

Indonesia Lanscape: The Family Social Supports' Investigation in Learning for Student with Disabilities

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Abstract

In the context of special education, parental support is crucially comprehensive. This is a fundamental need for children with disabilities to ensure they receive the services they need from an early age. This study aims to investigate the level of family social support as an effort to optimize learning for students with disabilities. Data collection uses instruments that refer to aspects of Sarafino social support and are analyzed using descriptive statistics. The data collection involved randomly selected students with disabilities in 19 Special Schools and 114 Inclusive Schools in Indonesia. The respondents involved consisted of 66 respondents from special schools and 52 respondents from inclusive schools. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data, and an ANOVA was conducted to explore the differences between school types and support categories. The findings of this study highlight the need for increased family support initiatives and interventions to enhance the educational experiences. Such initiatives could include parent training programs, counseling services, and community outreach efforts. By strengthening family social support, it is possible to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students.

Keywords: *Social Support, Family Support, Student with Disability, Special Education, Quality Learning.*

Introduction

Creating effective learning can improve the quality of education. Learning can reach a standard of high quality if teachers are able to provide effective learning through various approaches and methods. In addition, educators must be able to generate student learning motivation to attain finest learning goals and learning achievements (Sum & Taran, 2020). However, these demands cannot be immersed in teachers' responsibility, the role of parents is also crucially significant for learning. Therefore, parents have a pivotal fundamental role in children's education, including students with disabilities (SWD) (Chusna & Utami, 2020). Parents play the foremost corridor to investigate the conditions and characteristics of their children. It means that they must provide the best services, from the formal, informal and non-formal sectors. Functionally, these efforts are categorised as part of a form of social support for SWD. In the educational context, the role of parents has the most influential factor on a more meaningful climate for SWD empowerment (Ekawati & Lian, 2022).

Social support is known as a reassurance given by someone to individuals in need. This energy aims to have a virtuous impact, such as emotional state, frame of mind, or mood which stimulate the psychological status (Saputri, Raharjo, & Apsari, 2019). Based on its form, social support in the form of material, emotional, informational, and instrumental assistance can be received by someone from their social network environment (Dunst, Trivette, & Cross, 1986). One social network model is parents who provide social support in order to have a positive influence on children unswervingly. Through this network, children can reach out to various people, receive various stimuli, and get the opportunity to explore aspects of learning (Cochran & Brassard, 1979). In the context of learning, parental support is one of the indispensable factors that can influence children's drive to learn (Amaliati, Ellyawati, &

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Rahayu, 2021). Previous research has discovered that parents who approach adolescents and are involved in school activities (talking about school activities and helping them overcome difficulties) are able to internalise the value of having their children do well in school as demonstrated by teaching them finishing homework regularly, enjoying their school work, and doing their best for their success (Grolnick & Ryan, 1989). Parental involvement or engagement in the form of interest and support has a significant impact on learners' educational outcomes or achievement, if the parental involvement scale falls into a high categorisation, then the academic achievement results achieved by children will also be high (Lara & Saracostti, 2019), (Rasmitadila, Humaira, Laeli, Rachmadtullah, & Jauhari, 2023), (Irvan & Jauhari, 2020), (Irvan, Jauhari, Junaidi, Badijah, & Idhartono, 2023).

Creating an effective learning environment for SWD requires a multifaceted approach, one that extends beyond the school to include strong parental involvement and support. Nevertheless, in the context of interventions for SWD, parental social support transcends a personalised approach and providing motivation. The inimitable developmental characteristics of SWD make them require more services from parents, such as being actively involved in providing interventions related to their disability category. While previous studies have explored the impact of family support on children's educational outcomes, there remains a notable gap in research specifically addressing the nature and extent of parental support for SWD in different educational settings, such as special schools and inclusive schools. Although social support is recognized as a critical factor in promoting well-being and academic success, the variability in parental involvement and its effects on SWD's learning progress is not fully understood. This study aims to address this gap by investigating the levels of parental social support provided to SWD, examining both special and inclusive schools in Indonesia. By doing so, it seeks to contribute to the growing body of literature that emphasizes the pivotal role of family support in enhancing educational outcomes for children with disabilities. The findings from this study will provide valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and family support services aiming to optimize learning conditions for SWD, particularly in contexts where educational resources and support systems may vary.

