

Implementation of Inclusive Education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah: A Literature Review of Teacher Perceptions and Learning Practices

Mar'atun nisa¹, Mapanyompan², Aqodiah³, Mustapa Ali⁴,
Mardiyah Hayati⁵, Niswatun Hasanah⁶

^{1,2,3,4,5,6}PGMI, Universitas Muhammadiyah Mataram, Indonesia
maratunnisa456@gmail.com¹

Abstract: This study aims to examine the implementation of inclusive education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) by reviewing teacher perceptions and learning practices through a library research approach with an integrative literature review method. This study synthesized literature from various reputable sources such as Google Scholar, Scispace, DOAJ, and Scopus published between 2015 and 2024. Inclusion criteria included articles that were relevant, peer-reviewed, and available in full text. The analysis was conducted using thematic methods to identify key themes covering teacher perceptions, learning strategies, supporting policies and implementation challenges. The results show that teachers' perceptions of inclusive education are influenced by professional competence, infrastructure support and proper conceptual understanding. Successful implementation is largely determined by education policy integration, continuous training and multi-stakeholder collaboration. This research highlights the importance of a holistic approach in realizing effective inclusive education in MI. The findings contribute to the development of policies and teacher training programs and open opportunities for further research on inclusive education implementation strategies in 3T areas in Indonesia.

Keywords: Inclusive Education, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Teacher Perceptions, Learning Practices, Literature Review.

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A. INTRODUCTION

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Inclusive education is an educational approach that accommodates all learners, including those with special needs, in the same learning environment. The main principles of inclusive education are the recognition of the diversity of learners and the provision of equal access to quality education (UNESCO, 2009). In Indonesia, the implementation of inclusive education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) has been regulated through various policies, but the implementation still faces various challenges, especially related to teacher perceptions and learning practices applied (Muskania, 2023).

Research by Muskania (2023) shows that many MI teachers still experience confusion in understanding the concept of inclusive education, which results in disorientation in its implementation. This has led some teachers to feel reluctant to acknowledge the presence of children with special needs in their classrooms, as well as experiencing excessive anxiety regarding the potential for bullying and discrimination. Another study by Dewi (2024) revealed that teachers' perceptions of inclusive education are strongly influenced by their level of understanding of the concept of inclusion and their readiness to deal with diversity in the

classroom. In addition, research by Arnyana et al. (2025) highlighted that the lack of training and support for teachers is a major factor influencing negative perceptions of inclusive education.

In practice, many MI teachers face difficulties in implementing inclusive learning strategies. Research by Arnyana et al. (2025) shows that teachers often do not have sufficient skills to identify learners' special needs and adjust learning methods according to these needs. A study by Dewi (2024) also revealed that limited resources and lack of support from the school are barriers to the implementation of inclusive learning practices. In addition, Muskania (2023) emphasizes the importance of special training for teachers in designing and implementing learning that is responsive to learners' diversity.

Inclusive education policy in Indonesia has evolved, but its implementation at the MI level still faces challenges. Muskania (2023) notes that existing policies are often normative and have not been implemented effectively in the field. Research by Dewi (2024) shows that the lack of supervision and evaluation of the implementation of inclusive policies in MI leads to inconsistencies in their implementation. Arnyana et al. (2025) added that support from the school, including the provision of resources and training for teachers, is crucial for the successful implementation of inclusive education.

Effective implementation of inclusive education can have a positive impact on learners, including increased self-confidence and social acceptance. Research by Muskania (2023) shows that children with special needs who learn in inclusive environments have more positive self-perceptions. Dewi (2024) also found that social interactions between learners with and without special needs improved in inclusive settings. However, Arnyana et al. (2025) emphasized that this positive impact can only be achieved if teachers have adequate competence and support in implementing inclusive education.

The above studies show that despite efforts to implement inclusive education in MI, there is still a gap between policy and practice in the field. Teachers' perceptions are not fully positive and limitations in learning practices are the main challenges in implementing inclusive education. In addition, suboptimal institutional support also affects the effectiveness of inclusive education in MI. The existing research gap indicates the need for further studies that integrate aspects of teacher perceptions, learning practices and institutional support in the context of MI. This study aims to comprehensively examine the implementation of inclusive education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, with a focus on teacher perceptions and learning practices, in order to provide recommendations that can improve the effectiveness of inclusive education at the MI level.

B. METHOD

This study uses a library research approach with an integrative literature review method. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to systematically synthesize various previous research findings to build a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study, namely the implementation of inclusive education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah from the point of view of teacher perceptions and learning practices. This approach is suitable for examining the development of inclusive education theory, practice and policy through

analyzing relevant literature (Torraco, 2005). This approach also allows researchers to find new gaps and opportunities in the field under study.

The data sources in this study came from several trusted databases, namely Google Scholar, Scispace, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), and Scopus. The articles identified were national and international articles published between 2015 and 2024. The inclusion criteria used were: (1) articles in Indonesian or English; (2) topics addressing inclusive education in primary schools or equivalent (MI); (3) peer-reviewed articles; and (4) available in full text. The exclusion criteria were articles that were opinion, did not go through the peer review process, or were not relevant to the focus of the research.

