

Psychological Factors Influencing Leadership, Diversity and Equality for Better Inclusive Education Practices

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Abstracts: To promote inclusive practices holistically within Indonesia's school system, three ideas—leadership, diversity, and equality—have been constructed and integrated within the operationalization of the inclusive education concept. This study has been carried out to understand the influence of leadership, diversity, and equality factors on inclusive practices in schools, especially in Indonesia. This study used a correlational research method with a questionnaire as the data collection technique. Questionnaires were distributed to 212 respondents living in West Java Province, Indonesia. The research was based on the theory of inclusion, equality, diversity, and leadership in teaching and learning. The data analysis, using multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), revealed that female teachers had good knowledge and were found to be prospective teachers with better support for inclusive education. However, it has been established that variations exist regarding the way special education teachers and general teachers address practical leadership, diversity, and equality in an inclusive learning environment. Experienced teachers, in support of inclusive practices within education, were observed to understand their leadership style, perceptions regarding the equality of learners, and how they handle students' diversity within a school enclosure. It has been concluded that the attitudes of both experienced and inexperienced teachers toward leadership, equality, and diversity influence the promotion of inclusive practices.

Keywords: Leadership, Diversity, Education, Equality, Inclusive Practices

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the education sector has undergone several changes. This change represents a new order in the education sector, which includes inclusive education. A system of educational services called "inclusive education" mandates that all students with special needs attend the nearest school's regular class with their peers [1]. The usage of the inclusive education terminology for Indonesia emerged around 2001. During this time, the government initiated a pilot project, which was meant to bring an affirmative action program for disabled people to the public [2]. It later gained support in 2003 by its adoption and was officially included in the national education system framework [3]. The inclusive education model is an alternative the Indonesian government offers to ensure better services for those with different abilities [4], especially students.

However, inclusive education is not necessarily easy to implement. It is necessary to have various support factors that can improve inclusive education over time. Some supporting factors include leadership. Inclusive leadership is a collective process that exists in everyone rather than a term that denotes the position of a person who performs a task [5]. Inclusive leadership is an attitude in which leaders should not limit their relationships to only a few people [6]. Inclusive leadership is an active follower process that emphasizes the needs and expectations of followers with the guiding principle of "doing something with people " [7]. Inclusive leadership is primarily related to inclusion in both the process and goals, which can provide insight for those who care about social justice; in this case, what is meant is for those who experience disabilities both in society and at school [8,9]. From the above ideas, a common thread can be drawn that good inclusive education also requires inclusive leadership to pay attention to those with disabilities or not to limit relationships to anyone, such those with disabilities or disabilities.

Good inclusive education also requires other supporting factors, such as diversity. In this case, the concept of inclusive education implies that schools will face a variety of students [10]. Multicultural or diverse education offers an alternative through implementing educational strategies and concepts based on diversity, namely, inclusive education [11]. This means that inclusive education must indeed believe in and accommodate diversity. Without

diversity, inclusive education is difficult to implement. Progress in the inclusive field will be limited if diversity does not support inclusion [12]. To create a conducive and effective learning environment, teachers must be able to respond to the diverse needs of students [13].

Good inclusion is inseparable from equality. Of course, this is also an important factor in supporting inclusive education. Equality and inclusion are complex and interconnected concepts [14]. Equality is respecting and accepting the diversity of individuals and groups to ensure that all parties can be equal regarding access, participation, and benefits [15].

In this case, inclusion is education that respects the differences between all students; of course, this is a manifestation and description of equality in inclusive education. Reducing or preventing discrimination is with equality. This equality generally lies in the principle of inclusion itself [16]. The same treatment, or in this case, equality applied to all students in school, can inhibit the negative effects that arise, in this case, discrimination [17].

Based on the above description, we examine the extent of the influence of leadership, diversity, and equality. This study aimed to identify and analyze good inclusion practices in terms of leadership, diversity, and equality in the province of West Java.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Various studies have shown that leadership, diversity, and equality are significantly related to the success of inclusive education practices. Many studies have investigated these three aspects. However, most research has separated leadership, diversity, and equality. These three components must go hand-in-hand to optimize the development of inclusive education.

