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Exploring the Dynamics of Implementing Inclusive School: A Review of Public Elementary Education in Kebumen, Indonesia

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Abstract

Inclusive education is a manifestation of the commitment to ensuring every citizen's right to receive equal and non-discriminatory educational services, as well as an effort to realize education for all. This study aims to explore the dynamics of implementing inclusive schools at the basic education level in Kebumen Regency by considering the diversity of regional characteristics. The study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design. The sampling technique used purposive sampling to select schools representing urban, rural, coastal, and mountainous areas a total of ten schools. Data were collected through interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), observations, and documentation studies involving school principals, teachers, and regional policymakers. The findings indicate that the implementation of inclusive schools in Kebumen Regency has been carried out fairly well and reflects a commitment to equitable access to education. However, several challenges remain, including limitations in data collection on students with disabilities, a shortage of special assistant teachers, minimal collaboration between schools and parents, suboptimal implementation of individualized learning programs, the absence of specific regulations and budget allocations for inclusive education, as well as limited accessible facilities and infrastructure. These findings highlight the need to strengthen policies, enhance human resource capacity, and provide adequate budgetary and infrastructural support in order to achieve high-quality and sustainable inclusive education services

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Introduction

Educational inequality for children with special needs remains a serious challenge facing Indonesia's education system to this day (Abdillah et al., 2025; Ariwijaya, 2021; Fatimah et al., 2024; Hafiar et al., 2023). Based on 2023 BPS data, the number of persons with disabilities in Indonesia was recorded at 22.97 million people (8.5% of the total population) (<https://www.kemdikbud.go.id/>), with 57% of them residing on the island of Java (Abdillah et al., 2025). According to 2024 BPS data, the majority of persons with disabilities in Indonesia still have low levels of education, mostly at or below elementary school level (73.37%). Among the population aged 5 years and above, 17.85% of children with disabilities are not attending school, and 77.97% have dropped out. Of those who dropped out, 61.38% were at the elementary education level (see Figure 1). This situation indicates that Indonesia still experiences a very high level of educational inequality for persons with disabilities (BPS, 2024).

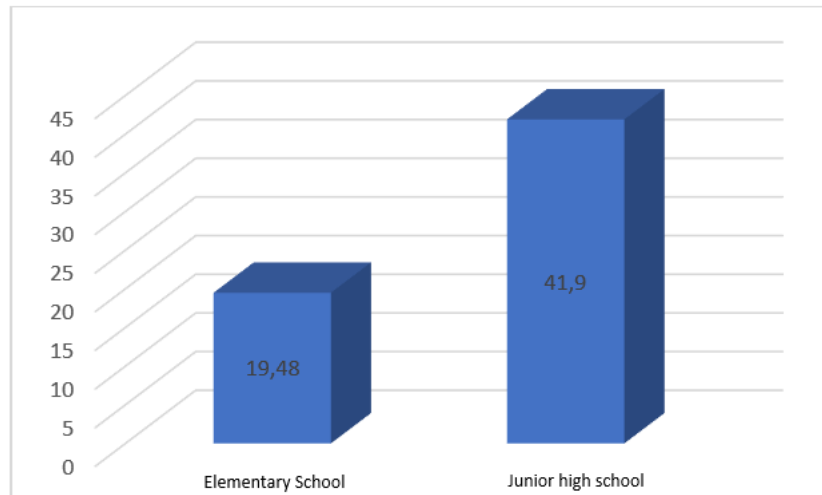


Figure 1. Percentage of Students with Disabilities Who Dropped Out in 2024
Source: (BPS, 2024)

Inclusive education is an effective solution for addressing various educational challenges faced by children with special needs (Chamdani, 2019). It is an educational approach that accommodates all learners regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, or other conditions (Fatimah & Chamdani, 2023). Through inclusive education, students with disabilities have equal opportunities to access quality education alongside other students in mainstream schools (Kirno & Premchaiporn, 2022). This is in line with Law No. 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities and Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 70 of 2009 on Inclusive Education. With this approach, every child can develop their potential according to their individual abilities and needs, while also learning to interact within a diverse society as preparation for real-life experiences (Chamdani, 2019; Himawati et al., 2023).

Kebumen Regency, as one of the regions that declared itself an inclusive regency on December 6, 2019, is committed to providing equal educational services for all students. Based on data from referensi.data.kemdikbud.go.id, there are 231 students with

disabilities in Kebumen Regency. Table 1 presents the detailed distribution of students with disabilities in each district.

