

# Developing an Inclusive School Model to Enhance Educational Service Quality for Students with Special Needs in Bukittinggi City

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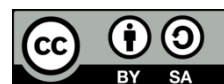
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## ABSTRACT

*Inclusive education has been formally mandated in Indonesia; however, its implementation at the school level remains inconsistent, particularly in managing students with special needs. This study aims to analyze school management practices in implementing inclusive education in two primary schools in Bukittinggi City. A qualitative case study design was employed, involving principals and teachers from SDIT Al-Azhar Darul Jannah and SD Negeri 04 Birugo as key informants. Data were collected through observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis, and analyzed using thematic analysis with source triangulation to ensure validity. The findings reveal that both schools implement inclusive education through five key management dimensions: student identification and assessment, educator adaptation, curriculum modification using Individualized Learning Programs and Universal Design for Learning, flexible evaluation systems, and partial adjustment of infrastructure. Despite these efforts, major constraints include limited specialized human resources, inadequate facilities, and low parental involvement. This study contributes to the literature by demonstrating how adaptive school management strategies can sustain inclusive practices in resource-constrained settings, highlighting the importance of collaborative governance and capacity building for improving inclusive education outcomes.*

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## 1. Introduction.

Inclusive education has become a global agenda in ensuring equitable access to quality education for all learners, including students with special needs (S. Shaeffer, 2019). International frameworks such as the Salamanca Statement and Sustainable Development Goal 4 emphasize the importance of inclusive

and equitable education systems that accommodate learner diversity (UNESCO, 2020; Nara Joaquina de Borba et al, 2024). In many countries, inclusive education is not only a policy commitment but also a strategic approach to reduce educational inequality and promote social justice. However, the implementation of inclusive education often faces structural and managerial challenges, particularly in developing countries where educational resources and institutional capacities remain uneven (Justin Niaga Siman Juntak et al, 2023).

In the Indonesian context, inclusive education has been formally regulated through national policies that guarantee equal educational rights for all citizens, including children with disabilities (Zola Permata Sari et al, 2022). Despite these regulatory frameworks, practical implementation at the school level remains inconsistent (Iftita Rahmi et al, 2024). Empirical evidence indicates that many schools still encounter difficulties in admitting and serving students with special needs due to limited infrastructure, inadequate funding, and the absence of specialized human resources (Mulyasa, 2018; Harahap, 2022). This gap between policy and practice highlights the complexity of managing inclusive education, particularly in primary education settings where foundational learning support is critical (Mustajib; Muna, 2021).

The urgency of this article is based on strong data and legal foundations but still encounters obstacles at the practical level (Narendra Jumadil et al, 2024). Article 31, paragraph 1 of the 1945 Constitution mandates that every citizen has an equal opportunity to obtain education, which is reinforced by Law No. 20 of 2003 stating that this right includes citizens with physical, emotional, mental, or intellectual disabilities (K. Komarudin and Nor Faizah Kaeni, 2023). Theologically, the principle of inclusion is supported by the Qur'an in Surah Al-Hujurat, verse 13, which affirms that differences are a blessing for mutual recognition, as well as verse 11, which prohibits belittling others because every individual has strengths behind their weaknesses. The city of Bukittinggi itself has an important history with the Bukittinggi Declaration of 2005, which emphasized the development of inclusive education programs. Although it was designated as the first "Inclusive City" in West Sumatra in 2014, the reality on the ground shows that out of 65 elementary schools, 16 junior high schools, and 23 senior high/vocational schools, not all have been able to implement inclusive programs optimally (Ari Kartiko et al, 2025; Himmaya Syahnas Nabiela and Nurul Ulfatin, 2023).

Various efforts have been made by the government to address this issue, ranging from the issuance of Bukittinggi City Regional Regulation Number 10 of 2019 concerning Persons with Disabilities to the provision of special operational assistance for inclusive schools (Ángel Deroncele-Acosta and Althia Ellis, 2024). Teachers have also started to be included in inclusive education training to improve service competence. However, the shortcomings of these efforts are still very apparent, especially in the weak school management regarding the availability of experts and disability-friendly infrastructure (Anabel Moriña, 2017). Most of the school facilities currently provided are only for regular students, so children with special needs often face learning difficulties that make them feel inferior, have to repeat classes, and eventually drop out of school (Abdullah Ahmed Almulla et al, 2025; Peder Haug, 2017). This disparity in services often occurs due to the diverse backgrounds and characteristics of the students.

