

PROFESSIONAL AKHMAD SHOLEH DEDICATION FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

Sri Haningsih

Islamic University of Indonesia, Yogyakarta – Indonesia

Under the theme of Professional education of persons with disabilities.

Abstract

To know successful person who motivated inclusive education development, we need some model figure. This research elaborates a professional with disabilities. Akhmad Sholeh is a teacher with visual impairment. The objectives of this research are to examine how Akhmad Sholeh overcome the barriers existed in Indonesia in which inclusive education is still unfamiliar, how he break through the discrimination done by his community and how the effect his dedication toward successful inclusive education. The field research take place at Islamic University of Indonesia with addition literature research towards Akhmad Sholeh's articles and his action to realize inclusive education.

The Result shows that: firstly, Akhmad Sholeh was successful to finish his studies in regular campuses (UII for Bachelor degree, UIN for master degree and UIN for doctoral degree). He became civil servant under Ministry of Religious Affairs to play role as religious consultant, taking care of YAKETUNIS, chief of PERTUNI and lecturer of Islamic Studies at Alma'ata Higher Education up to now. Secondly, Akhmad Sholeh broke through the discrimination by barriers formally and informally. Thirdly, many students with disabilities were inspired by his action and joining his footprint to succeed PERTUNI, YAKETUNIS and taking master degree.

Keywords: Professional, Akhmad Sholeh, Inclusive Education Development

A. Introduction

In the "Quagmire" episode of the television series The X-Files, Agent Mulder, discussing Moby Dick's Captain Ahab, tells Scully he always wished he had a physical disability. His reasoning: because society doesn't expect much from people with disabilities, he wouldn't have to work so hard to prove himself. Without a disability, Mulder would be considered lazy or a failure if he didn't work, whereas with a disability, he would have an excuse for slacking and would be called "courageous" for merely holding a job, let alone succeeding.¹

Over half a billion persons are disabled as a result of mental, physical or sensory impairment. These individuals are often limited by both physical and social barriers which exclude them from society and prevent them from actively participating

¹ Office of Disability Employment Policy at <http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/ek99/barriers.htm> accessed January 2016, also at NCWD, 2015, *Attitudinal Barriers for People with Disabilities*, <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/attitudinal-barriers-for-people-with-disabilities>

in the development of their nations. Approximately 80 per cent of the world's disabled population lives in developing countries. The key to unlocking this potential rests in the minds of men; it is through education and the respect for the rights of all individuals that change can effectively take place.²

The priority needs of disabled people are not special, they are basic. Disabled people also need food, shelter, love and affection, protection and education.

Within those background, the author means to explore how Akhmad Sholeh overcome the barriers existed in Indonesia in which inclusive education is still unfamiliar, how he break through the discrimination done by his community and how the effect his dedication toward successful inclusive education. The field research take place at Islamic University of Indonesia with addition literature research towards Akhmad Sholeh's articles and his action to realize inclusive education.

B. Literature Review

In this research, there are previous paper studies focusing to discuss related about professionals with disability:

A Paper by Mary Ellen Bargerhuff, Ph.D, et.all, from Wright State University, entitled *Preparing Teacher Candidates with Disabilities: A Growing Experience. In Eastern Education Journal Vol. 38(1) Spring 2009 pp 31-43*. This paper explores one institution's challenge in preparing effective classroom teachers via field practicum experiences. An assessment of the traditional system proved to both serve and hinder the preparation of teacher candidates with disabilities. Lessons learned from the assessment are shared along with the improved procedure that may be generalized to other teacher preparation programs with a similar vision. The goal is to create an "inclusive model of teacher preparation." (Reynolds, Scott, & Williams-Smith, n.d.).³

Many articles talking about great professionals with disability. But most of them did not discuss it in a scientific paper. The Author intend to carry on this research to contribute data of successful people with disability.

