Quality Management of Inclusive Schools: A Case Study in a City in Lampung Province on the Indonesian Island of Sumatra

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Abstract

It is widely recognized in the literature that inclusive education allows school children with special needs to learn in the same setting as other students, promoting a culture of respect for individual differences and ensuring each child has the resources they need. However, to the best of our knowledge, the literature has not frequently discussed inclusive school management, particularly quality management, in the Indonesian setting. Therefore, this research aimed to investigate inclusive school quality management in Indonesia. This study is quantitative in nature using a questionnaire for data collection among (45) participants, including six principals, 34 regular teachers, and five special guidance teachers coming from inclusive elementary schools in Metro City, Lampung Province on the Indonesian island of Sumatra. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. It is clear from the findings that the inclusive school quality management in the context under study is of good category, but a sizable portion of the participants also indicated that the school management is still deficient, falling into both sufficient and poor category. Therefore, more stakeholders, such as the community, government, and private parties, should collaborate to improve the management. Following the findings, implications and suggestions for future research are also discussed.

Keywords: Quality Management; Inclusive Education; Evaluation; Elementary Schools; Indonesia

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Introduction

It is well recognized that inclusive education gives children with special needs the same opportunity as other students to learn in the same setting, fostering a culture of respect for individual differences and ensuring that each child receives the resources they need (Afrianti et al., 2020; Sowiyah, 2021; Sowiyah & Perdana, 2022). Thus, the participation of numerous parties, particularly society, plays a significant role (Rollan & Somerton, 2021). In so doing, there is no marginalization of children with disabilities because of lack of educational opportunity. In other words, education is a fundamental human right that all children, including those with special needs, must have access to (Munene, 2021).

Since inclusive education is one of the worldwide goals of Education for All (EFA), the area of inclusive education has grown significantly on a global scale as widely stated in the literature (Kalyanpur, 2022; Munene, 2021; Nilholm, 2021). Simply put, education that is inclusive of students with and without special needs promotes equality. Each student with exceptional needs has a right to inclusive education that is tailored to their needs and abilities in specific educational settings. One strategy for enacting the principles of Education for All is the inclusive education paradigm (Miles & Singal, 2010; Munene, 2021). This is in conformity with the Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which highlights the importance of schools providing inclusive education for all students, including those who have disabilities and those who do not, without discrimination (Ainscow et al., 2000). Therefore, the management of inclusive schools also involves how factors such as race, disability, family background, language, and immigration status affect principals' efforts to promote inclusion (DeMatthews et al., 2021).

In Indonesia, for example, the law guarantees that children with special needs would receive quality educational services, and even a formalized system has been well developed. However, in practice, access to inclusive education services has not been enough due to factors like parental attitudes, student discrimination, a lack of infrastructure and resources, unqualified teachers, and schools that do not properly administer inclusive education (Rasmitadila et al., 2021; Wibowo & Muin, 2018; Windarsih et al., 2017). Moreover, there are management concerns with inclusive education that are not in accordance with the Ministry of National Education's existing regulation number 70 of 2009 regarding inclusive education for students with disabilities or children with special needs (Faragher et al., 2021; Iqbal et al., 2021). Ironically, only 18% of Indonesia's 1.6 million students with special needs received inclusive education programs in 2017 (Lily, 2021; Wardhani & Andika, 2021).

As stated in the literature, the difficulty of monitoring and supervisory process is one barrier to successful learning and teaching management, among other management concerns (Beddoe & Davys, 2016; Sellers et al., 2016). Thus, in order to effectively implement education, there are five factors that must be taken into account: 1) comprehension and implementation; 2) school regulations; 3) learning process; 4) condition of teachers; and 5) support systems (Sudjak, 2018). Numerous studies, on a worldwide level for example, have shown that inclusive education is poorly managed in schools that provide it, especially when its implementation is restricted to only accepting and sending children with special needs to school, as is evident from the extensive literature (Ainscow et al., 2000; Mosia, 2014; Mpu & Adu, 2021; Mullick et al., 2012; Sijuola & Davidova, 2022). However, to the best of our knowledge, the literature has not frequently discussed inclusive school management, particularly quality management, in the Indonesian setting. In other words, there is not enough information to draw any firm conclusions from the available studies. To put it simply, the existing findings in the literature are currently inconclusive. Therefore, this research was crucial since it aimed to investigate inclusive school quality management in Indonesia. This is because effective school administration is fundamental to providing equal access to education for all students.

