

Constraints and Strategies for Inclusive Education in Indonesia at the Primary School Level: A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Inclusive education in Indonesia is designed for all learners, both "regular" learners and learners with special needs. Inclusive education also aims to facilitate students with special needs to be able to get along with peers in general by placing one educational environment together with "regular" students, so that it is expected to realize an educational environment that respects diversity and without discrimination. However, in its implementation there are obstacles that are not easy to face, both for inclusive schools and teachers who teach. The purpose of this research is to find out the obstacles faced by inclusive schools and teachers at the primary school level and also provide strategies that can be used to optimize inclusive education. The research method used is a qualitative method with a literature review approach. The results of the study show that some of the obstacles faced are the lack of special mentor teachers, the lack of teacher knowledge about students with special needs, the imposed curriculum, the school environment that is still not friendly for students with special needs, and so on. Teachers can use various models, strategies, media and learning resources that are tailored to the class. One strategy that schools can do is to bring in professionals to provide insight for all school members regarding students with special needs.

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1. INTRODUCTION

One of the goals of the Indonesian nation written in the 1945 Constitution is to educate the nation's life. This goal is realized by the government by organizing schools for all Indonesian citizens without exception. This is the right and obligation of Indonesian citizens to get proper education without exception and without discrimination[1]. The diverse condition of Indonesian society requires an education system that can be used for all children from various backgrounds and circumstances[2].

Because of this diversity, the Indonesian government has designed inclusive education. In an effort to do so, the Ministry of Education and Culture in collaboration with the Australian government established a program called (INOVASI). INOVASI seeks to develop learning in Indonesian schools in order to improve student learning outcomes, especially those related to literacy, numeracy and inclusion[2]. Inclusive education also aims to provide opportunities for children with special needs to learn in the same environment as their peers.

The process of implementing inclusive education has at least four components in which there are three main components and one supporting component, these components are interrelated with one another. The most important main component is the teaching staff. Educators are the most influential on the success or failure of the inclusive education implementation process. The educators referred to in this case are homeroom teachers, subject teachers and special mentor teachers. These educators are expected to optimize the potential and talents of each child and can be an example of respecting diversity for students[3].

The next main component of inclusive education is the curriculum. Inclusive education requires a more flexible curriculum that can be adapted

to students with special needs. A flexible curriculum is one that can facilitate all students from different backgrounds, abilities and circumstances[3];[4].

The last major component of inclusive education is the implementation and strategies used by teachers and schools. The implementation of inclusive education includes methods, media and learning resources that must also adapt to the needs and circumstances of students with special needs. The strategies used by teachers in learning and classroom management must be able to handle all class students, including students with special needs[3].

The supporting component in the implementation of inclusive education is the availability of facilities and infrastructure that can facilitate the school community, especially students with special needs. In addition to facilities and infrastructure, a supporting component of inclusive education is cooperation. Schools must collaborate with parents of students with special needs or with other agencies that can optimize the implementation of inclusive education in the school[3].

The data obtained from pre-research is that in practice there are still many obstacles and obstacles faced by schools or educators in inclusive schools. Researchers are interested in knowing more about the problems faced by schools, especially related to the implementation of inclusive education, as an effort to obtain a comprehensive and in-depth picture obtained from the perceptions of teachers related to the obstacles or problems faced by schools and teachers in organizing inclusive schools and also strategies that can be used to optimize the implementation of inclusive education. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the world of education, especially educational psychology and provide an overview to the government, people who move and explore the world of education in

particular, about the obstacles faced by teachers and schools in organizing inclusive education at the primary school level.

2. METHOD

The method used is a qualitative method with the data collection method used is literature review. The research procedure is as follows:

1. Researchers documented (recorded) all findings regarding the constraints and strategies of inclusive education from books, journals, magazines or other sources.
2. Then filter the data sources specifically on the constraints and strategies of inclusive education in Indonesia at the primary school level.
3. Combining all findings (implementation in Indonesia, constraints faced and strategies that can be used in inclusive education).
4. Analyze all the readings from different sources on the strengths and weaknesses or relationship of each source to the theme.
5. Provide criticism and opinions in research results regarding past findings or discourse.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Constraints on Primary School Inclusive Education

Obstacles to the implementation of inclusive education at the primary school level can be grouped into several parts. Among them:

3.1 Teachers and Education Personnel

Apart from teachers, education personnel who play a role in the implementation of inclusive education are school principals, special mentor teachers and administrative staff. Some of the problems and obstacles faced by teachers are:

- a. Lack of special assistant teachers.

