

# Meaning of Physical Education Learning in Inclusive Schools from the Perspective of PE Teachers

Risani Riski Rahayu<sup>1</sup>, Caly Setiawan<sup>1</sup>, Reza Alfa Pranantyo<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Master of Sport Sciences, Faculty of Sport Science, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia*

**Keywords:** Phenomenology, learning, inclusive physical education

**Abstract:** The limited scientific information on inclusive education is a problem in the literature of Indonesian education. It is due to the fact that inclusive education is relatively new for Indonesian education. This research aims to find out the meaning of physical education learning for students with disabilities in inclusive schools. This is a qualitative research with phenomenological approach. The participants are 10 physical education teachers of inclusion schools in Yogyakarta. The data were collected by in-depth interview and interview using photo-elicitation technique. The interview results were recorded digitally and transcribed to be analyzed. The research instruments were the researchers themselves. They used interview protocols as a tool when they become an instrument. The data analysis was done by implementing two procedures of phenomenological approach, namely horizon and textural description. This research presented the textural description of the meaning of physical education learning in inclusive schools. Textural description illustrated the meaning of physical education learning in inclusive schools which consisted of artistic photos, meaning metaphor, meaning of learning experience, and opinion on meaning.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Education is a process of learning carried out in a structured way and within a certain period of time (Usman, 2005). Education is one of the most important things to support students in facing the future. For this reason, the meaningful learning process indeed determines the quality of education.

Speaking of education in Indonesia, it cannot be separated from inclusive education that lies in the central position in Indonesia. There is a role of the global movement of inclusive education. This movement results in the *Salamanca Statement*, which contains the call for government around the world to ensure more inclusive education. It leads to the birth of inclusive paradigm filled with humanity and human rights enforcement.

An inclusive education is a paradigm of humanist education. Inclusive education is a philosophy supporting the educational needs of students with disabilities in general education classrooms (Daniel, 2015). Inclusive education is an educational concept or approach trying to reach every individual without exception.

The purposes of inclusive education are: (1) to provide opportunity for all students who have physical emotional, mental and social abnormalities, or have the potential intelligence and/ or special talent to obtain quality education in accordance with their needs and abilities, (2) to realize an education management for all students that respects diversity, and does not discriminate as referred to in point 1. All schools should carry out inclusive education. The management of educational units for students with special needs is organized with the principle of independence and school-based management.

In the educational process of regular schools, physical education is an academic subject similar to other subjects. The physical education itself is one aspect of the students' overall educational process through carefully designed physical activities, which are carried out consciously and programmed to improve physical and social skills and abilities and the development of intelligence (Abdoellah, 1996).

In the role of physical education, there is also an integral part of the general education of students, especially those with disabilities. The education refers to special physical education. Specific physical education is defined as one comprehensive

service delivery system designed to identify, and solve problems in the psychomotor domain (Sherril, 1981). That service can be given by a specialist in special physical education or by a physical education teacher who has received special training to carry out a variety of special physical education tasks aimed at helping those with disabilities achieve physical growth and development, mentally, emotionally and socially commensurate with their potential through a carefully designed program of regular physical education activities. From all these objectives, it can be concluded that the objectives of physical education learning lead to the needs of the students' life.

In neighboring countries such as Malaysia, a research had been conducted by (Bari, Harun, Yasin, and Salamuddin, 2011). They also conclude that teacher education does not have adequate capacity to deliver inclusive physical education. A case study research in Ghana, Japan, the United States, and Puerto Rico shows teachers' lack of confidence in their abilities in teaching physical education for children with special needs (Hodge, Ammah, Casebolt, et al; 2009). If the problem is not resolved immediately, this can give a negative impression on the confidence of a child with special needs in the teaching and learning process. Besides, it can even support the social inequality in physical education learning. The weaknesses of each student do not make it to be considered as a reason to continue in getting benefits from physical education itself.

