



REALIZE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR LEARNING EQUITY FOR ALL INDONESIAN SOCIETY

¹Sukardi Muhammad
²Muhamad Ichsan Nurjam'an

¹sukardimuhamad77@gmail.com

²ichsan2820@gmail.com

^{1,2}Muhammadiyah University of Greater Bogor

Abstract

Education is a basic right of every citizen without discrimination, guaranteed in Article 31, paragraphs 1 and 2 of the 1945 Constitution. Paragraph one states that every citizen has the right to receive a decent education. Paragraph two states that every citizen is obliged to attend basic education, and the government is obliged to finance it. This means that every Indonesian citizen, without exception, must receive a decent education. Indonesia's population of 286,693,693 is required to receive a decent education. However, in reality, many groups in Indonesia still do not have access to equal and quality education, especially children with special needs, indigenous communities, and those living in remote and underdeveloped areas. Therefore, the implementation of inclusive education is a strategic step to realize learning justice for all levels of society. Inclusive education is an approach that emphasizes acceptance and respect for diversity, and provides equal opportunities for all students to learn and develop according to their respective potential. The Prabowo Subianto administration's commitment to education by building public schools is a manifestation of upholding the mandate of the 1945 Constitution. Public schools are the government's focus in providing facilities for children to access good education. Part of the efforts of inclusive education is equal distribution of education throughout Indonesia. Inclusive education is an educational approach oriented towards providing equal, fair, and adaptive learning services for all students without exception, including those with special needs, from low economic backgrounds, or living in 3T (Disadvantaged, Frontier, and Outermost) areas. This study aims to analyse the role of inclusive education in realizing learning equity in Indonesia and identify challenges and strategies for its implementation at various levels of education. The method used in this study is a literature review (library research) and analysis of inclusive education policies in Indonesia, which is strengthened by secondary data from government reports and international institutions such as UNESCO and UNICEF. The results of the analysis show that although inclusive education policies have begun to be implemented through Permendikbud No. 70 of 2009, its implementation still faces various serious challenges, including: a lack of teachers competent





in inclusive teaching, limited supporting infrastructure, and low public awareness of the importance of inclusive education. On the other hand, several schools that have implemented an inclusive approach have consistently shown significant increases in the learning participation of children with special needs and increased social empathy among students. Strategies proven effective in promoting the success of inclusive education include: intensive training for teachers and educational staff, flexible and differentiation-based curriculum development, the use of technology as a learning tool, and strengthening synergies between the government, schools, and communities. This study concludes that inclusive education is not only a pedagogical approach but also a strategic instrument for building social justice and equality in education. Therefore, a joint commitment across sectors is needed to accelerate the implementation of inclusive education comprehensively throughout Indonesia.

Keywords: inclusive education, learning equity, children with special needs, educational equality, educational policy.

Introduction

Education is one of the main instruments in human development and national progress. In the context of the Indonesian state, education is not only a basic need, but also a constitutional right guaranteed by the state. This is emphasized in Article 31 Paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which states, "Every citizen has the right to education," and Paragraph (2) which states that "Every citizen is obliged to participate in basic education and the government is obliged to finance it." The formulation of the constitution emphasizes the state's responsibility to ensure the provision of quality, equitable, and just education for all citizens without discrimination (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2019). Quality and inclusive education is the key to developing superior human resources. In the Vision of Golden Indonesia 2045, the government targets the development of human resources that are globally competitive and have national character. However, the main challenge facing Indonesia to date is the inequality in access and quality of education, especially between urban and rural areas, as well as between advantaged and vulnerable groups such as children with special needs (ABK), indigenous communities, and residents in 3T (Disadvantaged, Frontier, and Outermost) areas.

According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS, 2023), the school participation rate (APS) at the elementary school level in urban areas reached 97.4%, while in the 3T (third-most remote) regions it was only around 82.6%. Meanwhile, a UNICEF report (2022) shows that approximately 1.6 million children with disabilities in Indonesia have not received formal education due to various obstacles such as limited infrastructure, a lack of competent educators in special education, and the persistent social stigma attached to children with disabilities. This situation reflects a serious gap in the national education system.

