

Mentoring for assessment and adaptation programs for the curriculum in Inclusive Education

Pendampingan Asesmen dan Program Adaptasi Kurikulum Pendidikan Inklusif

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Abstract

This article examines the effectiveness of training and mentoring in curriculum assessment and adaptation programs for children with special needs at the elementary school level. The purpose of the community service is to describe teachers' abilities in assessing and adapting the curriculum and to evaluate the impact of ongoing mentoring on the implementation of an inclusive curriculum. The method used is ABCD (Asset Based Community Development), with an established framework for empowering the community. The findings of this community service activity indicate that effective training and mentoring can improve teachers' skills in curriculum assessment and adaptation, and have a positive impact on the learning process of children with special needs

Keywords: *Inclusive education, Curriculum adaptation, Curriculum assessment, Elementary school, teacher training*

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengkaji efektivitas pelatihan dan pendampingan dalam program penilaian dan adaptasi kurikulum untuk anak berkebutuhan khusus di jenjang sekolah dasar. Tujuan pengabdian adalah untuk mendeskripsikan kemampuan guru dalam menilai dan menyesuaikan kurikulum serta untuk mengevaluasi dampak pendampingan berkelanjutan terhadap implementasi kurikulum inklusif. Metode yang digunakan ialah ABCD (*Asset Based Community Development*), dengan kerangka kerja yang mapan untuk memberdayakan masyarakat. Temuan hasil kegiatan pengabdian ini menunjukkan bahwa pelatihan dan pendampingan yang efektif dapat meningkatkan keterampilan guru dalam penilaian dan adaptasi kurikulum, serta berdampak positif pada proses pembelajaran anak berkebutuhan khusus.

Kata kunci: *Pendidikan inklusif, Adaptasi kurikulum, Asesmen kurikulum, Sekolah dasar, Pelatihan guru*

1. Introduction

Inclusive education is an important foundation in ensuring that every child, including those with special needs, can obtain equal and quality access to education (Khairuddin, 2020). Inclusive education requires teachers who are skilled in assessing and adapting the curriculum to meet the individual needs of children with special needs (Phytanza et al., 2023). In the context of elementary schools, an adaptive curriculum is essential to ensure the accessibility of education for all students. However, many teachers do not yet have sufficient skills to carry out curriculum assessment and adaptation effectively.

The importance of an inclusive education curriculum in public elementary schools cannot be overstated, as it serves as a critical framework for fostering an environment where all students, regardless of their abilities, can thrive academically and socially. An inclusive curriculum not only promotes diversity and acceptance but also equips teachers with the necessary tools to address the varied learning needs of their students (Deroncele-Acosta & Ellis, 2024). This approach is essential in creating equitable educational opportunities and reducing barriers to learning.

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Although there has been significant progress in implementing inclusive principles, major challenges remain in terms of teacher training and mentoring at the elementary school level. Many teachers face difficulties in implementing a curriculum that is tailored to the individual needs of children with special needs, especially in terms of curriculum assessment and adaptation (Hakim Hidayat et al., 2024). This problem indicates the need for a systematic approach to training and mentoring that can improve teacher skills in assessing and adapting the curriculum.

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Training and mentoring of elementary school teachers in the context of curriculum assessment and adaptation programs for children with special needs is a multifaceted effort that requires a comprehensive understanding of inclusive education, teacher competencies, and collaborative relationships between educational institutions and schools. Research shows that pre-service teacher training significantly improves teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education, reduces anxiety and discomfort when interacting with children with special needs (Lisdiana et al., 2018). This training not only increases knowledge but also increases confidence in handling diverse classroom situations (Humaida et al., 2022) (Qandhi & Kurniawati, 2019). Furthermore, teacher competency development is very important, research shows that ongoing professional development, such as workshops and seminars, can effectively improve teacher skills and knowledge, especially in inclusive environments (Areta & Purwatiningsih, 2023). This is echoed by findings that highlight the importance of collaborative relationships between universities and schools, which can facilitate ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers (Rasmitadila & Rachmadtullah, 2023).