The success of varied and flexible inclusion practices in the classroom can lead to interaction, support, and adaptation, which positively affect inclusion practice [18]. In this paper, we discuss the importance of these three components. In particular, on interactions. We know that if the practice of inclusion is carried out, it must have good leadership characteristics, but if the interaction between teachers and students is still lacking, everything will be in vain. A good leader must be able to interact with anyone, such as a teacher or student. Therefore, research on the relationship between leadership, diversity, and equality aims to create inclusive education practices.

Leadership factors are positive behaviors that give members a high sense of empathy and respect for differences [19]. Of course, this would have a positive impact on inclusive education. Inclusive education is closely related to the spirit of leadership, where a teacher, either an inclusion expert or an expert in other fields, can lead and determine the appropriate approach for heterogeneous classes [20].

The development of inclusive education could be increased by building trust in stakeholders, noting that inclusive education is closely related to leadership traits. In addition to leading classes with diverse students, teachers must also be able to lead themselves to maintain consistency in their participation in developing inclusive education [21]. Teachers with limited leadership skills impact the academic outcomes of students with special needs. The presence of special needs students in regular classes is typically unimportant to teachers who lack leadership qualities. They occasionally delegate that task to teachers of students with disabilities [22].

Investigating teachers' attitudes toward facing inclusive education is a reflection of measuring how well laws regarding inclusive education (policies) can foster an understanding of equality in a teacher [23]. International policies have drafted various regulations on inclusive education to uphold equality. If a teacher turns against this policy, the teacher does not understand equality well. Attitude is an important component of inclusive education. One of the positive attitudes that teachers must possess is based on the ability to deal with diversity in students [24].

When a teacher has a good attitude while handling diverse students in regular classrooms, her learning approaches will be easier for her to carry out compared to one teacher who downplays diversity [25]. Diversity is one of the main principles for implementing inclusive education. The other main principles used were collaboration and necessity [26].

Furthermore, leadership in inclusive education affects the success of education for all. Leadership facilitates the effectiveness of inclusive education [8]. Diversity alone is insufficient for inclusion [27]. The views of various parties are needed so that there are no differences in providing services. However, one still needs to pay attention to the principles of inclusion, for example, by upholding equality. Other research discusses an institution's management in instilling a commitment to diversity and equality as a difficult challenge [28]. This applies to teachers, administrative staff and other students. Although many efforts have been made to improve equity, the results are still unclear.

Other research on leadership and diversity [29] notes three important phenomena in an inclusion institution: leadership, diversity, and awareness. These three phenomena must be applied in the development of inclusive education. This research shows that there is a misuse of the concept of diversity in inclusive education. This study discusses the truth in implementing diversity and relates it to leadership.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion are the three solutions for eliminating discriminatory behavior. All three of these factors are known to be 'anti-discriminatory'. 'Equalityists' also fully support this trend [30]. This research tries to integrate equality, diversity, and inclusion into the social life around it. As mentioned, positive leadership has an important influence on the development of inclusive education. Positive leadership can influence the development of an inclusive environment, eliminate discrimination, and foster good cooperation between related parties [31].

However, these studies do not combine leadership, diversity, and equity to underpin better inclusive education practices. Previous research has often been conducted collaborating on diversity and equality without leadership aspects. We all know that leadership is an important beginning in pioneering inclusive education. Therefore, researchers wanted to determine how effective it would be if leadership, diversity, and equality could support good inclusive education practices. These three aspects greatly influence the success of inclusive education in the future. The hypothesis is that these three important aspects will majorly impact the success of inclusive education practices if they are carried out in line and harmony.

