

Something Important For Special Education In Malaysia

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Abstract: Special education has always been special in the framework of the Malaysian education system. Discussions on special education are incomplete if not instilled with love and concern for students with special needs (MBK). Special education makes all parties involved always sensitive to the needs of MBK. In the face of various changes and current needs, special education must always be relevant and consistent in providing the best for all involved. Special education needs to be strengthened as much as possible so that consistency in service can be maintained. To ensure the sustainability of the best services to MBK which consists of various categories such as vision problems, hearing problems and learning problems, several things need to be improved in line with the current situation. This brief descriptive study was conducted to obtain general views from special education teachers on aspects that need to be given attention by the ministry of education Malaysia to make special education always at the forefront. The survey was conducted online to special education teachers around the district of Batu Pahat, Johor, Malaysia for that purpose and the data obtained were analyzed descriptively using SPSS. The findings of this study indicate 11 important aspects that need to be improved for special education. It is hoped that the results of this study are given due attention by the authorities to make the management of special education always the best.

Keywords: Special Education, vision problems, hearing problems, learning problems, leadership and educational management.

Introduction

The world of education is constantly evolving according to global needs. Starting with traditional learning methods using chalk to learning with technology, change is always needed for the field of education. These changes need to be in line with the needs of education as well as the students themselves. Extensive and diverse sources of knowledge as well as wide open references make the education system in general and education practitioners in particular need strong competitiveness in implementing change. All these changes that take place enable every citizen to enjoy educational services that are in line with the passage of time (Siri, 2017). The need for this change is also very important to avoid any dropouts. Various forms and aspects that need to be considered when we talk about changes in education. It covers teaching methods, leadership practices, use of materials and system management. All these changes must involve all relevant parties such as students, parents, teachers, the education department and also the ministry of education itself.

Background Study

Among those affected by all forms of change in education is special education. As we all know, special education is an important branch of service in the education system in Malaysia. The special thing about this special education is that the students involved are students with special needs (MBK). This MBK consists of various categories of disabilities such as hearing problems, vision problems and learning problems (Norizan et al., 2013). With a high awareness of the importance of providing balanced educational rights to all children, special education and MBK are necessarily directly involved (Nelson et al., 2014). The rapid changes that are happening to the world as well as special education also require some changes for special education. The changes that need to be done are aimed at providing the best service in the delivery of education to MBK. Recognizing that this special education is very important to pay attention to, then the researcher took the initiative to find out what exactly the changes needed by this special education. Through general reading, the researcher found that, there are some relatively critical problems that are necessary to change such as learning content for MBK. The content or syllabus in this learning is seen as too mainstream so that MBK is burdened to master it. This situation is more worrying when only certain subjects are adapted to special education, while other subjects have to follow as other normal students (Muyan & Ramli, 2017). Can be seen clearly for MBK hearing problems where they have to learn all the things learned by normal students while their hearing and speech is limited (Junaidah & Nik Rusila, 2013). Of course this needs to be fixed wisely. This is to provide justice for MBK in the process of seeking knowledge.

Literature Review

There are studies conducted related to the issue of change in special education. Most studies mention that, education in general and special education in particular need a mechanism that is always dynamic in keeping with the currents of global change. Special education, which is more focused on ability as well as self-reliance and self-training, certainly has various complications that need to be addressed (Johan, 2012). Among the changes that need to be done is in terms of MBK learning content that focuses more on skills and self-reliance (John Anderson, 2017). These skills are more important to focus on than academically related matters (Norazmi et al., 2020). It is this need that makes the MBK learning syllabus especially hearing problems need to be given attention (Zaid et al., 2021).