Table 1. Details of the Number of Students with Disabilities in Kebumen Regency (May 2025)

No	Kecamatan	Jml. Siswa Disabilitas	No	Kecamatan	Jml. Siswa Disabilitas	No	Kecamatan	Jml. Siswa Disabilitas
1	Adimulyo	5	10	Karanggayam	25	19	Petanahan	8
2	Alian	10	11	Karangsambung	2	20	Poncowarno	2
3	Ambal	8	12	Kebumen	10	21	Prembun	6
4	Ayah	11	13	Klirong	3	22	Puring	11
5	Bonorowo	1	14	Kutowinangun	7	23	Rowokele	2
6	Buayan	5	15	Kuwarasan	3	24	Sadang	7
7	Buluspesantren	7	16	Mirit	4	25	Sempor	37
8	Gombong	8	17	Padureso	4	26	Sruweng	0
9	Karanganyar	25	18	Pejagoan	31	TOTAL		231

Source: <https://referensi.data.kemdikbud.go.id/>

In addition to being mandated by national regulations, inclusive education is also a global commitment outlined in the Education for All framework and Sustainable Development Goal 4 on inclusive and equitable quality education. UNESCO emphasizes that an inclusive education system does not merely place students with special needs in mainstream schools, but requires the transformation of school culture, policies, and learning practices to be responsive to diversity (UNESCO, 2020). In line with this, research findings indicate that the success of inclusive education is strongly influenced by school leadership, teachers' attitudes toward disability, and sustained policy support (Ainscow, 2020; Sharma & Sokal, 2016). Thus, inclusive schools are not merely an issue of administrative policy, but must be understood as a comprehensive transformation process of the education system that involves all stakeholders, both at the policy level and in school practice.

Research on inclusive schools has been widely conducted. For example, Fatimah et al. found that the challenges in implementing inclusive schools at the elementary level include a lack of awareness and understanding that all children have equal rights to education, limited resources, and minimal involvement of parents and the community (Fatimah et al., 2024). This finding is also supported by Salim et al., who reported that the challenges of implementing inclusive education in elementary schools include a less adaptive curriculum, a limited number of special assistant teachers, inadequate facilities and infrastructure, and minimal collaboration among stakeholders (Salim et al., 2026). However, most of these studies remain partial and have not yet comprehensively analyzed the implementation of inclusive schools within a broader education system framework. Analyses that integrate dimensions of policy, institutional readiness, resource support, stakeholder collaboration, and the quality of educational services for students with special needs are still relatively limited.

Therefore, this study offers a novel contribution by conducting a comprehensive analysis of the implementation of inclusive school administration in public basic education in Kebumen Regency, covering both elementary and junior secondary school levels. This study not only describes implementation practices but also evaluates the alignment between policy and practice in the field, the readiness of human resources and infrastructure, and the patterns of collaboration formed in supporting inclusive education services. Through this approach, the study is expected to contribute to strengthening more effective and sustainable inclusive education policies and practices.

Based on the background explanation, the objective of this study is to analyze the implementation of inclusive school administration in public basic education in Kebumen Regency.

Methods

The study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design. The research was carried out in elementary education that have operational permits to implement inclusive education. A total of 10 schools were selected as research subjects, distributed across different regions, namely urban, rural, coastal, and mountainous areas.

The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, a method of selecting samples based on specific considerations. This technique was used to obtain in-depth information from subjects considered to have the most understanding of the phenomenon under study. In this research, school selection was based on the geographical characteristics of Kebumen Regency, which include urban, rural, coastal, and mountainous areas. This consideration is based on the assumption that geographical conditions influence the accessibility of educational services, the availability of resources, the support of facilities and infrastructure, and the implementation of inclusive school policies. Therefore, the selected schools represent regional diversity in order to obtain a comprehensive picture of the implementation of inclusive education, particularly at the basic education level.

Data collection techniques consisted of focus group discussions (FGDs), observations, in-depth interviews, document studies. FGDs were conducted to facilitate dialogue among stakeholders and to explore collective perspectives on the optimization of learning facilities. The FGDs involved relevant stakeholders such as the Education Office, educational institutions, parents, and others.

Observations were carried out to understand the social and physical conditions of the environments where students with disabilities learn. The focus of observation included the availability and condition of adaptive learning facilities, the accessibility of the school's physical environment, the interaction of students with disabilities with learning resources, teacher adaptation strategies, and the social dynamics in inclusive classrooms.

In-depth interviews were conducted to explore the experiences, perceptions, and expectations of stakeholders regarding learning facilities for students with disabilities. Interviews were conducted with school principals (discussing policies, budgeting, and

implementation), classroom teachers (discussing policies to improve learning in inclusive schools), parents of students with disabilities (discussing their role in improving the quality of inclusive education), and education office officials (discussing regional policies and resource allocation). The interviews used a semi-structured format with open-ended questions, allowing flexibility in obtaining in-depth information.

Document studies were conducted to analyze policies, program plans, and the implementation of inclusive education. The documents reviewed included national and regional policies on inclusive education, the strategic education plan of Kebumen Regency, and other supporting documents such as school-based inclusive education activities.

The data analysis technique used the Miles, Huberman, & Saldana model (Miles et al., 2014) which consists of three stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data condensation involves collecting data first and then selecting and sorting it according to the research needs. Irrelevant data are excluded. The next stage is data display, in which data are presented in various forms, including descriptions, tables, and figures, so that readers can understand the meaning of the research data. The final step is verification/conclusion drawing, where the available data are summarized based on the research objectives, and overall conclusions are drawn from the conclusions of each specific objective.

