



## **Implementation of Market Day Activities at SLB Bintang Harapan**

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**Abstract.** Market Day is an educational activity designed to resemble a mini market, where students can sell their own work or products. This study aims to describe the implementation of the Market Day activity as a life skills learning strategy in Special Schools (SLB). The research was conducted using a qualitative descriptive method through observation, interviews, and documentation. The research subjects consisted of teachers in charge of the activity and students. The results showed that the Market Day activity was designed as part of contextual learning that emphasized the development of independence, social skills, and a basic understanding of economics. In the planning stage, teachers actively involved students in determining the types of products, division of tasks, and marketing strategies. During the implementation, students showed high enthusiasm and were able to carry out simple transactions, interact with buyers, and manage the money from sales. The activity was evaluated through joint reflection between teachers and students, which reinforced meaningful learning and encouraged the development of self-confidence. The Market Day activity proved to be an effective means of strengthening life skills and social integration for students with special needs. Thus, this activity can be recommended as a good practice of contextual learning in special needs schools, while also supporting the objectives of education for students with special needs.

**Keywords:** Market Day, SLB, life skills, contextual learning, inclusive education

**Abstrak.** Market Day adalah sebuah kegiatan edukatif yang dirancang menyerupai pasar mini, di mana peserta didik dapat menjual hasil karya atau produk buatan mereka sendiri. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan implementasi kegiatan Market Day sebagai strategi pembelajaran keterampilan hidup di Sekolah Luar Biasa (SLB). Penelitian dilakukan dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Subjek penelitian terdiri dari guru penanggung jawab kegiatan dan peserta didik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kegiatan Market Day dirancang sebagai bagian dari pembelajaran kontekstual yang menekankan pada pengembangan kemandirian, keterampilan sosial, dan pemahaman dasar ekonomi. Dalam perencanaan, guru melibatkan peserta didik secara aktif dalam menentukan jenis produk, pembagian tugas, dan strategi pemasaran. Selama pelaksanaan, peserta didik menunjukkan antusiasme tinggi dan mampu melakukan transaksi sederhana, berinteraksi dengan pembeli, serta mengelola uang hasil penjualan. Evaluasi kegiatan dilakukan melalui refleksi bersama antara guru dan peserta didik, yang memperkuat pembelajaran bermakna dan mendorong perkembangan kepercayaan diri. Kegiatan Market Day terbukti menjadi sarana yang efektif dalam memperkuat keterampilan hidup dan integrasi sosial bagi peserta didik ABK. Dengan demikian, kegiatan ini dapat direkomendasikan sebagai salah satu praktik baik pembelajaran kontekstual di SLB, sekaligus mendukung tujuan Pendidikan untuk ABK.

**Kata kunci:** Market Day, SLB, keterampilan hidup, pembelajaran kontekstual, pendidikan inklusif

### **Introduction**

Education for children with special needs (ABK) in special schools (SLB) has very different challenges and approaches from general education. In SLB, learning is not merely about pursuing academic achievement as is commonly applied in public schools, but is more directed at achieving functional life skills. The main objective of education in SLB is to foster the independence of students so that they are able to live their daily lives optimally in accordance with their potential and abilities. Within this framework, learning activities must be designed to not only hone cognitive aspects, but also touch on social and emotional aspects, as well as vocational skills that will be useful for students in adulthood.



The implementation of market day in SLB is certainly tailored to the conditions, needs, and characteristics of each student. This activity is designed by teachers as part of contextual learning that focuses on real experiences. In practice, market day not only trains cognitive abilities in counting money or understanding the buying and selling process, but also serves as a medium for training social skills such as greeting buyers, saying thank you, apologizing, and working together to set up a market stall. Suryana (2013:17) states that early entrepreneurship education aims to instill independence, creativity, and self-confidence. In the context of SLB, this is done through real-life habits that are tailored to the potential of students so that they can develop life skills that are relevant to their future needs.

Market day activities also directly provide space for students with special needs to experience the learning process through practice. Concrete and contextual learning is very important for students with special needs, because the majority of them have difficulties in understanding abstract concepts. Mumpuniarti (2007:112) emphasizes that direct learning can help children with special needs understand the material more completely and meaningfully because this learning is concrete and easy to understand. This is reinforced by Latipun (2010:144), who states that students with special needs learn better through structured and meaningful direct activities. Therefore, market day is not only a simulation tool, but also part of a pedagogical strategy to build a bridge between theory and practice.