Ideal education not only provides access for all, but also ensures fair and equal learning opportunities according to individual needs and potential. From the perspective of the theory





of social justice put forward by John Rawls (1971), justice does not mean providing equal treatment, but rather providing proportional opportunities so that each individual can reach their maximum potential. This principle aligns with the idea of learning justice, namely the guarantee that every student has the right to receive educational services that are appropriate to their conditions, needs, and abilities without discrimination (Tilaar, 2009). As a concrete form of efforts to realize learning justice, the concept of inclusive education was born, namely an education system that accommodates all students, including those with special needs, socio-economic, cultural, or geographical differences, to learn together in the same environment with the support of adaptive learning services (Ministry of National Education, 2009).

Inclusive education does not simply erase the boundaries between "regular schools" and "special schools," but emphasizes that every school must be ready to accept all children without exception. Inclusive education policy in Indonesia began to be formally formulated through the Regulation of the Minister of National Education (Permendiknas) Number 70 of 2009 concerning Inclusive Education for Students with Disabilities and/or Potential Intelligence and Special Talents. This regulation serves as an important foundation for encouraging public schools to accommodate the diversity of students. In addition, Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System (Sisdiknas) also emphasizes that every citizen has the right to receive quality education without discrimination. This national policy aligns with the global commitment stated in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) point 4, namely "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" (United Nations, 2015). This means that inclusive education is not only a national agenda, but also part of international efforts to create social justice and sustainable development.

In the context of the current administration, President Prabowo Subianto has demonstrated a strong commitment to equal access to education through the People's School program, an educational institution designed to provide learning opportunities for children from low-income families and remote areas. This program is part of Indonesia's equitable and sustainable human resource development strategy (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, 2024). The existence of people's schools is a concrete manifestation of the implementation of inclusive education principles that support marginalized communities. However, the implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia still faces various obstacles. According to a 2021 UNESCO report, the most prominent challenges include:

1. Lack of teachers who have competence in inclusive learning and differentiated pedagogy.
2. Limited facilities and infrastructure, including physical accessibility and adaptive learning media.
3. Lack of regional policy support and sustainable funding.
4. Low public awareness of the importance of inclusive education.

This issue demonstrates that inclusive education is still often understood as merely an administrative policy, rather than as a social movement for paradigm shift in education.



However, as Amartya Sen (1999) argued in his capability approach, true justice in education is realized when every individual has the substantive freedom to develop their potential. Therefore, inclusive education should be viewed as a process to expand the learning freedom and social participation of all citizens.

Several studies have consistently shown positive impacts in implementing inclusive education. According to Booth and Ainscow (2011), schools that foster an inclusive culture tend to demonstrate improved academic outcomes, social skills, and empathy among students. Furthermore, research by Ainscow & Miles (2008) demonstrated that inclusive education increases social cohesion, reduces discrimination, and strengthens community solidarity. Thus, inclusive education is not only oriented towards fulfilling rights but also serves as a strategic instrument for building social justice, national cohesion, and sustainable human development in Indonesia. The success of inclusive education will determine the nation's quality in facing the era of globalization and the competitive world of work, which demands high levels of skills, tolerance, and adaptability. Within the framework of national development, the implementation of inclusive education is a prerequisite for achieving Golden Indonesia 2045, where every citizen is expected to have equal opportunities to grow, learn, and contribute to the nation's progress. Therefore, synergy between the central and regional governments, educational institutions, and the community is needed to strengthen policies, expand access, and ensure the implementation of inclusive education throughout the country.

Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a literature review method (library research). This approach was chosen because the research focus lies in the analysis of the concepts, policies, and implementation of inclusive education in the context of learning equity in Indonesia based on written sources. Descriptive qualitative research aims to systematically, factually, and accurately describe the facts and relationships between the phenomena studied (Sugiyono, 2019). The literature review method is carried out through an in-depth review of various scientific sources such as books, research journals, laws and regulations, reports from international institutions (UNESCO, UNICEF, United Nations), and Indonesian government policy documents (Kemendikbudristek, 2024). This approach is used to comprehensively understand the theories, concepts, and implementation of inclusive education policies relevant to the research objectives. According to Zed (2014), library research is a method carried out by reviewing and processing library materials to obtain theoretical foundations, conceptual frameworks, and scientific information that support the analysis of research problems. Therefore, this research does not focus on collecting field data, but on analyzing and synthesizing existing literature to generate new understandings of the issues of inclusive education and learning equity.

The data sources in this study consist of primary data and secondary data, all of which are obtained from library materials and written documents. Primary data in this study include official government regulations and policies related to inclusive education, including: The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, especially Article 31 concerning the rights and

obligations to obtain education, Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System (Sisdiknas), Regulation of the Minister of National Education Number 70 of 2009 concerning Inclusive Education for Students with Disabilities and/or Potential Intelligence and Special Talents, the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) 2025–2029 in the field of inclusive education, Documents on the People's School program of the Prabowo Subianto government (Kemendikbudristek, 2024).

Secondary data comes from various research results, reports, and scientific publications, including: Books and journals on the theory of social justice and learning justice (Rawls, 1971; Sen, 1999; Tilaar, 2009), Education reports from international institutions such as UNESCO (2021) and UNICEF (2022), Scientific articles and media reports on the challenges of implementing inclusive education in Indonesia, Education statistics data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS, 2023). Data collection techniques were carried out through documentation studies with the following steps: Source Identification Researchers identified literature sources relevant to the topic of inclusive education and learning equity, both in national and international contexts. Document Inventory, All literature sources were collected and classified by category: inclusive education theory, government policies, previous research results, and international agency reports. Systematic Reading and Recording, Each document was read in depth to find the main ideas, theoretical arguments, empirical data, and relevant research findings. Notes were made in the form of concept maps and thematic summaries to facilitate analysis.

Data analysis was conducted using qualitative content analysis. According to Krippendorff (2018), content analysis aims to systematically and objectively identify patterns, themes, and meanings in written texts or documents. In this study, content analysis was conducted through three main stages:

1. Data Reduction

Researchers selected and simplified relevant data from various literature sources to focus on the main variables, namely inclusive education and learning equity.

2. Categorization and Interpretation

The reduced data was then categorized based on the following themes: (a) legal basis for inclusive education, (b) concepts and theories of learning justice, (c) implementation challenges, and (d) policy strengthening strategies.

3. Conclusion Drawing

Conclusions are obtained through in-depth interpretation of the analysis results, which are linked to theories and previous research results to produce a comprehensive understanding of inclusive education in Indonesia.

To ensure the validity of the analysis results, this study employed source triangulation and theory validation techniques. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing data from various types of documents (regulations, international agency reports, and academic research results). Theory validation was conducted by referring to social justice theory (Rawls, 1971),



capability theory (Sen, 1999), and critical education theory (Freire, 1970) to ensure the analysis's consistency with scientifically recognized conceptual frameworks. Furthermore, the validity of the interpretation was strengthened through intertextual reading, namely by examining the correspondence between data sources addressing the issue of inclusive education. This study has the following limitations: It did not collect direct field data (non-empirical), so the results are conceptual and analytical. The analysis focused on the context of Indonesian national education, not discussing implementation per state at a micro level. The research results emphasize strengthening policies and theories, rather than evaluating specific programs.

