

Research Article

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Empowering Inclusive Education: Management Practices in Pilot Elementary Schools for Inclusion

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Abstract

Background/purpose. This study aims to describe an in-depth implementation of inclusive education management in pilot elementary schools for inclusion in Indonesia.

Materials/methods. This research is a qualitative method with a case study approach. The research sample consisted of 2 elementary schools, 50 students, 10 teachers, and 2 school principals who were selected using purposive sampling and snowball sampling techniques. Data collection techniques used were non-participant observation, structured in-depth interviews, and documentation. The research data analysis techniques include (1) data preparation; (2) developing a general sense; (3) data coding; (4) creating themes; and (5) interpreting the data.

Results. The research results indicate that curriculum management in inclusive education encompasses planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning. Student management involves admissions procedures, student activities, and school policies that support inclusivity. Financing management includes budget allocation, program evaluation, monitoring, and reporting to ensure sustainability. The management of educators and educational staff focuses on recruitment, professional development, and performance evaluation. Community relations are fostered through planning, implementation, and evaluation of school programs that actively involve the community and provide open channels for public aspirations. Facilities and infrastructure management covers procurement, maintenance, inventory, and the establishment of a dedicated team for implementing inclusive resources. Special services management includes initial assessments, support from teachers and psychologists, targeted treatments, therapy sessions, home programs, and home visits to address students' diverse needs effectively.

Conclusion. This study can be concluded that the management of inclusive education has been carried out properly and thoroughly.



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1. Introduction

The right to education is Human Rights. Human Rights emphasize that education is children's most basic human right, making educators try to be more active and expand access to education for all students of various backgrounds (Anam et al., 2019; Yildiran, 2014). Inclusive education is also one of the main focuses of UNESCO, ensuring that every individual, without exception, has equal and fair access to education (Pryima et al., 2017; Sapriati et al., 2024). The Education for All (EFA) program, initiated by UNESCO, aimed to meet the learning needs of all children, adolescents, and adults by 2015. The primary focus of this program was on inclusive education, ensuring that every child, including those with disabilities, has access to quality basic education (Pryima et al., 2017; Wheeler, 2017). The Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report published by UNESCO provides comprehensive analysis and policy recommendations on how to achieve inclusive and equitable education. The GEM Report highlights the importance of inclusion in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4, which focuses on quality education (Anam et al., 2023; Ersoy, 2021; Maurice et al., 2019).

According to Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning National Education, inclusive education is a form of government responsibility in fulfilling and respecting human rights (Robiyansah et al., 2020). According to the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia No. 70 of 2009 concerning Inclusive Education for Students with Disabilities and Potential Intelligence and/or Special Talents, inclusive education is an implementation system of education that provides opportunities for all students who have disabilities and have potential intelligence and/or special talents to participate in education or learning in an educational environment together with regular students (Ediyanto et al., 2017; Mulawarman et al., 2022).

Inclusive education programs implemented are service-oriented to students so that the needs of every child can be met (Mugambi, 2017). Inclusive education programs are not only implemented for students who have special needs but also for all children because basically, every child has existing natural characteristics, uniqueness, and diversity (Walker & Musti-Rao, 2016; Yazicioğlu, 2021). Inclusion is a system that can only be implemented when all school members understand and adopt it. Inclusive education is concerned with providing appropriate responses to a broad spectrum of learning needs in both formal and non-formal educational settings (Maurice et al., 2019; Ummah et al., 2022). Inclusive education is an approach that focuses on how to transform the education system so that it can respond to student diversity. In addition, inclusive education aims to enable teachers and students to feel comfortable with diversity and see it as a challenge and enrichment in the learning environment, not a problem (Leblebici & Türkan, 2021; Yusuf et al., 2018).

Inclusive education in Indonesia is considered very important. Education in Indonesia is implemented democratically and fairly and is non-discriminatory by upholding human rights, religious values, cultural values, and national diversity (Wulan & Sanjaya, 2022). The Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education system Article 5 Paragraph (2). It can be concluded that the state provides full guarantees for students with special needs to obtain quality educational services (Yusuf et al., 2018). This shows that students with special needs also have the same rights and opportunities as other regular students in obtaining quality education services. Quality services for students with special needs are educational services that are tailored to their special needs and the obstacles/disability they have. The inclusive education program is very important. Therefore, it should not only be applied to students with special needs but to all students because every student has natural characteristics, uniqueness, and diversity (Leblebici & Türkan, 2021; Singh et al., 2020). The characteristics of each student must be facilitated at all levels of education in general and early childhood education in particular (Şahan, 2021).

