

# How Inclusive Education Works: An Experience From Lazuardi Global Islamic School

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**Abstract-**Inclusive education is increasingly popular in the last few years. It is because this system is effective for disability people for not being excluded from their environment. Len Barton (1998) defines inclusive education as the education for all children, who necessitate serious changes, both in terms of society and economic, social conditions and the schools in which they are a part of. However, making this system work is very challenging and complex. The acceptance of disable students in schools is not the only criterion of inclusion. In fact, there are many more requirements to be inclusive education. Lazuardi, Global Islamic School is a good example of inclusive school in Islamic education. The school is highly committed to conduct inclusive education and famously known for its best and effective therapy center. There are also many students from other schools coming to the Lazuardi's therapy center. Utilizing qualitative research and extensive interviews with the school's leaders, teachers, head therapy center, parents, and students, this paper attempts to uncover the formula of inclusive school that Lazuardi implements. It concludes that Lazuardi's experience in implementing inclusive school can be a role model for other Islamic educational institutions.

**Keywords:** *Disability inclusion; inclusive education; inclusive school, Islamic education.*

## I. Introduction

Historically, the idea of inclusive education comes from United Nation Declaration about Human Rights (1990) and followed by world conference about education for all (1993). Since Salamanca Declaration UNESCO (1994), inclusive education is becoming more popular as a new

paradigm in education system across the world. It is inspired by democracy, social justice and humanitarian values and supported by some research that concludes inclusive education system is more effective for disability inclusion than segregation.

In Indonesian context, inclusive education has just formally started in 2009 under the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia No.70 tahun 2009. By this policy, the government strongly encourages all schools in Indonesia to change their education system with inclusive approach. In fact, the political will is not enough to make the inclusive education to be a reality. There are some important requirements to be a real inclusive education, not only receiving special need students into school as it is the most frequent criterion of inclusive education in Indonesia and some countries.

Lazuardi, Global Islamic School is one of Islamic education that is highly committed to conduct inclusive education since 1994. It has a lot of experiences and a comprehensive system of inclusive education that might be a role model or reference in developing inclusive education in Indonesia. So, the article will describe five instances of inclusive education: the school organization and management, the curriculum development, the training program, and the teacher ratio and competencies, and also therapy center as a significant support facility in succeeding the program.

Briefly, concept inclusive education has two meanings. Narrow definition means an integration education that putting children with special needs into the mainstream school. Meanwhile broad definition that is education for all students regardless of their special needs, gender, ethnicity, culture, social background, etc. This is in line with the Salamanca Declaration 1994.

Based on the research OECD [1] in eight countries that there are nine particular significant issues in developing and sustaining inclusive education: funding models, system of public accountability, pupil assessment, curriculum

development, teacher/student and adult/student ratios, the part-time or full time presence, the functioning of support services, the training system for teachers and other professionals, and community and parental involvement [1].

Meanwhile, the Peter Haug states that the difficulties in practical inclusive education are: lack of any real political priority, disagreement about how to operationalize definitions and about lack of coherence in educational policy, poor of teacher competencies in the field of inclusive pedagogy, confusing documentation of the effect of inclusive education and pedagogy (student's outcome), dominating and different national historical, social, and political traditions [2].

## II. METHODS

The research aims to describe practicing inclusive education in Lazuardi Global Islamic School. The research uses qualitative approach with analytic descriptive research type. The definition of inclusive school used in the article is narrow definition, which is inclusive education as a school program for SEN students. The specific object research is elementary school unit of Lazuardi. The primary informants are the principle of elementary school unit, the leader of Therapy Centre "Pelangi" unit, SEN teacher, parents and also SEN students. Data collection techniques in this research consisted of three kinds: literature study, in-depth interview and observation.

## III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### A. *The School Organization and Management*

Since establishment (1994), the school has a commitment to receive SEN (Special Education Needs) students to give them an opportunity to obtain the same education with regular students inspired by Islamic values including loves, care, equality, and no discrimination which is mentioned in vision and mission the school. It is applied to all the units of Lazuardi including Kindergarten, Elementary and High schools that have to receive (SEN) students.

