



RECRUITMENT OF SHADOW TEACHERS BY PARENTS IN SUPPORTING INCLUSIVE LEARNING (CASE STUDY AT KINDERGARTEN NEGERI PEMBINA 1 MALANG CITY)

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the role of parents in the procurement of special assistant teachers (shadow teachers) as a form of support for the learning of children with special needs in Kindergarten Negeri Pembina 1 Malang City. This study uses a qualitative approach using a case study method, where data is collected by observation and interviews with parents, teachers, and principals. Data analysis is carried out by data reduction techniques, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The results of the study show that parents have an active role in the procurement of special assistant teachers (shadow teachers) due to the limited number of inclusion educators in schools. The main reason for the procurement of shadow teachers by parents is to ensure that children with special needs receive optimal assistance in learning, encourage children's social interaction at school, and bridge communication between teachers and children with special needs. Obstacles include additional costs incurred, limited competent support staff, and lack of regulations governing the role of shadow teachers in inclusive schools. The results of this study confirm that the procurement of special assistant teachers (shadow teachers) by parents is a strategic solution in supporting inclusive education at Kindergarten Negeri Pembina 1 Malang City. Therefore, a clearer policy is needed from schools and also the government in supporting the existence of special assistant teachers (shadow teachers) so that inclusive education can run more effectively and sustainably.

Keywords: recruitment; shadow teacher; inclusive learning

1. Introduction

An education system that accommodates diversity is a manifestation of fundamental human rights in the realm of learning. This concept guarantees that every individual, including those with special needs, can access an equal education in a public educational institution. In the context of early childhood education, this method facilitates co-development between children with various conditions, both those with physical limitations and cognitive challenges, in a place that accepts differences. The goal is to create an atmosphere conducive to holistic growth in children, foster collaboration, and foster an appreciation for individual uniqueness.

This approach can be defined as a learning delivery mechanism that opens access for all students, regardless of their educational condition or background, to learn together in an inclusive environment. In this system, educational services are aligned with the needs and abilities of students. Schools that carry out inclusive education must meet a number of requirements, including having students with special needs, showing commitment to the concept of inclusive education, prioritizing the completion of compulsory learning, and establishing cooperation with related institutions. In addition, schools also need to provide learning facilities and facilities that are accessible to all children (Maliki, R. Y. et al., 2023).

The implementation of inclusive education requires schools to recognize and respond to the unique needs of each student. This includes the application of a variety of learning styles and ensuring that all students receive quality teaching. The application of the right learning methods and strategies is essential to ensure that all children, including those with special needs, can learn effectively. Therefore, a varied learning approach needs to be applied in order to meet the individual needs of each student. Learning for ABK in inclusion classes must be tailored to their specific needs and designed with various different innovations so that learning goals are optimal, considering that each child has different needs (Patilima, H. et al., 2024).

Inclusive schools are one of the strategies for equity and the realization of educational services that do not discriminate between children with special needs and normal children in order to get the same education (Wijaya & Supena 2023). In the implementation of the inclusion education program, there is no special treatment or privilege for children with special needs. Instead, this program emphasizes the equality of rights and obligations between them and other normal students (Mardhiah, A. 2024). Cooperation carried out by all parties such as the government, schools and the community will affect the implementation of inclusive education. With the existence of the inclusion school program, it is hoped that it will be able to prepare the next generation to accept and interpret the form of a difference and avoid discrimination in diverse community life (Mardani, Sulistia, 2020).

The implementation of inclusive education can be applied through the existence of special assistant teachers who are competent and have skills in the teaching process, as well as possessing the skills to create and develop creative and innovative ideas. These accompanying teachers are required to be able to provide teaching strategies to children with special needs so that they are not left behind in learning. Special companion teachers are commonly known as shadow teachers. A shadow teacher is an educator who is in charge of guiding and assisting students of educational institutions that provide inclusive education and has the competence to handle fingerprint participants with special needs (Andani, F. et al. 2023).

