

## THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AT MI MA'ARIF 56 TEMPUREJO, JEMBER, EAST JAVA

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### Abstrak

Penelitian ini menginvestigasi peran orang tua dalam pendidikan inklusi di MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo, Jember, Jawa Timur. Menggunakan metode kuesioner dan wawancara, data dikumpulkan untuk mengevaluasi tingkat keterlibatan orang tua dalam mendukung pendidikan inklusi dan mengidentifikasi hambatan yang dihadapi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan mayoritas orang tua menunjukkan keterlibatan positif, meskipun beberapa mengalami kesulitan memahami konsep inklusi. Pembahasan menekankan perlunya memperkuat keterlibatan orang tua dan mengatasi hambatan, seperti kurangnya pemahaman tentang inklusi dan kurangnya fasilitas dari sekolah. Implikasi temuan ini dapat digunakan untuk memperbaiki program pendidikan inklusi di MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo agar lebih inklusif dan efektif bagi semua siswa. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi penting dalam memahami peran orang tua dalam pendidikan inklusi di Indonesia.

**Kata Kunci:** Pendidikan inklusi, Peran orang tua MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo

### Abstract

*This research investigates the role of parents in inclusive education at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo, Jember, East Java. Using questionnaire and interview methods, data was collected to evaluate the level of parental involvement in supporting inclusive education and identify the obstacles faced. The results showed that the majority of parents showed positive involvement, although some had difficulty understanding the concept of inclusion. The discussion emphasized the need to strengthen parental involvement and address barriers, such as lack of understanding of inclusion and lack of support from schools. The implications of these outcomes can be used to improve the inclusive education program at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo so that it is more inclusive and effective for all students. Thus, this research makes an important contribution in understanding the role of parents in inclusive education in Indonesia.*

**Keywords:** *Inclusive, education, students, role of parents*

### INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education is a pedagogical strategy that focuses on embracing, engaging, and fostering the growth of every student, regardless of their diverse backgrounds or unique needs. It ensures that all children, including those with special educational requirements, are afforded equal opportunities to quality education within mainstream school settings.

This aligns with UNESCO's perspective, which upholds the right of every individual to access quality, meaningful, and relevant education alongside their peers in their local communities (UNESCO, 2017). At MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo in Jember, East Java, the significance of inclusive education is particularly profound. The institution adopts this inclusive methodology by ensuring that education is accessible to all students, including those with special needs,

without any discrimination. In this setting, every child is provided an equal chance to learn and develop in line with their capabilities. Consequently, MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo not only fosters an equitable and stimulating learning environment but also positively influences the social and academic growth of all its students.

In Indonesia, the movement towards inclusive education reflects an increasing dedication to accommodating all children, including those with special needs. The Indonesian government has pledged to guarantee that every person receives equitable access to quality and pertinent education, aligning with the principles of inclusive education. Despite ongoing challenges, such as insufficient resources and varying levels of comprehension of inclusion throughout the region, there have been notable advancements. These include teacher training initiatives, the creation of inclusion centers, and the development of education infrastructure that supports inclusivity (Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022). Through the cooperative efforts of the government, educational institutions, communities, and non-governmental organizations, it is anticipated that inclusive education in Indonesia will continue to advance and positively affect all children.

MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo, situated in Tempurejo, Jember, East Java, is an Islamic school dedicated to delivering

high-quality education rooted in Islamic principles. This madrasah embraces an inclusive educational model, ensuring that all students, including those with special needs, receive equal treatment and access to education. Furthermore, MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo is devoted to fostering a supportive and stimulating learning atmosphere, aiming to cultivate students into virtuous individuals who make positive contributions to society.

This research aims to investigate and comprehend the role of parents in implementing inclusive education at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo in Jember, East Java. The primary objective is to assess the level of parental involvement in supporting inclusive education at this school and to identify the obstacles and challenges encountered during this process. Although numerous studies have explored inclusive education and parental roles on a global scale, there is a notable deficiency in research focusing specifically on the role of parents within madrasahs like MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo. Addressing this gap is essential for broadening the understanding of inclusive education in madrasah settings. Thus, this research seeks to bridge this knowledge gap by examining the contributions and challenges of parents in the context of inclusive education at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo. Relevant research includes studies on parental roles in inclusive education within mainstream schools, as well as investigations into the factors influencing the implementation of

inclusive education across different settings. Additionally, research on parents' perceptions and experiences of inclusive education is pertinent, providing deeper insights. A theoretical issue in this research involves applying existing theories on parental involvement and factors affecting parental participation to the specific context of inclusive education at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo. This question becomes important in understanding how the role of parents can influence and support the implementation of inclusive education in the school. The title "The Role of Parents in the Implementation of Inclusive Education at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo, Jember, East Java" was chosen because it reflects the focus of the research which is to understand the contribution of parents in supporting inclusive education at the school. It also encompasses the geographical and institutional context of the research and emphasizes the importance of the role of parents in the context of inclusive education at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo.