Previous studies have explored various dimensions of inclusive education, including curriculum adaptation, teacher competence, and student engagement. For instance, (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2017) emphasize the importance of inclusive pedagogy that responds to diverse learning needs, while Hallahan et al. (2019) highlight the role of early identification and individualized interventions in supporting students with special needs. In addition, (Tomlinson, 2017) underlines the significance of differentiated instruction as a key strategy in inclusive classrooms. From a management perspective, (Dessler, 2020) argues that organizational capacity, particularly in human resource development, plays a crucial role in sustaining educational innovation. However, most of these studies tend to focus on isolated aspects of inclusion, rather than examining how multiple management dimensions interact within real school contexts (N. Singal, 2019; Pilar Arnaiz Sánchez et al, 2019).

The argument presented in this article is that the implementation of quality inclusive education heavily relies on the synergy of five management aspects: student management, educator management, facilities and infrastructure, curriculum, and evaluation (Ike Apriliani et al, 2024). Effective and efficient

management must be supported by professional human resources, a curriculum aligned with student characteristics, as well as task commitment from all educational staff (Atun Lestari et al, 2022). The author argues that schools implementing inclusion must be able to adapt systems and support facilities that differ from those of regular schools through innovative management (Georgia Ketikidou and Anna Saiti, 2022). Without good management, the planned inclusion programs will not run optimally and will only become a burden for educational institutions.

The research gap of this study lies in the limited attention to comprehensive school management practices in implementing inclusive education, particularly in resource-constrained settings. Existing literature has not sufficiently addressed how schools strategically integrate student management, educator capacity, curriculum adaptation, infrastructure provision, and evaluation systems into a coherent inclusive framework (F. Kurniawati, 2021). Moreover, there is a lack of empirical evidence from Indonesian primary schools that successfully implement inclusive education despite constraints such as the absence of formally trained special education teachers (Alien Silviani and Agus Mulyanto, 2025).

This study offers a novel contribution by providing an in-depth analysis of inclusive school management through a multi-dimensional framework consisting of five key aspects: student management, educator management, curriculum, infrastructure, and evaluation. Unlike previous studies that focus on single variables, this research highlights how adaptive strategies and institutional collaboration enable schools to sustain inclusive practices under limited resources (Nuphanudin et al, 2025; Roina Barokatin and Sukinah, 2025). The case of SDIT Al-Azhar Darul Jannah and SD Negeri 04 Birugo is particularly relevant, as both schools demonstrate practical innovations in inclusive education management despite structural limitations.

Therefore, the objective of this study is to analyze how inclusive education is managed at the primary school level, focusing on the integration of five core management aspects and the challenges encountered in their implementation. Specifically, this study seeks to (1) examine the strategies used by schools in managing inclusive education, and (2) identify key constraints and enabling factors influencing the effectiveness of these practices.

This study are expected to contribute both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research enriches the discourse on educational management by proposing a holistic framework for inclusive school management. Practically, the results provide insights for policymakers, school leaders, and educators in designing adaptive and collaborative strategies to improve the quality and sustainability of inclusive education.

## 2. Research Method

This study employed a qualitative research design using a case study approach to explore in depth the management of inclusive education in primary schools. The case study design was selected to capture the complexity of real-life practices and to understand how inclusive education is implemented within specific institutional contexts (Yin, 2018; Susan Carter, 2020). This approach allows for a holistic examination of multiple management dimensions, including student services, educator roles, curriculum adaptation, infrastructure, and evaluation (J. Green and N. Thorogood, 2018).

The research was conducted in two primary schools in Bukittinggi City, Indonesia, namely SDIT Al-Azhar Darul Jannah and SD Negeri 04 Birugo. These schools were purposively selected due to their recognition as reference institutions for inclusive education implementation in the region. The study was carried out from January to March 2025, covering stages of preliminary observation, data collection, and verification.

The participants of this study consisted of school principals, classroom teachers, and educational staff directly involved in the implementation of inclusive education. A purposive sampling technique was applied to select informants who possess relevant knowledge and experience related to school management and inclusive practices (Creswell, 2014; Muhammad Ishtiaq, 2019). Principals were chosen as key informants due to their strategic roles in policy and decision-making, while teachers and staff provided operational insights into classroom practices and support systems.

The primary research instrument was the researcher, supported by data collection tools including observation guidelines, semi-structured interview protocols, and document analysis checklists. The interview protocol was designed to explore five core aspects of inclusive education management: student

management, educator management, curriculum, infrastructure, and evaluation. Documentation included school profiles, curriculum documents, and records of inclusive education programs.

