INCLUSION STRATEGY CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS IN LEARNING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the challenges faced in implementing inclusion strategies in the classroom and find solutions to improve the learning experience of students with special needs. The method used in this study is a case study in several inclusive schools, with data collection through interviews, observations, and questionnaires involving teachers, students, and parents. The results of the study indicate that the main challenges include lack of training for teachers, limited resources, and social stigma against students with special needs. However, the solutions identified include improving professional training, developing adaptive learning materials, and increasing awareness and support from parents and the community. This study provides recommendations for policy makers and educators to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students.

Keywords : *Inclusion Strategy, Challenges, Solutions, Special Needs*

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education is a paradigm that places importance on equal access to education for all students, including those with special needs (Setiawan, E., & Apsari, N. C., 2019). In this context, inclusion refers to the practice of integrating students with special needs into the general learning environment, with the expectation that they can learn and develop alongside their peers (Ghita, A. M., Wahyuningsih, W., & Ulfa, Z., 2017). This approach not only provides opportunities for students with special needs to participate but also educates the entire community about diversity. Although the principles of inclusion have been widely adopted, their implementation still faces various challenges (Judijanto, L., & Caroline, C., 2025). One of the main challenges is the lack of adequate training for teachers in managing inclusive classrooms (Pujiaty, E., 2024). Many educators feel unprepared to handle the needs of diverse students, especially when dealing with complex needs. Without the right knowledge and skills, they may struggle to provide the support students with special needs need.

In addition, limited resources in schools are also a significant barrier. Many educational institutions, especially in remote areas, do not have access to the necessary assistive devices or trained support staff (Akbar, M., Suhrah, S., & Angraeni, N., 2024). These limitations can result in a suboptimal learning experience for students with special needs, and can even exacerbate the gap in their academic achievement compared to their classmates. Stereotypes and stigmas surrounding students with special needs are also difficult challenges to overcome (Supena, A., Nurasiah, I., Safitri, N., Kusmawati, A. P., Putri, F. D. C., Sundari, F. S., ... & Hatima, Y., 2022). Often, other students, even adults, have misconceptions about the abilities of students with special needs. This can create an unwelcoming environment and hinder healthy social interactions, which are essential for children's emotional and social development.

To address these challenges, effective inclusion strategies need to be implemented. One approach is to provide ongoing training for teachers and education staff (Marantika, S., Fatkhurohmah, F., Pratidina, I., & Widyasari, C., 2024). This training should include appropriate teaching methods, classroom management strategies, and how to communicate with students with special needs. With a better understanding, teachers can design more inclusive learning experiences. Improving school resources is also an important step in facilitating inclusion. Schools need to invest in adequate learning aids, such as assistive technology devices, as well as provide access to special education professionals who can assist students (Indriani, I., & Aminullah, A., 2024). This not only benefits students with special needs but also improves the overall quality of education. Awareness and education about special needs among students and school staff also need to be improved. Activities that promote understanding and acceptance of differences can help reduce stigma (Seprianto, S., Soleha, S., Ristianti, D. H., & Harmi, H., 2023). For example, a disability awareness program can be held to educate students on how they can interact with their friends who have special needs. Collaboration between teachers, parents, and other educational professionals is essential to creating an inclusive learning environment. Open and regular communication can ensure that all parties are involved in supporting student development. By working together, they can plan and adjust learning strategies that best suit the individual needs of students.

Finally, the implementation of policies that support inclusive education from the government level is also very necessary. These policies should include regulations that regulate the allocation of funds, teacher training, and the provision of resources for schools. With strong support from all parties, inclusive education can become a reality and provide maximum benefits for students with special needs. In conclusion, inclusive education is an important step towards achieving equality in education. Although the challenges are quite complex, with the right strategies and commitment from all parties, we can create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students.

METHOD

Research Approach

This study uses a qualitative approach, which allows researchers to explore in depth the experiences and perspectives of teachers, students, and parents related to inclusion strategies in the learning of students with special needs. This approach is expected to provide a more holistic insight into the challenges and solutions faced in the implementation of inclusive education.