The literature search process was conducted using keywords such as “inclusive education in Islamic elementary school”, “teachers' perception of inclusive education”, “inclusive teaching practices in madrasah”, and other relevant keyword combinations. The search was conducted systematically by filtering articles based on title, abstract and keywords. After that, a full content search was conducted to ensure conformity with the research focus. The selection procedure involved three stages, namely identification, screening, and final inclusion. The identification stage was conducted to capture as many articles as possible, screening to evaluate eligibility based on inclusion-exclusion criteria, and final inclusion for articles used in the analysis.

The data analysis method used was thematic analysis, where the selected articles were categorized based on main themes such as teacher perceptions, learning strategies, supporting policies and implementation challenges. Each theme was analyzed to find important patterns and relationships between variables. Validity in this study was strengthened by source triangulation, comparing studies from different database sources. Reliability was maintained by systematically documenting the selection process and using consistent criteria for screening and decision-making on articles included in the review (Whittemore & Knafl, 2005).

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teachers' Perceptions of Inclusive Education

Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers' perceptions of inclusive education is an increasingly relevant theme in the Indonesian learning context. Inclusive approaches aim to facilitate education for all children, including those with special needs, so it is important to explore how madrasah teachers perceive and understand the concept. First, a study by Suprihatin shows that many Madrasah Ibtidaiyah teachers still do not fully understand inclusive education and what is meant by learners with special needs (Suprihatin, 2024). This study found that through counseling and mentoring activities, teachers' awareness and understanding can be improved so that they can be better prepared to implement inclusive education. In addition, another study noted shortcomings in training faced by teachers, which impacted on their perceptions of effectively implementing inclusive education (Saloviita, 2019).

Furthermore, teachers' perceptions can be influenced by the policies and frameworks that exist within the educational environment. Hisham and Khairuddin note that teachers who are exposed to education policies during crisis situations, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, often experience changes in their perceptions and strategies in inclusive education (Hisham &

Khairuddin, 2023). This research confirms that external situations can shape teachers' perspectives on inclusion and how they adjust their teaching methods in inclusive classrooms.

2. Inclusive Learning Strategies and Practices in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah

Inclusive learning strategies and practices in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah are an important part of realizing education for all, including children with special needs. Inclusive education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah needs to be well managed to achieve the aspiration of improving the quality of education. Research shows that teachers play a crucial role in creating an inclusive and effective learning environment (Rahmi & Muqowim, 2022; Mahdi et al., 2021).

One strategy that can be applied is the Whole Person Approach, which focuses on holistic learning. This approach invites teachers to pay attention to learners' physical, cognitive, emotional and social needs, thus accommodating the various needs of students, including those with learning challenges (Mahdi et al., 2021). In addition, Rahmi and Muqowim noted that the use of appropriate media in learning can improve the understanding of students with special needs (Rahmi & Muqowim, 2022). The use of interactive media such as videos and educational game applications can create an interesting learning atmosphere and facilitate student engagement (Zulfa & Prastowo, 2023).

The Merdeka curriculum is a new guide for education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, which encourages adaptation and innovation in teaching strategies. Aisyah et al. pointed out that the implementation of this curriculum is expected to improve students' motivation and learning outcomes, regardless of whether they are children with special needs or not (Aisyah et al., 2023). Adaptations to this curriculum include adjusting teaching and assessment methods to meet the unique needs of each student (Atikoh, 2023).

3. Supporting Factors for the Implementation of Inclusive Education in MI

The implementation of inclusive education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) faces various challenges and is supported by various supporting factors. Although there has been progress, there are still many obstacles that must be overcome for inclusive education to be implemented effectively. One of the main challenges in implementing inclusive education in MI is the lack of readiness of madrasahs in providing adequate human resources and infrastructure. Research by Rahmi and Muqowim found that many madrasahs are not ready to face the demands of inclusive education, both in terms of policy and appropriate infrastructure (Rahmi & Muqowim, 2022). This is in line with Kriswanto et al.'s findings that poor support from government and the community is a significant barrier to the implementation of inclusive education. Limited access to educational aids and a lack of trained accompanying teachers are also problems (Kriswanto et al., 2023).

In addition, the psychological and cultural challenges faced by teachers and students cannot be ignored. Some teachers have stigma and negative perceptions towards students with special needs, which may hinder their integration in regular classes (Rangkuti & Maksum, 2019; Kurdi, 2018). Research shows that mindset change among teachers and the surrounding community is crucial to creating an inclusive environment (Putri et al., 2021).

D. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The implementation of inclusive education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah is strongly influenced by teachers' perceptions and learning practices in the field. Positive teacher perceptions of inclusive education can be formed through strengthening professional competencies, adequate infrastructure support and a correct understanding of the concept of inclusion. In addition, successful inclusive learning practices require synergy between policies that favor all learners, continuous teacher training, and active collaboration between schools, parents and government. Therefore, the implementation of inclusive education in MI requires a holistic approach that includes policy, training and community participation in order to create a friendly, fair and equal learning environment for all children.

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