

The implementation of inclusive education and its conflict with exclusionary education in Kerjo sub-district, Karanganyar regency 2020-2022

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Abstract: This study aims to critically examine the implementation of inclusive education programs in Kerjo Sub-district, Karanganyar Regency, Indonesia, using the framework of the eight national education standards. Despite government mandates requiring inclusive programs in all public and private schools, their implementation remains suboptimal. Employing a qualitative field research design, the study applies critical theory approaches by Max Horkheimer, Louis Althusser, and Paulo Freire. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation using the snowball sampling technique and analyzed interactively and critically to contrast regulatory expectations with field realities. Findings indicate that inclusive education in Kerjo Sub-district has not met national standards due to inadequate infrastructure, limited funding, lack of trained personnel, and overlapping roles with special schools (exclusion-based education). A key issue identified is the friction between inclusive and exclusive schools, particularly regarding the allocation of students with special needs and the recruitment of qualified special education teachers in small geographic areas. The study concludes that without clear government regulations delineating the roles and operational boundaries between inclusive and special schools, dualism and systemic inefficiencies will persist. Practically, the government should establish integrated frameworks and policies that encourage synergy between both education systems to promote equitable access and sustainable inclusive education.

Keywords: Clash, Critical, Exclusion education, Gap, Inclusive education.

1. Introduction

The implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia can be seen from evaluative and implementation points of view. This paper specializes in the implementation of inclusive education by three school levels, namely, State Elementary School 2 of Kerjo, State Junior High School of Kerjo, and State Senior High School of Kerjo. There are at least seven dimensions based on the eight national education standards, namely: 1) Management and institutionalization; 2) Student; 3) Identification and assessment; 4) Curriculum; 5) Learning; 6) Assessment; and 7) Support [1]. Support [1]. In addition to other dimensions, the social and mental dimensions of students also require proper attention, especially the dimension of students with special needs, the dimension of teachers, the dimension of parents, and the community.

The eight national standards of education according to government regulations for the implementation of learning in schools include: 1) Content standards, 2) Process standards, 3) Graduation competency standards, 4) Educators and education personnel standards, 5) Facilities and infrastructure standards, 6) Management standards, 7) Financing standards, 8) Educational assessment standards [2].

The inclusion program is a UNESCO program that is accepted by the Indonesian government as a human rights-based education, especially in the aspect of education for all students without

discrimination [3]. This means that both normal and disabled students are given the same treatment, both in learning and other academic activities. Thus, inclusive education is democratic. Children with special needs do not get different treatment [4]. They learn together in one class, which is expected that they can help each other with classmates who have deficiencies. This is in accordance with Jean Piaget's theory which intelligence is shaped by the environment. The hope is that normal inclusion students have empathy for abnormal students.

Theoretically, this makes sense. However, in practice, empathy and cultural acculturation cannot come together because normal students mostly have a negative attitude towards students with special needs [5]. Secondly, the general public also still has a negative stigmatic view of inclusive education. This is caused by *bullying* and mockery of abnormal students. Thus, parents become inferior to their children being sent to inclusive education [6].

Third, ideally, the relationship between the community, in this case parents and school teachers and school institution managers, has not gone well [7]. As a result, the handling of the implementation carried out in public and private schools has become a homework assignment for the community.

From what is described above, the problems that will be explored in this paper are the gaps in the practice of inclusive education including: 1. the gap between inclusion regulations (eight national education standards) and the reality found on the field. 2. the gap in the relationship between students with special needs and normal students. 3. Gaps in the relationship between parents and teachers and inclusive school administrators. 4. The clash between inclusive education and exclusionary education in running the student learning system.

The performance of inclusive education in Indonesia can be viewed in evaluative and implementative manner [8]. This paper specializes in the implementation of inclusive education run by three school levels, namely State Elementary School 2 of Kerja, State Junior High School of Kerjo, and State Senior High School of Kerjo. There are at least seven dimensions based on the eight national standards of education, namely: 1) Management and institution; 2) Student Affairs; 3) Identification and assessment; 4) Curriculum; 5) Learning; 6) Assessment; and 7) Support [1]. Support [1]. In addition, other dimensions, especially the social and mental dimensions of students also require attention, especially students with special needs, teachers, parents and communities.