A special assistant teacher or often referred to as a shadow teacher, is an educator who directly assists children with special needs, both in pre-school and in elementary school. Shadow teachers have a variety of roles and tasks that are very important in encouraging the development of children with special needs (ABK). One of the main roles is to understand the learning difficulties experienced by the child and deal with them with an appropriate approach. That way, children with special needs can receive the special attention they need to develop properly (Setianingrum, 2019:4) in (Patilima, H. et al., 2024).

As an educator, teachers are required to develop all their abilities in the classroom teaching process. In the context of education for ABK, the role of accompanying teachers or shadow teachers is very crucial. They are tasked with designing strategies, methods, and approaches according to each child's individual needs. Through the strategies implemented by shadow teachers, it is hoped that children with special needs can interact and follow the learning process optimally. (Nadratanna'im, S. 2023).

Special assistant teachers function as educational centers that have important responsibilities in assisting ABK. In the context of the implementation of inclusive schools, special assistant teachers have several duties and roles, including: (1) designing educational assessment instruments collaboratively with classroom teachers and subject teachers, (2) forming an effective coordination system between teachers, schools, and parents, (3)

accompanying children with special needs in learning with classroom or subject teachers, and (4) providing special services, such as remedial or enrichment programs, for children with difficulty participating in learning in regular classes, (5) sharing continuous guidance and recording the development of children with special needs while participating in learning activities, and (6) sharing support to classroom teachers/subject teachers so that they can provide optimal educational services for children (Garnida, 2015:88) in (Sholihah, N et al., 2025).

Children who have certain needs due to their limitations are known as children with special needs. They are children who, due to diseases or developmental abnormalities compared to children in general, require special treatment from certain parties. In the context of disability, children with special needs experience limitations in several abilities, both physical, such as the blind and deaf, and psychological, such as autism and ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder). Therefore, these children with special needs need educational services that are tailored to their individual needs. Currently, with inclusive education, it is hoped that it can support the development and learning of children with special needs in regular schools (Amanullah, 2022).

ABK can fully participate in classroom activities thanks to the implementation of inclusive education, regardless of whether they have any shortcomings or other distractions. This is stated in National Government Regulation No. 70 of 2009 related to inclusive education, which emphasizes that every child with special needs has the opportunity to get an education in regular schools. In addition, the government provides special education and special service education. This is as stated in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 of 2003 related to the National Education System, namely: "Special education is education for students who have a level of difficulty in following the learning process because of physical, emotional, mental, social, and/or have the potential for intelligence and special talents". Inclusive education is carried out to achieve educational goals for all Indonesian people. In addition, one of the benefits of inclusive education is the fulfillment of children's human rights and the achievement of their welfare. With inclusive education, there is a change in the mindset and view of society on children with special needs, it is hoped that they can be recognized as part of citizens without discrimination. Thus, children with special needs will feel appreciated, have confidence, feel calm, happiness, and protection. Inclusive education is expected to grow a generation of the nation that is able to accept diversity and think inclusively.

In this regard, inclusive schools cannot be separated from the role of Special Supervisors (GPK) known as shadow teachers. Shadow teachers are educators responsible for teaching, guiding, and evaluating students who have special needs in the context of general education, vocational education, or religious education (Faz, G. O. et al., 2023). The existence of shadow teachers is very influential, considering that many regular teachers have difficulty in dealing with children with special needs during teaching and learning activities, where they need more time and attention than children in general. Therefore, regular teachers need help from shadow teachers to support the learning of children with special needs in the classroom. Shadow teachers are educators who have a special education background and experience participating in training related to inclusive education (Sholihah, N. et al., 2025).