Inclusive education principles are the foundational beliefs guiding educational practices to foster a learning environment that embraces all students, including those with special needs. These principles encompass several crucial elements: acceptance, participation, access, equity, and engagement. Acceptance involves maintaining an open and welcoming attitude towards individual diversity within the educational setting.

Participation highlights the importance of including all students in learning activities and school experiences. Access guarantees that every student has equal opportunities to receive quality education and necessary resources. Equity focuses on ensuring fair and equal treatment for everyone, irrespective of their backgrounds or circumstances. Engagement entails involving all stakeholders—students, parents, teachers, and communities—in the decision-making and implementation processes of inclusive education policies. Collectively, these principles aim to cultivate an educational environment that promotes the optimal growth and well-being of every student, without exception (Kauffman, J. M., & Hallahan, D. P. (2012). *Handbook of Special Education*. Routledge).

Parents play a crucial and multifaceted role in inclusive education, acting as essential partners in the academic and social development of children with special needs. They support their children in navigating learning and social challenges, both in school and in the broader community. Beyond providing emotional support and motivation, parents advocate for their children's educational requirements in various settings. Additionally, they contribute to the design of inclusive education programs tailored to their child's unique needs and actively participate in school activities and collaborative efforts with teachers and staff.

Effective and sustainable implementation of inclusive education significantly benefits from strong parental involvement (Slee, R. (2011).

Parents play a pivotal role in education, significantly influencing their children's development and academic success. Research indicates that active parental engagement not only enhances academic performance but also bolsters social skills, independence, and motivation to learn (Epstein, 2018). By providing support, encouragement, and participating in learning activities both at home and school, parents foster a nurturing environment conducive to their children's growth. Furthermore, parental involvement helps instill crucial attitudes and values, such as responsibility, discipline, and cooperation, which are essential for educational success. Consequently, it is vital for schools and teachers to engage parents actively in the educational process, creating a strong partnership between school and home to achieve optimal educational outcomes (Epstein, J. L. (2018)).

Parental support in the education of children with special needs is a very important factor in ensuring the development and success of their children. Research has shown that parents who are actively involved in the education of children with special needs have a significant positive impact on children's academic and social progress (Turnbull et al., 2016). Through emotional support,

assistance in problem solving, and cooperation with schools and special educators, parents can help create a supportive environment for their children's learning. In addition, parents also play an important role in supporting the development of their children's adaptation skills and independence, thereby preparing them to face challenges in educational and community settings. By strengthening the partnership between parents and schools, the support provided by parents can be a determining factor in the educational success of children with special needs. (Turnbull, H. R., Turnbull, A. P., Wehmeyer, M. L., & Shogren, K. A. (2016)

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research adopted a qualitative approach with an emphasis on primary data collection through questionnaires and interviews to understand the role of parents in the context of inclusive education at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo, Jember, East Java. The research site, MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo, became the center of focus to explore the dynamics of inclusive education in the madrasah, while the research instruments of questionnaires and interviews were used to gain a broad and in-depth understanding of parents' experiences and views regarding their children's inclusive education (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Bogdan & Biklen, 2018).

## RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The overview of parents' role in inclusive education at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo reflects varied involvement. In the research results, most parents showed high involvement in supporting their children's inclusive education at school. They are active in participating in school activities such as parent-teacher meetings, school events and extracurricular activities. In addition, parents also provide emotional and motivational support at home, encouraging their children to achieve and overcome educational challenges. However, some parents face challenges in understanding the concept of inclusion and how best to support their children with special needs. Some of them may need more information and guidance on how they can effectively engage in their children's education in an inclusive environment. Nonetheless, the research results also indicate a growing awareness among parents about the importance of inclusive education. Many parents expressed a desire to be more actively involved and support schools in implementing better inclusive practices in the future. This shows great potential for improving parental involvement and strengthening their support for inclusive education at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo.

The level of parental involvement at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo varies, as revealed in the analysis of the research data. From the

survey results, about 70% of parents attend parent-teacher meetings regularly and actively participate in school activities such as school events and extracurricular activities. The results of the in-depth interviews show that these active parents often feel emotionally and motivationally involved in supporting their children's education. They play an active role in motivating their children to learn and achieve their potential. However, about 30% of parents expressed challenges in their involvement. Some felt a lack of understanding about the concept of inclusion and how they can support their children with special needs. These results suggest there is variation in the level of parental involvement at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo, with most showing positive and active involvement, while others face certain barriers in supporting their children's inclusive education. Therefore, a more intensive information sharing effort from the school or joint sharing between teachers and guardians is needed to improve the understanding and involvement of less active parents in order to provide more effective support for inclusive education in the school.

The barriers and challenges faced by parents at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo in supporting their children's inclusive education have been identified through analysis of the research data. Data from in-depth interviews showed some common barriers faced by parents, including a

lack of understanding of the concept of inclusion and their children's needs, as well as a lack of resources and support from the school. Some parents found it difficult to understand the different needs of their children and how they could provide effective support. In addition, some parents also stated that a lack of resources, including a lack of training for teachers and school staff on inclusive education, was a barrier to providing an inclusive educational environment for their children. These results point to the need for efforts to improve understanding and support for parents in dealing with these barriers and challenges. With better understanding and stronger support from the school, it is expected that parents can be more effective in supporting their children's inclusive education at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo.

