

Evaluation of The Implementation of Inclusive Education in the Inclusive School of Pajang 1 Surakarta

Andre Eksaputra Nugraha^{1*}, Minsih¹, Murfiah Dewi Wulandari¹

¹ Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Surakarta, Indonesia

* Corresponding author: q200230021@student.ums.ac.id

Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to evaluate the implementation of inclusive education at SD Negeri Pajang 1 Surakarta, focusing on both its supporting factors and the challenges encountered.

Methodology: The research employed a qualitative approach, utilizing in-depth interviews and direct observations to gather primary data. Secondary data were obtained through documentation studies. The participants included school principals, teachers, and other relevant stakeholders involved in inclusive education.

Results: The findings indicate that the implementation of inclusive education at SD Negeri Pajang 1 Surakarta is supported by adequate facilities and a strong commitment from the principal and teachers. However, several challenges persist, including limited teacher competence in handling children with special needs and the necessity for additional support for these students.

Applications/Originality/Value: This study highlights the importance of ongoing teacher training, enhanced collaboration between teachers and parents, and regular monitoring and assessment of children with disabilities. These recommendations are essential for improving the quality and sustainability of inclusive education in elementary schools. The study contributes to the growing body of literature on inclusive practices in Indonesian educational settings.

Introduction

Education is the right of all children in Indonesia, and every citizen is entitled to an adequate education regardless of their economic, social or cultural status. Law No 20 of 2003 on the National Education System reinforces this policy by guaranteeing equal access to education for all children, including those from underprivileged families, children in remote areas and children with special needs. The Government of Indonesia is committed to providing equal opportunities for every child to obtain quality education, with the aim of creating a generation that is smart, competitive and able to contribute to the progress of the nation.

In an effort to equalize education policies, the government continues to take various strategic steps to ensure equitable and quality education for all children, including children with special needs. One of the important initiatives implemented is the implementation of inclusive schools. Inclusive schools aim to create a learning environment that supports and accepts diversity, by integrating children with special needs into regular classes (Madanih, R. 2023).

In Indonesia, the implementation of inclusive education is an important part of supporting equal access to education for all children, including those with special needs (Wijaya, S., et al. 2023). Inclusive education is regulated by Law No. 20/2003 on the National Education System. This law stipulates that every child has the right to an appropriate education according to his or her potential, regardless of background, economic condition, disability or other distinguishing characteristics. The implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia requires the provision of facilities, resources and learning approaches that support all students so that they can participate fully in the education process without discrimination. The law is an important foundation in creating an inclusive and equitable learning environment for all of Indonesia's future generations.

A study by Kriswanto and colleagues (2023) identified various factors that influence the implementation of inclusive education. Supporting factors included parental support and partnerships, principal leadership, a child-friendly school environment, adequate facilities and infrastructure, the availability of special mentor teachers (GPK) and regular monitoring and assessment of children with disabilities. On the other hand, inhibiting factors include teachers' low competence in assisting children with disabilities, the diverse needs and abilities of children with disabilities, the need for extra assistance, the long time involved in identification and assessment and the low level of understanding of children with disabilities which has an impact on learning outcomes. Alternative solutions included facilitating training for teachers,

improving collaboration between teachers, GPKs and parents, and involving parents in assisting children with disabilities at school. Meanwhile, research by Yunita and her colleagues (2019) highlighted that teachers directly handle the implementation of education with special responses and attention to children with special needs, suggesting that this is adequate.

In organizing inclusive education, of course, there are several obstacles in the teaching and learning process. From the previous research above, there are significant differences between previous research and the novelty in this study. The difference is that while previous research has identified supporting and inhibiting factors and provided solutions, there has been no specific evaluation that assesses the effectiveness of the implementation of inclusive education at a specific school level such as SD Negeri Pajang 1 Surakarta. This study will fill this gap by focusing on how the implementation of inclusive education in this school works in practice, as well as an in-depth evaluation of the challenges and successes faced in the field.

Method

This study used a qualitative approach with the aim of exploring in depth the events that occurred naturally at SD Negeri Pajang 1, Laweyan District, Surakarta City. The research subjects consisted of the principal and grade 5 teacher of SD Negeri Pajang 1, who were chosen because of their knowledge and experience relevant to the phenomenon under study. The research design relied on in-depth interviews with both subjects to obtain descriptive and analytical qualitative information. Primary data were collected through direct interviews and observations, while secondary data were obtained from documentation studies of related literature. Data analysis was conducted using an analytical descriptive approach to generate a deep understanding of the complex and dynamic issues observed. This method was chosen to gain a more natural and in-depth understanding of the specific research context.