Literature Review

Inclusive Education

Globally, inclusive education has emerged as a primary objective of education research, policy,

and practice. The main idea, broadly speaking, is straightforward that each learner matters equally (Knight & Crick, 2022). Many nations' political discourse and legislation acknowledge that learners with exceptional needs have the rights to be educated alongside those without special needs, however, their cultures and practices frequently fall short of this ideal (Mitchell, 2014). Therefore, inclusive education should give students the chance to develop a variety of competences that are suited to their potential, talents, and characteristics.

Inclusive education refers to the idea of assimilating children with disabilities who enroll in conventional school programs. For all school-aged children, including those with disabilities, inclusion for all students must be a goal that must be attained. This is what inclusive education entails (Freeman et al., 2006; Vitello & Mithaug, 2013). In addition, the idea of inclusion can be interpreted as the acceptance of students with all of their limitations in the applicable curriculum, social interactions, surroundings, and educational self-concept (Hansen, 2012; Pijl & Frostad, 2010; Vaughn et al., 2001). Inclusion also refers to the provision of educational assistance for children with special needs in regular schooling while taking their level of disability into consideration (Lindsay, 2007; Shevlin & Banks, 2021). In the Indonesian context, as explained in the regulation of the Ministry of National Education number 70 of 2009, inclusive education enables all students, regardless of their disabilities to engage in learning in an atmosphere where students without disabilities are also present (Iqbal et al., 2021; Santrock, 2008). Therefore, the goals of inclusive education are to guarantee that all children have access to inexpensive, effective, relevant, and appropriate education in their local communities and that all stakeholders foster an atmosphere that is favorable to learning (Hunt, 2021; Raiden & King, 2021; Sudjak, 2018).

Inclusive Education Management

Adjustments to administrative practices are required in order to accommodate more inclusive education into regular schools (Dela Fuente, 2021). Schools that are formed of students from the same demographic will be different from those that are composed of students from a variety of backgrounds (Baugh, 2021). The primary tenet of the inclusive education concept is the notion that all students, without any qualification, are entitled to access the educational opportunities provided by conventional schools (Florian, 2021). As a result, managing inclusive education purely through changes to the intensity of instruction will not be sufficient. Within the larger context of inclusive education, even school culture is included (Andrews et al., 2021; Sorkos & Hajisoteriou, 2021). Therefore, inclusive education management needs to be a system of educational services that includes all aspects of school administration, such as 1) curriculum, 2) learning, 3) assessment, 4) studentship, 5) personnel, 6) infrastructure, and 7) public relations (Yusuf et al., 2014). In addition, six factors are necessary for the inclusive school management model to be successful: 1) curriculum; 2) professional development; 3) assessment; 4) accountability; 5) money; and 6) governance and administrative tactics. The planning, implementing, directing, coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating of the six aspects of inclusive school management will be completely under the control of school principals (Strieker et al., 2001). Out of these six, inclusive school management will grant full control to school principals for the process of planning, implementing, directing, coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating school education components, including students, educational staff, curriculum, educational funding, educational facilities and infrastructure, and public relations with schools (Sulasmi & Akrim, 2020).

The Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) Model for Program Evaluation

The school administration's responsibility is to plan, carry out, and assess inclusion initiatives. The so-called Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) evaluation is a method that can be used to assess inclusive learning programs (Arikunto & Jabar, 2010). Teachers can determine the learning process and community needs by evaluating the context (Arikunto & Jabar, 2010; Zhang et al., 2011). The input evaluation is a component of evaluation that aids in choosing the best needs assessment approach (Stufflebeam, 2000; Zhang et al., 2011). This assessment helps decision-makers choose the best program design, method of financing, resource allocation, implementation strategy, and activity schedule. The process is an assessment that upholds the planning process and its limitations while identifying the manager's needs for the plan. Finally, the outputs and their benefits, worth, relevance, and opportunities can be measured and examined using the products as evaluative components (Zhang et al., 2011). Thus, this model provides a simple and methodical way to assess the success or failure of a program (Akinci & Erdougan,

2021).

Methodology

Research Design

In order to get a clear picture of the quality management of an inclusive school, this research, which is an evaluation study, is quantitative in nature adopting the CIPP model approach (Akinci & Erdougan, 2021; Stufflebeam, 2000; Zhang et al., 2011). With regard to four assessment components—context evaluation, input evaluation, process evaluation, and product evaluation—our study's main objective was to examine an inclusive school management (Stufflebeam, 2000; Zhang et al., 2011).

Participants

This study included 45 participants, including six principals (13 percent), (34) regular teachers (76 percent), and five special guidance teachers (11 percent). All of them were from inclusive elementary schools in Metro City, Lampung Province on the Indonesian island of Sumatra. We assured participants of their anonymity and provided them with a thorough explanation of the research's goals.

