Proceedings Series of Educational Studies

The 5th International Conference on Educational Management and Technology (ICEMT) 2026

LITERATURE REVIEW: TEACHING CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES USING THE COOPERATIVE LEARNING METHOD IN INCLUSIVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Emira Nurfitria Muhammad[1], Anindhita Nanda Pradina[2], Azizah Dwi Fadilah[3], Qurotul Ishaqiyah[4], Wiwik Dwi Hastuti[5]

State University of Malang, Jl. Semarang No. 5 Malang, East Java, Indonesia

*Author of correspondence, Email: wiwik.dwi.fip@um.ac.id

Abstract

Learning for children with intellectual disabilities using the cooperative learning method in inclusive elementary schools. The main questions in this study are: (1) What are the problems faced by students with intellectual disabilities in interacting social interactions with their environment?; (2)What is the role of the cooperative learning model for students with intellectual disabilities? This study aims to examine the role of the cooperative learning model in improving the social and academic abilities of children with intellectual disabilities in inclusive elementary schools. The method used in this research is a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) by analyzing several joulnals and articles relevant to the research questions and topics. The result show that students with intellectual disabilities face obstacles in social interaction due to intellectual limitations, lack of environmental support, and low motivation and attention from parents. The cooperative learning model has proven effective for students with intellectual disabilities because it promotes collaboration among students, increases learning engagement, and enhances social and emotional skills. Through heterogeneous group work, students with intellectual disabilities can learn to interact, help one anoter, and build self-confidence. Therefore, implementing the cooperative learning model in inclusive elementary schools plays an important role in supporting a learning environment that is inclusive, adaptive, and respectful of individual differences in students' abilities.

Keywords: intellectual disability; inclusive school; cooperative learning; social interaction

1. Introduction

Article 28H, paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution states that every person has the right to receive special assistance and treatment to ensure equal opportunities and benefits, thereby achieving equality and justice. To realize this, an open and accepting educational environment and system is needed for everyone, regardless of their diverse backgrounds and circumstances, such as ethnicity, personality, status, physical condition, and other factors. An inclusive school is an educational environment that is open and accepting of children from diverse backgrounds. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) in the Guide to Implementing Inclusive Education, the objectives of inclusive education are: (1) to provide the widest possible opportunities to all students with physical, emotional, mental, and social disabilities, or those with exceptional intellectual potential and/or talents, to receive a quality education in accordance with their needs and abilities; (2) to realize an educational system that values diversity and is non-discriminatory toward all students. Therefore, schools that implement inclusive education should be able to accept all students without discrimination.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Inclusive elementary schools accept all students from diverse backgrounds, such as different ethnicities, religions, and economic statuses, as well as those with physical or emotional disabilities and other conditions. However, in this discussion, the author will focus on children with special needs, particularly those with intellectual disabilities, often referred to as children with intellectual impairments.

A child with an intellectual disability is a child who has below-average intellectual functioning and has difficulty adapting to or adjusting to their environment. This condition manifests before the child reaches the age of 18. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) defines an intellectual disability as significantly below-average general intellectual functioning, which occurs alongside deficits in adaptive behavior and manifests during the developmental period, adversely affecting the child's educational performance. Because children with intellectual disabilities have below-average intellectual functioning, they experience difficulties in problem-solving, as well as in receiving and retaining information. Due to these difficulties, the social interaction skills of children with intellectual disabilities are generally not as developed as those of other children. Therefore, children with intellectual disabilities require special education services tailored to their abilities and needs so that they can develop their potential fully and to the best of their ability.

One learning strategy or model suitable for children with intellectual disabilities in inclusive elementary schools is the cooperative learning model. Cooperative learning is a method of organizing students into small groups designed to encourage them to work together and help classmates who are struggling to achieve a common goal. According to Slavin (2008) as cited in Lubis and Nur Ainun (2016), cooperative learning is a learning model in which students learn and work collaboratively in small groups consisting of four to six members, with a heterogeneous group structure. Thus, each group comprises children with varying abilities so that they can help one another. Cooperative learning is highly effective for children with intellectual disabilities when implemented optimally.