Result

The implementation of inclusive education in basic education in Kebumen Regency still faces various challenges that hinder the fulfillment of educational rights for students with disabilities. Based on the results of FGDs with school principals and the Department of Education, Youth, and Sports (Disdikpora) of Kebumen Regency, it was found that the implementation of inclusive schools in Kebumen Regency shows a high level of policy commitment; however, its implementation still encounters challenges and problems. In general, schools have opened access for students with special needs to learn alongside regular students within the same educational institutions. Nevertheless, the availability of special assistant teachers (GPK), the provision of accessible facilities and infrastructure, and teachers' competencies in designing differentiated learning still need to be improved so that inclusive education services can function optimally.

The FGD results also show that coordination between schools and the Disdikpora of Kebumen Regency has been carried out through mentoring, policy dissemination, and regular monitoring. However, strengthening is still needed in the aspect of planning based on the actual needs of each educational unit, including mapping the number and characteristics of students with special needs, so that the interventions provided are more targeted. Thus, the implementation of inclusive schools in Kebumen Regency should not only be administrative in nature, but must truly be oriented toward fulfilling the right to equal and quality education for all students.

The study produced findings on the problems in the implementation of inclusive schools, namely:

Limited Data Collection on Students with Disabilities

Field analysis results show a discrepancy between data on children with disabilities and the numbers recorded in the system. This issue is also reflected in the limited statistical data on students with disabilities in Indonesia based on <https://referensi.data.kemdikbud.go.id/>. This problem arises from various factors and has a significant impact on the provision of appropriate educational services for this group. One of the main constraints lies in the suboptimal identification system. Many schools do not yet have standardized assessment tools to detect various types of disabilities. As a result, students with mild or non-visible disabilities, such as specific learning disabilities or mild autism, are often not recorded.

Kebumen Regency is one area that still faces limitations in collecting data on students with disabilities. Based on data from <https://referensi.data.kemdikbud.go.id/> as of May 2025, it is known that schools have not updated their data. This affects the quality of planning for inclusive education programs at the district level. Inaccurate data leads to misdirected budget allocations for facilities and infrastructure supporting students with disabilities.

Based on Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Regulation Number 48 of 2023 concerning Reasonable Accommodation for Students with Disabilities in Early Childhood Education, Basic Education, Secondary Education, and Higher Education, Article 5(3) states that educational units that have admitted students with disabilities are required to submit reports on students with disabilities through data updates in the education data system managed by the Ministry in accordance with legal provisions. Furthermore, Regional Regulation of Kebumen Regency Number 9 of 2020 concerning the Implementation of Protection and Fulfillment of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 11(2) stipulates that the regional government, in this case the regional apparatus responsible for education affairs, must provide public service information regarding the inclusive education system for persons with disabilities and their families.

To minimize the occurrence of inadequate data, it is necessary to develop an integrated digital platform that connects data on students with disabilities and can be accessed both offline and online, from the school level to district education offices and the ministry, with regular data updating and validation procedures. In addition, the roles and functions of school assistants and data operators should be optimized in the process of collecting and managing data on students with disabilities. Furthermore, certified training programs on disability identification and classification should be provided for teachers, educational personnel, and administrative staff to enhance the accuracy and reliability of disability-related data management (Carpenter et al., 2024; Papadogiorgaki et al., 2023).

Limitations of Companion Teachers

The limited number of Special Assistant Teachers in inclusive schools is one of the main obstacles in achieving quality inclusive education. Many inclusive schools in Indonesia

have only one GPK (*Guru Pendamping Khusus*) or even none at all. This problem is further complicated by the fact that many GPK do not have a special education background or have not received adequate training according to students' needs. The lack of specific understanding and skills in handling various conditions such as autism, dyslexia, ADHD, and intellectual disabilities makes the mentoring process less effective. The inability of special assistant teachers to design and implement appropriate Individualized Learning Programs directly affects the quality of education received by students with special needs.

This condition also places an additional burden on regular classroom teachers, who must handle students with diverse needs without sufficient professional support. As a result, teachers often feel overwhelmed and are not fully prepared to accommodate the learning needs of students with disabilities while



Figure 2. Inclusive Learning Activities by Teachers

managing the classroom as a whole. This leads to situations where students with disabilities are often merely physically present in inclusive classrooms without receiving appropriate and meaningful learning experiences. Classroom teachers or subject teachers and/or special assistant teachers, according to Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Regulation Number 48 of 2023, are entitled to acquire competencies through the inclusion of inclusive education courses in undergraduate teacher education programs and/or teacher professional education programs.

