

Challenges of Inclusive Education in Yogyakarta City

Zulfa Jihan Hanifa, Moh Salimi, Sukarno

Universitas Sebelas Maret
zulfajihan.h@student.uns.ac.id

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Abstract

Inclusive education is one of the efforts to fulfill the right to education for students with disabilities. However, the implementation of inclusive education still faces several challenges. This study aims to identify the challenges in implementing inclusive education, particularly in the city of Yogyakarta. The research method used in this study is a qualitative method with a case study approach. Data collection techniques include interviews and document studies. The subjects of this research consist of the head of the administrative sub-division and two technical service staff members, selected purposively. Based on the results of the study, it was found that the challenges in implementing inclusive education include discrimination and rejection in the admission of new students, teachers being unprepared to provide educational services for students with disabilities, a lack of facilities and infrastructure, as well as numerous unresolved cases involving students with disabilities due to complex handling bureaucracy. Thus, it can be concluded that the implementation of inclusive education in the city of Yogyakarta still faces several challenges.

Keywords: *Challenges, Education, Inclusion, Disability.*

Abstrak

Pendidikan inklusi merupakan salah satu upaya memenuhi hak pendidikan bagi peserta didik dengan disabilitas. Namun, penyelenggaraan pendidikan inklusi masih menghadapi beberapa tantangan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui tantangan penyelenggaraan pendidikan inklusi, khususnya di Kota Yogyakarta. Metode penelitian yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode kualitatif dengan strategi studi kasus. Teknik pengumpulan data dalam penelitian ini dilakukan dengan wawancara dan studi dokumen. Subjek dalam penelitian ini terdiri dari kepala sub bagian tata usaha dan dua staf layanan teknik, yang dipilih secara purposif. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, diketahui bahwa dalam penyelenggaraan pendidikan inklusi, tantangan yang dihadapi diantaranya yaitu adanya diskriminasi dan penolakan dalam penerimaan peserta didik baru, guru-guru belum siap memberikan layanan pendidikan bagi peserta didik dengan disabilitas, kurangnya sarana dan prasarana, serta banyak kasus peserta didik dengan disabilitas yang belum dapat diselesaikan karena birokrasi penanganan yang rumit. Dengan demikian, dapat disimpulkan penyelenggaraan pendidikan inklusi di Kota Yogyakarta masih menemui beberapa tantangan.

Kata kunci: *Tantangan, Pendidikan, Inklusi, Disabilitas*



Introduction

Education is a conscious and planned effort to develop the potential of each individual. As stated in the Law on the national education system No. 20 of 2003, education is “a conscious and planned effort to create an atmosphere of learning and learning so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character and skills needed by themselves and society”. Education is also one of the human rights (Declara, 2024). Human rights are rights that are inherent in human beings, as stated in Law No. 38 of 1999. In addition, through education a person can develop positive things, gain knowledge, encourage the growth of good practices, and learn various skills (Siregar et al., 2024). Education should be obtained by all levels of society, meaning that education is not reserved for certain groups, but also students with disabilities (Purnama Dewi, 2024). Disability is a condition that affects a person's physical, cognitive and mental functions and hinders their ability to fully participate in daily life (Nurdin, 2023). People with disabilities are one of the groups that are vulnerable to violations of their rights, including the right to education (Arifin et al., 2021). The protection of groups with disabilities has also been regulated, one of which is contained in Law No. 20 of 2003, which states “The Government and Regional Governments are obliged to provide services and facilities, and ensure the implementation of quality education for every citizen without discrimination”. This means that students with disabilities already have a legal umbrella to protect their educational rights.

Based on UNICEF data, globally there are 240 million children or the equivalent of 1 in 10 children in the world living with disabilities (UNICEF, 2023). The high number of people with disabilities in the world, makes the issue of education for students with disabilities also experienced in various countries, including Indonesia. Based on the 2020 population census long form data published in 2024, the prevalence of people with type 3 disabilities in Indonesia reached 1.43% (Ikawati et al., 2024). Based on education statistics, the school participation rate aged 7-12 years for students with disabilities is 83.395, meaning that 16.61% of students aged 7-12 years have not had access to education (Girsang et al., 2024). The distribution of the prevalence of people with disabilities in Indonesia is quite evenly distributed and the largest contributor comes from the Special Region of Yogyakarta Province, which is 2.05% (Ikawati et al., 2024). Based on Pusdatin Kemendikbudristek 2025, accessed on June 18, 2025, shows that students with disabilities in DIY Province are 8,322 and Yogyakarta City is 1,479 students. Starting from these data, it means that in Indonesia there are many students with disabilities and there are still many students with disabilities in Indonesia who have not received access to inclusive education.