Data were collected through three main techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to examine the actual implementation of inclusive practices in classroom and school management activities. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with participants to obtain in-depth insights into strategies, challenges, and institutional practices. Documentation was used to corroborate findings and provide supporting evidence for observed phenomena. Data collection was conducted iteratively to allow for continuous refinement and validation.

The data analysis technique followed an interactive model, including data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing (M. Miles and A. Huberman, 1994; J. Saldaña, 2020). Data were coded and categorized based on emerging themes related to the five management dimensions. Thematic analysis was applied to identify patterns, relationships, and key findings across cases. Cross-case analysis was also conducted to compare practices between the two schools and to identify commonalities and differences.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, this study applied several qualitative validation strategies. Credibility was achieved through prolonged engagement, triangulation of data sources (observations, interviews, and documents), and member checking with participants to verify the accuracy of interpretations (Y. Lincoln and E. Guba, 1985; G. Lincoln et al, 2019). Dependability was ensured by maintaining an audit trail of research procedures and decisions throughout the study. Confirmability was addressed by minimizing researcher bias through systematic data documentation and reflective analysis. Transferability was supported by providing rich and detailed descriptions of the research context, enabling readers to assess the applicability of findings to similar settings.

### 3. Research Results

#### 3.1 Institutional Legitimacy of Inclusive Schools

The findings indicate that the implementation of inclusive education in both schools is strongly supported by formal institutional legitimacy and leadership commitment. This legitimacy is reflected in legal recognition, policy support, and the strategic role of school principals in operationalizing inclusive practices.

To present a clearer comparison, the institutional characteristics of both schools are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Institutional Legitimacy of Inclusive Schools

Aspect	SDIT Al-Azhar Darul Jannah	SD Negeri 04 Birugo
Legal Status	Private inclusive pioneer school	Public core inclusive school
Formal Legitimacy	Decree from Education Office (2011)	Government-appointed inclusive school
Institutional Role	Resource center for inclusive education	Zoning-based service provider
Leadership Role	Principal as initiator and program developer	Principal as program coordinator
External Support	Foundation-based support	Central government operational assistance

The table shows that both schools possess formal recognition as inclusive education providers, although with different institutional orientations. SDIT Al-Azhar Darul Jannah operates as a pioneer institution with a strong internal initiative, while SD Negeri 04 Birugo functions as a government-supported core school with broader structural backing.

Field data also reveal the central role of school leadership in strengthening institutional legitimacy. The principals actively promote inclusive values and ensure that policies are implemented consistently at the operational level. This is reflected in the following interview excerpts:

“Since the beginning, we have committed to accepting all students regardless of their conditions. Inclusion is not just a program, but part of our school identity.” (SDIT Al-Azhar Darul Jannah)

“We follow government regulations as an inclusive school, but more importantly, we ensure that teachers and staff understand how to serve students with special needs properly.” (SD Negeri 04 Birugo)

In addition to leadership, institutional legitimacy is reinforced through administrative practices such as inclusive student admission policies and collaboration with external stakeholders. Both schools demonstrate openness in admitting students with special needs, although the mechanisms differ slightly based on institutional capacity. SDIT Al-Azhar Darul Jannah integrates inclusion into its internal policy framework, while SD Negeri 04 Birugo aligns its practices with government-directed inclusion programs.

### 3.2 Educators in Inclusive Services

The findings show that educator management in both schools is characterized by adaptive strategies to address the limited availability of professionally trained special education teachers. Both institutions rely on regular classroom teachers who assume additional roles in supporting students with special needs, supported by internal coordination and external partnerships.

A comparison of educator profiles and roles in both schools is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Educator Profile and Roles in Inclusive Services

Aspect	SDIT Al-Azhar Darul Jannah	SD Negeri 04 Birugo
Number of Special Needs Students	18 students	22 students
Availability of GPK (Special Teachers)	Not available (no PLB graduates)	Not available (no PLB graduates)
Teacher Role	Classroom teachers + inclusion team	Classroom teachers + appointed coordinators
Capacity Building	Training, workshops, comparative studies	Government training and internal mentoring
External Support	Collaboration with psychologists/therapists	Limited external expert involvement

The data indicate that neither school has formally qualified Special Education Teachers (GPK) with a background in Special Education (PLB). As a result, classroom teachers are required to take on dual roles, managing both regular students and those with special needs within the same learning environment.

