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IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE LEARNING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TO ENHANCE THE LEARNING MOTIVATION OF GRADE III STUDENTS AT SDN 2 KETARA

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ABSTRACTS

Inclusive learning is often associated with inadequate teacher training, limited supporting facilities, and a lack of understanding of instructional strategies that are responsive to student diversity. As a result, the implementation of inclusive learning in elementary schools has not yet been fully optimized, causing students to become passive and experience difficulties in understanding the learning materials. This study aims to examine the implementation of inclusive learning in elementary schools using the Natural Brain Learning System model, as well as the factors influencing its implementation among third-grade students at SDN 2 Ketara. This research employed a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through observations, interviews, and documentation. The research participants included the principal, teachers, and third-grade students of SDN 2 Ketara. The findings indicate that the implementation of the learning model was able to create a more enjoyable learning environment, increase students' active participation, and foster their skills and collaboration. Supporting factors included teachers' commitment and the use of varied learning media. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors consisted of limited instructional time, differences in students' abilities, and technical challenges in group management. Overall, the implementation of the model was found to be effective in improving the learning process within inclusive education for third-grade students at SDN 2 Ketara.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental right for every citizen without exception; it must be provided equitably, regardless of a learner's physical, intellectual, social, or cultural

conditions or background. This aligns with the concept of inclusive education, which offers all learners—including children with special needs and students with diverse learning characteristics—the opportunity to receive educational services within the same learning environment. Inclusive education aims not only to provide access to schooling but also to create a learning process that accommodates the needs of every student, enabling them to develop optimally. Education can also be defined as the effort made by educators to develop and enhance the physical and mental capabilities of learners, empowering them to carry out tasks independently and apply these skills in their daily lives (Halawa et al., 2022).

In primary schools, student diversity is an unavoidable reality. Each student possesses unique academic abilities, learning styles, character traits, interests, social backgrounds, and learning needs. Consequently, teachers are required to implement inclusive instruction by selecting appropriate strategies, methods, and media to ensure that all students can actively participate in the learning process. The success of inclusive education relies heavily on a teacher's competence in managing a heterogeneous classroom and fostering a learning atmosphere that values diversity.

Globally, the commitment to inclusive education has been affirmed through various international initiatives—such as Education for All (EFA) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—which emphasize the importance of quality education that is both inclusive and equitable for all. In Indonesia, the implementation of inclusive education is supported by various regulations, notably the Regulation of the Minister of National Education (Permendiknas) No. 70 of 2009. This regulation grants students with disabilities, as well as those with exceptional intelligence or special talents, the opportunity to pursue their education alongside other students. Although various policies support the implementation of inclusive education, practical application still faces numerous obstacles. Teachers often struggle to adapt instructional strategies to the diverse characteristics of their students, hampered by time constraints, a lack of training, and insufficient support resources. Consequently, the inclusive learning process has not yet been fully optimized, highlighting the need for efforts to improve the quality of its implementation.

This aligns with Tony Booth's view that a primary challenge in inclusive education is the teacher's ability to adapt instructional approaches to actively engage all students. These challenges include difficulties in mastering differentiated instruction strategies, limited time for providing individual attention, and an ever-increasing administrative workload. Previous studies also indicate that implementation hurdles are frequently linked to inadequate teacher training, limited support resources, and a lack of understanding regarding instructional strategies that are responsive to student diversity. As a result, inclusive teaching practices in primary schools have not yet reached their full potential.

One alternative approach to supporting inclusive education is the use of the Brain-Compatible Learning System (SIPAO). This learning model is designed to align with the brain's natural processes of receiving, processing, and retaining information, thereby creating an active and enjoyable learning environment while allowing each student to learn according to their own abilities. Implementing this model is expected to enable teachers to manage student diversity more effectively and enhance the participation of all learners in the learning process.

Given this context, the implementation of inclusive education in managing student diversity warrants further study. This research aims to understand how inclusive education is implemented to manage student diversity in the classroom, as well as the challenges teachers face and the strategies they employ to overcome them. The study is expected to contribute to the development of inclusive education practices through policy recommendations, the refinement of responsive teaching strategies, and the creation of teacher training programs tailored to diverse student needs.

