
**INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING:
BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN IDEALS AND PRACTICE**

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to explore the implementation of inclusive education in the elementary school context, especially in English language teaching, in order to identify the gap between idealism and the actual practice of its implementation. This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method in one elementary school in West Jakarta. Data collection was carried out through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with teachers and school leaders, and analysis of educational documents. Data analysis includes data reduction, data presentation, and interpretation to identify key themes and assess the effectiveness of the inclusive practices implemented. The research results show that although there is a strong commitment to the principle of inclusivity among school leaders and teachers, the implementation of inclusive education faces various challenges. Key challenges include adapting curricula, adapting assessment methods, and teaching strategies to meet diverse student needs. This research concludes that improving inclusive education practices requires additional resources, ongoing training for teachers, and collaborative support from various stakeholders. With these steps, it is hoped that a supportive and inclusive learning environment will be created for all students

Keywords: Inclusive education, English language teaching, elementary school.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi penerapan pendidikan inklusif dalam konteks sekolah dasar, khususnya dalam pengajaran Bahasa Inggris, guna mengidentifikasi kesenjangan antara idealisme dan praktik nyata pelaksanaannya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus di salah satu sekolah dasar di Jakarta Barat. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi kelas, wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan guru dan pimpinan sekolah, serta analisis dokumen pendidikan. Analisis data mencakup reduksi data, penyajian data, dan interpretasi untuk mengidentifikasi tema utama dan menilai efektivitas praktik inklusif yang diterapkan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun terdapat komitmen kuat terhadap prinsip inklusivitas di kalangan pimpinan sekolah dan guru, pelaksanaan pendidikan inklusif menghadapi berbagai tantangan. Tantangan utama meliputi adaptasi kurikulum, penyesuaian metode penilaian, dan strategi pengajaran untuk memenuhi kebutuhan siswa yang beragam.

Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa peningkatan praktik pendidikan inklusif memerlukan sumber daya tambahan, pelatihan berkelanjutan bagi guru, serta dukungan kolaboratif dari berbagai pemangku kepentingan. Dengan langkah-langkah tersebut, diharapkan tercipta lingkungan pembelajaran yang mendukung dan inklusif bagi semua peserta didik

Keywords: Pendidikan inklusif, Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris, Sekolah Dasar

1. Introduction

Providing appropriate support for children with special needs is essential to ensure they have access to quality education (Siahaan, 2022). Only 4% of Indonesian school-aged children with disabilities received formal education services in 2022, highlighting a critical gap in equitable access to education. This issue may stem from policy shortcomings, limited resources, and societal biases, underscoring the need for systemic reforms to ensure inclusive and quality education for all. Inclusive education, which integrates all students into a supportive and accommodating learning environment, is one solution to addressing these disparities and ensuring that every child has equal access to education. As a result, inclusion has become one of the key issues in discussions about human rights and educational equity, driving inclusive teaching practices worldwide (Sakiz & Woods, 2015; Yeo et al., 2016).

Inclusive education refers to the practice of educating students with special educational needs alongside their peers in regular classroom settings. According to Ainscow (2000), placing a student with special needs in a general education classroom with a teacher aide and separate assignments is not true inclusion. True inclusion involves both physical placement and social acceptance, fostering a sense of belonging within the classroom community (Long & Guo, 2023). Achieving genuine inclusion can be challenging, and to succeed, it is crucial for all parties in the educational system to work together to provide the necessary support and resources (Norwich, 2022). Collaborative efforts are essential in creating an environment where every student, regardless of their needs, can thrive both academically and socially. Moreover, Leijen et al. (2021) emphasized that inclusive education can be difficult to implement because its meaning often depends on personal interpretations, which can vary according to time and context. To overcome this ambiguity, norms and institutions such as laws, policies, and public opinion must be shaped to create social systems that fully support inclusive education.

Indonesia has made significant strides in inclusive education over the past few decades. In the Merdeka Curriculum, personalized learning experiences, including provisions for students with special needs, are a focal point. In 2022, the Agency for Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment, under Indonesia's Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, issued guidelines for implementing inclusive education within the Merdeka Curriculum. These guidelines aim to help stakeholders understand inclusive education and offer appropriate educational services tailored to the needs of students with disabilities. The government's guidelines clearly outline the stages of implementing inclusive education to ensure that all students, including those with special needs, receive equal access to quality education.