Method

Research Design

This study aims to determine the level of social support provided by parents to SWD. The approach applied is quantitative with descriptive data analysis. Data collection was carried out in the range of 2022-2023 in 19 Special Schools and 114 Inclusive Schools in Indonesia.

Participants

Respondents involved in this study were SWD who entered the adolescent phase with an age range of 15-21 years and had an average cognitive ability of 80-100 (IQ score on the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children) (Watkins & Smith, 2013). The determination of these criteria was determined to ensure that respondents were able to fill out the questionnaire properly. The total respondents involved consisted of 66 respondents from special schools and 52 respondents from inclusive schools.

Materials

To collect the data, it is also used a typical questionnaire, developed by Neta Sepfitri in 2011, based on aspects of social support according to Sarafino in 1994 (Sepfitri, 2011). Aspects of social support according to Sarafino 1994 consist of emotional support, appreciation support, instrumental support, information support and social network support (Sarafino & Smith, 1994). The instrument provides statements containing favourable and unfavourable attitudes. Favourable items have scores with a range of 4-1 while unfavourable items have scores with a range of 1-4. The overall lowest total score on the parental social support instrument was 28, while the overall highest total score was 112.

Data Analysis

Data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine the range of social support levels. In addition, to examine the differences between groups, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. This statistical method allowed for a deeper understanding of the factors influencing parental social support across different school types and categories of support.

Findings

Data collection in this study uses field study techniques in several regions in Indonesia. The selection of locations emphasises the availability of school types and respondent characteristics. The involvement of respondents in this study prioritises those who have sufficient cognitive abilities. This criterion is set to maintain the quality of information received, so that the validity of measuring parental social support can be maintained. As a first step in obtaining the respondents, the researchers traced the locations of 19 special schools and 114 inclusive schools in Indonesia. As a result, this study can involve respondents consisting of 66 respondents from special schools and 52 respondents from inclusive schools (see table 1).

Table 1: Respondent Demographics

School Category	Student Category							Score
	Df	ID	SL	MD	ASD	SLD	DS	
Special Schools	17	45	-	2	1	-	1	66 (55,9%)
Inclusive Schools	6	39	1	4	1	1	-	52 (44,1%)
Total	23 (19,5%)	84 (71%)	1 (0,9%)	6 (5,2%)	2 (1,6%)	1 (0,9%)	1 (0,9%)	118 (100%)

Df: Deaf, **ID:** Intellectual Disability, **SL:** Slow Learner, **MD:** Motoric Disability, **ASD:** Autism Spectrum Disorder, **SLD:** Specific Learning Disorder, **DS:** Doen Syndrome

Based on the results of data collection on parental social support in Special Schools (see table 2), the emotional support aspect has a minimum value of 23 and a maximum value of 40. In the appreciation support aspect, it has a minimum value of 12 and a maximum value of 24. In the instrumental support aspect, it has a minimum value of 11 and a maximum value of 28. In the information support aspect, it has a minimum value of 5 and a maximum value of 12. Meanwhile, in the social network support aspect, it has a minimum value of 4 and a maximum value of 8. The achievement of these scores is then categorised based on a predetermined scale (see table 3). There were 17 (25.8%) respondents in the low category and 49 (74.2%) respondents in the high category.

Table 2. Parents' Social Support in Special Schools

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Total_D. Emotional	66	23	40	32.86	4.011
Total_D. Reward	66	12	24	19.24	3.049
Total_D. Instrumental	66	11	28	22.11	3.738
Total_D. Information	66	5	12	9.77	1.804
Total_D. Social Network	66	4	8	6.61	1.175
Valid N	66				

Table 3. Scale of Parental Social Support in Special Schools

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low	17	25.8	25.8	25.8
	High	49	74.2	74.2	100.0
	Total	66	100.0	100.0	

The scores obtained by parents in inclusive schools have an insignificant difference compared to parents in special schools (see table 4). Aspect of emotional support has a minimum value of 22 and a maximum value of 40. Aspect of appreciation support has a minimum value of 8 and a maximum value of 24. Aspect of instrumental support has a minimum value of 14 and a maximum value of 28. Aspect of information support has a minimum value of 5 and a maximum value of 12. Aspect of social network

support has a minimum value of 3 and a maximum value of 8. Furthermore, the results of the rating scale categorisation show that 19 (36.5%) respondents fall into the low category, and 10 (19.2%) respondents fall into the high category (See table 5).