Even though the law has regulated the equal distribution of rights and obligations for every citizen to access education and several studies have stated the importance of implementing inclusive education, cases of discrimination in the field of education still often occur, especially against students with special needs (Khaleel et al., 2021; Melda, 2021). The cases occur not only because of the unpreparedness of human resources and infrastructure but also because of ignorance of the goals and benefits that all students can get from implementing inclusive education (Lawrie et al., 2017; Paola et al., 2022). The implementation of education in the field tends to judge that if students with special needs are given the same educational services and must study together with normal students, they will only interfere with the educational process and have negative impacts on normal students (Lestari et al., 2018). This pattern of education will have an impact on students, both students with special needs and normal students, such as apathy, disrespect, lack of confidence, individualism, and being unprepared to live in society (Lawrie et al., 2017; Paola et al., 2022).

Several studies have indeed examined the management of inclusive education (Amelia et al., 2022; Riowati et al., 2022), but this research explains each aspect of inclusive education management in a more structured way. This research also focuses on inclusive management at the basic education level with the best inclusive school research subject in a city in Indonesia. Besides, the researchers are optimistic that this research can properly explain the implementation of inclusive education management in elementary schools. Research on the management of inclusive education is currently getting quite a lot of attention because the concept of inclusive education is indeed being promoted to create education for all people. Therefore, this study aims to describe the in-depth implementation of inclusive education management in pilot elementary schools in Indonesia.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Inclusive Education

Inclusive education has become one of the main focuses of education policies, as outlined in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which aims to ensure quality and inclusive education for all (Ersoy, 2021; Maurice et al., 2019). Inclusive education is an approach that provides opportunities for all children, including those with special needs, to learn together in the same educational environment without discrimination (Mugambi, 2017). Its core principle is to eliminate barriers to accessing education and to create an environment that values diversity, equity, and inclusivity.

Inclusive education focuses on equality, ensuring that every student has the same opportunity to learn regardless of ability or special needs (Pryima et al., 2017). The curriculum in inclusive education is designed to be adaptive and relevant, enabling every student to access learning materials according to their individual abilities and needs (Walker & Musti-Rao, 2016; Yazicioğlu, 2021). Furthermore, inclusive education involves multidisciplinary collaboration, engaging the active roles of teachers, parents, psychologists, and the community to create a supportive educational environment (Leblebici & Türkan, 2021; Yusuf et al., 2018).

This educational process is designed to identify the unique learning needs of each child and provide appropriate support to help them achieve their full potential (Mugambi, 2017). Moreover, inclusive education emphasizes social acceptance, encouraging students with special needs to be respected and embraced by their peers within an inclusive environment. The learning environment developed through inclusive education is adaptive, welcoming, and supportive of diversity, allowing all students to learn together without barriers and to benefit from a comprehensive and equitable educational process (Khaleel et al., 2021; Melda, 2021). The targets of inclusive education encompass various groups of children with diverse backgrounds and needs, including children with special needs (such as those with physical, intellectual, socio-emotional, or sensory disabilities), children from marginalized groups (such as minorities, refugees, or families with low socioeconomic status), and all children in their diversity (Lawrie et al., 2017; Paola et al., 2022).

2.2. Inclusive Education Management

Inclusive education management is the process of planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating an educational system aimed at ensuring that all students, including those with special needs, have equal access to education (Lestari et al., 2018; Şahan, 2021). Inclusive education management aims to create a learning environment that is inclusive, adaptive, and values diversity (Efendi et al., 2022; Schultz & Higbee, 2011). Inclusive education management is an integrated approach that ensures equality, diversity, participation, and accessibility in education by collaboratively managing the curriculum, students, educators, financing, facilities, community relations, and special services to meet the needs of all students without discrimination (Maurice et al., 2019; Mulawarman et al., 2022). Inclusive education management covers seven main aspects: curriculum management that is adaptive to students' needs, student management that focuses on individual support and potential development, financial management for allocating funds to support facilities and training, management of educators and educational staff that involves specialized training to handle students with special needs, community relations management that creates partnerships and social support, facilities management to ensure disability-friendly infrastructure, and management of special services that provides psychological support and therapy for students with special needs, all aimed at creating an inclusive and equitable educational environment (Rokhim et al., 2021).

2.3. Pilot School for Inclusion

There are several policies and programs that underpin the establishment of inclusive schools. At the global level, the Education for All (EFA) Movement initiated the effort to ensure inclusive access to basic education for all children (Pryima et al., 2017; Wheeler, 2017). In Spain, the Salamanca Statement in 1994 emphasized that students with special needs should be educated in an inclusive environment. This declaration aimed to encourage countries worldwide to implement inclusive education, based on the principle that education is a right for all children, including those with disabilities. In the United States, inclusive schools are realized through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which ensures that schools provide education tailored to the needs of students with special needs in the least restrictive environment (Burke & Boccia, 2020). Model schools in the U.S. often use assistive technology, counseling services, and special assistants to support students. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) model has become the standard in ensuring that each student receives appropriate educational services (Fitri, 2022; Fitzgerald et al., 2021). In India, programs like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan mandate that model inclusive schools in India eliminate the gap in educational access for students with disabilities (Divya Bharathi. A. et al., 2024; Priti et al., 2015).

