

# EDUCATION FOR ALL: LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY IN IMPROVING THE ACCESSIBILITY OF EDUCATION FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN BANYUMAS REGENCY

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## Abstract

This research discusses the accessibility of education for people with disabilities in Banyumas Regency. The purpose of the study is to analyze the accountability of local governments in providing suggestions and infrastructure for education for all, including people with disabilities. Based on data from the Banyumas Regency Education Office in 2022/2023, it is stated that there are 2,499 adults with disabilities and around 432 children with disabilities. Data shows that there is a school-age population with special needs that does not have or lacks access to adequate educational facilities for children with disabilities, in addition to the problem of inclusive schools that do not receive attention. On the other hand, the issue of education for people with disabilities is also faced with the development of a lack of curriculum. The research method uses qualitative descriptions, with data collection using in-depth interviews and Focus Group discussions. The results of the study show that local governments, especially the education office, do not pay attention to access to education for people with disabilities, but as a form of responsibility, in 2023 they will only open schools for people with disabilities by paying attention to various community demands. In addition, it was also found that the development of education for people with disabilities lacked support for the development of human resources, teachers, and curricula that were not in favor of people with disabilities.

**Keywords:** Access, Accountability, Disability, education,

## 1. Introduction

Inclusive policies in education for people with disabilities are important to ensure access and justice for all citizens. The constitution and the state's purpose is to guarantee that every citizen gets a proper education for the realization of an intelligent and civilized society. Education is the main foundation for building a bright future for humanity and the country. Therefore all individuals, without exception, have the same right to quality education [1]. One of the inclusive policies in education is Special Education, which is a field of education that focuses on providing education and special support for individuals with different educational needs than the majority of students. These needs can be in the form of developmental disorders, physical, or mental disabilities, or learning problems. The urgency is great in the context of social inclusion and equality of human rights. [2]

Through exceptional education, it can create opportunities for every individual, regardless of physical or mental condition, to access education, develop their potential, and become productive members of society. One of the foundations of extraordinary education's urgency is realizing the principle of inclusion in the education system. Inclusion creates an environment where all students, including those with special educational needs, can learn together. It promotes better understanding, empathy, and integration in society. The WHO (World Health Organization) reference in the "World Report on Disability" in 2011, emphasizes the importance of inclusion and exceptional education in realizing a dignified life for individuals with disabilities. [3,4].

Extraordinary Schools (SLB) are one part of the education from *all, by all, and for all* paradigms. The Exceptional School is a special school for students with special needs such as disabilities, exceptional

intelligence, and behavioral problems. The main goal of SLB is to help students with special needs achieve educational goals that are equivalent to regular students. The Exceptional School Guidance is specifically designed to assist students with special needs in achieving their educational success. [5]

In addition, exceptional education supports the empowerment of individuals with special needs. It helps them to develop the social, academic, and daily life skills necessary for independence. In "The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education" issued by UNESCO in 1994, it is stated that exceptional education is one of the means to provide equal educational rights for all individuals. Exceptional education also has a positive impact on society as a whole. By providing quality education for all individuals, we create a more inclusive, diverse, and tolerant society [6,7,8].

Access and adequate and friendly educational facilities for children with disabilities in Indonesia are still lacking, especially in Banyumas Regency. Based on the Basic Education Data of the Directorate General of Early Childhood Education, Primary Education, and Secondary Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture for 2022/2023 Even Semester, Indonesia has 2,320 SLBs, Central Java has 190 Extraordinary Schools, and Banyumas Regency has 4 SLBs. The four SLBs are managed by the private sector and are spread across Banyumas District, South Purwokerto District, East Purwokerto District, and Ajibarang District. No state SLB institution serves and assists people with disabilities in Banyumas Regency.

So far, children with special needs and disabilities in Banyumas Regency with limited Special School conditions have made it possible for them not to be well served. As a result, people with disabilities who do not take education will experience isolation. They will have difficulty socializing and lack access to the information needed to contribute to society. It also causes psychological problems, such as low self-confidence. All of these things boil down to obstacles in developing skills and using their skills to get a job or contribute to society.

Therefore, the state must encourage the development and improvement of inclusive education by building Special Schools. The state must take various steps to ensure that SLB can function properly and provide children with special needs with proper education. The state must also make improvements in terms of human resources to ensure that children with special needs get the right and quality education. This will encourage the achievement of educational equality, which is education that is available to all people regardless of background, ability, condition, or ethnicity, and without being burdened by stigma and discrimination. SLB is expected to be able to foster the spirit of integration, sharing, and tolerance among different children.