The fulfillment of the right to education for students with disabilities needs to be resolved immediately, because education is one of the main focuses in national development. In addition, the Indonesian government is also committed to respecting the rights of persons with disabilities, as formulated by the United Nations, namely the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (CPRD) which emphasizes equal rights without discrimination, including in terms of education (Ikawati et al., 2024). Indonesia is also one of 193 countries committed to the Sustainable development goals in achieving 17 goals until 2030 (Yulaswati et al., 2021). The commitment has been contained in Presidential Regulation No. 59 of 2017 concerning the implementation of achieving SDGs. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) emphasize the principle of No One Left Behind, meaning that in the process of achieving these 17 goals, no particular group is left behind, including people with disabilities (Yulaswati et al., 2021). However, by 2023, more than 75% of students with disabilities will not have access to adequate education (KEMENKO PMK, 2023). Thus, it can be interpreted that the

implementation of education is not in accordance with the government's commitment to respecting the rights of school-age people with disabilities.

The government has made many efforts to improve access to education for all groups of people. Efforts to implement this commitment can be done by implementing an inclusive education system. Inclusive education is an education system that provides opportunities for students with disabilities to participate in learning without discrimination (Murtadlo et al., 2025). The inclusive education system has long been implemented, both nationally and internationally. The implementation of inclusive education is one of the efforts to realize equality in education rights for people with disabilities. Since the implementation of inclusive education, inclusive education has not only experienced many advances, but also faced challenges. For a better implementation of inclusive education, we need to understand what challenges are encountered in the implementation of inclusive education. Understanding the challenges in implementing inclusive education can help improve mutual understanding, so that it can be used as a suggestion for improvement so that the implementation of inclusive education can be implemented better.

There have been many studies on inclusive education. Based on the results of Mulyawan's research, the implementation of inclusive education is still far from perfect (Andriyan et al., 2023; Mulyawan et al., 2024; Naeemy & Yoneda, 2025; Rida Melinda et al., 2024; Sitanggang et al., 2025). In addition, Mustaqim's research also states that inclusive education requires holistic education management (Mustaqim, 2024). Previous research has also discussed inclusive education from the perspective of school readiness (Genovesi et al., 2024; Jayadi & Supena, 2023; Munajah et al., 2021; Susanti & Herawati, 2024; Utari, 2020) and educators' perspectives on students with disabilities (Draper-Rodi et al., 2024; Giavrimis, 2024) (Falkovskaya, 2024; Sundeen & Alsarawi, 2024). However, the implementation of inclusive education does not only involve one stakeholder. It involves multiple stakeholders, one of which is the Disability Service Unit in the education sector and the Yogyakarta city resource center. Therefore, there is still a lack of studies that discuss the challenges of implementing inclusive education. The challenges of inclusive education can also be identified through the perspectives of the Disability Service Unit for Education and the Resource Center of Yogyakarta city. Starting from this explanation, this research will discuss the challenges of implementing inclusive education in the city of Yogyakarta through the perspective of the UPT Layanan Disabilitas in the field of education and the Yogyakarta city resource center. Thus, the purpose of this study is to identify the challenges of implementing inclusive education, particularly in the city of Yogyakarta.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach, which aims to deeply understand human problems and social dynamics. Qualitative research methods were chosen because they are able to explore the meaning, experience, and complexity of situations that cannot be measured quantitatively. As explained by Ultavia et al (2023), qualitative research is research that aims to describe human and social problems in depth. The case study strategy is used to investigate phenomena within the limits of time, location, and specific contexts, by collecting data from various sources in order to obtain a comprehensive understanding. This is in line with the definition of Assyakurrohim et al. (2022), which emphasizes that a case study is an exploration through in-depth data collection and involves various sources of information. The research location was determined at the technical implementation unit Disability Services in the field of education and Resource Center of Yogyakarta City., which is a technical service center for persons with disabilities in the education sector.

The indicators used are access, participation, and quality. Data collection techniques in this study included interviews and document studies conducted at the technical implementation unit Disability Services in the field of education and Resource Center of Yogyakarta City. The subjects in this study were the Head of Administration Subdivision and technical service staff, who were purposively selected because they had direct involvement and in-depth understanding of the governance and implementation of disability services. The data analysis technique used was interactive analysis or Miles and Huberman's data analysis model.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of inclusive education is one of the efforts to fulfill the right to education for students with disabilities. Since its implementation, inclusive education has made a lot of progress and encountered many challenges. The results of interviews and document studies related to the challenges of inclusive education in the city of Yogyakarta have been carried out and obtained a lot of information. Interviews were conducted with the Head of the Administration Subdivision, Technical Policy Reviewer, Data and Information Processor. The other two informants said similar things to what was conveyed by the Head of the Administration Subdivision, namely,

"The challenges are as stated in the pocket book. Such as discrimination during the admission of new students, teachers not being prepared for students with disabilities, and inadequate facilities and infrastructure."

