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## An Analysis of Special Education Teacher Recruitment and Quality Development in Banjarmasin City

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**Abstract:** This study aims to analyze the recruitment system and quality development of special education teachers in Banjarmasin City. A qualitative approach was used with a multi-site study method with data collection techniques in the form of interviews, observation and documentation analysis. The informants in this study consisted of the Education and Culture Office of South Kalimantan Province, the Banjarmasin City Education Office, level school principals, and special education teachers. The results of this study show that the special education teacher recruitment system still faces challenges in terms of the availability of educators who have competencies in accordance with the needs of inclusive education. In addition, the implementation of training and development programs for special education teachers is still not optimal in improving the quality of inclusive education services. This research emphasizes the importance of a more comprehensive policy in recruiting and developing special education teachers to provide better education services for students with special needs.

**Keyword:** Recruitment, quality development, special education teachers

### INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education is an educational service for children with special needs in regular schools, with a focus on meeting the needs of students who have disorders, but still pay attention to the potential intelligence and unique talents of these students (Istiyati, 2023). Inclusive education in Indonesia has been an ongoing initiative since 2003, with efforts to encourage the sustainability of inclusive education programs. Indonesia has experienced a significant increase in the number of schools offering inclusive education at various levels of education, indicating a positive trend towards inclusiveness in the education sector (Astuti, 2020). Despite the efforts to advance inclusive education, there are still many challenges that hinder its effective implementation, requiring greater attention from all stakeholders in the education system. The mismatch between inclusive education policy and practice in Indonesia is a significant challenge (Jusni, 2023). There are still shortcomings in the implementation of inclusive education, especially regarding the provision of special education teachers (Yusuf, 2020). Special education teachers play an important role in adapting to changing circumstances and providing tailored support for learners with special needs in inclusive schools.

In Indonesia, the regulatory landscape governing special education teachers covers various aspects, including academic qualification standards, teacher competencies and professional development opportunities (Zahara, 2021). While regulations have

provided a fundamental framework for the practice of special education teachers in Indonesia, there are still challenges that need to be addressed, namely the recruitment of special education teachers (Pujaningsih, 2020). In addition, the need for continuous professional development and support for special education teachers is critical to improve self-efficacy, adaptability and overall effectiveness in an inclusive education environment (Supratiwi, 2021).

One city that has contributed to the implementation of inclusive education is Banjarmasin. Banjarmasin has been working to create a more inclusive and accessible city for people with disabilities, especially in terms of access to education. However, the implementation of inclusive education in Banjarmasin faces complex challenges, especially in terms of recruiting and developing the quality of special education teachers. One of the main problems faced in inclusive education in Banjarmasin is the lack of qualified and competent special education teachers. Recruitment of special education teachers is often done without clear standards regarding their academic and professional qualifications.

As a result, many special education teachers in inclusive schools do not have adequate special education backgrounds, making it difficult for them to meet the learning needs of learners with special needs. In addition, the lack of advanced training and professional development programs available for teachers improves the competence of teachers who have already been recruited. Each school also has a

different policy in recruiting teachers, which is often influenced by budget availability and immediate needs in the field.

Based on the phenomena described above, this study aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of the recruitment process and quality development of special education teachers in Banjarmasin City. By understanding the weaknesses in the recruitment system and identifying professional development needs, this research is expected to provide comprehensive recommendations to improve the quality of inclusive education in Banjarmasin, especially in the recruitment system and quality development for special education teachers who are the most important part of inclusive education.

## METHOD

This study used qualitative research to explore the recruitment system and quality development of special education teachers in Banjarmasin City. Multi-site is a qualitative research approach that involves case studies in more than one location or site to understand similar or related phenomena. This research not only looks at phenomena in one context, but also compares them in several different places to identify patterns, variations or differences that exist (Creswell, 2017). The location of this research is in Banjarmasin City. The informants in this study are the Education and Culture Office of South Kalimantan Province, the Banjarmasin City Education Office, principals at the elementary, junior high, and vocational school levels, and special education teachers at the elementary, junior high, and vocational school levels. The data collection techniques in this research are observation, interview, and documentation. Then, for data analysis using data analysis techniques refers to the four frameworks developed by Miles and Huberman (2014).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The recruitment process for special education teachers in Banjarmasin City and South Kalimantan Province begins with the schools reporting their needs to the education office. The next stage is the opening of job vacancies by the relevant office, administrative selection, and interviews conducted by the office or school to assess the eligibility of prospective teachers. This recruitment policy emphasizes the importance of coordination between schools and education offices to ensure the need for special education teachers is met appropriately. At the primary and junior secondary levels, the Banjarmasin city education office has full control over the recruitment process, including opening vacancies and conducting interviews by schools. At the senior secondary/vocational level, the South Kalimantan Provincial Office of Education and

Culture plays an important role in managing all stages, from opening vacancies to teacher placement.

