

# Far from Expectation: A Systematic Literature Review of Inclusive Education in Indonesia

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**Abstract** The purpose of this Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is to identify: (a) research topics, (b) research methods used, and (c) research results on inclusive education in Indonesia. This study was an SLR using the PRISMA model by identifying various appropriate and relevant literature. The PRISMA model adopted in this study contains four stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. Data search was carried out using criteria determined by researchers from various search engines such as Google Scholar, ERIC, Scopus, Researchgate, and others, which resulted in 9 articles for further analysis. Furthermore, the data were analyzed using a qualitative approach in describing the research findings. The results showed that three main research themes have been found, namely the implementation of inclusive education, teaching & learning in inclusive classrooms, and the inclusive education curriculum. Outline, the analysis results of these articles stated that the implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia is still not as expected. These findings are expected to become the basis for teachers, education observers, and education policymakers, both local and central government or the Ministry of Education to implement education policies that support the progress of inclusive education in Indonesia.

**Keywords** Inclusive Education, Inclusive School, Systematic Literature Review (SLR)

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## 1. Introduction

One of the issues of education that still remains "interesting" to be discussed until now is the issue of inclusive education. This education movement is not a follow-up to the universal declaration of human rights. Inclusive education is also interpreted as a form of implementation of "education for all" which means that all children in the world must have equal access with their peers to all levels of education [1].

In fact, many children with special needs in all parts of the world can not enjoy education in public schools. UNESCO claims more than 90% of children with disabilities in developing countries can not access schools and 50% of those enrolled in schools are capable of reaching secondary school levels [2]. Even though the United Nations issued a policy on the Right of the Child in 1989 to equalize the rights of all children, in reality, children with disabilities still face discrimination and are marginalized too far from their usual friends [3].

Inclusive education is not a global education policy without conflict. This policy presents a dispute about what the meaning of inclusive education really is. In other words, the concept of inclusive education is still a controversial concept because many researchers and

educators express concern about the effects of inclusion [4]. Until now, the theoretical construction of this type of education is still the subject of interpretation and declination, which tends to vary [5].

From American's and Europeans' perspectives, inclusive education's main feature is to place children with special needs in inclusive schools [6]. Adherents of this perspective assume that the educational process that combines all children into one class, regardless of psychological and physical background, can cause exclusion and abuse of physical and mental disorders [7]. In other words, the education system by combining children with special needs in public schools will only cause new problems.

On the other hand, the definition of inclusive education emphasizes a broader philosophical vision in creating the welcoming of minority groups such as refugees, rural communities, and orphans [8]. In Salamanca World Conference on Special Needs Education, the perspective of inclusive education is interpreted as granting equal access rights for children with special needs in the general education environment [9]. In some countries, this education is also considered as an approach to serving children with disabilities in public schools [10].

In its development, the definition of inclusive education is not only limited to the process of integrating children with special needs into public schools but also extends to other aspects. The increasingly diverse school population in the last three decades proves that the school is now inhabited by students with diverse cultures, socioeconomic backgrounds, languages, family structures, and different bits of intelligence and abilities [11]. Internationally, the inclusive education system is a form of reform that supports and welcomes diversity among students [12]. The fact that children have their own uniqueness, such as diversity of ways of thinking, intelligence and methods of learning must be accommodated by the inclusive school [13]. In addition, inclusive education has been recognized as a critical strategy for ensuring "education for all" in developing countries through policy reform, awareness creation, and development for teachers [14].

Indonesia, as a developing country, has challenges that are not easily related to the implementation of inclusive education. One of them is a policy that must be taken by considering two crucial issues, namely adopting international conventions and how to maintain their uniqueness as developing countries in inclusive education [15].

Other challenges also relate to teacher readiness factors which are considered as the primary determinant of success in implementing inclusive education. In fact, there are many shortcomings of general teacher competence in conveying the learning process in inclusive classroom practice [16]. However, it should be noted that there is no definitive approach to the formation of skills needed by teachers in this case [17].

Even though in recent years there have been positive changes related to inclusive education, there are still many gaps between children with special needs and ways of dealing with their obligations by the school and the community [18]. For this reason, researchers conducted a literature review to review, identify, and synthesize various studies on inclusive education in Indonesia. The data was obtained through a process of analysis of several popular international journal articles that raised the theme of inclusive education in Indonesia with a number of predetermined criteria. Thus, the article's research question is what themes are the research issues on inclusive education in Indonesia during 2014-2019?