Recap of Banyumas Regency Disability Data in 2022, 2023 from the Banyumas Regency Village Social and Community Empowerment Office, the number of adults with disabilities is 2,499 people, and children with disabilities is around 432 people. Kemranjen, Sumbang, and Baturraden are the sub-districts in the Banyumas Regency with the highest number of people with disabilities. In terms of quantity, based on the PPKS (Welfare Service Administrator) Social Disability Data of Banyumas Regency, many people with disabilities in Banyumas Regency need access to services for primary to secondary education. Therefore, the urgency of building a state Extraordinary School in Banyumas Regency is needed to facilitate children with disabilities in Banyumas Regency.

In the implementation of decentralization and inclusive education, local governments as the owners of the highest authority in the regions have authority in terms of regulation, management, coaching, and supervision. Therefore, the commitment of local governments to the implementation of decentralization and inclusive education is very necessary. Local governments are expected to create strategies and innovations in the implementation of decentralization and inclusive education in their respective regions. Local governments know and understand what needs to be done to improve the quality and quantity of educational services in their regions, especially in terms of education for people with disabilities who have not yet obtained educational facilities.

## 2. Method

The research method used in this study is qualitative, which is an approach used to explore social or behavioral phenomena in depth, with a focus on understanding the meaning, experience, and perspective of individuals or groups. In this case, it is the condition of people with disabilities in Banyumas Regency who have difficulties in accessing education. This research is descriptive and interpretive, where researchers seek to uncover how respondents understand, feel, and experience certain situations in their social context. In this approach, the data collected are words, stories, or texts delivered by people with disabilities, parents, and related institutions [9]

The data collection method is **Focus Group Discussion (FGD)**. The FGD involved structured discussions conducted in small groups with topics focusing on accessibility and accountability of the Banyumas Regency government in providing education for all. The FGDs involved are regional research institutions, education offices, social services, and parents of students with disabilities. The role of the researcher in the FGD is to act as a moderator who facilitates discussions to bring out various views, opinions, and experiences of participants related to the accountability of the Banyumas Regency government in providing education for people with disabilities. This method is effective for exploring group dynamics, social interactions, and variations of opinions that may arise in the group. FGDs allow researchers to obtain rich data from direct interactions between participants, as well as identify themes that emerge from group discussions.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. School-Age Children and Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

The issue of inclusion and social justice is still lacking the involvement of all stakeholders, especially for initiatives aimed at creating cultural awareness about diversity and inclusion and intended for the protection of persons with disabilities. Therefore, it is necessary to build awareness of the importance of inclusive education for all. Inclusive education is essential to achieving high-quality education for all students and is a commitment recognized by the government both at the national and regional levels. Of course, it starts with building awareness that inclusive education is part of the enforcement of international human rights law. [10,11,12].

Awareness of inclusive education needs to be built because so far there has been indifference and indifference in designing education for all. As a result of the low awareness of the community, causes helplessness and the isolation of social relations of people with disabilities. The inability of persons with disabilities to access public facilities, even though it is the most basic right, namely obtaining a proper education, is still ignored by various parties [13].

Building such awareness begins with new assumptions about the clarity of the basic concept of education for persons with disabilities, as the United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF) highlights the need for conceptual clarity around what inclusive education is, and the importance of contextual innovation to meet the educational rights of children with disabilities [14]. This clarity of concept makes it in line with the international obligation for central and local governments to jointly provide high-quality education systems that embody the UN's commitment to inclusive schools and communities. 15]

Based on these various studies, the Banyumas Regency government is based on inclusive policies that provide education for all, including people with disabilities. Banyumas Regency itself has a total of 494 children with special needs who are still not in school. The division of data by region shows that some sub-districts have a higher number of children with special needs than others. For example, the Ministry of Defense has the highest number with 45 children, followed by Ajibarang with 38 children, and Sumbang with 35 children. On the other hand, several sub-districts such as West Purwokerto, North

Purwokerto, and Baturraden have a lower number, each with only 3, 3, and 1 child with special needs who have not yet gone to school. This data is important in an effort to understand the educational challenges faced by children with special needs in Banyumas Regency. By knowing their numbers and distribution, authorities can plan better educational programs and services to ensure that all children, including those with special needs, can have access to equal and quality education according to their rights. As a principle of school autonomy to provide education without discrimination [16]