Table 4. Parents' Social Support in Inclusive Schools

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Total_D. Emotional	52	22	40	31.73	4.252
Total_D. Reward	52	8	24	18.19	3.290
Total_D. Instrumental	52	14	28	21.25	3.503
Total_D. Information	52	5	12	9.83	1.654
Total_D. Social Network	52	3	8	6.10	1.524
Valid N	52				

Table 5. Scale of Parental Social Support in Inclusive Schools

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Low	19	36.5	36.5	36.5
	High	33	63.5	63.5	100.0
	Total	52	100.0	100.0	

The normality test using the Shapiro-Wilk method is carried out to determine whether the data is normally distributed or not. If the p value > 0.05, then the data is considered normally distributed, so the normality assumption is met, but if the p value is \leq 0.05 then the data is not normally distributed. To evaluate whether the variances were homogeneous across groups, Levene's test was conducted. The p-value for the test was greater than 0.05, confirming that the variances between categories ("high" and "low") and school types (SLB and Inclusive) were not significantly different. This satisfies the homogeneity of variances assumption required for ANOVA. A two-way ANOVA was conducted to examine the effects of school type and category on total social support scores, as well as their interaction. The results, summarized in Table 6, show that:

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Table 6. Anova Result

Source	Sum of Squares	df	F	p-value
School Type (SLB vs. Inclusive)	NaN	1	NaN	NaN
Category (High vs. Low)	15746.09	2	166.77	<0.001
Interaction (School Category) x	82.42	2	0.87	0.35
Residual	5287.32	112		

The results of the two-way ANOVA provide insight into the influence of both category and school type on the total social support scores. Firstly, the effect of category ("high" vs. "low") was statistically significant, with a p-value less than 0.001. This indicates a substantial difference in the total social support scores between the two categories, highlighting that individuals in the "high" category received significantly greater social support than those in the "low" category. On the other hand, the main effect of school type (SLB vs. Inclusive) was not statistically significant. This suggests that the type of school does not independently influence the total social support scores, indicating uniformity in support levels regardless of the school type. Furthermore, the interaction effect between school type and category

was also not statistically significant. This implies that the observed differences in social support scores based on category were consistent across both SLB and Inclusive school types, with no evidence of category effects varying by school type. The mean and standard deviation of total social support scores for each group are presented in Table 7. These statistics provide additional context for understanding the distribution of scores across school types and categories.

School Type	Category	Mean Score	Standar Deviation
Special School	Low	78.63	6.26
Special School	High	95.43	6.98
Inclusive School	Low	74.06	6.34
Inclusive School	High	93.47	7.25