In addition, adaptation of teaching methods and materials is essential to effectively meet the needs of children with special needs (Suharsiwi, 2017). Teachers must be equipped with the right pedagogical knowledge and resources to implement effective reading interventions and inclusive practices (Mahlangu & Mtshali, 2024). The lack of adequately trained teachers in these areas has been identified as a significant barrier to the success of inclusive education (Arnaiz-Sánchez et al., 2023). Thus, training programs should focus on providing teachers with the skills necessary to adapt their teaching strategies and materials to meet the diverse needs of students (Salim Salabi, 2022).

In addition, the integration of differentiated instruction training has been shown to increase teachers' sense of efficacy in inclusive classrooms (Tambusai & Umami, 2019) (Moosa & Shareefa, 2019). This approach allows teachers to tailor their teaching to the diverse learning needs of students, thereby promoting a more inclusive environment (Rachmawati et al., 2018). The importance of emotional readiness and the ability to use appropriate teaching methods for inclusive education cannot be overstated (Christine et al., 2024), as these factors significantly influence the effectiveness of teaching practices in diverse classrooms (Sirem & Çatal, 2023) (Androshchuk et al., 2021).

Analysis of the existing literature shows a significant gap in understanding the effectiveness of training and mentoring, especially in the context of curriculum assessment and adaptation. Most previous studies have focused more on the basic theory of inclusive education without paying in-depth attention to the process of practical training and ongoing mentoring. Therefore, this study offers an important contribution by filling this gap, providing new insights

into how training and mentoring methods can be optimized to support teachers in facing practical challenges in the field.

The novelty of this study lies in its comprehensive approach that combines elements of intensive training and ongoing mentoring, as well as an in-depth evaluation of its impact. This study not only provides empirical data on the effectiveness of the program, but also offers practical recommendations that can be implemented in elementary schools to improve the quality of inclusive education.

The results of preliminary research related to early detection of children with special needs in 12 schools in the Jabodetabek area found that only 2 schools had an entrance assessment for screening for children with special needs or around 84% of parents were also found that 79% did not have an individual education program for children with special needs. Research conducted in the 2018-2020 PDUPT research, also the 2021-2022 PTUPT research, namely application development is needed by teachers as a learning strategy in schools, social skills assessment which is the output of the research can also be used as a model for assessing social skills for children with special needs in schools. So, it is based on the urgent need to improve teacher skills in managing inclusive curriculum effectively, which in turn can improve learning outcomes for children with special needs. This study aims to explore and evaluate the effectiveness of training and mentoring in curriculum assessment and adaptation programs for elementary school teachers. Specifically, this study focuses on how structured training and ongoing mentoring affect teachers' ability to assess and adapt the curriculum for children with special needs, as well as their impact on the implementation of inclusive curriculum in the classroom. The main objective of this study is to provide empirical evidence regarding the success of the training and mentoring methods applied, as well as to identify the most effective practices in the context of inclusive education.

2. METODE

Design

This study uses the ABCD (Asset Based Community Development) approach that focuses on developing potential and resources that already exist in the community. This design aims to empower elementary school teachers in implementing inclusive education through assessment and curriculum adaptation programs (TÜMEN AKYILDIZ & AHMED, 2021).

Location and Participants

This study was conducted in several elementary schools in [mention specific locations]. Participants consisted of 12 elementary school teachers involved in inclusive education, as well as representatives from the community and parents of students. The criteria for selecting participants included experience in teaching and involvement in inclusive programs.