Market day also provides strategic value in shaping entrepreneurial character from an early age. According to Hidayah and Ayuningtyas (2022), market day is a simulated buying and selling activity carried out at school by students on a specific day to foster creativity, independence, decision-making skills, and shape entrepreneurial character traits such as honesty and responsibility. In this activity, students are not only invited to make products and sell them, but also learn to develop simple marketing strategies, communicate with customers, and make decisions when facing problems. Activities such as this greatly help them to think independently, learn from direct experience, and build confidence to interact outside of school.

In this context, the implementation of market day activities can be reviewed from the concept of policy implementation according to Agustino (2008:155), which states that implementation is the actual process of carrying out plans or policies into practical actions. Implementation is not linear, but dynamic and requires adaptation to the situation encountered in the field. Thus, market day activities should be designed not only as a routine agenda, but as a flexible, participatory, and measurable learning strategy. Teachers, principals, and other stakeholders must work together to develop technical guidelines that take into account the characteristics of students, learning objectives, and clear indicators of success.

In practice, market day activities integrate various learning principles that are appropriate for the needs of children with special needs. Learning for children with special needs emphasizes an individualized, functional, concrete, and contextual approach. Each student has unique characteristics, so learning must be tailored to their needs and potential. Hallahan and Kauffman (2006:56) emphasize that learning for children with special needs cannot be equated with that of regular children because they require adjustments based on individual needs. Therefore, in market day activities, teachers need to determine the roles of students according to their respective abilities. Some are suitable to be sellers, some to be record-keeping assistants, and some are only able to be buyers who learn to count money and speak politely.



In addition, market day activities also reflect the principle of contextual learning. Johnson (2002) states that Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) is a learning system that connects academic knowledge with real life. Through CTL, learning becomes more meaningful because students experience firsthand what they are learning. Market day is a concrete example of the application of CTL, where students not only learn theory but also practice it in a real social setting. With all these benefits, market day is one of the best practices in education at SLB. Although challenges remain, such as limited facilities and infrastructure, a lack of technical guidance, and insufficient support from parents, this activity can still be carried out effectively if supported by a spirit of collaboration between teachers, parents, and the community. Future efforts that can be made include developing a market day guidance module for SLB that contains implementation guidelines, indicators of student engagement, and forms of evaluation that are appropriate for the characteristics of children with special needs. In addition, training for teachers to increase their capacity in managing life skills-based activities needs to be continuously encouraged. Market day is not just a ceremonial activity, but a reflection of educational efforts that prioritize meaningful learning, independence, and responsiveness to the social realities of students. When a student with special needs is able to serve buyers, calculate prices, or simply dare to greet strangers at their stall, that is where inclusive education finds its best form—education that empowers, strengthens, and provides equal space for all.

## **Method**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method, which aims to describe in depth the implementation of market day activities at SLB Bintang Harapan, including the supporting and inhibiting factors in its implementation. This approach was chosen because it is in line with the characteristics of the problem being studied, which is descriptive and contextual in nature. Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted directly at the activity location to record the market day implementation process, while interviews were conducted with the teachers in charge as the main informants to obtain more detailed data. Documentation was used to support field findings through written data such as activity programs and documentary photos. The data were analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques, which included data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data reduction was carried out to select relevant information according to the research focus, which was then compiled in narrative form. Conclusions were drawn based on the interpretation of the analyzed data. The research subjects consisted of teachers in charge of the activity and students involved in market day at SLB Bintang Harapan.

## **Result and Discussion**

### **1. Planning and Implementation of the Market Day Activity**

Based on the results of the research through direct observation, in-depth interviews with the teachers responsible for the activity, and documentation collected at SLB Bintang Harapan, the implementation of the Market Day activity at this school is one of the strategic efforts in developing life skills and entrepreneurial abilities for students with special needs.



This activity is carried out routinely once every semester and is designed as part of a learning curriculum that is not only oriented towards academic aspects, but also towards strengthening the values of independence, responsibility, and social interaction skills. This activity adapts the principles of contextual learning that bridges students with real experiences in everyday life.