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Inclusive Education

The idea of inclusive education emerged after the evolution of human rights in the last few decades. This change wants justice and equality in education for both children and inclusive children. It requires adaptation, differentiation, and modification to the world of education based on the needs and potentials of students who express the aspects of opportunity and justice of human rights [19].

Inclusive education is a process of responding to children's diversity through increasing participation in classrooms and reducing exclusion in the world of education [20]. This means that this education system meets all children's needs, including children with special needs in public schools. The same thing was also stated by Khan et al. [2] which says that inclusive education is an obligation to provide quality education for children in public schools by giving maximum educational services.

In essence, inclusive education requires teachers in public schools to cater to diverse student populations academically, socially, and culturally [21]. In addition to the teacher, the principal is obliged to accept and be committed to this philosophy [22]. Therefore, inclusive education is considered the fairest and most adequate method of educating all children [23].

The implementation of inclusive education still faces many obstacles, especially in developing countries. Proponents of inclusive education claim that there is a need to make radical changes and reform the structure of education. One of the changes referred to is the adjustment of the curriculum, which provides equal learning opportunities for all children [24].

Inclusive education reaps a lot of controversies, which led to their inadvertently trying to implement this type of education [23] [25] [26] [27]. One of the schools of inclusive education believes that inclusive education should only be focused on the adaptation of regular classes to accept and accommodate students with disabilities [28]. But on the other hand, experts state that the broader

philosophical vision of inclusive education is to create a culture and environment that welcomes minority groups to learn together without distinction and exclusion [29] [30] [31].

## 2.2. Systematic Literature Review

One type of literature review method is the Systematic Literature Review (SLR). This method is a research method that is carried out through rigorous examination of previous studies using explicit criteria in answering research questions [32]. Another definition states that SLR is a research activity by reviewing the literature based on an analytic framework and interpreting the results, which are also known as “defining the body of literature,” [33] [34] [35].

The SLR method is characterized by the activity of seeking relevant information to identify, assess, and interpret the results of investigations about problems of concern to researchers [36]. Some of these activities can be categorized as rigorous processes in SLR studies. This rigorous process has several objectives, namely (a) controlling the topic to be investigated to consider the quality of the research, (b) summarizing certain evidence about a theme, (c) identifying research shortcomings and strengths, and (d) suggesting new research with a theoretical framework, in certain research fields [37].

The SLR method has several advantages over unstructured reviews. This method adopts a replicable, scientific, and transparent process [38] [39] [40]. There are many models of the SLR method proposed by experts. One such model is the Preferred Reporting Item for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis (PRISMA). This model is used

to make a systematic, precise, and reliable literature review [41] [42] [43].

There are many models of the SLR method proposed by experts. One such model is the Preferred Reporting Item for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis (PRISMA). This model is used to make a systematic, precise, and reliable literature review [44]. The PRISMA model defines a systematic review as a review of clearly formulated questions using systematic and explicit methods to identify, select, and critically assess relevant research results [45].

## 3. Research Methodology

### 3.1. Research Design

This study used the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, which aims to collect, identify, analyze, and synthesize various studies on inclusive education in Indonesia. SLR is a literature review that is firmly attached to a set of scientific methods explicitly with the aim of avoiding systematic or biased errors [46]. This study uses several stages as suggested by Peter [47] about preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analysis or PRISMA. These stages are identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. The following Figure 1 is a glimpse of the systematic process of answering this research question.

Furthermore, based on the results of the data search as illustrated in the chart above, nine articles were further analyzed. The identity of the article is summarized in table 1.