The number of children with special needs in Indonesia increased annually. According to the data of Statistics Indonesia in 2005, there were 4.2 million children with special needs in Indonesia (Republika, 2013). Meanwhile in 2007, there were 8.3 million children with special needs in Indonesia (Statistics Indonesia). It can be concluded that the amount increases every year. However, UNESCO recorded that in 2009, Indonesia's ranking in the implementation of inclusive education for children with special needs kept declining. In 2007, Indonesia was ranked 58 out of 130 countries. Meanwhile in 2008, Indonesia was ranked 63 out of 130 countries. In 2009, Indonesia was even ranked 71 out of 129 countries. Those data illustrate that the number of children with special needs in Indonesia increased, but those involved in the schools were very few, due to the tendency that physical education teachers did not have sufficient capacity to deliver inclusive physical education (Bari, *et al.*, 2011). Researches consistently show that teachers positively responded to the idea of inclusion. Yet, they felt unprepared to face many problems that may come from teaching

students with special needs, such as lack of time, lack of support, inadequate training, ineffective teaching strategies, bad teaching equipment or facilities (Avramidis and Norwich, 2002; Doulkeridou, et al., 2011; Fejgin, et al., 2005; Hodge, et al., 2004, 2009; Westwood and Graham, 2003).

The discrepancy between the existing theories and the above facts made the researchers interested in conducting research on the meaning of physical education learning perceived by teachers of inclusive schools. Thus, this problem was necessary to be examined since the role of teachers was essential for the learning process in school. If it was ignored, it would bring negative impact on students with special needs.

## **2 METHOD**

### **2.1 Design of Research**

This research was a qualitative research using phenomenological approach. Bogdan and Biklen state that phenomenology basically tries to understand a subject from the point of view of the subject itself (Ahmadi, 2014). Phenomenology departs from the subjectivism mindset that does not only observe the visible phenomenon, but tries to explore the meaning behind each phenomenon.

### **2.2 Participants**

This research involved 10 physical education teachers. The criteria of subject recruitment were: a) men or women; b) individuals involved in physical education in inclusive classes; c) have been teaching in inclusion schools for more than one year.

### **2.3 Instrument and Data Analysis Technique**

The instrument of this research was the researchers themselves which were considered as trained people (Ahmadi, 2014). Human interest as an instrument basically roots in the fact that everything in the studies cannot be determined.

The data analysis technique used in this study follows the phenomenological approach. The procedure of phenomenological data analysis follows what (Moustakas, 1994) suggests to getting an overview of the meaning of physical education inclusive learning. The objectives are to find: 1) the

horizon (to determine a significant statement of a unit of meaning), 2). the description of textural experience/ meaning (the meaning of the subject).

As the first step, the researchers carried out phenomenological reduction that covers: (1). bracketing, where the research focus was placed in parentheses (set aside), everything was removed so that the whole research was based solely on the topics and questions; (2). making horizon statements, by observing that all subject statements are equally important and deleting all statements that were not relevant to the topics and research questions; (3). grouping the horizons into themes; and (4). organizing the horizons and themes into a comprehensive textural description. For the second step, the researchers conducted imaginative variations. At this stage, textural descriptions were transformed into structural descriptions. The researchers focused on textural descriptions and observe the descriptions from various possibilities and perspectives.

### 3 RESULT

The purpose of this research was to investigate the meaning that physical education teachers build when teaching students with disabilities in inclusive schools. The main focus of this research was the meaning of physical education teachers in inclusive schools. The meaning of the physical education teachers which was the main focus of the researchers produced several sub-themes. They were artistic photos, meaning metaphor, meaning of learning experience, and opinion on meaning. In this chapter, the researchers provided those sub-themes as a product of phenomenological analysis of physical education learning in inclusive schools, which cover the following elements.

#### 3.1 Educator Human Resource

Educator Human Resource is a description or illustration of the educators who participated in this research. Demographics of the educators played an important role in this research. The demographics described were the participant descriptions. The results of the demographics gave information about the background of the participants and as a consideration of the researchers in making decisions of data collection.

Those who participate in this research were 24 – 51 years old. Nine out of ten participants were the alumni of sport sciences department of Universitas

Negeri Yogyakarta, while one participant had finished undergraduate study at Universitas PGRI. All of them had earned bachelor degree. In other words, they already had the competencies obtained from formal education to teach at school.

Table 1. Origin of Universities

No	Participant	Education
1	IF	UNY
2	DIP	UNY
3	DW	UNY
4	CAK	UNY
5	NDM	Universitas PGRI
6	SJR	UNY
7	MR	UNY
8	LJB	UNY
9	SJY	UNY
10	EGR	UNY

All participants fulfilled the criteria of data collection. All of them had more than one-year experience of teaching in inclusive school. Almost all participants took the sports education major. Only one participant took a major in the department of coaching education.

