



Untangling the Knot: Navigating Teacher Doubts in Implementing Inclusive Education in Indonesia

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Abstract. The concept of inclusive education has gained significant attention in Indonesia as a means to create equitable and accessible learning environments for all students. However, its successful implementation relies heavily on the active participation and understanding of teachers. This article explores the challenges faced by teachers in Indonesia when tasked with implementing inclusive education practices. By examining the various sources of doubt and uncertainty among educators, the study aims to shed light on the complexities and obstacles hindering the effective implementation of inclusive education. Through a comprehensive analysis of existing literature and interviews with teachers, the research highlights the need for targeted support and professional development to address teacher concerns and facilitate the successful integration of inclusive education principles in Indonesian classrooms. By untangling the knots of doubt, this study aspires to offer valuable insights that may pave the way for a more inclusive and empowering educational landscape in Indonesia.

Keywords: teachers' doubt, challenges in inclusive education, Indonesia

1 Introduction

In recent years, the concept of inclusive education has emerged as a cornerstone of educational reform, reflecting a global commitment to ensuring that all students have the opportunity to participate fully in educational life [1]. Inclusion, defined as the process of responding to the diversity of needs among all learners, entails substantial changes in content, teaching methods, policies, and organizational structures. In Indonesia, the call for inclusive education has grown louder, fueled by international conventions, national laws, and an overall shift towards a more equitable educational system [2].

However, the implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia is fraught with challenges and complexities, particularly in the teacher's role. As the primary facilitators of learning, teachers are critical to the success of inclusive education, yet they often face obstacles in understanding and enacting inclusive principles [3]. Teachers' attitudes, beliefs, training, and the support they receive are identified as significant determinants of their ability to create inclusive classrooms ([4]; [5]).

This article explores the specific challenges faced by teachers in Indonesia when tasked with implementing inclusive education practices. By examining various sources of doubt and uncertainty, the study aims to shed light on the hindrances to effective inclusion in Indonesian classrooms. Through a comprehensive analysis of existing literature and interviews with teachers, the research underscores the pressing need for targeted support and professional development [6]. This study's aspiration is not merely to identify the knots of doubt but to untangle them, paving the way for a more inclusive and empowering educational landscape in Indonesia,

1.1 Overview of inclusive education principles and practices worldwide.

Inclusive education, heralded as an egalitarian approach to learning, strives to ensure that all children, irrespective of their differences, are provided equal opportunities in mainstream classrooms [1]. This review provides a brief overview of the principles and practices of inclusive education from a global perspective.

Global Commitments to Inclusive Education

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action [1] underlined the necessity of inclusive education, emphasizing its potential to build inclusive societies. The Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) also commits to ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all, further solidifying its global importance [7].

Challenges in Developing Countries

Despite the global push, many developing countries grapple with the practicalities of inclusive education due to limited resources, lack of training, and cultural beliefs [8]. However, grassroots movements and non-governmental organizations have been pivotal in promoting and implementing inclusive practices at localized levels [9].

Cultural Adaptations

It's essential to understand that inclusive education isn't a 'one size fits all'. Cultural and contextual adaptations are crucial. For instance, indigenous communities in Australia have tailored inclusive practices to suit their unique cultural and educational needs [10]. While inclusive education is a global endeavor, its implementation and practice are deeply entrenched in local contexts, resources, and cultural nuances. Its universal principle, however, remains unchanged: providing equitable opportunities for all. Challenges and trends in inclusive education within Indonesia

Inclusive education, a global mandate, presents unique challenges and trends in different geographical contexts. Indonesia, with its diverse socio-cultural landscape and burgeoning young population, offers a distinctive paradigm. This review sheds light on the specific challenges and trends in inclusive education within Indonesia.

1.2 Government Initiatives & Policy Context

Indonesia's commitment to inclusive education can be traced back to the Inclusive Schooling program initiated in 2003. The Ministry of Education has since scaled up

efforts, making inclusive education a central tenet of the nation's educational framework [11]. However, the translation of policy into practice remains an ongoing challenge.

Infrastructure & Resource Challenges

Despite policy directives, many schools lack the physical infrastructure and resources to support students with special needs. Classrooms are often not disability-friendly, and there is a dire shortage of teaching aids tailored to different disabilities [12].

Teacher Training & Expertise

The effective implementation of inclusive education is highly contingent on the training of educators. Many teachers in Indonesia feel inadequately trained to cater to students with diverse needs [13]. Ongoing professional development remains a significant gap.

Socio-Cultural Beliefs

Deep-rooted socio-cultural beliefs sometimes perceive disabilities as a curse or punishment, leading to stigmatization. Such perceptions can hinder community acceptance of inclusive education initiatives [14].

Trends: Community-Based Initiatives

In light of these challenges, there is a growing trend of community-based inclusive education initiatives. Such grassroots movements leverage local insights and resources to foster inclusion and have demonstrated success in specific regions of Indonesia [15].

Future Prospects: Technology in Inclusion

Digital tools and technologies offer a beacon of hope. There is a growing trend to harness technology to cater to the differentiated needs of students, bridging some of the resource gaps that brick-and-mortar schools face [16].

In conclusion, while inclusive education in Indonesia has seen commendable policy direction, practical implementation faces multifaceted challenges. Trends, like community-based initiatives and technological interventions, offer a promising future for the country's inclusive education landscape.