Research Stages

- 1) Conducting an analysis of the potential that exists in the community, including teacher experience, local resources, and support from parents. The methods used include in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with teachers and community members.
- 2) Developing relevant assessment instruments to measure the needs and abilities of teachers in implementing the inclusive education curriculum. The assessment was conducted through surveys and classroom observations to obtain comprehensive data.
- 3) Based on the assessment results, the research team designed a curriculum adaptation program that was appropriate to the needs of teachers and students. This program included training, workshops, and the preparation of inclusive learning modules.

- 4) The designed program was implemented within 3 months. During implementation, periodic evaluations were conducted through observation and feedback from participants. The evaluation method used a predetermined assessment rubric.
- 5) Holding reflection and discussion sessions to encourage teachers' capacity building in implementing inclusive education sustainably. This activity aims to create an active learning community.

Data obtained from interviews, observations, and surveys were analyzed using qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative analysis was conducted using a thematic approach to identify patterns and themes that emerged from the data, while quantitative analysis was conducted to measure the effectiveness of the curriculum adaptation program through descriptive and inferential statistics

The test was designed to measure teachers' skills in assessment and curriculum adaptation before and after the training. The test included questions on assessment techniques, knowledge of curriculum adaptation, and inclusive learning strategies. A questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data on teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the training and mentoring. The questionnaire included items on participant satisfaction, assessment of skills, and perceptions of the benefits of the training. The questionnaires were completed before and after the training program

Data from the tests and questionnaires were statistically analyzed to provide an overview of the level of teacher satisfaction and perception after participating in curriculum adaptation training for children with special needs. This analysis includes measuring the average, frequency distribution, and comparison between times (Kotronoulas et al., 2023). The assessment criteria for early detection of children with special needs in inclusive schools are based on the following table (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017), (SÜRÜCÜ & MASLAKÇI, 2020).

Table 1. Aspect of Child Capacity Assessment

No	Assessment Aspect	Child Capacity				
		VWD	WD	NYMD	NM	NMM
1.	Cognitive	96	72 - 95	48 - 71	24 - 45	0 - 23
2.	Behavior	96	72 - 95	48 - 71	24 - 47	0 - 23
3.	Sensory	120	90 - 119	60 - 89	30 - 57	0 - 29
4.	Communication	28	21 - 27	14 - 20	7 - 13	0 - 6
5.	Independence	56	42 - 55	28 - 41	14 - 28	0 - 13
TOTAL		396	297 - 391	198 - 292	99 - 168	0 - 94

Note:

VWD : Developing Very Well

WD : Developing Well

NYMD : Not Yet Developing Maximally

NM : Needs Monitoring

NMM : Needs More Monitoring

Visualization in the form of a flow diagram to clarify the stages of activity is shown in Figure 1.