The implementation of inclusive education is in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4), which emphasizes quality and inclusive education for all [9]. SDG 4 promotes the provision of non-discriminatory and equitable education, ensuring that every student, including those with special needs, has an equal opportunity to receive an education that supports their potential. Inclusive education thus serves as a tool to reduce inequalities, build empathy and foster tolerance among students, in line with the goals of democratic education [10].

In line with this, the eight national education standards set by the government become a reference in the implementation of learning in schools, including inclusive education [11]. These standards include 1) Content standards, 2) Process standards, 3) Graduation competency standards, 4) Educators and education personnel standards, 5) Facilities and infrastructure standards, 6) Management standards, 7) financing standards, and 8) education assessment standards. The inclusion program is part of the government's efforts to fulfill UNESCO's mandate to promote human rights-based education and guarantee the right to learn for all students without discrimination [12].

However, although theoretically inclusive education can support the achievement of SDG 4, challenges in implementation still exist. The gap between regulations and realities in the field, the negative attitudes of normal students towards students with special needs, community stigma, and suboptimal relationships between parents, teachers, and school administrators, are obstacles that need to be overcome so that inclusive education can run effectively and meaningfully.

1.1. Content

1.1.1. Inclusion Program

Inclusive education is an educational concept that does not discriminate against the background of students, both in the form of limitations both physically and mentally [13]. According to Kustawan [14] and Fuadi [15] Inclusive education is an education system that is open to all individuals and can accommodate the needs and conditions of each individual. Inclusion emphasizes the importance of acceptance for children who have barriers to social interaction, the environment, the curriculum in schools [16].

Inclusive education is an educational concept that does not discriminate against the background of learners, including physical and mental limitations [13]. This principle is in line with SDG 4, which emphasizes quality and inclusive education for all, without discrimination. According to Kustawan [14] and Fuadi [15] inclusive education is an open education system that can accommodate the needs and conditions of every individual. Within the framework of SDG 4, inclusion also emphasizes the importance of accepting children who have barriers to social interaction, environment or challenges in following the school curriculum [16].

Inclusive education, in line with the goals of SDG 4, is seen as a manifestation of education reform that focuses on equal rights, anti-discrimination, justice, and expanding access to education for all. This program not only aims to improve the quality of education, but also supports the 9-year compulsory education program and efforts to change public attitudes towards children with special needs, so that quality education can truly be accessed by all [13].

Broadly speaking, inclusive education is seen as a manifestation of educational reform that focuses on attitudes of equal rights, anti-discrimination and justice and expanding access to education for all parties, improving the quality of education, as well as various strategic efforts to support 9-year compulsory education, and efforts to change public attitudes towards children with special needs [13].

1.2. Frankfurt School of Critical Theory

SDG 4 can be categorized and analyzed within the framework of theory and critical analysis due to its focus on quality education that includes aspects of justice, equality and inclusion [17]. Quality education, as pursued by SDG 4, is not only oriented towards access or enrolment rates, but also aims to dismantle discriminatory social structures and uphold human rights. Here are some ways in which SDG 4 can be critically analyzed:

1.2.1. Critical Theory and Education for Social Justice

SDG 4 is in line with critical theory in education which emphasizes that education should be a means to address social inequality [18]. Inclusive and equitable education, as per the principles of SDG 4, can be analyzed with the critical theory that questions whether the education system serves all groups in society or only reinforces the existing social hierarchies. This includes analyzing access to education for minority groups, children with special needs and the poor.

1.2.2. Ideological Analysis in Education

In critical analysis, education is often seen as an ideological tool that can reinforce dominant values or as a way to create critical awareness [19]. SDG 4, which emphasizes inclusive and equitable education, can be analyzed to understand the extent to which the education system functions as a tool for liberation or instead reproduces values that can reinforce injustice.

1.2.3. Social Reproduction Theory

SDG 4 can be examined through social reproduction theory, which highlights how the education system tends to preserve existing social inequalities [20]. Thus, the achievement of SDG 4 can be

analyzed to see whether inclusive and quality education policies really have an impact on social mobility or instead are still at risk of benefiting certain social classes.