Therefore, based on the background described above, the researcher intends to conduct a study titled "The Implementation of Inclusive Education in Elementary Schools to Enhance Learning Motivation among Third-Grade Students at SDN 2 Ketara." Based on the issues outlined above, the following research questions have been formulated: 1) How is inclusive education implemented to manage student diversity in the third-grade class at SDN 2 Ketara? 2) What challenges do teachers face in managing an inclusive classroom, and what efforts are made to address them in the third-grade class at SDN 2 Ketara?

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method employed in this study is field research utilizing a qualitative approach. This approach was chosen because the study aims to describe, explain, and analyze outcomes within a specific context, without manipulating variables or testing hypotheses. The focus lies on the process rather than the outcome, making it highly suitable for research that observes behaviors, interactions, and lived situations. Participants are the individuals interviewed or serving as informants; they are observed and provide data, opinions, thoughts, and perceptions. The analysis technique comprised three main stages: 1) data reduction, 2) data display, and 3) a continuous analysis process. These stages were not executed linearly but rather proceeded cyclically and simultaneously throughout the research process. Researchers could revisit previous stages as needed to deepen or refine the analysis results.

RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research findings, the implementation of inclusive education in the third-grade class at SDN 2 Ketara faces several challenges that affect the execution of the learning process. These challenges are as follows:

1. Differences in students' academic abilities.

   Teachers must be able to adapt instructional strategies so that all students—whether they possess high, average, or low ability levels—can engage optimally in the learning process. This situation requires teachers to implement flexible and differentiated instruction tailored to the students' needs.

   These findings are consistent with the views of Tomlinson (2014), who states that classroom instruction involving students with diverse characteristics requires differentiation in content, process, and assessment to ensure that every student's learning needs are met. Furthermore, the Regulation of the Minister of National Education (Permendiknas) Number 70 of 2009 concerning Inclusive Education mandates that schools providing inclusive education must offer educational services tailored to the specific abilities and needs of each student. Thus, differences in academic ability do not

serve as a barrier to providing equitable educational services; rather, they provide a basis for teachers to design more adaptive instruction.

2. Differences in Student Character and Behavior

Research findings indicate that one of the challenges teachers face in managing inclusive learning in the third-grade class at SDN 2 Ketara is the variation in student character and behavior. Interview results reveal that each student possesses a distinct personality. Some students tend to be active in asking questions, self-confident, and sociable, while others are more reserved, lack confidence, and are reluctant to express their opinions, even when they have actually grasped the lesson material.

These findings demonstrate that each learner's character influences how they participate in the learning process. Active students generally find it easier to demonstrate their understanding through questions and discussions. Conversely, reserved students do not necessarily possess low academic ability; rather, they may have a more cautious nature, lack confidence, or fear making mistakes when speaking in front of the class. Therefore, student activity levels cannot be used as the sole indicator for assessing their level of understanding.

The results of this study align with the theory proposed by Mulyasa (2021), which states that every student possesses distinct individual characteristics—whether in terms of personality, interests, or modes of interaction with the learning environment. These differences necessitate that teachers adopt flexible approaches to ensure all students receive equal learning opportunities tailored to their respective needs.

Furthermore, these findings are supported by Vygotsky's theory, which emphasizes that learning development is influenced by social interaction. A learning environment that fosters a sense of security, support, and opportunities for participation helps students build the confidence to express their opinions. In the context of inclusive education, the teacher acts as a facilitator, creating a classroom atmosphere that values individual differences so that all students can thrive optimally.

Observations indicate that the teacher has endeavored to address these character differences by providing equal opportunities for all students to participate in the lesson. The teacher does not limit opportunities to active students; instead, they intentionally direct questions toward students who tend to be passive and offer praise when those students summon the courage to answer. This strategy serves as a form of positive reinforcement that boosts students' confidence to participate in the learning process.

Thus, differences in student character and behavior present a unique challenge in managing an inclusive classroom. Teachers are required to recognize the specific characteristics of each student and apply differentiated approaches based on individual needs. Such approaches aim not only to increase student engagement but also to create an inclusive, comfortable learning environment that respects the diverse characteristics of every student.