2. Method

The method used in this study was the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method. A systematic literature review is a process of critically and systematically collecting, evaluating, and synthesizing the results of an information search. This study was conducted by following procedures that included the following steps.

2.1. Formulating the question

This study addresses the following two questions:

a. What challenges do children with intellectual disabilities face in social interactions with their peers?
b. What is the role of cooperative learning models for children with intellectual disabilities?

2.1.1. Searching for references (studies)

The literature review for this study drew on various articles from indexed journals. The keywords used in this literature review included inclusive schools, cooperative learning, and intellectual disabilities.

2.1.1.1. Selecting References

The author reads and understands the abstract and then identifies the relationship between the variables or topics and the research keywords; relevant journal articles can be analyzed further to answer the research questions. The following are some of the articles used in this Systematic Literature Review.

No	Question	Source	Author, year of publication	Literature Titles
1	What challenges do children with intellectual disabilities face in social interactions with their environment?	Multidisciplinary Indonesian Center Journal (MICJO), 1(3)	Qurrotul A & Nova E H, (2024)	Analysis of Issues Facing Children with Intellectual Disabilities at the Karya Bhakti Special Education School in Surabaya
		Ash-shudur: Journal of Islamic Guidance and Counseling, 4(1)	Nurul dkk., (2024)	Social Interaction Among Children with Intellectual Disabilities (A Study in Blang Cut Village, Meurah Mulia Subdistrict)
		Journal of Child and Gender Studies, 99-107	Alfi dkk., (2023)	The Role of Guidance and Counseling for Children with Intellectual Disabilities in Social Interactions at the Pertiwi Special School in Ponorogo
		Jurnal Ecuatio, 8(4), 1582-1588	Koyimah dkk, (2022)	Role-Playing as a Method for Improving the Interaction Skills of Children with Intellectual Disabilities
		Jurnal Sakato Ekasakti Law Review, 1(2), 61-71	Syaiful A & Indah V., (2022)	Persuasive Communication Strategies for People with Intellectual Disabilities to Improve Social Interaction Skills (Nur Rachman Special Education School, Lubuk Alung)

2	What role does the cooperative learning model play for children with intellectual disabilities?	Undergraduated thesis, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Jember	Pertiwi A E, (2020)	The Implementation of Cooperative Learning Strategies for Children with Intellectual Disabilities in Islamic Religious Education at the Jember State Special Education School
		Thematic Education: Journal of Elementary School Education, 6(1)	Vinsensus W, (2025)	The Application of the STAD Cooperative Learning Model in Social Studies Instruction for Students with Special Needs
		JP2SD (Journal of Elementary School Thought and Development), 9(1)	Nia D M & Yus M C., (2021)	Increasing the Learning Motivation of Students with Intellectual Disabilities Using the Puzzle-Assisted STAD Model in First Grade Elementary School
		Special Issue: Caruban Nasional, 1(1)	Asma dkk., (2025)	A Theoretical Review of Learning Strategies for Students with Intellectual Disabilities and the Role of Special Education Teachers in Inclusive Schools
		At-Thullab: Journal of Elementary Madrasah Teacher Education, 4(2), 78–92	Rahmah N & Muhammad A H., (2020)	Strategies for Managing Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Inclusive Classrooms

2.1.1.2. Extracting data

Use a form to filter and list the interesting and important points that need to be highlighted in the writing.

2.1.1.3. Interpreting the results

Write your answers based on the results of your analysis of the question categories you have created, and then organize them into coherent paragraphs.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

The study findings indicate that children with intellectual disabilities face challenges in social interaction that are influenced by intellectual and communication barriers, environmental factors, and a lack of parental support. Possible interventions include speech

therapy, counseling, and educational services tailored to the child's needs. Cooperative learning is one strategy that can help improve the social interaction skills of children with intellectual disabilities through activities that involve collaboration, communication, mutual assistance, and learning alongside peers in an inclusive school setting.

