

Teachers' Perception Towards Inclusive Education

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ABSTRACT--*Inclusive education has emerged internationally over the past thirty years as a way of developing democratic citizenship. Core to inclusive principles are that improved equity in education can only be achieved by eliminating the economic, cultural and physical barriers that currently impede learning for particular students. Treating all children who have various potencies in inclusive schools is a major challenge facing the education system internationally. It is needed schools with educators who are really ready to run it. Also, it includes the perception of inclusive education in Indonesia. Therefore, the study on teacher perception of inclusive education in Indonesia is very important to study, because the perception will be one of the keys to success in treating children with disabilities, as well as an effort to encourage the achievement of the government's vision and mission inclusive. One of the supporting factors for the success of inclusive education in schools is the role and function of teachers in implementing an inclusive education system in schools. Based on this, the research was conducted with the aim of providing an overview of the perception of inclusive school teachers in Indonesia. The approach used in this exploratory case study. Data of this study were collected from multiple interview with thirty five inclusive school teachers in Indonesia. The finding reveal such problems, challenge, inclusive school teachers' quality, and a lack of learning resources and facilities. Drawing on these findings, policy recommendations are discussed in this article.*

Keywords: *Teacher Perceptions, School Readiness, Challenge, Inclusive*

I. Introduction

One of the greatest challenges for teachers in the twenty-first century is addressing the needs of all learners in their classrooms. Graduate teachers are expected to be in their careers as inclusive educators equipped with the relevant knowledge, skills and capacities to meet the diverse needs of all students in their classes and deliver socially just education for all. This social justice focus for education has come about through the belief that every child has a right to basic education (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 1990). Inclusive education is a system of education that provides opportunities for all students who have disabilities and have the potential for intelligence and / or special talents to participate in education or learning in an educational environment together with students in general (Permendiknas No. 70 of 2009). In connection with the statement above, the presence of inclusive

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education in Indonesia is very urgent. This is based on the limited number of special schools that can accommodate children with special needs. This article explores how inclusive school teachers' understand diversity and inclusion and how they perceive themselves as inclusive educators who will apply these understandings to engage the diversity of learners in their classrooms.

The issue of the perception of inclusive school teachers in Indonesia is a very important matter to be studied more deeply, because the perception of inclusive school teacher in Indonesia will be one of the keys to success in achieving the government's vision and mission to realize Indonesia towards inclusive. As for implementation, inclusive education in inclusive schools is strongly influenced by the condition teacher. Based on this, the consequence that must be faced together is to prepare everything related to the existence of teachers in the implementation of inclusive education. Therefore, in this aim was to explore inclusive school teacher perceptions of their possible selves as inclusive teachers in relation to their understanding of the concepts of diversity and inclusion.

In the implementation of inclusive education, there are also a number of problems that occur in schools providing inclusive education. One of the problems that often occurs in children with disabilities at inclusive schools is the rejection of children with certain conditions when registering as students in schools providing inclusive education. One of the main factors in this problem is the unavailability of teachers who will handle students with disabilities at school. Some schools only accept mild to moderate levels of special needs with a recommendation letter from the assessment of doctors and psychologists. Whereas those with severe special needs are forced to go to special schools. The problem related to the unavailability of teachers who handle children in schools is related to the competencies that must be fulfilled. This competency is a consequence that must be fulfilled together as an effort made to implement inclusive education effectively. The competencies were based on four main competencies is pedagogical, personality, professional and social.

In connection with the statement above, one of the special competencies that teachers need to deal with children with disabilities is the capacity of the teacher in choosing and establishing learning plans. This is consistent with (Martínez, Yolanda Muñoz and Gordon L. Porter (2018) The 'Special Education Plan' the emphasis on the essential elements of engagement with instruction during the instruction. The essential element of the most recent change is to focus on the need for teachers to develop strategies and methods that meet individual needs, and to be used as a whole, thus ensuring an inclusive learning environment alongside peers.