C. Theory Framework

1. Attitudinal Barriers for People With Disabilities

People with disabilities encounter many different forms of attitudinal barriers.

a. Inferiority

Because a person may be impaired in one of life's major functions, some people believe that individual is a "second-class citizen." However, most people with disabilities have skills that make the impairment moot in the workplace.

b. Pity

People feel sorry for the person with a disability, which tends to lead to

² The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2005, *Guidelines for Inclusion : Ensuring Access to Education for All*, UNESCO, p. v

³ Mary Ellen Bargerhuff, 2009, *Preparing Teacher Candidates with Disabilities: A Growing Experience*. Eastern Education Journal Vol. 38(1) Spring 2009 pp 31-43

patronizing attitudes. People with disabilities generally don't want pity and charity, just equal opportunity to earn their own way and live independently.

c. Hero worship

People consider someone with a disability who lives independently or pursues a profession to be brave or "special" for overcoming a disability. But most people with disabilities do not want accolades for performing day-to-day tasks. The disability is there; the individual has simply learned to adapt by using his or her skills and knowledge, just as everybody adapts to being tall, short, strong, fast, easy-going, bald, blonde, etc.

d. Ignorance

People with disabilities are often dismissed as incapable of accomplishing a task without the opportunity to display their skills. In fact, people with quadriplegia can drive cars and have children. People who are blind can tell time on a watch and visit museums. People who are deaf can play baseball and enjoy music. People with developmental disabilities can be creative and maintain strong work ethics.

e. The Spread Effect

People assume that an individual's disability negatively affects other senses, abilities or personality traits, or that the total person is impaired. For example, many people shout at people who are blind or don't expect people using wheelchairs to have the intelligence to speak for themselves. Focusing on the person's abilities rather than his or her disability counters this type of prejudice.

f. Stereotypes

The other side of the spread effect is the positive and negative generalizations people form about disabilities. For example, many believe that all people who are blind are great musicians or have a keener sense of smell and hearing, that all people who use wheelchairs are docile or compete in paralympics, that all people with developmental disabilities are innocent and sweet-natured, that all people with disabilities are sad and bitter. Aside from diminishing the individual and his or her abilities, such prejudice can set too high or too low a standard for individuals who are merely human.

g. Backlash

Many people believe individuals with disabilities are given unfair advantages, such as easier work requirements. Employers need to hold people with disabilities to the same job standards as co-workers, though the means of accomplishing the tasks may differ from person to person. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not require special privileges for people with disabilities, just equal opportunities.

h. Denial

Many disabilities are "hidden," such as learning disabilities, psychiatric disabilities, epilepsy, cancer, arthritis and heart conditions. People tend to believe these are not *bonafide* disabilities needing accommodation. The

ADA defines "disability" as an impairment that "substantially limits one or more of the major life activities." Accommodating "hidden" disabilities which meet the above definition can keep valued employees on the job and open doors for new employees.

i. Fear

Many people are afraid that they will "do or say the wrong thing" around someone with a disability. They therefore avert their own discomfort by avoiding the individual with a disability. As with meeting a person from a different culture, frequent encounters can raise the comfort level.

2. Breaking Down Barriers

Unlike physical and systematic barriers, attitudinal barriers that often lead to illegal discrimination cannot be overcome simply through laws. The best remedy is familiarity, getting people with and without disabilities to mingle as coworkers, associates and social acquaintances. In time, most of the attitudes will give way to comfort, respect and friendship.⁴

D. Research Method

D.1. Research Sort

The sort of this research performs qualitative research (Patton, 2001). Author examines Islamic University of Indonesia (UII) to know how far a person with disability fights for his right to work professionally like regular people. How He can breakthrough the barriers. Then how he could motivate younger generations with disability to follow his path studying in regular campuses and working with regular people.

D.2. The Sources of Data

In-depth interviewing is an open ended question which is used in order to get as many details as possible. (Patton, 2001, 295) Because qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit. (Patton, 2001) The author had opportunity to have interview directly, and also by phone with Akhmad Sholih. Akhmad Sholih was previously one of the students with disabilities in Islamic education department was taught by The Author.

