How Special Schooling For Disabled Kids Is Going In Malaysia: Progress And Problems

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Abstract

In recent times, there has been a growing recognition among various nations regarding the need of inclusivity and the active participation of those with disabilities in their endeavors to attain developmental objectives. One strategy that can be employed to foster inclusivity for children with disabilities is the provision of specialized educational opportunities. The delivery of primary and secondary education in Malaysia has a rich historical background inside the nation, including catering to students with diverse disabilities. This study aimed to examine the current condition and trajectory of educational provision for kids with special needs in Malaysia. This research employed three distinct qualitative research methodologies, including focus group talks, individual interviews, and a qualitative assessment of the existing literature. Despite the presence of certain positive advancements, such as the development of lesson plans tailored to primary school students with special needs and the implementation of early identification programs, several challenges remained that required identification and resolution. The aforementioned issues encompassed insufficiency in resources, early intervention initiatives, essential infrastructure, preparedness, and instructional materials. The need of involving several stakeholders in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of projects is emphasized by all of these factors.

Introduction

The term "special education" encompasses a range of key methods and services designed to support children with diverse disabilities, as well as those who have exceptional abilities or have experienced social exclusion. In contrast, the focus of this study pertains to the provision of education specifically designed to meet the needs of impaired children in Malaysia. Malaysia has made notable advancements in the domain of special education, namely in policy development, subsequent to its commitment to international obligations in this area (Lay & Hui, 2014: p. 54). These achievements can be observed in the realm of policy formulation. Nevertheless, the process of formulating regulations is merely the surface-level aspect of a much larger challenge. The crux of the matter is in determining the most optimal means of implementing these policies. The objective of this study is to enhance the researchers' comprehension of the present circumstances, the obstacles encountered, and the prospective remedies for augmenting inclusive educational chances for Malaysian children with impairments.

There are several different approaches that can be employed in order to achieve a desired outcome or solve a particular problem. These methods can vary

The researchers in this study employ three qualitative methodologies, namely interviews, focus group discussions, and qualitative systematic reviews. As part of a qualitative systematic review, a comprehensive examination was conducted on all journal papers pertaining to research on special needs education for children with disabilities in Malaysia, which were published in the Journal of Special Needs Education from Volume 1 in 2011 to Volume 3 in 2013. The purpose of this study was to facilitate the comparison and contrast of findings. The article of interest selected for this study is the Geographica OnlineTM Malaysian article of Society and Space, volume 12, number 10 (78-87), page 79, 2016, ISSN 2180-2491, as it specifically addresses the topic of special education in Malaysia. Researchers and scholars in the field of special education in Malaysia may find this publication to be a valuable resource, facilitating their evaluation of the corpus of material on this topic.

The objective of the discussion group, comprising a total of five individuals, is to ascertain the barriers impeding the greater inclusion of individuals with disabilities within the educational system, and to propose potential strategies for surmounting those barriers. The focus group is comprised of individuals who possess academic backgrounds and representatives from diverse organizations dedicated to enhancing the well-being of those with disabilities. The individuals who took part in the study were chosen through the utilization of a technique known as intentional sampling. The perspectives of these individuals are crucial in providing an accurate portrayal of the realities of the local special education system. The discourse inside the focus group yielded valuable feedback that will prove beneficial to researchers in their efforts to structure ideas for advocacy.

Following the conclusion of the events, an individual holding a prominent position within the Special Education Division of a Federal Territory was subjected to an interrogation. The participant for this specific survey was also chosen by a technique known as deliberate sampling. It is widely believed among researchers that engaging in dialogue with a senior official within the Special Education Division is crucial in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the present condition of the local special education sector. Additionally, such interactions offer valuable opportunities to explore other viewpoints on the subject, particularly from the standpoint of an individual responsible for implementing policies. Researchers are motivated to

acquire a more comprehensive comprehension of the present condition of the regional special education industry. Researchers investigating this subject can effectively utilize the insights obtained from the interview and the focus group discussion as evidence-based lobbying techniques.

Conduct a thorough examination of the published literature.