Managing an inclusive classroom is often more challenging than managing a

traditional one due to the varied learning abilities of students, including those with special needs. Teachers in Indonesian inclusive classrooms face unique challenges, particularly when teaching young learners. They must adapt strategies to align with the national curriculum while addressing the diverse needs of students, including those with special needs. Individualized plans are often hindered by large class sizes and limited teacher training on inclusive practices. Young learners require additional guidance, have shorter attention spans, and may struggle with behavioral control, further complicating classroom dynamics. Teaching English presents additional hurdles, as students often have minimal exposure to the language outside the classroom, necessitating tailored instruction to build comprehension. Balancing these diverse needs while adhering to curriculum standards and maintaining engagement is particularly demanding in this context. Employing effective classroom management techniques is crucial to addressing the unique needs of all students, including those with special educational needs (Awal & Sarkar, 2023; Lutz et al., 2024; Wijaya et al., 2020).

Inclusive education has been implemented in many countries, with schools adopting different approaches (Haug, 2017). To assess the success of inclusive education, evaluations are essential. These evaluations form part of an ongoing effort to monitor, ensure, and improve the quality of education. Studies indicate that there is often a gap between the ideals of inclusive education and its actual implementation (Hardy & Woodcock, 2015). Previous studies have used the CIPP evaluation model (Context, Input, Process, Product) to assess inclusive education (Dermawan et al., 2024; Humairoh et al., 2022; Junanto & Kusna, 2018; Liswandari et al., 2024; Rokhim, 2021; Sasmito & Wijaya, 2022; Sopandi & Khasanah, 2020). These studies suggest that the implementation of inclusive education still requires further improvements to achieve its intended goals effectively. Widyastuti & Haryanto (2023), who applied Malcolm Provus's evaluation model, found that there were no significant discrepancies between the planning and execution of inclusive education. Context evaluations, such as those conducted by Natsir et al. (2023), indicate that the implementation of inclusive education is functioning effectively. However, Bagaskorowati (2015) noted that the primary challenge lies in shifting the mindset from segregated to inclusive education, as many schools still utilize traditional learning strategies that struggle to accommodate diverse learning needs, resulting in inadequate support for students with special needs.

SDN 5 Joglo, located in West Jakarta, has been implementing inclusive education since 2015. The school accommodates 519 students across 19 classes, including 27 students with special needs, such as those with hyperactivity and slow learning abilities. In this school, English is introduced as a subject beginning in the 4th grade. However, the school has not previously conducted an evaluation of its inclusive education program. This research aims to explore the implementation of inclusive education and to identify the gap between the ideals and actual practices, using the multifaceted concept proposed by Mitchell (2015). This concept, which is represented by the formula $IE = V + P + 5As + S + R + L$, emphasizes key components such as Vision (V), Placement (P), Adapted Curriculum, Adapted Assessment, Adapted Teaching, Acceptance, and Access (5As), Support (S), Resources (R), and Leadership (L). These components interact in ways that can either strengthen or weaken the effectiveness of inclusive

education. For example, teachers at SDN 5 Joglo face challenges such as limited training in differentiated instruction and insufficient access to specialized resources, which hinder their ability to address the diverse needs of students with special needs in English classes. By addressing these challenges, the framework can provide a clear roadmap for schools to bridge the gap between the ideals of inclusivity and the realities of its implementation.

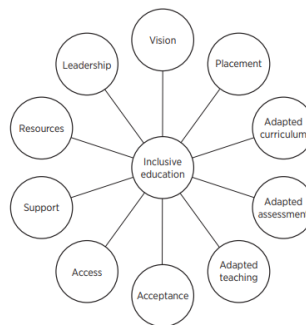


Figure 1. Model of inclusive education

Ultimately, the researcher hopes that this study will lead to improved strategies for implementing inclusive education, ensuring that all learners receive the support they need to thrive.

2. Method of Research

This research aims to explore the implementation of inclusive education in English language learning. A qualitative approach is employed to examine the issue comprehensively. This method is particularly suitable for situations where the research variables are complex and cannot be measured by a specific unit (Creswell, 2013). Additionally, Creswell and Clark (2018) suggest that qualitative research involves gathering diverse data and examining numerous variables within a natural context, making it ideal for investigating real-world challenges in inclusive education.