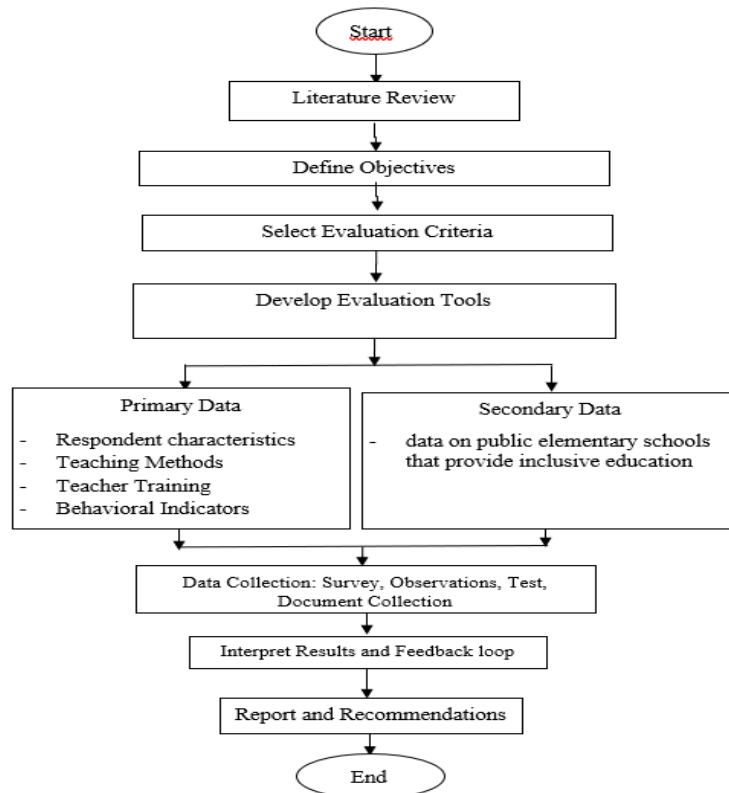


Figure 1. Flow Diagram of Community Service Activities

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 2. Research Completion Target

Output	Completion Target		
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Partner Skill Enhancement	Training Preparation I ✓ Coordination with HKMI and Partners ✓ Participant registration ✓ Participant selection ✓ Determining training time ✓ Making flyers ✓ Preparing instructors and mentors ✓ Preparing instruments ✓ Making training modules ✓ Preparing necessary tools ✓ Preparing infrastructure	Assessment Training Assessment of ABK abilities ✓ Initial Assessment ✓ 3-day screening training ✓ 2-day child development screening practice ✓ Discussion and Q & A ✓ Evaluation Training Preparation 2 ✓ Training time information on the flyers ✓ Preparation of teachers and assistants ✓ Preparation of training module 2 ✓ Preparation of necessary tools ✓ Preparation of facilities and infrastructure	Practice at school ✓ Group division and practice location ✓ Preparation of mentors according to group ✓ Curriculum adaptation practice module ✓ Preparation of necessary tools ✓ Practice ✓ Evaluation

Training and mentoring, both theoretical and practical, are carried out by carrying out the following stages:

- 1) The program begins by conducting a needs analysis of teachers and school principals, representatives of Model Inclusive Elementary Schools, and Non-Model Inclusive Elementary Schools, the Education Office through FGD activities and filling out self-report inventories.
- 2) After mapping the needs, a validated training activity module is prepared to increase teacher knowledge regarding assessment activities for child development problems, children with autism, ADHD, ADD and children with other developmental disabilities.
- 3) After the module is prepared, recruitment and selection of teacher participants from 51 Non-Model Elementary Schools are carried out to participate in the training program to increase understanding of assessment activities and curriculum adaptation through seminars, workshops and field practice.
- 4) In each activity, the effectiveness of the activity is measured through pre-tests and post-tests, and monitoring is carried out for programs that have been carried out through interviews with the HKMI Foundation, workgroup and the Education Office.
- 5) Mentoring program in practice at school or internship (PPL). The program is carried out with a weighting of 40% theory, 60% practice.

Assistance in the preparation of curriculum adaptation programs and problem solving for handling ABK in schools is carried out through discussions and direct practice.



Figure 2. Early Detection Assessment Training Activity Documentation (Theory & Practice)
Source: Community Service Activity Documents (2024)



Figure 3. Early Detection Assessment Training Activity Documentation (Theory & Practice)
Source: Community Service Activity Documents (2024)

The results of the development assessment of one of the children with special needs from the training and mentoring of this community service activity are presented as follows:

Table 3. Results of the Assessment of Children with Special Needs

Child Identity

Child name	MF
Gender	Male
Place, Birth Date	Depok, 24 June 2017
Child Education	Elementary Education
Birth order of children	2

Child Health History	
Children born with normal delivery birth	No
Children born with caesarean section	Yes
During the delivery process, the child is assisted with aids	No
Children lack oxygen during the delivery process	No
Children have a history of congenital diseases since birth (heart, seizures, asthma, etc.)	No
Congenital diseases still exist today	No
Children born at full term	Yes
The condition of the child when the baby has jaundice	Yes

Family Data Information	
Father's occupation	Employee
Mother's occupation	Professional
Family Health History	
Mother has chronic/comorbid illness during pregnancy	No
Mother takes regular medication during pregnancy	Yes
There are extended family members who have developmental problems (such as: late talkers, Autism, ADHD)	No
There are siblings who have developmental problems (such as: late talkers, Autism, ADHD)	Yes

Child Risk Factor Points

No	Children's Environmental Conditions	
1.	Family conditions	5
2.	Child's health history	3
3.	Family health history	2

Child Development Advice

Children in the medium risk category require more intensive monitoring and support compared to children in the low-risk category, but not as intensive as the high-risk category.