This condition is reflected in the following interview excerpts: “We do not have special education teachers yet, so classroom teachers must adapt and handle students with special needs as well. We support them through training and teamwork.” (SDIT Al-Azhar Darul Jannah) “Handling inclusive classes is challenging because teachers must divide their attention. However, we try to coordinate and share responsibilities among teachers.” (SD Negeri 04 Birugo)

To address these limitations, both schools have developed internal support mechanisms. At SDIT Al-Azhar Darul Jannah, an inclusion team has been established to assist teachers in identifying student needs and designing appropriate interventions. Meanwhile, SD Negeri 04 Birugo assigns specific coordinators to oversee inclusive practices and facilitate communication among teachers.

In terms of capacity development, both schools actively engage in training programs to improve teacher competence in inclusive education. These activities include workshops, seminars, and comparative studies with institutions that specialize in special needs education. However, the intensity and continuity of these programs vary depending on institutional resources and access to external support.

Despite these efforts, several challenges persist. Teachers experience increased workloads due to dual responsibilities, and the absence of specialized expertise limits the depth of intervention that can be provided to students with more complex needs. Additionally, coordination with external professionals, such as psychologists or therapists, is still limited and not systematically integrated into school programs.

### 3.3 Curriculum, Learning, and Evaluation Management

Research results indicate that both schools implement curriculum management through structured adaptation of the Merdeka Curriculum to accommodate the diverse needs of students with special needs. Curriculum modification is operationalized through the development of Individual Learning Programs (ILP) for each identified student, which serve as the primary reference for planning learning objectives, instructional strategies, and assessment criteria.

Document analysis shows that all students with special needs in both schools are formally registered in individualized learning records. At SDIT Al-Azhar Darul Jannah, approximately 18 students are supported through ILP documents that are updated periodically based on student progress. Similarly, at SD Negeri 04 Birugo, around 22 students are included in individualized planning, although the level of documentation detail varies depending on teacher capacity. These ILP documents typically include baseline assessment results, targeted competencies, learning modifications, and progress notes.

In classroom implementation, curriculum adaptation is carried out through differentiated instruction strategies. Teachers adjust learning content, teaching methods, and expected outcomes based on students' cognitive and behavioral characteristics. For example, students with moderate learning difficulties are provided with simplified learning materials and extended time to complete tasks, while students with higher support needs receive task modification focusing on functional skills rather than academic targets. Classroom observations indicate that differentiation occurs in at least three forms: modification of instructional materials, variation in task complexity, and flexible grouping during learning activities.

The integration of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles is evident in the use of multiple instructional approaches. Teachers employ a combination of visual aids, verbal explanations, and hands-on activities to facilitate student understanding. Learning media such as pictorial cards, interactive worksheets, and assistive tools are used to support engagement, particularly for students with attention and communication difficulties. However, the use of assistive technology remains limited due to resource constraints.

In terms of evaluation, both schools apply a flexible and continuous assessment system. Assessment practices extend beyond standard academic testing and include observation-based evaluation of students' functional, social, and behavioral development. Student progress is measured against individualized targets outlined in the ILP, rather than standardized class-level benchmarks. School records indicate that evaluation is conducted on a weekly and monthly basis, with teachers documenting progress in cognitive skills, task completion, communication ability, and social interaction.

Despite these adaptive practices, several limitations are identified. The consistency of curriculum implementation is influenced by teacher workload and varying levels of understanding of inclusive strategies. In some cases, ILP documentation is not updated regularly, and differentiation practices are applied unevenly across classrooms. Additionally, the absence of standardized monitoring tools for inclusive curriculum implementation results in variability in assessment quality.

### 3.4 Infrastructure Management in Inclusive Education

Infrastructure management in both schools has been partially adapted to support inclusive education, although the level of adequacy remains limited. Physical and instructional facilities are adjusted to accommodate students with special needs; however, these adaptations are not yet comprehensive and vary between the two institutions.

School inventory records indicate that basic classroom facilities are available in both schools, including standard desks, whiteboards, and learning media. However, only a limited number of classrooms have been modified to enhance accessibility. At SDIT Al-Azhar Darul Jannah, several classrooms have been arranged to allow flexible seating and movement space for students with behavioral and attention difficulties. Meanwhile, SD Negeri 04 Birugo has made minor physical adjustments, such as seating arrangements and simplified classroom layouts, but has not yet developed fully accessible infrastructure for students with mobility impairments.