The role of shadow teachers can be said to be effective if the learning achievements of students go well. However, there are several cases that show inconsistencies in the

implementation of these roles, including teaching in front of the class, preparing teaching materials, preparing classes, and arranging student schedules. This discrepancy is often caused by the lack of understanding by the accompanying teacher about their responsibilities, as well as the lack of understanding from the classroom teacher about the role of the accompanying teacher in the context of inclusive learning (Pratiwi, R. et al., 2024)

Shadow teachers have an important role in supporting classroom teachers in carrying out educational activities for children who need special attention. It should be noted that the existence of shadow teachers is not to replace the role of regular teachers in the classroom. In pedagogic competence, accompanying teachers do not only play a role in terms of education but also role in parenting and protection of children (Marwiyati and Kinasih 2022). Their duties include encouraging and accompanying students with special needs so that they can participate in completing assignments, developing a sense of involvement in learning activities, and accompanying inclusive students both inside and outside the classroom. In addition, they are also responsible for designing learning programs that are individually adapted to meet the needs of each student.

This diversity of roles can affect learning outcomes for students with special needs, either with positive or negative impacts. Positive influences include improving the learning outcomes of these students. On the other hand, negative impacts can appear in the form of wrong decision-making, poor social relations with the surrounding environment, and increased dependence of students on accompanying teachers.

2. Method

This research was conducted using qualitative methods. The qualitative method is a systematic approach used to explore and understand social and cultural phenomena in depth (Suprayitno et al., 2024). This method was chosen because it allows researchers to explore the experiences, policies, and challenges faced by schools, parents, and shadow teachers in the implementation of inclusive education. Data was collected by in-depth interviews with principals, classroom teachers, and parents. Data analysis was done with thematic techniques with data reduction, categorization, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. According to Patton in (Jailani & Saksitha 2024), data analysis is a process that starts from arranging the sequence of data, organizing the sequence of data into a pattern, category, and unit of basic description.

In order to maintain the validity of the data, triangulation of sources and methods is used. Triangulation is a multi-method approach used by researchers when conducting research, collecting, and analyzing data (Nurfajriani et al., 2024). The results of this study are expected to share an in-depth understanding of the shadow teacher procurement system, their role in inclusive education, and the challenges faced, so that they can be evaluated and recommended for schools in improving services for students with special needs.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

The procurement of shadow teachers in inclusive education plays a very crucial role in supporting the development of ABK in schools. The presence of a special assistant teacher (shadow teacher) can help children understand the subject matter, adapt socially, and manage

their behavior in the school environment. However, in its implementation, the procurement of this special assistant still faces a number of challenges, especially related to the recruitment system, division of tasks, performance evaluation, and collaboration between schools and parents. Based on research conducted at Kindergarten Negeri Pembina 1 Malang City, various information was obtained about the process of procuring companions, the roles they perform, and the obstacles faced in the implementation of the mentoring system for inclusion students.

3.1.1 Recruitment Process and Challenges Faced

The results of research at Kindergarten Negeri Pembina 1 Malang City show that the procurement of special assistant teachers (shadow teachers) is the responsibility of the parents of inclusion students, not the school. Parents seek out shadow teachers through training institutions or choose family members with related educational backgrounds, such as psychology or special education. However, not all parents can afford to provide shadow teachers, especially families with economic limitations. In these conditions, schools continue to accept children with special needs without forcing the presence of shadow teachers, and classroom teachers try to distribute support according to their abilities. However, classroom teachers often face challenges in dealing with children with complex needs, especially in communication and behavioral aspects, which results in inequality in meeting the needs of mentoring for inclusive students. Based on interviews with parents, some of them admitted that finding a suitable shadow teacher was not an easy task. Some have difficulty finding a companion who understands their child's needs and hopes for support from the school in providing companions. In addition, there are also parents who highlight the financial burden that families must bear to pay shadow teachers independently. This imbalance in the availability of Shadow teachers results in variations in the quality of assistance received by inclusion students. Classroom teachers try to share the best support for children who do not have a shadow teacher, but they face limitations in sharing individual concerns, especially for children with communication disorders and complex behaviors.