The phenomenon of the emergence of pilot-inclusive primary schools in Indonesia is closely related to the societal stigma surrounding special schools for disabilities (SLB). Many people believe that SLBs are only for children with severe special needs or view the existence of SLBs as isolated from general education. This perception often creates a social distance between students with special needs and other students. As a result, students with special needs face challenges in socially integrating and receiving equitable education (Ediyanto et al., 2017; Mulawarman et al., 2022). In response to this situation, the government and various education stakeholders began developing pilot inclusive primary schools. The government, through policies such as Permendikbud No. 70 of 2009 on Inclusive Education, encourages the establishment of inclusive schools in various regions (Robiyansah et al., 2020). These schools are designed to provide an environment that supports both social and academic inclusion, allowing students with special needs to learn alongside other students in the same classroom. Pilot inclusive primary schools are a government effort to reduce stigma by showing that students with special needs can excel in the regular education system when provided with adequate support (Rokhim et al., 2021).

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

Qualitative research is a method or research method that emphasizes analysis or description (Dawadi et al., 2021). Qualitative research methods aim to explain a phenomenon in depth and are carried out by collecting data as deeply as possible (Aspers & Corte, 2019). Qualitative methods prioritize observation of phenomena and examine these phenomena more deeply (Collins & Stockton, 2018). In this qualitative research, the focus is on the human element (students, teachers, and school principals), objects (facilities and infrastructure), and institutions (inclusive elementary schools), as well as the relationships or interactions between these elements, to understand the implementation of elementary school inclusive education management.

Case study research is in-depth and detailed research about a person or a small group of individuals with a qualitative nature because it produces a narrative description of the behavior and experiences that the researcher finds (Baxter & Jack, 2015; Rebolj & Possibilities, 2013). Case studies can be described as an empirical knowledge-seeking process to investigate and examine various phenomena in real-life contexts (Starman, 2017). This study analyzes the in-depth and detailed implementation of inclusive education management in pilot elementary schools in Indonesia.

3.2. Participants

Samples in qualitative research are not called respondents but informants or participants. The participants in this study were 2 elementary schools, 50 students, 10 teachers, and 2 school principals. The participants were selected using purposive sampling and snowball sampling techniques. The purposive technique is a data source sampling technique with certain considerations (Wu Suen et al., 2014). The reason for using a purposive sampling technique is that it is the easiest technique to implement and allows researchers to meet selected samples that are usually easy to find or approach to researchers and in line with the research needs (Tongco, 2007). The considerations in this study include (1) the willingness of the participants to become the research sample; (2) knowing with certainty related to the research topic; (3) being directly involved with the process of providing education; and (4) staying at school for at least 1 year. Furthermore, the snowball sampling technique was also used to select research subjects. Snowball sampling is a technique for determining a sample that is initially small in number (QuestionPro, 2021). Then, the respondents were asked to choose their friends to be the sample so that the number of samples increased. It is like a snowball rolling bigger and bigger (Leighton et al., 2021). The reason the researcher chose the technique was because the data collected can provide satisfactory data. So, when the data from one source was still incomplete, the researcher could take data from other informants in line with the recommendations of other research subjects. Furthermore, the ethical considerations were strictly followed in this study. Prior to participation, all informants, including students, teachers, and school principals, were informed about the study's objectives, procedures, and potential impact.

3.3. Instrument and Procedures

This research used observation, interview, and documentation techniques as the technique of collecting data. The observation technique used was non-participatory. In a non-participant observation, researchers observed participants without interacting directly with the research subjects and objects (Jamshed, 2014). In this study, the researcher served as an observer of the implementation of inclusive education management. The interview technique used was an in-depth interview technique with a research instrument in the form of structured open questions. Structured interviews were used as a data collection technique when the researcher or data collector had already known exactly what information would be obtained (Roopa & Rani, 2012). Therefore, in

conducting interviews, the researchers have prepared research instruments in the form of written questions whose alternative answers have been prepared. Documentation techniques were also used in collecting secondary data for this study. Documentation techniques were used as a means to collect data from non-human sources (Chamdani et al., 2022). These sources consisted of documents and records. From the results of observations and interviews conducted by the researchers, it would be more reliable if it were equipped with documentation from the observed locations. So, it was concluded that the researchers used documentation as supporting accurate data on the research topic.