This problem is the most complained about problem. This is evidenced in research conducted by Nissa Tarnoto (2016) which states that the problem of the lack of special assistant teachers occupies the first position out of ten categories, which is 27.39%[5] Similarly, the implementation of inclusive schools in public elementary schools in the district of Tuban, that the number of special assistant teachers is still insufficient compared to the number of students with special needs in inclusive schools[3].

b. Lack of teacher understanding of students with special needs and inclusive education

Teachers in primary schools must have the ability to identify and understand students who may have special needs, especially in inclusive schools. It is likely that there are children with special needs in primary schools, but teachers have not recognized and identified them. This is because some teachers still do not have insight into children with special needs. In general, teachers only recognize physical special needs that are easily identified, such as hearing impaired, blind, physically disabled, and so on[6].

Some class teachers do not understand inclusive education. In practice, class teachers often take their hands off students with disabilities with the assumption that there is already a special assistant teacher who handles them. So the class teacher and the special assistant teacher work independently without any cooperation.

c. Lack of teacher competence in handling students with special needs.

Teachers should be able to play an active role in the learning process or outside of learning hours. During learning hours, teachers must be able to control all students in the classroom, including in terms

of handling students who have special needs. Often, teachers are impatient in dealing with and handling students who have special needs because they do not have competence in this matter[6];[7].

d. Teachers' educational backgrounds that do not match the teaching field

The problem of inappropriate teacher education background has a percentage of 5.95%[3]. Inappropriate teacher educational background greatly affects the teacher's understanding and delivery of the material being taught. Inappropriate educational background causes an in-depth understanding of the learning material so that it affects the delivery of material in the classroom.

3.2 Curriculum

Basically, to develop the curriculum in schools is the right / authority of the educational institution concerned. The government only provides an outline in the form of competency formulations that must be achieved at the end of the learning program. However, research in the field shows that the curriculum and assessment used by educational institutions still do not adjust to the needs of children. Moreover, children with special needs are forced to follow the regular curriculum and assessment[1];[8].

3.3 Students

One class in an inclusive school has a variety of students. The class has students with special needs and regular students. This can cause obstacles for students. Among them: students with needs require different handling and teachers are often unable to handle appropriately which results in a non-conducive class, students with special needs have difficulty following the subject matter due to differences in methods and abilities that are different from regular students, lack of empathy and care for regular students towards their friends who have special needs[3];[7].

3.4 School for Inclusive Education

The constraints experienced by schools implementing inclusive education include various aspects, including: school management, school environment and school infrastructure. The main problem with the management of schools implementing inclusive education is that schools have not fully involved teachers in the management of inclusive education and schools are not ready for inclusive education programs, both in terms of administration, human resources and so on[3].

The school environment is also often "unfriendly" to students with special needs. This is due to the unpreparedness of human resources / staff and regular students in schools organizing inclusive education to accept students with special needs who do have different intelligence / ability to control emotions / social / physical abilities[9].

The infrastructure of schools implementing inclusive education programs is still not well met, such as the lack of availability of resource classes for students with special needs, classrooms that can make it difficult for students with special needs, learning media that are not tailored to the needs and abilities of students with special needs, and many more[3];[7].

3.5 Others (Parents, Community, and Government)

Obstacles to the implementation of inclusive education also exist in aspects other than schools, such as parents, communities and governments. The most prominent obstacle to the implementation of inclusive education in the community is the lack of public awareness with the assumption that children with special needs can be contagious. This is one of the gaps between children with special needs and regular children in general. In

addition, the community still does not have insight into inclusive education and children with special needs[5];[9].

The implementation of inclusive education can also be hampered due to parents. Lack of concern for parents of students with special needs for their children, occupies the first position of parental problems with a percentage of 47.27%, then the problems that arise are the lack of parental knowledge about children with special needs, the embarrassment of parents who have children with special needs, so they do the wrong treatment for children and are impatient with children with special needs. Apart from parents of students with special needs, problems also exist for parents of regular students who lack empathy for students with special needs.

Obstacles that arise in the implementation of inclusive education related to the government include: the government's lack of concern about the implementation of the inclusive education program, unclear policies regarding the inclusive education program, lack of inclusive education training for teachers, no special institution that handles training for assisting students with special needs, and many more.

In addition to the aspects mentioned above, the obstacles to the implementation of inclusive education programs are the lack of cooperation of all parties (schools, teachers, parents, communities and governments) and the title of inclusive schools causing bright students to not want to enter these schools[5].