3.1.2 The Role and Impact of Shadow Teachers in Learning

Shadow teachers play a crucial role in supporting inclusion learners individually during the learning process. While classroom teachers teach according to the curriculum, shadow teachers focus on helping children understand the material, as well as supporting their social and behavioral aspects. The results of the study show that shadow teachers focus on helping children understand the material, develop social skills, and deal with behavioral challenges. Children with special needs are given flexible learning targets, adjusting to their abilities. Based on interviews with students' parents, they felt the positive impact of the existence of shadow teachers. Some parents stated that their children showed significant progress after receiving special assistance. Children who previously had difficulty expressing themselves began to dare to communicate with their friends. In addition, there are also parents who feel that the presence of Shadow teachers makes their children more comfortable in interacting and participating in activities at school. However, challenges arise when shadow teachers have to adapt the mentoring method to the characteristics of each child. Some parents emphasized that shadow teachers not only help in the academic aspect, but also in supporting their children in daily activities at school, such as moving around and adapting to the classroom environment.

3.1.3 Some Children with Special Needs in Kindergarten Negeri Pembina 1 Malang City and Their Mentoring Strategies

Most of the inclusion students at Kindergarten Negeri Pembina 1 Malang City are children with autism, followed by children with speechlessness, ADHD, and hyperactivity. Communication is the main challenge in assisting inclusion students, especially for those who do not have shadow teachers. Classroom teachers often have to rely on nonverbal communication or use gesture-based approaches to bridge interactions with children with speech impairments. Despite facing various obstacles, most of the inclusion students showed positive progress. For example, a child who could only scribble at first is now able to draw a face more completely, and a child who previously had difficulty walking begins to show an improvement in his physical strength. This reflects significant progress in their development albeit with limited support. Based on interviews with parents, most appreciated the school's efforts in sharing inclusive education, but they also hoped for improvements in more structured learning methods. There are parents who emphasize their child needs more visual and audio-based stimulation to help him understand the lesson. Meanwhile, there are also those who highlight the need for special strategies to help ADHD children stay focused during learning. The results of the study also showed that despite various challenges, most of the inclusion students experienced positive development. Children who initially have difficulty in basic activities, such as drawing or walking, begin to show improvements in their skills. This proves that with the right approach, children with special needs can develop optimally.

3.1.4 Shadow Teacher Performance Evaluation

The evaluation of shadow teacher performance at Kindergarten Negeri Pembina 1 Malang City was not done formally. Instead, classroom teachers and shadow teachers work on sharing information about children's development, as well as communicating the results with parents. Child development assessment is based on observation and discussion with parents, without a formal structured evaluation system. While this approach allows for flexibility and more personalized communication, the lack of a standardized evaluation system can affect consistency and accountability in assessing the effectiveness of shadow teacher roles as well as the progress of inclusion learners. Based on interviews with parents, some of them want a more structured evaluation system to ensure that shadow teachers who accompany their children have adequate competence. On the other hand, there are also parents who feel that direct communication with teachers and shadow teachers is enough to understand their child's development. The absence of systematic evaluation is also a concern for schools, considering that each shadow teacher has a different approach in assisting children with special needs. Therefore, it is important for schools to start considering the implementation of more measurable evaluation mechanisms based on child development indicators.

3.1.5 School and Parent Collaboration in Realizing Inclusive Education

Results Collaboration between schools and parents is one of the key factors in the success of inclusive education. The results of the study show that schools have established good cooperation with parents through various activities, such as socialization, parenting classes and discussion groups. Through these activities, parents not only gain a deeper understanding of their child's condition, but also have the opportunity to discuss and share experiences with

other parents facing similar situations. This collaboration helps to create social support and a strong communication network between schools and parents, allowing for a more holistic and integrated approach to supporting the development of children with special needs. Based on interviews with parents, they appreciate this initiative, but they also hope that this collaboration can be further strengthened. Some parents hope for more intensive consultation sessions with teachers and relevant experts so they can gain a deeper understanding of how to support their children at home. In addition, there were also parents who highlighted the need to increase the capacity of classroom teachers in handling children with special needs. According to them, if classroom teachers are given more training on inclusive learning strategies, then children who do not have a shadow teacher can still get optimal guidance.