3.4. Data Analysis

The data analysis technique used in this research was (Cresswell et al., 2003) data analysis technique. The steps for data analysis were carried out as follows: (1) data preparation which involved interview transcripts, material scanning, typing field data, sorting and compiling data; (2) building general sense and reflecting on it; (3) data coding by dividing information into coded writing segments; (4) grouping data based on narrative themes of qualitative reports; and (5) interpreting the data by comparing it with other research information or other theories. The data verification was carried out with credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

The credibility of this research was carried out by utilizing triangulation techniques. Transferability is when the results of qualitative research can be used or applied to other cases or situations. This study uses a purposive sampling technique with clear subject characteristics so that readers can transfer the research findings more easily to other cases that have almost the same subject characteristics. Dependability is when the results of this research have the same results as the research repeated by other researchers. In this study, the authors used the assistance of several lecturers in fields related to the research topic to check the consistency of all materials, stages, and research findings. Meanwhile, confirmability is used to see that the research results are neutral and not full of the researchers' personal biases. In this study, confirmability can be achieved by thoroughly checking and tracing research data, including by re-checking raw research information, a systematic process of analyzing research information, and a discussion of phenomenal data confronted with a literature review to test the results of research findings, an examination of the assumptions and prejudices of researchers.

4. Results

4.1. Curriculum Management

Inclusive curriculum management pays attention to the stages of planning, implementing, and evaluating learning based on the needs of students with special needs. Learning planning that is carried out for both regular students and students with special needs still refers to the Standard Process of the National Curriculum in which elementary schools use a thematic approach. All learning materials in each subject are united by a predetermined theme, while a scientific approach is used as the strategy. The learning models used are contextual, problem-based, project-based, and inquiry/discovery learning models. The implementation of learning follows the planning documents that have been prepared in the RPP (lesson plans) and PPI (Individualized Education Programs) for students with special needs.

At certain moments, group learning assignments or activities should include students with special needs in the group. The method used is lectures, and the media used are mostly textbooks. Students with special needs also use customized textbooks. In the closing activities, the class teacher provides materials as reinforcement and assignments for regular students, while the students with special needs get reinforcement and assignments from the learning support assistant. Thus, the implementation of learning in the classroom involves all students, but at certain materials and

moments, students with special needs get differences in their learning materials, evaluation, and learning media to suit the abilities of each student with special needs. Furthermore, the evaluation phase is reviewed through a flexible inclusion assessment system, commonly used evaluation techniques, remedial programs, enrichment programs, and learning outcome reports. The evaluation refers to the National Curriculum standard process, that is, authentic assessment to assess attitudes, knowledge, and skills.



Figure 1. (a) Students are Studying Bakery Science in The Context of Implementing Project-Based Learning; and (b) Students are Going Directly to Nature in The Context of Implementing Inquiry Learning

4.2. Student Management

The management of students in inclusive schools is viewed in the procedures for admitting new students, school regulations and policies towards students, physical development activities, attitudes, and student skills. The management of students in inclusive schools starts with planning, in which new students are analyzed for their needs. The planning in the analysis of students' needs includes schools planning the number of new students admitted based on the available classes, planning student activity programs, and forming committees for admitting new students.



Figure 2. Physical development and student cohesiveness activities

School policies are made by holding a discussion session between teachers and school committees. This is also done for regulations that involve students. Teachers and students will discuss to apply certain rules. Based on the results of the interviews with several teachers, the researchers found some information regarding school policies. The school policy for students with achievements

is the dissemination of student achievements on social media, special awards in the form of certificates and money, as well as facilitating additional programs or providing special clubs. Furthermore, while the school policy regarding students with problems/bad behavior, teachers will try to handle them by discussing solutions with other teachers until the problems are solved. Teachers also establish communication with parents so that they are not mishandled. Besides, good communication can maximize teachers' service to the students because they can get information from the students' closest parties. For policies concerning student transfers, this inclusive school can provide a transfer letter only if the student has received an acceptance letter from the newly destined school. Furthermore, school activities in fostering student activities with club and extracurricular program activities include music clubs, theater, drum bands, scouting, sports, and academic/scientific clubs. Students with special needs (ABK) are those who have abnormalities in their physical, mental, behavior (behavioral), or senses.

4.3. Financing Management

The inclusive school funding source purely comes from the students' parents. While teacher salary sources come from the government, foundations, and various allowances according to educational qualifications, position, and years of service. Regulations regarding the cost of SPP (school tuition) are determined by the head of the foundation and there is a large difference in costs for students with special needs and regular students. In addition, there are additional costs outside the SPP for students with special needs based on the category to meet the needs for special facilities and infrastructure, special services, and salary for learning support assistants. The result of interviews with school principals is as follows:

"School tuition for regular students is IDR. 650,000 or the equivalent of 45 USD per month while the school tuition for students with special needs is IDR. 3,000,000 or the equivalent of 205 USD per month. Additional costs for the heavy category of students with special needs require Rp. 2,500,000 or the equivalent of 171 USD per month, students with special needs belonging to the medium category require IDR. 1,800,000 or the equivalent of 123 USD per month and the students with special needs belonging to the medium category require IDR. 850,000 or the equivalent of 58 USD per month."

