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Literature Review: Teacher Strategies for Managing Behavior and Enhancing Social Interaction Among Children with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) in Inclusive Elementary School Settings

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Abstract

This study examines the behavior of children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) within inclusive primary school settings, as well as the strategies teachers can employ to manage such behavior effectively. Although the government has emphasized the importance of inclusive education through Regulation of the Minister of National Education (Permendiknas) Number 70 of 2009, its practical implementation faces numerous obstacles particularly regarding students with ADHD, who often struggle with concentration, act impulsively, and exhibit high activity levels. Key challenges stem from limited teacher training, a shortage of support staff, and a lack of social acceptance from peers. Research indicates that teachers who understand the characteristics of children with ADHD and implement appropriate instructional strategies such as individualized approaches, positive reinforcement, and activity-based learning methods can help improve student concentration and reduce impulsive behavior. Through this literature review, it is hoped that teachers and aspiring educators will gain a deeper understanding of the importance of creating a welcoming, adaptive, and inclusive learning environment to support the optimal development of children with ADHD in primary schools.

Keywords: behavior management, teacher strategies, social interaction, instructional strategies, and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

1. Introduction

Inclusive education in Indonesia continues to evolve as part of a commitment to providing equal learning opportunities for all children, including those with special needs. The government has underscored the importance of inclusive education through Regulation of the Minister of National Education (Permendiknas) Number 70 of 2009, which governs educational services for students with disabilities or exceptional intellectual potential. However, in practice, the implementation of inclusive education still faces various challenges, particularly in accommodating the needs of children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Children with ADHD represent one of the groups of children with special needs most frequently encountered in primary schools. They exhibit distinct characteristics, such as difficulty sustaining attention, impulsive behavior, and high activity levels. These conditions often create obstacles in the learning process and in establishing social relationships within the school environment. According to Fitriyani, Oktaviani, and Supena (2023), children with ADHD display inadequate social behaviors and often struggle to adapt to their surroundings.

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Their inability to control impulses and maintain focus during lessons can lead to minor classroom disruptions, such as speaking without permission or having difficulty following the teacher's instructions.

In the context of inclusive primary schools in Indonesia, the challenges faced stem not only from the children's characteristics but also from the readiness of the learning environment. Research by Ningrum and Rusmawan (2023) indicates that many teachers still encounter difficulties when dealing with students with ADHD, primarily due to a lack of specialized training and a shortage of support teachers. This impacts the teachers' ability to implement appropriate teaching strategies and manage the children's behavior in the classroom.

2. Method

The method employed for this study is the Systematic Literature Review (SLR). A systematic literature review is the process of systematically and critically collecting, evaluating, integrating, and presenting search results. This study follows the procedures outlined in the steps below..

2.1. Formulating Research Questions

This study addresses the following two questions:

a. What forms of behavior do children with ADHD exhibit in inclusive elementary school settings?

b. What strategies do teachers use to manage behavior and enhance social interaction for children with ADHD in inclusive classrooms?

2.1.1. Seeking references (studies)

The literature search for this study utilized various indexed international journal articles. The keywords used for the search were: behavior management, teacher strategies, social interaction, learning strategies, and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

2.1.1.1. Selecting references

The author comprehends the abstracts and identifies the connections between the variables or issues and the research keywords. Relevant journal articles can be examined in greater depth to address the research questions. The following is an inventory of the articles used in this Systematic Literature Review.

2.1.1.2. Extracting data

Using a form to filter and record points of interest and essential information derived from the research

2.1.1.3. Analyzing and presenting results

After cataloging the articles, the author analyzes the obtained data, summarizing and categorizing it according to the research questions.

Based on the first research question regarding the forms of behavior demonstrated by children with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in inclusive elementary school settings, several studies have been reviewed. Susanti (2017),

through the study entitled *Metode Social Story untuk Meningkatkan Interaksi Sosial Siswa Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) di Kelas Inklusi SD Negeri Karanganyar Yogyakarta*, examined the use of the Social Story method to improve social interaction among students with ADHD in inclusive classrooms. Fitriyani et al. (2023), in the study *Analisis Kemampuan Kognitif dan Perilaku Sosial pada Anak ADHD (Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)*, analyzed cognitive abilities and social behavior in children with ADHD. Umiati (2024), through the research entitled *Bimbingan Sosial untuk Mengembangkan Interaksi Sosial Siswa Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) di SD Quail Mayyitah Purwokerto*, discussed social guidance as an approach to developing social interaction skills among students with ADHD. Nuraini and Harsiwari (2024), in the study *Kendala Guru Kelas dalam Menangani Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus dengan ADHD di SDN Banjarsari 2*, identified the challenges experienced by classroom teachers in handling students with ADHD. Furthermore, Kurniawan (2025), through the study *Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) pada Anak*, discussed the characteristics and behavioral issues associated with ADHD in children.

Regarding the second research question, which focuses on teachers' strategies in managing behavior and improving social interaction among children with ADHD in inclusive classrooms, several studies have highlighted various intervention approaches. Susanti (2017) described the implementation of the Social Story method as a strategy to improve social interaction among students with ADHD in inclusive elementary schools. Hurniyah and Zubaidah (2023), through the study *Terapi Modifikasi Perilaku untuk Menurunkan Impulsivitas dan Hiperaktivitas pada Anak dengan ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)*, examined behavior modification therapy as an approach to reducing impulsivity and hyperactivity in children with ADHD. Satria et al. (2024), in the study *Studi Literatur Mengenai Anak Usia Sekolah Dasar dengan ADHD: Perspektif Neuropsikologi*, reviewed ADHD characteristics among elementary school-aged children from a neuropsychological perspective. Ermawati and Diana (2025), through the research *Implementasi Terapi Behavior terhadap Perilaku Hiperaktif Anak Usia Dini*, discussed the implementation of behavioral therapy in addressing hyperactive behavior among young children. Suryi and Saptajaya (2024), in the study *Perancangan Ruang Kelas Bagi Anak Usia Sekolah dengan Penyandang Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder*, explored classroom environment design as a supporting factor for children with ADHD in educational settings.