The studies mentioned above are some of the studies conducted to test the effectiveness of leadership, diversity and equity in supporting inclusive education practices. Some of these studies conclude that leadership, diversity, and equality are important factors that support the success of inclusive education practices. However, research on these three aspects has been conducted separately. Thus, this study aimed to combine these three aspects. Thus, what will be studied is the effectiveness of leadership, diversity, and equality when combined and matched to support the good practice of inclusive education.

3. MATERIAL AND METHODS

This study used a correlational research method with a questionnaire as the data collection technique. The questionnaire was distributed to 212 respondents living in West Java. The respondents consisted of teachers at various levels, both new and experienced teachers. Respondents taken to be new teachers had less than five years of teaching experience. Meanwhile, an experienced teacher had more than five years of work experience. This method was used to accommodate a large number of participants.

The study was conducted online. The questionnaire had various questions grouped into leadership, diversity, and equality. The questions in the questionnaire focused on respondents' attitudes toward inclusive education. The leadership question group consisted of questions that used a scale to show how much the respondents agreed with statements related to their leadership attitude. This question group used a Likert scale of 1-5 to show the

respondent's agreement with their knowledge of inclusive education. The Likert scale had 5 points for strongly agree and 1 for disagree. The equality question group used a Likert scale and asked questions about the consistency and efforts of the respondents in developing inclusive education in regular schools. Cronbach's alpha for all statement items showed good internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.82$).

After all data were collected, data analysis was carried out using the multivariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) technique using the IBM SPSS Statistics 26 program. This was used to measure how influential leadership, diversity, and equality are independent variables in inclusive education in West Java.

4. RESULTS

Of the 212 respondents collected, 80.2% were women, and the rest were men. The identities they filled in showed that 62.3% of the teachers were experienced ($M = 12.3$, $SD = 10.0$). 55.7% of the respondents, 55.7% were teachers with a special educational background, and the rest were from outside fields. Not all respondents had experience interacting with persons with disabilities. From the data obtained, 70.8% directly interacted with people with disabilities before becoming teachers. The identities of the respondents as a whole are shown in the table below.

Table 1. Profile of Respondent Identities

Identity	Category	Frequency	%
Gender	Women	170	80.2
	Male	42	19.8
Background	General	132	62.3
	Special Education	80	37.7
Teacher category	General	94	44.3
	Special Education	118	55.7
Interaction	Ever	150	70.8
	Never	62	29.2
Experience	Experienced	130	61,3
	Inexperienced	82	38,7

N = 212

One-way multivariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze the data. All research variables, including leadership, diversity, and equality, were calculated using the Pearson correlation test. The correlation results fell within the ANOVA assumption, ranging from -.02 to .68, with an average correlation value of 0.30. Testing the homogeneity variance assumptions for two variables revealed insufficient variation homogeneity (Box's test and Lavene's test.05). The experience variable test's findings for the teacher category revealed a value of $>.05$.

Even though the largest standard deviation value was not four times smaller than the smallest, the ANOVA test was still run [32]. Additionally, a different sample was used in this study (i.e., a smaller sample size). ANOVA was used to analyze the data that was obtained. Results indicated that there was no statistically significant difference between the responses from male and female respondents. Wilks' $\lambda = .97$, $F(3,208) = 13.02$, $p = .096$, $\eta^2 = .03$ were the findings. However, after recalculating and counting separately for each question group, it was discovered that there was a significant difference between male and female respondents' knowledge of inclusive education (diversity) ($F(1,210) = 5.07$, $p = .05$, $\eta^2 = .024$). The results demonstrated that the female respondents' score ($M = 29.4$) was higher than the male respondents' ($M = 28.3$). At the same time, there is no significant difference for the other two groups of questions, leadership ($F(1,210) = .083$, $p = .77$, $\eta^2 = .00$) and diversity ($F(1,210) = .46$, $p = .50$, $\eta^2 = .002$).

