

Developing the Extraordinary Potential: Inclusive Education as the Key to Developing the Talent of Children with Special Needs

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – The purpose of this research is to understand the importance of inclusive education for developing the talents of children with special needs. Inclusive education plays a crucial role in optimizing the development of the talents of children with special needs. By providing equal and supportive access to education for children with various special needs, inclusive education creates a learning environment that allows them to develop their potential without limitations.

Methods – The method used is library research, which involves collecting data by searching for sources and reconstructing it from various sources such as books, journals, and existing research. The data is then analyzed and filtered to obtain the research focus.

Findings – Previous research findings, namely inclusive-based education, are the answer to education for all systems, namely a system that provides education and knowledge to all students without considering the differences between them. Through inclusive education, most students with special needs can reveal and develop their talents. The research results show that inclusive education helps children with special needs in Indonesia, helping them build life skills, independence, and decision-making. Inclusive education provides equal rights and opportunities for all students, enabling them to access education in regular schools. Parents, teachers, and the community have an important role in creating an environment that supports diversity and respects differences.

Research Implications – This research is limited to library research; the results are a compilation of previous research findings and data from various sources, such as the internet, books, and journals. Therefore, it is recommended to apply the results of this research to subsequent field studies.

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Introduction

A child is a gift given by God to a pair of parents. Parents want a child who is born normal and healthy physically, mentally, and thinking. However, if a child is born with conditions that do not meet expectations, it certainly requires mental readiness on the part of the parents. Children with special needs (ABK) are children who have limitations physically, mentally, emotionally, and so on, and who need special services or attention and special treatment among children who were born "normal" to develop their human potential perfectly. Children with special needs can also be defined as children who have different characteristics from children in general (Pitaloka et al., 2022). The terms used to refer to ABK include disability, disorder/abnormality, deformity, developmental psychopathology, developmental barriers, and disablement (Ika., 2021). It is not easy for parents who are destined to have children with special needs (ABK). But in reality, there are still many parents who cannot accept the existence of children with special needs, which affects the way they are raised and can cause stress in raising them. Indeed, caring for children with special needs requires patience and unusual handling. Parents need to have a way or strategy of raising them. However, usually, a child with special needs has something extraordinary compared to a child who was born normally. The timing of parents' awareness that their child is born with special needs or disabilities varies, it could be known since they were in the womb when they were born or even when they started growing up (Hidayah et al., 2019). This awareness can be seen in the growth and development of a child, whether seen in his physical appearance, way of speaking, or ability to think. When parents begin to realize that their child was not born normal, they immediately need special education and in-depth treatment. Children with special needs usually receive different educational treatment from children who are born normally, for this reason, parents need to be mentally prepared when their children are discriminated against. Children with disabilities must be treated with expert care. Education given to children with special needs must be carried out from a very early age.

So far, society has viewed someone with disabilities with different views. Many people think that children with special needs have limitations and disabilities in many ways. Apart from that, they also consider that someone with a disability is a burden, who is useless, must be helped in everything they do, and pitied (Jauhari, 2017). No one wants to be a disabled child, and no one wants their child

to experience discrimination either in the family or in society. To create a just society, it is necessary to have inclusive education for children with special needs. Inclusive education, in the Ministry of Education and Culture's guidebook, is an integrated education service provided to give children with special needs the opportunity to attend public schools, in the same place as normal-born children of their age (Arriani et al., 2021). Inclusive education was pioneered in 1986 and was implemented with a slightly different learning model. The aim of establishing inclusive education is so that children who have physical or mental deficiencies and limitations can receive education from public schools and can socialize with the community, especially among children their age. Providing inclusive education also means creating general welfare. In essence, inclusive education was established to humanize humans, prevent all forms of discrimination, and provide opportunities and possibilities for children with any conditions (Hasmyati et al., 2022).

As written in the Law. No. 23 of 2002 concerning child protection which states that every child has the right to live, grow, develop, and participate appropriately by human dignity, as well as protection from violence and discrimination (Baharun & Awwaliyah, 2018). Therefore, every child has the right to receive education and teaching which he develops according to his level of intelligence, interests, and talents. Talent development is the process of improving a person's talents, potential, attitudes, behavior, and personality through repeated learning and experience to reach the stage of independence (Muchlisin, 2020). The educational services provided for children with special needs are Special Schools (SLB) which were established for children who have special limitations or the same disorders, and Special Elementary Schools (SLDB) which were established to accommodate all types of disabilities. The third education service is integrated education, namely regular schools that accept students with special needs, with the same curriculum, teachers, learning infrastructure, and teaching and learning activities for all students.

