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Demikian surat tugas ini dibuat agar digunakan sebagaimana mestinya atas perhatian dan kerjasamanya, kami ucapkan terima kasih dan penghargaan yang tinggi.

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# Adjustment of Inclusive Education Courses with Inclusive Elementary Schools Needs: Part of the University School Collaborative Partnership in Indonesia

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## Abstract

*Collaboration between universities and inclusive elementary schools, especially in the adjustment of inclusive education courses, has not overcome the problem of inclusive education practices. Although some topics of inclusive education lessons are relevant to problems in inclusive classrooms, they have not been able to fully meet the needs of inclusive elementary schools. The purpose of this study was to explore the opinions of faculty lecturers regarding the adjustment of inclusive education courses to overcome the problems faced by inclusive elementary schools. This research is a case study involving five department lecturers who teach inclusive education courses. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis. The study results resulted in three main themes: benefits, formulations, and topics of inclusive education courses. The adjustment of inclusive education courses is the basis for universities and inclusive elementary schools in dealing with the dynamics of change and development of inclusive education. In addition, as a form of collaboration between the two parties to obtain positive reciprocal benefits in implementing inclusive education.*

*Keywords: Inclusive elementary school; collaborative; partnership; university*

## Introduction

The commitment of Indonesian government to implementing inclusive education, particularly in elementary schools, is by issuing a rule that universities that run the primary school teacher education department must provide inclusive education courses. This rule is an obligation for every department of primary school teacher education at universities, so there must be adjustments that are in line and relevant to the needs of inclusive primary schools. For this reason, a collaboration between departments and inclusive primary schools must be well established.

Collaboration between universities and inclusive elementary schools is one form of cooperation that must carry out in inclusive implementation (Causton-Theoharis et al., 2011; Waitoller & Kozleski, 2013). So far, various problems in inclusive education in inclusive elementary schools have not received a comprehensive solution (Carrington, 1999; Rasmitadila et al., 2021). Although there has been a cooperative relationship between universities--departments-- such as the elementary school teacher education as the provider of inclusive education courses, it has not been able to meet the needs and solve problems faced by inclusive elementary schools (Rasmitadila et.al, 2021; Loreman, 2007). Several programs from the department, such as student internships, field practices, and research conducted by students and lecturers, only position inclusive elementary schools as objects (Forlin & Chambers, 2011; Sharma et al., 2006). There are no direct benefits for inclusive primary schools, especially in solving inclusive problems. This study aimed to explore the opinion of faculty lecturers regarding the adjustment of inclusive education courses to overcome the difficulties faced by inclusive elementary schools. Adjustment of courses must

involve all parties, both the university--department-- and inclusive elementary schools, as a form of collaboration between the two parties.

**Methods and Materials**

This research uses qualitative research with a case study approach. The study involved five lecturers at a university that organizes elementary school teacher education programs and teaches inclusive education courses. The average teaching experience is 5-10 years. Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews. Interviews were conducted for 1-2 hours for five days and discussed the adjustment of inclusive education courses that were relevant to the issue of inclusive education in inclusive primary schools. The data from the interviews were then transcribed as a basis for analyzing the data. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is used to obtain relevant themes from the results of this study (Braun & Clarke, 2012). To make it easier for researchers to code and analyze data, Nvivo 12 is used, especially in making categorizations and producing accurate themes. Data from interviews are entered into Nodes and Codes to be grouped into data with relevant codes. Thematic maps show the organization of concepts according to various levels, and potential interactions between concepts are then developed.

**Results and Discussion**

Research findings indicate that the adjustment of inclusive education courses to the needs of inclusive elementary schools produces four main themes: benefits, formulation, and subject topics.
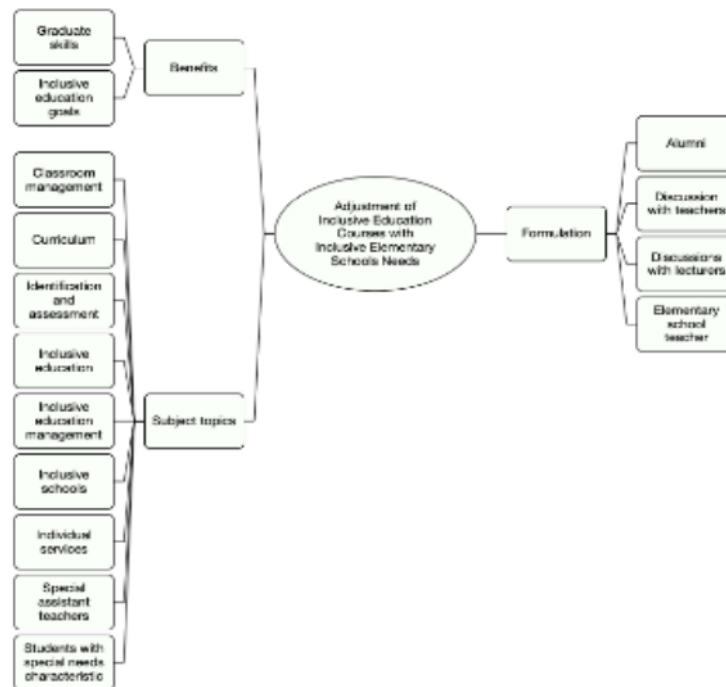


