

The Dynamics of Resilience Kindergarten Teachers at Regular School X in Supporting Special Needs Children (ABK)

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Abstract

This study describes the dynamics of resilience among kindergarten teachers in regular school X who support children with special needs (ABK). It used a qualitative approach with a case study method, involving three teachers as participants. Data were collected through interviews and observations and analyzed using NVivo software. The research results show that teacher resilience is formed through three main components according to Grotberg (1995), namely I Have, I Am, and I Can, which are strengthened by seven aspects of resilience according to Reivich and Shatte (2002). The study has limitations regarding access to the internal scope of the school (support and policies from the foundation and access to official documents). These limitations impact the dominance of the analysis on the perceptions and experiences of the teachers. The findings contribute to the resilience of kindergarten teachers supporting children with special needs. Spirituality emerges as a significant source of strength in creating meaning for teachers in fulfilling their roles. They perceive their profession as a calling from God and a form of service, enabling them to endure and grow in facing the challenges of supporting children with special needs in regular schools.

Keywords: *resilience, kindergarten teachers, children with special needs, spirituality*

1. Introduction

Education is a learning process that can be experienced by individuals in various environments. These environments include families, schools, playgrounds, workplaces, and everyday life. The preamble of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia clearly states that the purpose of establishing the Republic of Indonesia is to promote the general welfare and educate the nation. This relates to government programs such as the 9-year Compulsory Education Program and every individual's right to receive education. Regular schools in Indonesia are formal educational institutions for children. They serve as learning places that implement the national curriculum as their approach. Most schools in Indonesia have not been designed to meet the special needs of students or certain developmental disorders. One of the regular education levels that is the subject of this research is kindergarten X, which currently has seven children with special needs (ABK) and three teachers to support both regular and special needs students.

Regular kindergartens are educational institutions for early childhood, aimed at providing initial educational experiences before entering the next level of education, which is elementary school. In Indonesia, regular kindergartens are regulated by the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 137 of 2014 regarding the National Standards for Early Childhood Education, which emphasizes the importance of enjoyable learning for children. Children have unique characters in their learning processes. Like other children, ABK also requires education to support their daily abilities. According to Cartwright (in Astuti, Sonhadji, Bafadal, & Soetopo, 2011), it is necessary to fulfill human rights in education by providing opportunities for children with special needs to receive an equal education without discrimination. In Indonesia, there are challenges in the educational field, and ABK often face discrimination (Wardani & Dwiningrum, 2021).

As students, ABK need a flexible and supportive learning environment to accommodate their unique needs. They require additional services in education because of physical, intellectual, emotional, or social limitations, or even a combination of these factors (Hallahan & Kauffman, 2003). For ABK, kindergarten is not only a place to prepare for further education but also helps them develop their abilities according to their needs and potential. ABK requires a more adaptive and individualized educational approach to support their development (Hallahan & Kauffman, 2003). According to Guralnick (2005), kindergarten can serve as an early intervention for children with special needs,

allowing the development of their cognitive and social abilities before progressing to elementary school (SD).

Education for children cannot be separated from discussions about individual development as learners. The role of the surrounding environment, including teachers and parents, is crucial for the continuity of early childhood education (Kristiana, 2015). Teachers play a role in the teaching and learning process as guides, facilitators, and mediators in creating an enjoyable and efficient learning process to build students' motivation in achieving their developmental goals. This research is significant because preliminary studies revealed that teachers at regular school X had not received special needs training from the foundation but were required to handle ABK, leading to self-assessment issues regarding their performance and the realization of the need for assistance in managing ABK.

The presence of ABK has motivated researchers to investigate how teachers can navigate their resilience. Related to Reilly's (2014) opinion that teachers carry burdens in their teaching, poor performance can negatively impact teachers' job satisfaction. This dissatisfaction adversely affects the motivation of the students they support. A poor working environment coupled with an ineffective teaching process can lead to stress for teachers. Additionally, the researcher noted the real situation at regular kindergarten X, which has only three teachers to support both regular and special needs students. The challenges faced by teachers in their work certainly require each individual's ability to bounce back in the face of challenges. This ability to withstand stress is referred to as resilience (Diah & Pradna, 2012).

Resilience generally refers to factors that limit negative behaviors associated with stress and outcomes faced in unfortunate or distressing situations (Waxman, Gray, & Padron, 2003). Resilience is closely linked to stress, as both are forms of inseparable constructs. Resilience can only be explained when negative pressure occurs. It manifests as a form of stress management in response to internal pressure. Resilience is the process by which an individual adapts to negative situations that can induce stress (Mahmood & Gahffar, 2014). Essentially, every individual has seeds of resilience. Many factors can influence the development of resilience in individuals; based on previous research titled "Factors Influencing Resilience" by Missasi and Izzati (2019), one of the resilience factors is self-esteem. Individuals with high self-esteem tend to have better socioemotional abilities. In line with the views of Burns and Covington (Owens, Stryker, & Goodman, 2006), the self-esteem possessed by individuals acts as a shield against the influences of distress and prevents various life problems. The researcher focused on resilience to examine the dynamics of kindergarten teachers at regular school X in supporting ABK. The seven aspects of resilience, according to Reivich and Shatte (2002), that measure individual resilience include emotional regulation, impulse control, optimism, causal analysis, empathy, self-efficacy, and achievement.

In a previous study titled, "Resilience in Inclusion School Teachers at the Preschool Level" (2020), it was found that the resilience of the two research subjects differed due to variations in personality and problem-solving methods. However, both subjects demonstrated responsible behavior as teachers. A compelling statement arose from one of the informants regarding their feelings upon first knowing that they would be assisting ABK, which was feeling pity for the ABK and empathizing with the burden of parents who wished for their child's immediate improvement.