This research refers to previous research conducted by (Widodo et al., 2020) entitled "Identification of the Talents of Students with Special Needs (PDBK) in Inclusive Madrasahs, Lombok Regency". This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach by collecting data through observation, interviews, and documentation. The subjects of this research were 54 students with special needs. The results of this research state that the only students with special needs whose talents have been identified are those in the high class. Most students with special

needs have talents in the fields of arts, and sports, and a small number have talents in linguistics, mathematical logic, and recitation. Based on the description above, researchers want to know more about developing the talents of children with special needs through inclusive education. So the researchers took the title "Developing the Extraordinary Potential: Inclusive Education as the Key to Developing the Talent of Children with Special Needs" in this research.

Methods

The method used in this research is a qualitative approach. The data collection technique was carried out using triangulation (combination), and data analysis was inductive. The results of qualitative research emphasize the importance of generalization (Abdussamad, 2021). The type of research used is library research. Library research is research in which data collection techniques come from books, journals, or other readings related to the article's theme, namely inclusive education for children with special needs. Mendes, Wohlin, Felizardo, & Kalinowski's research (Fatha Pringgar & Sujatmiko, 2020), states that library research is carried out by reviewing literature and analyzing relevant topics. Library research can use journals, books, dictionaries, documents, magazines, and other sources without conducting field research. This research was carried out by reading, studying, and analyzing reading sources. The analysis technique used in this research is the descriptive method.

Results

1. The influence of inclusive education on the development of talents of children with special needs

Inclusive education is a new paradigm in education in Indonesia. Inclusive education means that all students, both normal children and children with special needs, have the same rights and opportunities. Inclusive education is very important because children with special needs are often served in different ways at school. The results of previous research conducted by (Joseph & Mangedong, 2023) stated that inclusive-based education is an answer to an "education for all" system, namely an education system that accepts every child to be educated and equipped regardless of the differences that exist in each child. The principle of non-discrimination contained in the implementation of inclusive-based education is a forum where children with special needs receive the same educational services as other normal children so that children with special needs will receive good benefits, and social interaction can also be created. build children's self-

confidence, and train children to appreciate differences. Inclusive education is a strategy in educational services that accommodates the diversity, uniqueness, and potential of every child. This means that all children, especially children with special needs, have optimal access to education in regular schools. In this way, children with special needs will have the same quality of life as ordinary children (Majir, 2013).

In general, education for children with special needs is carried out in segregation at Special Schools (SLB). SLB locations are usually located in the district capital, while children with special needs are spread across almost all regions. As a result, some children with special needs cannot go to school because the SLB location is far from where they live, while public schools are not prepared to accommodate children with special needs (Ita, 2019). The presence of inclusive education helps students build life skills, and independence, be able to make decisions for themselves, be able to recognize themselves, know their emotions and desires, and regulate their emotions with various self-development programs (Ayunda, 2022). Children with special needs have physical, psychological, and ability differences, but this does not prevent them from excelling at school and outside of school. Children with special needs may also be more successful than children in general. This shows that children with special needs can achieve on par with students in general (Tiara et al., 2023). This is in line with previous research conducted by (Baharuddin & Saidang, 2020) at SDN 39 Cakke Enrekang, South Sulawesi, with inclusive education, and social skills aspects in terms of cooperation between children with special needs and autism which have been proven to be achieved. Children with special needs and autism socialize with various characters, not only with others who have disabilities but also with other normal children and teaching staff at school, so that the aspect of cooperation in terms of completing a task together is proven to be able to avoid behavior. who causes problems and can collaborate in various activities in the school environment. In this way, awareness arises in children of the importance of education, and children's talents can grow well.

2. Obstacles and challenges faced in implementing inclusive education for children with special needs

Inclusive education is a solution to equal rights in obtaining quality education. However, implementing inclusive education is not easy and is still faced with various challenges. Some of the challenges faced include: first, lack of preparation and training for teachers and school staff. In the context of inclusive education,

teachers need to have a deep understanding of the needs and ways of teaching students with special needs (Sabariah, 2023). Lack of preparation and training for teachers and school staff is a serious obstacle in implementing inclusive education. In this context, teachers are not only expected to provide learning to general students but must also have a deep understanding of the needs and effective teaching strategies for students with special needs. These skills include adapting the curriculum, managing an inclusive classroom, and implementing learning strategies that support a variety of learning styles. By improving teacher preparation and training regarding inclusive education, we can create more supportive learning environments, provide better support for students with special needs, and promote inclusivity across educational institutions.

Second, the lack of school facilities and infrastructure is a significant obstacle for children with special needs in receiving learning (Supini, 2021). These limitations may include physical facilities such as classrooms that are not easily accessible to those with special accessibility needs, or a lack of learning support equipment designed specifically for their needs. As a result, these children may have difficulty following the curriculum optimally, hindering their academic and social development. Serious attention is needed to improve school infrastructure to create an inclusive environment that supports successful learning for all students, including those with special needs.