The teachers who participate in this research had sufficient teaching experience, ranging from 1.5 – 34 years. However, the duration of teaching experience could not guarantee that they already had an educator certification. Some participants admitted that they did not have an educator certification despite having more than one year of experience.

The participants taught in elementary up to high school in Yogyakarta. Those schools were categorized as inclusive schools with students of special needs who studied at the schools.

#### 3.2 Unit of Meaning

The unit of meaning derived from the data collected by the researchers which were then analyzed and grouped. The unit of meaning consisted of theme and sub-themes. The theme chosen was about the meaning of learning. From the theme, subthemes were obtained. The subthemes of this research were: photos, meaning metaphor, meaning of learning experience, and opinion on meaning. The results of this unit of meaning were verbal statements conveyed by the participants. With this unit of meaning, we could determine several expressions that could be classified in each correct sub-theme.

Therefore, the data collected could be examined deeper.

Table 2. Unit Meanings and Participant Statements for Learning Experience

Unit of meaning		Examples of Verbatim Statements
Theme	Sub-theme	
Meaning of learning	a. Artistic Photos	“There is a cat, in front of the door”
	b. Meaning Metaphor	“There is a food stall, well the cat’s just being silent and it is like daydreaming, alone, let’s pretend that the cat’s staring at its friends over here.”
	c. Meaning of Learning Experience	“In the assessment, the inclusive boy still gets high score, even though he did nothing.. no, I keep equalizing them. There is a certain criterion for each. It’s that simple”
	d. Opinion on Meaning	“The most important thing in assessment is that they can do what they are told. If they can’t, they try to do their best, they will get a score just right of the minimum criteria of mastery learning, not less, but just right of the minimum criteria of mastery learning”

### 3.3 The Meaning Built when Learning Physical Education

One of the parts of phenomenological research is the presentation of descriptions of meaning on the experience of participants. The researchers focused this research on the meaning of physical education learning in inclusive schools. The meaning of learning in this research was the following sub-themes: Photos, Terms, Experiences, and Opinions.




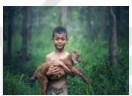




#### 3.3.1 Artistic Photos

The artistic photo in this research was a bridge between the meaning contained in the teacher and the utterances which could then be analyzed by the researcher. The images to express meaning were at the interview stage which used photo-elicitation techniques with artistic photos. The artistic photos used by researchers were obtained freely through creative commons on the internet. This kind of visualization would facilitate the expression of meaning on a metaphoric experience. Using this method, the meaning expressions built by participants for their experiences in physical education learning would be able to be touched metaphorically and deeply.

The sub theme of the artistic photos was image selection. Image selection refers to the artistic photos which would be chosen by the participant as a metaphoric of the meaning built.

The participants were asked to choose photos that had been provided by the researchers (ten artistic photos) according to the session on the protocol. The researchers would then ask the participants to give the metaphoric photos chosen and to express the meaning in depth. The photos chosen in one session were still allowed to be chosen in the next session. This was because the visualization of participants might change.

Table 3. Image Choice of the Participants

Participants	Metaphoric Image Choice	Example of Metaphoric Image
n1	“cats”, “group photo”, “riding a motorcycle”	 “group photo”
n2	“car”, “a family”, “puppet character”	 “puppet character”
n3	“elementary school students”, “elementary school students”, “a jeep”	 “a jeep”
n4	“the car”, “people carry things”	 “people carry things”
n5	“carrying a lamb”	 “carrying a lamb”
n6	“toy car”, “a bridge”, “a glass”	 “a glass”
n7	“seeds that contain”, “rice fields”, “white clean cloth”	 “rice fields”
n8	“rice plants”, “ <i>odong – odong</i> ”, “A mother drawing <i>batik</i> on a white cloth.”	 “a mother drawing <i>batik</i> on a white cloth”
n9	“a picture of blazing lava”, “A picture of a wall, isn’t it?”	 “a picture of blazing lava”
n10	“a desert”, “water, isn’t it?”	 “a desert”

### 3.3.2 Meaning Metaphor

Teacher is a person who has been through the sharing and learning process so that they can become a teacher. Yet, it does not mean that teachers are all the same. They are different in the skills of teaching, understanding, and reasoning. It is proven by the data results collected; the terms stated by the participants have nothing in common. However, in a more complex stage, the meaning contained in these participants had the same tendency.