The researcher conducted a preliminary study at Kindergarten (TK) X, which was the research location. The preliminary study data were obtained from three regular school teachers at TK X, identified by the initials YK, AK, and CC. YK has been a kindergarten teacher for 19 years, AK for more than 6 months, and CC for 9 years. The preliminary study was conducted using ten descriptive questions via a Google Form. Based on the results of the preliminary study, the following statements regarding the teachers' feelings upon knowing that they would be assisting ABK are presented:

"Very burdened, I really hope these children can gradually adapt to the demands of their surrounding environment, and that these children find a community that can accept and understand their needs so that they can enjoy their school environment." (Subject 1 – YK, September 30, 2024.)

"I feel happy because I feel that not everyone can understand children with special needs, so I am always happy so that my positive energy can be received by my students." (Subject 2: AK, September 30, 2024).

"My feeling is anxiety when I assist children with special needs, with one question: Am I capable of teaching children with special needs, children who have exceptionalities, whether physical, mental-intellectual, social, or emotional." (Subject 3, CC, September 30, 2024).

The researcher concluded that three teachers had different manifestations of feelings when assisting ABK. Some felt burdened, some were anxious about their own abilities, and others felt happy with their current situation. The motivation arising from the difficulties faced by each subject originated from a sense of responsibility, a gift from God, and the child itself:

"Because I feel it is my duty to be able to facilitate each of my students to achieve their best ability respectively." (Subject 1: YK, September 30, 2024).

"Because I feel I am a chosen person who has been gifted by God so that I can assist children with special needs." (Subject 2: AK, September 30, 2024).

"The thing that motivates me when facing difficulties in assisting students with special needs is the child itself." (Subject 3, CC, September 30, 2024).

Thus, it can be seen that each individual has different motivations when facing difficulties. Based on the preliminary study and related theory, the researcher conducted this research. The researcher believes that kindergarten teachers play a role in supporting the development of early childhood, including ABK. The process of assisting is certainly not easy, especially for regular schools, where the preliminary study results found that not all teachers had received adequate training or facilities. Kindergarten teachers are expected to demonstrate resilience against the challenges they face. Resilience can take the form of the ability to survive, adapt, and maintain effective teaching despite being under pressure, limited resources, or emotional demands. This study is considered important and interesting to conduct to provide greater insight into the needs of kindergarten teachers and develop efficient strategies for improving inclusive education in regular schools.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Regular Schools

Regular schools generally implement the national curriculum as the main reference framework, with the fundamental goal of preparing students for higher educational levels (Mulyasa, 2019). Regular schools are often the main choice for the Indonesian public because they are considered capable, affordable, and easily accessible compared to special or international schools (Suparlan, 2017). However, according to Tilaar (2016), education in Indonesia faces various serious challenges, especially in terms of equal access and the quality of education. Suryani (2021) explains that regular schools in urban areas tend to have better access to technology, more adequate learning support facilities, and qualified teaching staff compared to regular schools in rural areas, where insufficient classrooms, inadequate textbooks, and less competent teaching staff are often found. This gap creates a dilemma in the effort to uniformly educate the nation. The government is reducing this gap by initiating the Bantuan Operasional Sekolah (BOS) fund program and the school zoning system, which aim to ensure the equalization of access and quality of education (Kemendikbud, 2020). The research concludes that regular schools in Indonesia play a crucial role in providing education that is affordable and easily accessible to the community, despite facing significant challenges in terms of equal access and the quality of education, challenges which are bridged by the BOS funds and the school zoning system.

2.2 Inclusive Education in Regular Schools

Inclusive education is a globally mandated educational approach intended to provide equal learning opportunities for all students, including those with special needs. Its main philosophy, as asserted by Ainscow (2016), is to integrate students with special needs into regular classrooms so that they can adapt, learn alongside their peers, and participate fully without discrimination. The goal of inclusive education, according to Winarsih (2020), is to ensure that all children, including children with disabilities, receive equal education in the same environment as other children. Kusnandar (2018)

identified several key barriers: a lack of specialized training for regular teachers to manage ABK, the emergence of social stigma against ABK within the school environment and community, minimal teaching resources or teachers competent in educating students with diverse backgrounds, and a lack of adaptive facilities or learning aids. Furthermore, collaboration between schools, parents, and specific communities is vital to creating a comprehensive support ecosystem for students across various aspects of life (Winarsih, 2020).

When dealing with ABK, regular school teachers are required to possess new skills, namely, the ability to identify and accommodate the diverse learning needs of students (Zulfija, Indira, & Elmira, 2013). Myres (2014) outlines that teacher readiness in inclusive education encompasses several critical dimensions: the teacher's perception regarding the influence of inclusion on the learning strategies they implement, the level of acceptance and readiness to teach students with disabilities, continuous professional competency development for teaching students with disabilities, and effective collaborative relationships between regular teachers and special needs assistants or other professionals.

2.3 Resilience

Resilience is a positive psychological construct defined as an individual's ability to bounce back from setbacks, stress, trauma, or tragedy experienced (Ruswahyuningsih & Afiatin, 2015). This concept is also understood as the ability to adapt to the ever-changing demands of daily life (Connor & Davidson, 2003). Masten (2001) specifically refers to resilience as an individual's capacity to demonstrate positive and adaptive attitudes despite facing adversity, whereas Werner and Smith (1992) view it as a phenomenon in which individuals remain psychologically and socially healthy even when facing high-risk challenges. Resilience can guide individuals in overcoming stress or trauma, thus being interpreted as an individual's skill in handling frustration (Dewi & Melisa, 2004). Garmezy (1991) asserts that resilience is not a static, inherent trait but rather the result of a complex interaction between internal and external factors that continuously develops throughout life.

Individual resilience is supported by a series of internal and external factors. Internal factors of resilience include personality and cognitive elements, such as an optimistic and confident personality, an adequate level of emotional intelligence to manage feelings, and the individual's intrinsic motivation to develop, such as the desire for mastery and competence (Fredrickson, 2001; Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Deci & Ryan, 1985). One internal component strongly correlated with resilience is self-esteem. Individuals with high self-esteem possess better socio-emotional capabilities and a positive self-view, serving as a buffer against the effects of stress and preventing various life problems (Owens, Sheldon, & Norman, 2006). External factors include solid social support from family, friends, or colleagues, a stable, affectionate, and hopeful positive environment, and accessible resources, such as access to adequate education, health, and social facilities (Werner & Smith, 1992; Ungar, 2008; Masten, 2001).