The study employs a case study design, as outlined by Creswell (2013), who explains that case studies are used to deeply explore a specific phenomenon within a real-life context. This method allows for an in-depth examination of a bounded system—such as a school or educational program—over time, through detailed data collection involving multiple sources of information like observations, interviews, and documents. In this case, the implementation of inclusive education at SD N 5 Joglo serves as the bounded system under investigation, making it an appropriate approach for understanding how the school's practices align with inclusive education ideals.

The research was conducted at SDN 5 Joglo and involved the participation of the school principal and three English teachers. The data collection process included three methods: document analysis, interviews, and classroom observations. First, the researcher analyzed the curriculum, lesson plans, and the English textbooks used in the school. Next, semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants to gather their experiences and perspectives on the implementation of inclusive education. The interview questions were adapted from the indicators of the

multifaceted concept proposed by Mitchell (2015). Lastly, two types of observations were carried out: classroom observations, focusing on teaching methods, student participation, and teacher-student interactions during English lessons; and school observations, assessing the broader inclusive environment and infrastructure. Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, confidentiality of data was ensured, and approval was secured from relevant authorities, including the school administration. These measures ensured that the research adhered to ethical standards in qualitative studies. The data analysis in this research follows a systematic process involving three main steps. First, data reduction focuses on filtering and organizing the information gathered from document analysis, interviews, and observations, ensuring that only relevant insights aligned with the research objectives are retained (Mezmir, 2020). Next, data display involves the visual representation of organized data using tools like tables and charts to clarify the findings related to the implementation of inclusive education. Finally, interpretation synthesizes the organized data to draw conclusions about the school's practices in relation to the inclusive education framework (IE = V + P + 5As + S + R + L). Each component of Mitchell's framework is operationalized in this study to assess specific aspects of inclusive education. Vision (V) is examined through the school's overarching goals for inclusivity, while Placement (P) is analyzed in terms of how students with special needs are integrated into regular classes. The 5As—Adapted Curriculum, Adapted Assessment, Adapted Teaching, Acceptance, and Access—are evaluated through lesson plans, teaching strategies, and classroom interactions. Support (S) and Resources (R) are assessed by examining the availability of special education staff, teaching aids, and infrastructure. Lastly, Leadership (L) is analyzed based on the school principal's role in promoting and sustaining inclusive practices. These components guide the interpretation process to identify patterns and themes that reveal whether the school's practices align with the ideal inclusive model.

3. Result and Discussion

This section presents an in-depth analysis of the findings from interviews and classroom observations conducted at SD N 5 Joglo regarding the implementation of inclusive education in English Language Teaching (ELT). The analysis aims to explore the gaps between the ideals of inclusive education and its practical application, as reflected in the various elements in multifaceted concept.

A. Vision

Vision in this concept means that educators throughout the education system are dedicated to the core philosophy of inclusive education, which is reflected in the laws, regulations, and policy documents at all levels.

This commitment is evident through various indicators: the school principal consistently demonstrates a commitment to inclusive education, and other senior leaders within the school also actively support this approach. Additionally, the school's governing body upholds the principles of inclusive education, ensuring that policies align with its values. Furthermore, national, regional, and local educational authorities also express strong support for inclusive education, reinforcing its importance throughout the system.

The interviews with the principal and teachers reveal a strong commitment to fostering inclusive education within the school's English language curriculum. The

principal, a highly qualified teacher who has earned the distinction of Guru Penggerak (Educational Leader), consistently emphasizes the importance of providing every student, regardless of their abilities or backgrounds, with equal access to education. The principal's leadership plays a crucial role in shaping inclusive educational management (Khaleel et al., 2021; Tanzi & Hermanto, 2024). This involves proactive efforts to address the diverse needs of students with special needs, reflecting on leadership practices, fostering teachers' responsiveness, and creating an environment that supports inclusivity. However, the level of engagement among teachers varies due to systemic challenges, such as limited professional development opportunities and insufficient training in inclusive teaching methods. Additionally, some teachers identified a lack of resources and time as significant barriers to implementing inclusivity effectively. For example, they noted the need for specialized teaching aids, smaller class sizes, and more tailored support for students with special needs. These systemic issues, coupled with personal beliefs and confidence levels in managing inclusive classrooms, highlight the importance of providing targeted professional development and institutional support to address the gaps in teacher engagement and practice. The interviews revealed that the level of commitment among the English teachers varies. While one teacher is actively engaged in implementing the program, others expressed the need for more training and support to feel confident in managing inclusive classrooms. To bridge the gap between the school's vision and its day-to-day practices, the school has started taking initial steps by inviting experts in inclusive education to provide practical advice and hands-on strategies. For instance, a recent training session focused on adapting lessons and managing classrooms with diverse abilities, which received positive feedback from participants. However, these efforts remain sporadic, and ongoing, structured professional development is needed to ensure all teachers are adequately equipped.