1.2.4. Paulo Freire's Emancipation Theory

Paulo Freire's emancipatory perspective is also relevant in the context of SDG 4. Education according to Freire should enable individuals to think critically and become agents of change in society. SDG 4, with its efforts to provide access to education for all, can be assessed whether or not its approach has empowered students to actively participate in social and economic development.

1.2.5. Critical Analysis of Education Access and Quality

From the perspective of critical theory, a deeper analysis of the quality and equitable access to education, including the financial, geographical and cultural aspects that can hinder or support the achievement of SDG 4, can be conducted. It is important to understand whether these global efforts in education have taken into account local needs, especially in developing countries.

1.2.6. Postcolonial Theory

SDG 4 can also be analyzed in the context of postcolonial theory to see how education and curriculum are designed. For example, whether the pursuit of quality education contains a Western bias or whether the provided education respects the local cultural context and honors the indigenous knowledge of the local communities.

This research uses critical theory analysis. The essence of critical theory as stated by the critical thinkers of the Frankfurt School is hatred of closed philosophical systems. By examining things in such a way as to provoke feelings, Critical theory focuses on a series of criticisms of other thinkers and philosophical traditions. Critical theory then continues to develop through dialog. Its dialectical character is well suited to the methods used to study various social phenomena [21].

Judging from the history and background of its emergence, it can be understood that critical theory emerged because it saw previous ideas that were no longer relevant to the conditions of the times. This topic encouraged critical thinkers to dialogue with each other and tries to find new methods to examine social phenomena [22].

Critical theory offers a method that temporarily frees academic work from forms of power. According to Littlejohn [23] critical theory is synonymous with the following: 1) Efforts to understand human life experiences based on their social context. 2) Efforts to find untruths in a social construction of society in everyday life, 3) Conscious efforts to unite theory and action.

Adorno and Horkheimer [24] mentioned that commodification, massification and standardization of cultural products have been carried out to meet the needs of society, in this case the market. People make cultural industry products into something valuable or important for their lives (fetishism). The importance of the cultural product is not seen from its benefits for life but rather the label attached to it. The occurrence of commodification, standardization and massification is oppressive because it is unable to convey ideas towards enlightenment efforts in society. So, societies emerge - societies that are not always dependent on products created by the industrial world. Educational institutions are seen as one of the parties that contribute to forming a mass society that is identical to social homogeneity [25].

2. Methods

Data collection techniques in this paper, in accordance with the type of field research, predominantly use observational data. This data will reveal various findings of gaps that occur in the field with the regulations outlined in the eight national education standards. Secondly, interview data is used, especially those who are directly involved in inclusive education, such as classroom teachers and school-level management personnel, for example, school principals and heads of education departments.

The majority of the supporting (secondary) data was drawn from reference books, journals and educational regulations spread across the internet.

Furthermore, the data that has been collected is then coded in accordance with the four issues raised. Using the critical analysis method, this paper describes descriptively what is happening in the field. Then, the data that has been coded is critically analyzed, using Max Horkheimer's critical theory, namely providing arguments for various problems in the field by dialoguing with reference books and regulations on the eight national standards of education.

If the field data and reference data are insufficient, the researcher will return to the field to develop the data he has obtained (snowball technique).

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. *The Gap Between Practice and Regulation*

From observations at three school levels in Kerjo Sub-district, the implementation of the inclusion program still experiences significant gaps from the eight SNP (National Education Standards) standards stipulated in government regulations. The most striking gaps are found in the budget and facilities and infrastructure. According to the Principal of State Senior High School of Kerjo, until now, no special facilities have been provided for students with special needs, and no budget has been allocated specifically for the inclusion program (Interview with Principal of State Senior High School of Kerjo, Sardiyo [26]).

Another shortcoming is the unavailability of special assistant teachers, which greatly affects the learning process of students with special needs. Based on an interview with the principal of SMPN 1 Kerjo, it is known that students with special needs do not receive services according to their needs due to the limited number of teachers who are competent in this field [27].