Based on the analysis results, many inclusive schools in the Kebumen area still do not have special assistant teachers. So far, assistance for students has been directly handled by classroom teachers or guidance and counseling teachers. This condition causes classroom teachers and guidance and counseling teachers to experience a double workload, because in addition to carrying out their main duties, they are also required to act as special assistants without sufficient educational background or training in inclusive education. As a result, students with special needs do not receive optimal support according to their needs, while the quality of learning for regular students also has the potential to decline due to limited teacher time and attention.

The availability of special assistant teachers in inclusive schools is an important component in the implementation of inclusive education. Based on Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 13 of 2020 concerning Reasonable Accommodation for Students with Disabilities, Article 5(3) states that the central and regional governments are required to provide special education teachers in educational institutions that accept students with disabilities. In addition, they are also required to conduct training for educators and education personnel to develop and improve their competencies. This is further reinforced by Regional Regulation of Kebumen Regency

Number 9 of 2020, Article 11(2), which states that the regional government facilitates the availability of special support personnel resources in inclusive education units according to needs. The regional government is also obliged to improve the qualifications of classroom teachers/subject teachers in line with competencies related to disability services.

Based on Kebumen Regent Regulation Number 22 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of Inclusive Education, Article 9(b) stipulates that the local government is obliged to provide at least one Special Assistant Teacher in inclusive schools. Students in inclusive education have the right to receive inclusive education in educational units according to their needs and abilities; obtain quality and non-discriminatory education; access facilities and infrastructure that support the learning process; receive therapeutic services and other professional support according to their needs to achieve optimal achievement; receive guidance through Special Assistant Teachers; receive financial assistance to support the continuity of their education; and receive equal legal protection.

Given the limited availability of special education teachers in inclusive schools in Kebumen, it is essential to strengthen the competencies of educational personnel through tiered professional development programs for classroom teachers and subject teachers in the field of inclusive education, involving collaboration with various stakeholders. In addition, the provision of special incentives for teachers who work with students with special educational needs should be considered to enhance motivation and commitment. To further support inclusive education practices, partnerships with higher education institutions can be established through internship programs and the placement of special education students in inclusive schools. These initiatives should be complemented by the development of a sustainable mentoring system involving experts in inclusive and special education to provide ongoing professional support and guidance for teachers.

Lack of Parental Support and Communication with the School

Most inclusive schools in Kebumen have not yet provided educational programs for parents, skills training, or forums for sharing experiences among parents of students with disabilities. As a result, many parents feel isolated in facing parenting challenges without adequate access to information or social support networks. This condition creates a cycle of problems in which limited support for parents affects the level of assistance they can provide to their children, thereby influencing the overall quality of learning. To break this cycle, close collaboration is needed among schools, special education professionals, and communities in order to build an integrated support system for parents of students with disabilities.

Based on the analysis results, parents of students with disabilities in the Kebumen area still face difficulties in assisting their children at home, particularly in teaching learning materials and providing learning facilities and infrastructure. These obstacles mostly arise because parents have limited knowledge and skills in applying learning methods that are appropriate to the needs of children with special needs. In addition, economic constraints

are also a major factor, as many families are unable to provide specific learning aids, such as visual media for visually impaired children or communication devices for children with speech disorders. Limited access to information and parenting training for children with special needs further hinders parents in creating a conducive learning environment at home, resulting in children's academic development and life skills not developing optimally.

Based on occupational profiles, most parents of students with disabilities work as laborers, farmers, or homemakers. This condition affects the family's economic capacity to meet the educational needs of children with special needs. With limited and unstable income, parents face difficulties in providing supporting facilities such as learning aids at home. In addition, long working hours outside the home reduce parents' opportunities to assist their children in the learning process. The generally low educational background of parents also poses a challenge, as they often experience difficulties in understanding learning materials and appropriate teaching methods for children with disabilities. As a result, a cycle of problems emerges in which economic limitations affect the quality of education, which in turn impacts the future and independence of the child.

According to Kebumen Regent Regulation Number 22 of 2019, inclusive schools may cooperate and build networks with resource centers, special education institutions, universities, professional organizations, rehabilitation institutions, hospitals and community health centers, therapy clinics, businesses, non-governmental organizations, parents, and the community. In accordance with this regulation, the role of parents should be maximized as an important element in the implementation of inclusive education in Kebumen Regency.

To strengthen partnerships in the implementation of inclusive education, active parental involvement is essential through the establishment of communication forums for parents of students with special educational needs at the inclusive school level, supported by an integrated communication system between schools and families. In addition, tiered parenting and home-based learning training programs should be provided, accompanied by the availability of learning modules tailored to the specific needs of students with disabilities. These initiatives are consistent with the mandate outlined in Kebumen Regent Regulation No. 9 of 2019 concerning the Establishment of Inclusive Working Groups at the regional level. Furthermore, public awareness campaigns such as "Disability-Friendly Kebumen" and the digital platform "Sahabat Inklusi" should be intensified to promote greater community awareness, participation, and support for inclusive education and disability inclusion.