Result and Discussion

Implementation of inclusive education at SD Negeri Pajang 1 Surakarta

The implementation of inclusive education is a significant step in creating a welcoming and comprehensive learning environment for all students, including those with special needs. SD Negeri Pajang 1 Surakarta is committed to implementing the principles of inclusion by providing supportive facilities, as well as involving educators who are trained to meet the individual needs of students, as revealed by Mr. Setyo Nugroho as the Principal of SD Negeri Pajang 1 Surakarta below,

“Of course, we are very committed to implementing inclusive education in our school. We follow the guidelines and standards set by the government, as well as other inclusion policies. We strive to ensure that every child, including children with special needs, receive equal and quality education.”

From the interviews above, it can be confirmed that the school's commitment to implementing inclusive education is in line with government policy. In ensuring that every child, including those with special needs, receives an equal and quality education, school facilities play a crucial role,

“We have made several improvements to support inclusion facilities. For example, we have customized classrooms to be more welcoming for students with special needs, including better accessibility and supportive equipment. In addition, we also have dedicated areas for therapy and recovery activities.”

From the interview results above, SD Negeri Pajang 1 Surakarta has taken significant steps in improving facilities to support inclusive education, such as adjusting classrooms and providing special areas for therapy and recovery. However, in addition to adequate facilities, the role of GPK is very important in ensuring the success of inclusive education, as reiterated by the Principal below,

“Yes, however limited, we only have two Special Mentor Teachers assigned to this school. They are instrumental in providing individualized support to students with special needs, both academic and social-emotional. They also collaborate with class teachers to ensure inclusive and adaptive teaching methods.”

Although SD Negeri Pajang 1 Surakarta only has two Special Mentor Teachers, their role is crucial in providing individualized support to students with special needs as well as collaborating with classroom teachers to implement inclusive teaching methods. However, to ensure the success of inclusive education, support from parents and the community is also very important.

“Support from parents is very important, and we try to involve them as much as possible. We regularly hold meetings with parents to discuss their children's development and strategies that can be implemented at home. In addition, we also involve the school community through activities that support inclusion, such as training and seminars. Community involvement goes a long way in creating a more inclusive environment for all students.”

SD Negeri Pajang 1 Surakarta demonstrates a strong commitment to inclusive education by actively involving parents through regular meetings to discuss child development and strategies that can be implemented at home. In addition, the school also engages the community through training and seminars that support inclusion. This approach not only

strengthens support within the school but also creates a more inclusive environment by involving various parties in the education process, thus having a broader positive impact on students' learning experiences.

Supporting and inhibiting factors for implementing inclusive education

The implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia faces various supporting and inhibiting factors that affect its success. One of the main supporting factors is the support from several surrounding parties, as expressed by Mrs. Marwa as a grade 5 teacher at SD Negeri Pajang 1 Surakarta below,

“Of course. Support from parents is very important in inclusive education. In my class, parents are usually very supportive, especially when they realize how important their role is in their children's learning process. They often communicate with me to ensure that their children's special needs are well taken care of. From the principal's side, I feel very supported. Our principal is very committed to implementing inclusive education well. He often holds meetings to ensure that all of us, including teachers and staff, understand the purpose and methods of inclusive education. His leadership is very helpful in creating an inclusive environment in the school.”

From the results of the interviews above, support from parents and the committed leadership of the principal are key factors in the success of inclusive education at SD Negeri Pajang 1. However, in addition to this support, teacher competence is also a major determining factor,

“Teacher competence is a key factor in inclusive education. I think the training we receive is helpful but there are times when we feel we need additional training to understand the different special needs more deeply. Sometimes, challenges arise when we have to adjust teaching methods to meet the individual needs of children, especially if they have very specific needs.”

From the results of the interview above, teacher competence is very important for the inclusive learning process. In carrying out its implementation, of course, faced with various challenges that arise,

“One of the biggest challenges is the need for extra assistance. Children with special needs often require additional attention and support, which can be an additional burden for teachers. In addition, we also face the challenge of ensuring all children, not just those with special needs, get the attention they need. Teacher competence, as I've already mentioned, can also be a barrier if training is inadequate. And children's level of understanding of their peers' differences and special needs can also affect the classroom atmosphere. Sometimes, other children may not fully understand or accept their friends with special needs, and that can create its own challenges in social interactions in the classroom.”

The implementation of inclusive education at SD Negeri Pajang 1 faces significant challenges, especially in terms of the need for extra assistance for children with special needs. Therefore, it is important to improve teacher training and inclusive education for all students to create a more inclusive and harmonious environment.

The implementation of inclusive education at SD Negeri Pajang 1 Surakarta shows that the school has tried to meet the inclusive education standards set by Law No 20 of 2003. In this evaluation, it was found that the school has adequate facilities, including child-friendly classrooms and the availability of a special mentor teacher (GPK). Support from parents and the school community is also significant, reflected in their active participation in various school activities. However, despite this strong support, challenges in teacher competence and the need for extra assistance for children with special needs remain major obstacles.