The significance of education is of utmost importance, encompassing both individual and societal dimensions. Education is presently seen as a crucial element not alone for an individual's cognitive and personal development, but also for their vocational pursuits. The role of education in the lives of individuals with disabilities is of great importance as it facilitates the development of essential skills such as reading, writing, English communication, employment seeking, and active participation in familial decision-making processes (Singal, Salifu, Iddrisu, Casely-Hayford, & Lundebye, 2015, p. 919). Furthermore, the significance of education lies in its ability to facilitate personal improvement through fostering respect, enhancing awareness of one's rights, and cultivating interpersonal aptitude (Singal et al., 2015, p. 920). Vulliamy and Webb (1993) assert that the focus of study in the field of special education has shifted from disciplinary research to pedagogic research within the academic domain.

In the context of human rights, a compelling argument may be made asserting that every individual, irrespective of their circumstances or social context, inherently possesses an inalienable entitlement to access education. When examining the fundamental aspect of education pertaining to rights, it is imperative to thoroughly examine not only the methods of providing and guaranteeing children's access to schooling, but also the role of education in facilitating the holistic development of each individual child (Quennerstedt and Quennerstedt, 2014, p. 116). The provision and guarantee of children's access to education is but one facet of the fundamental rights component of the educational sphere. Quennerstedt and Quennerstedt (2014, p. 117) assert that the Convention on the Rights of the Child plays a pivotal role in establishing a shared agreement. The authors propose that the existing body of research on children's rights in education is predominantly grounded in rudimentary theoretical frameworks. They underscore the imperative of using more sophisticated theoretical frameworks to supplant these rudimentary ones. Furthermore, it is contended by the authors that prior investigations pertaining to the rights of children in the realm of education have predominantly relied on rudimentary theoretical frameworks.

Quennerstedt and Quennerstedt (2014) put out a proposition to elevate the examination of children's rights to a more theoretical and critical realm. Their proposal entails the integration of insights derived from the domain of childhood sociology with John Dewey's educational philosophy, thereby establishing a comprehensive theoretical framework. This action was undertaken with the intention of advancing the scholarly exploration of children's rights to a more elevated standard. The framework presented in this study challenges the concept that children are inherently categorized as either "being" or "becoming." It posits that education is an ongoing process that extends throughout an individual's journey to adulthood. Furthermore, this framework places children's rights at the forefront of analytical frameworks.

Terzi (2014) posits that the attainment of inclusion within the education sector for children with disabilities necessitates the recognition of inclusive education as a mechanism for promoting educational equity, parity in capabilities, fairness, and the overall welfare of these children. The implementation of this measure is necessary to effectively realize the objective of attaining

inclusivity within the realm of education for children with disabilities. Modifying programs for special education is crucial in order to achieve the goals of inclusive education practice and meet the demand for financial integration between special education and general education. The division of attention towards mainstreaming educational inclusion for disabled children might arise due to the presence of several educational provisions, including special schools and inclusive schools (Al-Obaidi & Budosan, 2011; p. 38). Special schools and inclusive schools are two distinct forms of educational provision designed to cater to the needs of disabled students. In order to ensure the inclusive participation of children with disabilities in society, it is imperative to develop and provide a comprehensive array of interrelated and integrated services and activities. Based on the scholarly publication in Geografia OnlineTM Malaysian Journal of Society and Space, namely in Volume 12, Issue 10, pages 78-87, in the year 2016, as shown by the ISSN 2180-2491, the aforementioned statement holds true. Highlighted in this context are many efforts, including those aimed at the professional growth of teachers, programs focused on early childhood development, community-based rehabilitation programs, inclusive education programs, and interventions designed to support children with mental health difficulties. The relevant section can be found in Al-Obaidi and Budosan's (2011) article, namely on pages 39-41.

