INTEGRATION OF LOCAL CULTURAL VALUES IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY AT SD ALAM INSAN CENDEKIA BONDOWOSO

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the integration of local cultural values into inclusive education practices at SD Alam Insan Cendekia Bondowoso. Using a qualitative approach and a single case study design, data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman interactive model with triangulation of sources, techniques, and time. The results indicate four main patterns of cultural integration: the application of mutual cooperation values in collaborative learning, the use of regional languages in interactions, the involvement of indigenous communities in the learning process, and the development of a contextual curriculum based on local culture. These results strengthen the framework for developing multicultural education that is responsive to culture and supports the achievement of SDG 4 on inclusive and quality education. The resulting integration model provides a practical framework for elementary school administrators in developing inclusive curricula that are responsive to cultural development while strengthening school partnerships with indigenous and social communities. This study contributes to the literature on multicultural and inclusive education based on local culture and can serve as a reference for policy and the development of comparative studies in various social and geographical contexts.

Keywords: *Inclusive Education, Local Culture, Elementary School, Multicultural Education, Mutual Cooperation*

A. Introduction

Education builds the essential character, knowledge, and skills in children, having a guiding influence on individual development throughout life. Indonesia exhibits multiculturalism in reality as over 300 ethnic groups are present, and about 67% of the students are from pluralistic backgrounds. This reality calls for a more holistic education system in order to serve the social, cultural, and economic diversities of the country (Khoirin Nisa' et al., 2023). However, the local value education and the access for Children with Special Needs (CSN) makes it very limited which leads to the unequal regional disparities on education opportunities (Khoirin Nisa' et al., 2023).

Inclusivity in education goes beyond the provision of physical access and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for CSN to include acknowledgment of cultural localism, diversity, multiculturalism, and activism of the local guardians (Tuala et al., 2024). While the teacher and the amenities in Bogor, Malang, and Yogyakarta have been the subjects of inquiry, the juxtaposition of culture and inclusive basic education remains underexplored (Khoirin Nisa' et al., 2023).

A number of studies show the promise of local cultural values in enhancing inclusivity. For example, the values of mutual aid (gotong royong) as well as tolerance, and solidarity foster social awareness in primary schools with the help of multimodal multicultural education (Melindawati et al., 2024). In addition, studies conducted in Papua show the importance of local cultural values in strengthening identity and inclusion in remote regions (Eko et al., 2020). In another study from Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Bojonegoro, contextually based pedagogy was found to enhance student character and motivation (Anggraeni et al., 2022). However, there have not yet been systematic efforts to construct pro-inclusive cultural policy models for nature-based primary schools like SD Insan Cendekia Bondowoso.

In order to fill this gap, the current study uses a multicultural framework of education which includes the dimensions of content integration, equity pedagogy, and school culture and climate empowerment (Ladson-Billings, 2001). Furthermore, this study is in line with SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) 4a, which focuses on inclusiveness and the provision of quality education for all (Sipos, 2022). This framework provides an opportunity for a holistic investigation of the practices of teaching local cultural values, local community values, with curriculum design, community engagement, and school inclusivity.

The study developed the pro-inclusive cultural policy model which systematizes local values like regional languages, social norms, and mutual cooperation into the curriculum and the governance of inclusive primary schools. It alsoonstructs collegial approaches among teachers, parents, and indigenous communities for inclusive, culture-based education. It is anticipated that the model will guide local policymakers and the Ministry of Education and Culture in developing culturally responsive policies and budgetary allocations. It is hoped the results will add to the body of literature on inclusive and multicultural education and serve as a basis for comparative and action research in and outside the country.

B. Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach with a single case study to examine the incorporation of local culture in the practice of inclusive education at SD Alam Insan Cendekia Bondowoso. This approach is justified by the ability of inclusive education to reveal the intricate social meanings and dynamics of the education grounded in the culture of the community. It is justified to use single case design because the nature-based school is the only school with an environmentally and locally culture-contextualized curriculum. The site was selected because of its reputation for diversity-oriented and community-engaged pedagogical approaches (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Data collection was done in six months, starting from November 2024 and finished in April 2025.