Discussion

Inclusive education is an educational paradigm that positions every student, without exception, as an integral part of the national education system. According to UNESCO's Salamanca Statement (1994), inclusive education is an approach aimed at ensuring that all children, including those with special needs, learn together in an educational environment that supports and values differences. This approach rejects all forms of discrimination and segregation in education. Conceptually, inclusive education is based on the values of social justice and human rights. Justice in the context of education, as stated by John Rawls (1971) in *A Theory of Justice*, does not mean equal treatment for all individuals, but rather providing treatment appropriate to each individual's needs and potential so that all have equal opportunities to develop. This view was further developed by Amartya Sen (1999) through the capability approach, which emphasizes the importance of substantive freedom for individuals to choose and realize their potential.

In the context of education, Tilaar (2009) adapted this concept into learning justice, the principle that every child has the right to receive educational services tailored to their circumstances and potential. This means that schools must provide learning environments and systems that adapt to diversity, rather than standardizing the learning process. Thus, inclusive education is a concrete manifestation of learning justice.

1. Legal Basis and Policy for Inclusive Education in Indonesia Indonesia has a fairly robust legal framework to support the implementation of inclusive education. Normatively, the legal basis is:

- a. Article 31 of the 1945 Constitution guarantees the right of every citizen to receive education without discrimination.
- b. Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System (Sisdiknas), which emphasizes that every citizen has the right to receive quality education.
- c. Minister of National Education Regulation Number 70 of 2009 concerning Inclusive Education for Students with Disabilities and/or Potential for Special Intelligence and Talents.
- d. RPJMN 2025–2029, which includes policies to strengthen access to quality and inclusive education.





e. The Prabowo Subianto Government's People's School Program (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, 2024), which is a concrete initiative to equalize access to education in 3T areas and for underprivileged communities.

In addition, Indonesia has also ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) through Law No. 19 of 2011, which requires the state to guarantee access to education for persons with disabilities at all levels. However, despite the relatively comprehensive legal and policy framework, its implementation in the field still faces various obstacles. Many schools lack adequate human resources, facilities, and learning systems to accommodate the needs of students with varying abilities or backgrounds.

1. Implementation of Inclusive Education in Indonesia

The implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia remains partial and uneven. According to data from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (2024), only around 25% of all elementary schools in Indonesia are registered as providing inclusive education. Most are concentrated in urban areas such as Jakarta, Yogyakarta, and West Java, while implementation is very limited in the 3T (frontier and remote) regions. Several factors that influence the implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia include:

a. School and Teacher Readiness

Many teachers lack pedagogical competence in differentiated learning and inclusive classroom management. Research by Suharto (2020) shows that most teachers still view children with special needs (ABK) as the responsibility of special schools (SLB), not part of the regular school system.

b. Facilities and infrastructure

Physical facilities such as building accessibility, learning aids, and adaptive learning media remain limited. Many regular schools lack ramps, accessible restrooms, or technology-based learning devices for people with disabilities.

c. Regional Policy Support

Not all regional governments have derivative regulations from the Minister of National Education Regulation No. 70 of 2009. In fact, regional autonomy places regional governments as the main determinants in the implementation of education policies in their regions.

d. Social Stigma

Negative views persist in society toward children with disabilities and minority groups. This stigma contributes to low family participation in inclusive education.

Region Number of Inclusive Elementary Schools Percentage of Total Elementary Schools Information

DKI Jakarta 524 45% Active companion teacher program

West Java 312 22% Some districts do not yet have regional regulations

Yogyakarta 210 60% Pilot province for good practice

East Nusa Tenggara 98 12% Lack of human resources and adaptive facilities

Papua 65 8% Geographic and social access challenges



National Total 1,209 \pm 25% of the total public/private elementary schools

Distribution is not even across all provinces

2. Inclusive Education as a Form of Learning Justice

Inclusive education plays a strategic role in realizing learning justice, which not only means equal access to education but also equal quality and relevance of learning for all students. From Rawls' (1971) perspective, inclusive education is an effort to implement the difference principle, namely, social policies that are permissible only if they benefit the most disadvantaged groups. This means that inclusive education provides space for previously marginalized students to obtain equal learning opportunities.