II. Method

The method used in the study used a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. Data collection techniques by means observation, interviews and documentation studies on research objects (Lutfiansyah, Hufad, & Purnomo, 2018). This exploratory case study was conducted in inclusive school in Indonesia. We obtained the information on these inclusive school teacher from PPPPTK TK and PLB located in the West Java Province. Thirty five teachers were recruited as participants of this study. Regarding research ethics, they were asked to read, complete, and sign an informed consent form which indicated that their participation in this study was voluntary. They also deserved the right to withdraw their participation in any phases of this study. The following table show the demographic characteristic of inclusive school teacher participants (Table 1).

Over a period of two months (from December to January 2020), empirical data were collected through multiple

semi-structured interviews. The interview guidelines were used included interview questions related to such issues as paradigm about inclusive education, knowledge about children with disabilities, the challenges that teachers face, learning resources and facilities, what sort of support central and district governments provide.

In order to help us focus on key aspects of investigating a phenomenon. As Van Manen (1997) suggests, deeper and exploratory interviewing was used to explore and gather richer data. During the interviews, we used Bahasa Indonesia in order to get richer or deeper information about the participants' opinions and views on the perception towards inclusive education. Each interview lasted for approximately 45 min. All the interview sessions were audio recorded so that each data could be replayed many times.

We developed provisional codes based on the research questions that was addressed and the topics and questions from the interview. Data reduction is a "form of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards, and organizes data in such a way that final conclusion can be drawn and verified" (Miles and Huberman 1984, 11). In data reduction, we focused on relevant data and reduced the irrelevant ones. We looked for patterns and found themes to answer the research questions. From the interview responses, a number of issues related to the implementation of inclusive education, such as paradigm about inclusive education, knowledge about children with disabilities, the challenges that teachers face, learning resources and facilities, what sort of support central and district governments provide.

Afterwards, we displayed the interview data to find sub-themes and themes by elaborating and aligning all the data. Based analysis, there were two emergent themes: hope and challenges. In data conclusion and verification, the themes and sub-themes that emerged were verified by confirming other evidence, to make sure that conclusions drawn were consistent. Finally, two emergent themes were confirmed and verified.

In order to ensure trustworthiness, member checking was conducted. Each of the participants was given special access to their interview transcripts and invited to read the transcripts thoroughly for data clarity and accuracy as well to provide additional insight into their lived experience. For data analysis, pattern coding and meaning making strategies proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) and Widodo (2014) were employed.

Table 1. Demographic characteristic of the participants.

Inclusive School				
Demographic characteristics of participants				
Participants	Age	Educational Background	Teaching Experience	Informal Training
Male Teacher #1	41	Master Degree	18 Years	*PKB
Female Teacher #2	26	Bachelor Degree	3.5 Years	*Teaching Strategies
Female Teacher #3	39	Bachelor Degree	18 Years	*Curriculum Design
Male Teacher #4	30	Bachelor Degree	2 Years	*Teaching Strategies
Female	45	Bachelor	11 Years	*Assessment

Teacher #5		Degree		
Female Teacher #6	32	Bachelor Degree	13 Years	*Teaching Strategies
Male Teacher #7	51	Bachelor Degree	16 Years	*Curriculum Design *Teaching Strategies
Female Teacher #8	37	Bachelor Degree	10 Years	*Curriculum Design
Female Teacher #9	48	Master Degree	12 Years	*PKP
Female Teacher #10	48	Bachelor Degree	17 Years	*Curriculum Design *Teaching Strategies
Female Teacher #11	52	Bachelor Degree	20 Years	*PKP
Female Teacher #12	33	Master Degree	11 Years	*PKP
Female Teacher #13	51	Bachelor Degree	29 Years	*Teaching Strategies
Female Teacher #14	37	Bachelor Degree	11 Years	*PLPG
Male Teacher #15	38	Bachelor Degree	10 Years	*PKB
Female Teacher #16	52	Bachelor Degree	20 Years	*Curriculum Design *Teaching Strategies
Female Teacher #17	37	Bachelor Degree	13 Years	*PKP
Female Teacher #18	40	Bachelor Degree	17 Years	*PKB
Female Teacher #19	37	Bachelor Degree	14 Years	*Teaching Strategies
Female Teacher #20	48	Bachelor Degree	16 Years	*KKG
Female	30	Bachelor	9 Years	*PKB