Following up on the information provided, a document study was conducted on the 2024 handbook of the technical implementation unit Disability Services in the field of education and the Yogyakarta City Resource Center. The documents are as follows:



Based on the results of interviews and document studies, there are several challenges in implementing inclusive education in Yogyakarta City. The challenges faced include discrimination and rejection in the admission of new students. One of the discriminations faced by students with disabilities is bullying (Mustaqim, 2024). One of the discrimination experienced by people with disabilities is due to the stigma of being a group that is unable to live independently (Kusmawati et al., 2024). This discrimination can also result in the mental disruption of students (Mustaqim, 2024). Therefore, there needs to be synergy between the community, teachers, students, and parties, especially those directly involved in education to increase awareness in creating an inclusive environment and respecting differences.

Another challenge faced in the implementation of inclusive education is that educators in schools implementing inclusive education are not ready to provide educational services for students with disabilities. Starting from Permendiknas No. 70/2009 on guidelines for implementing inclusive education, there are eight components that must be recognized, namely students, curriculum, teaching staff, learning activities, assessment and certification, school management, and rewards and sanctions. The educators referred to in the regulation are not only class teachers and subject teachers, but also special mentor teachers. Special mentor teachers are teachers who have academic qualifications and special education competencies who are tasked with providing assistance in the form of guidance, advocacy or consultation to educators and education personnel in schools implementing inclusive education. However, the number of special mentor teachers in inclusive education is inadequate. There is also a lack of skills and knowledge in providing services for students with disabilities. This lack of skills and knowledge can result in the creation of an exclusive environment for learners with disabilities. Therefore, training is needed for class and subject teachers to improve their understanding of providing services for learners with disabilities. This includes training in differentiated instruction, inclusive classroom management strategies and an in-depth understanding of different special needs. Also, if the school already has a special mentor teachers, collaboration between the special mentor teachers and the class and subject teachers is needed to provide more optimal education services for learners with disabilities.

Educational facilities and infrastructure for students are also supporting factors for the successful implementation of inclusive education (Bella Karmelia et al., 2024). Facilities are tools that can be used to facilitate or facilitate humans in achieving certain goals. Meanwhile, infrastructure is everything that supports, either directly or indirectly, all types of facilities (Islam et al., 2024). However, in reality the facilities and infrastructure needed are still inadequate, budget constraints are still the main reason for the unavailability of adequate facilities and infrastructure (Mulyawan et al., 2024). Facilities and infrastructure also play an important role in the success of inclusive education. Inadequate facilities and infrastructure result in policies set by the government that are only policies (Mulyawan et al., 2024). Without the support of adequate facilities and infrastructure, students with disabilities are hampered to be able to actively participate in the learning process (Andriyan et al., 2023). Therefore, facilities and infrastructure should be a common concern, so that educational services for students with disabilities can be achieved as expected.

Inclusive education also faces the challenge of many unresolved cases of learners with disabilities, which are often rooted in unclear tasks and functions of inclusive education and complex bureaucratic handling. One of the most basic aspects of bureaucracy is the standard operating procedure (SOP). These SOPs provide direction for implementation, without a clear direction for implementation, many cases of students with disabilities are neglected (Rosari et al., 2023). Therefore, bureaucratic services that specifically serve inclusive education are one of the answers to this challenge (Fadlan et al., 2023). Bureaucratic services that specifically handle inclusive education, in addition to providing direction for implementation, also play a role in studying, developing inclusive education, and bridging between policy and practice in the field. Thus, collaboration between schools and these specialized services is important to improve inclusive education services.

CONCLUSION

Inclusive education in Indonesia, especially in Yogyakarta City, has made significant progress in realizing equal access to education for all children, including students with disabilities. However, there are still a number of structural and cultural challenges that hinder its optimal implementation. Based on the results of the research

that has been conducted, it is known that there are several challenges in implementing inclusive education in the city of Yogyakarta. Among the challenges faced are discrimination and rejection in the admission of new students. the implementation of inclusive education cannot be separated from the role of teachers. However, teachers are not ready to provide education services for students with disabilities. Another challenge is that many of the problems experienced by learners with disabilities have not been resolved because of the complicated bureaucratic handling. In addition, facilities and infrastructure in inclusive schools are inadequate, which hampers the learning process because students are prevented from actively participating in learning. One of the answers to these challenges is through bureaucratic services that specifically serve inclusive education. Bureaucratic services that specifically handle inclusive education, in addition to providing implementation directions, also play a role in studying and developing inclusive education, as well as bridging the gap between policy and practice in the field. Thus, collaboration between schools and these special service units is important in order to improve inclusive education services.

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