A critical challenge lies in the discrepancy between administrative compliance and practical outcomes. While inclusive education policies are in place, limited interaction between students with and without special needs often undermines the program's goals. This gap highlights the importance of fostering meaningful integration. One potential solution is implementing peer buddy programs, where students without disabilities assist their peers in academic and social activities, promoting mutual understanding and collaboration. Additionally, structured group activities that encourage teamwork and inclusive participation could further enhance interactions, ensuring that the goals of inclusive education are met both administratively and practically.

B. Placement

In this criterion, students with special educational needs are enrolled in their local neighborhood schools, ensuring they have access to education within their communities. They are placed in classes that match their age group, promoting an inclusive environment that respects their developmental stage. When additional support is needed, these students are provided with assistance, but they are not pulled out of the classroom more often than their peers. This approach aims to balance the need for extra help with the goal of keeping students integrated in the classroom as much as possible.

In the interview, the principal explained that all students, including those with special needs, are placed in age-appropriate classes. English teachers support this

finding, but they also pointed out that some students with special needs often require additional time outside the regular classroom to receive specialized assistance. This aligns with observations, where students with special needs were frequently pulled out of class to receive extra support in a separate room.

Further observations revealed that although students with special needs are formally placed in regular classes, their interaction with other students remains limited. Interaction between regular students and those with special needs, especially during English lessons, is not always optimal. For instance, in one observed lesson, students with special needs were seen sitting separately, participating only in specific activities, while much of their time was spent under the supervision of an aide. Although this placement meets the administrative standards of inclusivity, more attention is needed to ensure all students are fully engaged in the same learning process. Special needs students are often isolated from the main classroom activities, which can hinder their social and emotional development (Mitchell, 2015). This suggests that while the inclusive principles are being followed, adjustments in practice are necessary to fully achieve the goals of inclusivity.

C. Adapted Curriculum

Ideally, the standard curriculum should be adapted or modified to suit the unique abilities and interests of all students. For those with special educational needs, the curriculum content must be tailored to be both age-appropriate and aligned with their developmental stages. Rather than creating a separate curriculum for these learners, the goal is to adjust the existing curriculum so it effectively meets the diverse needs of various student groups. The principles of Universal Design, which emphasize creating educational materials and environments that are usable by all students without the need for extensive modifications, are integral to this process. For example, a Universal Design approach might include providing lesson content in multiple formats (e.g., visual, auditory, and tactile), using assistive technology, or offering flexible assessment methods to accommodate different learning styles. These strategies ensure the curriculum is both inclusive and accessible, allowing all students to fully participate and benefit from the learning experience.

Based on the document analysis, it was also found that all students, including those with special needs, follow the same English curriculum, specifically the Merdeka Curriculum. This curriculum is categorized into phase B for 3rd and 4th grades and phase C for 5th and 6th grades. In the Merdeka Curriculum for English, learning is divided by grade levels. Phase B is for students in grades 3 and 4, while phase C is for grades 5 and 6. In phase B, students start with basic English skills to help them understand the language. They focus on listening, speaking, reading, and writing. For listening and speaking, they learn to follow simple instructions, introduce themselves, talk about topics like family and school, and have simple conversations, such as asking and answering questions. In reading, they recognize common words, read short texts, and understand the meaning of words in context. Writing focuses on simple sentences, using basic punctuation, and sharing personal information.

In phase C, students build on these skills by expanding their vocabulary and fluency. They learn to understand more complex instructions and join in discussions on topics like daily routines and school subjects. Their reading tasks involve more complex texts, such as short stories or informational pieces, where they focus on

understanding main ideas and details. Writing also becomes more advanced, as they create paragraphs about familiar topics, share experiences, and connect ideas more effectively. Both phases prioritize communicative competence, helping students use English in real-life situations. The curriculum also introduces cultural elements, giving students insight into English-speaking cultures and broadening their global understanding. While this standardized curriculum aims to provide consistency in learning across different grades, it poses challenges when applied to students with diverse learning needs, particularly those requiring more individualized instruction.