The Individualized Education Program is not yet Optimal

The implementation of Individualized Learning Programs (ILPs) in inclusive schools is still far from optimal and often exists merely as formal documentation without real application in practice. The preparation of ILPs is frequently carried out hastily and superficially, without in-depth assessment of each student's strengths, weaknesses, and

specific needs. Some schools even use the same ILP format for all types of disabilities without considering the unique characteristics of each student, thereby neglecting the principle of individualization that should serve as the foundation of the program.

The involvement of various parties in the design and evaluation of Individualized Learning Programs (ILPs) also remains a major challenge. Ideally, ILPs should be designed through collaboration among classroom teachers, special assistant teachers, psychologists or therapists, and parents. However, in practice, the preparation of individualized support programs is often carried out only by special assistant teachers or inclusion coordinators without maximizing the involvement of other parties. Parents are rarely invited to discuss the learning goals and strategies for their children, while regular classroom teachers often do not fully understand the contents of the ILP or how to implement it in teaching and learning activities. This lack of collaboration results in inconsistent implementation of ILPs across different contexts, including regular classrooms, resource rooms, and home environments.

Based on the analysis, inclusive schools in Kebumen have developed adaptive curricula that serve as guidelines for preparing Individualized Learning Programs (ILPs). However, many inclusive schools have still not developed ILPs optimally. Some schools are already familiar with the concept of ILPs, but their development remains inadequate. The main factor contributing to this issue is teachers' limited understanding of how to design effective ILPs that are tailored to the specific needs of each student.

In addition, the lack of continuous training and technical assistance for teachers in designing and implementing ILPs is also a significant obstacle. High administrative workloads further reduce the time teachers can devote to creating detailed and personalized ILPs. Limited collaboration among stakeholders (classroom teachers/subject teachers, psychologists, parents, and others) also hinders the development of more comprehensive ILPs. As a result, although adaptive curricula have been established as guidelines, their implementation at the individual student level has not yet been maximized, and the educational services provided do not fully meet the learning needs of students with disabilities.

According to Kebumen Regent Regulation Number 22 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of Inclusive Education, Article 4(b) states that students in inclusive education have the right to receive quality and non-discriminatory education. Article 16 concerning curriculum, learning, and assessment states that: (1) inclusive schools use an education unit-level curriculum that accommodates students' needs and abilities according to their talents, interests, and potential; and (2) learning in inclusive education must consider learning principles that are adapted to the learning characteristics of students.

One recommendation for addressing this issue is the establishment of an effective Individualized Education Program team through the formation of school clusters based on geographical proximity and shared school characteristics. The designation of a Model

School within each cluster as a center for the development and dissemination of best practices, accompanied by capacity-building initiatives for teachers and educational personnel, provides valuable opportunities for the diffusion of innovative approaches to inclusive education. Such model schools can serve as hubs for professional learning, mentoring, and collaboration, enabling schools within the cluster to share experiences, resources, and effective strategies. Consequently, this approach can contribute to strengthening the quality and consistency of inclusive education services across schools while promoting continuous improvement in educational practices.

Specific Regulations and Budgets for the Implementation of Inclusive Education are Unavailable

The absence of a special budget for inclusive schools in Kebumen Regency has become a fundamental obstacle in efforts to provide quality inclusive education. Most inclusive schools still rely on general budgets that are not specifically designed to meet the needs of students with disabilities, resulting in no additional funding for accessible facilities, adaptive learning media, special teaching aids, or assistive technology. Consequently, schools must struggle to meet these needs with limited funds. This budget limitation also restricts schools' ability to recruit professionals with specialized competencies, such as special assistant teachers, therapists, or educational psychologists, who are greatly needed in the learning process for students with special needs.

In addition, limited funding also affects the low frequency of professional development opportunities for teachers and education personnel. Training, workshops, or advanced study programs that are important for improving competencies in handling students with disabilities are difficult to organize due to financial constraints. In fact, many teachers in inclusive schools do not yet have adequate special education backgrounds. Limited funding also hampers the implementation of other support programs, such as transition programs, rehabilitation services, and extracurricular activities tailored to the needs of students with disabilities, resulting in less optimal learning experiences at school.

In the long term, the absence of a special budget further widens the gap in service quality among inclusive schools. Schools with better financial resources, such as private schools or schools in urban areas, are able to provide more comprehensive inclusive education services, while public schools or schools in remote areas are forced to implement inclusive programs with minimal facilities. This disparity creates indirect discrimination, where access to quality inclusive education depends on students' socioeconomic backgrounds, which contradicts the principle of equality in inclusive education. Therefore, a special funding policy from the government is needed, for example through an additional funding scheme based on the number of students with disabilities or special allocations within the Education Special Allocation Fund, to ensure that the development of inclusive education is implemented in a directed and sustainable manner.