Rutter (1987) mentions that resilience narrows the risk of negative consequences, prevents the emergence of negative relationships after traumatic events, helps individuals protect their self-esteem, and increases their opportunities for advancement and growth. To understand the structure of resilience, Grotberg (1995) developed the "Three Sources of Resilience" model which consists of three categories of declarative sentences that form an individual's psychological resources: I Have-refers to available external support, including home structure and rules, positive role models, and strong interpersonal relationships, I Am-refers to internal strengths and character dispositions, such as a sense of pride in oneself, having empathy or being altruistic, being independent, and being responsible, I Can-refers to the individual's social and interpersonal skills that are applicable, such as the ability to solve problems, control emotions, and communicate effectively. To analyze the dynamics of resilience more operationally, this study relies on the model developed by Reivich and Shatte (2002), which identifies seven specific skill aspects that constitute individual resilience, highly relevant in challenging work contexts such as those experienced by ABK teachers:

1. **Emotion Regulation:** The ability to remain calm and focused despite pressure or emotional turmoil. For teachers, this involves managing frustration or fatigue when facing challenging ABK behaviors.

2. **Impulse Control:** The ability to control internal desires, urges, and pressures. Strong impulse control allows teachers to respond to difficult situations wisely rather than reactively or emotionally.
3. **Optimism:** The tendency to view oneself as having a bright future and demonstrate confidence in overcoming adversity, even when work results are not yet clear in the ABK.
4. **Causality Analysis:** The ability to rationally identify the cause of a problem and avoid overly blaming oneself or others. In teaching ABK, this involves a functional analysis of student behavior to find the right solution, rather than simply reacting to symptoms.
5. **Empathy:** The ability to understand others' emotional and psychological states is vital for building good social relationships with students, parents, and colleagues. Empathy is the foundation for teachers to understand the ABK perspective.
6. **Self-Efficacy:** The individual's belief in their own ability to handle problems well, always strive, and not easily give up. Teacher self-efficacy is a strong predictor of persistence in implementing new teaching strategies.
7. **Reaching Out:** The individual's ability to achieve success and overcome problems by viewing problems as challenges for self-growth.

2.4 Children with Special Needs (ABK)

Children with special needs (ABK) experience limitations or exceptionalities, whether physical, mental-intellectual, social, or emotional, that significantly affect their growth and development compared to other children of the same age (Minister of Women Empowerment and Child Protection Regulation No. 10 of 2011, Article 1). Internationally, the World Health Organization (WHO) states that ABK are children with long-term limitations in physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory aspects that prevent them from fully participating in society and having a role equal to other children, while UNICEF highlights the importance of a fair, inclusive environment for ABK to reach their full potential, emphasizing the necessity of implementing inclusive education.

However, Suharsiwi (2017) notes that among teachers and the general public, the term ABK is not yet popular, and teachers often demand "sameness" between ABK and their age-appropriate peers, reflecting a lack of inclusive understanding. According to Wardani et al. (2014), ABK are children who, because of a disorder, require special assistance in education or learning so that they can optimally develop their potential. The Ministry of Women Empowerment & Child Protection of the Republic of Indonesia (2013) categorizes ABK into various types, including children with visual, hearing, intellectual, physical, and social disabilities; children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); autism spectrum disorder (ASD); multiple disorders; slow learners; specific learning disabilities; communication disorders; and children with exceptional talents. The diversity of these categories demands that teachers in regular schools become experts in curriculum adaptation and teaching strategies, a challenge that greatly tests the limits of their professional resilience.

The researcher concludes that ABK refers to children who experience limitations or exceptionalities in physical, mental, intellectual, social, or emotional aspects, requiring special attention in their education and development. ABK comprises various categories, including those with disorders below the normal range, such as the visually and hearing impaired, and those with exceptionalities above the normal range, such as gifted children.

2.5 Kindergarten Teachers

Teachers not only act as educators but also as facilitators, motivators, and role models for children in shaping their personalities (Rusdinal & Elizar, 2005). Hidayat (2017) states that kindergarten teachers create a learning environment that is safe, comfortable, enjoyable, and supports children's holistic development. The main task of kindergarten teachers is to teach basic skills (such as reading, writing, and arithmetic—*calistung*) that are adjusted to early childhood development, such as the ability to cooperate, communicate, and share with peers (Nugraheni, 2018). Kindergarten teachers are expected to provide an approach that is suitable for the needs of every child, including ABK. According to Wahyuni (2019), the main challenge faced by teachers when assisting ABK is creating an environment that can support ABK to learn and interact with their peers.

3. Methodology

This study used a qualitative approach to explore and understand social and psychological phenomena in depth and contextually (Narbuko & Ahmadi, 2003). The qualitative method was chosen because its goal is not to measure or generalize, but rather to explain a specific situation or event experienced by the subjects, namely the dynamics of teacher resilience, and to attempt to present problem-solving tailored to the collected data. The research design used was a case study. Creswell (1998) defines the case study approach as a process in which the researcher will spend more time fully describing the context or setting of a case. This approach allowed the researcher to intensively explore a single case in the regular kindergarten School X. The in-depth data collection involved various rich information sources within a context, aiming to gain a holistic understanding of the resilience dynamics of regular kindergarten teachers at School X amidst the challenges of accompanying ABK.

This research was conducted at Kindergarten X (TK X) in Bali. The selection of this location is relevant because TK X is a regular school actively involved in accompanying ABK but faces resource limitations, thus creating a natural setting for an in-depth look at the dynamics of teacher resilience. The research execution period is planned from September 2024 to July 2025, covering all research stages, starting from initial manuscript preparation, field data collection, data analysis, to final manuscript preparation. The subjects in this study are three kindergarten teachers at regular School X who regularly accompany ABK in the classroom learning process. Subject selection used the saturated sampling technique. This technique is a procedure in which the researcher considers the entire population as the sample (Sugiyono, 2019). This technique was applied because the population of teachers at TK X who accompany ABK is very small, ensuring that no subject's perspective is missed. In addition to the three teachers as primary subjects (YK, AK, and CC), the researcher also interviewed the school principal to obtain an additional data source (key informant) as part of the triangulation process. The interview with the principal aimed to obtain an institutional view on school policies, the support system provided to teachers, and the school's perspective as a regular institution managing ABK.