Although this planning did not refer to a standard or systematic program document that was written as a fixed guideline, the activity was still able to run according to plan thanks to the decisions made in the meeting. Teachers played a very important role in directing the implementation of the activity, ensuring that all technical and learning strategies ran in an orderly and safe manner. In this context, the planning process was a key aspect that determined the success of the activity. Robbins (2003:122) states that planning is not only about formulating goals, but also creating a comprehensive strategy that can integrate the contributions of all parties. Thus, good planning at SLB Bintang Harapan is not only aimed at technical aspects, but also at the emotional and functional readiness of students to actively participate in the designed activities.

An important part of the planning stage also includes initial training for students to prepare the products to be sold. The types of products commonly made are simple traditional foods such as wet cakes, market snacks, or light snacks. Each class at SLB Bintang Harapan produces one product to be sold, and the manufacturing process is carried out together with the teacher, taking into account the abilities of each student. This process is not only part of technical preparation, but also a means of learning practical skills such as mixing dough, using kitchen utensils safely, and recognizing food ingredients. These activities help students develop motor coordination, understanding of instructions, and responsibility for their own work.

The implementation of this activity showed that students found it easier to understand and engage in the learning process when they directly experienced learning in real-life situations. The learning experience became more meaningful because students did not only receive theory about buying and selling transactions, but also practiced the process themselves. Their active involvement in real transactions made this activity a direct implementation of contextual teaching and learning. Johnson (2002:25) states that contextual learning is a learning process that allows students to understand the meaning of academic material by relating it to real life, whether personally, socially, or in the world of work. This is clearly seen in the Market Day activity, where students learn through concrete and meaningful situations, such as greeting buyers, serving customers, managing money, and working in teams. In addition, the implementation of Market Day also provides space for students to build self-confidence. They feel that they have an important role and are valued for their contributions. Bransford (2000:6) emphasizes that learning will be more effective if it is linked to the knowledge that students already have and applied in a real context. In the context of Market Day, students who previously showed high dependence on teachers began to dare to make decisions independently, such as determining prices, responding to buyers, or showing the products on offer. This change shows that practical and real learning has a direct impact on the social and emotional development of students.

The evaluation results show that this activity has a positive impact on the development of students' social and emotional skills. For example, students who were initially unconfident in talking to others began to be able to say greetings and thank you. Those who had difficulty in

counting became more accustomed to using money in real life through this activity. The Market Day activity also showed how interactions between students can increase empathy, cooperation, and understanding of each other's social roles.

Although Market Day activities have been running well, there are several important notes for future development. One of them is the need to prepare systematic and written activity program documents so that these activities have clearer implementation standards. In addition, active parental involvement still needs to be improved, both in the preparation and implementation stages. The presence of parents can boost students' enthusiasm and provide a more holistic experience in entrepreneurship learning. Thus, the implementation of Market Day activities at SLB Bintang Harapan can be considered a good practice in life skills education for children with special needs. Through this activity, students not only learn about basic economic concepts, but also build self-confidence, independence, and social skills that are important provisions in their lives. This shows that meaningful education does not have to be theoretical, but is actually more effective when presented in the form of real experiences that are appropriate to the needs and abilities of students.

## 2. Factors hindering and supporting Market Day activities

In implementing Market Day activities at SLB Bintang Harapan, it was found that although these activities had a positive impact on the development of students' life skills, there were a number of hindering factors that needed serious attention. One of the main obstacles was the limitations of the students' abilities. Students at SLB Bintang Harapan have a variety of barriers, including intellectual barriers, communication barriers, and behavioral and social barriers, each of which presents its own challenges in the implementation of activities. For example, students with mild intellectual disabilities may have difficulty understanding the concept of buying and selling as a whole, such as counting money, giving change, or recording transactions. Meanwhile, students with autism tend to have difficulty maintaining focus, are easily distracted by crowds, or even show resistance to social interaction with buyers. In some cases, students experience fatigue more quickly because they have to interact in a dynamic and irregular environment.

Another inhibiting factor is the limited facilities and infrastructure. Ideally, Market Day activities require a large enough area to set up small stalls, product displays, and pathways for students and visitors to move around. However, at SLB Bintang Harapan, limited space is a challenge in itself. Activities are usually carried out in the limited school yard, and supporting facilities such as sales tables, booth decorations, and visual aids are still very simple and minimal. Not only that, the lack of promotional media for the activity also results in very limited involvement from the surrounding community and parents. The lack of publicity means that this activity is only an internal school activity, even though participation from the external environment has the potential to provide a richer social experience for students.

