

Parents, Teachers, Special Teachers, and School Principals: Which one Matter in Driving the Success of Inclusive School in Indonesia?

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ABSTRACT

Managing quality education primarily for children with special needs has been a challenge for the Indonesian government, and it has enhanced attention among scholars. This study aims to investigate the determinant factors driving the success of the implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia. This study involves the variables that directly link with the implementation of inclusive education, including teachers, school principals, and parents. The research involved a mixed-method approach to reach a deeper understanding of this phenomenon. This study started with quantitative data and was followed by qualitative analysis. The data were collected using questionnaires and further conducted in-depth interviews for selected informants in East Java of Indonesia. The results indicate that the highest supports come from special teachers, followed by parents and teacher in other subjects. Surprisingly, school principals take the lowest rank for implementing inclusive education in East Java of Indonesia. The implication of this study is to collaborate between parties can enhance the success of inclusive education implementation in Indonesia.

Keywords: Inclusive education, school principals, teachers' role, parents support

INTRODUCTION

Managing the education quality for children with special needs is challenging, and it has attracted the attention of scholars and policy researchers. The main issue is that children with special needs are often marginalized, which in turn affects educational inequality. In fact, approximately 18 percent of Indonesian children with special needs have received an educational service, while a large percentage is missing from the education services. In doing so, the Indonesian government has provided special schools for them and attempted to promote an inclusive school as well. The implementation of inclusive education was officially in Indonesia in 2004. However, there are many obstacles experienced by schools, including not being ready for schools to accept students with special needs in school and a lack of understanding of classroom teachers on accommodative learning for students with special needs (Tarnoto, 2016; Mirici, 2022). The success of the implementation of inclusive education depends on several parties, including the principal as the primary management of the school and decision-makers related to the implementation of inclusive education. In addition, the implementation of inclusive education requires a teacher for special students who helps class teachers in translating materials or moderating learning in the classroom. In addition, parents who support students with special needs at home help learning to obtain maximum accomplishment (Ogolla, 2011). The inclusive educational school involves students with special needs altogether and enables them to interact with other students in the same public schools (Buchner et al., 2021).

School principals' and teachers' performance in this context is interpreted as the implementation of the work or school principals, teachers, and special teachers' performance in operating inclusive education programs at the education unit level (Sanagi, 2016). Special teacher for students with special needs is arranged to prepare for some matters, including starting from making assessments, compiling materials, compiling evaluations, modifying materials even to the stage of conducting evaluations to be more accommodating for children. At some point, the school principals and teachers in other subjects need also to have tasks in touching their children to avoid any discrimination and other negative aspects for children with special needs. This is very crucial for all parties to provide a different learning environment in the schools. A recent study by Edianto et al. (2021) mentioned that the implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia faces some

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problems, and it is noted that the attitude of regular teachers can be both positive and negative. This study elaborates on some components, including parents, teachers for special needs students, teachers in other subjects, and school principles that are missing in the prior studies. The majority of preliminary scholars are concerned with the implementation of inclusive education, while this study incorporates determinant factors for supporting inclusive education. Furthermore, this study involves a mixed-method to raise a greater understanding of capturing this phenomenon.

In more detail, inclusive education is described as the type of teaching in which the students with special education needs obtain the necessary in the primary classroom to guarantee an effective teaching-learning process (Magyar et al., 2020). By creating an accommodating learning environment for children with special needs, it is possible for students to study in the same environment together with regular children without any exceptions. Some studies argued that inclusiveness is a spirit of openness and welcomes the diversity of students from various backgrounds, abilities, cultures, races, ethnicities, and social backgrounds, so schools must facilitate and create a setting that accepts all students as part of the school community (Symeonidou & Chrysostomou, 2019; Hanafi et al., 2019). The implementation of inclusive education has raised a debate among teachers, parents, and school principals. Some teachers are more likely to be pessimistic about the implementation of inclusive education due to the lack of communication and interaction with other students in the schools, even when the learning process is performed in a different class (Ummah et al., 2020). On the other hand, some parents agree with this learning model while others do not. Parents are the driving and determining factor in the establishment of inclusive education. It is expected that parents will fully support inclusive education implementation in schools since they are expected to help their children study at home so that the material taught at home can synergize well (Gasteiger-Klicpera et al., 2013; Amka, 2019). In its implementation, parents are expected to participate in the operation of inclusive education actively. The significance of establishing an inclusive school system emerged after the principle of inclusive education was incorporated into international law with the passage of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006). In addition, some scholars mentioned that the challenge of implementing inclusive education in Indonesia has no precise regulation from the government (Sulistiyadi, 2014; Sudarto, 2017). In addition to teachers and parents, the performance of school principals is also critical to organizing better inclusive education at the school level (Wang et al., 2017; Young et al., 2017). Public schools that organize inclusive education need to make adjustments, both from the aspect of school management, which is the duty and responsibility of the principal, as well as classroom and learning management which are the duties