The primary data collection method used was in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews were chosen because they can freely, detailed, and *in-situ* explore information regarding the subjects' subjective experiences, views, and personal resilience dynamics, which are difficult to measure through structured questionnaires (Sugiyono, 2019). Interviews will be conducted using a semi-structured guide, where the researcher has a list of main guiding questions but remains flexible to follow the flow of the conversation and explore the subjects' responses further. The interview focuses on the subjects' experiences in accompanying the CSN, the challenges faced, the coping strategies applied, as well as self-reflection related to the seven aspects of resilience by Reivich and Shatte (2002)—emotional regulation, impulse control, optimism, causal analysis, empathy, self-efficacy, and reaching out. The tools used during the interview include a voice recorder to ensure the accuracy of verbal data transcription and field notes to document non-verbal observations, context, and important impressions.

The researcher performed the analysis and interpretation phases of the case study data by providing detailed descriptions of the case and its setting (Creswell, 1998). The data analysis steps are verbatim transcription, data organization, category formation and coding, in-depth interpretation and pattern matching, and case report synthesis. To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, which is a key quality criterion for qualitative research, the researcher applied several techniques. First, the researcher performed epoché, which involves strict self-reflection to identify personal assumptions and perspectives during the research process, striving to understand the phenomenon purely and free from bias (Kahija, 2017). Second, the researcher conducted a member check by providing the analyzed interview transcript results to the research subjects, who were then asked to sign the transcript as proof of agreement that the data interpreted by the researcher accurately represented the subjects' views. Third, the researcher will perform data source triangulation by interviewing the school principal to gain an institutional perspective on the school system and its role as a regular institution accompanying ABK, ensuring that the findings do not rely on a single source. Fourth, to maintain rapport and test initial findings, the researcher will continue to establish interaction and prolonged engagement with the three subjects throughout the research period.

Conducting research requires adherence to ethical principles (Creswell, 2013). The ethical procedures applied included communicating with the subjects who were to be informants, transparently conveying the research title and purpose, explaining the subjects' right to withdraw at any time, and outlining any potential risks to the subjects in an informed consent form. The subjects then signed the *informed consent* form as proof of agreement for data collection. The researcher will also guarantee the confidentiality of the subjects' identities by using initials (YK, AK, CC) in the data reporting. The research was carried out after approval by the Ethics Committee of Universitas Bali Internasional. Adherence to these ethical procedures ensures that the research is conducted responsibly and professionally.

4. Results & Discussions

The structure of the themes and sub-themes obtained from the NVivo analysis results is presented in the following table:

Table 1. Theme and Sub-theme Structure

Theme Category	Theme Subcategory	Interpretation Description	Individual Interpretation	Subject
<i>I Am</i>	Empathy	The teacher mentioned that she empathizes with the child.	-	AK
		The teacher learns more about the child's situation through observations in the classroom and interviews with parents.	-	YK, AK, CC
		The teacher is close to the child, not only within the school environment, but also through interactions outside of school such as religious activities at church and additional activities, such as private tutoring.	Teachers meet with children through church activities. Teachers meet with children through private tutoring	YK, AK, CC
		The teacher does not merely perform routine teaching activities, such as coming and going, but also plays an active role in shaping a child's future.	-	YK
		The teacher is open to Direct communication with the child's parents immediately after school hours.	-	YK, AK, CC
		Teachers show empathy towards students'	-	

	emotional conditions by using warm physical and verbal approaches, such as eye contact and gentle touch.	-	YK, AK, CC
	Teachers accompany both students with special needs and regular students during lessons and lunch breaks.	-	YK, AK, CC
Optimism	Teachers demonstrate optimism and readiness in dealing with the behavioral dynamics of children with special needs, including flexibly responding to changes in children's emotions and behavior.	-	AK
	Teachers do not view the challenges of accompanying children with special needs as a problem or emotional burden, but rather as part of the learning process and their dedication	-	YK, AK, CC
	Teachers experience happiness and gratitude in carrying out the role of accompanying children with special needs and view their work as a life calling.	-	YK, CC
	Teachers consistently motivate children by praising them for their small achievements.	-	YK, AK, CC

	Impulse Control		Teachers demonstrate different forms of impulse control, such as maintaining distance from children when emotions are running high, relying on spiritual strength, and acting professionally by separating personal matters.	Maintaining distance from children when emotions are running high	AK
			Teachers use brief, clear, and easy-to-understand verbal instructions to guide student behavior, including that of children with special needs.	Relying on spiritual strength	YK, CC
			Teachers convey instructions clearly during lessons (maximum three words).	Professional in their work by separating personal matters from work	YK
				-	YK, AK, CC
				-	YK, AK, CC
<i>I Can</i>	Analysis of Causes of Problems	the	Teachers actively communicate with parents and directly observe children's development in the classroom.	-	YK, AK, CC
			Teachers observe children's behavior for 3–5 seconds before providing instructions or solutions.	-	YK, AK, CC
			Teachers ask children about their indiscipline/negative behaviour	-	YK, AK, CC
	Emotional Regulation		Teachers demonstrate various ways of managing emotions, such as keeping their distance from children when emotions are running high, relying on spiritual strength, and acting professionally by separating personal matters.	Maintaining distance from children when emotions are high	AK
				Relying on spiritual strength	YK, CC
				Professionalism in work by separating personal matters and work	CC