3.2 Discussion

3.2.1 Recruitment Process and Challenges Faced

Teacher recruitment is one of the crucial aspects of human resource management in the education sector. This process does not only aim to fill vacant positions, but also aims to find individuals who have a high commitment and dedication to the world of education (Sudarsono, 2024; Supriadi, 2019) in (Ismanda et al., 2025). Kindergarten Negeri Pembina 1 Malang City leaves the recruitment process completely to parents, this can cause a gap in the quality of mentoring. This shows that the financing of companions by parents is often an obstacle in inclusive education. This condition creates unequal access to assistance services, especially for families with economic limitations, thus affecting the effectiveness and equality in the implementation of inclusive education.

A more active role is needed from the school in the recruitment and financing process of accompanying personnel. Schools need to ensure the qualification standards of the accompanying staff to match the needs of inclusion students. In addition, financing alternatives, such as support from the government or cooperation with private institutions, can be a solution to reduce the financial burden on parents. With these measures, the effectiveness of inclusive education can be improved, so that every student gets quality assistance without being constrained by economic factors. Based on the theory of the procurement of educational personnel, the recruitment process should be carried out by educational institutions to ensure the qualifications of accompanying personnel in accordance with the needs of students (Arifa, B. 2020).

3.2.2 The Role and Impact of Shadow Teachers in Learning

The role of shadow teachers in the inclusion education system has been discussed in various studies that show that the presence of special companions can increase the academic and social success of inclusion students (Thufail, D. F., & Bakhtiar, A. M. 2023). The role of the accompanying teacher is crucial in the learning process and classroom management. When the classroom teacher explains the material, the accompanying teacher helps ensure that the children can be properly monitored and stay focused on the explanations given (Hidayat et al., 2024). In practice, shadow teacher strategies involve mentoring and teaching using certain methods. The selection of strategies used in teaching is of course based on the level of effectiveness and efficiency. In an inclusive classroom, shadow teachers will accompany or guide

children with special needs from the beginning to the end of the learning session (Sismawijaya & Astutik 2024).

The role of shadow teachers in inclusive education is crucial to support the academic and social development of students, especially for those with special needs. In the academic aspect, the accompanying teacher helps students understand the material in a way that is tailored to their individual needs, provides guidance to students who are experiencing difficulties, and encourages active participation in the learning process. On the social side, the accompanying teacher contributes to facilitating interaction between students and their classmates, helps with communication, and instills the values of tolerance and respect for differences. Not only that, the accompanying teacher is also in charge of managing the situation in a crowded classroom, supervising students who have problems understanding the lesson, and providing guidance and motivation, including in extracurricular activities. With this significant role, the accompanying teacher serves as a liaison that ensures that the learning environment remains inclusive, thus supporting the optimal development of students, both academically and socially (Khasanah et al., 2025).

At Kindergarten Negeri Pembina 1 Malang City, the presence of shadow teachers has been proven to make a significant contribution to the development of children with special needs, especially in the aspects of communication and independence. With a companion, it is easier for children to understand instructions, adjust to the learning environment, and improve their social skills. According to (Giangreco et al. 2010) in (Hasani & Kurniawati 2024), the existence of shadow teachers is very effective in helping special needs students to continue to integrate in a regular classroom environment and be able to achieve their learning goals. The role of shadow teachers not only helps children in carrying out daily activities at school, but also provides more personalized support in facing academic and social challenges. This shows that the existence of accompanying staff plays a very important role in increasing the effectiveness of inclusive education in the school.