. In the interviews, teachers expressed that adapting the Merdeka Curriculum to accommodate students with special needs can be difficult. While the curriculum outlines clear goals for English learning, it doesn't always provide enough flexibility for students who need extra help or different learning approaches. For instance, one teacher shared that a student with a learning disability struggled significantly with vocabulary retention, requiring repeated explanations and additional visual aids to understand basic terms. Another observation revealed that during speaking activities, a student with hyperactivity had difficulty focusing and participating, often disrupting the flow of the lesson. These challenges highlight the need for more adaptable teaching strategies. Teachers mentioned that they sometimes rely on peer support, such as pairing students with special needs with more advanced classmates to encourage participation, or using flashcards and interactive games to make vocabulary lessons more engaging. However, these strategies are applied inconsistently and depend heavily on the teacher's initiative and resources, underscoring the need for a more systematic approach to support inclusive learning in English classes.

D. Adapted Assessment

The assessment process should mirror any modifications made to the curriculum to accommodate diverse learning needs. Common modifications to the curriculum might include simplifying lesson objectives, using visual aids or hands-on activities, and incorporating assistive technologies for students with special needs. These adjustments should be reflected in the assessment methods to ensure alignment with the learning experiences of all students. For example, instead of traditional written tests, students could demonstrate their understanding through oral presentations, role-playing, or project-based tasks tailored to their strengths. Individualized plans, which are personalized strategies designed to meet the unique needs of each student, form the foundation of how students with special needs are evaluated. These plans might involve setting specific, measurable goals for a student's progress, such as mastering ten new vocabulary words within a given timeframe, or allowing extended time and alternative formats for completing assessments. By integrating these adaptations, assessments can be made more flexible, accessible, and equitable for all learners.

English teachers mentioned that it can be difficult to adjust these assessments in a way that truly reflects the students' abilities. For instance, during one observation, a student with learning disabilities struggled to comprehend a written test, even though the test had been modified to accommodate their needs. Teachers also explained during interviews that, despite efforts to adjust assessments—such as offering oral tests or incorporating visuals—the results don't always capture the progress of students with special needs accurately. They shared the difficulty in designing assessments that are fair and appropriate for all learners. One teacher

explains that she often has to come up with creative ways to make assessments work, but the resources available to us are sometimes limited, making it tough to create truly inclusive assessments.

This really underscores how important it is to provide proper resources. When teachers have access to specialized materials, training, and tools, they're better equipped to create assessments that cater to the unique needs of every student. Without these supports, even the most dedicated teachers can struggle to ensure that students with special needs are assessed accurately and fairly. To make inclusive education truly effective, schools need to invest in the right resources so that every student has an equal chance to succeed. This underscores the critical importance of providing proper resources to support inclusive education. When teachers have access to specialized materials, such as visual aids, assistive technologies like speech-to-text software, and adapted learning tools (e.g., tactile resources for students with visual impairments), they are better equipped to create assessments that cater to the unique needs of every student. Additionally, targeted training programs are essential, focusing on strategies for differentiated instruction, using Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, and managing classrooms with diverse abilities. Tools like detailed Individualized Education Program (IEP) templates and assessment rubrics tailored for students with special needs can further assist teachers. Without these supports, even the most dedicated teachers can struggle to ensure that students with special needs are assessed accurately and fairly. To make inclusive education truly effective, schools need to take concrete steps, such as allocating budgets specifically for inclusive education resources, establishing partnerships with organizations specializing in special education, and conducting regular professional development workshops. These actions would ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to succeed and thrive in an inclusive learning environment.

E. Adapted Teaching

Teaching strategies should be tailored to fit the composition of the classroom and the specific needs of each student, drawing on methods outlined by Mitchell (2014) where appropriate. Indicators of this approach include the use of a significant portion of Mitchell's recommended classroom strategies, applied based on the situation. Additionally, teachers utilize data from student performance to shape and refine their teaching methods in several ways. For example, observations revealed that teachers regularly review the results of formative assessments, such as quizzes and classwork, to identify specific areas where students struggle, such as vocabulary retention or grammatical errors. This data is then used to adapt lesson plans, providing more targeted instruction in these areas. Furthermore, during classroom observations, teachers were seen offering additional practice opportunities for students who required more time to master specific concepts, while simultaneously challenging advanced students with higher-order tasks. By analyzing student performance trends, teachers ensure their strategies remain effective and responsive, promoting progress for all learners. In English classes, providing additional resources such as differentiated materials tailored to various learning levels and targeted teacher training would significantly improve lesson accessibility. This would enable students with special needs to engage more effectively with English language learning, helping them develop their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills alongside their peers. English teachers sometimes face challenges

in creating strategies that address the diverse needs of their students effectively (Mumpuniarti et al., 2020).