In terms of specialized facilities, neither school has a fully equipped resource room dedicated to inclusive education services. SDIT Al-Azhar Darul Jannah utilizes a multi-purpose room for assessment

and individualized support sessions, although its use is shared with other school activities. At SD Negeri 04 Birugo, support services are conducted within regular classrooms due to space limitations. This condition affects the intensity and focus of individualized interventions provided to students with higher support needs.

Learning support tools are available but remain limited in variety and quantity. Both schools provide basic visual learning aids such as picture cards, worksheets, and simple manipulatives. However, assistive devices specifically designed for students with sensory or physical impairments, such as audio learning tools or adaptive equipment, are largely unavailable. Documentation of school facilities shows that procurement of inclusive learning media is still incidental and depends on internal initiatives rather than systematic planning.

Funding sources also influence infrastructure development. SD Negeri 04 Birugo receives government operational assistance, which supports general school needs, including partial funding for inclusive facilities. In contrast, SDIT Al-Azhar Darul Jannah relies primarily on foundation support and internal budget allocation, resulting in more flexible but limited resource development. In both cases, budget allocation for inclusive infrastructure is not yet proportionally prioritized compared to other school operational needs.

Environmental accessibility remains a significant constraint. Observations indicate that facilities such as ramps, accessible toilets, and clear navigation signage for students with disabilities are either unavailable or insufficient. This limitation restricts the full participation of students with physical disabilities and indicates that infrastructure adaptation is still focused primarily on students with mild to moderate learning needs.

Despite these limitations, both schools demonstrate efforts to optimize available resources. Classroom environments are arranged to be more inclusive through seating flexibility, reduced physical barriers, and the use of visual supports. Teachers also compensate for infrastructural gaps by modifying learning strategies and utilizing low-cost teaching aids.

## 4. Discussion.

### 4.1 Institutional Legitimacy of Inclusive Schools

The findings indicate that institutional legitimacy in inclusive schools is constructed through the interaction between formal recognition and leadership commitment. Both SDIT Al-Azhar Darul Jannah and SD Negeri 04 Birugo demonstrate that legal status as inclusive schools provides a structural foundation, but the actual operationalization of inclusion is driven by the principal's vision and commitment. This suggests that legitimacy is not merely symbolic but functional, as it translates into inclusive admission policies, stakeholder engagement, and consistent program implementation. The principal's role as a value-driven leader ensures that inclusion becomes embedded in the school's identity rather than treated as a compliance-based program.

These findings are consistent with previous research emphasizing the central role of leadership in sustaining inclusive education. Studies by Ketikidou and Saiti (2022) and Nuphanudin et al. (2025) highlight that transformational and systemic leadership significantly influence the success of inclusive practices by shaping school culture and organizational direction. Furthermore, research by Silviani and Mulyanto (2025) and Barokatin and Sukinah (2025) confirms that schools in resource-constrained contexts can maintain inclusive practices through adaptive governance. However, this study extends prior findings by showing that internal institutional initiatives, particularly in private schools, can be as influential as government-driven mandates in establishing legitimacy.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings reinforce institutional theory, particularly the concept that organizational legitimacy is derived from both external pressures and internal value alignment. As suggested by Scott (2014) and Thornton et al. (2012), legitimacy operates through regulative and normative dimensions. This study supports that argument by demonstrating how formal policies (regulative legitimacy) and leadership-driven cultural values (normative legitimacy) jointly sustain inclusive education practices. Unlike perspectives that prioritize coercive policy compliance, the findings highlight the importance of internal cultural construction in strengthening institutional legitimacy.

The observed patterns can be explained by the strategic role of school principals as change agents who bridge policy and practice. In contexts where resources and specialized personnel are limited, leadership becomes a critical determinant in mobilizing available capacities and fostering collective

commitment among teachers and staff. The principals in both schools actively interpret inclusive education policies and adapt them to their institutional contexts, thereby ensuring practical implementation. Additionally, continuous interaction with stakeholders, including teachers and external partners, contributes to building trust and reinforcing the legitimacy of inclusive practices within the school environment.

This study contributes theoretically by proposing an integrated model of institutional legitimacy in inclusive education that combines structural (policy-based) and cultural (leadership-driven) dimensions. While previous studies tend to examine these aspects separately, this research demonstrates their interdependence in sustaining inclusive practices, particularly in developing country contexts. The findings enrich the discourse on educational management by highlighting that legitimacy is not static but dynamically constructed through ongoing interaction between institutional structures and human agency.