2 Methods

The method that has been used in this study was to gather the teacher's opinions about their doubts about implementing inclusive education in Indonesia. The aim of this study was to identify the challenges in the practice of inclusive education.

Participants

I employed a purposeful sampling technique to carefully select the participants for the interviews. I identified the 7 teachers from Indonesia who showed eagerness to take part in the interview in this research.

Procedure

Participants were individually interviewed using a semi-structured interview guide designed to elicit rich, detailed narratives on the implementation of inclusive education: challenges and teachers doubts. Each interview lasted approximately 25 minutes and

was audio-recorded with the consent of the participants. Recordings were later transcribed verbatim.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using Reflective Thematic Analysis (RTA) in line with the principles outlined by Braun and Clarke [17]. This method is particularly suitable when the research seeks to find themes within the data and take into account the researcher's reflexive engagement with the data.

Familiarization with the Data

The transcripts were read and reread by the primary researcher to immerse themselves in the data, noting down initial ideas.

Generating Initial Codes

Systematic coding was done across the entire data set, assigning labels to segments of data that appeared to capture relevant and meaningful features.

Searching for Themes

Codes were collated into potential themes by reviewing and clustering related codes.

Reviewing Themes

Themes were then reviewed and refined, ensuring they were supported by the data. This involved checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set.

Defining and Naming Themes

Each theme was given a clear definition and name.

Producing the Report

The final step involved weaving together the analytic narrative and supporting data extracts.

Throughout the analysis, the researcher maintained a reflexive journal. This was used to track thoughts, feelings, and interpretations throughout the analytic process, ensuring transparency and rigor.

Ethical Considerations

The research was reviewed and given a favorable opinion by the Educational Research Ethics Committee, Institute of Psychology, Pedagogical University of Krakow.

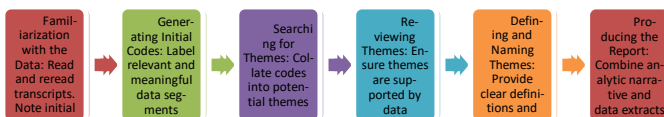


Figure 1. Thematic analysis stage by Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006)

3 Findings and Discussion

The extensive coding from the interview provides an intricate and comprehensive look at the landscape of inclusive education in Indonesia, specifically focusing on the challenges and obstacles. Analyzing the provided information, we can identify significant relationships and key themes related to teachers' doubts and the factors contributing to these doubts regarding inclusive education.

Teachers' Training and Support

Training

The coding indicates that teachers have received training, but the quality and continuity of training are not mentioned. Annual training and follow-ups by education authorities are highlighted as needs.

...if you really want to be serious about inclusion, especially in the education sector, the Education Office should not only

hold training every year, inviting schools that are deemed to have children with special needs, but what will happen next? [teacher 2]

...even though we have SL here, it seems like if SL outside is regular, we still modify it, we lighten up the material like that. For children with severe autism, then we use a function like that. we know about it when attending seminars like that...[teacher 7]

Support

The lack of Special Education Teachers (SET) and the high workload for existing special teachers underscore a lack of structural support. Limited learning media and time constraints also contribute to challenges.

...There are also accompanying teachers. But coincidentally the accompanying teachers here are very limited. [teacher 5]

...the obstacles are clear, there are not enough teaching staff, especially for SET. The number of SET does not match the number of teachers. [teacher 1]

Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusive Education

The coding reveals that some teachers find teaching Special Needs Students (SNS) difficult, and some may even refuse to accept SNS into their classes. Schools are also portrayed as apprehensive about accepting SNS, fearing low performance (Interview data).

...From the heart, sincerely develop the abilities of children who initially can't, how can I do it as much as I can, that child should be able to. in terms of attitude, in my school, if the attitude is between regular teachers and ABK (inclusion) teachers, the attitude is the same...[teacher 3]

...But after we invite them spiritually, how does it affect our psyche, how does it affect our gratitude. Then actually they are not happy because they do not know the knowledge, you know, knowledge for the spiritual, knowledge for the psyche, and knowledge of how to handle it. [teacher 4]

Policy and Governmental Challenges

The coding points to inconsistency in government support for Inclusive Education (IE) and a focus on special schools over inclusive schools.

... I don't know, maybe the government hasn't got anything yet, response to inclusive schools or what, I also don't know...[teacher 6]

... If the inclusive schools are prepared by the government, they already know more than us, if that means that in the future the government will have good intentions to make inclusive schools for our children..[teacher 2]

4 Conclusion

Results of the current study indicate that inclusive education in Indonesia is marked by distinct challenges spanning training, attitude, and policy dimensions. While teachers receive training, gaps persist in its quality and continuity, compounded by a concerning shortage of Special Education Teachers (SET) and limited structural support. Concurrently, mixed attitudes among educators manifest with some passionately advocating for Special Needs Students (SNS) inclusion, while others, due to lack of knowledge or training, demonstrate hesitancy. This landscape is further complicated by ambiguous government policies that, although recognizing the importance of inclusive education, lack consistent support and clear implementation frameworks. Thus, a holistic overhaul encompassing enhanced training, bolstered support systems, attitudinal shifts, and refined governmental policies is imperative for the successful integration of inclusive education in Indonesia.

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