	Teachers provide firm instructions in a calm tone when dealing with children having tantrums.	-	YK, AK, CC
	When busy and distracted or interrupted by children with special needs, teachers remain calm and do not panic.	-	YK, AK, CC
Self-efficacy	Teachers are not complacent about their achievements but remain humble and aware of the importance of continuing to learn to improve their ability to assist children with special needs.	Teachers seek further education to learn more about children with special needs.	AK
		Teachers want to continue developing themselves through seminars and training.	CC
		Teachers are willing to continue learning through the diversity of children with special needs.	YK
	Teachers can conduct the teaching and learning processes independently without immediately seeking help from others.	-	YK, CC
	Teachers provide clear verbal instructions to guide the students.	-	YK, AK, CC

<i>I Have</i>	<i>Reaching Out</i> (Achievements)	Teachers receive career support from various sources to strengthen their roles in assisting children with special needs.	Families provide career support to teachers.	YK, CC
			Teachers receive career support from spiritual strength and the church community	AK, CC
			Teachers receive career support from their peers.	YK, AK, CC
		Teachers collaborate with colleagues to support the learning process.	The foundation has provided training before the new academic year.	YK, AK, CC
	Teachers use a variety of teaching methods or media in the teaching and learning processes.	-	YK, AK, CC	
Perception & Teachers' Expectations	Views on Children with Special Needs	Teachers have views regarding the condition of children with special needs of special children.	-	CC
	Views on Kindergarten	Kindergarten is the foundation for children's development so that they can continue to the next level of education.	-	YK
	Children Must Progress	Teachers have targets in the learning program that children must achieve.	-	YK, AK
	Children Make Progress	Teachers receive feedback from parents regarding the progress of their children 's development.	-	YK, CC
		Through observations, teachers can see the progress of children in socializing and learning in class.	-	YK, CC
Teacher Spirituality	God's Instrument	Teachers feel that they are individuals chosen by God as instruments to	-	YK, AK

		accompany children with special needs.		
		Teachers feel called to serve in carrying out their duties and responsibilities towards children with special needs.	-	AK
	Relying On God	Teachers believe that they cannot carry out their duties and responsibilities without God's help.	-	CC
	Acceptance of God's Plan	The teacher believes that the presence of children with special needs at Kindergarten X is God's plan.	-	YK, AK
	God gives ability	The strength from God enables the teacher to fulfil their role as a companion to children with special needs.	-	CC
Challenges	Increasing Diversity of Children with Special Needs	Every year, Kindergarten X receives students with diverse developmental disorders.	-	YK, AK, CC
	Differences in Perception with Parents	Teachers find that some parents are less open about their children's conditions.	-	YK
	Challenges in Providing Support	Teachers feel challenged by the different rules between school and home, which cause uncertainty in the children's circumstances.	-	YK, AK, CC
	The role of AK	AK holds a position equivalent to that of a teacher, including administrative duties such as accreditation.	-	CC

	School Psychologist	The Foundation has one school psychologist who is responsible for several schools under the Foundation, but her role has not been active in assisting Kindergarten X	-	CC
	Training	The foundation regularly holds training sessions before each new school year; however, the topics are related to children with special needs. Teachers seek out and attend training sessions and seminars at their own expense outside of teaching hours.	-	YK, CC
	School Always Accept Students	Lack of screening system in the admission process for new students with special needs.	-	YK, CC, AK
	No <i>Shadow Teacher</i>	The foundation and school do not provide <i>shadow teachers</i> to assist students with special needs.	-	AK
	Not informed about students with special needs	During the recruitment process, junior teachers are not informed about the presence of students with special needs.	-	AK
Teachers' Perceptions of Institutional Technicalities	Student Admission	Teachers require complete personal data on children for student admission purposes, particularly for the results of	-	YK, AK, CC

	psychological examinations.		
	The school provides a <i>Trial</i> period for new students.	-	AK
Teacher Performance Assessment	The Foundation routinely conducts annual teacher development evaluations.	-	YK
Teacher Recruitment	The teacher recruitment process at Kindergarten X involves Administrative selection, interviews, psychological tests conducted by the foundation, and a 30-minute teaching test in the classroom.	-	YK, CC

4.1 Resilience Dynamics

The researchers' findings in the field show that the dynamics of resilience in teachers at Regular Kindergarten X in assisting children with special needs are formed through three main components of resilience s according to Grotberg (1995), namely "*I Have*", "*I Am*", and "*I Can*". These three components of resilience do not stand alone but work together with the seven aspects of resilience, as described by Reivich and Shatte (2002): emotional regulation, impulse control, optimism, problem analysis, empathy, self-efficacy, and *reaching out*. The details of the field findings described by the researchers are as follows:

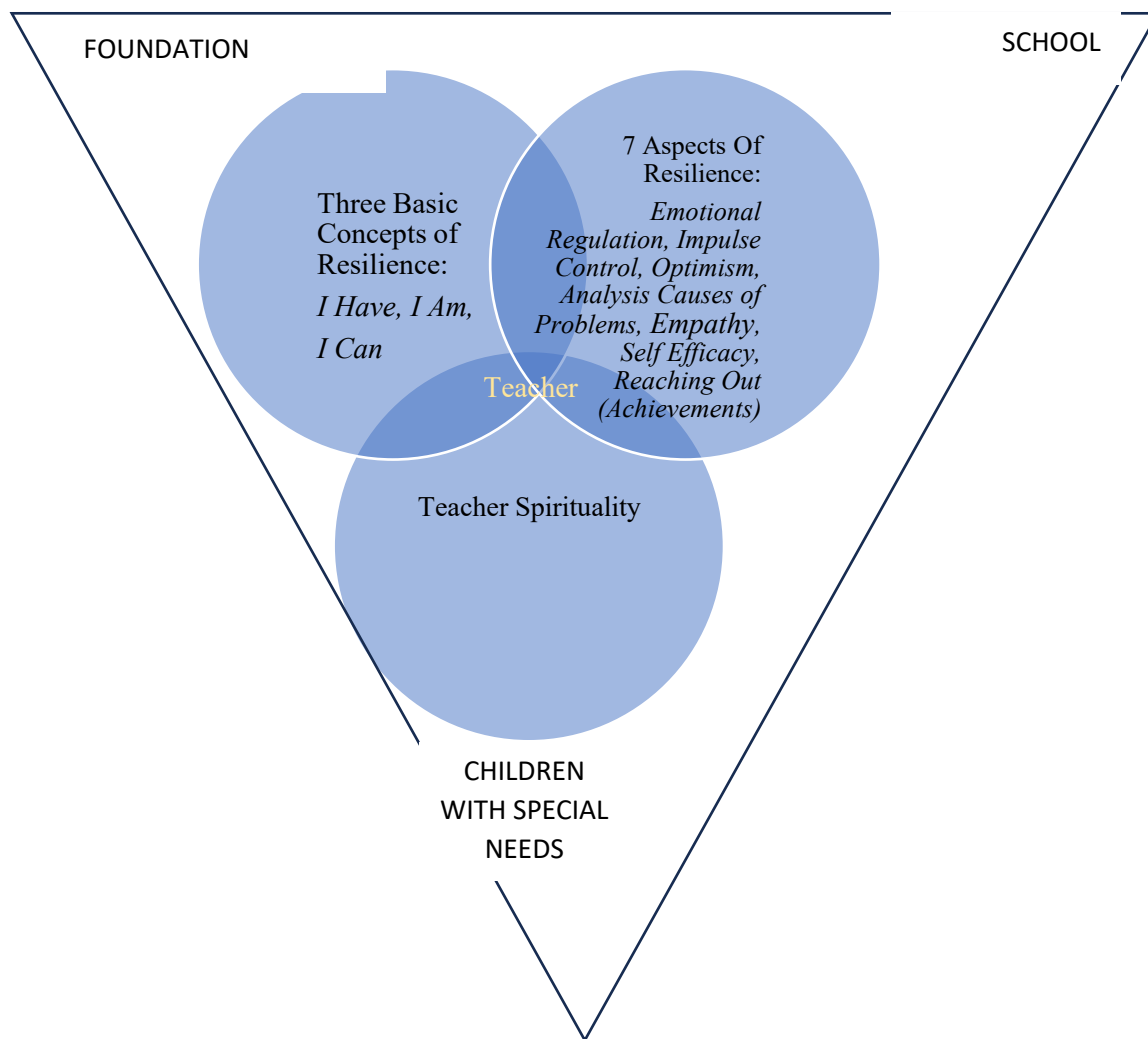


Figure.1 Visualization of Result and Theories

Based on the figure above, the dynamics of the resilience of regular kindergarten teachers at School X in assisting children with special needs are formed by the interrelationship between the three main components of resilience according to Grotberg (1995), namely *I Have, I Am, and I Can*, and the seven aspects of resilience according to Reivich & Shatte (2002), namely emotional regulation, impulse control, optimism, problem analysis, empathy, self- efficacy, and *reaching* out. These three components and seven aspects intersect and are reinforced by teachers' spirituality, which serves as the foundation and motivation for supporting children with special needs. The spirituality referred to here refers to teachers' Christian faith, who view their profession as a calling and a form of service to God. All these elements exist within the broader framework of the challenges faced by teachers, namely, the context of the foundation, the school, and the existence of children with special needs. The dynamics of teacher resilience can be interpreted as being formed not only by internal factors but also influenced by external systems with which teachers interact.

Research exploring the dynamics of resilience in three regular school kindergarten teachers (YK, AK, and CC) in the context of their duties assisting children with special needs has produced key conclusions confirming that the dynamics of teacher resilience are functional, adaptive, and highly multidimensional. Resilience was successfully activated and maintained despite facing significant structural obstacles. The main obstacle was the lack of consistent training and professional resource support for the implementation of inclusive education. The findings indicate that resilience in teachers at these regular schools is not a static innate trait but rather a complex adaptive process driven by a unique synergy between strong internal factors and the strategic utilization of available external resources amid emotional and professional pressures. Data analysis shows that teachers'

adaptation mechanisms can be accurately grouped into three basic concepts of resilience proposed by Grotberg (1995), namely *I Have*, *I Am*, and *I Can*, which collectively form their psychological capabilities to survive in this challenging environment.

4.2 Three Basic Concepts of Resilience

Regarding the *I Have* component (external sources of support), the focus on the external sources of support possessed by the three subjects was greatly influenced by spiritual values. In addition to conventional support such as family and colleagues, the spiritual values of the three subjects stood out as their main sources of resilience. Teacher YK explicitly mentioned that she had a mission that made her persevere and feel called to work at Kindergarten X, namely, to help children get to know God, showing that this spiritual mission gave her professional duties a transcendental purpose. Similarly, teachers CC and YK mentioned the importance of relying on God in their work and feeling proud to be used by God as an extension of His hand to assist children with special needs.

The results related to spirituality serve as a reminder for teachers when faced with difficulties and challenges. Field observations further reinforce this finding, noting that before the teaching and learning process begins, YK, CC, and AK always sing hymns and pray together, a practice that collectively creates a calm and focused atmosphere before facing daily challenges. This phenomenon is in line with Marques et al. 's (2022) study, which shows that *workplace spirituality* significantly improves employees' psychological resilience and emotional well-being, underlining spirituality as a form of internalized external psychological capital. In addition to spiritual support, the three teachers also had more secular pillars of external support. Teacher YK explicitly mentioned support from family and colleagues who were perceived as being united, working together, and helping each other to overcome technical and emotional problems. Teacher AK highlighted support from the church, colleagues, and, in particular, positive feedback from parents regarding their children's development, which provided external validation of her self-efficacy, while Teacher CC emphasized support from family and fellow teachers at Kindergarten X. The existence of a supportive environment in terms of emotional, informational, and instrumental support from various parties is directly in line with Grotberg's opinion. Grotberg explains that a supportive environment is one of the main pillars of resilience, effectively filling the void in formal training not provided by institutions (1995).