Strategies that can be used in primary school inclusive education

1. Teacher

There are several models that teachers can use to optimize learning in inclusive class settings. If possible, students with special needs can participate in full class learning with regular students. If students with

special needs have difficulty following one or more lessons, teachers can place students with special needs in the resource room in certain subjects. If students with special needs are completely unable to take part in learning in one class with regular students, teachers can place students with special needs in individualized classes. [10].

Teachers can also use various strategies tailored to optimize students with special needs in inclusive education. One strategy that can be used is the *Peer Tutor* strategy. The literature review conducted by Siti Hartinah and Wiwin Hendriani (2022) shows that the peer tutor strategy is effective in optimizing the abilities of students with special needs, both in academic and socio-emotional aspects. [11]. Teachers can also use or combine with creative strategies, such as *remedial teaching* that can help teachers understand students and can take appropriate preventive actions for subsequent learning, creative strategies of deduction, induction, heuristic, and so on that are tailored to the needs and abilities of students with special needs. Teachers must also use media and learning resources that are friendly to students with special needs in inclusive education settings. Appropriate learning models, strategies, media and resources for all students (especially students with special needs) can increase student learning motivation. [12]

2. School

One strategy that schools can use to optimize inclusive education is to work with professionals to provide insight to teachers, staff and students about students with special needs. In addition to providing insight, professionals can provide teachers with training and commitment to collaborate with other teachers regarding students with special needs. This can improve a friendly school environment for students with special needs. [13].

In the aspect of school management, education financing funds need to be allocated specifically for the implementation of inclusive education which includes: student input assessment activities, curriculum modification, incentives for special mentor teachers, procurement of infrastructure, empowering the role of the community environment around the school, implementing teaching and learning activities. [14].

3. Parents

Parents are the key players in the individual education of children with special needs. While education is the doors to a better life for children with special needs. Parents hold the key to each of these doors. They are the ones who show, direct, open, facilitate and guide with the support of many parties.

Parents of children with special needs, especially autism, can use the TEACCH (*Treatment and Education of Autism and Related Communication Handicapped Children*) method or strategy. Some steps in TEACCH are [15]:

- T= *Terbuka* (Open)

Parents not only accept the condition of children with special needs, but are also open. Parents do not confine their children because of their limitations, because this can cause children to lack confidence and feel differentiated in their environment.

- E= *Edukasi* (Education)

Parents educate themselves on health, nutrition, psychology, art and life skills. Make it a lifelong education for parents, children and families. Continue to learn to better understand children's specialties and how to respond to them, because each child is a unique creation of God.

- A= *Aktif* (Active)

Be active in meetings between parents of children with special needs that can provide positive support for parents and families of children with

special needs. discussions between parents or members of a family forum for children with special needs will stimulate the spirit that sometimes fluctuates.

- C= *Cari* (Search)

Quickly seek information on the development of knowledge about children's barriers and anything relevant to the child's needs. Never feel like you've reached the end of your search.

- C= Commitment

Make a commitment to serve the child fully, sincerely and prioritize it over a career that can be pursued at other times.

- H= *Hargai* (Respect)

Respect the child's voice, thoughts, views or attitudes and use them as a compass. Emphasize their strengths, not their weaknesses. Praise and support their interests. Don't force what we think is good, but see how the child responds.

4. Government

The government can socialize children with special needs to all parties, such as the community, parents, schools, and teachers. In addition to insight into children with special needs, the government can socialize the concept of inclusive education in Indonesia. The government can also organize training for teachers in dealing with students with special needs in inclusive classes.

The education office also needs to coordinate internally, especially in the field of educators who can understand the concept and implementation of sustainable training inclusion policies

4. CONCLUSION

Constraints experienced in implementing inclusive education in primary schools are: lack of special assistant teachers, lack of understanding

of teachers about students with special needs and inclusive education, lack of teacher competence in dealing with students with special needs, teacher educational background that is not in accordance with the teaching field, curriculum which are still imposed on students with special needs, schools with inclusive education programs are not ready, both in terms of administration and human resources, the school environment is "unfriendly" for students with special needs, inadequate infrastructure, students with special needs experience difficulties in learning, the lack of empathy of regular students towards students with special needs, the assumption that children with special needs can be contagious, the lack of concern for parents of children with special needs for their children, there is no special institution that handles mentoring training for students with special needs, and still much more

Strategy. Teachers can use various models, strategies, media, and learning resources that are tailored to the abilities and diversity of the class. Schools can work with professionals to provide insight to teachers, staff, and school students about students with special needs. Parents can use the TEACCH method to accept and develop the potential of children with special needs. The government needs to coordinate internally, especially in the field of educators who can understand the concept and implementation of sustainable training inclusion policies

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