Research Design

The design of this study is a case study, where researchers will focus on several schools that have implemented inclusion strategies. Through case studies, researchers can observe different practices in each school and analyze the factors that influence the success or failure of the implementation of inclusion.

Participants

Participants in this study consisted of:

a. Teachers: Several teachers who are directly involved in teaching students with special needs.
b. Students: Students with special needs and their classmates to gain diverse perspectives.
c. Parents: Parents of students with special needs to understand their views on inclusive education.
d. Support Personnel: Special education professionals who play a role in supporting students.

Data Collection Techniques

Data will be collected through several techniques, including:

a. In-depth Interviews: Semi-structured interviews with teachers, students, and parents to explore their experiences and views on inclusion strategies.
b. Classroom Observations: Direct observation of the learning process in classes that implement inclusion strategies to understand interactions between students and teachers.
c. Documentation: Analysis of documents related to school policies, lesson plans, and evaluation reports relevant to inclusive education.

Data Analysis

The collected data will be analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. This process includes data coding, identifying key themes, and interpreting the results. The researcher will look for patterns and relationships in the data to understand how inclusion strategies are implemented and their impact on students with special needs.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the study, the researcher will apply data triangulation by combining interviews, observations, and document analysis. In addition, the researcher will also involve colleagues in checking the data and interpretation to ensure the accuracy of the analysis.

Ethical aspects will be upheld in this study. The researcher will obtain consent from all participants before conducting interviews and observations. In addition, the identities of the participants will be kept confidential to protect their privacy.This study will be conducted over a period of six months in several schools that implement inclusion strategies, both in urban and rural areas, to gain different perspectives.

From this study, it is expected to gain a deep understanding of effective inclusion strategies and the challenges faced by various parties. The results of this study can provide practical recommendations for schools and policy makers in improving the implementation of inclusive education. This research method is expected to provide a significant contribution to the development of inclusion strategies in learning for students with special needs, as well as increasing public understanding of the importance of inclusive education for all students.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Inclusion Strategies

Research shows that various schools have implemented various inclusion strategies that include flexible classroom arrangements, the use of assistive technology, and group-based learning. Many teachers adopt a differentiated approach to meet the diverse learning needs of students.

Teachers' Role

Teachers play a key role in the success of inclusion strategies. Interview results revealed that teachers who received special training on inclusive education felt more confident in teaching students with special needs. They also demonstrated skills in creating a supportive and safe learning environment for all students.

Challenges Faced

Despite progress, several challenges remain. Lack of resources, both in the form of teaching materials and professional support, is a major barrier. In addition, stereotypes and stigmas still exist that hinder social interactions between students with special needs and their classmates.

Family Support

Parents of students with special needs generally support the implementation of inclusion strategies, but they also want more communication with the school. Research shows that parental involvement in the educational process can improve student success, but they often feel less involved.

Impact on Students

Students with special needs who learn in inclusive environments show improvements in self-confidence and social skills. Classroom observations show that they are more actively involved in learning activities, and interactions with classmates who do not have special needs help them feel more accepted.

Use of Technology

The use of assistive technology in the schools studied has been shown to be effective in supporting students with special needs. These tools help students understand the material in a way that is more appropriate to their abilities, thereby improving learning outcomes.

Collaboration Between Stakeholders

Research shows that collaboration between teachers, parents, and support staff is critical to the success of inclusion strategies. Schools that implement a collaborative approach create environments that are more inclusive and responsive to students' needs.

Policy Recommendations

Based on these findings, it is recommended that education policies provide greater support for teacher training in inclusive education and adequate resources to support the implementation of inclusion strategies. Policies should also emphasize the importance of parental involvement in children's education.

Community Awareness

The study also found that increasing community awareness of inclusive education can help reduce stigma against students with special needs. Diversity awareness programs can increase acceptance in the school environment. Overall, this study shows that inclusion strategies in the learning of students with special needs have great potential to improve the learning experience.