and responsibilities of teachers and special teachers (Ummah & Pambudy, 2017).

There is a continued debate among scholars on this matter on what or how to implement inclusive education. For example, in the Europe context, Morina (2016) investigated the practices of inclusive education for higher education. Additionally, Bjornsrud and Nilsen (2019) examined using a qualitative approach to the implementation of inclusive education in Norway and remarked that inclusive education had provided benefits and drawbacks for students with special needs. Indeed, the implementation of inclusive education in China concerns some obstacles (Yada & Savolainen, 2017). However, few studies have investigated the implementation of inclusive education in any systematic way.

METHOD

Study Design

This study employed a mixed-method as the fundamental research design to acquire a comprehensive finding. This method enables obtaining data from a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches to understand better the research problem than when using only one approach (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007). Additionally, it is beneficial to overcome the quantitative and qualitative approaches' weaknesses and obtain data following the research study (Hanson et al., 2005). This study started with quantitative data and was followed by qualitative analysis. In detail, the quantitative approach was involved in exploring information on the attitudes of school principals, teachers, special teachers, and parents in inclusive schools. While the qualitative approach is attempted to reach a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. The design of the quantitative method consists of stages that need to be taken by a researcher by taking and acquiring information from sources who have an understanding regarding the topic under study.

Data Collection

For the data collection, this study used an open questionnaire in collecting the required data. The number of respondents was 264, consisting of 42 principals, 138 teachers, and 84 parents in East Java. The instruments given to principals consisted of 50 items, instruments for teachers numbered 75 items, and 46 items given by parents in East Java. The information collected from the questionnaire enabled the researcher to develop closed-ended interview questions given to 70 randomly selected respondents of a pilot project for the implementation of inclusive education in East Java. The data excavated for principals are related to the school's policy in accepting students with special needs, the school's readiness to accept students with special needs, and the division of tasks between class teachers and special teachers to accommodate

students with special needs in inclusive schools. While the data excavated from teachers about the acceptance and know the characteristics of students with special needs and learning models that are accommodative for them. Data were informed for special teachers about breastfeeding learning tools and the admission of students with special needs in schools. The last is parents; researchers dig into related data on the admission of students with special needs in the family and admission to schools. Questionnaires were filled out by respondents to express attitudes towards implementing inclusive education. In detail, school principals cover the indicator of regulations and policies, while parents were performed from indicator of assessment of attitudes, responses, and anxieties. The special teacher was measured by the planning of the teaching and learning process and assisting students with special needs. Lastly, the teacher in other subjects was calculated from their perceived acceptance and handling environment.

Data Analysis

The process of data analysis was used quantitatively first and followed by qualitative. Quantitative data were collected by filling out questionnaires that were distributed to a number of samples that had been determined. Moreover, the data were analyzed using ANOVA. Once the quantitative data is collected, the next is to explore further data in a qualitative way. Qualitative data were analyzed using Nvivo. Data were collected by further interviews with respondents and then coded based on research problems and grouped based on research findings. The data collected from the questionnaires are intended to show how the attitude of school principals,

special teachers, and teachers in the implementation of inclusive education. Analysis of the questionnaires data allowed researchers to develop an interview with open-ended questions to find out the problems experienced by teachers related to the implementation of inclusive education. The qualitative data were analyzed using triangulation data for confirming the obtained data. Lastly, the quantitative analysis was carried out with ANOVA, which is aimed to reveal several aspects that could be explored related to the support of school principals, special teachers, and teachers in the success of inclusive education.