Parents are advised to monitor development and pay more attention to child care by providing adequate nutrition, ongoing support. Create a safe, loving, and stable home atmosphere so that children feel safe and comfortable

No	Assessment Aspect	
1.	Cognitive	50
2.	Behavior	50

3.	Sensory	62
4.	Communication	15
5.	Independence	30
		207

Child Development Advice

Not Yet Developing Maximally (NYMD)	Children in the category of lack of stimulation in development are seen in cognitive, behaviour, sensory, communication and independence aspects. Parents are advised to provide a comfortable and conducive environment at home, train children or put them in school according to their level. If possible, parents can check further and consult with a doctor in child development, in order to obtain accurate examinations and good medical and therapeutic treatment as needed
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After the assessment results are obtained, the next step is to carry out periodic monitoring of the children's progress and evaluate the effectiveness of the program that has been implemented. This can be done by collecting data from observations, interviews, and feedback. The effectiveness of the program that has been carried out is assessed through filling out questionnaires by participants and also interviews, by looking at the achievement indicators according to the objectives of the activity. The results of the assessment of the level of satisfaction of participants in the training and mentoring activities for the assessment and adaptation of the curriculum for children with special needs in the context of community service activities at the University of Muhammadiyah Jakarta are presented as follows.

Table 4. Summary of Results of Analysis of the Level of Satisfaction of ABK Curriculum Training

No	Description	Score
1	The training provided by the UMJ lecturer team is very much needed by the training participants (elementary school teachers)	4.85
2	The training provided by the resource team is very useful for the participants	4.76
3	The training provided by the resource team is right on target for the training participants	4.64
4	The material presented is in accordance with the needs	4.72
5	The material presented is very useful	4.76
6	The material presented is right on target	4.64
7	The material is given completely	4.31
8	The material needs to be further explored	4.52
9	The speaker prepares the material well	4.4
10	The speaker uses interesting media	4.28
11	The implementation time is sufficient	4.08
12	The implementation time does not interfere with the main tasks of the training participants	4.08
13	The speaker provides time for questions and answers	4.42
14	There is a break time between materials	4.38
15	The committee monitors and evaluates the activities	4.27
16	Suggestions and input for the committee	3.42
Total Average		4.41

Table 4 shows a summary of the results of the analysis of the level of satisfaction of participants in the training on early detection assessment and adaptation of the curriculum for children with special needs, which shows that the total score obtained was 4.41, which is included in the very satisfactory category.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that training and mentoring provided to elementary school teachers significantly improved their skills in assessing and adapting the curriculum for children with special needs. This finding is in line with previous studies showing that structured training can improve teachers' attitudes and confidence in facing the challenges of inclusive education (Qandhi & Kurniawati, 2019; Rasmitadila et al., 2022). This improvement in skills not only has an impact on teachers' ability to adapt the curriculum but also contributes to improving the quality of learning for students with special needs.

One important aspect identified in this study is the effectiveness of the training method that combines theory and practice. With a weighting of 40% theory and 60% practice, teachers not only gain conceptual knowledge but also direct experience in implementing the strategies they have learned. This is in line with recommendations in the literature that emphasize the importance of practical experience in teacher professional development. Ongoing mentoring after training has also been shown to be effective in helping teachers overcome challenges that arise in the field, thus supporting better implementation of the inclusive curriculum (Hammond et al., 2017).