Based on Regional Regulation of Kebumen Regency Number 9 of 2020, persons with disabilities have the right to: (a) obtain quality education in educational institutions across all pathways, types, and levels of education; (b) have equal opportunities to become

educators or education personnel across all educational pathways, types, and levels; (c) have equal opportunities as providers of quality education in educational institutions across all pathways, types, and levels; and (d) receive reasonable accommodations according to the needs of students with disabilities (Kebumen Regency, 2020). The regional government is obliged to organize and/or facilitate education for persons with disabilities through inclusive education. This is reinforced by Kebumen Regent Regulation Number 22 of 2019, Article 4, which states that students in inclusive education have the right to receive financial assistance to support the continuity of their education.

The analysis results indicate that inclusive schools in Kebumen do not yet have a special budget for the development of inclusive education. This condition hampers various important aspects of implementing quality inclusive education. Without sufficient funding, schools face difficulties in providing accessible facilities for students with disabilities, such as ramps, special toilets, or adaptive learning media. The development of teachers' competencies through inclusive education training also cannot be carried out sustainably.

In addition, budget limitations hinder the recruitment of competent special assistant teachers and the provision of assessment tools to diagnose students' learning needs. Support services such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, or physiotherapy, which should be part of the inclusive school system, also cannot be adequately facilitated. This condition creates a gap between the ideal concept of inclusive education and the reality in practice, making it difficult to achieve the goal of fair and equal education for all students without a special budgeting policy that supports all aspects of inclusive education programs.

One recommendation for addressing this issue is to allocate a dedicated budget for inclusive education within the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD), amounting to at least 5% of the total education budget, accompanied by transparent and accountable mechanisms for the management and utilization of inclusive education funds. Furthermore, the establishment of a competitive grant scheme for schools to support innovative inclusive education programs can encourage the development of creative and student-centered educational practices that respond to the diverse needs of learners. Such initiatives have the potential to strengthen schools' capacities to design, implement, and evaluate innovative approaches, thereby contributing to the provision of more inclusive, high-quality, and sustainable educational services.

Limited Facilities and Infrastructure for Students with Disabilities

The issue of limited facilities and infrastructure also occurs in the Kebumen region, leading to a widening gap in educational access for students with disabilities. Factors such as limited budgets, low awareness of the importance of accessibility, and insufficient technical understanding in creating inclusive learning environments are interconnected and worsen the situation. Based on the analysis of problems in several inclusive schools in Kebumen, it was found that 98% of inclusive schools have not provided adequate

facilities and infrastructure. Even when such facilities exist, such as accessible toilets, wheelchairs, and others, they are often in a damaged condition.

Based on Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 13 of 2020, regional governments are required to facilitate the provision of reasonable accommodation through the supply and/or maintenance of facilities and infrastructure that meet building and environmental accessibility standards in accordance with legal provisions. The provision of facilities and infrastructure for persons with disabilities, according to Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Regulation Number 48 of 2023, Article 7, includes general facilities and infrastructure, special facilities and infrastructure, and facilities and infrastructure that support distance learning.

The regional government, based on Kebumen Regency Regional Regulation Number 9 of 2020, is obliged to provide adequate facilities, infrastructure, and teaching personnel in accordance with the needs of students with disabilities. In addition, according to Kebumen Regent Regulation Number 22 of 2019, students in inclusive education are entitled to facilities and accessibility that support the smooth implementation of education. The facilities and infrastructure available in inclusive schools consist of the existing resources within the respective educational units, supplemented by the provision of accessibility features and learning media required for students with special needs, in accordance with National Education Standards.

Specifically, Kebumen Regent Regulation Number 22 of 2019, Article 20, stipulates that facilities and infrastructure for students with special needs include:

- a. Assessment tools; orientation and mobility equipment; learning aids; visual aids; auditory aids; and physical training equipment for students with visual impairments;
- b. Assessment tools; hearing aids; auditory perception/rhythm training equipment; learning aids; and physical training equipment for students with hearing impairments/communication disorders;
- c. Assessment tools; visual sensory training equipment; tactile sensory training; taste and sensory training; self-help training; numeracy concepts and symbols; creativity and cognitive development tools; language instruction aids; and perceptual-motor training equipment for students with intellectual disabilities;
- d. Assessment tools; physical training equipment; self-care training tools; orthotic and prosthetic devices; and learning aids for students with physical disabilities;
- e. Assessment tools for behavioral disorders and physical therapy equipment for students with emotional and behavioral disorders;
- f. Assessment tools, teaching aids, and instructional materials for gifted students; and
- g. Assessment tools, assistive devices, remedial teaching materials, and remedial rooms for students with learning difficulties.

Discussion

The low quality of statistical data on persons with disabilities is a serious issue for the Indonesian government, particularly in Kebumen, and is one of the contributing factors to the low participation rate of persons with disabilities in education (Azzahra, 2020). One of

the influencing factors is the limited competence of operators responsible for student data collection. The lack of adequate competency among officers responsible for data collection also constitutes a significant issue. Most teachers and administrative staff have not received sufficient training on disability classification and identification techniques, which leads to misclassification or even the failure to record students with disabilities (Lieung et al., 2021). The impact of these limitations is substantial, ranging from inaccurate distribution of resources, inappropriate educational services provided, to difficulties in evaluating the effectiveness of inclusive education programs. Without accurate data, the government will struggle to formulate evidence-based policies to improve access to and the quality of education for students with disabilities (Nabila et al., 2025).