Furthermore, in the *I Am* component (positive beliefs and individual identity), the findings focus on the internal qualities of the subject, particularly those related to two aspects of resilience described by Reivich & Shatte (2002), namely empathy and optimism. Empathy is defined as an individual's ability to understand the emotional and psychological states of others, which has been proven to be the foundation of their professional commitment. From the interview results, teacher AK said that she had deep empathy for her students; she "felt what they felt" and wanted to meet their needs. The interview results reflected intrinsic motivation to serve. The observation results further reinforced the *I Am* component, in which the three teachers—YK, AK, and CC—consistently showed empathy towards all students by giving hugs, warm touches, and extra attention when welcoming children to school or when children were fussy because they were separated from their parents. The observation results showed that empathy is a fundamental social-emotional skill that teachers activate to build *rappor*t and reduce children's emotional stress. In addition to empathy, the *I Am* component also includes the aspect of optimism. Optimism refers to an individual's belief that they have a bright and happy future. This was clearly evident from the interview with teacher AK, who stated emphatically that she was optimistic, did not view challenges as something to be feared,

and was always prepared to face them. Observations showed that YK, AK, and CC appeared optimistic in their daily interactions with students, which was manifested through the use of motivational phrases such as and praise when children did something positive, as well as transferring positive energy to their environment. The *I Am* component is also reinforced by a positive self-identity, as shown by each subject having fairly good self-confidence, manifested in

the feeling that they are God's chosen instruments to serve regular children and children with special needs, an identity that gives noble meaning to their work and strengthens their *self-esteem* (Owens, Sheldon, & Norman, 2006), which in turn supports the self-efficacy of each teacher.

Finally, in the *I Can* component (interaction, socialization, and challenge management skills), the field findings show that teachers use various adaptive skills to overcome daily obstacles. The three teachers demonstrated strong solidarity in facing challenges, particularly in the form of helping each other find practical solutions to issues and proactively communicating obstacles to parents to avoid miscommunication and build therapeutic alliances. Strong solidarity is a manifestation of the importance of social-interactional skills (Grotberg, 1995). In addition, emotional control is recognized as a vital skill. Teacher CC also stated that closeness to God (as an internalized *I Have* resource) helped them control their emotions, underlining that spirituality plays a dual role as a source of support and a coping mechanism. This is in line with the theory of *workplace spirituality* (Marques et al., 2022), in which spirituality is present as one of the things that can withstand the negative effects of work demands. AK's differing opinion shows a difference in emotional management strategies. AK argued that when faced with situations that evoke emotions (children), he would choose to avoid the source of emotion.

The difference in emotional management strategies may be because AK has not been a teacher for long, whereas YK and CC have been teachers for more than 10 years with various complex experiences. In Grotberg's theory (1995), this difference can be attributed to the fact that an individual's ability to manage emotions and face social challenges is a result of experience; avoiding the source of emotion can be seen as an initial coping strategy that functions before more mature emotional regulation skills (such as *reappraisal* or *distancing*) develop through experience. In addition to emotional coping skills, the *I Can* factor is also reinforced by observational findings showing that all three teachers actively facilitated ABK students directly by providing special assistance with learning materials that were considered difficult. Moreover, the teachers demonstrated creative adaptation to the teaching process and situation despite the lack of adequate formal training. Overall, the dynamics of resilience in teachers at regular kindergarten X is a strong adaptation process, in which internal resources (*I Am*) provide a foundation of motivation and self-efficacy, while external resources (*I Have*) and practical skills (*I Can*) are used to bridge existing gaps.

4.3 Seven Aspects of Resilience

The seven aspects of resilience from Reivich and Shatte (2002) are scattered parts of the three components of Grotberg (1995). The aspect of *reaching out* is part of the *I Have* component. In this case, YK, AK, and CC worked together and supported each other. From the observation results, spiritual values were found when teachers prayed in the morning to strengthen and support each other. The results of interviews with YK, AK, and CC indicate that the three of them are able to work together to accompany and take responsibility for their duties as teachers.

The next aspect relates to the *I Am* component, namely, empathy, optimism, and impulse control. Empathy can take the form of a teacher who understands their environment or feels understood by their surroundings. In the findings, AK said that he empathized with what his students felt, especially when the students he was mentoring were experiencing difficulties. From the observations, YK, AK, and CC appeared to be very concerned about their students. When a child cannot be separated from their parents or experiences certain obstacles, the three subjects can comfort the child by hugging them so that they feel at ease.

Furthermore, optimism can be viewed as individuals' positive outlook on the future. This is in line with AK's statement that he is optimistic about all the challenges that lie ahead and that he is certain that he is ready. From the observation results, it was evident that YK, AK, and CC consistently motivated and encouraged their students to achieve something. They offered words of encouragement to motivate children to complete their learning tasks.

In terms of impulse control, the three subjects of the study showed how they viewed existing problems or challenges. From the findings of the interviews, the three subjects mentioned that they did not view pressure or negative things as sorrow. According to CC and YK, challenges are opportunities to learn, and it is important to have self-control when assisting children. From the observation results, it was seen that when AK assisted a child who was running and busy with his activities, AK was able to be firm and give instructions calmly, even though the situation was challenging. Similarly, CC and YK also gave clear instructions.

The next aspects were emotional regulation, analysis of the causes of problems, and self-efficacy, which are included in the *I Can* component related to the active skills of teachers in facing challenges. Emotional regulation can be seen in the differences between the statements of CC and YK, who have been teachers for more than nine years, and the statements of AK, who has been accompanying children with special needs for less than a year. This is in line with Reivich and Shatté's (2002) theory, which states that the ability to regulate emotions is an important aspect that shapes an individual's resilience, as experienced by the three subjects. CC stated that closeness to God in providing learning assistance as a teacher can help in regulating emotions. YK stated that it is very important to regulate emotions so that other problems do not affect one's work.

Meanwhile, AK, with less than one year of experience, said that he would avoid sources of emotion. The sources of emotion AK referred to were the students at school. AK also explained that he had done this before, although very rarely. In addition, AK chose to enjoy the beach atmosphere to calm himself after experiencing challenges in the process of assisting children at school. This is an interesting finding regarding how the experiences of teachers who have been in their careers for more than 10 years differ from those who have been in their careers for less than 1 year. However, the results of the observation show that the three teachers were still able to consistently regulate themselves in facing dynamic situations in the learning process in the classroom.

