



Implementation of The Disability Service Unit At SLBN Cinta Asih

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Abstract. This study aims to describe the implementation of the Disability Service Unit (ULD) at SLBN Cinta Asih, particularly in the context of remote areas. This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation involving the ULD coordinator and education staff at the SLBN Cinta Asih Disability Service Unit. The results show that although not administratively labeled as a DSU, the Learning Activity Center (TKB) has functionally performed the role of a DSU through initial assessments, the development of individual learning plans, and support services. The main challenges faced include limited facilities, the absence of professionals such as psychologists or therapists, and low parental involvement. However, flexible teaching strategies, the use of contextual learning materials, and a family-oriented approach have proven effective in maintaining special education services in the area. This study highlights the importance of community-based ULDs in supporting inclusive education in areas that do not have full access to formal special education services.

Keywords : Disability, Inclusive Education, Disability Service Units.

Abstrak. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan implementasi Unit Layanan Disabilitas (ULD) di SLBN Cinta Asih, khususnya dalam konteks daerah terpencil. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi yang melibatkan koordinator ULD dan staf pendidikan di Unit Layanan Disabilitas SLBN Cinta Asih. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun secara administratif tidak dilabeli sebagai ULD, Pusat Kegiatan Belajar (TKB) telah secara fungsional menjalankan peran ULD melalui penilaian awal, pengembangan rencana pembelajaran individual, dan layanan dukungan. Tantangan utama yang dihadapi meliputi fasilitas yang terbatas, ketidakhadiran tenaga profesional seperti psikolog atau terapis, dan keterlibatan orang tua yang rendah. Namun, strategi pengajaran yang fleksibel, penggunaan bahan pembelajaran kontekstual, dan pendekatan yang berorientasi pada keluarga telah terbukti efektif dalam mempertahankan layanan pendidikan khusus di daerah tersebut. Penelitian ini menyoroti pentingnya ULD berbasis komunitas dalam mendukung pendidikan inklusif di daerah yang tidak memiliki akses penuh ke layanan pendidikan khusus formal.

Kata kunci : Disabilitas, Pendidikan Inklusif, Unit Layanan Disabilitas.

Introduction

Conceptually, the Disability Service Unit (ULD) is a support unit in the educational environment that is responsible for assessing student needs, preparing Individual Service Plans (RLI), providing learning aids, therapy services, and training for educators so that they are able to implement adaptive and inclusive learning strategies (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2019). The ULD also plays a role in establishing cross-sector coordination, both with parents, therapy institutions, and local education agencies. The presence of the ULD in educational units is expected to bridge the gap between inclusive education policies and their actual implementation in the field. Regulations on ULD are reinforced through Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Number 48 of 2023, which states that every educational unit, both formal and non-formal, is required to establish and operate ULD as part of a strategy to fulfill the rights of students with disabilities. Previously, technical guidelines for the implementation of ULD were regulated in Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 46 of 2019, which emphasized the importance of conducting



learning needs assessments, curriculum adjustments, and creating accessible learning environments. However, various studies show that the implementation of ULD in the field still faces structural and cultural challenges, including limited human resources, low understanding among educators, and weak institutional support (Rahmawati, 2021; Hidayat, 2022).

At a theoretical level, the concept of inclusive education refers to the principles of equality and non-discrimination in the provision of educational services. Booth and Ainscow (2002) explain that inclusion is a continuous process of identifying and removing barriers to the participation and learning of all students. Within this framework, ULD serves as a structural instrument that supports the creation of an educational ecosystem that welcomes diversity. Furthermore, UNESCO (2009) emphasizes that inclusive education is not only about including students with disabilities in mainstream schools but also includes systemic adjustments to the curriculum, teaching methods, and evaluation approaches.

Several previous studies have shown that the existence of ULD has a positive impact on the learning process of students with disabilities. Research by Wulandari et al. (2024) found that the establishment of ULD in higher education institutions helps create a support system that enables students with disabilities to complete their studies with good results. Similar research by Rahayu (2023) highlights the importance of coordination between schools, local governments, and external institutions in supporting the effective implementation of ULD. At the elementary and secondary school levels, studies by Rahmawati (2021) and Hidayat (2022) identified that the existence of ULD increases teachers' awareness of the individual needs of students, although its implementation is still limited by a lack of training, facilities, and conceptual understanding of inclusive education.