The terms in this study were parts that contained the meaning of inclusive learning expressed by the participants. The ten participants were able to express using their own language and terms. Yet, the meaning of each utterance was very clear. As perceived by Mr. ND, who likens inclusion to a newborn child, taking care of a newborn child is not easy. It needs patience, time, and energy.

### 3.3.3 Meaning of Learning Experience

The meaning that could be expressed by the participants certainly starts from personal experience. The parameter of minimum one-year teaching experience was set as a criterion of participants who could be interviewed so that they could feel the development of that meaning by themselves. Yet in fact, the participants had the experience of more than a year. This was good for getting the information that the researchers needed.

The participants learned from the experience when interpreting the learning process. Just as Mr. ND said “the inclusive child usually does not have synchronous posture and brain ability”. This is clearly illustrated through his experience.

From Mr. ND’s statement, it could be concluded that children with special needs had problem in their formal education. Meanwhile in order to achieve the learning objectives of physical education, the “posture” and “brain” of the students needed to be trained and developed. Therefore, we were aware that there was a problem that the teacher should face.

### 3.3.4 Opinion on Meaning

This research aims to express meaning and the interview was related to the opinion of the participants. The opinions of the participants were those which could be analyzed, because their opinions relate to the meaning they expressed. The opinions of experience came from one of the participants about his direct experience dealing with children with special needs. Mr. ND stated “It is



because... they always think of playing and playing. Even though in the class they seem to pay attention, their views are empty like... It's like they are not focused." From the statement, it can be analyzed that the teacher did not only teach, but also observed and analyzed the problems of the children with special needs. Furthermore, Mr. MR gave a statement that represents the teacher's point of view, "For instance, if we, the normal people, can live our life together with the children with special needs, and cover up their lacks." From the point of view of Mr. MR, he did not only teach about learning materials, he also had the principle to provide life values for all his students.

## 4 DISCUSSION

The teacher's knowledge of the inclusive school was very influential to the meaning that he built. In this research, all participants had different meanings. Despite the difference, all the meanings were positive. There were participants who considered learning to be a challenge, a heavy burden, or a reality, etc. However, they had a foundation with their respective meanings. None of the participants isolated or ignored the children with special needs. This is in accordance with the concept of inclusive education in the form of organizing education that provides opportunities for all students who have abnormalities and have the potential for intelligence and / or special talents to take part in education or learn in an educational environment with students in general (Kustawan, 2012).

The experienced participants would obtain the meaning of learning. The minimum teaching duration of one year for new teaching participants allowed them to have enough time to create and construct meaning. The meaning they attached to the experience added to the purpose of inclusion, physical education inclusion, and inclusive learning. Although not all participants succeeded in understanding the concept through education without professional development activities, they could produce an ideology of inclusion, like the one from the participants who interpreted inclusion as a child's freedom, not from coverage.

The other method used in this study was photo-elicitation. By using artistic photos, participants could express their meaning. They chose photos that represented what they felt inside. However, the picture did not participate directly with inclusion, but through the picture the participants could reveal the meaning they had, as explained by one of the participants who accepted the meaning of inclusion

like a newborn child. Caring for a young child can be easy. It needs patience, more time, and energy.

One of the meanings obtained from the participant who likened the game of cats was that the only silence occurred when the children were free to do anything. This participant compared a child with special needs as a cat. The participant tried to feel what was felt by the student. From his experience, he considered that it was very difficult for children with special needs to be the same as the others. That was the goal of inclusive schools. One of the best learners should study together without seeing any difficulties they might have.

In its implementation, the participants had succeeded in correcting the weaknesses or strengths of the students. One of the participants said that this created particular indicators for children with special needs. He did this because the participants wanted the children with special needs to get satisfying grades as the results of his hard work. The emphasis of the inclusive curriculum about getting a school must be adapted to the curriculum regarding the talents and potential the students have.