Table 1. Children with Special Needs of School Age Who Are Already in School in Banyumas Regency in 2023/2024

School Name	Blind	Deaf	Mental retardation	Physical Disabilities	Autism	Sum
SLB B Yakut	-	105	-	-	-	105
SLB C Yakut	-	-	233	-	20	253
SLB Kuncup Mas	7	39	78	2	1	127
SLB Aisyiyah Al-Walidah	5	30	50	-	50	135
<b>Sum</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>620</b>

Source; Banyumas Regency Education Office in 2023/2024

Based on the data, Banyumas Regency, with an area consisting of 27 sub-districts, has a diverse population that needs special attention in terms of education. To provide inclusive educational services, Banyumas Regency has established four Special Schools (SLB) with different capacities in several sub-districts. First, SLB B Yakut, located in East Purwokerto District, can accommodate 105 students with various special educational needs. Furthermore, SLB C Yakut, located in South Purwokerto District, provides educational services for 253 students with their various special needs.

In Banyumas District, there is SLB Kuncup Mas with a capacity of 127 students, providing educational opportunities to students with special educational needs in the region. Finally, SLB Aisyiyah Al-Walidah located in Ajibarang District can accommodate 135 students with various educational needs, in particular. The existence of SLB is an indication of Banyumas Regency's commitment to providing equitable and inclusive access to education to all children, including those with special needs. With this SLB, it is hoped that every individual in Banyumas Regency can develop their potential optimally and actively participate in society.

#### a. Local Government Accountability and Education for All

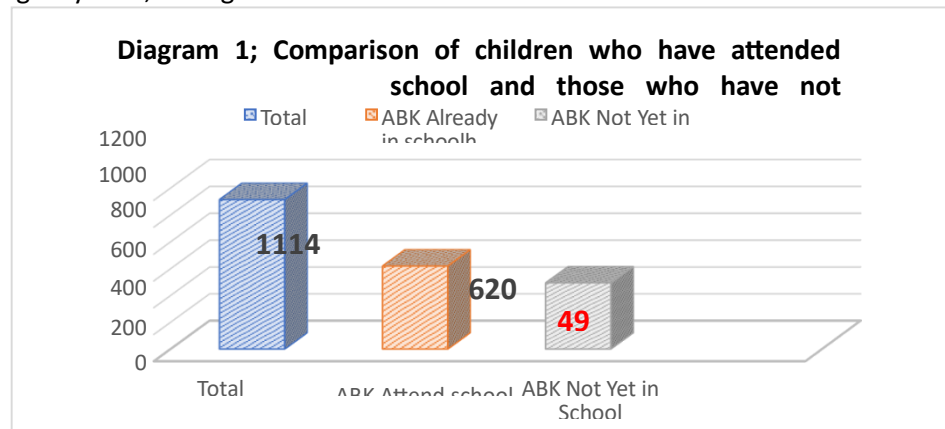
Inclusive public policies, with continuous monitoring and encouraging the participation of persons with disabilities in decision-making for their full integration, are encouraged and continue to be pursued. [17] Local governments need to develop accountability systems in realizing inclusion policies. This effort is needed to explore the long-term impact of governance arrangements, accountability of educational programs, and targeted activities to enhance the capabilities of persons with disabilities. Especially the accountability of educational programs for all, not only reaching out to students who are normal but also students who have physical and mental limitations. [18,19]

The existence of Special Schools (SLB) in the Banyumas Regency area itself is considered insufficient to meet the needs of the number of school-age ABK, recorded based on a survey conducted by the Banyumas Region X Education Office Branch, data on the number of children with special needs (ABK) in Banyumas Regency amounted to 1114 children. The distribution of ABK who attend school is also uneven because there are still half of ABK who have not studied at SLB. The following is data on ABK

students registered at 4 SLBs in the Banyumas Regency area. Based on the data mentioned above, there are only 4 SLBs in Banyumas Regency so the delum can accommodate all school-age ABKs. Of the total number of ABK as many as 1114 children, only 620 children attend SLB, this shows that there are 494 ABK who have not had the opportunity to take SLB education.