The development of an accurate, comprehensive, and up-to-date database of persons with disabilities constitutes a strategic measure to minimize the problem of inadequate disability data. Moreover, such a database serves as an essential instrument for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of disability-related programs, enabling program outcomes to be assessed objectively and ensuring that their benefits are directly experienced by persons with disabilities and the broader community. These findings are supported by the study conducted by Fajar, which demonstrated that a Disability Information System containing data on individuals' names, addresses, religious affiliations, educational backgrounds, as well as the types of disabilities, barriers, and support needs of each person with disabilities, facilitates policymakers and other stakeholders in formulating evidence-based policies and designing appropriate disability service programs (Fajar, 2022). Similarly, Suprianto and Endriharto developed an integrated disability data information system that enables stakeholders to obtain detailed information regarding the characteristics and needs of persons with disabilities, thereby supporting more targeted planning and service provision (Endriharto & Suprianto, 2023).

The shortage of special assistant teachers represents a major challenge for inclusive schools in Kebumen. Their role is crucial in providing appropriate educational services for students with special needs (Abdillah et al., 2025; Yuliawati et al., 2023). The imbalance between the number of special assistant teachers and the number of students requiring specialized support results in suboptimal learning services, preventing students' potential from being fully developed within inclusive settings (Lestari et al., 2024; Thufail & Bakhtiar, 2023). This issue is further complicated by the fact that many special assistant teachers do not have a special education background or have not received adequate training aligned with students' needs (Wardah, 2019).

One recommendation that can be implemented by the education authority is to provide competency development training for teachers to enhance their capacity to support and educate students with special educational needs in inclusive schools. Such professional development initiatives are essential for strengthening teachers' knowledge, skills, and pedagogical practices, thereby improving the quality and effectiveness of inclusive education. Continuous professional development programs can equip teachers with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to implement inclusive teaching practices,

develop individualized learning strategies, and create supportive learning environments for students with special educational needs (Aziz et al., 2025; Hardianti et al., 2024).

The lack of effective communication between parents and schools is one of the main challenges in supporting the development of students with disabilities in inclusive education settings (Ediyanto et al., 2024; Jardinez & Natividad, 2024; Yuliawati et al., 2023). Many schools have not yet established structured and continuous communication mechanisms with parents, such as the regular use of communication books, scheduled meetings, or the utilization of digital platforms to share information about students' progress. On the other hand, some parents remain less involved in communication with schools due to various constraints, such as busy work schedules, limited understanding of the importance of collaboration, and feelings of inferiority or social stigma related to their child's disability. As a result, an information gap emerges that disrupts the continuity of support between home and school, causing educational programs that have been designed not to be implemented holistically.

Home-based learning support for students with disabilities is often suboptimal due to parents' limited knowledge and skills in supporting children with special needs (Ni'mah et al., 2022). Many parents do not fully understand their child's condition, including the characteristics of the disability, appropriate learning methods, and strategies for managing specific behaviors. This lack of understanding often leads to frustration and inappropriate parenting practices, such as being overly protective, permissive, or even neglectful of the child's needs. In addition, economic pressures that require parents to work full-time further reduce their opportunities to provide intensive support for their children at home (Antwi, 2023).

Parents play a fundamental role in their children's development and education. Their involvement is a key determinant of the successful implementation of inclusive education within educational institutions. Active parental participation fosters collaboration between families and schools, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of inclusive education practices. Such synergy contributes to the creation of supportive learning environments that address the diverse needs of students with disabilities. This finding is consistent with the study by Aryuni et al., which highlights that collaboration between parents and schools plays a significant role in the implementation of inclusive education and supports the development of more effective and meaningful inclusive learning experiences (Aryuni et al., 2024).

On the other hand, the monitoring and evaluation system for the implementation of Individualized Learning Programs (ILPs) in many inclusive schools remains weak. ILPs are rarely evaluated on a regular basis to assess their effectiveness and to adjust them according to students' developmental progress. The targets set within individualized support programs are often too general and difficult to measure, making the outcomes of interventions unclear and challenging to evaluate. In addition, documentation of students' progress toward ILP goals is frequently not carried out systematically, resulting in a lack of accurate data to inform subsequent instructional planning. This condition creates a cycle

of inefficiency, in which ILPs continue to be developed without reflection on previous achievements, thereby hindering the development of students with disabilities despite their presence in inclusive educational environments (Masyithoh, 2021).

The development of Individualized Learning Programs (ILPs) is often carried out hastily and superficially, without in-depth assessment of each student's strengths, weaknesses, and specific needs. Some schools even use a standardized ILP format for all types of disabilities without considering the unique characteristics of individual students, thereby neglecting the principle of individualization that should form the foundation of the program. As a result, although schools may formally possess ILP documents for administrative purposes, these programs fail to function as effective frameworks for delivering appropriate instructional interventions (Yuliawati et al., 2023).