In one observed lesson, the teacher used the same material for all students without modifying the approach for those with special needs. As a result, students with learning disabilities struggled to keep up, while their peers completed the tasks with ease. Teachers also pointed out that limited time and resources are significant barriers to fully implementing these adapted strategies. Based on the interviews and observations, while teachers are using the same curriculum, they make adjustments to better support students with special needs. For example, some teachers provide books with more pictures or allow students to use colored pens for different activities, making the learning experience more engaging and accessible. Despite these thoughtful efforts, many teachers still struggle to fully adapt the Merdeka Curriculum to meet the unique needs of these students.

This emphasizes the need for more resources, such as customized learning materials and specific teacher training, to help ensure that all students, especially those with special needs, can actively participate and succeed in their English lessons. These findings align with existing literature, which suggests that inadequately adapted teaching strategies can hinder the effectiveness of inclusive education (Ainscow, 2020). Although teachers are committed to supporting all students, the lack of ongoing training and limited resources often prevents them from fully implementing appropriate teaching methods.

F. Acceptance

The education system and the school acknowledge the rights of students with special educational needs to be integrated into general education classrooms. These students are entitled to equitable resources and deserve to be socially and emotionally accepted within the school environment. Inclusive classroom environments are more than just a trend—they represent a dedication to fostering respect, thoughtfulness, and academic success for all students. Through collaboration between teachers and students, classrooms can become spaces where diversity is valued and everyone's voice is acknowledged. Here are nine impactful strategies to encourage inclusion in the classroom. In fact, the rejection of the existence of students with special needs by their peers are still exist (Razalli et al., 2017). The observations indicate that while students with special needs were physically present in regular classrooms, they were often not fully integrated socially. This is not solely due to a lack of acceptance from their peers, but also because some students with special needs may require time alone to regulate their emotions or manage sensory overload, as observed during classroom activities. For instance, one student with autism was seen leaving the classroom briefly during group activities to calm down in a quieter space. Such moments allow them to reset and re-engage with the learning process more effectively. The school addresses this issue by providing designated quiet areas and implementing flexible classroom policies that permit students to step away when needed, ensuring they can participate fully without feeling overwhelmed.

In interviews with the principal and English teachers, there was a clear consensus on the importance of students with special needs being included in regular classrooms. The principal emphasized that inclusivity is a top priority and that the school leadership is fully committed to supporting it. Teachers also agreed that students with special needs should be socially and emotionally integrated into

the classroom environment. One teacher remarked that she work hard to make sure every student feels like they belong, no matter their abilities. These findings are consistent with previous studies indicating that while schools often recognize the value of inclusion, achieving full social and emotional integration requires more than just policy—it demands an environment that actively fosters peer interactions and emotional support (Ainscow, 2020). Without strategies to promote these interactions, students with special needs may continue to feel isolated, even within inclusive classrooms.

G. Access

To ensure inclusivity for all students, the school provides appropriate physical access both in and around classrooms. This includes essential modifications such as ramps, elevators, and adapted toilets. Doorways are widened to accommodate wheelchairs, and classrooms have ample space for easy maneuverability. Beyond structural changes, the school considers individual needs in the arrangement of furniture, acoustics, lighting, temperature, and ventilation. These efforts aim to create a comfortable and accessible environment for every student. Key elements of accessibility in the school include features such as ramps and adapted toilets, which are essential for supporting students with physical disabilities and visual impairments. Additional features, such as accessible playground equipment, wide doorways for wheelchair users, and adjustable furniture, demonstrate the school's potential readiness for inclusive physical infrastructure. However, the principal and teachers explained that the school primarily enrolls students with ADHD and slow learners, whose needs are primarily related to cognitive and behavioral support rather than physical accessibility. As a result, infrastructure modifications for physical disabilities, such as ramps or specialized lighting and acoustics, have not been prioritized. This decision reflects the school's effort to allocate resources toward addressing current student needs, such as individualized learning plans and teaching strategies. While the emphasis on learning support aligns with the existing student population, accessibility should not be overlooked, as it ensures preparedness for future students with mobility or sensory impairments. Both physical accessibility and learning support are equally important to creating an inclusive environment that meets the diverse needs of all students. A balanced approach would allow the school to address current needs while preparing for a more inclusive future, demonstrating a proactive commitment to universal accessibility.