Figure 1. Themes of the data analysis

**Benefits**

The findings of the benefits are the benefits of inclusive education courses related to graduate skills and inclusive education goals. Graduate skills relate to graduates' output when they finish their studies. In the opinion of participants, inclusive education courses will benefit students. Students will learn about handling students with special needs (SSNs), adding insight into inclusive education when they become teachers. Students will also get an overview of the practice of inclusive education in inclusive elementary schools through various programs from this course. So that the purpose of inclusive education is apparent, and in particular, students are expected to understand the concept and apply it in inclusive primary schools. This opinion is appropriate to be expressed by one of the lecturers:

> *"The graduate teacher candidates have the knowledge, insight, and skills in dealing with those with special needs."*

The benefits of inclusive education courses for students must be obtained so that the concept of inclusive education is theoretical and can also be practiced in inclusive classrooms through internships and field practices (Carrington et al., 2015; Brandon & Charlton, 2011). This program aims to provide students with a teaching experience in inclusive primary schools and help classroom teachers solve problems in inclusive classrooms.

**Formulation**

The formulation of inclusive education courses is the initial plan of choosing the topic of the courses that will be given to students. This formulation found that the formulation of subject topics came from the involvement of alumni, discussions with lecturers, teachers, and elementary school teacher education associations. The participation of alumni is essential so that there is relevance between the content of the courses and the problems teachers face in inclusive elementary schools. Usually, the alumni involved are alumni who have taught in inclusive elementary schools. Likewise, the teachers involved are teachers who teach in inclusive classes. The university--department--invites teachers to discuss problems in inclusive classes. In addition to teachers, the department also invites lecturers directly involved in teaching inclusive education courses. The lecturers discuss with each other, formulate subject topics, and make lesson plans together--team teaching-- to become courses following the problems in inclusive elementary schools. Usually, another reference for the department is the guide from the elementary school teacher education association. So, the department can combine input from lecturers and associations. One of the lecturers expressed his opinion:

> *" Usually, we discuss with Inclusive Elementary School teachers to find out the problems in the field regarding inclusive education in Elementary Schools."*

The formulation of inclusive education courses must be carried out by all stakeholders involved so that they are relevant and in sync with the problems and needs of inclusive elementary schools (Majoko, 2019; Budnyk & Sydoriv, 2019). All parties can formulate together by mapping the problems and needs in inclusive classes. Based on this formula, the teacher education department can create subject topics and basic standard learning plans that each lecturer can flexibly develop.

**Subject topics**

One of the results of the formulation of inclusive education courses is the subject topics used in semester lectures. Subject topics in inclusive education courses include inclusive education, inclusive

schools, students with special needs characteristics, identification and assessment, special assistant teachers, curriculum, individual services, inclusive education management, and classroom management. This topic must exist and be studied by students because many problems that occur in inclusive elementary schools are related to these topics. One of the lecturers argued:

> *"... must be introduced to the characteristics of children, any students in inclusive schools, starting with regular students there are also SSNs."*

The topic of the courses given by the lecturer must be able to describe the whole practice of inclusive education. The topic content of the course is the result of a joint formulation of all stakeholders of inclusive education providers so that they can solve problems that occur in inclusive elementary schools. The universities and inclusive elementary schools must reach a mutual agreement in determining the topic of inclusive education courses (Mittler, 2012; Rasmitadila et al., 2022). The needs needed by inclusive elementary schools can be met (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010; Slee, 2011). At the same time, the department gets the best input related to inclusive education courses.

## Conclusions

This study aimed to explore the opinion of faculty lecturers regarding the adjustment of inclusive education courses to overcome the problems faced by inclusive elementary schools. Adjustment of courses must involve all parties, both the university (department) and inclusive elementary schools, as a form of collaboration between the two parties. The adjustment of inclusive education courses is the basis for university and inclusive elementary schools in dealing with the dynamics of change and development of inclusive education. In addition, as a form of collaboration between the two parties to obtain positive reciprocal benefits in implementing inclusive education.

## Acknowledgments

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