FINDINGS

The results of this study aim to identify the role of parents, teachers, special teachers, and school principals in supporting the implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia. The data in Figure 1 shows that the highest support for the implementation of inclusive education comes from the special teacher for children with special needs, while the lowest support is the school principals, which showed by the average value of the Anova test (see Table 1). Additionally, teachers and parents have the value of 2.4131 and 2.0402. The data in Figure 1 were collected from the questionnaires distributed to the respondents. Based on the outcome of the ANOVA test, the probability value (p-value) obtained is $0.000 < 0.05$. This indicates that there is a significant contrast in inclusive assessment between the teachers, special teachers, parents, and school principals.

The qualitative data shows the acceptance, learning process, and were indicated in their responses to the respective open-ended questions (Table 2).

DISCUSSION

Inclusive education is one form of equality and a form of non-discrimination in which children with special needs and children can receive the same education (Freer, 2021; Symeonidou & Chrysostomou, 2019). In inclusive education,

Table 1: Anova Test

Variables	Mean	Standard of Deviation	ANOVA
Teachers	2.4131	0.41114	p = 0.000
Special Teachers	1.9345	0.91223	
Parents	2.0402	0.80758	
School Principals	2.574	0.14489	

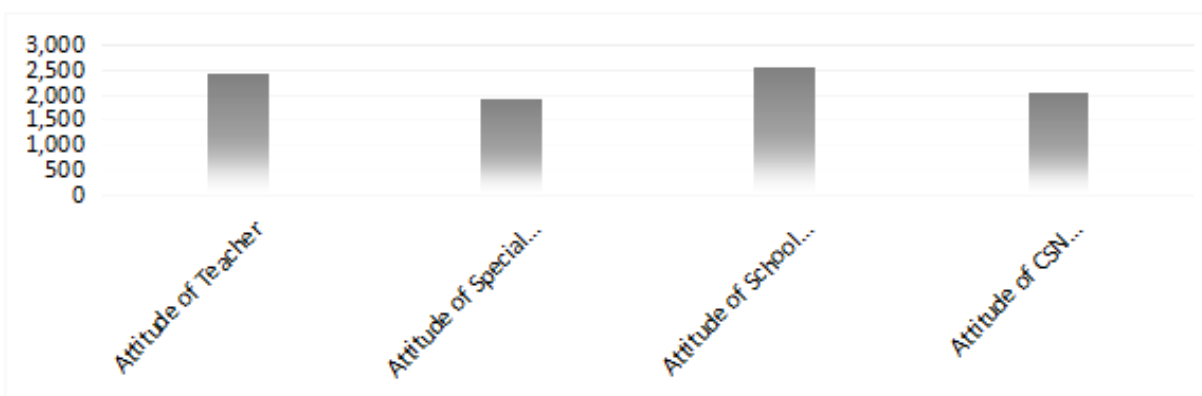


Fig. 1: The degree of each party in supporting inclusive education

Table 2: Reason indicated informant responses

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Reason indicated informant responses</i>
Acceptance	Normal children are afraid at first because their crew members sometimes suddenly shout in class and laugh in class but still do not tell them if they are okay. Additionally, the treatment needs to be fair for students with special needs. The point is that we do not defend normal children and feel sorry for the special needs children. We usually try to be neutral, not taking any side. In fact, if there are crew members who play alone during breaks, we will tell them to play with them. If there is a class assignment, the students with special need who can join my class involves a group with normal children so that the tutors are the same age and can learn together. Those with special needs can adapt to normal themes, which can help children with special needs in learning
Learning process	The support provided by the school which aims to facilitate the school equipment needed. For example, the learning media that students need. Additionally, the learning process was provided contextually by incorporating them in real activities such as buying ice cream. At school, this is fully supported this inclusion because students with special needs is lightweight for me, with no problem in inclusive schools. If it is heavy, it is not possible, so we accept the children well as much as possible.
Learning involvement	We facilitate students with special needs by including related training to make it even better. We also include teachers so that we can learn together. After receiving students, the special teachers and teachers have a focus group discussion (FGD) to discuss the acceptance of students with special needs. Another FGD is focused on learning programs to suit the needs of children at school. We also evaluate the students with special needs program every semester with the teacher and special teachers to consider when there are difficulties that we can discuss learning with each other. The point is that we fully support this inclusion because the service has also appointed us

children with special needs do not receive special treatment or privileges but the same rights and obligations as other learners. Cooperation from various parties such as the government, the school, and the community are influential in its implementation because school inclusion is a new challenge for the school and the community. Based on the results that have been revealed, the principal supports the implementation of inclusive education for students with special needs, but the data has the lowest value compared to teachers, special teachers, and parents. Based on the interviews' results, some principals are not ready to accept students with special needs in their schools. This is because they do not adequately understand students' characteristics and learning styles with special needs. The principal is the first person to decide whether to accept ABK or not. One of the critical components in the admission of students with special needs in schools is principals' openness to the implementation of inclusive education. According to Andini et al. (2018) stated that the success of inclusion education, one of the indicators is that the principal has a broad view or accepts students with special needs well open and the absence of discrimination in the admission of students, including students with special needs.