The evaluation of school financing is carried out by tracking reports on the use of finances every month. From the interview, observation, and documentation techniques regarding the accountability of education funds coming from the community/parents, it is found that the accountability reports on the use of education financing from students' parents are prepared by the treasurer in the form of a balance sheet (daily cash book) which refers to records of receipts and disbursements as material for reports, including, in this case, evidence of unexpected disbursements of funds. The school committee is in charge of managing if there is money coming in either from students and is in charge of managing expenses to be allocated to each education sector according to what is stated in the program of activities in the initial budget planning of the year.

4.4. Management of Educators and Education Personnel

The implementation of the management of educators and education staff is reviewed through the process of recruiting educators and education staff, placing educators and education staff, the process of developing educators and education staff, monitoring and evaluating the performance of educators and education staff, rewarding and punishment as well as procedures for dismissing educators and education staff. The following is the interview result related to the recruitment process.

"Before the recruitment stage starts, we provide registration forms for teachers and internal staff first to obtain data on whether the teachers or staff still want to continue or not teach and work here

next year. After that, we will open recruitment based on the required educational qualifications. The first stage is an administrative check and the qualifications of prospective educators and education staff. Then, the second stage is interviews, written tests, observation, and micro-teaching tests (for educators). The third stage is the induction period in which there is training on education, introducing the profile of Mutiara Bunda School, explaining the rules at the school, and workshops related to learning. After the training, there is a three-month apprenticeship in the next stage based on their respective positions."



Figure 3. A Coordination Meeting After Routine Supervision

This school requires educators and education staff to attend training, workshops, seminars, or training every month in line with their respective job duties to develop the educators' and education staff's competence. The development activities are carried out internally in advance every month with external keynote speakers each semester. Based on the results of observations, teachers have groups consisting of a group of junior teachers and a group of senior teachers. The speakers are usually taken from a group of senior teachers. The performance of educators and teaching staff is also monitored through daily supervision programs, weekly supervision, and supervision every semester. Supervision is carried out for academic and non-academic fields of educators and teaching staff and is conducted on a scheduled basis for all educators and teaching staff. After the supervision is carried out, a coordination meeting will be held to discuss the results of the supervision. The principal examines the positive side that must always be developed and the negative side that must be improved immediately.

4.5. Management of Community Relation

Management of Community Relation can be assessed from the community's involvement in planning learning/school activities, organizing community members, socializing work programs to the community, providing open space for the community to express their aspirations, and assessing and evaluating the performance of school work programs by the community. In preparing the curriculum, schools involve the community such as psychologists and the students' parents to create learning activities that are in line with students with special needs. Community involvement also occurs when they are invited to attend special events regarding the work exhibition in terms of both funding and involvement. Schools involve the community in funding activities by submitting proposals.



Figure 4. Students are Studying Directly at A Red Brick Factory Near The School

In the learning process, schools also involve the community. Based on the results of observations, during certain materials, teachers invite students to go directly into the community. For example, when the material is about production, the teacher invites students to a red brick factory in the neighborhood near the school. Students can explore freely such as making red bricks together with the experts. They can also study the aspects of production by observing and interviewing the owner. In addition, the city and provincial education offices are often involved in workshops held by schools for both teachers and students. Community leaders are also invited to share their experiences and good practice regarding their profession. This is because the teacher wants the students can learn directly from the experts. The students' parents whose professions are doctors, lecturers, PLN (National Electricity Company) employees, bakers, etc are also often involved in learning activities.

4.6. Facility and Infrastructure Management

The management of facilities and infrastructure can be examined through the process of providing facilities and infrastructure that supports inclusive education, maintenance, inventory efforts, and the formation of a special team to implement the maintenance of facilities and infrastructure. Procurement of facilities and infrastructure is carried out by purchasing facilities and infrastructure from the budget taken from student tuition. The facilities and infrastructure that support the implementation of the learning process include classrooms, libraries, laboratories, prayer facilities, practice rooms, art rooms, sports centers, and halls.