The participants' opinion of the meanings revealed that they theoretically did not deepen it. Yet, the fact shows that there are similarities in principle with what has been written in scientific researches, especially in terms of inclusion. "The most important thing in assessment is that they can do what they are told. If they can't, they try to do their best; they will get a score just right of the minimum criteria of mastery learning." This is one of the main ideas in the concept of inclusion. Competent teachers will be better in creating an effective learning environment and in managing their class so that students get optimal learning outcomes (Usman, 2006).

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

It can be concluded that that the meaning of physical education learning in inclusive schools was strongly influenced by the teaching experience and the educating instinct of a teacher. Lots of experience of teaching in inclusive classes was an important factor in building meaning by teachers on physical education learning in inclusive schools. Therefore, the meaning that had been built would affect the teachers' behavior in inclusive learning. Many teachers did not have comprehension of inclusion, and not many of them joined the professional development activities for inclusive learning. Yet in fact, from the meaning implied by the teachers, the

attitude they chose was not inversely proportional to the existing theories.

The meaning of physical education learning in inclusive schools was also influenced by the metaphor of meaning, the meaning of learning, and opinion on meaning. Artistic photos were helpful in revealing the meanings hidden in a teacher. For the metaphor of meaning, meaning of learning, and opinion on meaning, these sections could support and explain more deeply about the meaning expressed by the teacher. The influence of the sections made the meaning of the teacher to be clearly understood.

The meaning of physical education learning in inclusive schools was also inseparable from the influence of barriers and support, experienced by teachers while teaching children with disabilities. The knowledge, skills, and competencies of the teachers were the main obstacles for the teachers when handling children with disabilities. The lack of knowledge could influence the meaning they built.

Likewise, the meaning could be also influenced by the experience dealing with children with special needs. Those children were different in the characteristics, so they needed to be handled in the right way. This was also an obstacle for the teachers who had different abilities in dealing with children with special needs. However, those obstacles could be erased with the help of the teachers' instinct as an educator. Even though the teachers' knowledge was limited in terms of inclusion, they could determine a positive attitude by interpreting inclusion based on humanity.

## REFERENCES

- Abdoellah, A. 1996. *Pendidikan Jasmani Adaptif*. Jakarta: Depdikbud Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi Proyek Pendidikan Tenaga Akademik
- Avramidis E and Norwich B. 2002. Teachers' attitudes towards integration/inclusion: A review of the literature. *European Journal of Special Needs Education* 17(2): 129–147.
- Bari, S., Harun, M., Yasin, M. & Salamuddin, N. 2011. Readiness of Malaysian's schools for special needs in teaching adapted physical education. *International Journal of Arts & Sciences*, 4(11): 269–274.
- Daniel Tindall, Whitney MacDonald, et. al. 2015. Pre-service teachers' attitudes towards children with disabilities: An Irish perspective. *European Physical Education Review* Vol 21(2) 206-221.
- Doulkeridou A, Evaggelinou C, Mouratidou K, et al. 2011. Attitudes of Greek physical education teachers towards inclusion of students with disabilities in physical education classes. *International Journal of Special Education* 26(1): 1–11.
- Fejgin N, Talmor R and Erlich I. 2005. Inclusion and burnout in physical education. *European Physical Education Review* 11(1): 29–50.
- Hodge S, Ammah JOA, Casebolt K, et al. 2004. High school general physical education teachers' behaviors and beliefs associated with inclusion. *Sport, Education and Society* 9(3): 395–419.
- Hodge S, Ammah JOA, Casebolt K, et al. 2009. A diversity of voices: Physical education teachers' beliefs about inclusion and teaching students with disabilities. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education* 56(4): 401–419
- Kustawan, Dedy. 2012. *Pendidikan Inklusif dan Upaya Implementasinya*. Jakarta: PT Luxima Metro Media.
- Moh. Uzer Usman. 2005. *Menjadi Guru Profesional*. Bandung. Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Moustakas, C. 1994. *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications
- Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Nasional Nomor 70 Tahun 2009 tentang Pendidikan Inklusif Bagi Peserta Didik yang Memiliki Kelainan dan Memiliki Potensi Kecerdasan dan/atau Bakat Istimewa.
- Westwood P and Graham L. 2003. Inclusion of students with special needs: Benefits and obstacles perceived by teachers in New South Wales and South Australia. *Australian Journal of Learning Disabilities* 8(1): 3–15.