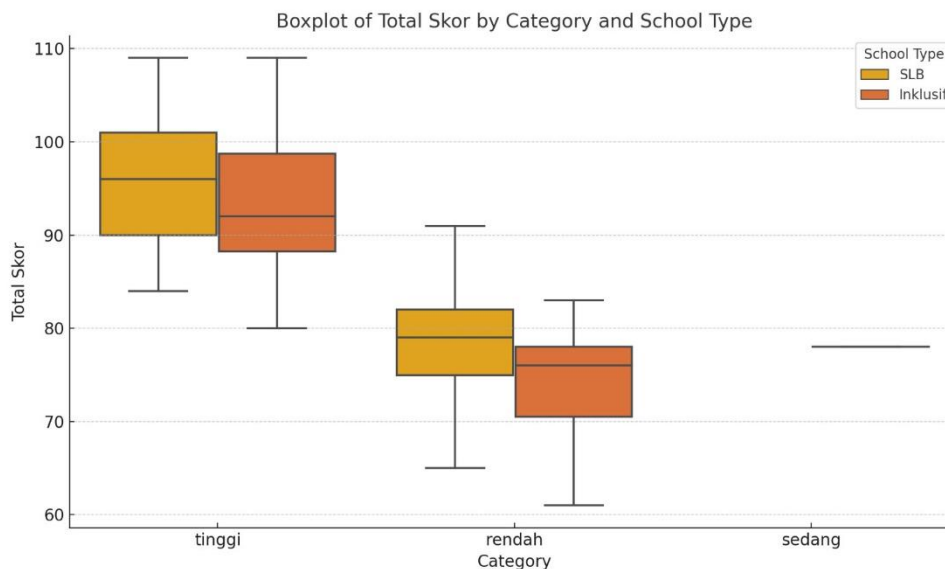


Figure 1. Boxplot of Scor Total by Category and School Type

The boxplot (Figure 1) provides a clear visualization of how social support scores vary across the different categories and school types. It effectively demonstrates that there are substantial differences in social support scores between the "high" and "low" categories, with the "high" category consistently showing higher scores across both school types. Additionally, the boxplot reveals that the variation in social support scores attributable to school type is minimal, suggesting that the type of school (SLB or Inclusive) does not significantly influence the distribution of scores. Furthermore, the interaction effect between school type and category is negligible, as indicated by the relatively parallel trends in the scores for both categories across school types.

Discussion, Conclusion, and Suggestions

Based on the data analysis report, it is evident that parental social support for SWDs in Special Schools and Inclusive Schools is classified at a moderate level. This finding explains that SWDs receive social support quite well from parents, although it is not delivered optimally. It affects to the students' achievement. Another condition, some children with special needs have lesser support from their father or mother. However, they still have complete parental figures. Some of them tend to get more support from their mothers, while others tend to get more support from their fathers. Although it is an incomplete support (a single parent), but it still touches the emotion of the children and the touch must have the least consequence.

Previous research on family social support for children with autism shows that mothers' support has a higher mean value when compared to fathers' social support. However, both have a difference in value that is not significantly different. Both have the same meaning; female parents (mothers) and male parents (fathers) on average provide social support in the positive category (Tahsa & Ekawati, 2021), (Rani & Jauhari, 2018). Family social support greatly affects the development of children with autism. Providing appropriate social support is expected to optimise services and improve their quality

of life. Conversely, a lack of social support for children will negatively impact their behaviour. This condition makes them feel inferior and will withdraw from the social environment (Wangi & Budisetyani, 2020), (Irvan, Damayanto, Jauhari, & Aqilah, 2021), (Charalambous & Papademetriou, 2024).

The findings of this study are in the form of hypotheses regarding parental social support in learning for SWD. Theoretically, if the provision of parental social support on learning for SWD can be improved and maximised again, it will be predicted that learning outcomes will be more easily achieved. The learning obtained will certainly improve the quality of children's learning which affects the quality of life of SWD in the future. This is due to the fuller social support of parents; it makes things easier for children to achieve learning goals and get maximum development. Parental support provided during the learning process can trigger student motivation (Sani, Fandizal, & Astuti, 2020). A harmonious family relationship between father, mother, and children is a key need for every student. Children can initiate confabulation with parents if they encounter things that they have no idea. On the other hand, parents always ask about their learning progress at any time. A pleasant atmosphere in the family can also affect children's learning motivation because children can study with warm atmosphere, so that in the end, they can reach the peak of success in the learning process (Yudha, 2020), (Sujarwo, Kusumawardani, & Nurmalasari, 2022), (Gusho & Goci, 2024).

Previous research also has shown that providing social support for people with totally blind disabilities has a strong relationship with children's motivation to achieve, both academic and non-academic achievements (Rosalina & Apsari, 2020). Social support that comes from family and school parties, such as teachers, can foster motivation in children to achieve (Amseke, 2018), (Carlson & Miller, 2017), (Cochran & Brassard, 1979). Forms of social support provided directly or indirectly momentarily affect achievement (Cahyani et al., 2020). The numerous forms of social support that have been provided by families to persons with disabilities in the aspect of education show that support from families is important and main for the survival of persons with disabilities. From a theoretical point of view, the support system provided by the family can provide the finest way in the process of child development. This condition can be analogised that a system in the family is like spider web, broken web cannot work well to catch the object or goal, thus it must be interrelated and solid with each other. Family support as a system can affect the micro system, including children with disabilities. Thus, if a system in the family works in malfunctional process, then the subsystem or family members receive the consequence in return (Dayanti & Pribadi, 2022). Therefore, improvements in a family system, especially the system in families of persons with disabilities, in the form of the role or capacity of members, must be made because their existence can affect other family members and can strengthen positive relationships in the family. If positive relationships have been created in a family, it is possible that the growth and development of persons with disabilities will also show good things.