In line with Basuki's (2019) view, the success of an organization, including in the education sector, is highly dependent on the quality of the recruited workforce. Therefore, each stage in the recruitment process must be carried out systematically and data-based in order to produce competent educators. In addition, according to Alfiyanto (2022), educators must meet predetermined academic standards, have professional competence, and have educator certification. They must also be in good physical and mental condition in order to provide optimal education services. As for the source of special education teacher recruitment in Banjarmasin City, it uses external recruitment, which refers to the recruitment of education personnel outside the school. External recruitment allows educational organizations to obtain educators who are more skilled and have competencies according to specific needs (Robinson & Darling-Hammond, 2020). In addition, research from Ingersoll et al. (2022) confirmed that external recruitment methods are more effective in increasing the diversity of the teaching force and accelerating adaptation to the evolving challenges of inclusive education.

Then, the educational qualifications for special education teachers in Banjarmasin city and the ideal qualifications for special education teachers in the Banjarmasin area and South Kalimantan are S1 Special Education (PKh) or Special Education (PLB) graduates. However, the reality on the ground shows that there is flexibility in qualifications, especially in schools like SDN Kebun Bunga 1 Banjarmasin. The limited number of PKh/PLB graduates who are willing to become special education teachers means that schools provide opportunities for graduates from other educational backgrounds, such as counseling, PGSD or psychology, as long as they have the commitment and ability to overcome the challenges of inclusive education. In the national context, formal education qualifications for prospective special education teachers in Indonesia generally require them to complete a bachelor's degree in education, specializing in special education or a related field (Rahman et al., 2018). This suggests that while educational qualifications are important, they do not necessarily correlate with teacher self-efficacy.

The main competency expected of special education teachers in Banjarmasin and South Kalimantan is pedagogic competence, which includes understanding the needs of children with special needs, learning strategies, assessment, evaluation and curriculum modification. This is in line with the views of the education office and school principals who emphasize the importance of pedagogical competence in assisting and understanding the various special needs, whether physical, sensory, cognitive or social-emotional. However, flexibility is also applied in some schools, especially in cases of urgent need. In addition

to competence, work experience for special education teachers is also flexible. The main focus remains on the ability of prospective teachers to assist and understand the needs of students with special needs. According to Rusdi (2023), the recruitment process of educators aims to find teachers who have competence, skills and expertise in educating and carrying out the learning process in accordance with their fields. In addition to the competency aspect, attitude and integrity are also important factors in the teaching profession.

Furthermore, training programs to develop the quality of special education teachers in Banjarmasin city include various initiatives organized by the government and schools. The main training available is Technical Guidance (Bimtek) organized by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the local education office. In line with Arfiana's research (2019) entitled "Evaluation of the Implementation of Inclusive Education at the Surabaya City Junior High School Level", improving the competence of special education teachers is the main focus in inclusive education. One of the efforts made is to encourage the participation of special education teachers in various trainings organized by the government. Mayya (2019) added that improving the quality of special education teachers can be supported through education and training programs (DIKLAT), in-house training, comparative studies, and scholarships for teachers who want to improve their skills. In addition, Platform Merdeka Mengajar (PMM) is also a learning tool that can be accessed by special education teachers and teachers with non-linear educational backgrounds, providing opportunities for certification and strengthening inclusion competencies. Additional training programs such as the Special Education Teacher Working Group (KKG-GPK), which was initiated by special education teachers in Banjarmasin. The perceived obstacle is the limited budget, which affects the frequency, scope of participants and training materials. On the other hand, several parties mentioned that the obstacle lies more in the implementation of the training results, where the success of the training program cannot be entirely dependent on special education teachers alone, but requires the support of all elements of the school. Evaluation constraints are also a concern, especially as budget constraints prevent the assessment of the effectiveness of special education teacher training and competency development.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that the recruitment system and the development of the quality of special education teachers in Banjarmasin city still face various challenges. Teacher recruitment has not fully considered competencies in special education, so many inclusive schools still rely on regular teachers who do not have

specialized skills. In addition, the uneven distribution of special education teachers hampers the equitable distribution of education services for students with special needs.

In terms of quality development, training programs for special education teachers are still not optimal because they are sporadic and unsustainable. Systematic training and certification are needed to improve teachers' competence in teaching in an inclusive environment. This study also found that recruitment programs that do not consider specific competencies have an impact on teachers' readiness to carry out their duties. In addition, limited professional development opportunities affect teachers' motivation and effectiveness in teaching. Therefore, improvements in the recruitment system, provision of more intensive training and incentives for special education teachers are needed to improve the quality of inclusive education in Banjarmasin city.

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