

# Instructional Strategy of Cluster Model in Inclusive Education (Preliminary Study on Cluster Model of Inclusive Education)

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## Abstract

The research aims to (1) identify the current condition of the implementation of inclusive education, (2) identify the inhibiting sources and the need of the instructional strategies in full inclusive education, (3) and propose Cluster Model of an instructional strategy in inclusive schools. This research was a survey on full inclusion model. The sample of this research was a number of 56 inclusive schools in Wonogiri, Central Java, Indonesia. The data was collected by means of questionnaire and interview, and analyzed by both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative method was used to describe the data resulted from questionnaire. While qualitative method was used to describe the data resulted from interview. The data showed that the full inclusive schools in Wonogiri performed special educational services for students with special needs (SWSN) in terms of modified curriculum (36.4%), teachers' understanding of students characteristics (51.1%), Teachers' competence (46.4%), SWSN learning involvement (51.1%), attention from non-SWSN (58.2%), Teachers' assistance (60.4%), Classroom management (40.4), Special teachers' involvement (48.2), parents' and School committees' involvement (44.6%), and SWSN academic achievement (45.0%). The research concluded that (1) the implementation of educational services in full inclusion model was not yet well performed. Except the teachers' assistance, the educational services for SWSN in full inclusion need to be promoted, (2) the schools performances were

inhibited by the insufficient implementation of inclusive educational services, (3) the need to propose an alternative model instead of full inclusive model of instructional strategy.

**Keywords:** full inclusion, instructional strategy, students' characteristics, modified curriculum,

## INTRODUCTION

The issuance of Salamanca Statement 1994 and The World Education Conference in Dakar Senegal, 2000 have triggered the world movement towards the demand of education for all. Such a demand was becoming stronger since it was agreed to be a collective commitment by UNESCO in 2000. The demand was postulated into a frame work of action so as to open the broadest access particularly for all marginal citizens to get quality of education for free in inclusive settings of service (Shaeffer, 2005).

The right to educational access is basically agreed among the world conference participants under the following statements of education for all " Every person-child , youth and adult -shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs". This statement inspires the needs of inclusive education. In Salamnca statement (Mayor, 1994), it is believed and proclaimed that:

1. Every child has the fundamental right to education and has to be given the opportunity to achieve and own proper degree of knowledge.
2. Every child has unique characteristics, and interests, abilities, and learning needs
3. Educational system should be designed, and educational program should be implemented by considering the wide diversity of characteristics and special needs.
4. Those with special needs should get the right access to regular school setting that accommodates their special needs in students-centered approach of pedagogy.
5. Regular schools with this inclusive service is believed to be effective means of combating discriminatory attitude, creating child-friendly environment, and building an inclusive society and achieving education for all.

In a different point of view, Holdsworth (2003) asserts that local community schools should be for everyone. It means that no child is excluded. The school should provide for all in a flexible way, and there is no longer a need to select students except for assessment. The fact, however, many children are excluded from schools due to different reasons. Some say education is too expensive. Others comment the school is far away, and particularly for girls, school is not considered important. Parents think the place to go children with special needs is to special schools, They prefer not sending their children to neither regular schools nor special schools since the special school is too far in the city (Gunarhadi, Tri Rejeki, and Sugini, 2012).

Inclusion (Freire & Giroux, 2013) is defined as a approach to educating students with special education needs. Under the inclusion model, students with special needs spend most of or all of their time with non-disabled students. Inclusion has two types; partial inclusion and full inclusion. Partial inclusion enhances students with special needs to receive extra help in pulled out system in a resource room for special services. Meanwhile, in the full inclusion, students with special needs learn alongside with students without special needs. Each of these types has strong and weak points. However, combination of full and partial inclusion has shown to be beneficial to students with learning disability both in terms of social and academic perspectives.