This implementation gap contradicts the goal of SDG 4, which expects every child, including children with special needs, to have access to inclusive and quality education. Without adequate budgets and accompanying teachers, SDG 4 cannot be effectively achieved, especially in the context of inclusive education in the area.

Based on observations in the field, the implementation of the inclusion program at three school levels in Kecamatan Kerja, in terms of the eight national standards of education (SNP), has many shortcomings and is still far from the objectives and implementation of inclusive education in accordance with the eight SNP.

The most dominant shortcomings lie in the budget and facilities. According to the Principal of State Senior High School of Kerjo, since the implementation of the inclusive education program, there have been no facilities and infrastructure for students with special needs. As for the budget for the inclusion program, there has also never been a budget derived (Interview with the Principal of State Senior High School of Kerjo, Sardiyo [26]).

Another shortcoming is the unavailability of special assistant teachers for students with special needs. This greatly affects the learning process for students. The reality shows that students with special needs do not receive learning services as described in the regulations (interview with the Principal of SMPN 1 Kerjo [27]).

Due to the unavailability of teachers for students with special needs, many of the public schools studied in implementing the inclusion program experienced confusion. This is understandable because classroom teachers who do not have a background in inclusion education face serious problems in dealing with students with special needs.

3.2. *Gap in Material Acceptance and Student Interaction between Normal Students and Students with Special Needs*

The gap in material acceptance and the gap in student interaction are real obstacles. This is based on observation [28] which shows that the relationship between normal students and students with special needs is not harmonious. Children with special needs are isolated and there is bullying from

normal students. According to the results of interviews with class teachers, based on field observations, it shows that students with special needs experience difficulties. Ideally, a special curriculum for abnormal students. (Interview with counseling teacher (BK) of State Senior High School of Kerjo, Umi Nashirul (Jan 12, 2023). Slow learner special needs students have difficulty accepting lessons so that there is an imbalance in the learning atmosphere in the classroom.

That is what causes the gap in the fulfillment of the material on the curriculum used in which both groups of students still use the normal student curriculum. In term of learning material absorbtions, children with special needs also experience gaps due to teachers also lacking attention to the interaction gap.

Observations show a gap in material reception and social interaction between normal students and students with special needs. At State Senior High School of Kerjo, students with special needs often experience isolation and bullying from other students, and they face difficulties in understanding the material due to limited comprehension (slow learner). The counseling teacher of State Senior High School of Kerjo revealed that the curriculum implemented is not specifically designed for students with special needs, so they have difficulty following the same lessons as normal students (Interview with Counseling Teacher of State Senior High School of Kerjo, Nashirul [29]).

This condition shows that students with special needs have not fully received equal and quality education. Inclusive education that aims to strengthen SDG 4 should involve curriculum and teaching methods that are adapted for students with different needs. Without these adjustments, students with special needs find it difficult to participate fully in the learning process, which hinders the achievement of quality and inclusive education.

3.3. Parents' Views of Students with Special Needs and Normal Students

In inclusive regular schools, there are two groups, namely normal students and students with special needs. Based on the results of interviews with the Head of Technical the Implementation Unit (UPT) of Karanganyar Regency, there is a fact that regular schools that run inclusion programs have experienced a decrease in the number of normal students due to the stigma of the community or guardians of normal students who believe that if their children attend these schools, the teachers will not be optimal in paying attention to normal students because some of the attention will be focused on students with special needs. A similar statement was also expressed by Supadi [30] as a guardian of a normal student who originally wanted to send his child to SDN 04 Karanganyar but was reluctant because the school was running an inclusion program. This causes the fulfillment of the right to education for every child to be not optimal for inclusion schools and exclusion schools. Unlike the case with parents of students with special needs who attend inclusive schools, they feel insecure because they feel that this place is not their community so that a *shock culture* emerges which is characterized by taking a place alone as a form of failed social adaptation.

An interview with the head of the UPT office in Karanganyar regency showed that regular schools with inclusion programs experienced a decrease in the number of normal students due to the stigma that is still strong in the community. Guardians of normal students are concerned that the presence of students with special needs will reduce teacher attention to their students. An interview with a guardian confirmed that they were hesitant to send their child to an inclusive school for fear that their child would not receive enough attention (Interview with Supadi [30]).

