

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AS A FULFILLMENT OF INDONESIAN CULTURE

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to explore the implementation of inclusive education in elementary schools in Indonesia through a qualitative approach. Inclusive education in Indonesia, which requires students with and without disabilities to learn together in the same environment, still faces various challenges in its implementation. This research uses in-depth interviews, participant observation, and case studies to collect data from various stakeholders, including teachers, students, and parents, in several elementary schools in urban and rural areas. Research findings show that although there is increasing awareness of the importance of inclusive education, the main challenges faced are a lack of training for teachers, limited facilities and infrastructure, and gaps in understanding of the concept of inclusion itself. On the other hand, the research results also show the positive impact of inclusive education on the social and emotional development of students, both those with disabilities and those without. Students with disabilities showed improvements in social interactions, while students without disabilities became more empathetic towards their peers with special needs. This research suggests the need to increase training for teachers, provide adequate facilities, and increase community and school awareness about the importance of implementing effective inclusive education.

Keywords: *inclusive education, Fulfillment, Indonesian Culture*

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education emerged as a response to traditional educational approaches that often separate students with special needs or disabilities from students in general. Previously, children with disabilities were often placed in special schools or given separate attention (Sari et al., 2022). In the 20th

century, the inclusion movement began to grow, advancing the right of all children to receive an equal education in public schools. Inclusive education not only includes teaching for children with disabilities, but also promoting diversity and respecting differences (Safitri et al., 2024). This model includes flexible teaching strategies, the provision of additional resources (such as teaching assistants), and the use of technology to support the learning process for all students. Although there is growing awareness of the importance of inclusive education, many challenges are still faced, including a lack of resources, inadequate teacher training, and a lack of supportive facilities (Maulida et al., 2023). Additionally, some schools may not have sufficient infrastructure to welcome students with special needs. Inclusive education, although full of challenges, has a significant positive impact on students' social, emotional and academic development. By providing equal opportunities, inclusion paves the way for the creation of a more just and highly competitive society.

Inclusive education is an education system that provides opportunities for all children with disabilities and have the potential for intelligence and/or special talents to participate in education or learning in an educational environment together with children in general. This means that every child has the same opportunity to obtain education according to their respective abilities. Based on the diversity of children with special needs, the problems and needs that must be met by schools vary greatly. Schools that provide inclusive education are required to understand each type of obstacle, disability and form of learning for children with special needs themselves. Inclusive education is a dynamic process, in order for inclusive education to continue to live, continuous participatory monitoring is needed, involving all stakeholders in critical self-reflection. One core principle of inclusive education is that it must be responsive to diversity in a flexible, ever-changing, and unpredictable manner. So, inclusive education must remain alive and run in accordance with the mandate of the constitution. Each region has human resources, characteristics, and cultures, as well as a very basic social system. If these things can be used as considerations in implementing inclusive education, the implementation will certainly run according to the planned objectives. (Utama, 2021).

These factors are less considered when the implementation of inclusive education is rolled out, thus giving rise to the most fundamental problems in the implementation of inclusive education. The ideology and approach to inclusive education first appeared in an international document in 1994 in "The Salamanca Statement". The statement is explained as follows: We, the delegates to the World Conference on Special Needs (Akande et al., 2024). Education representing ninety-two governments and twenty-five international organizations, gathered here in Salamanca, Spain, from 7 to 10 June 1994,

hereby reaffirm our commitment to Education for All, recognizing the need and urgency of providing education for children, youth and adults with special educational needs within the regular education system, and hereby further adopt the Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, the spirit of which provisions and recommendations of which we hope will be used as a guide by governments and organizations worldwide. Inclusive schools do not just accept children with special needs, but more than that, inclusive schools must be able to provide educational services that are appropriate to the students' needs so that they are able to create an active, creative and innovative learning system for all students.

METHODS

Qualitative methods are used to dig deeper into individual experiences, perceptions and views related to inclusive education. Case study methods are used to study the implementation of inclusive education in one or several specific school contexts. Researchers can explore certain aspects, such as the policies implemented, the challenges faced, and their impact on students and teachers (Kaharuddin, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Inclusive education in Indonesia, especially at the elementary school level, has shown various findings that reflect the implementation, challenges and impact of inclusive education programs in various schools. (Humaira et al., 2022) Many studies show that teachers and parents are starting to accept the concept of inclusive education. They see the importance of equal opportunities for children with disabilities to learn together with their friends who do not have disabilities. However, understanding of the effective implementation of inclusion is often still limited (Rosnaeni, 2021). One of the main problems faced by educators is the lack of adequate training regarding inclusive education. Several studies have found that many teachers feel less prepared to teach in inclusive classrooms, especially in dealing with the special needs of students with disabilities (Aditya Aldi Pamungkas, Tri Saptuti Susiani, 2023). Some schools still lack support staff, such as teacher assistants or special education specialists who can provide direct support to students with disabilities. This becomes an obstacle in providing adequate attention to students with special needs in inclusive classes.

Before conducting learning, schools need to conduct an assessment to map the needs of students. Assessment is defined as the collection, processing, and use of data that includes cognitive and non-cognitive aspects in order to improve the quality of student learning (Kasmini et al., 2024). Assessment for ABK is also called diagnostic assessment, which is a systematic and comprehensive process to explore further problems to

determine the potential, abilities, and obstacles of the ABK (Rosnaeni, 2021). The results of the assessment are then used as the basis for providing appropriate educational services based on the modalities or potentials to compile learning programs. The assessments carried out consist of academic and non-academic assessments. Both assessments can be carried out by teachers or in collaboration with experts, such as psychologists. The importance of inclusive education as an answer to the challenges of 21st century education provides an opportunity to realize the development of inclusive education. The implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia is still controversial, however, the practice of inclusive education has shown benefits, one of which is the realization of justice for each individual to obtain education, which also provides space for interaction between students with special needs and other students (Syarfuni, Suraiya, 2021).

Classes that are too large and crowded often make it difficult for teachers to provide adequate attention to students with disabilities. Research shows that classes with too many students reduce the effectiveness of teaching, especially for students who need special attention (Minat Belajar et al., 2019). The impact of inclusive education on students' academic achievement varies. Some students with disabilities have difficulty following lessons in classes that are not adapted to their needs (Akmaluddin et al., 2022). However, some research also shows that with the right support, students with disabilities can achieve good results, especially if they are given additional guidance and flexible teaching approaches (Bulkini & Nurachadijat, 2023). Many studies have found that students without disabilities demonstrate positive attitudes toward their peers with disabilities, although challenges in social interactions remain (Samsul et al., 2023). This attitude is more often seen in schools that have a strong culture of inclusion and appropriate support from teachers and parents. Research also shows that recognition and understanding of diversity from an early age is very important for building inclusive attitudes. In elementary school, if students are taught to accept and celebrate differences, they tend to have a more open attitude towards friends who have disabilities.

CONCLUSION

Overall, research on inclusive education in primary schools in Indonesia shows progress, but also many challenges that must be overcome. Despite increasing acceptance of inclusive education and the positive impact it has on students, especially in social and emotional aspects, there is still much work to be done in terms of improving facilities, training teachers and providing adequate resources. Inclusive education in Indonesia requires stronger support from both the government, society and educational institutions to be able to fully accommodate the needs of all students, including those with disabilities.

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