In addition to changes to the subject syllabus, assessment and evaluation methods also need to be re-examined so that it is fair to all (Amalina & Azita, 2016). Changes to this method of assessment will also help in a more meaningful assessment right and to avoid bias (Awang & Hasani, 2016). These conditions and changes are very necessary because of the enlargement of ability, the level of mental acceptance is very different between MBK and normal pupils (Baharuzaini et al., 2016). Next are changes related to the placement of students in a class (Habib & Zaimah, 2012). Classroom conditions that place MBKs that are not in the same ability category will result in less effective class control as well as insignificant knowledge delivery (Fauziyana et al., 2020). Changes need to be made by assigning students of the same category to be placed in the same class (Zaid et al., 2020). Nevertheless, among the very important changes are changes related to the management and leadership of special education itself (Norazmi et al., 2019).

Special Education Unique Leadership Theory

In maintaining the success of the special education program, the welfare of teachers and SNS needs to be taken into account (Norazmi, 2020). Therefore, the basis for this theory of leadership is based on leadership those focuses on:

23. The Welfare of Special Education Teachers

ii. Achievement of Special Education Students

To achieve this, leadership needs to control the task load of teachers and inculcate teachers' job satisfaction, so that SNS achievement can be enhanced. As a result, school administrators need to have five uniqueness in their leadership:

23. First Unique: Unique Leadership Style

In leading a school organization or program involving special education, a school leader must have uniqueness in their leadership. This means that the style of leadership practiced should be consistent with the guidelines for the implementation of the work and scope of the special education teacher's duties. In addition, their leadership must also be special in considering the needs of the SNS. In other words, the practice of leadership needs to be consistent with the acceptance of special education teachers and students. In order to make the leadership relevant, it is sometimes necessary to emphasize things that involve teacher work performance and student achievement. This unique leadership style is at the center of the autocratic and democratic leadership styles.

ii. Second Unique: Unique Knowledge

Knowledge of leadership is very important in managing special education. The uniqueness of this knowledge is that their knowledge must be meticulously as bottom up process. School leaders need to have knowledge of basic education fundamentals such as policies, scope rules and so on. Then, knowledge also needs to be satisfied regarding each of the features of SNS and their capabilities. This knowledge of SNS is important to prevent school leaders from setting goals beyond their SNS capabilities. After that, the knowledge of special education teachers should be taken into consideration. Their basic background, their service, their way of working, their commitment to the school and so on. On the top level, knowledge about leadership is needed in deciding what kind of leadership needs to be implemented.

iii. Third Unique: Unique Attitude

In addition to leadership styles and knowledge, school leaders also needs to have a unique attitude toward leading special education. Attitudes are concerned, empathy, love and more are at the discretion of deciding something for teachers and SNS.

iv. Fourth Unique: Unique Experience

The experience of managing special education is a unique and meaningful journey. In order to succeed in effective leadership, a leader leading a special education program needs to have direct experience with special education. This means that the leader must be in the special education program, in the special education teacher

condition and in the SNS abilities. Keep in touch with them, hear them, experience the learning process with special education teachers and SNS. Gain experience by engaging in activities with a special education community at school or outside of school.

v. Fifth Unique: Unique Qualification

In order to become a leader who is qualified to lead a special education 5213rogram, one must place themselves at the ready with the hustle and bustle of special education. Not only academic requirements, but management qualifications, community engagement, always wanting to find special education related knowledge, ready to serve special education and always bear the responsibility of special education.

The theory introduced is in support of existing leadership theories and adapted to the situation in special education. In line with the findings of this study and previous studies, this theory is an attempt to make special education more consistently through competitive and responsible leadership. It is hoped that this theory will help the school leadership to implement leadership focused on special education.

Methodology

The study to be conducted is a descriptive survey study that uses a quantitative approach. The guided questionnaire was constructed by setting five types of constraints as found through literature review. The survey was conducted online and distributed randomly to special education teachers and student management assistants (PPM) in the Batu Pahat district of Johor, Malaysia. The data were then analyzed using SPSS. A total of 52 respondents were willing to provide feedback to the online survey conducted.