Freire (1970), in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, also emphasized that true education must liberate humans from structural oppression. Inclusive education transforms the learning process into a dialogic space where every individual, regardless of differences, can actively participate and be empowered. Thus, inclusive education not only expands access but also shifts the educational paradigm from an elitist system to one that is participatory, empathetic, and humanistic.

3. Challenges and Obstacles to Implementing Inclusive Education

Some of the main challenges faced in implementing inclusive education in Indonesia include:

a. Limited Teacher Capacity

Teacher education curricula have not fully integrated inclusive approaches and differentiated learning. Many teachers still struggle to adapt learning methods to students with diverse needs.

b. Lack of Budget and Facilities

Inclusive education requires additional investment, particularly in the provision of assistive devices, physical facilities, and teacher training. Regional education funding allocations often fail to prioritize these needs.

c. Lack of Inter-Agency Coordination

The implementation of inclusive policies often proceeds independently between the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, the Social Service, and the Health Service without strong synergy.

d. Public Understanding is Still Low

Many parents still choose not to send their children with disabilities to school because they are worried about stigma or difficulties adapting to mainstream schools.

4. Strategies for Strengthening Inclusive Education in Indonesia

To strengthen the implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia, a comprehensive strategy involving various stakeholders is needed. Some strategic steps that can be taken include:

a. Strengthening the Capacity of Teachers and Education Personnel

The government needs to expand teacher training on inclusive pedagogy, alternative assessments, and the use of adaptive learning technology. An inclusive teacher certification program could be one long-term solution.

b. Expansion of Disability-Friendly Infrastructure



The construction of educational facilities must meet universal accessibility standards, including ramps, accessible toilets, and adaptive learning spaces.

c. Integration of Inclusive Education in Regional Policies

Regional governments need to have specific Regional Regulations (Perda) on inclusive education, accompanied by a clear budget and action plan.

d. Community and Family Empowerment

Families and communities must be involved in building a culture of inclusion through outreach programs, parental guidance, and anti-stigma public campaigns.

e. Multi-Sector Collaboration

Inclusive education needs to be strengthened through cross-sector collaboration between education, health, social services, and the business world. This approach will strengthen resource support and program sustainability.

5. Inclusive Education Towards Golden Indonesia 2045

Inclusive education is a crucial prerequisite for achieving Indonesia Emas 2045, as superior human development can only be achieved if all citizens have equal opportunities to learn and develop. In the era of globalization and technological disruption, diversity is a national strength. Through inclusive education, Indonesia not only builds academically intelligent human resources but also builds character, tolerance, and empathy for differences. Thus, inclusive education serves as the foundation for social justice, national cohesion, and a just national civilization.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the literature review and analysis of the concept, policy, and implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia, several important things can be concluded as follows:

1. *Inclusive education is a manifestation of learning justice.*

Inclusive education is based on the principles of social justice (Rawls, 1971) and the capability approach (Sen, 1999), which emphasize that every individual has an equal right to develop their potential without discrimination. In the context of education, justice does not mean equal treatment, but rather providing opportunities appropriate to the needs and abilities of each student.

2. *The legal and policy framework for inclusive education in Indonesia is quite strong, but its implementation is still limited.*

Regulations such as Article 31 of the 1945 Constitution, Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, and Minister of National Education Regulation No. 70 of 2009 have provided a clear normative basis. However, implementation on the ground remains hampered by a lack of human resources, facilities, and regional policy support. Program implementation remains partial and has not yet reached all regions, particularly in underdeveloped, frontier, and outermost (3T) areas.

3. *The main challenge of inclusive education lies in the readiness of the national education system.*



Limited teacher competency in differentiated learning, a lack of disability- friendly facilities and infrastructure, low public awareness of the importance of inclusion, and weak coordination between institutions are key inhibiting factors. This indicates that inclusive education policy is still in the transition phase from an integrative approach to true inclusion.