Practically, the findings imply that strengthening inclusive education requires not only formal policy endorsement but also the development of strong instructional leadership at the school level. Policymakers should focus on empowering school principals through leadership training and providing flexible frameworks that allow contextual adaptation. Schools, on the other hand, need to institutionalize inclusive values through internal policies, collaborative practices, and stakeholder engagement. Without this alignment between policy and practice, institutional legitimacy may remain superficial and fail to produce meaningful improvements in inclusive education services.

#### **4.2 Educators in Inclusive Services**

Educator management in inclusive schools is characterized by adaptive strategies in response to the absence of formally trained special education teachers. Both schools rely on regular classroom teachers who assume dual roles in handling both general and special needs students, supported by internal coordination mechanisms such as inclusion teams and designated coordinators. This indicates that inclusive service delivery is not dependent solely on specialized personnel, but rather on the flexibility and responsiveness of existing human resources. The presence of training initiatives and collaborative practices suggests that schools are actively attempting to bridge competency gaps to maintain the continuity of inclusive education services.

These findings are consistent with previous studies that emphasize the importance of teacher adaptability and inclusive pedagogy in addressing diverse student needs. Florian and Black-Hawkins (2017) argue that inclusive teaching practices require teachers to respond flexibly to learner diversity, while Hallahan et al. (2019) highlight the role of early identification and individualized support in enhancing learning outcomes for students with special needs. In addition, Tomlinson (2017) underscores the importance of differentiated instruction as a key strategy in inclusive classrooms. However, this study extends prior research by demonstrating how these pedagogical approaches are implemented in contexts with limited professional support, where regular teachers must assume expanded roles beyond their formal training.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings reinforce the concept that organizational capacity, particularly in human resource development, plays a critical role in sustaining educational innovation. Dessler (2020) emphasizes that continuous training and skill development are essential investments in maintaining workforce performance. This study supports that argument by showing that capacity-building initiatives, such as workshops and mentoring, function as substitutes for formal specialization in inclusive settings. At the same time, the findings suggest a partial deviation from ideal theoretical conditions, where inclusive education is expected to be supported by specialized professionals, indicating that adaptive human resource strategies are necessary in resource-constrained environments.

The emergence of dual-role teachers can be explained by structural limitations within the education system, particularly the shortage of graduates in special education and unequal distribution of qualified personnel. In such conditions, schools are compelled to optimize available human resources by assigning additional responsibilities to classroom teachers. Furthermore, institutional demands to implement inclusive education, as mandated by national policy frameworks, create pressure for schools to operate inclusively despite limited capacity (Zola Permata Sari et al., 2022; Ifitita Rahmi et al., 2024). As

a result, adaptive strategies such as internal collaboration, peer support, and informal training become essential mechanisms to ensure that inclusive services continue to function.

This study contributes to the theoretical development of inclusive education management by highlighting the role of adaptive human resource strategies in sustaining inclusive practices. Unlike conventional models that emphasize the necessity of specialized personnel, this research demonstrates that inclusive education can be operationalized through the optimization of general teachers supported by continuous professional development. This expands the existing discourse by integrating the concept of organizational adaptability into inclusive education theory, particularly in contexts where structural limitations are significant.

Practically, the findings suggest that improving inclusive education requires a dual approach: strengthening teacher competencies and developing institutional support systems. Policymakers should prioritize continuous professional development programs focused on inclusive pedagogy, as well as provide structured mentoring and technical assistance for teachers. At the school level, the establishment of collaborative teams and internal support mechanisms is essential to distribute workload and enhance service quality. Without systematic support, the dual burden on teachers may lead to decreased effectiveness in both general and inclusive instruction, ultimately affecting student learning outcomes.

### 4.3 Curriculum, Teaching, and Evaluation Management

Curriculum, teaching, and evaluation management in inclusive schools are implemented through systematic adaptation strategies, particularly via Individualized Learning Programs (ILP), differentiated instruction, and flexible assessment systems. Both schools demonstrate the capacity to modify the Merdeka Curriculum to accommodate diverse student needs, ensuring that learning objectives, instructional processes, and evaluation criteria are aligned with individual student characteristics. This suggests that inclusive education is operationalized not through uniformity, but through pedagogical flexibility and responsiveness, where student progress is measured based on personalized benchmarks rather than standardized outcomes.