The consequences are the schools have to prepare all the requirements to success inclusive education including providing qualified SEN teachers, therapy center (Pelangi Unit), curriculum development, trainings and infrastructure. Besides that, the school management also creates inclusive environment that is all stakeholders of the school such as regular students, parents, security, teachers, cleaning service have to understand and respect to SEN students. As a results, SEN students would feel comfortable and being respected and not excluded.

Based on the data above, the philosophy of the inclusive school is Islamic values. It is different with inclusive education in Europe that the basic idea comes from Human Rights and democracy values. It is absolutely relevant with the name of Global Islamic School and affects to all activities, learning and teaching process of the school. The school has 20 principles of Lazuardi that are love, altruistic, contentment, gratefulness, optimism, patience, having husn' udhdhan, no envy/jealousy, fraternity, trust and truth, istiqomah, courage, prudence, justice, respect,

cleanliness, modesty, broadminded, joyful, having selfcontrol have to be implemented in daily activities and in school curriculum.

Socializing approach in order to promoting understanding of children with special needs to all stakeholders is very appropriate management to create inclusive education. So, everybody will have a great understanding, awareness, and respect in viewing their differences and needs. It is very important to build the right perception or opinion about children with special needs to avoid bullying, criminal, and discrimination. In disability studies, it is called social model of disability that disability is caused by social construction [3].

### B. *The Teacher Ratio and Competencies.*

Based on the principle about SEN students, each student has different needs, which we have to give supports to. As a result, it surely requires logic ratio between pupil and teacher. Lazuardi fully realizes about it and the school has a ratio between pupil/teacher that are 1:1 for those with more severe disabilities, while 2:1 for those with less severe needs. This ratio is smaller compared to applying inclusive education in Denmark which is 1.7:1 and 4.3:1 respectively [1]. As we know, Denmark is known as a welfare state that concerns about providing social services to enhance wellbeing of its citizens including disabled people. So, it indicates that Lazuardi has proportional ratio of teacher because it is not bigger ratio that Denmark.

Meanwhile, there are 19 teachers who are assigned as SEN teachers in elementary school unit. They come from different educational backgrounds: 5 people from special needs education, 7 from psychology, 4 from physiotherapy, 2 from occupational therapy, and 1 from non-formal education background.

Ideally, student with special needs accompanied by particular educational background that is special need education (PLB). However, the needs of SEN students is complex, they do not only need the curriculum modification (IEP) but they also need counseling and therapy which can be qualified by psychologist and therapist. So, it looks like a team-teaching that have different job for the same goal. It is similar with the research by Yaum and Mais who concluded that there is no correlation between education qualifications and optimizations of basic tasks and function of SEN teachers (Yaum and Mais: nd).

### C. *The Curriculum Development*

Basically, the Lazuardi regular school curriculum refers to National and Cambridge curriculums. The curriculum for SEN students depend on the special needs of the students. There are two categories curriculum for SEN students. *First*, pure regular curriculum, that is for those who are able to follow the regular curriculum. *Second*, modified curriculum, that is for those who are not able to understand the regular curriculum. Modified curriculum is designed for individual SEN students or called with IEP (Individual Education Plan).

In the class, every SEN student will have three teachers: classroom teacher, subject teacher and SEN teacher. Classroom teacher is responsible for all students in the class and subject teacher's role is teaching the particular

subject. Meanwhile, SEN teacher has a multitasking job, which are accompanying, observing, designing IEP program, giving therapist and also counseling.

This curriculum development is relevant with General Guidelines Implementation of Inclusive Education released by Ministry of Education 2007 that emphasizes the urgency of curriculum modification for children with special needs. Lani Florian [4] also encourages to have inclusive pedagogy as an evidence of inclusive education because it is an approach to teaching and learning that supports teachers to respond to each different student's needs.

#### D. The Training System

These are training theme for SEN teacher's Lazuardi conducted by therapy center, Pelangi unit of Lazuardi. This training also offers for other parties who are interested to hold the inclusive education training.