4. Inclusive education plays an important role in human development towards Golden Indonesia 2045.

By placing learning equity as the foundation of the education system, Indonesia can build a society with character, tolerance, and global competitiveness. Inclusive education not only creates equitable access but also fosters a culture of empathy and appreciation for diversity, a national strength.

Recommendation

Based on the results of the analysis and research findings, several recommendations that can be given to strengthen the implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia are as follows:

1. For the Central Government

- a. Develop a national inclusive education roadmap that is integrated with the 2025–2029 RPJMN and the Golden Indonesia 2045 vision.
- b. Increase the allocation of a special budget for inclusive education for infrastructure development, teacher training, and provision of adaptive learning media.
- c. Strengthening synergy between ministries and institutions (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Affairs, and Bappenas) in implementing cross-sectoral inclusion programs.

2. For Local Government

- a. Establishing Regional Regulations (Perda) regarding the implementation of inclusive education accompanied by funding mechanisms and periodic monitoring.
- b. Developing inclusive resource centers in each province/district as a forum for training, mentoring, and consultation for schools providing inclusive education.
- c. Encourage collaboration between regular schools, special needs schools, and community institutions in providing adaptive and equitable educational services.

3. For Schools and Educational Institutions

- a. Applying the principles of differentiated learning and authentic assessment, so that each student gains learning experiences according to their potential and needs.
- b. Training teachers in inclusive pedagogical approaches through workshops, certification, and collaborative lesson study between teachers.
- c. Building an inclusive school culture, where all school members have an awareness and commitment to respecting differences.

4. For Communities and Families

- a. Increase parental awareness and participation in supporting children with special needs to be able to study in regular schools.



- b. Eliminating social stigma against people with disabilities through public campaigns and social literacy that emphasize the importance of empathy and equality.
- c. Encourage local community partnerships in helping schools provide moral, material and social support for the implementation of inclusive education.

5. For Researchers and Academics

- a. Conducting further empirical research to evaluate the effectiveness of implementing inclusive education in various regions.
- b. Developing technology-based inclusive learning and assessment models that can be implemented in schools with limited resources.
- c. Integrating inclusive education as a mandatory curriculum in prospective teacher education so that inclusive pedagogical competencies become part of the professionalism of educators.

Bibliography

- Ainscow, M., & Miles, S. (2008). Making Education for All Inclusive: Where Next? Prospects, 38(1), 15–34. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-008-9055-0>.
- Central Statistics Agency (BPS). (2023). Indonesian Education Statistics 2023. Jakarta: BPS.
- Booth, T., & Ainscow, M. (2011). Index for Inclusion: Developing Learning and Participation in Schools (3rd ed.). Bristol: Center for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE).
- Ministry of National Education. (2009). Minister of National Education Regulation Number 70 of 2009 concerning Inclusive Education for Students with Disabilities and/or Potential for Special Intelligence and Talents. Jakarta: Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia.
- Freire, P. (1970). Pedagogy of the Oppressed. New York: Continuum.
- John Rawls. (1971). A Theory of Justice. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Ministry of Education and Culture. (2019). Education and Culture Statistics 2019. Jakarta: Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia.
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. (2024). People's School Program: Equalizing Access to Education in the Era of the Prabowo Subianto Government. Jakarta: Center for Information and Public Relations, Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology.
- Krippendorff, K. (2018). Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Sen, A. (1999). Development as Freedom. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sugiyono. (2019). Qualitative, Quantitative, and R&D Research Methods. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Tilaar, HAR (2009). Power and Education: A Review from a Cultural Studies Perspective. Jakarta: Rineka Cipta.
- UNESCO. (1994). The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2021). Global Education Monitoring Report: Inclusion and Education – All Means All. Paris: UNESCO Publishing.





- UNICEF. (2022). Education for Every Child: Indonesia Country Report. Jakarta: UNICEF Indonesia.
- United Nations. (2015). Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. New York: United Nations.
- Zed, M. (2014). Library Research Methods. Jakarta: Obor Indonesia Foundation.