In Indonesia, the concept of inclusive education has been mandated in the government policy through The Rule Of Minister of Education No 70 - 2009 on Inclusive Education for children with special needs stating that there should at least one elementary, one secondary school in each of sub-district area. The further development is on the shoulder of professional agents including non-government organization (Failace, 2009). Due to this rule, the number of inclusive schools grows very rapidly. Within one decade of period, there are now more than 1000 (one thousand) inclusive schools have been established (Sunardi, Munawir, Gunarhadi, and Priyono, 2010). The growing number of inclusive education is run most of the time in full inclusion system. Partial inclusion is an emerging

alternative to solve the problems found in full inclusion. Cluster model is a type of partial inclusion where students with special needs are pulled out for some certain time of day for additional services of education (Gunarhadi, et.al. 2012)

The concept of inclusive education basically refers to responding to children with diversity. Inclusive education is the manifestation of education for all. To respond to the issues of diversity Ainscow (2003) defines that inclusion is a process of searching for ways identifying and removing barriers that enable them to attend, participate in the regular schools for meaningful achievement. In almost the same the point of view, (Sandkull&Heijnen, 2005) in International Symposium, 2005 in Bukittinggi, Indonesia defines inclusive education as a strategy of implementing the approach to the rights of children to education, especially for those who are marginalized. Inclusive education, as such, holds the principle of equal rights, respect of differences, and understanding the needs of all students by removing the obstacles in the learning environment.

There are many types of delivering special educational services in inclusive educational settings. Smith (2004) describes a continuum type of opportunity for children to live and learn from the least to the most restricted environment of school settings. For the sake of instruction, the types of settings can be categorized in three different educational services. The first is the instruction in of students with special needs in the full inclusion. Students with special needs learn together with the normal peers in regular class. They learn, interact, and cooperate or even compete with other students of normal peer in the regular class activities. The second is Cluster instruction where a group of some students with special needs learn together in full inclusion system or pulled out to a resource room in a regular school. The third is individualized instruction where a student gets educational service based on his individual needs and capability.

In practice, however, children with special needs in the full inclusion do not get meaningful benefit from educational services as expected. Due to the limited facilities, human resources, teaching competences, and school management, these included children hardly learn form the school academic environments. Most of the schools do not do as expected on

the basis of inclusion philosophy. Many teachers complain for the impossibility of such children to learn together with the normal peers in a big heterogeneous class, and so do the parents. Inclusive school is not even the worth place particularly for children with severe handicapping condition. Ideally, all students with special needs get individual services in order that they can learn meaningfully (Browlie & King, 2000). The limited number of human resource, however, makes the individualized instruction impossible to be conducted in such a big heterogeneous class. Most inclusive schools, particularly in the full inclusive system, are not provided with special education teachers that children do not learn meaningfully in regular schools (Ichrom & Gunarhadi, 2005).

## **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purposes of research include the following points; (1) to show the profile of performance of the implementation model of inclusive education in Indonesia, (2) to identify the existing problems on the implementation of inclusive education in regular schools, (3) to analyze the opportunity and challenges of inclusive education both in Indonesia and Malaysia, (4) to recommend a model of instructional strategy inclusive schools.

## **METHOD OF RESEARCH**

This study aims at finding a prototype as an alternative instructional strategy in inclusive education through Cluster Model Development. This type of study is a Research and Development. It is a procedural model proposed by Borg and Gall (2003). The design covers four steps of research procedure; (1) analyzing need and components of model, (2) model development, (3) model piloting, and (4) result dissemination.

The sample of the research consisted of 56 out of 81 (69%) of total inclusive schools scattered in Wonogiri Regent, Central Java, Indonesia. The number of sample was determined by the number of inclusive schools that returned the distributed questionnaires. The data of research was collected by means of questionnaires and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The questionnaire was filled out by 56 inclusive schools mentioned as the sample,

while the interview and Focused Group Discussion (FGD) were attended by 56 teachers in the sense that each teacher represented each inclusive school of the assigned sample. The data was analyzed by quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative method was used to analyze the data from questionnaire, while the qualitative method was to describe the data resulted from the interview and Focused Group Discussion (FGD). The quantitative was related to general performance of inclusive schools in terms of curriculum, teacher understands on the student's characteristics, classroom management, students learning problems, teachers' competence, and individual educational plan. Meanwhile, the qualitative method was used to support the respective data obtained from questionnaires.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Performance of Full Inclusive Schools.**