Teacher #21		Degree		*PKP
Female Teacher #22	48	Bachelor Degree	14 Years	*PKB
Female Teacher #23	33	Bachelor Degree	13 Years	*Teaching Strategies
Female Teacher #24	35	Bachelor Degree	13.4 Years	*PKP
Female Teacher #25	37	Bachelor Degree	14 Years	*PKP
Female Teacher #26	28	Bachelor Degree	8 Years	*Curriculum Design *Teaching Strategies *Assessment
Female Teacher #27	33	Bachelor Degree	13 Years	*Teaching Strategies
Female Teacher #28	36	Bachelor Degree	14 Years	*PKP *PKB
Female Teacher #29	28	Master Degree	6 Years	*Curriculum Design *Teaching Strategies *Assessment
Male Teacher #30	44	Bachelor Degree	16 Years	*PKB
Female Teacher #31	33	Bachelor Degree	8 Years	*PKB
Male Teacher #32	28	Bachelor Degree	2 Years	*Teaching Strategies
Male Teacher #33	39	Bachelor Degree	13 Years	*Teaching Strategies
Male Teacher #34	28	Bachelor Degree	5 Years	*Teaching Strategies
Female Teacher #35	31	Bachelor Degree	8 Years	*Teaching Strategies

III. Result and Discussion

The participants in our research reported subtle differences in their understanding of diversity and inclusion. They identified that for them the term diversity focuses on differences between individuals or group of people while perceptions of inclusion focused on the participation and engagement (e.g. teaching practices) of individuals or specific groups of people. On the surface this may seem to create a divide in teachers' perceptions of the two terms with a focus on a theoretical perspective for diversity and a practical perspective for inclusive education. However, we should not interpret this as a binary, nor do we wish to create such a binary. Instead, we may interpret these two perspectives, each as one side of the same coin. It may be that these teachers have understood diversity as a broad spectrum in order to conceptualize how to implement inclusive practice.

In responding to the question asking participants to describe their understanding of the term "inclusion" and some examples of inclusion from a typical classroom, there was great similarity in how inclusion was described by many of the teachers in our study, but with the danger of tautology in their description. For example, many of the teachers described: *inclusion means including everyone*.

In their responses, teachers referred to both "including each student" and "including all students". These statements were then generally followed up with the identification of specific groups of students thus promoting the needs of these group of students above others. The above suggests that, at this stage in their teacher development, this cohort teachers had not yet developed a sophisticated insight into the nuances in differentiating between the terms of diversity and inclusion.

The concept of inclusive education continues to challenge teachers to move outside their comfort zone and reframe their thinking about teaching (Armstrong, Armstrong, and Spandagou 2011). The participants in our study are yet to embark fully fledged as teachers in their own classrooms, however, their comments suggest that they are beginning to realize their possible selves as inclusive teachers. On the whole, participants expresses positive view towards inclusive education.

IV. Conclusion

Thus inclusive school in Indonesia that were targeted in this study were not all schools really prepared from the teacher's side. An inclusive school that has teachers who are ready to carry out learning to children with disabilities is recognized as having a positive attitude and can implement inclusive learning strategies. Similar opinions were expressed Jordan, et. al. That the other end of the spectrum are the teachers who are all students, including those with disabilities, benefits from the learning and instructional opportunities. These teacher spend more time interacting with their students and using diverse teaching strategies (Jordan, Lindsay, and Stanovich 1997). Broadly speaking, the meaning of Jordan's statement, et al are teachers who believe that all students, including those with special needs, benefit from learning and teaching opportunities. These teachers spend time interacting with their students and using diverse teaching strategies.

The concept of inclusive education continues to challenge teachers to move outside their comfort zone and reframe their thinking about teaching (Armstrong, Armstrong, and Spandagou 2011). The participants are beginning to realize their possible selves as inclusive teachers. On the whole, participants expresses positive view towards inclusive education.

Recommendation

For the benefit of the Indonesia Government policy, the results of this study can be used as an effort to develop the readiness of inclusive schools that are still not really ready as providers of inclusive education from the teacher's side. This study is initial research focused on teacher perception, furthermore more comprehensive study is needed including teacher attitudes and parents, both of which are highly related and influence the success of inclusive education in the future.

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