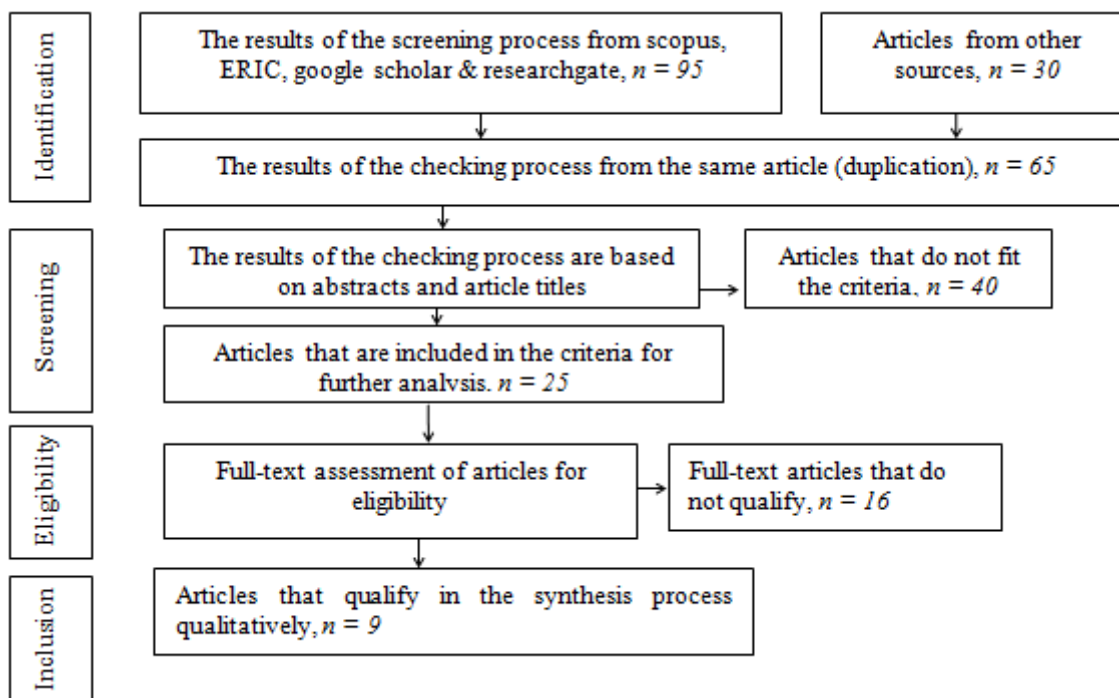


Figure 1. Research Data Search & Selection Flow

**Table 1.** Identifies the articles to be analyzed further

No	Article Title	Author Name	Journal Name
1.	Teaching English to Students with An Autism Spectrum Disorder in The Regular Classroom in Indonesia	Padmadewi & Artini (2017)	International Journal of Instruction
2.	The Impact of Quantum Teaching Strategy on Student Academic Achievements and Self-esteem in Inclusive School	Gunarhadi, Kassim, & Shaari (2014)	Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction
3.	The Readiness of General Elementary Schools to become Inclusive Elementary Schools: A Preliminary Study in Indonesia	Rasmitadila & Tambunan (2018)	International Journal of Special Education
4.	Elementary School Teachers' Perception of Public Inclusive Elementary School readiness Formation	Rasmitadila, Tambunan, & Rahmadtullah (2018)	International Journal of Special Education
5.	Perceptions of Inclusion Education by Parents' Elementary School-aged Children in Lampung, Indonesia	Adiputra, Mujiati, & Hendrowati (2019)	International Journal of Instruction
6.	Curriculum Reform in Indonesia: Moving from An Exclusive to An Inclusive Curriculum	Mukminin, Habibi, Prasajo, Idi, & Hamidah (2019)	Central for Educational Policy Studies Journal (CEPS Journal)
7.	How Students with Mathematics Learning Disabilities Understand Fraction: A Case from the Indonesian Inclusive School	Ikhwanudin & Suryadi (2018)	International Journal of Instruction
8.	Indonesian Teachers' Epistemological Beliefs and Inclusive Education	Sheehy, Budiyo, Kaye, & Rofiah (2019)	Journal of Intellectual Disabilities
9.	The Pedagogic Beliefs of Indonesian Teachers in Inclusive Schools	Sheehy & Budianto (2015)	International Journal of Disability, Development, and Education

### 3.2. Data Collection

Search for data sources in this research was accessed through various electronic databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, Researchgate, ERIC, and others. There are several keywords used in data search, namely inclusive education, inclusive school, inclusive class, and inclusion education. In addition, the researchers also used several criteria in analyzing data. The analysis criteria in this study were developed by the researcher by referring to the requirements previously carried out by Hoang [48], Kwon & Lee [46], Kartal & Guner [49], & Williams [50]. The selection of these criteria is based on the SLR model equation, namely Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis (PRISMA). The articles chosen are articles published by reputable scientific journals because journal media are considered better because they use a peer-review system.

