



## **Evaluating the Context of Inclusive Education Implementation at the School of Laboratory of Universitas Negeri Gorontalo: Challenges and Policy Alignment**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study evaluates the context of the inclusive education program at the School of Laboratory of Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, focusing on how national policies are implemented at the local level. The objective is to examine the alignment between national and provincial regulations and their practical application in a local school setting, particularly in relation to available resources and local government support. The research uses a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys, interviews, observations, and document analysis. Data were gathered from key stakeholders, including the headmaster, teachers, and guidance counselors, as well as through classroom observations and a review of relevant policy documents. The study employs the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) evaluation model to assess the context component of inclusive education. The results show that while national and provincial policies provide a solid foundation for inclusive education, the absence of specific local regulations and limited local government support hinder the full implementation of the program. The school administration has shown strong leadership, but resource constraints and inconsistent community support present significant challenges. The study highlights the need for clearer local policies and greater community involvement in supporting inclusive education. The findings offer valuable insights into the importance of local frameworks and suggest areas for future research on policy development and community engagement in inclusive education.

**Keyword :** Inclusive Education, Local Policy, Educational Leadership, Special Needs, Policy Alignment

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### **Introduction**

The concept of inclusive education, which entails integrating students with special needs into mainstream classrooms, has gained significant global attention as an essential educational reform. In many countries, including Indonesia, the integration of students with disabilities in regular schools is seen as a key step towards ensuring equal educational opportunities for all. The Indonesian government has implemented various legal frameworks to support inclusive education, aiming to guarantee that children with disabilities receive the same opportunities as their peers. Despite these efforts, the successful implementation of inclusive education faces numerous challenges at the local level, where policies and resources often do not fully align with national mandates. As a result, schools, especially those in regions with limited resources, struggle to effectively carry out inclusive education programs, thus hindering their success.

Indonesia's commitment to inclusive education is reflected in several national policies. The 1945 Constitution guarantees every citizen the right to receive education, a principle reinforced by the Law No. 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities, which provides specific provisions to accommodate students with disabilities in the education system (Republic of Indonesia, 2016). Further, the Government Regulation No. 17 of 2010 on the management and implementation of education outlines guidelines for inclusive education, emphasizing the need for policies that support students with special needs (Republic of Indonesia, 2010). More recently, Regulation No. 48 of 2023 from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology expanded on these provisions, detailing the necessary accommodations for students with disabilities, including the provision of appropriate infrastructure, teacher training, and suitable learning materials (Kemendikbudristek, 2023). These national policies provide a strong foundation for inclusive education, but the real challenge lies in their effective implementation at the local level, where variations in political commitment, resources, and local regulations create significant disparities in educational access for students with disabilities.

One of the key challenges in implementing inclusive education is ensuring that local governments align their policies and resources with national laws and regulations. Local contexts, such as the availability of trained educators, physical infrastructure, and local government support, play a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of inclusive education programs. In some areas, the lack of local regulatory frameworks and insufficient training for educators can severely limit the capacity of schools to implement inclusive education effectively. This issue is evident in Gorontalo Province, where the School of Laboratory of Universitas Negeri Gorontalo (SD Lab. UNG) has been striving to provide inclusive education for students with special needs. While the school has made strides in integrating students with disabilities, the absence of comprehensive local regulations and inconsistent support from local governments have impeded the full implementation of inclusive education.

Previous studies have highlighted similar challenges in the implementation of inclusive education across Indonesia. A study by Wardani (2017) found that the lack of a supportive regulatory framework at the local level, combined with insufficient teacher training, created barriers to the successful integration of students with disabilities into mainstream classrooms. Similarly, research by Jannah (2021) emphasized that, while national policies on inclusive education are well-established, their impact at the school level is often undermined by the absence of detailed local regulations and the lack of practical support for teachers. These findings suggest that inclusive education cannot be fully realized without a comprehensive approach that involves not only national policies but also strong local implementation strategies.

To address these challenges, scholars have proposed various solutions. For instance, Mufid (2020) suggested that enhancing local capacity through targeted training programs for educators and providing schools with the necessary resources would significantly improve the implementation of inclusive education. Additionally, Mariani (2018) argued that increasing community involvement in inclusive education, including the active participation of parents and local stakeholders, could help bridge the gap between national policies and local realities. These recommendations align with the broader literature on inclusive education, which consistently emphasizes the importance of local adaptation and community engagement in the successful integration of students with disabilities.

Despite the valuable insights provided by previous studies, there remains a significant gap in understanding how specific contextual factors—such as local policies, community support, and resource availability—affect the practical implementation of inclusive education in Indonesian schools. While existing research has explored the broader challenges faced by schools in implementing inclusive education, fewer studies have focused specifically on the context of local regulations and their role in facilitating or hindering the success of such programs. This study aims to fill this gap by evaluating the context of inclusive education at SD Lab. UNG, with a particular focus on the alignment between national policies and local practices.