Various factors that cause ABK not to go to school have been identified, including economic problems, social aspects, and the psychology of the parents themselves. Although the Banyumas Regency government through the Education Office (Dindik) has instructed that all schools in Banyumas must implement inclusion schools that accept all types of students, both normal and ABK categories, it turns out that they are not able to accommodate all school-age ABKs. This is evidenced by the data on the distribution of crew members who have not attended school in SLB in the Banyumas Regency area.

Based on the comparison of ABK who attend school with those who have not attended school in the Banyumas Regency area, the figures are as follows.



Source: processed researcher data, 2023.

In addition, extraordinary schools or SLBs must have various facilities that are different from schools in general because the students are also different. Because the function of the school itself will only provide teaching according to the abilities of children with special needs. For example, communication fostering space, sound and rhythm perception, sound and speech perception fostering room, skills room and others. These rooms are almost similar to classrooms in schools in general but are supported by tools that can help children with special needs (ABK) grasp the lessons given. Data shows that the facilities in SLB in Banyumas Regency are not enough to accommodate various types of crew members.

Table 2. Extraordinary School Facilities in Banyumas Regency

No	School Name	R. Class	R. Lab	R. Library
1	SLB C Dan C1 Yakut Purwokerto	16	0	1
2	SLB Abcd Kuncup Mas Banyumas	14	0	1
3	SLB Aisyiyah Al-Walidah	6	0	0
4	SLB B Yakut Purwokerto	11	1	1

Source : [dapo.kemdikbud.go.id](http://dapo.kemdikbud.go.id)

The construction of the Purwokerto State SLB Education facility which is planned to be built should be adjusted to the needs and types of ABK, namely the construction of facilities based on the availability of schools, classrooms, and the number of teachers. The opportunity of

the ABK population to obtain education is indicated by the indicator of the Gross Participation Rate (APK) of the population in an area. Banyumas Regency itself has 4 SLBs spread across several regions, but this is not enough to meet the equitable distribution of ABK education in the Banyumas Regency area. Population growth that is always increasing can certainly bring problems if the population is not balanced with the availability of the needed facilities.

The provision of adequate educational facilities is very necessary to support the improvement of the quality of life of the community to be even better. Therefore, the appropriate development design is to project the number of school-age children to find out the needs of facilities needed by residents in Banyumas Regency. In addition, the plan to build SLB Negeri Purwokerto will provide a more equitable distribution of education for the community which has an impact on increasing the national education rate. With the increasing evenness of education, it is hoped that it can improve the quality of the nation's next generation in realizing the development and enhancement of people's welfare.

Based on these data, there are several efforts by the local government of Banyumas Regency to promote inclusive education, but the level of political will remains a big challenge. Constraints such as inadequate policy priorities, lack of adequate budget allocation, and lack of coordination between institutions are the main factors hindering the progress of inclusive education in Indonesia [20] It is hoped that with regional autonomy and a strong legal framework, seven-step planning mechanism will, to some extent, be able to overcome the problems of social exclusion, marginalization, and ineffectiveness in planning and budgeting at the local level [21]

#### **4. Conclusion**

The Banyumas Regency Government has made several efforts to support inclusive education, including affirmation policies that support educational accessibility, as well as building disability-friendly educational infrastructure. Through special programs, the local government of Banyumas Regency strives to ensure that children with disabilities can access a proper and equal education with other children. However, this study also finds various challenges that still have to be faced in the implementation of inclusive education.

The challenge is the lack of training for educators to handle students with special needs, limited physical facilities, and adequate infrastructure in schools. In addition, public and stakeholder awareness of the importance of inclusive education also needs to be increased. In addition, collaboration between local governments, schools, communities, and non-governmental organizations is crucial in realizing sustainable inclusive education. In addition, more progressive policies and stricter monitoring are needed to ensure that every child, regardless of his or her physical or mental condition, can enjoy the full right to education. Overall, the study concludes that despite positive steps from the Banyumas local government in improving the accessibility of education for people with disabilities, further efforts are still needed to overcome the various barriers that exist. Inclusive education must be a top priority in social development to ensure the creation of an inclusive and equitable society.

#### **5. Conflict of Interest**

The writing of this scientific article was intended to provide a definite picture of the importance of the Banyumas Regency Regional Government being Responsive to people with disabilities. They need attention and fair and inclusive policies. This article is not intended to be the performance of related agencies in Banyumas Regency.

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