

## Brief Report

### Empathy of Regular Junior High School Students on Children With Special Needs

Rheni Meiliani and Elisabet W. Hapsari

Faculty of Psychology Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya

Children with special needs (ABK) who are enrolled in regular (public) schools will elicit empathy or negative behavior, because regular students cannot comprehend and tolerate the behavior of the ABK. The aim of the present study is to investigate the relationship between empathy and attitude towards ABK on students of a regular junior high school in Surabaya. Subjects are 11-16 year old students ( $N = 25$ ) who have interacted with an ABK, obtained through total population study. Data was collected with scales for attitude towards ABK and empathy, and was further analyzed with a non-parametric Kendall's Tau-b correlation. Results showed values for  $r = .229$  and  $p = .124$  ( $p > .5$ ), indicating a lack of correlation between empathy and attitude towards ABK on regular students of the junior high school. This lack of correlation was argued to be because attitude includes a cognitive component that acts as a source of information, and empathy of an individual is objective and situational. It was further argued that external factors such as experience, culture, learning process, direct contact, and information can also contribute to the lack of relationship between the two variables. Descriptively, a majority of subjects have a moderately positive to very positive attitude (92%) and empathy towards ABK was categorized as very high (96%).

*Keywords:* attitude, empathy, special needs

Anak berkebutuhan khusus (ABK) yang memperoleh pendidikan di sekolah reguler (umum) akan memunculkan empati atau sikap negatif, karena siswa reguler tidak dapat memahami dan memaklumi perilaku yang dimunculkan oleh ABK. Tujuan studi ini adalah mengetahui hubungan antara empati dan sikap terhadap ABK pada siswa reguler sebuah SMP di Surabaya. Subjek berusia 11-16 tahun ( $N = 25$ ) yang pernah berinteraksi dengan ABK, diperoleh melalui studi populasi total. Data dihimpun melalui skala sikap terhadap ABK dan skala empati, kemudian dianalisis dengan non-parametrik Kendall's Tau-b correlation. Hasil analisis menunjukkan nilai  $r = .229$  dan  $p = .124$  ( $p > .5$ ) berarti tidak ada hubungan antara empati dan sikap terhadap ABK pada siswa reguler SMP tersebut. Tidak ada hubungan empati dengan sikap terhadap ABK karena di dalam sikap terdapat komponen kognitif yang memiliki peran sebagai informasi dan empati yang dimiliki individu yang bersifat objektif dan situasional. Selain itu, tidak adanya hubungan antara kedua variabel dapat disebabkan oleh faktor eksternal seperti pengalaman, kebudayaan, proses belajar, kontak langsung, dan informasi. Secara deskriptif mayoritas subjek memiliki sikap cukup positif hingga sangat positif (92%) dan empati terhadap ABK pada kategori sedang sampai sangat tinggi (96%).

*Kata kunci:* sikap, empati, kebutuhan khusus

In the compulsory study program, every citizen has equal opportunity to obtain appropriate edu-

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Elisabet W. Hapsari, Faculty of Psychology, Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya Jalan Kalisari Selatan No. 7, Tower B, Pakuwon - Laguna Surabaya. E-mail: elisabetwidyaninghapsari@gmail.com

cation, including children with special needs. This is regulated in UU No. 23, Year 2003 about the National Education, in articles 51 and 52 subsection 2 explaining that children with physical and/or mental disability are given accessibility in regular education or are provided the opportunity to access