Furthermore, there is a gap between the regulations that encourage the formation of ULDs and their implementation in the field. In the context of SLBs, where the majority of students already have special educational needs, the function of ULDs should be more structured and comprehensive. However, there is not much empirical data showing how the ULD implementation process takes place in SLBs, both in terms of institutional aspects, resources, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. This raises critical questions: does the ULD in SLBs play a different role from the ULD in regular schools? Is its implementation more effective given its more specific context? And what strategies do schools use to overcome various obstacles in implementing the ULD?

Therefore, this study aims to examine in depth the implementation of the Disability Service Unit (ULD) at SLBN Cinta Asih, focusing on the technical aspects of implementation, the obstacles encountered, and the strategic efforts made to improve the effectiveness of services. This research is important to fill the research gap related to the implementation of ULD practices in SLB as an institution that exclusively handles students with disabilities. In addition, the results of this study are expected to provide policy input for the Ministry of Education and Culture and other stakeholders in strengthening the implementation of ULD nationally. Specifically, this study will answer three main questions: How is the implementation of the Disability Service Unit (ULD) carried out at SLBN Cinta Asih? What are the obstacles encountered in the process of implementing ULD at the school? What strategies are being implemented by the school to overcome obstacles and improve the effectiveness of ULD services?

Using a qualitative approach and case study design, this research will explore in depth the dynamics of ULD implementation at SLBN Cinta Asih. Data collection will be conducted



through observation, in-depth interviews with the principal, teachers, parents of students, and the ULD team, as well as analysis of internal school policy documents. The findings of this study are expected to not only contribute theoretically to the development of inclusive education literature and disability service management in schools, but also provide practical contributions in the form of policy recommendations and strategies for more effective ULD implementation at the educational unit level, particularly in special schools.

Method

This study used a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. This approach was chosen because it aims to understand the phenomenon in depth, especially in the context of the implementation of the Disability Service Unit (ULD) in the SLB environment. The qualitative approach is relevant to describe the processes, dynamics, as well as obstacles and supporters in the implementation of ULD based on the perspective of the research subjects. The subjects in this study consisted of the principal, teachers, DSUs, and parents of students at SLBN Cinta Asih. The subjects were selected purposively, considering their direct involvement in the implementation of services. Data collection was carried out through direct observation of service activities at the school, in-depth interviews with research subjects, and documentation studies of supporting data such as service programs, activity schedules, and student assessment records. It began with the initial observation stage, followed by interviews and documentation. The data obtained was analyzed using thematic analysis techniques, namely by identifying the main themes that emerged from the field data. The analysis was conducted inductively, starting from data collection, data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, to data triangulation so that the data presented was validated.

Result and Discussion

Results

SLB Negeri Cinta Asih is located in Rancabali District, Bandung Regency, under the auspices of the West Java Provincial Education Office. This school was originally a remote class of SLB PGRI Pasirjambu in 2012. After undergoing a development process and responding to the need for special education access in remote areas, in 2022 this school officially became a Learning Activity Center (TKB). Although it does not have a formal structure as a Disability Service Unit (ULD), this school functionally carries out the roles and responsibilities in accordance with the ULD concept as stipulated in the national inclusive education policy. Its main objective is to provide access to education for Children with Special Needs (ABK) who live in areas with limited transportation and educational infrastructure.

The results of the initial assessment are an important basis for the preparation of Individual Learning Plans (RPI). Through this process, teachers can understand the strengths, potential, and learning barriers of each student. "We assess every child who enters, although not as detailed as a psychologist. We look at their abilities and shortcomings from the start," said the ULD Coordinator in a personal interview on June 24, 2025. This approach allows teachers to develop learning strategies that are relevant, realistic, and responsive to the students' conditions. In practice, learning at SLBN Cinta Asih is designed to be flexible. Students are not forced to follow a uniform schedule and learning method. Teachers adjust the content and delivery of the



material according to the physical readiness, emotions, and learning abilities of the students on that particular day.