This research is included in the category of data-based research or literature in the library so that this research is *field research with* a subject Akhmad Sholeh, a Professional with disability of visual impairment. Beside doing some interview with the The author examined various kinds of literature that

⁴ NCWD, 2015, *Attitudinal Barriers for People with Disabilities*, <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/attitudinal-barriers-for-people-with-disabilities>

have relevance such as Curriculum vitae of Akhmad Sholeh, his Book, Journals, Papers, Newspaper discusses about him. While the researcher approach in this case is a qualitative approach, namely an approach that uses analysis technique and scientific logic method.⁵

E. Results and Analysis

Autobiography of Dr. Akhmad Sholeh, M.S.I

Foto...

Image 1. Akhmad Sholeh And His Family: Final Defend on his Dissertation

Self Identity

Complete Name : Dr. Akhmad Soleh, S.Ag., M.S.I.
Place, Date of Birth : Kudus, 16 Juli 1968
Sex : Male
Religion : Islam
Status : Married
Address : Kampung Besalen RT. 06 RW. 12 Kel. Baturetno Kec. Banguntapan Kab. Bantul DI. Yogyakarta
Phone/HP. : Hp. 08121579596 / 081804308285
E-mail Address : ppci_yogya@yahoo.com

Education Background

1. Formal Education

- a. SLB A (Extraordinary School Type A) Negeri Pemalang Tamat Tahun 1983.
- b. MTs (Regular Islamic Middle School)Hasyim Asyari Kudus Tamat Tahun 1986.
- c. MAN ((Regular) Islamic High School)Maguwoharjo Sleman, Yogyakarta Tamat Tahun 1989.
- d. S1 (Bachelor) Degree,Islamic Universityof Indonesia, Tarbiyah Faculty, graduated 1995.
- e. S2 (Master Degree) Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Yogyakarta, Concentration Manajemen Kebijakan dan Pendidikan Islam (MKPI) (Management and Policy in Islamic Education), Under Departemen of Islamic Studies, Graduated in 2005
- f. S3 (Doctoral Degree) , Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University Yogyakarta,

⁵ Anselm Strauss and Juliet Coebin, *Basic of Qualitative Research*, translated by Muhammad Shodiq and Imam Muttaqin, *Dasar-dasar Penelitian Kualitatif*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2003), P. 5.

Under concentration of Islamic Studies, Student year 2007/2008.

2. **Non Formal Education**

- a. Massage Education in 1990.
- b. Education of Qur'anic Teaching Learning Management
- c. Speaking Computer Education in 2001 and in 2010.
- d. Training and Workshop for *Perkoperasian* in Advanced Level under Ministry of Religious Affairs District of Yogyakarta in 2011.

Working Experience

1. A teacher of An Islamic Education Subject at MTS Yaketunis in 1998.
2. A teacher of An Islamic Education Subject at SMP YPI Sewon, Bantul, in 1999-2001.
3. A teacher of An Islamic Education Subject at SMP Bina Jaya Banguntapan, Bantul in 2001-2012.
4. A teacher of An Islamic Education Subject at SMK Smart Al-Muhsin Sewon Bantul in 2012.
5. Civil Servant as a religious consultants at Ministry of Religious Affairs District of Bantul since 2014.