However, although the research results show significant progress, there are still challenges that need to be addressed. For example, the initial results showing the low number of schools that have assessment programs for children with special needs (only 2 out of 12 schools) indicate a gap in the implementation of inclusive education policies. This indicates the need for further efforts to increase awareness and understanding of the importance of appropriate assessments for children with special needs among educators and school administrators. In addition, this study also highlights the importance of collaboration between universities and schools in continuing professional development. Strong relationships between higher education institutions and schools can create opportunities for teachers to continue learning and adapt to the diverse needs of students (Rasmitadila et al., 2022). Therefore, the development of training programs that involve this collaboration should be a priority in efforts to improve the quality of inclusive education.

The results of this study indicate that training and mentoring provided to elementary school teachers significantly improved their skills in assessing and adapting the curriculum for children with special needs. This finding aligns with existing literature that emphasizes the positive impact of structured professional development on teachers' attitudes and competencies in inclusive education (Qandhi & Kurniawati, 2019; Rasmitadila et al., 2022). Specifically, the increase in teachers' confidence and ability to implement inclusive practices is supported by research indicating that targeted training can reduce anxiety and enhance efficacy in diverse classroom settings (Lisdiana et al., 2018).

However, despite these positive outcomes, the study also identified several challenges that educators face during the implementation of inclusive education practices. For instance, the low number of schools with established assessment programs for children with special needs (only 2 out of 12 schools) highlights a significant gap in the application of inclusive education policies. This finding resonates with the literature, which points to systemic barriers such as inadequate resources, lack of administrative support, and insufficient training as critical obstacles to effective inclusive education (Arnaiz-Sánchez et al., 2023).

To address these challenges, it is essential to develop comprehensive strategies that involve collaboration between educational institutions and schools. The literature suggests that fostering strong partnerships can facilitate ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers, thereby enhancing their capacity to meet the diverse needs of students (Rasmitadila et al., 2022). Additionally, implementing information campaigns and further training focused on the importance of appropriate assessments for children with special needs can help bridge the knowledge gap among educators and school administrators.

Furthermore, the integration of differentiated instruction training, as highlighted in previous studies, can empower teachers to tailor their teaching methods to accommodate the varied learning styles of students (Tambusai & Umami, 2019). This approach not only promotes

a more inclusive environment but also aligns with the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which advocates for flexible learning environments that can accommodate individual learning differences (Meyer et al., 2014).

4. CONCLUSION

This community service activity has successfully evaluated the effectiveness of training and mentoring in the assessment and curriculum adaptation program for children with special needs at the elementary school level. The results of the community service implementation show that structured training and ongoing mentoring significantly improve teacher skills in curriculum assessment and adaptation, and have a positive impact on the learning process of children with special needs. Although there has been significant progress, there are still challenges in implementing inclusive education policies, especially related to the small number of schools that have adequate assessment programs. Therefore, it is important to continue to develop and strengthen training programs and cooperation between universities and schools.

The recommendations submitted are:

- 1) It is important to increase awareness and understanding among educators and school administrators about the importance of appropriate assessment for children with special needs. Information campaigns and additional training can help address this gap.
- 2) It is recommended that educational institutions and governments develop more comprehensive ongoing training programs for teachers, focusing on assessment and curriculum adaptation for children with special needs. These programs should include a balance of theoretical and practical elements, and provide opportunities for teachers to share experiences and strategies.
- 3) Encourage closer collaboration between universities and schools in teacher professional development. Programs that involve lecturers and education students in mentoring teachers in the field can strengthen inclusive education practices.
- 4) Further research is needed to explore the long-term impact of this training and mentoring on learning outcomes for students with special needs. This research should also include an analysis of best practices in implementing inclusive curricula in various school contexts.
- 5) Governments and educational institutions need to develop policies that support the development of inclusive education, including adequate resource allocation for teacher training and assessment programs for children with special needs.

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