The finding indicates that school principals take a significant role in the implementation of inclusive education. In practice, the school principal with the stakeholders established of school's curriculum as the main element of the educational process. The attitude of school principals who display a high commitment will lead to a great environment in supporting the success of inclusive education. The aim of the curriculum establishment and teaching-learning activities will drive a consideration towards the competence level of each teachers' capabilities and attempt to support and encourage them to enhance their competencies constantly. School principals can take as an educator need to master various approaches,

techniques, methods, and strategies in the learning process. School principals must also be pioneers for teachers to carry out an active, creative, effective and fun learning process (Taufan & Mazhud, 2016; Manora, 2019). In this context, effective leadership is measured by indicators of effective principal leadership seen in program management, from the arrangements, directing the implementation of the program, and the results and evaluations of the program in accordance with the aimed vision, mission, and goals (Sider et al., 2011; Aisyah & Badrudin, 2019). The results indicate that the principal's attitude supports the implementation of inclusive education. In relation to teachers, the principal motivates teachers and special teachers to always provide accommodative services to children with special needs at school. For example, it can be formed in delivering learning activities based on the results of assessment according to the conditions of the students with special needs. It can be shown by modifying the learning materials according to the conditions and providing evaluations that accommodate the students with special needs. In addition, the principal actively participates in developing the competencies of teachers or special teachers towards inclusive learning.

The school principal, as the manager of the school, provides full support for the successful implementation of inclusive education in schools. This is in line with Yusuf (2012), which remarked that school principals have an essential role in the success of the implementation of inclusive education. Without the active role and support of school principals, the implementation of inclusive education cannot develop properly (Hanafi et al., 2019). Indeed, some scholars in believing that the principal as the school administrator feels a favorable attitude toward inclusion (Chandler, 2015; Hack, 2014). Furthermore, a prior study also found that the development of professional skills through training is one of the success factors in the

implementation of inclusive education (Goley, 2013) and that training is one of the most critical factors in forming favorable attitudes towards inclusive education, which provides them with knowledge of disability, management skills, and understanding of laws that mandate the inclusion of children with special needs in public schools.

In addition to school principals, a teacher is a motor in the implementation of inclusive education in schools. The implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia directly places teachers in primary schools as the spearhead in the implementation of education in schools. In view of this, the professionalism and competence of teachers in schools is an essential aspect of a teacher's capital to implement inclusive education. Elementary school teachers, according to Article (1) of Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, must master four competencies consist of pedagogic competence, personality competence, social competence, and professional competence. Pedagogic competence is the ability to manage student learning. Personality competence is the ability of a strong personality, noble, wise, and authoritative, as well as being a role model for students. Professional competence is the ability to master the subject matter broadly and deeply. Based on the data obtained from the results, teachers also agreed and supported the implementation of inclusive education. Values obtained based on field findings obtained from interviews show that class teachers or regular teachers stated that accepting students with special needs takes time to learn for regular teachers because education services for students with special needs are very different from regular children. Hence, it is necessary to time to learn about it. However, in general, classroom teachers accept students with special needs if the school has declared inclusive but ask for the help of a special teacher to assist in providing accommodative learning.

From the respondent perspectives, in general, it shows that teachers in other subjects also welcome the implementation of inclusive education. Learning activities in inclusive classes are required to accommodate the learning needs of children in the classroom (Amalia & Kurniawati, 2021). Teachers have the role in providing learning services that suit the needs of children, for instance, compiling learning materials, starting from the assessment until the evaluation for students with special needs in the class. This activity was carried out in collaboration with the special teacher in the class because it was the special teacher who helped the students with special needs to plan the lessons in accordance with the characteristics of the students with special needs at that time (Carter et al., 2019).