These findings are consistent with prior research emphasizing the importance of adaptive curriculum and differentiated instruction in inclusive education. Florian and Black-Hawkins (2017) highlight that inclusive pedagogy requires teaching approaches that accommodate learner diversity, while Hallahan et al. (2019) stress the significance of individualized interventions in supporting students with special needs. Furthermore, Tomlinson (2017) argues that differentiation in content, process, and product is essential in inclusive classrooms. This study extends these perspectives by providing empirical evidence on how such strategies are practically implemented within primary schools operating under resource constraints, particularly through the integration of ILP and flexible evaluation practices.

From a theoretical standpoint, the findings reinforce the principle that inclusive education is grounded in the alignment between curriculum design and student diversity. The implementation of ILP and differentiated instruction reflects the theoretical assumption that learning should be student-centered and adaptive. This aligns with broader educational management perspectives that emphasize the need for curriculum flexibility and innovation in diverse learning environments (Ike Apriliani et al., 2024; Atun Lestari et al., 2022). However, the findings also reveal partial gaps between theory and practice, particularly in the consistency of implementation, indicating that while theoretical models advocate systematic adaptation, practical execution is often influenced by teacher capacity and institutional limitations.

The implementation of adaptive curriculum and evaluation practices can be explained by the necessity for schools to respond to diverse student needs within inclusive settings. Given the heterogeneity of students' cognitive, social, and behavioral characteristics, standardized approaches are insufficient, prompting schools to adopt flexible instructional strategies. Additionally, policy demands for inclusive education require schools to ensure that all students receive equitable learning opportunities, even in the absence of optimal resources (Zola Permata Sari et al., 2022; Iftita Rahmi et al., 2024). As a result, teachers are encouraged to innovate and adjust their teaching practices, leading to the emergence of differentiated instruction and individualized assessment as practical solutions.

This study contributes to the theoretical discourse by demonstrating how curriculum adaptation, differentiated instruction, and flexible evaluation can be integrated into a coherent management framework for inclusive education. Unlike previous studies that tend to examine these elements

separately, this research highlights their interdependence as part of a holistic system of inclusive learning management. The findings also emphasize the role of contextual adaptation, suggesting that inclusive curriculum theory must account for variations in institutional capacity and resource availability.

Practically, the findings suggest that schools need to institutionalize structured mechanisms for curriculum adaptation, including the systematic development and monitoring of ILP documents. Continuous teacher training in differentiated instruction and inclusive assessment is essential to ensure consistency and effectiveness in implementation. Policymakers should also provide clear guidelines and support systems to standardize inclusive curriculum practices without limiting flexibility. Without such efforts, disparities in implementation quality may persist, potentially affecting the equity and effectiveness of learning outcomes for students with special needs.

#### **4.4 Facility and Infrastructure Management in Inclusive Education**

The findings indicate that facility and infrastructure management in inclusive schools remains partially adaptive rather than fully comprehensive. Both schools have made efforts to adjust physical environments and learning resources to support students with special needs; however, these adaptations are still limited in scope and consistency. Infrastructure development tends to focus on basic classroom modifications and flexible arrangements rather than the provision of specialized facilities such as resource rooms, assistive technologies, and accessibility features. This suggests that inclusive education in these contexts is sustained through optimization of existing resources rather than through fully developed inclusive infrastructure systems.

These findings are consistent with previous studies highlighting infrastructure limitations as a major barrier in the implementation of inclusive education, particularly in developing countries. Research indicates that inadequate facilities, limited funding, and unequal resource distribution often hinder schools from providing optimal services for students with special needs (Mulyasa, 2018; Harahap, 2022). Furthermore, studies on inclusive education in Indonesia show that many schools struggle to meet accessibility standards, resulting in disparities between policy expectations and actual practice (Zola Permata Sari et al., 2022; Iftita Rahmi et al., 2024). This study reinforces these findings by providing empirical evidence from primary schools that continue to operate inclusive programs despite infrastructural constraints.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings support the view that facilities and infrastructure are critical components in ensuring the effectiveness of educational processes, particularly in inclusive settings. Educational management theory emphasizes that physical and instructional resources play a strategic role in facilitating learning and supporting diverse student needs (Ike Apriliani et al., 2024; Atun Lestari et al., 2022). However, the findings also reveal a divergence from ideal theoretical conditions, where inclusive education is expected to be supported by fully accessible environments. Instead, the study shows that schools adopt pragmatic approaches by prioritizing essential adaptations, indicating that theoretical models must consider contextual limitations in their application.