On the other hand, parents of students with special needs feel uncomfortable because they feel that their children are placed in an environment that is not suitable for their conditions, causing a sense of insecurity and a lack of social interaction with the school community. This shows that social challenges and stigma towards students with special needs in inclusive schools still hinder the achievement of quality and inclusive education, which is the goal of SDG 4. Inclusive education should not only cover academic aspects but also require a more comprehensive social approach and support, including the involvement of parents and communities to reduce stigma and build a more conducive learning environment.

3.4. *The Clash of Inclusive Schools and Exclusionary Schools (SLB)*

The inclusion program that has been implemented by the government still does not see the position of exclusion schools such as special school (SLB) at this time because the inclusion that was applied at that time in the past era may be appropriate but when viewed from the development of the current era it is irrelevant because the increase in SLB is increasing from year to year. Data [31] shows that currently the number of SLB in Central Java province is more than 200. If this data is juxtaposed with the current regulation that all regular schools must be inclusive, it means that in quantity, services for children with special needs in various places so that the facts that occur in the field, the work system between inclusion and SLB will collide.

The above description shows that this dualism has led to a bitter clash in the field. Therefore, the government must provide clear boundaries between inclusion and exclusion schools. This is to avoid the mistake of parents choosing to enter SLB or inclusion. These restrictions make it easier for schools to accept or direct children according to the school's ability. Both in providing teaching according to students' abilities as well as in monitoring children's interests, talents and abilities in receiving teaching (Interview with SLB Supervisor Mr. Sunarto).

The increasing number of special schools (SLB) in Central Java Province shows that inclusive education has not been fully adopted as the main solution for children with special needs. According to Data from BPS Central Java [31] there are more than 200 special schools in the province. This shows that the community still chooses special schools as an alternative education for children with special needs compared to regular inclusive schools. Based on an interview with the SLB supervisor, Mr. Sunarto, it is known that there needs to be a clear division between the roles of inclusive and special schools so that parents have the right guidance in choosing a school for their child.

The conflict between the inclusive and special education systems suggests the need for more structured policies to manage the existence of these two types of schools. SDG 4 aims to ensure that every child has equal and inclusive access to education. However, without clear arrangements, inclusive and special schools tend to function in overlapping and suboptimal ways. Collaboration between SLBs and inclusive schools, including a clear division of roles, will help improve the quality of education services for children with special needs.

4. Conclusion

The implementation of the inclusion program in schools in Kerjo Sub-district, Karanganyar Regency, still needs a clear mapping. This means that there needs to be regulations governing the harmonious and complementary relationship between inclusive education and SLB. This means that the two institutions need to work together in handling students with special needs. The division of labor is more positive in increasing the competence of students with special needs so that the learning mission is fulfilled comprehensively.

The implementation of the inclusion program in Kerjo Sub-district, Karanganyar regency, still requires clearer and more comprehensive regulations, especially to improve the integration between inclusive schools and special schools in accordance to the goal of SDG 4. Collaboration and a clear division of roles between inclusive schools and special schools can help improve the competence of students with special needs and create an inclusive and effective learning environment.

5. Recommendation

This research provides recommendations for the implementation of the inclusion program:

5.1. *Student Mapping*

An initial assessment is needed for each student who enter an inclusive school to create a child profile to be recorded as student data so that each child has his own footprint which serves to ease teachers in directing children to their talents and interests.

5.2. Inclusion and Exclusion Schools (SLB)

The government is obliged to provide clear boundaries between inclusion and exclusion schools so that parents can assess which schools to enroll their children in. On the other hand, the boundaries will make it easier for schools to accept or direct children according to the school's ability to provide teaching and according to the student's ability in interests, talents and ability to receive teaching.

5.3. Preparation of 8 Standards

The implementation of the inclusion program in schools requires schools to be able to first prepare 8 standards for implementing inclusion to reduce the risk of labor received by students in inclusive schools. So that inclusive schools can be implemented as the government aims to launch the program to be implemented.

Transparency:

The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

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