The study by Kriswanto et al. (2023) identified similar supporting and inhibiting factors, such as parental support and principal leadership as supporting factors, and low teacher competence and the need for extra assistance as inhibiting factors. These findings are consistent with the results of the study at SD Negeri Pajang 1 Surakarta, which also highlighted the importance of improving teachers' competencies through specialized training. In addition, research by Yunita et al. (2019) mentioned that teachers' direct handling of children with disabilities was adequate, indicating that with the right support, teachers are able to manage inclusive education well. However, a difference that emerged in this study is the need for more intense collaboration between teachers, GPKs and parents to optimize inclusive education.

Another study by Hannah and Mia (2022) highlighted the importance of regular monitoring and assessment of children with disabilities to ensure that each child's needs are met. The results from SD Negeri Pajang 1 Surakarta also show that effective monitoring contributes to the successful implementation of inclusive education. However, this study added that the long time involved in the identification and assessment process is a challenge that needs to be overcome. In this context, continuous training for teachers and increased cooperation between all relevant parties are crucial to improving the effectiveness of inclusive education in these schools. This underlines the need for a holistic and sustainable approach to achieving equitable access to education for all children, including those with disabilities.

To improve the effectiveness of inclusive education implementation at SD Negeri Pajang 1 Surakarta, several relevant efforts and recommendations can be implemented. First, continuous training for teachers on inclusive learning methods needs to be improved, as suggested by Munajah et al. (2021). This is important to improve teachers' competence in assisting children with special needs. Secondly, increased collaboration between teachers, GPKs and parents is crucial to creating a more supportive and effective learning environment, as emphasized in the research by Wulandari et al. (2024). In addition, the government and schools must ensure regular monitoring and assessment of children with disabilities to adjust the educational approach according to their individual needs, which was also identified by Surwanti (2020). The

implementation of technology in the learning and assessment process can also be a solution to overcome time constraints in identification and assessment. By implementing these recommendations, it is hoped that inclusive education at SD Negeri Pajang 1 Surakarta can run more optimally, providing maximum benefits for all students, including those with disabilities.

Conclusion

Overall, it can be concluded that the implementation of inclusive education at SD Negeri Pajang 1 Surakarta shows that this school has tried hard to meet the standards of inclusive education set by Law No 20 of 2003 by providing adequate facilities and involving trained educators. Support from parents and the school community plays an important role in the success of inclusive education. However, challenges remain, especially in terms of teacher competence and the need for extra assistance for children with special needs. Continuous training for teachers, increased collaboration between teachers, GPKs and parents, and regular monitoring and assessment of children with disabilities are needed to overcome these challenges and ensure that all children receive an equal and quality education. The implementation of technology in the learning and assessment process is also recommended to overcome time constraints in identification and assessment. By implementing these steps, it is hoped that inclusive education at SD Negeri Pajang 1 Surakarta can run more optimally and provide maximum benefits for all students, including those with disabilities.

References

- Ministry of Education. (2003). Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 Year 2003 on the National Education System. Jakarta: Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education.
- Hanaa, H., & Mia Evani, E. (2022). The Important Role of Special Mentor Teachers in Inclusive Education at SDI Al-Muttaqin. *Journal of Basic Education Review: Journal of Educational Studies and Research Results*, 8 (3), 167-171. <https://doi.org/10.26740/jrpd.v8n3.p167-171>
- Kriswanto, D., Suyatno, & Sukirman. (2023). Implementation of Inclusive Education in Primary Schools: Analysis of Factors and Solutions Offered. *Basicedu Journal*, 7(5), 3081-3090. <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v7i5.6167>
- Madanih, R. (2023). A model for inclusive education in Indonesia: The Lazuardi Global Islamic School. *Indonesian Journal of Social Sciences (JISI)*, 4(1), 14-24. <https://doi.org/10.15408/jisi.v4i1.33367>
- Munajah, R., Marini, A., & Sumantri, M. S. (2021). Implementation of Inclusive Education Policy in Elementary Schools. *Basicedu Journal*, 5(3), 1183-1190. <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v5i3.886>
- Surwanti, A. (2020). Inclusive education for persons with disabilities in Indonesia. *QIJIS: Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies*, 4(1), 602-612. <https://doi.org/10.5220/0008434306020612>
- Wijaya, S., Supena, A., & Yufiarti. (2023). Implementation of Inclusive Education Program in Primary Schools in Serang City. *Journal of Educatio FKIP UNMA*, 9(1), 347-357. <https://doi.org/10.31949/educatio.v9i1.4592>
- Wulandari, P., Desy Safitri, & Sujarwo. (2024). Implementation of Inclusive Education and its Relationship with Social Interaction of Students with Special Needs. *Journal of Intelek Dan Cendekiawan Nusantara*, 1(2), 744-752. Retrieved from <https://jicnusantara.com/index.php/jicn/article/view/104m>
- Yunita, E. I., Suneki, S., & Wakhyudin, H. (2019). Inclusive Education Management in the Learning Process and Teacher Handling of Children with Special Needs. *International Journal of Elementary Education*, 3(3), 267-274. <https://doi.org/10.23887/ijee.v3i3.19407>