Findings

Based on the analysis conducted, there are 11 items that have received the attention of respondents consisting of special education teachers in the district of Batu Pahat, Johor, Malaysia, namely Syllabus/Curriculum, Age Cohort in Class, Separate Students by Category of Disability, Assessment and Evaluation, Time Allocation for each subject, Teacher Appointment, Administrator Line Appointment, Allocation Management, Administrative System, Committee Division and Others. The following is the number of respondents who provided feedback according to relevant matters and the percentage represented as in Table 1.

Table 1: Number of Respondents and Percentage of Things to Improve

No	Things to Improve	Total Feedback	Percentage (%)
1	Syllabus/Curriculum	35	67.3
2	Age Cohort in Class	15	28.8
3	Separate Pupils by Disability Category	26	50
4	Assessment and Evaluation	31	59.6
5	Time allocation for each subject	14	26.9
6	Appointment of Teacher	16	30.8
7	Appointment of Administrators	16	30.8
8	Allocation Management	10	19.2
9	Administrative system	18	34.6
10	Division of Committee	6	11.5
11	Others	12	23.1

Based on Table 1, the syllabus/curriculum recorded 35 responses representing 67.3% of the total feedback. While the age cohort in the class recorded 15 responses representing 28.8%, segregate students according to disability category (26 = 50%), assessment and evaluation (31 = 59.6%), time allocation per subject (14 = 26.9%), teacher appointment (16 = 30.8%), administrative training (16 = 30.8%), allocation management (10 = 19.2%), administrative system (18 = 34.6%), committee division (6 = 11.5%) and others recorded 12 responses representing 23.1% .

From the total feedback obtained, an order of attention can be formed based on the percentage values recorded. This shows that, the syllabus/curriculum is at the top ranking with a record of 67.3%, followed by assessment and evaluation (59.6%), segregate students according to disability category (50%), administrative system (34.6%), teacher training and appointment of administrators share the position equivalent to 30.8%, age cohort in class (28.8%), time allocation for each subject (26.9%), others (23.1%), allocation management (19.2%) and committee division (11.5%), as shown in the Table 2.

Table 2: Things that need to be improved

No	Things to Improve	Total Feedback	Percentage (%)
1	Syllabus/Curriculum	35	67.3
2	Assessment and Evaluation	31	59.6
3	Separate Pupils by Disability Category	26	50
4	Administrative system	18	34.6
5	Appointment of Teacher	16	30.8
6	Appointment of Administrators	16	30.8
7	Age Cohort in Class	15	28.8
8	Time allocation for each subject	14	26.9
9	Others	12	23.1
10	Allocation Management	10	19.2
11	Division of Committee	6	11.5

Discussion

The findings of the study show that there are many things that can be considered for improvement in special education in Malaysia. Through these findings, updates to the syllabus or curriculum need to be given attention, because according to the respondents' opinion, the existing syllabus at this time seems to burden MBK in learning it. They suggested that the syllabus be restructured so that it is relevant to the needs of MBK such as skills and self-management. For hearing problems, the syllabus can be improved and adapted to the hearing of the subject as a whole. At this point, only four subjects are fitted, which are Malay, Malaysia Sign Language, English and Islamic Education. For subjects that do not have adaptations, a normal syllabus like a normal student will be followed. This matter is very burdensome for students and teachers due to the hearing and speech restrictions from MBK. This continuity will also have an impact on the methods of evaluation and assessment. Assessment for MBK also needs to be adjusted because their ability with normal students is not equivalent.

Other matters such as age cohort and segregation of students by disability category are also seen as relevant for improvement, as teaching in classrooms with diverse MBKs will affect the quality of teachers' teaching and it is not focused. In addition, the appointment of teachers and the training of administrators also need to be improved by taking into account the appropriate professional qualifications.

Conclusion

The improvements noted in this study are only to provide a brief overview of the problems that occur in special education. Attention to 11 things that need to be improved is hoped to be able to provide the best service to MBK.

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