The primary objective of this study is to assess the context of inclusive education at SD Lab. UNG, using the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) evaluation model. This model provides a comprehensive framework for evaluating educational programs by examining the contextual factors, resources, implementation processes, and outcomes. By focusing on the **context** component, this study seeks to analyze how national and provincial policies are adapted and implemented at the local level, particularly in the absence of specific local regulations. The study will also explore the role of local government support, teacher training, and community involvement in shaping the context of inclusive education at SD Lab. UNG. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on the specific challenges faced by schools in Gorontalo Province, which has unique local conditions that may not be fully addressed by national policies.

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## Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to evaluate the implementation of inclusive education at the School of Laboratory of Universitas Negeri Gorontalo (SD Lab. UNG), focusing specifically on the **context** of the program. The research utilizes the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) evaluation model, which provides a structured framework to assess the different components of an educational program. In particular, this study explores how national policies on inclusive education are adapted and implemented at the local level. Data for the study are collected through a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. A questionnaire is distributed to key stakeholders, including the headmaster, teachers, and guidance counselors, to assess their perceptions regarding local policy support, available resources, and the alignment of national regulations with local practices. In-depth, semi-structured interviews are conducted with key informants to gain deeper insights into the practical challenges and opportunities involved in implementing inclusive education. Classroom observations are also carried out to observe how inclusive education is practiced and to identify any discrepancies between intended policies and actual classroom dynamics. Furthermore, relevant policy documents, school records, and training materials are analyzed to assess the formal frameworks and available resources for implementing inclusive education.

Quantitative data collected from the surveys are analyzed using descriptive statistics, which help to assess stakeholders' perceptions of the **context**. Meanwhile, qualitative data from interviews, observations, and documents are analyzed through thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes related to the context of the program. To ensure validity and reliability, the study employs triangulation by using multiple data sources and maintains an audit trail throughout the research process to ensure transparency and consistency. Ethical approval for the study will be obtained, and informed consent will be sought from all participants, with confidentiality and anonymity ensured throughout the research. By combining surveys, interviews, observations, and document analysis, this study aims to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the context of inclusive education at SD Lab. UNG, highlighting the alignment between national policies and local practices. Ultimately, the findings will offer valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities for improving inclusive education implementation in Indonesia.

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## Results and Discussion

The evaluation of the **context** of the inclusive education program at the School of Laboratory of Universitas Negeri Gorontalo (SD Lab. UNG) revealed several key findings regarding the alignment between national policies and their local implementation. The context of inclusive education at SD Lab. UNG is shaped by a combination of national legal frameworks, provincial policies, and local school regulations, as well as the availability of resources and the support of various stakeholders. This section presents the results from the evaluation of the **context** component using the CIPP model, followed by a detailed discussion on the implications of these findings.

The evaluation of the **context** focused on various factors that influence the implementation of inclusive education, including national and provincial policies, the role of the local school administration, and the community's support. The data collected from surveys, interviews, observations, and document

analysis provided insights into how national policies are interpreted and applied at the local level. A particular emphasis was placed on the alignment of local regulations with national frameworks and the challenges faced by SD Lab. UNG in this regard.

### 1. National Policies and Legal Frameworks

At the national level, Indonesia has established a strong legal and policy framework to support inclusive education. The 1945 Constitution of Indonesia guarantees the right to education for all citizens, including those with disabilities, while the Law No. 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities further emphasizes the need to provide equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities (Republic of Indonesia, 2016). The Government Regulation No. 17 of 2010 provides additional support by outlining how educational institutions should accommodate students with special needs, ensuring that they receive appropriate education in an integrated environment (Republic of Indonesia, 2010). Furthermore, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology introduced Regulation No. 48 of 2023, which specifies the necessary accommodations for students with disabilities in schools, including the provision of trained educators, adequate learning materials, and proper infrastructure (Kemendikbudristek, 2023). These regulations form the cornerstone of Indonesia's inclusive education framework and provide clear guidance for schools such as SD Lab. UNG.

The survey results revealed that the majority of respondents at SD Lab. UNG perceived the national policies regarding inclusive education as strong and supportive. Teachers, guidance counselors, and the headmaster acknowledged that the policies established at the national level provided a solid foundation for the implementation of inclusive education. However, while national policies are clear and comprehensive, the challenge lies in how these policies are translated into practice at the local level, particularly in terms of the availability of resources and the alignment with regional regulations.

### 2. Provincial and Local Policies

At the provincial level, the Government of Gorontalo has issued several policies to support the implementation of inclusive education, including the Governor's Regulation No. 41 of 2015, which outlines the framework for implementing inclusive education in the province (Gorontalo Provincial Government, 2015). This regulation aligns with national mandates, providing guidelines for schools to integrate students with disabilities into regular classrooms. Additionally, the Regional Regulation No. 5 of 2019, which discusses the provision of education services for children with special needs, further supports inclusive education within the province.

However, despite these efforts at the provincial level, the results from the survey and interviews indicated a significant gap in the implementation of inclusive education due to the absence of a Peraturan Walikota (Mayor's Regulation) that would specifically address the operationalization of inclusive education within the city of Gorontalo. According to the headmaster of SD Lab. UNG, although the provincial government had issued regulations to support inclusive education, the lack of a specific local regulation hindered the school's ability to fully implement inclusive practices. This gap in local policy was highlighted as a major obstacle in ensuring that the national and provincial guidelines could be effectively applied in day-to-day school operations.