**Table 2.** Inclusion & Exclusion Criteria

No	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
1.	Journal articles are written by Indonesian or foreign writers	National or international seminar proceedings
2.	Research location in Indonesia	Research locations outside Indonesia
3.	Published in reputed international journals (indexed by Scopus as recommended by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia)	Articles published in local or international journals are not reputable
4.	Articles in English	Articles in Indonesian
5.	Year of publication between 2014-2019	Published before 2014

### 3.3. Data Analysis

In connection with the research question, the data analysis used in this study is content analysis. This technique is used to determine trends at the descriptive level of studies conducted on a particular subject [51]. There are three steps taken in analyzing data with this technique, namely: (a) coding, (b) grouping codes based on similarities, and (c) data abstraction [52]. Furthermore, the results of the analysis were validated using member checking techniques and peer review. The member checking was carried out by the researchers in the group as many as 4 people [53] while the peer review process involved two experts in the field of education (1 expert from an educational psychology background and one expert from an inclusive education expert) in examining and providing advice [54].

### 3.4. Validity & Reliability

The SLR method used in this study, both at the data collection and analysis stage, is stated as one indicator of validity. It is confirmed by the existence of a comprehensive explanation at each step of the research. In 2 articles that were randomly selected and encoded among five researchers, the consistency value was 90%. This consistency value is calculated based on the formula proposed by Miles and Huberman [55]. From the results of the consistency, it can be stated that the results of the study have been valid and reliable.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Research Methods Used

The following table provides an overview of the research methods used in the articles reviewed. There are three research methods used, namely qualitative, quantitative, and mix-methods methods. Besides, there was also an article which is an article with a theoretical study approach or literature review. Four items use qualitative methods, 3 subjects with quantitative methods, 1 article using mix-methods, and 1 article with a theory study approach.

There were four articles in this literature review that use qualitative methods in generating or collecting research data. All four items explore inclusive education in schools. The first article seeks to explore information on three students who have learning disabilities in mathematics on fractions sub discussion [56]. Furthermore, another article that uses students as research subjects is a study of 20 students who have autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) using observation and interview methods [57]. Besides students,

there are several other research subjects used in some of these studies. The research subjects in question include teachers, parents, school administrators, and school committees [58] [59].

Quantitative methods are also used in 3 articles in this review. One of them is a study conducted by Gunarhadi [60] who use research instruments in the form of tests and questionnaires. This study proves that the quantum teaching strategy has a positive impact on learning outcomes in Indonesian and natural science subjects. Another quantitative research is a study conducted by Rasmitadilla et al. [61] and Sheehy et al. [62]. Both of these studies chose teachers as research subjects using instruments in the form of questionnaires.

Another method used in one of the research articles reviewed was mix-methods. This study uses a combination of questionnaires and interviews in gathering data. The questionnaire instrument was aimed at 140 teachers and an interview instrument with 20 teachers) [63]. Furthermore, one research article in this review is a theory study article without listing the research methods used [64].

**Table 3.** Research Designs

Research Approach	Data collection & Instruments	Research Participants	Author(s)
Qualitative (n=4)	Tests, observation, analysis of media & documents, and interviews with teachers	Three students who have learning disabilities in Mathematics	(Ikhwanuddin & Suryadi, 2018)
	Observation and interviews	20 students who have Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	(Padmadewi & Artini, 2017)
	Face-to-face interview	50 school administrators, 50 elementary school teachers, 50 student parents, and 30 school committees	(Rasmitadilla & Tambunan, 2018)
Quantitative (n=3)	Interview	117 parents of students	Adiputra & Mujiyati, 2019)
	Test and questionnaire	78 elementary students from 5 districts	Gunarhadi, Kassim, & Shaari, 2014)
	Open-questionnaire	115 public elementary school teachers	(Rasmitadilla et al., 2018)
Mix-methods (n=1)	Questionnaire	267 teachers at the national seminar in Surabaya (36% public school teachers, 32% special school teachers, and 32% inclusive school teachers)	(Sheehy & Budiyanto et al., 2019)
	Questionnaire & semi-structured interviews	140 teachers using questionnaires & 20 teachers using interviews	(Sheehy & Budiyanto, 2015)
Theoretical review (n=1)	-	-	Mukminin, Habibi, Prasajo, Idi, & Hamidah (2019)

## 4.2. Theme & Results of The Article Under Review

This section is presented to provide a general description of some of the themes raised in the articles reviewed. Broadly speaking, there are three main themes in this review. The three topics were learning in inclusive classes, the implementation of inclusive education, and an overview of inclusive education.