Meanwhile, if it is seen from the background of teachers, both those with special education backgrounds or other fields, the Wilks' score $\lambda = .842$, $F(3,208) = 13.02$, $p < 0.01$, partial $\eta^2 = .16$. Similar to the previous calculation, this score was recalculated by separating each group of questions. The results show a significant difference between teachers with a special educational background and those with other educational backgrounds in the leadership question group, $F(1,210) = 8.42$, $p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .004$. Teachers with a special educational background ($M = 10.3$) scored higher than those from other fields ($M = 9.8$). And the scores obtained by the respondents regarding the diversity question group. There were also significant differences, $F(1,210) = 30.52$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .$. Of course, teachers with special educational backgrounds scored higher ($M = 30.6$) than teachers with other educational backgrounds ($M = 28.4$). The same result was obtained for the equality question group, $F(1,210) = 5.71$, $p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$. Teachers with special educational backgrounds scored higher ($M = 34.1$) than teachers with other educational backgrounds ($M = 33.1$).

Leadership, diversity, or equality Wilks' $\lambda = .956$, $F(3,208) = 3.18$, $p > 0.05$, partial $\eta^2 = .04$; there was a significant difference between special and general teachers in the entire question group concerning teacher categories. This is comparable to the previous calculation, which distinguished between each question group such that the special teachers and general teachers in the diversity question group were significantly different, $F(1,210) = 4.41$, $p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .021$. Of course, special educators scored higher than general educators ($M = 29.6$) ($M = 28.7$). However, there was no discernible difference between the special and general teachers for the leadership question group. $P = .11$, partial $\eta^2 = .012$ and $F(1,210) = 2.66$. The equivalence question group also had the following results: $F(1,210) = .00$, $p = .988$, partial $\eta^2 = .00$.

The following table displays the total results of Wilks' Lambda and ANOVA calculations:

Table 2. Summary of Wilks' Lambda and ANOVA Results

Test Variable	Wilks' λ			ANOVAs		
	Test Results	$F_{(3,208)}$	p	$F_{(1,210)}$	P	η^2
Gender	.027	2.14	.096	13.02	.096	.03
Educational Background	.000	13.02	<0.01	13.02	<0.01	.16
Teacher Category	.107	3.18	<0.05	3.18	<0.05	.04
Interaction	.003	5.37	<	5.37	<0.05	.072
Experience	.098	.85	.46	.85	.46	.15

Meanwhile, teachers who interacted with children with special needs and those who had never interacted significantly differed. Almost all the answers from each group of questions on leadership, equality, and diversity experienced differences (Wilks' $\lambda = .928$, $F(3, 208) = 5.37$, $p < 0.05$, partial $\eta^2 = .072$). Once separately calculated, an alpha level of .05. In the leadership question group, the results showed $F(1,210) = 4.17$, $p < .05$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$; teachers who had interacted before becoming teachers got higher scores ($M = 10.1$) than teachers who had never interacted with children with special needs before becoming a teacher ($M = 9.7$). Likewise, with the results of the diversity question group, which showed the results $F(1,210) = 12.02$, $p < .005$, partial $\eta^2 = .054$, of course, teachers who interacted with children with special needs had higher scores ($M = 29.6$) compared to those who never interacted at all ($M = 28.1$). However, in the equality question group, there was no significant difference ($F(1,210) = 1.87$, $p = .17$, partial $\eta^2 = .009$).

Overall, there was no significant difference in experience in undergoing the profession as a teacher between teachers who had been teachers for more than five years or less than five years, Wilks' $\lambda = .99$, $F(3, 208) = .85$, $p = .46$, partial $\eta^2 = .012$. As with other calculations, the calculation between the leadership, diversity, and equality questions found that the three results showed no significant difference: $F(1,210) = .50$, $p = .48$, partial $\eta^2 = .002$ for the question group. leadership, $F(1,210) = .754$, $p = .386$, partial $\eta^2 = .004$ for the diversity question group and $F(1,210) = .117$, $p = .73$, partial $\eta^2 = .001$ for question group equality.

The final results of the relationship between the three groups of questions can be seen in the table below

(calculation level 0.01).