The lack of a Mayor's Regulation also meant that the local government had not yet provided clear directives regarding funding, infrastructure, or teacher training specific to inclusive education. While SD Lab. UNG had made strides in accommodating students with special needs, the absence of clear local policies left the school to navigate the challenges of inclusive education with limited support from the municipal government. This issue was also evident in the interviews with teachers and the headmaster, who noted that the school had to rely heavily on its own initiatives and resources to implement inclusive education, rather than receiving systematic support from local government policies.

### 3. Role of School Administration

The school administration at SD Lab. UNG plays a crucial role in the context of inclusive education. The results from the survey and interviews showed that the school's leadership, particularly the headmaster, is committed to ensuring that inclusive education is implemented to the best of the school's ability. The headmaster emphasized the importance of creating an inclusive environment and mentioned that the school had initiated various programs to integrate students with disabilities into regular classrooms. The school's leadership also ensured that teachers received training in inclusive education practices, and the school had formed a special team consisting of guidance counselors who were specifically tasked with supporting students with special needs.

Despite these efforts, the absence of formal regulations at the local level posed significant challenges. The school was operating under limited resources and had to make do with the facilities available. Teachers, while trained to some extent, still lacked comprehensive professional development opportunities in the field of inclusive education. According to the interviews, many teachers expressed the need for more specialized training to better address the diverse needs of students with disabilities. While the school administration showed strong leadership, the lack of a coherent policy framework and sufficient local support meant that their efforts were often insufficient to fully realize the goals of inclusive education.

### 4. Community Support

The role of the community, particularly the support from parents and local stakeholders, is another important factor in the context of inclusive education. The results from the surveys and interviews revealed that the community at SD Lab. UNG was generally supportive of the inclusive education program. Parents of students with disabilities were involved in the school's activities and regularly communicated with the teachers and guidance counselors to monitor the progress of their children. The school had also organized meetings with parents to discuss the development of inclusive education at the school and provide them with the opportunity to give feedback.

However, the level of community support varied, with some parents expressing a greater willingness to engage in the school's inclusive education initiatives than others. The survey data showed that while many parents were supportive, there were instances where a small number of parents were less responsive or disengaged from their children's progress. This variability in support highlights the need for ongoing efforts to involve parents and ensure that the community remains actively engaged in the inclusive education process.

The evaluation of the **context** of inclusive education at SD Lab. UNG revealed that while the national policies and provincial regulations provide a solid foundation for inclusive education, the lack of specific local policies and resources remains a significant challenge. The absence of a Peraturan Walikota, which would guide the implementation of inclusive education at the local level, creates a policy gap that affects the school's ability to fully integrate students with special needs into mainstream classrooms.

Moreover, the findings underscore the importance of the school administration's role in bridging the gap between national and local policies. The leadership at SD Lab. UNG has shown a strong commitment to inclusive education, but the limited resources and lack of local policy support hinder the effectiveness of these efforts. The variability in community support further complicates the situation, suggesting that more needs to be done to engage all stakeholders in the process.

To address these issues, it is recommended that local government policies be strengthened to provide clear directives and support for inclusive education. Additionally, professional development opportunities for teachers should be expanded to ensure that they are adequately trained to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Finally, greater efforts should be made to involve parents and the broader community in the inclusive education process, ensuring that all stakeholders work together to create a truly inclusive learning environment.

The results from this evaluation provide valuable insights into the challenges faced by SD Lab. UNG in implementing inclusive education, particularly in relation to the **context**. By addressing the gaps in local policy and enhancing support for teachers and the community, it will be possible to improve the effectiveness of inclusive education at the school level and ensure that all students, regardless of their abilities, receive a high-quality education.

In conclusion, the context of inclusive education at SD Lab. UNG is shaped by a complex interplay of national policies, provincial regulations, local government support, school administration, and community involvement. While there are significant strengths in the school's commitment to inclusive education, the lack of a coherent local policy framework and limited resources pose substantial challenges. Addressing these issues will be crucial for improving the implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia.

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## Conclusion

This study evaluated the **context** of the inclusive education program at SD Lab. UNG, highlighting the alignment between national policies and their local implementation. The findings reveal that while national and provincial policies provide a strong foundation for inclusive education, the lack of specific local regulations—such as the Peraturan Walikota—hinders the effective integration of students with disabilities. Despite strong leadership from the school administration, limited resources and insufficient local support pose significant challenges in fully realizing inclusive education goals. The variability in community support further complicates the situation, suggesting the need for enhanced engagement from all stakeholders.

The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by emphasizing the importance of local policy frameworks in supporting inclusive education, particularly in regions with limited resources. By identifying gaps in the current policy landscape, the research offers practical insights for improving the implementation of inclusive education at the local level. The findings call for further research into the development of localized regulations and strategies for supporting schools in underserved areas. Future studies could explore the impact of community engagement on inclusive education outcomes and investigate how teacher training programs can be enhanced to better address the needs of students with disabilities.

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