**Table 4.** The Research Theme of The Article being Reviewed

Theme	Research Sub-theme	Remarkable Outcomes of Research	Author(s)
Teaching & learning	Teaching english to students with ASD	The Individual education plan (IEP) which is equipped with visual media through a “buddy program” is very suitable in helping students learn English. This strategy is very effective in implementing inclusive class programs	Padmadewi & Artini (2017)
	Quantum teaching strategy in the learning of bahasa	T-test results show that the quantum teaching strategy has more impact on the learning achievement of Indonesian and science subjects compared to using conventional approaches	Gunarhadi, Kassim, & Shaari (2014)
	Mathematics learning	Students know the standard denominator method in adding fractions but are wrong in applying it. Students use the common denominator approach in multiplying fractions. In fraction division, students mistakenly apply the multiply invert algorithm.	Ikhwanudin & Suryadi (2018)
Implementa-tion of inclusive education	Perceptions study	Results: 60% of school principals are ready to implement inclusive schools, 92% of schools do not have supporting facilities, 94% of schools do not have extraordinary teachers, 72% of schools have not received information about inclusive schools, 80% of schools have not collaborated with institutions that are relevant to education inclusive, and 82% of schools do not yet have an inclusive school administration system. Conclusion: primary schools are not ready to become inclusive elementary schools (IES).	Rasmitadila, & Tambunan (2018)
		Levels of general primary school readiness to become inclusive schools: 20% are ready, 49.6% are not prepared, and 30.4% are not prepared. Factors that become obstacles include: availability of infrastructure and facilities as much as 24.35%, teacher skills as much as 23.48%, the presence of special teachers 20%, the mindset of parents and community as much as 14.78%, problems of funds as much as 9.5% and 7.82% about government involvement	Rasmitadila, Tambunan & Rachmadtullah (2018)
		Parents with low educational & socioeconomic status (ESES) are 30 parents with 25 agreeing and four rejecting. Parents with moderate ESES were 41 people with ten parents agreed and seven people refused Parents with high ESES as many as 38 people with 18 people who accept and four people reject Thus, in general, the ESES level does not affect parents’ perceptions about inclusive education in primary schools	Adiputra, Mujiyati, & Hendrowati (2019)
	Teachers’ epistemological beliefs	Teachers in inclusive schools express their ideas about social constructivists who are stronger than other school teachers.	Sheehy, Budiyanto, Helen & Rofiah (2019)
	The pedagogical beliefs	The results of the study, in general, show that the implicit orientation of teachers in inclusive education is a social constructivist. This is reflected in the teacher's report. In addition, teachers as a unique pedagogy usually need additional time in organizing good teaching for all.	Sheehy & Budiyanto (2015)
Curriculum of inclusive education	Inclusive education in K13 curriculum in Indonesia	Indonesia’s curriculum that is centered and equated causes underdeveloped schools in quite difficult situations. The ASPIRE model is suggested as a type of principal leadership that can support curriculum reform by integrating inclusive and exclusive education curricula.	Mukminin, Habibi, Prasajo, Idi, & Hamidah (2019)

The main issue about inclusive education in the study reviewed is related to learning in inclusive classes. There was 33% (3 studies) that discuss the theme of inclusive learning, namely English learning, Indonesian language learning & natural science, and mathematics learning. English learning for students with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) is rated positively by using the Individual Education Plan (IEP) which is equipped with visual media based on "buddy program" [57]. The next study is Indonesian language learning and natural science using quantum teaching methods. This study tries to prove that the quantum teaching method has a good impact on students' learning achievement in both lessons [60] while the third study explores the ability of students in the common denominator for fractional material in mathematics [56].

The second theme that is widely used in the articles reviewed was the implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia. On this theme, the majority of research uses perception studies for teachers, students, parents, and even the school committee. At the elementary school level, the implementation of inclusive education is declared not yet ready to be applied in public primary schools due to facilities, human resources, funds, etc. [59]. Still related to perceptual studies, another sub-theme raised in the research reviewed is the educational & socioeconomic status associated with perceptions about inclusive education [58], social constructivist beliefs for teachers in inclusive and public schools [62], and the implicit orientation of teachers in inclusive schools [63].

Finally, the theme of the article that needs attention is the curriculum of inclusive education implemented in Indonesia. So far, the curriculum used in Indonesia (2013 syllabus) is still centralized and general in nature [64]. This condition is undoubtedly severe for schools that do not yet have complete facilities or schools that lag behind in quality. For this reason, the principal's leadership model with the ASPIRE Model needs to be implemented. ASPIRE model is a leadership method that refers to Assessment, Synthesis, Planning, Implementation, Review, and Evaluation.