Instruments and Data Analysis

We used Google Forms, a free survey tool, to send out an online questionnaire. The participants had to fill out a questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale (1 = poor - 5 = very good). Before distributing the questionnaire, we did validity and reliability tests to make sure that the statements in the questionnaire were a good length and easy to understand (Schleef, 2014) and well-made so that each statement could reach the research goals (McQuirk & O'Neill, 2016). The validity of the questionnaire was found to be acceptable ($0.00 < 0.05$), based on our Pearson product-moment analysis. The correlation coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) was used to assess the items' internal consistency, providing further assurance that they were reliable and valid in assessing the variables of interest. According to this metric, all items were trustworthy and consistent among themselves (> 0.60). By returning the questionnaire, they gave us permission to utilize the information we gathered for scientific inquiry. Finally, the data collected from the questionnaire were summarized using descriptive statistics calculated with IBM SPSS Statistics Version 22 for Windows. The findings were then presented and interpreted descriptively in a way that was both accessible and easy to understand (Ho, 2014).

Results and Discussion

One of the key jobs in school operations is school management, which is created by the principal. Planning, administering, directing, coordinating, monitoring and evaluating the various aspects of education are all completely within the principal's purview (Sulasmi & Akrim, 2020). Therefore, in order to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of inclusive education in schools, a preliminary description of the quality of inclusive school administration must be investigated. Table 1 provides a summary of the inclusive school management's level of effectiveness.

Table 1. Inclusive School Management in General

No	Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	≥85%	Very good	6	13.33%
2	70-85%	Good	21	46.67%
3	53-69%	Sufficient	16	35.56%
4	37-52%	Poor	2	4.44%
Total			45	100%

Table 1 reveals that (46.67%) of participants deemed their school's administration to be of good quality, while (13.33%) deemed it to be of very good quality. This indicates that the majority of management programs and systems are operating effectively. In addition, a total of (35.56) percent and (4.44) percent of participants, respectively, rated the quality of their school's administration as sufficient and poor. Obviously, this is a major deficiency that requires more investigation because it relates to the quality of education services in schools. This is due to the process of monitoring and evaluating the designed program, which is consistent with previous findings that the problem of school management lies in monitoring and supervision, hence rendering learning ineffective (Ngole & Mkulu, 2021). Most school principals lack expertise on the implementation of inclusive schools, which resulted in a lack of monitoring and supervision (Abdullah et al., 2021; Kisbu-Sakarya & Doenyas, 2021). Due to factors such student prejudice, a lack of infrastructure and resources, unqualified teachers, improperly implemented inclusion education in schools, and parental attitudes, inclusive education services have not been adequately supported (Kauffman et al., 2023; Slowik et al., 2021). More in-depth explanations of school management, including 1) context; 2) input; 3) process; and 4) product evaluation, are provided below to further our inquiry.

Context Evaluation

Table 2 summarizes the findings of the context-related data analysis.

Table 2. Context Evaluation of School Management

No	Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	≥89%	Very Good	8	17.78%
2	71-88%	Good	22	48.88%
3	54-70%	Sufficient	12	26.66%
4	36-53%	Poor	3	6.66%
5	35%≤	Very Poor	0	0
Total			45	100%

According to Table 2, the majority of participants - (17.78) percent and (48.88) percent, respectively—said that their school's context-aware management fell into the very good and good categories. However, more than (40%) of them claimed that the management of their school fell into the sufficient and poor categories. This indicates that a large majority of them still perceive several problems with inclusive school administration in the context evaluation. The literature states that the context evaluation is an assessment of needs, challenges, assets, and prospects to help with decision-making and setting objectives as well as priorities, for example, the current program that has not fulfilled, the development objectives that have not been achieved by the program, the development objectives that are related to meeting the needs, and the goal that is easiest to achieve (Arikunto & Jabar, 2010; Rostini et al., 2022). This also shows that they were aware of the poorly thought design of work programs and the weak execution of inclusiveness (Vorapanya, 2008; Vorapanya & Dunlap, 2014). Therefore, this also shows that they were aware of the poorly thought design of work programs and the weak execution of inclusiveness.

Input Evaluation

The input evaluation refers to a methodology used to assess how the utilization of already-available resources can achieve objectives and, in essence, give information about whether or not to seek assistance from other parties. The input evaluation aids in formulating the designs and processes to accomplish the program (Arikunto & Jabar, 2010). Table 3 provides a description of the quality of inclusive school management based on our data collection and analysis.