The implementation of educational services in full inclusion was indicated by the required activities instruction addressed to students with special needs included in full inclusion system. Such activities include the following aspects; the use of modified curriculum, teachers' understanding on the students' characteristics, classroom management, Teachers' attempt in students' learning engagement, building positive attitude toward students with special needs, assisting students with special needs, the role of special education teachers, and the utilization of individualized instruction plan for students with special needs. In most cases, these activities could not be performed successfully due to the following inhibiting factors.

#### **1. The Implementation of Modified Curriculum**

From the point of view of curriculum, the inhibiting factors of the implementation of full inclusion model consists of availability of modified curriculum in 36 out of 56 inclusive schools (66%), the unavailability of modified curriculum (63%), lack of knowledge on the modified curriculum (52%), and no students with special needs did not need modified curriculum (8.9%). The other reasons (7.1% ) were stated that teachers did not get training

on curriculum modification, the schools did not provide the guide to use modified curriculum, and some others said they did not have opportunity to implement the modified curriculum. This data can be seen in the following table.

**Table 1.** The Implementation of Modified Curriculum

Problems	%
Modified curriculum	66
Unavailable	63
Unimplemented	52
Unnecessary for SWSN	8.9
Others	7.1

This table shows that a number of 63% inclusive schools do not provide modified curriculum for students with special needs, 52 % or 29 schools have modified curriculum but do not implement it, and 8.9% or 5 schools say modified curriculum is not necessary for students with special needs. In general, it means that inclusive schools in this area still do not reach the good quality of inclusive schools as expected by the government.

## 2. Teachers' Understanding on the Characteristics of SWSN.

Among 25 out of 56 teachers (45%) said that learning the responsibility of all students, 52% out of them said that learning needs of SWSN was different from those who are non-SWSN, but mostly teachers believed that SWSN is difficult to learn together with other non-SWSN students in inclusive schools. The rest (7.1%) said did not have any idea on this points; some said it was difficult for the teachers to have children with special needs in his or her classroom because children could not follow the lessons, no identification, and no facilities such as resource room for them to teach a student individually. This data is described as the following table:

**Table 2.** Inhibittance of Teachers' Understanding on Students' Characteristics

<b>Problems</b>	<b>%</b>
Learning is the responsibility of all students	45
Learning needs is the same for everyone	52
SWSN hardly learn in regular school	73
Others	7.1

From this table, it shows that teachers in inclusive schools do not have good common sense in coping with the problems of learning among students in the regular schools. This is true to the fact that teachers in regular schools need to learn the instructional strategy for students with special needs in their classroom.

### **3. Problems with Classroom Management.**

To this point, 6 out of 56 teachers (11%) complained there were too many students in one class. Curriculum target was not achieved, SWSN could not catch up with the lessons. Some other teachers said they did not have time to give special attention to SWSN in his class, and the rest said other things such as; the minimum learning mastery could not be achieved, no modified curriculum, and no differentiated curriculum. The data on this point can be seen in the following table.

**Table 3.** Inhibittance of Inclusive Classroom Management

<b>Problems</b>	<b>%</b>
Too many students in one class	11
Unachievable target of learning	39
SWSN hardly learn from the lesson in the same pace of other students	66
Not enough time to attend to the SWSN	52
Others	5.4



In general, this figure shows that the biggest problems for classroom management inclusive schools the limited time for teachers teach to help students with special needs. This is because there are too many students in the classroom to care for. As a consequence, students with special needs could not learn. Hence, they achieve lower than other students.