However, there are challenges for students who do not have a shadow teacher, especially due to parents' financial limitations or lack of available companions. Children without companions tend to have difficulty in following learning that has been designed for regular students, so they are at risk of falling behind academically and socially. Therefore, classroom teachers need to develop more adaptive and inclusive learning strategies to ensure that all children receive appropriate support. This strategy can include the application of different teaching approaches to differentiated instruction, the use of more flexible learning media, and closer cooperation with parents and other educators. Thus, all students, whether they have a companion or not, still get the same opportunity to develop optimally in an inclusive education environment.

In addition, shadow teachers are also faced with challenges in controlling themselves when dealing with the emotions of children with special needs who are often unstable. Sudden emotional changes can be triggered by various factors, such as frustration due to difficulty completing tasks, discomfort due to physical limitations in activities, difficulty in expressing feelings both verbally and non-verbally, and fatigue after doing an activity. Therefore, the accompanying teacher needs to have high patience and remain calm, so that they can control themselves and not get carried away by emotions in difficult situations (Halidah & Rosyidi 2024).

3.2.3 Some Children with Special Needs in Kindergarten Negeri Pembina 1 Malang City and Their Mentoring Strategies

Early childhood is at a very important stage of development, where character, social skills, and cognitive abilities begin to form significantly (Sumitra, 2014) in (Arita, E. et al., 2024). Autism, speech-impaired, ADHD, and hyperactivity are the majority of inclusion children in Kindergarten Negeri Pembina 1 Malang City.

Autism is a condition that affects the brain and can reduce or inhibit a person's ability to communicate, establish relationships with others, and respond to their environment. This condition is characterized by abnormalities in social interaction and communication patterns, as well as limited and stereotypical interests and movements. Autism is a disorder that is chronic, with a varied prognosis. Some children with autism may grow and live independently later in life, although they may still show minimal symptoms of autism, such as difficulty in socializing (Maharani & Nadhirah 2024).

Speech impairment is a physical disorder that inhibits a person's ability to speak well. This condition is characterized by difficulty in speaking, a shrill voice, and the habit of repeating words. Children with speech impairment often have problems communicating verbally, so their interlocutors often have difficulty understanding what they are saying (Rahmawati & Nadhirah (2024).

Medically, children with ADHD have problems with their brains, which result in difficulty controlling movements, concentrating, and regulating movement. As a result, children often have difficulty focusing, so their attention is easily distracted, which in turn can hinder their behavior. If this condition continues during their growth period, children will face various difficulties, such as learning, interacting, and behaving, and it will be difficult to stay calm and not move. This will certainly have an impact when children start school, where they are required to be more focused and calm when completing school assignments (Mirnawati & Amka, 2019) in (Mbuik 2024). Children with ADHD often have difficulty following the learning process like other children. This causes them not to achieve optimal learning outcomes. In addition, children with ADHD can also sometimes disturb their friends. (Syahfitri et al., 2024).

Continuous early treatment can have a big impact on the growth and development of children with special needs. Early intervention in language and speech can make significant progress if the strategies are tailored to each child's circumstances, use media that suits their interests, and involve close cooperation between parents, a team of experts, and the surrounding environment. Good cooperation with parents is one of the important factors that encourage the rapid development of children's language skills and ensure that the implementation of early intervention in language and speech runs smoothly (Dini J. P. A. U. 2022).

The improvement of communication skills and motor skills that occurred at Kindergarten Negeri Pembina 1 Malang City showed that the learning strategies applied were quite effective in supporting the development of inclusive students. However, there are still obstacles in the treatment of individuals who do not have a special companion, so further efforts are needed to develop a more inclusive and adaptive approach. This includes increasing the

capacity of classroom teachers as well as systemic support from schools and the government to ensure that all children with special needs receive optimal services, regardless of the availability of shadow teachers.