The ability to analyze the causes of problems can be demonstrated by an individual's ability to identify the causes of the problems. The three research subjects said that they were able to explore the children's problems at school by diligently observing the children's behavior, finding out about the children's conditions from their families, and communicating the children's problems with their colleagues at school. This is consistent with the observation results, where teachers observe children for a few seconds when they do something and ask them why they did it, rather than immediately reprimanding them for their actions at school.

The final aspect to be discussed is self-efficacy, which is closely related to spirituality. The three subjects—YK, AK, and CC—believe that what they are currently doing is God's calling to serve. They do not feel proud or overly confident but continue to strive to assist children, especially those with special needs. Based on the results of the observation, YK, AK, and CC appear to be capable and confident in independently accompanying and instructing children with special needs. The behavior exhibited by the three subjects indicates that they have good self-efficacy. Thus, it can be concluded that in the seven aspects of resilience, all field findings are well reflected in the interview statements and observation results.

4.4 Teachers' Perceptions of the Education System

The foundation acts as the policy manager, recruiting and establishing the teacher work system, as well as compiling the training programmes needed by educators. The foundation is responsible for ensuring that schools have adequate resources and a strong support system to assist children with special needs. Based on the statements of the three subjects regarding their perceptions of the education system, it is known that AK was recruited as an educator at Kindergarten X with a salary adjusted for a high school graduate. AK's role was initially categorised as a teacher's assistant. However, based on the results of data triangulation through interviews with the principal, it was found that AK carried out responsibilities equivalent to those of other teachers, namely YK and CC.

These duties included administrative activities such as document management and active involvement in the teaching and mentoring process for children, including children with special needs. This shows that even though AK's educational status was not yet equivalent to that of other teachers, in practice, he carried out the same role in school operations. When reviewing Law No. 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers and Permendiknas No. 16 of 2007, the minimum qualification for kindergarten teachers is a Diploma IV or Bachelor's Degree (S1) in a relevant field. These findings indicate that the recruitment system implemented by the foundation is not yet fully optimal, as it does not take into account the suitability of the educational background of prospective educators with the job responsibilities assigned to them, particularly in administrative tasks and the context of assisting children with special needs, which requires special competencies.

The Foundation's role in equipping teachers with the skills to assist children with special needs should ideally include providing relevant training, analyzing competency requirements, and supporting continuous professional development. However, based on the findings of the study, which were triangulated with the school principal, the foundation has not provided specific training related to assisting children with special needs. Instead, training focuses more on educational entrepreneurship. This causes teachers to rely on personal experiences and independent learning initiatives to face the challenges of assisting children with special needs. These findings emphasize the importance of the Foundation's involvement in providing support that meets teachers' needs so that assistance for children with special needs can be more effective.

In contrast, schools also play a role as technical implementers who carry out the learning process and interact directly with ABK on a daily basis to create a safe, comfortable environment that suits the children's needs. From the interview data, it was mentioned that the three teachers provided teaching programmes tailored to the needs of children and their different targets. Through the observation data, it can also be seen how CC, AK, and YK take turns assisting children with special needs to provide special assistance related to learning to children with special needs.

Schools play an important role in supporting teachers in assisting children with special needs by creating a collaborative and meaningful work environment that aligns with the teachers' values. Based on the results of the triangulation with the headmaster, the support provided to teachers in assisting children with special needs includes regular spiritual guidance, such as communal prayer, *sharing* the word of God, and morning reflection before teaching. This practice is in line with the concept of *workplace spirituality*, where the workplace provides an opportunity for individuals to express their spiritual values and find meaning in their work. In this context, integrated spiritual support in schools is a significant source of strength for teachers to maintain resilience and remain committed to facing the challenges of assisting children with special needs.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Conclusion

All three teachers demonstrated various abilities in managing emotions, establishing social support, showing empathy, and maintaining faith and motivation when facing challenges. The difference in approach between the senior and junior teachers also shows that resilience is a process that develops over time. Furthermore, the value of spirituality becomes the foundation that strengthens their meaning as educators, so that the job of assisting ABK is seen not only as a professional duty but also as a calling and a form of service to God. Thus, teacher resilience is dynamic, influenced by experience, spirituality, and adaptive abilities in responding to challenges. On the institutional side, the foundation plays a vital role in setting policies, work systems, and teacher training, while the school acts as the technical implementer that interacts directly with ABK. In this context, assistance for ABK cannot stand alone but requires synergy between the foundation, the school, and the teachers to create an educational environment that is supportive and responsive to the needs of ABK.

5.2. Limitation

This study has limitations, namely, that the researcher's access was restricted to the internal scope of the school. Consequently, more in-depth information regarding the support system and policies from

the foundation could not be optimally explored. The researcher also did not have access to official documents, such as school management letters or foundation policies related to teacher duties and competency standards. Therefore, the analysis was based more heavily on teachers' perceptions and experiences. This opens opportunities for future research with a broader scope and direct involvement of education policymakers.

5.3. Suggestion

The authors of this study offer the following suggestions to various parties:

5.3.1 For Educational Institutions (Relevant Foundations and Schools)

It is expected that the foundation and school administration can provide continuous training for teachers regarding the accompaniment of CSN, whether in the form of seminars, workshops, or psychologist assistance for schools uniformly. Furthermore, it is important for the foundation and school administration to focus on teacher qualifications and build a structured collaborative work system so that the school management system can be improved and facilitated in the future.

5.3.2 For Teachers

It was expected that kindergarten teachers at School X continue to maintain their resilience through CSN-related training by gaining practical and theoretical knowledge to face classroom challenges. Teachers were also expected to continue self-reflection and collaboration with colleagues.

5.3.3 For Future Researchers

This research serves as a basis for further studies to be conducted with a broader scope, both in terms of the number of subjects and the variation of educational levels, as well as including efforts to obtain direct information from school management and the foundation. This access is important to study in depth the policies, support systems, and teacher competency standards established by the institution. Furthermore, it is hoped that there will be in-depth research on spirituality in shaping teacher resilience to understand the meaning of a teacher's dedication that correlates with the role of positive psychology in the world of education.

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