1. Typical & Atypical Child Development
2. Topics of Disability or Constraints Progress: Autism Spectrum Disorder, Attention Deficit Disorder Hyperactive, Barriers to learning, Intellectual barriers, Physical disability, Hearing disorders, and Blind
3. Analyze and Behavioral Management
4. Facilitating Social Communication
5. Managing Sensory Issues (sensory integration dysfunction)
6. Curriculum and Individual Education Plan (IEP)
7. Together Working with Family and Other Professionals
8. Adaptation of Classroom & Activity
9. Developing Trained Practitioners (Leadership and Team Building).

The Lazuardi also has a Training Workshop for parents because Lazuardi believe that parents has a big role in promoting successful integration of children with special needs into society. The topic of training includes: Behavior management, Managing Sensory Issues, Facilitate speech, language and communication, Managing Daily Living Events, Community mobility, Feeding Skills etc.

The training program that Lazuardi hold is a comprehensive training model because it contains of all knowledge and skills that the special need teachers need. It is also very similar with training in Denmark, as a country has a long history of inclusion. The training includes working as the special education coordinator, team-teaching, developing mutual support between teachers and learners to develop effective collaboration through meetings and problem solving approach, the pedagogies of curriculum differentiation, the development of individual education programs, and the monitoring of progress[1].

#### E. The Therapy Centre

One of the characteristics of inclusive education in Lazuardi is the therapy center Pelangi Lazuardi. It is a part of Lazuardi Units providing variety of therapies for people living with disability from both internal and external school. It also supplies training for inclusive education as mentioned above. Here are kind of therapies provided:

1. Sensory Integration (Snoezelen, Self-Reliance in Self Care, ability to manipulate hands, functional eye, foot and eye coordination ability)
2. Speech Therapy and Communication
3. Cognitive and behavioral therapy
4. Psychological Consultation
5. Occupational Therapy Consultation

The SEN teacher usually will send the SEN students to this center as part of school program relate to their IEP. The students can also have additional therapy by themselves to foster their growth and development.

Existing this therapy center is a huge advantage of the school because not every inclusive schools has a therapy center. Therapy center located in the school area is very helpful because it makes the students easier to get there in having therapy either as a part of the school program or additional therapy. So, the distance is not becoming a barrier to get intensive therapy.

Pelangi will give the therapy based on the clients' needs, can be sensory integration, speech therapy, cognitive and behavior therapy, consultation, or occupational therapy. Inclusive education from the school is more about to pursue academic aspect but in therapy is more about basic skills of life aspects include daily activities routine, communication, and self-management. If SEN students doing both aspects regularly that are school and therapy, their potential would be actual better and faster.

## IV. CONCLUSIONS

Lazuardi Global Islamic School is a good example for developing inclusive education. There are five instances of practicing inclusive education in Lazuardi. *First*, school organization and management has a high commitment to implement inclusive education followed by allocating and developing curriculum development, teacher competencies, therapy center, infrastructure, and funding and resourcing. The difference of this school with other inclusive schools is all activities schools based on 20 principles of Lazuardi, which is adopted from Islamic values. *Second*, the teacher ratio and competences. The ratio pupil/teacher are 1:1 for those with more severe disabilities while 2:1 those with less severe needs. SEN teacher has different educational backgrounds: special needs education, psychology, physiotherapy, and occupational therapy. *Third*, each student with special needs has individual curriculum development that is modified regular curriculum according to each student's needs. *Forth*, training program is also important for improving teacher's competencies in performing their tasks as SEN teacher. In Lazurdi, besides the normal training conducted by therapy center about special need education, training is also delivered by sharing and case conference supervised by SEN coordinator or the leader of therapy center every week. *Fifth*, therapy center as a support facility in developing inclusive education provides therapy services and also training for teacher and parents about special education needs.

All these practices of inclusive education is suitable for General Guidelines Implementation of Inclusive Education 2007 and even more perfect because

Lazuardi has regular training programs and therapy center which is not mentioned in the guidelines.

However, it needs more research about the students' outcome to see the effectiveness of the inclusive education program at Lazuardi Global Islamic School.

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