The participants consisted of 20 purposively selected informants: one principal, five class and special needs assistant teachers, three parent representatives, one local cultural leader, and ten students with mixed abilities as a mixture between special needs and regular students. Data were collected through participant observation,semi-structured interviews, and document analysis of curricula, teaching modules, and school activities that reflect local values. Instruments were interview guides to investigate teachers' experiences of integration; perceptions of parents and cultural leaders; session checklists for observing integration interactions and engagement with the community were developed as were document checklists to analyse school documents. Ethical practice followed the qualitative research's guidelines of voluntary participation, informed consent, and confidentiality (Pratchett, 1999).

Data were analyzed through using Miles and Huberman’s (Miles et al., 2020) interactive model which consists of data reduction, data display, with conclusion drawing/verification. Four aspects were the focus of thematic coding: cultural value integration, inclusive practices, community roles, together with barriers and opportunities when implementing cultural policies. Researchers checked on the source and technique with temporal triangulation so as to ensure validity. Peer debriefing plus member checking ensured it too. Researcher's reflexivity with audit trails supported analytical processing that was consistent and accountable. The study ensured data was of good quality plus stayed committed to cultural sensitivity and social sustainability in the basic inclusive education context (Sharp, 2003).

C. Results and Discussion

1. Results

Research conducted at SD Alam Insan Cendekia Bondowoso revealed four main patterns of cultural integration, identified through interviews, observations, and documentation. This study aimed to explore how local cultural values are integrated into the school's learning process. The following is a detailed explanation regarding each cultural integration pattern in the practice of developing inclusive education.

Interviews with educators at SD Alam Insan Cendekia revealed that the value of mutual cooperation is the foundation of collaborative learning methods. Teachers implement learning strategies that encourage students to work together in groups, creating a mutually supportive learning environment. Classroom observations show that students actively participate in group discussions and help each other complete assignments. This not only improves students' social skills but also strengthens their sense of community.

The use of regional languages, namely Javanese, in daily classroom interactions was the second identified pattern. Interviews with students indicated that they felt more comfortable and understood the material more easily when taught in their regional languages. Teachers also acknowledged that the use of regional languages helped students better connect with their cultural context. Observations showed that students were more active in communicating and discussing when using their native language, which in turn increased their engagement in the learning process.

The third pattern identified was the involvement of indigenous communities in the learning process. Interviews with indigenous community members indicated that they play a crucial role in imparting cultural knowledge and experiences to students. Activities such as visits to cultural sites and traditional skills training are held regularly. Observations indicate that indigenous community involvement not only enriches students' learning experiences but also strengthens the relationship between the school and the community. Students demonstrate a strong interest in their own culture when directly engaging with community members.

The final pattern identified was the development of a contextual curriculum based on local culture. At SD Alam Insan Cendekia, the curriculum was designed to integrate local cultural elements into the teaching materials. Interviews with curriculum developers indicated that this approach aims to make learning more relevant and meaningful for students. Classroom

observations showed that students were more enthusiastic and motivated when the teaching materials were directly related to their culture and traditions. This created a dynamic and enjoyable learning environment.

Overall, the research findings at SD Alam Insan Cendekia Bondowoso indicate that integrating local culture into education has a significant positive impact on the learning process. The four main patterns identified—the implementation of the value of mutual cooperation, the use of regional languages, the involvement of indigenous communities, and the development of a contextual curriculum show that this approach not only improves students' understanding of the material but also strengthens their cultural identity. Data obtained from interviews and observations demonstrate strong support from all parties involved, including educators, students, and indigenous communities, indicating that integrating local culture into education is a strategic step and needs to be continuously developed.