H. Support

In an ideal inclusive classroom, teachers receive comprehensive support from a team of professionals who cater to the diverse needs of students. This team typically includes a general educator, supported by specialist advisers who offer guidance on adapting lessons for students with varying needs. For example, speech and language therapists may work with students who have speech delays or articulation difficulties, assisting them with communication exercises and providing teachers with strategies to enhance verbal interactions during class. Similarly, physiotherapists contribute by designing physical activities or ergonomic seating plans for students with mobility challenges, ensuring they can participate comfortably in classroom activities. Occupational therapists often assist in modifying tools, such as providing pencil grips for students with fine motor

difficulties, to help them engage in writing tasks.

Assistant teachers or paraprofessionals play a key role in providing direct support, such as helping students with ADHD stay focused through one-on-one interventions or guiding students with autism during group activities to enhance their social interactions. However, observations revealed gaps in the availability of resources and practical assistance. For instance, teachers noted a lack of adaptive teaching tools, such as noise-canceling headphones for students sensitive to auditory stimuli, or visual schedules to help students with organizational challenges. Additionally, insufficient professional development opportunities leave team members underprepared to address diverse needs effectively. Ensuring adequate training and equipping classrooms with practical resources can significantly enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education.

When discussing support systems, the principal explained that while the school receives government funding and policy guidance for inclusive education, there remains a pressing need for more consistent, hands-on support. Although the government has established clear policies, both the principal and teachers noted that without additional resources and practical assistance, it is difficult to fully meet the needs of students with special needs. Specifically, teachers highlighted the lack of adaptive learning materials, such as visual aids, interactive software, and tactile resources for students with sensory impairments. They also mentioned the need for assistive technologies, including speech-to-text devices and noise-canceling headphones, which can significantly improve the learning experience for students with hearing or attention challenges. Furthermore, the absence of sufficient training programs leaves teachers unprepared to effectively differentiate instruction or manage diverse classroom dynamics. Practical assistance, such as hiring more assistant teachers or paraprofessionals to provide one-on-one support, was also cited as a pressing need. These resources and supports are essential to translating inclusive policies into actionable practices that ensure all students receive equitable and effective education.

Teachers also emphasized the critical role parents play in the success of inclusive education. While some parents are highly engaged and work closely with the school, others are less involved, which can create challenges for teachers. When parents actively participate in their child's education, helping at home and staying in communication with teachers, it strengthens the support network for students with special needs. One teacher mentioned that she makes an effort to involve parents, but not all of them are as engaged, making it harder to fully support their children.

Observations further highlighted how parental involvement influences classroom integration. In one English class, a student with engaged parents received more personalized support. For example, the parents regularly communicated with the teacher, sharing insights about the child's learning preferences and challenges, which helped the teacher tailor lesson plans and activities to meet the student's needs. The parents also provided additional learning resources, such as flashcards and educational apps, which the teacher incorporated into lessons to enhance the student's participation and understanding. This collaborative approach allowed the teacher to focus on the student's progress more effectively, resulting in better classroom integration.

Conversely, in another class where parental involvement was minimal, the teacher faced significant challenges in managing the needs of multiple students with special needs. Without regular communication from parents, the teacher struggled

to identify the specific needs of these students, leading to generalized teaching strategies that were less effective for addressing individual learning gaps. Furthermore, the lack of support from home, such as reinforcing lessons or providing additional practice materials, made it difficult for these students to keep up with their peers. This situation underscored the importance of active parental involvement in creating a cohesive and supportive learning environment, where teachers and parents work together to promote the inclusion and success of all students. These insights align with research showing that both government and parental involvement are crucial to successful inclusive education (Kambuga & Mgonja, 2023; Mann et al., 2024; Muhammad et al., 2024). Government support should go beyond policy creation and include providing schools with the resources and tools they need. Likewise, parental involvement is essential to ensuring students with special needs receive the necessary support at both home and school. A strong partnership between schools, parents, and the government is key to creating a truly inclusive learning environment where all students can thrive.