Support from students' parents is also one of the obstacles faced by teachers. In the Market Day activities that have been observed, parental involvement is still very limited. Most parents simply entrust their children's products or equipment to the teachers without participating in the activities. Even on the day of the event, parents are only passive as they drop off their children, rather than actively participating in the learning activities. In fact, according to interviews with teachers, the presence and moral support of parents is needed to motivate students and build their confidence when performing in front of others. The absence of parents



in this activity has the potential to reduce the social learning value that children can gain from interactions in a broader environment. In addition, the role of parents in assisting their children at home to understand and prepare for their roles in Market Day is also very necessary to strengthen the continuity between learning at school and at home.

Nevertheless, Market Day activities were still carried out well thanks to a number of supporting factors that deserve appreciation. One of them is the ability of teachers to adapt activities based on the abilities of each student. Teachers at SLB Bintang Harapan consciously adjusted the roles and tasks in Market Day activities to suit the children's level of difficulty and capacity. For example, students who were not yet able to carry out financial transactions were involved in the preparation process, such as wrapping food, arranging merchandise, or accompanying friends while selling. Meanwhile, students who were more capable were given greater responsibilities, such as receiving money, giving change, or explaining products to buyers. This adaptation is important so that each student feels involved and gains experience appropriate to their level of ability. This principle of individualization is crucial in learning for children with special needs, as explained by Hallahan & Kauffman (2006:56), who state that learning for children with special needs cannot be equated with that of regular students and requires adjustments according to individual needs.

Another supporting factor that plays a significant role is the involvement of teachers as active facilitators. Teachers not only act as instructors, but also as guides, companions, and motivators. During Market Day activities, teachers are always at the students' side, guiding them when making transactions, helping when mistakes are made, and motivating them when they show doubt or anxiety. The role of teachers in this case is the main determinant of the success of the activity because they are the ones who bridge the learning concept with its actual implementation in the field. Teachers also show creativity in utilizing simple materials as teaching media. For example, teachers create a buying and selling simulation in the classroom before the activity is carried out to train children to understand the flow of activities in stages. This approach is in line with the principles of concrete and contextual learning, where learning materials are directly linked to real activities that are easy for students with special needs to understand.

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that the Market Day activity at SLB Bintang Harapan has been successfully implemented as a meaningful and enjoyable contextual learning model. Students not only learn about the concept of buying and selling, but also develop other important skills such as recognizing the value of money, talking to others, understanding instructions, and managing responsibilities. This activity provides ample space for students to appear as active, confident individuals who are appreciated for their contributions. Their involvement in every stage of the activity, from product manufacturing, booth arrangement, to interaction with buyers, is a true reflection of a learning approach that emphasizes direct experience.

Although there are challenges that still need to be overcome, such as limited resources, differences in student abilities, and lack of parental participation, Market Day activities still show great potential as an inclusive and functional learning medium. With more systematic planning, more active parental involvement, and adequate facility support, this activity has great potential to become a flagship program that not only supports the educational goals for children with special needs but also strengthens the relationship between the school, students, parents, and the wider community. Overall, the implementation of Market Day at SLB Bintang



Harapan shows how contextual learning designed with empathy, flexibility, and collaboration can create meaningful learning experiences for children with special needs. This activity is not just a buying and selling event, but more than that, it is a forum for instilling life values that will be important provisions in the growth and development process of students towards a more independent and inclusive life.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the results of research on the implementation of the Market Day activity at SLB Bintang Harapan, it can be concluded that this activity has a positive impact on the learning process and development of students with special needs. Market Day is not just a buying and selling activity or entrepreneurial practice, but a learning tool that integrates various aspects of life skills, social interaction, and independence. First, in terms of planning, the involvement of teachers and students from the outset demonstrates a collaborative learning process oriented towards student empowerment. Students are trained to make products, manage time, develop sales strategies, and adapt to their individual abilities. This demonstrates adaptive educational practices that respect differences and build self-confidence. Second, in terms of implementation, students showed great enthusiasm. They actively took on the roles of producers, sellers, and product managers. The interactions that took place with teachers, peers, and outside buyers showed that Market Day served as a bridge between the school environment and the community. This supports social inclusion, improves communication skills, and opens up space for children to express themselves in the public sphere. Third, the activity was evaluated reflectively. Teachers provide constructive feedback, while students are also invited to reflect on their experiences. This process shapes self-awareness and understanding of the value of effort, courage, and the importance of cooperation.

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