

Inclusive Buddy System: Pelibatan Anak Tipikal untuk Mendukung Keterampilan Sosial Anak dengan Autism Spectrum Disorder

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Abstrak

Perkembangan keterampilan sosial pada anak usia dini merupakan dasar penting dalam membangun interaksi adaptif di kelas inklusif. Namun, anak dengan *Autism Spectrum Disorder* (ASD) sering mengalami hambatan dalam komunikasi dan relasi sosial dengan teman sebaya, sehingga membutuhkan dukungan yang terstruktur. Praktik *buddy system* di KB TK Al-Azhar 67 Kota Blitar masih cenderung berorientasi pada pengurangan beban guru. Penelitian ini bertujuan memahami bagaimana pelibatan anak tipikal secara partisipatif dalam membentuk *buddy system* untuk mendukung keterampilan sosial anak ASD di kelas inklusif. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan *Participatory Action Research* (PAR) dengan satu siklus awal yang melibatkan empat anak tipikal usia 5–7 tahun. Data dikumpulkan melalui diskusi dengan pendekatan *Mosaic Approach*, *role play*, observasi, dan dokumentasi yang dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa pembentukan *buddy system* berkembang melalui pengalaman interaksi langsung dan partisipatif di kelas. Anak tipikal usia dini memahami peran *buddy* dari hubungan nyata bersama anak dengan ASD di kelas, bukan dari konsep teoritis. Penggunaan *reward* stiker bintang berperan sebagai pemicu awal munculnya interaksi. Seiring berjalannya waktu, keterlibatan anak tipikal usia dini tidak lagi semata-mata didorong oleh *reward*, sehingga inklusivitas kelas terbentuk melalui praktik interaksi sehari-hari dengan Guru Pendamping Khusus sebagai pendamping yang mendukung proses tersebut.

Kata Kunci: *buddy system, Participatory Action Research, anak tipikal, kelas inklusif*

Abstract

The development of social skills in early childhood is an important foundation for building adaptive interactions in inclusive classrooms. However, children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) often experience difficulties in communication and peer relationships, thus requiring structured support. The implementation of the buddy system at KB TK Al-Azhar 67 Blitar City has tended to focus on reducing the teacher's workload. This study aims to understand how the participatory involvement of typically developing children can contribute to the formation of a buddy system that supports the social interaction of children with ASD in an inclusive classroom. The study employed a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach with one initial cycle involving four typically developing children aged 5–7 years. Data were collected through discussions using the Mosaic Approach, role play, observation, and documentation, and were analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings indicate that the development of the buddy system emerged through direct and participatory interaction experiences in the classroom. Typically developing children came to understand the role of a buddy through real interactions with children with ASD rather than through abstract or theoretical explanations. The use of star stickers as rewards functioned as an initial trigger for interaction. Over time, children's participation was no longer solely driven by rewards, and inclusive classroom interactions gradually developed through everyday social practices with Shadow Teacher as facilitators who supported this process.

Keywords: *buddy system, Participatory Action Research, typically developing children, inclusive classroom*