Teacher in the classroom takes an essential role in the acceptance of heterogeneous students. For this matter, the teacher should have an open, friendly attitude and accepts the diversity of students in the class. Students with special needs in inclusive classes are accepted by supporting all of the students' potential

so that they can develop well in the classroom in collaboration with the special teacher team (Clarke & Visser, 2019). Teamwork between teachers and Special teachers is a crucial activity needed in an inclusive classroom (Salter et al., 2017). A special teacher is a special guiding teacher who helps children with special needs to learn in inclusive classes. Based on the data obtained from the respondents shows that special guidance teacher is the most supportive parties in the implementation of inclusive education. Special education teachers are teachers who have a special educational background or who have received training in special education and are assigned to inclusive schools (Amalia & Kurniawati, 2021).

Furthermore, it is the attitude of a special teacher to support the implementation of inclusive education. Based on the data states that special teachers most support the success of inclusive education. A special teacher is a teacher who manages class teachers in providing learning for students with special needs. This starts from the initial assessment, preparing the learning program, and implementing learning to the evaluation of learning. The role of the special teacher is not only to help children with special needs in learning at school but also to develop the potential and abilities of children. Thus, the function and role of a special teacher are divided into two, namely, pedagogic and non-pedagogic roles (Amalia & Kurniawati, 2021). The pedagogical role carried out by a special teacher is to be responsible for learning, lesson planning, implementation of learning, compiling an accommodating curriculum, preparing, and compiling or modifying learning materials in adapting learning materials in the class so that it is accommodating for children with special needs at the school (Webster et al., 2011). Moreover, the main task of special education teachers in inclusive schools is to help children with special needs study in school with regular friends. Seeing the critical function of a special teacher in special schools implies that the competencies of those teachers need to have competencies that follow their educational backgrounds. Special teacher is expected to be graduated from the Department of Special Education. In addition, managing children with special needs in inclusive schools requires teamwork between Special teachers and classroom teachers because special education teachers must have the skills, expertise, and knowledge to handle the needs of children with special needs in the classroom so that the ability of children with special needs in school improves (Carter et al., 2019; Webster et al., 2011; Ummah et al., 2020). Thus, a special education teacher is someone who has the ability to handle children with special needs, starting from assessments up to compiling learning materials for children with special needs in inclusive schools.

Lastly, based on the data obtained, the attitude of parents supports the implementation of inclusive education. With inclusive education, they are immensely helped to find a school

that is closest to their home, and children can play and study with their normal friends. In addition, parents also assess that with the inclusion of their children feel accepted in the environment close to home and feel no difference in the child's environment. Furthermore, the support of parents is crucial to the success of the implementation of inclusive education. In this case, parents play an essential role in facilitating successful inclusive education (Tiware et al., 2015). There should be adequate preparations to prepare for the maximum implementation of inclusive education (Hanafi et al., 2019). Parents whose children attend inclusive classes must have a positive attitude compared to parents whose children are in regular classes or learn integrated. This finding is in agreement with the results of other groups, especially teachers (De Boer et al., 2011), and that there are benefits for all children with inclusive education. In line with previous research regarding parents' attitudes (De Boer et al., 2011; Maria, 2013), thus parents have a positive attitude toward the implementation of inclusive education for children with special needs. One of the duties of parents in developing children's abilities at school is to accompany children when studying at home. Parents check whether the tasks given at school have been done well by the children (Makoelle, 2020). Therefore, in the implementation of inclusive education, parents must be active in providing learning at home.

CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS

The research concludes that all parties take a significant role in supporting the implementation of inclusive education in schools. School principals take on many tasks in preparing teachers, curricula, and the school environment in supporting the implementation of inclusive education. Additionally, special teachers and teachers play an important role in serving children with special needs in schools according to children's learning needs and can create a friendly environment for all children at school. Lastly, parents take a crucial role in facilitating successful inclusive education. This paper has implications to have a great collaboration between parties in order to reach a successful inclusive education. Furthermore, there is a great opportunity to implement inclusive education that has the potential to develop students with special needs by obtaining great experience. Further research is suggested to involve other variables that are overlooked in this research, for instance, the role of peers or the involvement of government in practice. Also, it can be elaborated with a greater geographical context to show a wider understanding.

LIMITATION

This study is limited to the geographical settings in East Java of Indonesia. Second, the scope of this study is limited to the attitude of parents, school principals, and teachers, as well as the for the processing analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare that it has no conflict of interest.

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