions and appear positive, limited time and resources that hinder the provision of individualized attention, and difficulties in building relationships with students who may show resistance or distrust. . To overcome these challenges,

several strategies can be implemented, such as providing appropriate training to manage emotional burden, encouraging collaboration with teachers and other staff to share the workload, and organizing efficient time management so that each student gets optimal attention without sacrificing the shadow teacher's well-being. (Wu, et al, 2020)

At SD Muhammadiyah Notoprajan Yogyakarta, Islamic values such as compassion, tolerance and mutual respect are integrated into shadow teacher strategies to guide students' emotions in a way that is full of empathy and attention. Shadow teachers act as companions who bring children closer to understanding the importance of affection in social interactions, teach them to respect differences and tolerate each other in groups. These values are reflected in the approaches used, such as relaxation techniques that calm emotions and the use of educational games to develop social skills. Thus, shadow teachers not only support children with special needs in managing emotions, but also build an inclusive environment that strengthens relationships between

individuals, fosters mutual respect, and encourages empathy among peers, in accordance with Islamic principles that emphasize social welfare and emotional.

At SD Muhammadiyah Notoprajan Yogyakarta, collaboration between shadow teachers, regular teachers and parents is very important to create an inclusive learning environment for children with special needs. Shadow teachers work together with regular teachers to design teaching strategies that suit student needs, such as adapting materials and more inclusive teaching methods. In addition, they provide insight into a child's specific needs, assisting teachers in designing appropriate approaches. Collaboration with parents is also important, with shadow teachers ensuring smooth communication between school and home, as well as helping parents continue emotional support at home, creating consistency in educational approaches and supporting children's social-emotional development.

In this study, it was found that shadow teachers at SD Muhammadiyah Notoprajan Yogyakarta have a very vital role in

supporting the emotional growth of children with special needs. Through techniques such as emotional use and breathing exercises, shadow teachers help children recognize and manage their emotions better. These techniques are effective in reducing children's anxiety and stress, as well as strengthening their self-awareness. Additionally, play-based approaches have been shown to improve children's social skills, such as communication, cooperation, and empathy, which are important for building positive relationships with peers.

Collaboration between shadow teachers, regular teachers and parents is the main component in building an inclusive environment. Research shows that effective communication between schools and families ensures consistency in supporting children, both at home and at school. At SD Muhammadiyah Notoprajan, this collaboration is clearly visible, through active collaboration with the school, parents are involved in supporting children's social and emotional growth. This approach provides a solid foundation for the child's holistic development.

Even though the techniques applied by shadow teachers have proven to be effective, challenges in their implementation remain, such as limited resources and the need for more intensive training for educators. Therefore, it is mandatory to continue to update the approaches used, as well as increase training and awareness of the importance of collaboration between teachers, shadow teachers and parents. With this effort, it is hoped that children with special needs at SD Muhammadiyah Notoprajan can develop well, not only academically but also emotionally and socially.

E. Conclusion

This research confirms that shadow teachers play a very crucial role in supporting the emotional development of children with special needs. Through the application of appropriate techniques and strategies, shadow teachers not only help students overcome emotional challenges, but also create an inclusive and supportive learning environment. These findings suggest that close collaboration between shadow teachers, regular teachers, and parents is critical to creating

consistency in educational approaches. Although there are challenges in implementation, such as limited resources and the need for more intensive training, joint efforts can improve the quality of support provided to children with special needs.

Improvement Suggestions:

1. Ongoing Training: Ongoing training programs are needed for shadow teachers to improve their skills and knowledge in supporting students' emotional development. This training should include the latest techniques in inclusive education and emotion management.
2. Resource Support: Schools and educational institutions need to provide adequate resources, including learning materials and tools that can be used by shadow teachers to support students. It also includes better administrative support to facilitate collaboration between all parties involved.
3. Raising Awareness: An awareness campaign about the importance of the role of shadow teachers and inclusive education needs to be carried out among parents, teachers and the

community. This may include seminars, workshops, and publications that highlight the importance of emotional support for students with special needs.

4. Further Research: Further research is needed to explore best practices in supporting the emotional development of children with special needs in various educational contexts. This research could include longitudinal studies to understand the long-term impact of support provided by shadow teachers, as well as explore local factors that influence inclusion practices.
5. Evaluation and Feedback: It is important to develop an evaluation system that can provide feedback on the effectiveness of implemented support programs. This helps identify areas that need improvement and ensures that the interventions implemented are truly appropriate to the student's needs.

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