The types of services provided at this school include individualized learning for basic academic skills such as reading, writing, and arithmetic with the help of concrete media, independence training such as how to use eating utensils and maintain personal hygiene, and the development of social skills. In this context, social habituation plays an important role in the educational process. Students are accustomed to greeting teachers and friends, waiting their turn, asking for help politely, and working together to clean the classroom. In addition, the school also encourages parental involvement in emotional skills training. Parents are guided to train their children to recognize basic emotions such as happiness, sadness, or anger, as well as how to express their feelings in words. Teachers provide guidance so that these exercises can be continued consistently at home, as part of the continuity of learning between school and the family environment.

Parental involvement is an important part of the services provided at SLBN Cinta Asih. The school maintains active communication through various means, ranging from regular progress reports, routine meetings such as home visits and parent meetings, to the use of instant messaging applications such as WhatsApp to convey information and discuss the children's needs. Student progress is assessed informally through daily observations by teachers, which are then recorded in brief reports and shared with parents. At the end of the semester, teachers also compile simple report cards that include notes on the child's cognitive development, social skills, and attitude at school.

Monitoring of ULD activities is carried out by the parent school, namely the central SLB Negeri Cinta Asih, which is responsible for technical and administrative supervision. Monitoring includes direct visits to the TKB location, observation of the teaching and learning process, and evaluation of documents such as student attendance, activity schedules, and individual progress reports. Teachers at the TKB also compile monthly reports that are sent to the main school as part of the reporting system and institutional responsibility to the Education Office.

Although the implementation of the service is carried out with high enthusiasm and dedication, SLBN Cinta Asih still faces various challenges in its implementation. One of the main obstacles is the geographical condition of the remote Rancabali area, with difficult road access and long distances. This causes irregular student attendance, especially during bad weather or harvest season. Teachers must adjust their lesson plans based on the uncertain attendance of students. In addition, many students have difficulty concentrating, regulating their emotions, and interacting socially. Teachers must be highly flexible in dealing with these dynamics, and this becomes a heavy emotional workload.

SLBN Cinta Asih shows that despite being located in a remote area and having limited facilities and professional staff, the spirit of collaboration, creativity of teachers, and flexibility in services are able to provide meaningful education for children with special needs. The functions of the Disability Service Unit (ULD) are carried out in full, even though they are not yet in a formal structural form. With institutional strengthening and support from relevant parties, the experience of SLBN Cinta Asih can be an example of good practice for other educational units that want to implement disability services in an inclusive, responsive, and community-based manner.



Discussion

The implementation of educational services for students with special needs at SLBN Cinta Asih through the Learning Activity Center (TKB) scheme reflects the functional implementation of the Disability Service Unit (ULD). Although institutionally it does not yet have a separate ULD structure, the practices carried out have covered the core functions of the ULD, namely assessing student needs, preparing individual learning plans, providing adaptive services, daily assistance, parental involvement, and reporting and monitoring to the parent agency. Initial assessment is an important part of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) model, which aims to develop services based on the conditions and potential of students (Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2012). Without proper initial mapping, learning for students with special needs risks being irrelevant, too difficult, or too easy. Therefore, even though the initial assessment is simple, it is a direct implementation of the main principle of ULD, namely the identification of students' individual needs (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2019).

The types of services provided include basic academic learning, life skills training, socialization, and emotional development, with an individualized approach. This is in line with the principle of inclusion proposed by Booth and Ainscow (2002), which emphasizes the importance of adapting the curriculum, methods, and environment to suit the needs of students. Services such as training in brushing teeth, recognizing eating utensils, and practicing greeting and playing together are not additional activities, but part of essential learning in the context of special education. SLBN Cinta Asih also implements emotional learning by involving parents in the process of recognizing emotions, self-control, and communicating feelings. This strategy is in line with the collaborative approach in inclusive education, where learning success is largely determined by the continuity of stimulation between school and home (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). Although not all parents are able to be actively involved, the efforts of teachers to provide guidance show that the role of ULD in developing partnerships with families has been carried out functionally.