Figure 5. Special Service Facilities and Infrastructure for Students with Special Needs

The management team of school infrastructure is responsible for planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, supervising, and evaluating the needs and use of infrastructure so that it can contribute

optimally to the teaching and learning activities of students with special needs. First, equality and opportunity mean that inclusive education facilities and infrastructure must be able to facilitate or allow students with special needs to accommodate and participate in learning and other educational activities. Second, accessibility means that inclusive education facilities and infrastructure must be easily accessible or used by students with special needs based on their abilities and needs. Third, sustainable development means that inclusive education facilities and infrastructure must be able to develop their potential optimally. Finally, inclusive education facilities and infrastructure provided by inclusive schools must be safe for all students, including those with special needs.

4.7. Management of Special Service

The implementation of special service management is related to the assessment process of students with special needs, individual learning programs, supporting teachers, and psychologists as well as various special services such as treatment, therapy, home programs, and home visits. The first aspect of special service management is the assessment of students with special needs. The assessment process for students with special needs is usually carried out twice a year at the beginning of the odd semester of the academic year and the beginning of the even semester of the academic year to measure students' basic abilities. The assessment was carried out using academic and non-academic instruments prepared by ortho-pedagogic teachers including fine motor, gross motor, communication skills, emotions, concentration, and cognitive skills for each subject. The assessment process involves ortho-pedagogic teachers, principals of inclusive schools, homeroom teachers, psychologists, parents, and supporting teachers.

The next aspect is the individual learning program. The individual learning program for students with special needs is prepared based on the results of the assessment and adapted to ortho-pedagogic theory based on the abilities and students' age. The result of interviews with ortho-pedagogic teachers is as follows:

"The individual learning program in our school is constructed by referring to the regular curriculum implemented in this country, namely the Merdeka Curriculum. We adopted several Merdeka Curriculum competencies and integrated them with the results of the students' assessment. If the regular curriculum is suitable for students with special needs based on the results of the assessment, then we will use the Merdeka Curriculum in their learning. However, the Merdeka Curriculum is not suitable for students with special needs, we will create individual learning programs."

Other special service management aspects in inclusive schools are supporting teachers and psychologists. In this school, there are regular teachers, supporting teachers, ortho-pedagogic teachers, and psychologists. The regular teacher is in charge of making work programs and implementing the regular curriculum/the Merdeka Curriculum. The supporting teacher is tasked with adjusting the program formed by the class teachers with individual learning programs and accompanying students with special needs in participating in learning activities. Meanwhile, ortho-pedagogic teachers are expert teachers who serve as experts handling inclusive learning by compiling individual learning programs, assessment instruments, evaluations, and supervisors of inclusive learning. Psychologists are needed when students need psychological services. The psychologist also has a role in providing tests based on the obstacles experienced by students with special needs and recommending suitable programs for students with special needs.

5. Conclusion

This study shows that the implementation of information systems in higher education significantly improves operational performance, collaboration, data-driven decision making, and user satisfaction.

5.1. Curriculum Management

Inclusive curriculum management considers planning, implementing, and evaluating learning based on the needs of students with special needs, adhering to the National Curriculum's thematic approach and scientific strategy. Learning models include contextual, problem-based, project-based, and inquiry/discovery learning, with adaptations in materials and methods for students with special needs. Evaluation involves a flexible inclusion assessment system, authentic assessment, and tailored remedial and enrichment programs to meet diverse student needs. The teaching methods commonly used in teaching students with special needs are communication, task analysis, direct instructions, prompts, and cooperative learning (Fitri, 2022; Fitzgerald et al., 2021). Teachers need to choose effective teaching strategies or methods for students with special needs. In learning activities, communication cannot be separated (Efendi et al., 2022). If good communication occurs between students and teachers, a good learning atmosphere will exist, and vice versa, if poor communication occurs between students and teachers, it will create an unfavorable learning atmosphere. The main teaching method for students with special needs is communication (Robiyansah et al., 2020). The assessment system that is commonly used in determining student grade increases in inclusive schools is the achievement of students' mental skills (Fitzgerald et al., 2021). Most students with special needs cannot go to the upper level of classes because they have not met the standards of learning completeness and the determined grade increases (Lestari et al., 2018; Şahan, 2021). In an inclusive education setting, the assessment of learning outcomes aims to assess student learning outcomes in schools systematically and sustainably, to be accountable for providing education to the community, and to determine the quality of education in schools (Rokhim et al., 2021).