2. Discussion

Analysis of observing, interviewing, with documenting revealed four main patterns of local cultural integration within inclusive education at SD Alam Insan Cendekia Bondowoso. Collaborative learning activities coupled with school environment maintenance consistently manifest the value from mutual cooperation (gotong royong). Daily routines such as the morning assemblies and community cleaning efforts do occur as such too. This practice fosters a participatory and inclusive atmosphere (The Council of Europe, 2021). In formal settings with informal exchanges, local languages build the cultural identity of students then increase their appreciation for local heritage. Third, indigenous communities involve themselves within the learning process by way of storytelling sessions also customary agricultural practices. This involvement here strengthens the intergenerational bonds as it nurtures a mutual respect among all of the children. An inclusive contextualized curriculum makes learning relevant and meaningful because subjects are contextualized with local culture like Civics Education and Social Studies.

These results are consistent with the content integration dimension (Sipos, 2022) of multicultural education framework, which incorporates local culture into the curriculum, and equity pedagogy, which involves teachers modifying their teaching methods to accommodate multicultural and CSN students. The empowerment of the school culture dimension is confirmed by the use of local languages and community involvement, which creates room for regional cultural identities. This bolsters the findings of

which demonstrate that incorporating Sundanese local cultural values into the curriculum improves student motivation and cultural identity (Purnairawan & Anfasa, 2024).

According to Moeis (et al., 2024), multicultural education based on local knowledge fosters social cohesion and inclusivity in the Minangkabau community. The adoption of gotong royong highlights the effectiveness of cultural values in fostering empathy and social cohesion. Additionally, incorporating cultural values into Islamic religious education has a positive effect on students' behavior and morals, highlighting the importance of cultural integration in inclusive educational environments (Maideja et al., 2023).

Culturally relevant pedagogy perspectives (Ladson-Billings, 2001) serve as the conceptual foundation for the developed Pro-Inclusive Cultural Policy Model, which emphasizes cultural relevance as crucial for character development and academic success (Gay, 2002). The model also embraces the ideas of community-based pedagogy, emphasizing the active roles of local communities, similar to inclusive practices in Yogyakarta and indigenous practices in Australia and Alaska (Belkhir, 2005).

Integrating local cultural values such as mutual cooperation, local languages, and indigenous community involvement enriches inclusive practices through three mechanisms: strengthening social cohesion, enhancing curriculum relevance, and promoting self-identity. The pro-inclusive cultural policy model offers a systematic framework for policymakers and practitioners in primary schools to develop culturally sensitive curricula. This strategy supports SDG 4a on inclusive and quality education (Sipos, 2022) and reinforces local literature on cultural values as educational assets.

Overall, the formulated pro-inclusive cultural policy model demonstrates that successful integration of local culture in inclusive education arises from collaborative practices, culturally responsive pedagogy, and community-based learning. The model serves as a practical guide for other schools aiming to design culturally sensitive and inclusive curricula and enriches academic discourse on the synergy between multicultural, inclusive, and cultural ecological education at the primary level.

The findings have positive implications for curriculum development and teacher training, as well as for strengthening school-community partnerships. This approach advances broader goals of multicultural and

inclusive education by fostering a tolerant, empowered, and culturally committed society.

D. Conclusion

This study confirms that integrating local cultural values into inclusive basic education at SD Alam Insan Cendekia Bondowoso is effectively realized through collaborative, contextual, and community-based pedagogical approaches. Practices such as gotong royong in learning, use of the local Bondowoso language, involvement of indigenous communities, and a contextualized curriculum significantly strengthen social cohesion, cultural identity, and engagement of all students, including Children with Special Needs (CSN). The resulting Pro-Inclusive Cultural Policy Model provides a systematic framework adaptable by other schools to develop education responsive to cultural diversity and individual learner needs while supporting the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4a on inclusive and quality education.

For further development, this study recommends testing the model in varied social and geographic contexts, including urban and rural areas, to assess its flexibility. Comparative studies across regions or countries also hold potential to enrich the literature on locally grounded multicultural and inclusive education. The authors express gratitude to SD Alam Insan Cendekia, teachers, students, parents, indigenous leaders, and the Bondowoso Education Office for their support throughout the study. It is hoped that these findings will serve as practical references for educators and policymakers in realizing equitable, contextualized, and culturally mindful basic education.

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