Trainer and Publication Experiences

1. Speaker at Interactive Dialogue at RRI (Indonesian Radio) Yogyakarta, 25 April 2007.
2. Speaker and Trainer at Workshop For Educators of Pelatihan Tenaga Pengasuh/Pamong Panti Cacat, BKKKS Yogyakarta, 2 April 2008.
3. Speaker at Interactive Dialogue at RRI (Indonesian Radio) Yogyakarta, 2nd December 2007.
4. Speaker at Interactive Dialogue at RRI (Indonesian Radio) Yogyakarta, 1st December 2008.
5. A Judge for Reading Braille Letters, PERTUNI Yogyakarta, 10 February 2008.
6. Speaker and Trainer at Training of *Micro Finance* for People with Disabilities in Bantul District, under contract of Department of Social Province DI.Yogyakarta Year Period 2008.
7. Instructor at Training of RBM (Rehabilitasi Berbasis Masyarakat) (rehabilitation under Society Basis) in Bantul District Year Period 2008, under contract of Department of Social Province DI.Yogyakarta
8. Speaker and Trainer at Training of KUBE for Difables, under contract of Department of Social Province DI.Yogyakarta, 4 May 2007.

Akhmad Sholeh Breaking through The Discrimination

Nearly everyone faces hardships and difficulties at one time or another. But for people with disabilities, barriers can be more frequent and have greater impact.

People who have a disability often face many challenges, especially when it comes to transportation, communication, their appearances and other people's attitudes about their impairments.⁶ Akhmad Sholeh started earlier his education in Extraordinary school, where many children like them were educated to get extra education. But getting more spoiled, he determined to join with regular education institution to Iregular school with some helps from people around them. He studies Islamic Education at Islamic University of Indonesia. As there were rare people with disability study at higher education. He also got some obstacles during finishing her first thesis. Then he changed his Thesis under advice of his lecturer, Mr. Aden Wijdan. Before he continued doctoral degree. He Applied a Job as a civil servant- a most wanted job by Indonesian. But after knowing his condition, he was rejected to get the same opportunity. He then came to Representatives in Jakarta to ask why the difable people don't want to receive applicants with disability. With his negotiation, he then got a policy to join civil servant test, joining the test with assistant of his friends and could pass the test and joining civil servant. He also became the first person who gained Doctoral Degree in regular campus from person with visual impairment.

How Akhmad Sholeh Dedicate His Life to Develop Better Inclusive Eductaion in ndonesia

According to the interview, the report that Akhmad Sholeh Gives motivation to regular people related to their daily problems. He receives consultation for everyone to and motivates some. To motivate more students with disability Akhmad Sholeh became chief of PERTUNI (United of Indonesian Visual Impairment). Going to schools for disabled students to promote inclusive education. He also become one of the senior motivator for YAKETUNIS. Many students were motivated to study at Inclusive campuses even to continue to master degree.

F. Closing

F.1. Conclusion

From The Result of the research, it can be concluded that :

1. Akhmad Sholeh was successful to finish his studies in regular campuses (UII for Bachelor degree, UIN for master degree and UIN for doctoral degree). He became civil servant under Ministry of Religious Affairs to play role as religious consultant, taking care of YAKETUNIS, chief of PERTUNI and lecturer of Islamic Studies at Alma'ata Higher Education up to now.
2. Akhmad Sholeh broke through the discrimination by barriers formally and informally.

3. Many student with disabilities were inspired by his action and joining his footprint to 1 succeed PERTUNI, YAKETUNIS and taking master degree.

F.2. Suggestions

- Listen to the person with the disability. Do not make assumptions about what that person can or cannot do.
- When speaking with a person with a disability, talk directly to that person, not through his or her companion. This applies whether the person has a mobility impairment, a mental impairment, is blind or is deaf and uses an interpreter.
- Extend common courtesies to people with disabilities as you would anyone else. Shake hands or hand over business cards. If the person cannot shake your hand or grasp your card, they will tell you. Do not be ashamed of your attempt, however.
- If the customer has a speech impairment and you are having trouble understanding what he or she is saying, ask the person to repeat rather than pretend you understand. The former is respectful and leads to accurate communication; the latter is belittling and leads to embarrassment.
- Offer assistance to a person with a disability, but wait until your offer is accepted before you help.
- It is okay to feel nervous or uncomfortable around people with disabilities, and it's okay to admit that. It is human to feel that way at first. When you encounter these situations, think "person" first instead of disability; you will eventually relax.

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