#### **4. Problems in involving SWSN in learning process.**

More than 29 out of 56 teachers (50%) said that SWSN has too low capability to learn in inclusive schools together with other non-SWSN. Some other commented that SWSN could not learn when no other friends helped them (45%). Mostly (84%) said regular teachers need special teacher in his class to facilitate the students learn, and (13%) said that they did not have enough time to help students with special needs. The rest (3.6%) said SWSN indeed, should be helped in order to learn by providing some learning facilities. The data is described as the following table:

**Table 4.** Problems in Involving SWSN in Learning Process

<b>Problems</b>	<b>%</b>
SWSN is too hard to achieve	52
SWSN learn only when helped by the seatmate	45
Special teacher is needed	84
Not enough time for teacher to help SNC	13
Others	3.6

This figure indicates that the importance of special teacher in the inclusive schools is urgent. Otherwise, students with special needs in inclusive schools remain neglected in term of academic achievement. Otherwise, students with special needs should be facilitated by learning in group with other children or peer learning system.

### 5. Problems of Teachers' Competence

From the following table, it is indicated that most teachers or 36 out of 56 teachers (71%) admitted they did not have special education background. Those who are interested in special education (16%) did not have open opportunity to learn about special education to extend their knowledge and skill to handle children with special needs in regular schools. Strangely, few of them (5.4%) said they were not interested in special education. It means these number of teachers felt they were not part of inclusive education movement. Some others commented they were interested in special education but they did not have any experience so that they could not participate in handling children with special needs in their inclusive classroom. The data is described as in the following table:

**Table 5.** Teachers' Competence in Special Education

Problems	%
Non-Special education background	71
Not interested in learning special education	5.4
Not enough time to learn Special education	16
Others	3.6

This table shows that since most of the regular teachers have the education background of elementary schools, improving the regular teachers' competence of regular schools through special education should be considered seriously.

### 6. The Implementation of Individualized Educational Plan

The individual educational plan, as seen from the table, was not fully implemented in the inclusive class. The fact shows 28 out of 56 teachers (50%) commented that they did not apply individual instruction for children with special needs in their class. Among 56 teachers,

18 of them (36%) commented that they find it difficult to apply the individual plan to the children with special needs in their class learning activity.

On the other side, those who already applied individual plan (8.9) said that individual educational plan did not mean a lot to children with special needs. They commented that Individual educational plan did not show better result of academic achievement. Others commented; individual plan was not available in schools, they did not know the procedure to make the individual educational plan, and some others said individual plan was not well prepared and needed other facilities to support the implementation of individual plan in inclusive schools. The data is described as in the following table:

**Table 6.** The Implementation of Individual Educational Plan

<b>Problems</b>	<b>%</b>
Unfamiliar with the knowledge of Individual Instruction	50
No time to prepare Individual instructional Plan.	41
Individual plan is hardly implemented.	36
The implementation of individual instruction if fruitless	8.9
Others	7.1

This figure indicates the biggest problem for students with special needs is related to the poor services of individualized instruction. Beside the teacher's limited time to prepare the individual lesson plan, unfamiliarity of what and how the individualized instruction among regular teachers is the culprit of failure inclusive education.

## CONCLUSION

### 1. Conclusion

The implementation of educational services in full inclusion model in Solo Raya was not yet well performed. From 56 inclusive schools, only 26 schools could perform good quality of educational service. The rest, 30 schools performed below average of standard expected by national qualification. It means less than 50% of the full inclusive model could show adequate management of inclusive education on the basis of education for all.

The low profile of inclusive education performance is indicated by some inhibiting factors such as the following aspects: (a) modified curriculum, (b) the teachers' inadequacy of understanding on students' characteristics, (c) the role of classroom teachers, (d) students' involvement, (e) the classroom management, and (f) the utilization of individualized educational plan.

### 2. Recommendation.

The research recommends two points to develop the performance of full inclusive education model in these areas. One is resisting the same model of full inclusion by improving all the weaknesses. The second is by changing the strategy to cluster model where students with special needs are pulled out for educational services in the regular schools both in Indonesia and Malaysia.

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