The results of the research on parents' understanding of inclusive education at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo showed variations in their level of understanding. Data from the questionnaire showed that most parents have a good understanding of the concept of inclusion, with more than 80% of respondents stating that they have sufficient knowledge about inclusive education. However, the results of the in-depth interviews highlighted that there was a small proportion of parents who experienced difficulties in understanding the concept of inclusion. Some expressed uncertainty about how they could support their children's inclusive

education or did not even fully understand what inclusive education entailed. Further analysis showed that factors such as parents' level of education, previous experience with inclusive education and access to information and support resources may affect their level of understanding. Parents with higher levels of education tend to have a better understanding, while those who have previous experience with inclusive education or have access to supporting resources are more likely to have a good understanding of the concept. Therefore, the results of this research suggest the need for efforts to provide adequate information and support to parents who have difficulty in understanding inclusive education so that they can be more effective partners in supporting their children's education at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo.

The results of the research on parents' contribution in promoting children's success in the context of inclusion at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo show that parents play a significant role in their children's educational development. Data from the questionnaire showed that most parents are active in supporting their children emotionally and motivational, with almost 90% of respondents stating that they provide moral support and encouragement to their children in education. In addition, the results of the in-depth interviews highlighted that parents also play a role in providing

practical support, such as helping children with homework or facilitating extracurricular activities. Further analysis shows that the support provided by parents has a positive impact on children's motivation and independence and helps them succeed in education. Parents who are actively involved and provide consistent support tend to have more motivated and accomplished children. Therefore, the results of this research confirm the importance of parents' role in promoting their children's success in the context of inclusion at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo and the need for continued efforts to strengthen parents' involvement in their children's education.

In examining the factors that influence parental involvement in inclusive education at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo, several key elements emerge. These include the parents' educational background, prior experience with inclusive education, the availability of social support and resources, and various internal and external influences on their attitudes and perceptions towards inclusion. Analysis suggests that parents with higher education levels generally have a better grasp of inclusion concepts and are more proactive in their children's education. Furthermore, parents who have previous experience with inclusive education or access to supportive resources, such as training or information, tend to be more involved in fostering their children's

inclusive education. Environmental factors, such as social support from family, friends, or the community, also significantly shape parents' views and attitudes towards inclusion. Conversely, obstacles such as a lack of understanding about inclusion, insufficient support from schools, and ambiguity about parental roles in inclusion can hinder parental involvement. To enhance parental participation in inclusive education, it is essential to adopt a comprehensive approach that considers these factors and develops targeted strategies to support effective parental engagement.

The implications of the research results for the development of inclusive education programs at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo include several aspects that need to be considered in depth.

1. First, the importance of strengthening parental involvement in inclusive education should be recognized and prioritized in the development of education programs. Programs should be designed to take into account the role of parents as partners in supporting the educational development of children with special needs. Activities such as parent-teacher meetings, training for parents and discussion forums can be part of such programs to improve

parental understanding and involvement.

2. Second, inclusive education programs should take into account the barriers and challenges faced by parents. Adequate support and resources should be provided to help parents who have difficulty understanding the concept of inclusion or feel less motivated to get involved. This could include providing educational materials, special training sessions or counseling services for parents in need.
3. Third, the development of inclusive education programs needs to consider variations in parents' levels of understanding and involvement. Different approaches may be needed to reach parents with varying levels of understanding, thus ensuring that all parents can be effectively involved in supporting their children's inclusive education.
4. Finally, collaboration between schools, parents and other stakeholders is also key to the development of successful inclusive education programs. Active participation from all parties can help ensure that

the programs designed reflect the needs and expectations of all stakeholders involved.

The challenges and opportunities in improving parents' role in inclusive education at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo are crucial to consider in developing effective strategies. Barriers such as insufficient understanding, scarce resources, and communication difficulties must be addressed. Meanwhile, opportunities lie in enhanced training and education, improved collaboration, and the use of technology. Tackling these challenges and seizing these opportunities can foster a more inclusive educational environment in schools (Ministry of Education and Culture Republic of Indonesia, 2022).

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

### **Conclusion**

The research outcomes reveal differences in parents' comprehension and participation in inclusive education at MI Ma'arif 56 Tempurejo. Although many parents were positively engaged, some struggled with grasping the concept of inclusion. Nonetheless, the research underscores that parental support significantly benefits children's educational growth, emphasizing the crucial role parents play in fostering an inclusive school environment.

### **Advice**

For educational institutions, it is advisable to enhance cooperation with parents through various channels



such as discussion forums, seminars, and support groups. There is also a need for improved training for teachers and staff on inclusive education to ensure effective implementation. Parents should take a more active role in their children's learning by making use of school-provided resources and support. Additionally, attending training sessions or seminars can help

parents gain a better understanding of inclusion. Future research should aim at assessing the effectiveness of inclusive education programs involving parents and conduct comparative studies on inclusion practices across different schools to offer valuable insights for the advancement of inclusive education.

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