3.2.4 Shadow Teacher Performance Evaluation

Evaluation is the process of measuring or assessing the plan that has been implemented by an organization. This activity can be done at various times, such as the middle of the month, the end of the month, the middle of the year, or the end of the year (Arifandi, A. S. D. 2020). The teacher performance evaluation process is a crucial step that should be carried out gradually in every school organization. One of the main reasons why this evaluation is so important is to improve the quality of teaching. The quality of teaching has a significant impact on student learning outcomes, so attention to it is urgently needed. Through teacher performance evaluation, principals can easily identify strengths and weaknesses in the teaching methods applied. This not only allows teachers to know which aspects need improvement, but also contributes to their increased professionalism in carrying out teaching tasks (Ilmi et al., 2024).

The main challenge lies in the inability of existing performance evaluation methods to cover all dimensions of teacher success. Shadow teacher performance evaluation should be done using more structured indicators, such as competency-based assessment rubrics. The lack of formal evaluation, as happened at Kindergarten Negeri Pembina 1 Malang City, can cause differences in the quality of mentoring between one shadow teacher and another. This has the potential to affect the consistency and effectiveness of the support provided to inclusion students. Therefore, schools need to consider creating a more targeted and standardized monitoring and evaluation system. The system can include clear performance indicators, periodic training, and structured feedback mechanisms to ensure that each shadow teacher is able to provide optimal mentoring according to the needs of inclusion learners.

3.2.5 School and Parent Collaboration in Realizing Inclusive Education

Parental participation in education has a profound influence on children's development, especially for those with special needs. Parents not only provide support, but also serve as facilitators in the educational process. In this case, parents and teachers need to work together to share information about children's development, skills, motivation, attention given, social acceptance, and emotional adjustment of students. Therefore, effective collaboration between teachers and parents is very important in guiding children towards optimal development (Liza, D et al., 2024).

Collaboration between schools and parents is an important component in the success of inclusive education (Hasan et al., 2024). The approaches used by TK Negeri Pembina 1 Malang City, such as socialization, parenting classes, and WhatsApp groups, are in accordance with the effective parent involvement model. This approach allows parents to understand their child's educational needs, share experiences, and receive guidance to support the development of children with special needs. Open communication between schools and parents facilitates structured and continuous child support, both at school and at home. This collaboration is an important approach to optimize the development of children with special needs and can be applied in inclusive education to expand its positive impact (Sidabutar et al., 2023).

Positive collaboration between parents, schools, and teachers is a solid foundation in achieving the goal of inclusion (Fitriani et al., 2024). Collaboration between teachers, counselors, parents, and the community plays an important role in creating a positive, inclusive, and comfortable learning environment for all students. For this reason, strengthening child-friendly school policies is needed to support the implementation of inclusive education and counseling guidance. Thus, we can create a safe, comfortable, and discrimination-free learning environment for all students (Natania, N. et al., 2025).

4. Conclusion

This study highlights the importance of the role of shadow teachers in Kindergarten Negeri Pembina 1 Malang City to support the academic and social development of children with special needs. The existence of shadow teachers has a positive impact on communication, adaptation, material understanding, and children's behavior. However, inequality in services due to economic limitations and the lack of optimal assistance and evaluation systems are major challenges that must be overcome. Success in inclusive education is not only determined by the presence of shadow teachers, but also supported by a holistic support system, such as recruitment policies, teacher capacity building, performance evaluation mechanisms, and intensive collaboration carried out by schools with students' parents.

Based on the results of research that has been carried out regarding the procurement of special educators for inclusion students at the State Kindergarten Pembina 1 Malang City, it is recommended to the school to continue to improve careful planning in the procurement of special educators, both in terms of the need for number, competence, and qualifications that are in accordance with the characteristics of inclusion students. In addition, the implementation of procurement should be carried out by considering sustainability and equitable distribution of teachers, so that all inclusion students get optimal services. To the education office, it is recommended to provide stronger policy support, including budget allocation and ongoing training for special teachers. This research is also expected to be a reference for other educational institutions in designing strategies for the procurement of special educators that are more integrated and oriented to real needs in the field.

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