I. Resources

In an inclusive education setting, it is essential that schools are equipped with adequate and appropriate resources, including both materials and staffing. The national, regional, or local education authorities play a crucial role in ensuring that schools receive the necessary resources to fulfill their commitments to inclusive education. These resources may include specialized equipment, learning materials, and additional staff members to support students with diverse needs. Okongo et al. (2015) mention that the term "resources" encompasses not just teaching methods and materials, but also the time allocated for instruction, as well as the knowledge and skills that teachers gain through training and experience. Educating students with special needs in an inclusive classroom differs from the standard program. These students may require additional instructional time, alternative teaching methods, and specialized expertise. This can be addressed by increasing resources or adjusting the use of existing ones. In inclusive education, the focus is on adapting the classroom to meet the individual needs of all students, rather than expecting students with special needs to meet general classroom standards.

The principal mentioned that the school receives adequate funding from local and national bodies to support inclusive education, but both he and the teachers pointed out gaps in resource allocation. Teachers explained that while basic materials, such as standard textbooks and general classroom supplies, are provided, additional specialized resources are often needed to fully accommodate students with special needs. One teacher noted, "We have the basics, but we could really use more specialized materials for students who need extra help with English." These gaps significantly impact students' learning experiences by limiting their ability to engage fully in lessons. For example, students with learning disabilities struggle with comprehension tasks because there are no adaptive materials, such as simplified texts or interactive visuals, to meet their needs. Similarly, the absence of tools like assistive technologies or tailored worksheets for vocabulary practice makes it harder for these students to build foundational skills. Without these resources, students with special needs are often left behind, unable to keep pace with their peers, which undermines the goals of inclusive education.

These findings support the argument that while schools may receive funding for inclusive education, the distribution of resources does not always meet the

specific needs of all students (Booth & Ainscow, 2002). Effective inclusive education requires not only adequate funding but also the provision of specialized materials and tools that can be tailored to students' individual learning needs.

J. Leadership

Leadership plays a crucial role in the success of inclusive education by shaping how inclusive practices are implemented and sustained within a school. Strong leadership not only establishes a clear vision for inclusivity but also actively supports teachers with the necessary resources and practical guidance to translate that vision into classroom practices. For instance, in SDN 5 Joglo, the principal demonstrated this by organizing professional development workshops that focused on inclusive teaching strategies and by ensuring the availability of individualized learning plans for students with special needs. These initiatives provided teachers with actionable tools to adapt their lessons and create a more inclusive classroom environment. Furthermore, the leadership team regularly monitors the implementation of inclusivity policies through classroom observations and teacher evaluations, fostering a culture of continuous improvement. This hands-on approach aligns with research that highlights the importance of leadership in providing not only strategic direction but also tangible support to ensure inclusivity is effectively integrated into everyday practices (Norwich, 2022).

4. Conclusion

This research has provided a comprehensive look into the implementation of inclusive education within an elementary school setting, specifically in English Language Teaching (ELT). The findings emphasize that while the leadership and teaching staff demonstrate a clear commitment to inclusivity, significant gaps remain in the practical application of inclusive teaching strategies and support systems. The principal's leadership plays a crucial role in establishing an inclusive vision; however, more hands-on guidance, resources, and professional training are needed to ensure this vision is effectively translated into classroom practices. Social and emotional inclusion, particularly for students with special needs, is a critical area requiring further attention, as many students remain physically present in classrooms but lack meaningful engagement with their peers. Moreover, the current allocation of resources, particularly in terms of specialized materials and paraprofessional support, is insufficient to fully meet the diverse needs of all students. Addressing these challenges is vital to fostering a truly inclusive educational environment.

This study acknowledges certain limitations that future researchers can address. First, the research focuses solely on one school, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other contexts with different challenges and resources. Future studies could expand the scope by examining multiple schools with varying demographics and support systems to gain broader insights. Additionally, this study primarily relies on qualitative methods, such as interviews and observations, which could be complemented by quantitative data to provide a more balanced perspective. For future researchers, exploring the long-term impact of specific interventions, such as peer buddy programs or structured teacher training, would offer valuable insights into effective strategies for improving inclusivity. Recommendations for schools include fostering stronger collaboration between educators, parents, and government bodies to ensure adequate resource allocation and more robust support systems. By adopting a holistic and evidence-based

approach, future efforts can bridge the gap between inclusive education policies and their implementation, ensuring that every student receives equitable opportunities to succeed.

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6. References

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