3.2 Discussion

Children with intellectual disabilities including those with intellectual impairments experience difficulties in social interaction with their peers. This is due to limitations in their intellectual abilities, which make it hard for them to solve problems, control their emotions, and process and understand information all of which impact their social interaction skills. According to Alfi et al. (2023), the second factor causing children to experience difficulties in social interaction is the environment; environmental factors can influence how they interact with others. An environment that does not support the child and instead belittles the child's limitations can lead the child to lack self-confidence and withdraw from their surroundings. The final factor identified by Qurrotul et al. (2024) is a lack of parental motivation. Parents play a crucial role in a child's development; if parents show no concern for their child at all, the child's development will be hindered. For example, if a child is rarely spoken to during early childhood and is only given gadgets, the child may experience speech delays that can carry over into adulthood. Additionally, children with intellectual disabilities who have speech impairments often feel frustrated, anxious, and have low self-esteem due to their limitations in communication. This can hinder their ability to interact socially with their environment, both at school and in the community.

The social communication difficulties faced by children with intellectual disabilities particularly in interacting with others and their inability to adapt pose serious challenges, as all living beings inherently require interaction to navigate daily life (Koyimah & Sidik S.A., 2022). Therefore, special interventions are necessary to help children with intellectual disabilities develop their social interaction skills. Children with speech delays can undergo speech therapy to help them communicate fluently and express their feelings through words or sentences. In addition, teachers can also provide counseling to these children. The guidance provided by homeroom teachers to children with intellectual disabilities is a form of support designed to help individuals achieve optimal development and assist them in resolving the problems they face (Farhati, A., et al., 2023).

All children have the right to educational services, including children with intellectual disabilities. However, educational services for children with intellectual disabilities must be tailored to their needs and abilities, which can be achieved through early intervention. The educational services provided differ from those for typical children, as they must be specifically designed in terms of objectives, learning strategies which may include media, methods, and assessment and learning evaluation (Mawanti, N. D., & Cholily, Y. M., 2021). Children with intellectual disabilities can attend not only special schools, such as schools for the exceptional (SLB), but also inclusive schools that are open to and accept students from all backgrounds. Inclusive schools must adapt their learning models to their students; therefore, in this context, inclusive elementary schools must adapt their teaching methods to children with intellectual disabilities.

One learning method that can be adapted for children with intellectual disabilities and other typically developing children is cooperative learning. Cooperative learning is a system in

which small groups are formed consisting of children with varying abilities. The goal of cooperative learning is for children to help one another and achieve learning objectives together. Cooperative learning can be considered effective because, in an inclusive elementary school classroom where there are children with intellectual disabilities, these children can learn from their peers and develop their social interaction skills with confidence. According to Wangge's (2025) research, the implementation of this learning model fosters cooperation among students, enhances learning activities, and facilitates understanding of the material, thereby having a positive impact on children's academic achievement. Furthermore, cooperative learning is not only beneficial academically but also fosters children's social and emotional development. An example of implementing cooperative learning in an inclusive elementary school is when the teacher forms learning groups, each of which must include a typically developing child, a child with intellectual disabilities, and a child with other special needs. Teachers do this to foster teamwork among children with diverse personalities, particularly children with intellectual disabilities who tend to be quiet and have difficulty socializing; through their study groups, they will gradually learn to respect one another and develop a high level of empathy toward their peers (Nurfitriani, R., & Hidayat, M. A., 2020). Through these groups, typically developing children can help explain the material to children with intellectual disabilities, enabling them to understand the material and encouraging them to learn to communicate with their peers with confidence. Therefore, cooperative learning for children with intellectual disabilities in inclusive schools is highly influential and effective when it is tailored to the children's needs and abilities and implemented correctly and to the fullest extent possible.

4. Conclusion

Children with intellectual disabilities have intellectual impairments that can cause them to struggle with social interaction in their surroundings. Factors contributing to these children's difficulties in social interaction include their cognitive limitations, a lack of support from their surroundings, and a lack of motivation and attention from their parents. To address these issues, special education services tailored to the needs and abilities of children with intellectual disabilities are required, whether in special education schools (SLB) or inclusive elementary schools.