The development of individualized education programs and the strengthening of instructional management in inclusive schools can serve as effective strategies for addressing this issue. These initiatives have the potential to enhance the effectiveness of instructional planning, implementation, and evaluation, thereby fostering a learning environment that is inclusive, adaptive, and oriented toward optimizing learning outcomes for all students. This finding is supported by the study conducted by Chamdani et al., which demonstrated that effective instructional management in inclusive schools contributes significantly to the successful implementation of inclusive education and promotes more effective learning processes (Chamdani et al., 2022).

The lack of specific regulations and dedicated funding for inclusive education remains a major challenge in Kebumen. Educational institutions, as service units, are mandated to provide reasonable accommodation to ensure the fulfillment of human rights, including those of persons with disabilities. This is in accordance with Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 13 of 2020, which stipulates that the provision of reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities in educational units is carried out by regional governments according to their authority. The facilitation of reasonable accommodation is implemented through the provision of budgetary support and/or financial assistance, the provision of facilities and infrastructure, the preparation and deployment of educators and education personnel, and the development of appropriate curricula. This is further reinforced by Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Regulation Number 48 of 2023, which states that regional government budget support and/or financial assistance includes: (a) costs to support the implementation of education in accordance with the needs of students with disabilities; (b) assistance or scholarships for students with disabilities; and (c) funding for the provision of facilities and infrastructure that support reasonable accommodation.

The lack of facilities and infrastructure for students with disabilities in educational institutions represents a major challenge in achieving quality inclusive education (Ediyanto et al., 2024; Jardinez & Natividad, 2024). Most schools in Indonesia still do not provide disability-friendly physical facilities, such as wheelchair ramps, specially designed toilets, guiding paths for students with visual impairments, and resource rooms

equipped with appropriate learning support devices. The absence of these essential facilities not only restricts the mobility of students with disabilities but also implicitly indicates that their needs have not yet become a priority within the education system, thereby hindering their full participation in the teaching and learning process.

The availability of adaptive learning media that can meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities remains very limited. Essential resources such as braille books, screen reader software, hearing aids, tactile instructional materials, interactive applications for students with learning difficulties, and other assistive technologies are often neglected. The lack of such learning media causes students with disabilities to experience difficulties in fully accessing instructional content, thereby preventing them from having equal opportunities to develop their academic potential compared to their peers (Hidayat et al., 2024; Prihatin & Mei, 2018).

The challenges in implementing inclusive education in Kebumen remain consistent with findings from previous studies. Ediyanto et al., through a systematic literature review of scholarly articles published between 2020 and 2023, found that the main issues in the implementation of inclusive schools include a shortage of special assistant teachers, limited funding, insufficient human resources with adequate understanding of inclusive education, and low parental involvement in the development of children with special needs (Ediyanto et al., 2024). Similarly, Jardinez et al. and Yuliawati et al. reinforced these findings by identifying additional challenges in inclusive education implementation, such as inadequate professional development for teachers and education personnel, insufficient parental participation, inadequate learning facilities, a shortage of special assistant teachers, and the suboptimal implementation of adaptive curricula and Individualized Learning Programs (Jardinez & Natividad, 2024; Yuliawati et al., 2023).

The existing problems in the implementation of inclusive education have an impact on the quality of inclusive education delivery (Lestari et al., 2024). One of the benchmarks of high-quality inclusive schooling is the presence of an effective learning system. An effective learning system has a positive impact on the development of students with disabilities. Inclusive schools have been shown to positively influence students' social awareness. This is closely related to the potential of students with disabilities, which is often overlooked in conventional education systems. Through inclusive education, students with disabilities are given opportunities to develop their talents and abilities optimally with appropriate support, while non-disabled students learn to appreciate diversity and recognize the unique contributions of their peers with special needs. This creates a mutually supportive learning environment that enhances the motivation and academic development of students with disabilities (Setiawati, 2023; Wijayanti, 2019).

Conclusion

This study concludes that the implementation of inclusive schools in basic education in Kebumen Regency has been carried out fairly well. Several issues were identified as

ongoing challenges in the implementation of inclusive schools, including limitations in data collection on students with disabilities, a shortage of special assistant teachers, minimal collaboration between schools and parents, suboptimal implementation of individualized learning programs, the absence of specific regulations and budget allocations for inclusive education, and limited facilities and infrastructure for students with disabilities.

Recommendations for future research include the need for studies on inclusive education policy analysis focusing on the effectiveness of regulatory implementation at the regional level, particularly in the aspects of planning, budgeting, and monitoring mechanisms. Future studies should also examine the alignment between policies formulated by local governments and the actual implementation of inclusive schools in educational institutions. In addition, further research is needed to explore collaboration models among schools, local governments, and communities in supporting the sustainability of inclusive education services.

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