Despite the existence of regional and international mechanisms such as ASEAN statements and UN accords, the achievement of universally accessible education for children with disabilities remains a significant challenge, particularly in developing countries like Malaysia. This phenomenon is particularly evident inside the school system of Malaysia. Adnan and Hafiz (2001) assert that several factors, such as discriminatory policies, divergent interpretations of impairment across different agencies, and misinterpretations of educational ideologies pertaining to children with disabilities, collectively contribute to an adverse educational milieu for these individuals. In conflict-affected nations such as Afghanistan, societal norms and beliefs regarding individuals with disabilities, particularly females, along with prevailing apprehension, persistent armed conflicts, and economic deprivation collectively hinder the ability of disabled children to obtain inclusive education (Trani, Bakhshi, & Nandipati, 2012; p. 347). The findings presented in this statement are derived from a study conducted by Trani, Bakhshi, and Nandipati. National programs, action plans, and educational systems can be subject to the effect of macro-level factors, including international and regional instruments and tactics. The reason for this phenomenon is because macro-level factors can have influence on the micro-level of implementation. Hence, instead of being regarded merely as a decorative item, it is imperative to effectively adapt global and regional tools and policies to the specific circumstances of the local setting. It is imperative to undertake this action in order to mitigate the occurrence of such perception.

Currently, the education system in Malaysia is encountering various obstacles in providing enough support and services for kids with special needs.

A total of six significant concepts emerged from the interview and subsequent deliberations with the focus group. Several problems must be addressed in order to effectively support children with learning disabilities. These challenges encompass issues related to accessibility, readiness, availability of resources, early intervention programs, and the establishment of fair and widely accepted assessments for this population. Furthermore, there exists a deficiency in the availability of pertinent teaching materials. The subsequent sections will include a thorough analysis and examination of each of these concepts.

The topic of discussion pertains to the components of infrastructure (A).

In relation to the physical environment, the primary challenges that impede the provision of special education are the absence of specialized equipment and structural barriers. There is a need for an increase in the number of schools that possess features accommodating those with disabilities, including those with physical impairments. The broad and mandatory use of universal design principles in all educational facilities, irrespective of their ownership (public or private), is necessary. Due to the persisting gaps within the technological and assistive device domain, disabled children and adolescents continue to encounter barriers preventing them from effectively utilizing these resources to enhance their scholastic endeavors. The utilization of assistive technology among individuals with impairments has great importance, as it significantly contributes to their educational attainment and various facets of their daily existence, encompassing employment and social interactions. Consequently, it is imperative for the government to ensure the widespread availability of assistive technology in classrooms throughout all schools accommodating students with special needs.

The task has been completed and finalized.

The participants in the study identified various obstacles pertaining to preparedness, including the presence of stigma and stereotyping, a deficiency in comprehension or conceptualization of disability, diminished motivation among students with disabilities, inequitable opportunities for enrollment in university courses and engagement in activities, and inadequacies in support systems within the education sector. Furthermore, the participants observed a dearth of support mechanisms within the school sector. These perplexing situations serve as a thought-provoking reminder that it is imperative to address the perceptual and attitudinal barriers encountered by educators, administrators, politicians, and individuals with disabilities. The potential hindrance of our endeavors to enhance inclusivity for individuals with disabilities within the local school system may arise if the unresolved dispute regarding preparedness is not promptly addressed.

One of the foremost issues now confronting the Malaysian educational system for pupils with special needs pertains to a pronounced scarcity of resources.

Several issues related to resources can be identified. These include inadequate financial allocation, limited availability of translators and fluent sign language teachers, and inconsistency in the teaching approaches employed for students with hearing impairments. The effective cultivation and administration of human resources is crucial for addressing the aforementioned difficulties and mobilizing sufficient resources to achieve the goal of inclusion. In order to facilitate the provision, advancement, and investigation of inclusive education, it is crucial to incorporate precise financial allocations within the framework of the national budget.

a. Inadequacy of the existing pedagogical resources

Furthermore, concerns have arisen regarding the restricted accessibility of instructional resources. The challenges encompassing the education of deaf students include a demanding academic program, inadequate instructor training, insufficient teacher training, and limited resources for educators. One issue that arises is the lack of requisite conceptual knowledge of disability among teacher-training programs. The issue pertaining to the availability of resources is intricately linked to the aforementioned challenges that were previously delineated. The

formulation and implementation of a comprehensive strategy is important in order to effectively address and surmount these challenges.

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