Table 3. Correlation Matrix of Leadership, Diversity, and Equality

	Leadership	Diversity	Equality	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Leadership	1	.126	-.016	10	1.2
Diversity	.126	1	.681	29.2	3.0
Equality	-.016	.681	1	33.5	3.0

5. DISCUSSION

The results of this study show that, in terms of knowledge about inclusive education, female teachers have more knowledge than male teachers. However, all male and female teachers had moderate knowledge and no significant differences between male and female teachers [33]. Most male and female teachers have the same conceptual knowledge of special education [34]. However, Male and female teachers had significant differences [35]. All teachers had inclusive knowledge that tended to be good, but male teachers had more knowledge than female teachers [36].

The results of this study show that teachers with an inclusive background have better leadership than teachers with other backgrounds. However, all teachers must have a good leadership attitude to provide quality education to their students, especially students with special needs. In line with this, school leadership and a teacher are very important in providing learning opportunities for all students, especially students with special needs [37]. Teacher leadership is also key to improving school performance and education systems [38]. The leadership of every teacher is a means of building and improving learning [39].

In general, school leaders can be said to be the school's principal. Of course, the role of the principal is very important in realizing good inclusive education. The principal and the leadership model he adopts are key factors that can contribute to creating a good, inclusive environment [40]. However, leadership in inclusive education could enhance or hinder the goals of inclusive education itself. This occurs when the role model or leadership attitude contradicts the goals of inclusive education [41].

This study also found that teachers with an inclusive background had a score of diversity and equality that tended to be almost the same, but teachers with a higher inclusive background. The attitudes of all teachers, whether they have an inclusion background or not, show a positive attitude towards disabilities. This attitude certainly understands the diversity of students and provides equality for all students, both disabled and nondisabled [42,43]. This indicates that teachers' attitudes are more tolerant of cultural diversity, multiculturalism, and equality. Teachers in Ghana pay good attention to inclusive education, which shows a good attitude toward diversity and equality [44]. Increasing awareness of teacher educators from any background has increased awareness of inclusion. Of course, this also increases their awareness of diversity and equality [45].

This study also found that prospective teachers who interacted with children with special needs had better leadership and diversity attitudes than those who had never interacted with children with special needs. The equality score tended to be the same. Teachers who have interacted with children with special needs will have more confidence when handling children with special needs [46]. Of course, self-confidence is part of good leadership attitudes. When they can handle children with special needs, their attitude toward diversity and equality will be more positive. Most prospective teachers expressed concern when dealing with children with special needs. Still, they also thought that when they were able to interact with them, this could shape their attitudes better, which, of course, led to leadership attitudes, diversity, and equality for the better [47].

This study's final findings revealed no significant differences between teachers who had been teachers for a long time and new teachers regarding leadership attitudes, diversity, and equality. However, teachers who have

been teaching for a long time or are very inclusive tend to have lower caring attitudes, indicating that their leadership, diversity, and equality tend to be lower [48]. New teachers who have attended training tend to have better attitudes and knowledge regarding leadership, diversity, and equality [49]. However, experience as a long-term teacher can also affect leadership attitudes, diversity, and teacher equality [50]. Of course, from the above opinion, it is found that both new and experienced teachers influence the formation of leadership attitudes, diversity, and equality among these teachers.

6. CONCLUSIONS

From the results of this study, we can conclude that creating good inclusion practices is difficult. However, this requires various supporting factors, such as leadership, diversity, and equality. Current research rarely includes these three factors, but this study proves that leadership, diversity, and equality positively influence better inclusion practices.

Of course, from this study, it is hoped that those who want to implement good inclusion, especially inclusive schools and environments that want to be inclusive, are expected to pay attention to the three supporting factors discussed in this study. And it doesn't stop there, and it is hoped that the school and the community want their environment to be inclusive and more advanced. The factors of leadership, diversity and equality must also be implemented properly in their daily life of inclusion so that the practice of inclusion can be better in the future.

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