The limited development of inclusive infrastructure can be explained by several interrelated factors, including financial constraints, competing institutional priorities, and limited policy enforcement at the operational level. Schools often allocate budgets to general operational needs, resulting in minimal investment in specialized facilities. Additionally, the absence of strong monitoring mechanisms and technical guidelines for inclusive infrastructure development contributes to inconsistent implementation. In many cases, schools rely on internal initiatives or external support, which are not always sustainable. These conditions reflect broader systemic challenges in implementing inclusive education policies effectively (Zola Permata Sari et al., 2022; Iftita Rahmi et al., 2024).

This study contributes to the theoretical development of inclusive education management by emphasizing the concept of “adaptive infrastructure management,” where schools strategically utilize and modify existing resources to support inclusion. Unlike conventional frameworks that assume the availability of adequate facilities, this research highlights how inclusive practices can still be sustained under infrastructural limitations. This perspective expands the discourse by integrating resource-based constraints into the theoretical understanding of inclusive education implementation.

Practically, the findings suggest that improving inclusive education requires more strategic and targeted investment in infrastructure development. Policymakers should prioritize funding allocation for accessibility features, assistive technologies, and the establishment of dedicated resource rooms. Schools need to develop systematic planning for inclusive facilities rather than relying on incidental or short-term adjustments. In addition, collaboration with external stakeholders, including government agencies and community organizations, is essential to support infrastructure enhancement. Without such efforts, the effectiveness of inclusive education programs may remain limited, particularly for students with more complex needs.

#### 4.5 Synthesis of Findings on Inclusive School Management

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of inclusive education is shaped by the dynamic interaction of five key management dimensions: institutional legitimacy, educator capacity, curriculum adaptation, infrastructure support, and evaluation systems. These dimensions function as an integrated and interdependent system, where each component not only contributes to but also compensates for the limitations of others. Strong leadership and institutional legitimacy provide a structural and cultural foundation, while adaptive teacher practices address the lack of specialized personnel, and flexible curriculum and evaluation systems ensure accessibility for diverse learners despite infrastructural constraints. This confirms that inclusive education is inherently systemic and aligns with previous studies emphasizing the need for holistic and coordinated approaches in managing learner diversity (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2017; Hallahan et al., 2019; Dessler, 2020).

Theoretically, this study contributes by proposing an integrative framework of inclusive school management that highlights the synergy among structural, human, and pedagogical dimensions, extending prior research that often treats these elements separately (Ike Apriliani et al., 2024; Atun Lestari et al., 2022). The findings also show that in resource-constrained contexts, successful inclusion is driven more by institutional adaptability than by the availability of ideal resources (Zola Permata Sari et al., 2022; Ifिता Rahmi et al., 2024). Practically, this implies that improving inclusive education requires a systemic strategy that simultaneously strengthens leadership, teacher competence, curriculum flexibility, infrastructure, and evaluation practices. Without such integration, efforts in one dimension may not significantly enhance overall outcomes, highlighting the importance of coordinated and sustainable management approaches in inclusive education.

### 5. Conclusion

This study concludes that the implementation of inclusive education in primary schools in Bukittinggi is carried out through the integration of five key management dimensions: institutional legitimacy, educator capacity, curriculum and learning adaptation, infrastructure support, and evaluation systems. The findings answer the research objectives by showing that inclusive education can be effectively implemented through adaptive and collaborative strategies, even in resource-constrained contexts. Inclusion is not merely realized through formal policy compliance, but through leadership commitment, teacher responsiveness, and flexible instructional practices that accommodate diverse student needs.

The synthesis of the findings reveals that the success of inclusive education depends on the synergy among these dimensions, where each component reinforces and compensates for the limitations of others. Institutional legitimacy provides a structural foundation, while teacher adaptability addresses the absence of specialized personnel, and curriculum flexibility ensures equitable learning opportunities. This study contributes theoretically by proposing an integrative framework of inclusive school management that connects structural, human, and pedagogical aspects into a unified system, extending prior research that often examines these elements separately.

Practically, the study highlights the need for strengthening leadership capacity, continuous teacher professional development, and systematic planning for inclusive infrastructure and curriculum implementation. It is recommended that policymakers provide targeted support through funding, training, and clear operational guidelines to ensure sustainable inclusive practices. For future research, further studies are needed across different educational levels and contexts, as well as the use of quantitative or mixed-method approaches to examine the broader impact and generalizability of inclusive education management.

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