5.2. Student Management

The management of students in inclusive schools involves analyzing new students' needs, planning admissions, and organizing student activities and committees. School policies, formed through discussions between teachers and committees, address student achievements with social media recognition, certificates, and special programs, while behavioral issues are handled through collaborative problem-solving and communication with parents. Extracurricular activities, such as music, theater, sports, and academic clubs, are available to all students, including those with special needs, to foster their development. Talented students need academic services and activities that meet their emotional, educational, and physical needs to develop and fulfill their full potential (Efendi et al., 2022; Schultz & Higbee, 2011). They also need differentiation in learning to overcome asynchronous development in their intellectual, emotional, and physical development (Ediyanto et al., 2021; Sánchez et al., 2019). The benefits of mental physical activity for a person include increased feelings of control, competence and self-skills, positive social relations, increased self-concept, and self-esteem, and opportunities to have fun (Toharudin et al., 2018). There are three types of physical and emotional development activities for students with special needs, including (1) self-development education as an internal learning process in which students must be allowed to learn optimally, anytime and anywhere. The implications are realized by providing opportunities for students to listen, see, observe, and do the activity; (2) self-development education as a socialization process in which self-development education is not only to educate and make students to be skillful but also to make students responsible human beings, and (3) self-development education as a process of formation and self-development of children towards independence (Maurice et al., 2019; Mulawarman et al., 2022).

5.3. Financing Management

Inclusive school funding primarily relies on parents' tuition fees, while teacher salaries are supported by government funding, foundations, and allowances based on qualifications and tenure. Tuition fees vary significantly between regular students and those with special needs with additional costs for special facilities and services based on the category of special needs. Inclusive school financial management starts with planning, namely planning and estimating school programs, establishing a school financial income budget, spending the school budget properly, monitoring or controlling the use, accountability, and reporting of school finances (Asongu et al., 2020; Goldan et al., 2022). This inclusive school has met the standards for inclusive school financing. Inclusive schools need to have a special budget for the implementation of inclusive education by including inclusive education in the school budget (Meijer & Watkins, 2019). In addition, inclusive schools need to pay salaries, incentives, transport, and other allowances for Guru Pendamping Khusus (learning support assistants) (Myende et al., 2020). Besides, the inclusive schools need to pay salaries, incentives, transport, and other allowances for the manager/task force/another person in charge of managing inclusive education (Makoelle & Burmistrova, 2020; Tegtmejer, 2022). Therefore, inclusive schools should allocate funds for student activities including students with special needs, and have a scholarship program for all students who are poor and with special needs (Goldan et al., 2022).

5.4. Management of Educators and Education Personnel

The management of educators and staff involves a comprehensive process including recruitment, placement, development, monitoring, evaluation, rewarding, and dismissal procedures. Recruitment starts with internal registration to determine current staff's intentions, followed by stages of administrative checks, interviews, tests, and an induction period. Continuous professional development is emphasized through monthly training, workshops, and seminars, with performance monitored through regular supervision and coordination meetings to address strengths and areas for improvement. School principals must be able to optimize and build a good management system for the success of education in inclusive schools (Osiname, 2016; Yazıcıoğlu, 2021). The position of a school principal is the highest leader and must supervise and protect all human resources in the school. In this role, the principal is responsible for the implementation of the entire educational process in schools which is carried out by all elements of the school community (Efendi et al., 2022). As a leader, it is natural that the principal is required to strive for the implementation of the educational process effectively and efficiently (Ağalday, 2022).

5.5. Management of Community Relation

Community relations management involves community engagement in planning school activities, organizing community members, socializing work programs, providing platforms for community feedback, and evaluating school initiatives. Schools collaborate with community members, including psychologists and parents, to develop inclusive learning activities. Community involvement extends to funding proposals and direct participation in learning activities, such as visits to local industries for practical learning experiences, workshops involving local leaders, and parents contributing their professional expertise to enrich student learning. The results of this study are in line with the theory stating that participation and the role of the community in implementing inclusive education include: (1) planning; (2) provision of related experts/professionals; (3) decision-making; (4) learning and evaluation; (5) funding; (6) supervision; and (7) distribution of graduates (Gross et al., 2015; Mulawarman et al., 2022). Community participation in the form of cooperative partnerships between schools and the government, parents, community groups, and other social organizations is protected by laws or government regulations that underlie partnership cooperation (Dewi et al., 2020; Walker & Musti-Rao, 2016). Community participation is very important to be realized in the implementation of special needs education because the community has various

resources needed by schools and at the same time the community is also the owner of schools in addition to the government (Al-Shammari, 2021; Zidniyati, 2020). When community participation can be maximized in supporting inclusive education, the goal of education for welfare will be achieved more easily. Community workers provide resources, opportunities, knowledge, and skills to increase the capacity of community members to participate and influence community life (Muhajir, 2022; Zulkarnain & Zubaedi, 2021).

5.6. Facility and Infrastructure Management

Facility and infrastructure management in inclusive schools involves procurement, maintenance, and the formation of specialized teams, funded through student tuition. Key facilities like classrooms, libraries, labs, and prayer rooms are critical for supporting inclusive learning activities and must ensure equal access, sustainability, and safety for all students, including those with special needs. In developing facilities and infrastructure, the following aspects should be considered: (1) equality of opportunity; (2) accessibility; (3) sustainable development; and (4) security (Melda, 2021; Mihat et al., 2019). The importance of the role of inclusive education facilities and infrastructure is explained in the convention organized by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), 2006) in the document archives article 9 concerning accessibility states that enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate in life. The state must eliminate accessibility barriers as much as possible by providing facilities and infrastructure, one of which is at school (Fertika et al., 2022).