The use of cooperative learning methods has proven effective in helping children with intellectual disabilities in their learning process. Through collaboration in heterogeneous groups, children with intellectual disabilities can learn to interact, help one another, and build their self-confidence. In addition, cooperative learning also has a positive impact on children's social and emotional development. Thus, cooperative learning plays a vital role in inclusive settings in supporting the optimal development of children with intellectual disabilities when implemented according to their individual needs and abilities.

References

Aini, Q., & Harsiwi, N. E. (2024). Analisis Permasalahan Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus Tunagrahita di SLB Karya Bhakti Surabaya. *Multidisciplinary Indonesian Center Jurnal (MICJO), 1(3).* https://doi.org/10.62567/micjo.v1i3.182

Ardi, S., & Vionel, I. (2022). Strategi Komunikasi Persuasif Penyandang Disabilitas Tunagrahita Dalam Meningkatkan Kemampuan Interaksi Sosial (SLB Nur Rachman Lubuk Alung). *Jurnal Sakato Ekasakti Law Review, 1(2),* 61-71. https://doi.org/10.31933/peex3113

Farhati, A., Jundullah, M. A., & Azzuhri, M. F. S. (2023). Peran Bimbingan Konseling Bagi Anak Tunagrahita dalam interaksi Sosial Di Sekolah Luar Biasa Pertiwi Ponorogo. *Journal of Child and Gender Studies, 1(2),* 99-107. https://doi.org/10.55380/iktifak.v1i2.635

Fauziyah, N. K., Iskandar, C. P., & Iskandar, A. F. (2024). Interaksi Sosial Anak Tunagrahita (Studi di Desa Blang Cut Kecamatan Meurah Mulia). *Ash-Shudur:Jurnal Bimbingan dan Konseling Islam, 4(1).*

Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi. (2022). *Panduan Pelaksanaan Pendidikan Inklusif.* Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan.

Khaerunnisa, A. F., Sinta., Rahmawati, Y., & Shiamullaeli, M. (2025). Tinjauan Teoritis Mengenai Strategi Pembelajaran Siswa Tunagrahita dan Peran Guru Pendamping Khusus di Sekolah Imklusi. Special Issue: Caruban Nasional, 1(1).

Koyimah. & Sidik, S. A. (2022). Metode Role Playing Untuk Meningkatkan Kemampuan Interaksi Anak Tunagrahita. *Jurnal Educatio FKIP UNMA, 8(4),*1582-1588. https://doi.org/10.31949/educatio.v8i4.3996

Lubis, N. A., & Harahap, H. (2016). Pembelajaran Kooperatif Tipe Jigsaw. *Jurnal As-Salam, 1(1),* 96-102.

Mawanti, N. D., & Cholily, Y. M. (2021). Peningkatan Minat Belajar siswa Tunagrahita Menggunakan Model STAD Berbantuan Puzzle di Kelas 1 Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Pemikiran dan pengembangan Sekolah Dasar, 9(1),* 28-39.

Nurfitriani, R., & Hidayat, M. A. (2020). Strategi Pengelolaan Siswa ABK Jenis Tunagrahita di Kelas Inklusi. At-Thullab: *Jurnal Pendidikan Guru madrasah Ibtidaiyah, 4(2),* 78-92. https://doi.org/10.30736/atl.v4i2.193

Pertiwi, A. E. (2020). *Penerapan Strategi Cooperative Learning untuk Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus Tunagrahita dalam Pendidikan agama Islam di SLB Negeri Jember.* Undergraduate thesis, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Jember.

Turnbull, A., Turnbull, R., Wehmeyer, M. L., & Shogren, K.A. (2012). *Exceptional Lives Special education in Today's Schools Seventh Edition.* Pearson Education.

Wangge, V. (2025). Penerapan Model Cooperative Learning Tipe Stad dalam Pembelajaran IPS bagi Siswa Berkebutuhan Khusus. Edukasi Tematik: *Jurnal Pendidikan Sekolah dasar, 6(1),* 70-81. https://doi.org/10.59632/edukasitematik.v6i1.589