Although challenges remain, with the right support and commitment from all parties, inclusive education can become a better reality. The results of this study are expected to be the basis for further development in inclusive education practices.

DISCUSSION

Implementation of Inclusion Strategies

The results of the study indicate that the implementation of inclusion strategies in various schools varies, but is generally characterized by flexible classroom arrangements and the use of diverse learning methods. Inclusive classroom arrangements help create a learning atmosphere that supports interactions between students with special needs and their classmates. This is in line with the theory that a positive and inclusive environment can increase student motivation and engagement.

The Role of Teachers in Inclusion

The role of teachers is crucial to the success of inclusion strategies. Teachers who are trained in inclusive education are better able to identify students' needs and apply appropriate teaching methods. Uncertainty and lack of knowledge about how to teach students with special needs can hinder the learning process. Therefore, it is important to provide ongoing training for teachers so that they can keep up with the latest developments in inclusion strategies.

Challenges Faced

The challenges faced, such as lack of resources and social stigma, are complex issues. Schools often do not have adequate access to educational aids and support personnel. This shows the need for more attention from the government and educational institutions to allocate sufficient resources. In addition, the stigma that exists in society can affect interactions in the classroom, so efforts are needed to increase public awareness of diversity and the importance of inclusion.

Family Support and Parental Involvement

Parental support is very important in the educational process of students with special needs. Parental involvement can create synergy between home and school, which in turn improves student learning outcomes (UNUJA, M., 2024). However, research results show that many parents feel less involved and want better communication with the school. This indicates the need for schools to develop more effective and inclusive communication strategies.

Positive Impact on Students

Students with special needs who learn in an inclusive environment show positive development, both in academic and social skills (Budianto, A. A., 2023). Interaction with classmates who do not have special needs increases their self-confidence and social abilities. This

shows that inclusive education is not only beneficial for students with special needs, but also for all students in terms of developing empathy and social skills.

Utilization of Assistive Technology

The use of assistive technology in learning has proven to be effective in supporting students with special needs. These tools provide greater access to educational materials and allow students to learn in a way that is more appropriate to their needs. However, it is important to ensure that all teachers have the knowledge and skills necessary to utilize this technology effectively.

Collaboration Between Stakeholders

Collaboration between teachers, parents, and support staff is key to creating an inclusive learning environment. Schools that adopt a collaborative approach show better results in terms of student achievement. Open and supportive communication between all parties can create learning strategies that are more responsive to student needs.

Recommendations for Education Policy

Based on the research findings, it is recommended that education policy should further support teacher training and allocate adequate resources for inclusive education. Policies that facilitate parental involvement are also essential to creating a holistic learning environment.

Community Awareness

Increasing community awareness of inclusive education is an important step in reducing stigma against students with special needs. Educational programs that explain the benefits of inclusion not only for students with special needs, but also for the entire community, need to be expanded.

Overall, the results of the study indicate that while there are challenges in implementing inclusion strategies, there are also many successes that can be achieved. With the right support and a collaborative approach, inclusive education can provide significant benefits for all students. This discussion provides insight into the importance of commitment from all parties to create a more inclusive and supportive educational environment.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study on inclusion strategies in learning for students with special needs show that the implementation of inclusive education can have a significant positive impact on all students. Schools that implement various strategies, such as flexible classroom arrangements and group-based learning methods, have succeeded in increasing the engagement and self-confidence of students with special needs. However, challenges such as lack of resources and social stigma remain obstacles that need to be overcome through better support from schools and the government.

Parental support and collaboration between teachers, parents, and support staff are essential to creating an inclusive learning environment that is responsive to students' needs. In addition, the use of assistive technology can increase the accessibility of education for students with special needs. By increasing public awareness of the importance of inclusion, we can create a more accepting and supportive environment for all students. A shared commitment from all parties is needed to realize quality and sustainable inclusive education.

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