Overall, the reviewed literature indicates that children with ADHD in inclusive elementary school settings commonly experience challenges related to social interaction, cognitive abilities, impulsivity, hyperactivity, and adaptation to the learning environment. Various strategies have been implemented by educators and researchers, including Social Story methods, behavior modification therapy, behavioral therapy, and classroom environment adjustments to support the social and academic development of children with ADHD.

2.1.1.4. Interpreting results

Incorporating answers based on the analysis and categorization of the research questions, and synthesizing them into paragraphs

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Result

Social interaction issues are not limited to children in regular schools; they frequently occur among children with special needs, specifically those with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) (Erlia, 2017). According to Sugiarmin, ADHD is commonly found in preschool-aged and school-aged children. Signs or symptoms of ADHD can be identified before a child reaches the age of seven, typically manifesting across various environments and situations such as home, school, playgrounds, and other locations (Ratrie, 2007: 49). The symptoms associated with ADHD are long-term, characterized primarily by difficulty focusing, poor self-control, and hyperactive behavior (Wijaya & Kurniawan, 2025). Children with ADHD meet three diagnostic criteria: attention deficits, impulsivity, and hyperactivity. Citing the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-IV) published by the American Psychiatric Association (1994), Marlina (2007: 12) notes that children with ADHD exhibit behavioral characteristics such as difficulty maintaining attention during tasks or play, problems engaging in play or extracurricular activities, a failure to attend to details, and a tendency to act carelessly or make errors in schoolwork; they also struggle to follow instructions and fail to complete school assignments. Children with ADHD have very limited concentration abilities, which hinders their capacity to process information from their environment (Surya & Suteja, 2024).

3.2 Discussion

Based on observations by Nur'aini & Harsiwi (2024) regarding a student with special needs named Rafa at SDN Banyuajuh 2, these primary symptoms were clearly evident manifesting as an inability to maintain focus, excessive motor activity, and communication difficulties. Furthermore, Rafa's struggles with social interaction and expressing opinions align with previous research by Yuliati (2022) and Mikami (2022), which indicates that children with ADHD frequently face challenges regarding communication and social skills. Observations by Susanti (2017) also revealed emotional instability in children with ADHD when disturbed by peers; behaviors included outbursts of anger, crying, and frequent shouting in the classroom. The subject was able to express feelings through facial expressions and behaviors such as laughing and jumping around when happy, or showing anger when their wishes were not met.

The observed behaviors tended to lean toward a preference for solitude and impulsivity, alongside an inability to join in with peers at school. The involvement of parents, teachers, and the surrounding environment serves as a support system, enabling the child to continuously improve upon their shortcomings, particularly regarding social behavior (Fitriyani et al., 2023).

Teachers can employ several approaches as strategies to manage behavior and enhance social interaction for children with ADHD in inclusive classrooms (Surya & Suteja, 2024): a.)

Behavioral Approach: A method focusing on modifying the physical and social environment to alter behavior. In this approach, interventions are administered to the child with ADHD as part of treatment to reinforce positive behaviors. Success requires understanding not only from the teacher but also from the parents, allowing both parties to support the child's skill development. b.) Pharmacological Method: The most common method for treating children with ADHD. Medications used include psychostimulants, antidepressants, anti-anxiety drugs, antipsychotics, and mood-stabilizing agents. Non-stimulant medications prescribed to children with ADHD include antidepressants, anti-anxiety drugs, antipsychotics, and mood-regulating drugs, whereas stimulant-based treatments involve the use of methylphenidate, dextroamphetamine, and pemoline. In this context, the approach to medication use does not differ significantly from behavioral or multimodal approaches (Surya & Suteja, 2024). In 2003, a new medication for ADHD atomoxetine, better known as Strattera was introduced for use by both children and adults (Wahidah, 2018).

The "social story" strategy implemented by Susanti (2017) with ADHD subjects at Karanganyar Public Elementary School helped address social interaction and behavioral issues; this method conveys social cues through descriptive sentences (depicting social situations), perspective sentences (describing the internal states of story characters), and directive sentences (explaining appropriate responses).

Behavior modification therapy as observed by Humaiya and Zulaikha (2023) can also serve as a strategy for teachers managing ADHD behaviors; this involves multimodal management, comprising pharmacotherapy, behavioral therapy, or a combination of both.

Parents can deepen their understanding of ADHD, collaborate with schools regarding their child's specific needs, establish consistent routines and time management practices at home, and provide positive reinforcement whenever the child successfully completes a task or behaves as expected (Sadida, 2024).

4. Conclusion

This literature review indicates that children with ADHD generally exhibit similar behaviors, specifically difficulty maintaining focus and adapting to their surroundings. These behaviors manifest as excessive movement, outbursts of anger, shouting, crying, communication difficulties, and social withdrawal. Children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) typically face challenges in maintaining focus, exercising self-control, and managing hyperactive tendencies. This condition can impact their ability to interact socially, communicate, and adjust to both school and home environments. Consequently, the roles of teachers, parents, and the surrounding community are crucial in providing a primary support system for these children. Various approaches can be employed to assist them, including behavioral strategies, medication, combined therapies, and "social story" methods that help children understand social situations and develop self-control. Effective collaboration between teachers and parents is key to ensuring that interventions are implemented consistently and yield positive outcomes for the social, emotional, and academic development of children with ADHD.

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