## 5. Discussion

Based on the nine articles' analysis, several main research themes on inclusive education can be grouped. The three main research themes in question are (a) implementation of inclusive education, (b) teaching & learning in inclusive classrooms, and (c) inclusive education curricula. Regarding inclusive education implementation, two research articles are analyzed, indicating that inclusive education is not yet ready to be applied at the general primary school level with various problems. Other studies have also stated that the most significant obstacles, in this case, are inadequate teacher

training and teachers' mindset towards inclusive education [65] [66]. Gronlund, Lim, & Larsson [67] emphasize that many developing countries experience most of these problems in all parts of the world.

One of the interesting aspects of these various obstacles is the community's perception factor and even teachers about inclusive education itself. In other words, inclusive education's unsuccessfulness is also caused by the teacher's factor in teaching children with special needs. The teaching experience of teachers for decades is considered to have influenced teachers' attitudes towards this philosophy of inclusion, and many teachers even expressed their reluctance to accept this philosophy [68] [69]. For this reason, it is necessary to acquire competencies, instill diversity, and uphold sustainable human rights for the success of inclusive education [70] [71] [69]. Salim et al. [72] explicitly stated that the success of inclusive education is shown by teachers' instructional skills in the classroom and the awareness of all people to accept students with disabilities.

In addition to teachers' perceptions of the philosophy and application of inclusive education in Indonesia, several studies also involved participants from different backgrounds, such as school principals, school committees, school administrators, parents, community, and others. The involvement of various elements of society is also carried out by foreign researchers. Baguisa & Ang-Manaig [73] stated that inclusive education needs to be supported and collaborated with parents, counselors, teachers, nurses, doctors, and local/central government in developing action plans to assist teachers in dealing with children with special needs. There are very few professionals who have supported teachers and students in the inclusive learning process so far, especially in Croatia [11].

The second theme in the research results is about teaching and learning in inclusive classrooms. Various models, approaches, and methods are used by teachers to teach students with special needs to achieve the expected learning objectives. The use of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) with audio-visual media and quantum models are some of the models used by teachers. Experts consider the quantum model as a learning model that is more fun, effective, and consistent [74]. The advantage of this model is that it is a model that combines all the neural structures of the brain to create meaningful information [75] and can solve problems creatively [76].

Furthermore, the inclusive education curriculum is a theme raised in the articles reviewed. One of them is a study conducted by Mukminin et al. [64]. They stated that the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum (C13) in Indonesia needs development efforts to be able to place better inclusive education. They offer the ASPIRE (Assessment, Synthesis, Planning, Implementation, Review, and Evaluation) model in the current curriculum system. A study that suggests the need for activities to

promote inclusive education in the school system and increase adequate resources in teaching children with special needs is not much different [5]. Other experts state that institutions should provide appropriate curricula for inclusive education such as (a) content pedagogical curriculum, moral training-based curriculum, (c) independent and creative training for both children with physical and intellectual disabilities, or children with multiple disabilities [77].

From some of the analyzed studies, it can be concluded that inclusive education in Indonesia is still far from what was expected. Likewise, several countries around the world are also facing various challenges that are not light. The existence of disagreements about the meaning & concept of inclusive education in educational needs is suspected to be a factor in the unsuccessfulness of this inclusive education. This disagreement occurs due to several factors, namely: (a) differences in educational policies, (b) different procedures, (c) identification of different needs of children, and (d) different socio-cultural influences on the interpretation of the inclusive concept [78]. It is also not surprising that Anastasiou & Kauffman [79] assess that the inclusive education model does not have the desired outcomes for children with diverse educational needs. For this reason, researchers suggest that future research be more focused on expert studies and government policies on inclusive education that is ideal for implementation in Indonesia with its unique socio-cultural background.

## 6. Conclusions

This study is an SLR on inclusive education in Indonesia, which analyzes nine articles that have been published from 2014-2019 in reputable international journals and selected based on predetermined criteria. This article provides a clear picture of SLR inclusive education's current trends by identifying, classifying, and synthesizing research results based on research themes. There are three main themes found based on data analysis: inclusive education, teaching & learning in inclusive classrooms, and the inclusive education curriculum. In general, Indonesia is considered not ready to implement inclusive education to its full potential, especially in primary schools. The unpreparedness referred to here relates to various factors that influence it, including the socialization of inclusive education programs that have not been maximized, the availability of specialized teachers in public schools or human resources, the availability of facilities and infrastructure (facilities for disabilities), funds, etc.

One limitation of this review is the relatively small number of articles reviewed /analysis. This is caused by the restrictions set as criteria in capturing various items called exclusion & inclusion criteria. A literature review must be carried out with a broader scope, both in terms of quantity,

in producing more comprehensive literature review articles.

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