The role of parents is needed to improve the quality of SWD learning at school. Before providing support to children, parents must go through a process of self-acceptance of the child's condition. The process of self-acceptance is a process in which parents can accept the reality of the shortcomings and advantages possessed by the child. Parental acceptance is the basis for each individual to accept the reality of life from all good and bad experiences (Rahmawati, 2018). Parental acceptance is an attitude or behaviour from parents that is shown by the ability to accept their children's existence unconditionally, including providing affection, good attachment, high care, as well as support and nurturing (Putri & Lutfianawati, 2021).

The findings of this study do not fully guarantee that parents' social support scores are solely influenced by their knowledge of what to do. However, past situations related to their acceptance of their children's disabilities are sturdily suspected to be related to current services (Ho & Keiley, 2003). Positive parental attitudes and acceptance of a child's disability usually leads to children being more open to instruction and developing in a more positive direction. Contrariwise, a rejecting parental attitude (overt or covert) usually results in autistic individuals who are difficult to direct, educate and nurture. Parents' understanding of their children's limitations means that they must be disciplined in guiding their children (Tarigan, 2022), (Machmud & Ramadhan, 2022). However, this demand is not a modest task for parents who surprisingly find their children with disabilities. Denial can be shown in a variety of attitudes, for example not accepting the child's condition or being overprotective (Lekholetova, Liakh, & Zaveryko, 2020). Not being able to accept the condition of disability certainly has an impact on parents' low empathy for the importance of services for children. This situation is not much different from an overprotective attitude that tends to limit various services that should be important to provide (Duma, Tshabalala, & Mji, 2021)

Parents should be more active in asking how their children feel, particularly when participating in learning at school. By establishing a good communication relationship, children can have good development in learning and also emotional support from parents can be provided to children optimally. The parent-child communication model used by parents of children with disabilities is clear evidence that parents accept their children's circumstances so that children develop well, despite their limited circumstances, regardless of the emotional ties or love that are tied to the parent-child relationship (Ramadhana, 2021).

Parents and teachers should always communicate SWD's reactions to learning. Active parental involvement depends on interest, ability, opportunity, and motivation. However, the attitude of parents and teachers must be synergistic towards the learning process so that SWDs still feel care for in the control of parents and teachers (Dakhi, 2020). In order for the provision of parental social support for SWD to be maintained, it requires the ability of parents to survive in problematic situations, such as emotional conditions in the process of accepting the condition of disability. This ability to survive in difficult situations is called resilience. Resilience is defined as the quality that individuals have to survive, adapt and develop (Connor & Davidson, 2003), face, overcome, learn, and change through the inevitable difficulties of life (Grotberg, 2003).

This resilience also helps parents in maintaining their physical and mental health. Resilience can be used by parents as a source of strength in the face of adversity. This is supported by research conducted by (Greeff & Nolting, 2013), namely parents with children with special needs who have resilience appear to be able to accept the situation at hand and these parents also have good relationships between family members. Through resilience, parents with children with special needs are able to see the problems faced as a positive thing (Muir & Strnadová, 2014), so they are able to accept the condition of their children who are different from other children (Azmi, 2017). Perceived social support is a subjective assessment made by individuals of support that comes from family, friends, and people who are considered important (Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, & Farley, 1988). Individuals with high perceived social support will rarely feel lonely (Kang, Park, & Wallace, 2018), (Strating, Suurmeijer, & Van Schuur, 2006). Based on the results of research (Ali, Gazadinda, & Rahma, 2020) that there is a significant relationship between perceived social support and resilience, the more positive the direction of the relationship between perceived social support and resilience, the higher the perceived social support and resilience in parents of children with special needs.

This study aims at investigating the levels of parental social support to generate hypotheses for further, more in-depth research. Parental social support in Special Schools and Inclusive Schools is categorised as moderate. However, the social support provided by parents still needs to be improved in order to create a sense of comfort, peace, and confidence in SWD. This finding raises the hypothesis that providing social support can create quality learning for SWD with conditions that must be met, namely minimising denial and building resilience. Future research needs to examine in more depth the relationship between denial and social support, and or between resilience and social support. Furthermore, the boundaries of respondent involvement also need to be further improved, for example between urban or rural areas in order to encourage evidence of environmental influences on service conditions and learning quality.

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