Third, the lack of motivation of students with special needs in taking learning assessments can be influenced by the mismatch between the type of assessment given and the student's abilities. Often, standardized assessments that do not consider the varying needs and potential of students with specific challenges can create significant barriers. In creating an inclusive learning environment, it is important to adopt assessment methods that support a variety of learning styles and ability levels. This can not only increase student participation but also stimulate their motivation to actively engage in the learning process, creating conditions that are more conducive to the development of their overall skills and understanding.

3. The role of parents, teachers, and the school environment in supporting inclusive education

The success of an education does not only depend on the teacher. Parents and the school/community environment are also basic elements that are considered central to the success of education so that children can develop further (Wardani & Dwiningrum, 2021). The role of parents and society is very important

to achieve optimal educational goals. Parents have an important role to play in helping their children grow in an inclusive environment. They can work closely with educators and school employees to ensure their children's needs are met. Parents must also understand their children's unique needs, provide support at home, support children's rights, and support their social and emotional growth (Zainal, 2021). In inclusive education, teachers act as role models, instructors, and coaches of student attitudes. Teachers also need to work together with parents, provide emotional support to children, and support children's rights (Zakiah, 2023).

Community participation also determines the success of inclusive school policies. Inclusive schools require relationships between the community, parents, and teachers to create a warm classroom environment, accept diversity, and respect differences (Nuraeni et al., 2016). In the law, there are several rules regarding the legal basis that regulate education. "The community is obliged to provide resource support in providing education." (Law Number 20 of 2003 Article 9). The community plays a role in improving the quality of educational services which includes planning, monitoring, and evaluating educational programs through education councils and school committees.

Discussion

Inclusive education in Indonesia marks an important step towards extending access and opportunities for all pupils, including children with special needs. In a study conducted by Joseph & Mangedong (2023), it was found that inclusive education meets the needs of the "education for all" system by providing equal educational services to children with special needs and normal children. The principle of non-discrimination in inclusive education creates an environment in which children can benefit equally with peers, build confidence, and develop social skills. Moreover, inclusive education opens the door to broader access for children with special needs, which were previously concentrated in the Extraordinary School (SLB) in the district capital. Thus, inclusive education contributes positively to the development of the talent of children with special needs by providing optimal opportunities for growth and social interaction.

Although inclusive education brings the hope of equal rights in education, its implementation faces several obstacles. The main challenge is the lack of preparation and training for teachers and school staff. In the context of inclusive education, it was found that teachers need to have a deep understanding of the needs and effective teaching strategies for students with special needs. It

emphasizes the importance of improved teacher preparation and training to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment. In addition, the lack of school facilities and supplies is a significant challenge, especially in terms of physical accessibility and learning support equipment that can meet the needs of children with special needs. The solution to these barriers involves improving school infrastructure to create an inclusive environment that supports learning success for all students. The low motivation of students with special needs in following learning assessments should also be noted, with emphasis on the application of assessment methods that support the diversity of learning styles and student ability levels, encourage active participation, and create conducive conditions for their comprehensive skills development.

Educational success is determined not only by the role of teachers but also by the involvement of parents and the school/community environment. Parents have a crucial role in helping children grow up in an inclusive environment. Collaboration between parents, educators, and school staff is needed to ensure that children's needs are met. In the context of inclusive education, the teacher is not only a teacher, but also a mentor, teacher, and attitude trainer of the student. Cooperation between teachers and parents is necessary to provide emotional support to children and ensure the fulfillment of their rights. Public participation plays an important role in inclusive school policies. Relationships between communities, parents, and teachers are needed to create a classroom environment that supports diversity and appreciates differences. The law emphasizes that the public must provide resource support in the conduct of education, including through an active role in education councils and school committees to improve the quality of education services.

Conclusion

Inclusive education has a positive influence on developing the talents of children with special needs in Indonesia. This paradigm provides equal rights and opportunities for all students, allowing them to access education in regular schools. Inclusive education helps children with special needs build life skills, independence, and decision-making abilities. Even though we are faced with challenges such as lack of teacher preparation, lack of school facilities and infrastructure, and inappropriate types of assessment, the roles of parents, teachers, and the school environment are key in supporting the success of inclusive education. Parents need to be actively involved, understand their child's needs, and work together with educators to create an inclusive environment at

home. Teachers need to increase preparation and training to overcome the challenges of teaching students with special needs. Meanwhile, society has an important role in creating an environment that supports diversity and respects differences. Thus, close collaboration between parents, teachers, and the community is the key to bridging the gap and achieving success in inclusive education in Indonesia.

This research is limited to library research. The results of this research are a compilation of previous research results and information from several sources such as the internet, books, and journals. For this reason, it is recommended that in future research the results of this research be applied to field studies. With field studies, the implementation of inclusive education in public schools to develop the talents of children with special needs can be observed directly, thereby providing practical and operational results.

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