Teachers at SLBN Cinta Asih act as learning facilitators as well as emotional companions. Teaching strategies are not rigid and are adapted to the daily conditions of the students. When students arrive late or are in an emotionally unstable condition, teachers adjust the time and teaching methods, for example by changing the learning to motor activities or educational games. This approach is in line with the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which encourages the development of a flexible learning system that can accommodate the various learning needs of students without requiring major adjustments later on (Meyer, Rose, & Gordon, 2014). In this context, teacher flexibility is key to maintaining student active participation in the learning process, while ensuring that learning remains relevant and meaningful.

These obstacles have been widely identified in previous studies. According to Hidayat (2022), parental involvement is one of the major challenges in implementing inclusive education in areas with low literacy rates. Therefore, teachers' strategies to maintain active communication, even through simple approaches, are an important step in carrying out the ULD function of supporting family involvement as partners in education (UNESCO, 2009). In terms of monitoring, SLBN Cinta Asih receives supervision from the parent school, which conducts regular visits, evaluates learning reports, and checks administrative records. This system shows that service accountability has been implemented, although it is not yet within a structurally established ULD framework. The function of periodic reporting to the Education Office is part



of the governance mechanism for sustainable inclusive education services (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2019).

Another major obstacle is the absence of non-teaching professionals such as psychologists or therapists. In these circumstances, PLB teachers at SLBN Cinta Asih collaborated internally to develop learning strategies based on empirical experience. The teachers' initiative to create learning media from available materials also demonstrates their high dedication and commitment to inclusive services. This strategy shows that the implementation of ULD functions does not have to start with ideal infrastructure but can be achieved through innovation, cooperation, and a focus on the real needs of students.

The findings of this study show that the implementation of ULD at SLBN Cinta Asih has reflected the five basic principles of ULD as stipulated in Permendikbudristek No. 48 of 2023, namely: (1) identification of individual needs, (2) tailored learning services, (3) psychosocial and emotional support, (4) family involvement, and (5) service administration management. Although it does not yet have a formal ULD structure, the school has been carrying out all of its core functions operationally. This reinforces the idea that the implementation of ULD does not solely depend on institutional structures, but is also largely determined by human resource capacity, institutional will, and adaptation to the local context (Florian, 2008). SLBN Cinta Asih is a representation of effective community-based ULD practices, even though it is run with limited resources and professional support.

Conclusion

This study aims to determine how educational services for children with special needs are implemented through the Learning Activity Center (TKB) at SLBN Cinta Asih, as well as to examine the extent to which these services perform functions similar to those of a Disability Service Unit (ULD). The results show that TKB has functionally performed the role of ULD, even though it is not administratively referred to as such. The services provided include initial assessment, individual learning plans, and daily assistance from special education teachers. The types of disabilities served include autism, mental retardation, and deafness. The assessment process was carried out using a standard format from the parent school or central agency, which was used as the basis for determining learning strategies according to student characteristics. Learning activities were carried out in one large room divided by grade level, with the building being shared with early childhood education (PAUD). Although simple, facilities such as tables, chairs, and blackboards were adequate to support learning activities.

There are several significant obstacles in the implementation of ULD at SLBN Cinta Asih, including limited facilities and infrastructure, the lack of special service rooms, a shortage of teaching aids, and the absence of professionals such as psychologists and therapists. In addition, the geographical and socioeconomic conditions of the students, as well as the lack of optimal involvement from parents, pose additional challenges. To overcome these obstacles, teachers implement family-based strategies, flexibly adjust learning methods, and utilize simple media from the surrounding environment. The commitment of teachers, creativity, and informal collaboration among educators are the main strengths in maintaining the continuity of services. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that TKB at SLBN Cinta Asih has served as an adaptive and contextual community-based ULD, capable of providing exceptional educational services for children with special needs in remote areas that do not yet have access to independent SLBs or formal inclusive education systems.



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