3. Differences in Student Learning Styles

The research results indicate that the Grade III teacher at SDN 2 Ketara also faces challenges regarding differences in student learning styles. Interview data reveal that each

student has a unique way of comprehending lesson material. Some students grasp concepts more easily through verbal explanations, while others require visual aids, images, or hands-on activities to understand the material being taught. The findings indicate that the learning process does not unfold in the same way for every learner. Differences in learning styles mean that the effectiveness of a specific teaching method varies from student to student. Consequently, the continuous use of a single teaching method may cause some students to struggle with comprehending the material.

These research results align with the theory proposed by DePorter and Hernacki (2016), which explains that individuals possess distinct learning styles: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. Visual learners grasp material more easily through images, diagrams, or other visual media. Auditory learners learn more effectively through verbal explanations and discussions, whereas kinesthetic learners better understand material through hands-on practice, demonstrations, and direct experience. Teachers need to take these differing learning styles into account to ensure that instruction accommodates the needs of all learners.

These findings are also supported by Tomlinson's (2017) theory of differentiated instruction, which posits that teachers should tailor their strategies, methods, media, and learning activities to the characteristics and learning needs of their students. In inclusive education, differentiation serves as a crucial strategy for ensuring that every student has an equal opportunity to achieve learning objectives.

Observations indicate that teachers have implemented various instructional methods, such as the use of concrete aids, images, discussions, and simple hands-on activities. When teachers utilize concrete aids and hands-on practice, students appear more enthusiastic and active, and they grasp the material more easily compared to when they merely listen to verbal explanations. This demonstrates that a variety of teaching methods can enhance engagement among students with diverse learning styles.

Consequently, differing learning styles present a challenge that teachers must address when managing inclusive classrooms. Teachers are required not only to master the subject matter but also to select and combine various teaching methods and instructional media to meet the learning needs of all students. Implementing varied instructional approaches is a crucial step toward creating effective, inclusive, and student-centered learning.

4. Time constraints in instruction.

In a single classroom, teachers must divide their attention among all students, thereby limiting opportunities for providing individualized support. This situation necessitates the adoption of instructional strategies that engage all students simultaneously without overlooking individual needs.

These findings align with the views of Friend and Bursuck (2019), who state that a major challenge for teachers in inclusive classrooms is the limited time available to provide individualized support to students with diverse learning needs. Therefore, teachers need to implement effective classroom management, utilize group-based learning, and foster collaboration with parents to ensure that students' needs continue to be met.

5. Limitations in instructional media and facilities.

   Research findings indicate that teachers rely on the instructional media currently available at the school; consequently, not all student needs are fully accommodated. Yet, instructional media is a vital component in creating inclusive and meaningful learning experiences.

   This is consistent with Arsyad's (2019) view that instructional media serves to help students understand material in a way that aligns with their individual characteristics and learning styles. In the context of inclusive education, the use of varied instructional media facilitates the teacher's ability to accommodate students' differing capabilities. Therefore, limited facilities constitute one of the factors that can influence the effectiveness of inclusive learning implementation.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings regarding the implementation of inclusive learning to manage student diversity in the third-grade class at SDN 2 Ketara, it can be concluded that the process is carried out by providing equal learning opportunities to all students, regardless of their backgrounds, abilities, or individual characteristics. Teachers employ various learning methods tailored to student needs, ensure equitable attention, and create a classroom atmosphere that respects differences. Furthermore, teachers foster an attitude of mutual respect, cooperation, and self-confidence, thereby making diversity an integral part of a positive learning process. In managing student diversity, teachers recognize the characteristics of each student, take an individual approach, use varied learning strategies, and create a comfortable and conducive learning environment. Despite facing challenges such as differences in learning abilities, character, and limited time for assistance, teachers overcome them through flexible learning strategies, additional guidance for students who need it, communication with parents, and increased competence in managing inclusive classes. These efforts support the creation of learning that is effective, fair, and able to accommodate student needs.

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