Table 3. Input Evaluation of School Management

No	Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	≥89%	Very Good	5	11.11%
2	71-88%	Good	18	40.00%
3	54-70%	Sufficient	17	37.78%
4	36-53%	Poor	5	11.11%
5	35%≤	Very Poor	0	0%
Total			45	100%

According to Table 3, some participants gave their inclusive school management ratings of good and very good during the input evaluation. In reality, though, about (48%) of them still felt that the management quality in this evaluation was still deficient. The input evaluation can determine the most effective method for determining needs (Stufflebeam, 2000; Zhang et al., 2011). This evaluation helps decision-makers choose the best program design, method of funding, resource allocation, implementation strategy, and activity schedule. In this area, an evaluation is done to see if the infrastructure and facilities are ready, as well as the teachers, to help children with special needs become more motivated to learn. By looking at the data in Table 3, it is evident that the sufficient value category has a value of (37.78) percent and the poor category value is (11.11) percent, both of which are quite high percentages. That is, the participants believed that attention still needs to be paid to and improvements still need to be made to facilities, infrastructure, and teacher readiness. This finding is in line with previous studies that obstacles to the implementation of inclusive education include features of the principal's knowledge, teacher knowledge, the preparedness of facilities and infrastructure, and parental comprehension. There are still negative perceptions of children with special needs (Bansal & Kaur, 2021; Crispel & Kasperski, 2021; Nkomo & Dube, 2022; Windarsih et al., 2017).

Process Evaluation

The process evaluation focuses on how closely the program's activities followed the plan (Arikunto & Jabar, 2010). Table 4 displays the outcomes of the process evaluation analysis.

Table 4. Process Evaluation of School Management

No	Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	≥89%	Very Good	4	8.89%
2	71-88%	Good	13	28.89%
3	54-70%	Sufficient	21	46.67%
4	36-53%	Poor	7	15.56%
5	35%≤	Very Poor	0	0%
Total			45	100%

The management quality as seen from the perspective of process evaluation is shown in Table 4 above, where it remains in the sufficient and poor categories with a percentage of about (62.22) percent. This relates to how well programs are implemented in accordance with the work plan, such as the execution of classroom learning and its monitoring and evaluation, teacher development programs, and other programs made public by the school in the school work plan (Arikunto & Jabar, 2010). Therefore, it might be claimed that most schools still do not follow the work plan when implementing their work programs adequately. This is obviously a concern since, if further investigated, it will have an impact on the standard of educational services provided to

children in schools. This finding is also in line with previous findings that less awareness and understanding of inclusive school management was present among school leaders and their personnel. The idea that inclusive schools do not integrate the principle of inclusion in their educational system is one of the misconceptions that arise during the implementation process. Additionally, the under preparedness of teachers as educators is highlighted (Fernandes et al., 2021; Raguindin et al., 2021; Shrestha & Bhattarai, 2021).

Product Evaluation

The CIPP model also includes a product evaluation step. Table 5 below shows the findings of the quality management analysis based on the product evaluation.

Table 5. Product Evaluation of School Management

No	Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	≥98%	Very Good	3	6.67%
2	78-97%	Good	17	37.78%
3	54-70%	Sufficient	22	48.89%
4	36-53%	Poor	3	6.67%
5	35%≤	Very Poor	0	-
Total			45	100%

Table 5 demonstrates that some schools, with a combined percentage of more than (44%), already have good management quality in the area of product evaluation. In spite of this, (55.56) percent of the participants said that the management quality in this component is still sufficient or even poor. In other words, schools ought to be concerned about this. The goal of the product evaluation is to demonstrate how well a learning program is being implemented (Arikunto & Jabar, 2010).

The product evaluation may reflect the success or failure of a program's implementation in schools, such as the instructional strategy used by teachers (Nash et al., 2021; Widoyoko, 2009). From a management standpoint, it is evident that the school must monitor student learning results so that, if there are still problems, they may be improved. Follow-up can be done based on the findings of the product evaluation to make upgrades more efficient and targeted (Widoyoko, 2009). Moreover, leadership skills of principals also play an important role as a determinant of school performance (Sowiyah et al., 2021). In so doing, inclusive school children can access high-quality educational services and learn new things.

Conclusion

It is clear from the findings above that the inclusive school quality management in the context under study qualifies as good. This suggests that the inclusive education is properly run. The majority of participants indicated that their inclusive school administration is of good category, but a sizable portion of them also indicated that the school management is still deficient, falling into both sufficient and poor category. Therefore, more stakeholders, such as the community, government, and private parties, should collaborate to improve the quality of school management. In other words, the current research's findings provide the basis for further efforts to improve inclusive school management. For each component to function properly and under control, several aspects, such as a management system for monitoring and assessing elements, must be established. One of the innovations that must be made is the creation of inclusive school e-management. However, the current study also has a few limitations. In other words, future research needs to take into account a several things, such as a bigger environment with a greater number of participants, more diverse research instruments, and more advanced data analyses. By doing so, we would be able to derive inferences from our data that are more trustworthy and valid.

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