5.7. Management of Special Service

Individual learning programs are then customized based on these assessments and orthopedagogic principles, ensuring tailored educational experiences for students with special needs. Based on the aforementioned facts, the implementation of individual learning programs in these two schools has been maximally conducted because the process of preparing PPI (Individualized Learning Program) involves parties such as class teachers, subject teachers, psychologists or psychiatrists, parents, co-teachers, therapists, etc (Robiyansah et al., 2020). The preparation of PPI is carried out routinely, is compiled at the beginning of the semester, and evaluated when the program is finished so that it can be done every month, three months after the program has started or as necessary. The PPI must be progressive and flexible by considering the treatment that best suits the students' level of development and needs (Ediyanto et al., 2021; Schultz & Higbee, 2011).

Special service management in inclusive schools involves biannual assessments using academic and non-academic tools, led by orthopedagogic teachers, principals, homeroom teachers, psychologists, parents, and support staff. The results of this study are in line with several theories stating that the main tasks of a classroom teacher in an inclusive school are: (1) creating a conducive learning climate; (2) developing and carrying out academic and non-academic assessments for all children; (3) preparing PPI (Individualized Learning Program) with GPK (learning support assistants); (4) carrying out learning and assessment activities; (5) providing remedial learning programs; (6) carrying out class administration and (7) developing programs and carrying out guidance practices for all students (Ediyanto et al., 2021; Sánchez et al., 2019). The duties of the learning support assistants are carrying out special administration, special evaluation, fostering the physical and emotional aspects of students with special needs, and mastering the development of integrated educational programs (Efendi et al., 2022). Therefore, it is necessary to pay more attention to this psychological aspect so that each student feels comfortable and the target or goal of learning can be achieved properly (Nwosu et al., 2023; Sowiyah et al., 2022).

6. Conclusion and Implications

Based on the results of the research and discussion above, it can be concluded that: (1) Inclusive curriculum management includes the stages of planning, implementing and evaluating learning based on the needs of students with special needs; (2) Management of students in inclusive schools includes procedures for admitting new students, school regulations and policies concerning students, physical development activities, attitudes, and student skills; (3) Inclusive financing management includes budget plans, organizational structure of the budget preparation team, honorarium for educators and education staff, budget for facilities and infrastructure, program evaluation, financial monitoring, and reporting; (4) The management of educators and education staff includes the process of recruiting educators and education staff, educators and education staff placement, the development process of educators and education staff, monitoring and evaluating the performance of educators and education staff, reward and punishment as well as procedures for dismissing educators and education staff; (5) Management of community relation includes community involvement in planning school learning/activities, organizing community members, socializing work programs to community, providing open space for community aspirations and assessment and evaluation of school work program performance by the community; (6) Management of facilities and infrastructure includes the process of procuring facilities and infrastructure that supports inclusive education, efforts to maintain and inventory as well as the formation of a special team to implement the maintenance of facilities and infrastructure; (7) Management of special services includes the process of assessing students with special needs, individual learning programs, supporting teachers and psychologists as well as various special services such as treatment, therapy, home programs and home visits. So, it can be concluded that the management of inclusive education has been carried out properly and thoroughly.

7. Limitation and Suggestion

This study is limited to the management practices of pilot inclusion elementary schools, which may not fully represent the conditions in non-pilot or rural schools. The research focuses on qualitative data, potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings to broader educational settings. Additionally, the study does not deeply explore the long-term impacts of inclusive education management on student outcomes. The involvement of external stakeholders, such as policymakers and higher education institutions, is not extensively analyzed, which could provide a more comprehensive understanding of inclusive education implementation. Future research recommendations could involve collaboration among schools, parents, and communities to develop more adaptive inclusive management models tailored to the needs of students with special needs. Studies could focus on creating technology-based evaluation strategies to monitor the effectiveness of inclusive programs in real-time. Additionally, further research could explore the role of government and higher education institutions in providing continuous training for educators and educational staff on inclusive education. Investigations could also examine the impact of integrating innovative psychological and therapeutic services on improving learning outcomes for inclusive students. Lastly, studies should assess the effectiveness of community involvement in providing and maintaining inclusive facilities through participatory community-based programs.

Declarations

Author Contributions. (F.A.Y.: Conceptualization, methodology, and data analysis. L.E.W.F.: Literature review, review-editing and writing, and data coding)

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Elementary School, with all participants providing written informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation in compliance with ethical research guidelines.

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