Stakeholder Involvement in Inclusive Campus Services for Students with Disabilities in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT: This study aims to describe several relevant services that need to be supported by stakeholders to support the inclusion of people with disabilities in higher education in Indonesia. The method used in this research is a descriptive qualitative method. Using the secondary data obtained from news, journals, published articles, and government survey results, which were reviewed based on the conditions of several campuses in Indonesia, with a minority of disabled students. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of disability inclusion in Indonesian universities still faces significant challenges, particularly in terms of infrastructure, human resource readiness, and policy implementation. Some universities have begun efforts through the establishment of disability service units, training to provide disability services, and the provision of accessible facilities. The campuses in question which has implemented the policy that are leaning more into disability-friendly practices, has proved to be more inclusive within the universities civitas in Indonesia. However, service indicators that serve as benchmarks for inclusivity have not yet been consistently applied. The findings of this research reveal that disability inclusion in Indonesian higher education institutions has not been implemented systematically. Although some institutions have made initial efforts to adopt an inclusive approach, there are no standardized evaluation indicators to assess the achievements and quality of services provided. The absence of these standards results in inclusion policies and practices being implemented without a consistent direction.

Keywords: Inclusivity, Social Equity, Stakeholder Involvement.

INTRODUCTION

Inclusion policies provide equal access to opportunities and resources for people who may be marginalized or excluded, such as those with physical or intellectual disabilities or from other minority groups. Most members of these groups are of working age. Students with disabilities face various challenges, including physical difficulties, limited access to information, and social stigma (Shpigelman et al., 2022). It is important to provide inclusive services, such as providing information in appropriate formats (Braille, audio, digital text), inclusive socialization, and guidance support (Martiningsih, 2023). To this day, people with disabilities in Indonesia still face numerous challenges in their daily lives, including access to education, employment, healthcare,

and equal social participation. While efforts are being made to promote inclusion, many challenges remain for people with disabilities across various fields.

The challenges faced by persons with disabilities in their daily lives include accessibility, education, employment, health, social issues, and especially poverty (Lindsay et al., 2025; Pinilla-Roncancio & Alkire, 2021). Poverty and education are the most prominent issues, and the two are interrelated. Education opens up opportunities for persons with disabilities to obtain better jobs that require skills taught in higher education, but if education is difficult for them to access, poverty tends to remain with them. This situation shows that people with disabilities are vulnerable to a cycle of repeated powerlessness. Limited access to higher education is one of the causes of their low competitiveness in the job market, which ultimately reinforces the poverty they experience. Within the university environment, this situation highlights the urgent need to understand how various stakeholders, including students, can contribute to creating a more inclusive educational ecosystem. Therefore, it is important to further examine how the roles of stakeholders within the university environment can contribute to improving access and the quality of education for people with disabilities.

In recent years, the issue of disability inclusion in higher education has become a major concern in many countries, as awareness of the right to equal education for all individuals has grown. A number of studies show that despite an increase in the participation of students with disabilities, structural and cultural challenges remain, including limited facilities, inadequate policies, and discriminatory attitudes within the campus environment (López Gómez et al., 2025). The experiences of students with disabilities show that the systems and culture in higher education institutions often result in unfair treatment, either through unequal services or through assessment systems that limit their opportunities to participate fully in academic activities(Nieminen et al., 2024; Wertans & Burch, 2022). Efforts to create an inclusive campus and a center of excellence for persons with disabilities require a well-planned strategy through increased research, publications, and the provision of facilities, infrastructure, and human resources, while addressing social challenges, discrimination, and institutional limitations that still hinder the full participation of persons with disabilities in higher education (Puspitosari et al., 2022; Yusuf et al., 2024). Experience at various universities shows that the implementation of structured inclusion services, supported by caring human resources and reinforced by disability awareness mentoring and training programs, can improve the quality of services for students with disabilities (Masadhe et al., 2021). However, these efforts still face challenges such as limited facilities with universal design and weak supervision of disability-friendly development.

In Indonesia itself, there is a gap between graduates of lower education and higher education for people with disabilities because, unlike the lower education stage, there are no special universities reserved for the disabled. The living conditions of students with disabilities in Indonesia reflect the complex challenges that are still faced by the disabled in and out of campus life. The low accessibility of higher education for persons with disabilities in Indonesia reflects systemic discrimination that violates human rights principles and national legislation, due to facilities that are not disability-friendly, services that are not inclusive, and the absence of specific policies that guarantee equal access to education(Nurlailiya & Khasna, 2024; Satria et al., 2025). In addition, the protection and fulfillment of the right to education for students with disabilities in higher education is still neglected because the regulations that have been made do not fully accommodate the

support of accessibility for disability services in a tangible manner and in line with the mandate of the law (Sholehah & Susilo, 2024). Another issue is that many universities show that stakeholder commitment to inclusive education is still partial, where the lack of training for human resources, the absence of disability services units, and the uneven distribution of disability-friendly facilities reflect that people with disabilities have not yet fully obtained equal rights and learning opportunities on campus (Sulaeman & Trustisari, 2024). Based on these situations that are still commonplace among the disabled in Indonesia, it is pertinent to conclude that making the disabled have access to universities can also support the lives of the graduates with disabilities and their families, and help them improve their standard of living (Shutaleva et al., 2023).

Various studies have discussed the issue of higher education inclusion for people with disabilities, but most of them still focus on physical accessibility, the individual experiences of students with disabilities, or general policies implemented by institutions. Few studies have specifically examined the active role of stakeholders within the campus environment—such as faculty members, educational staff, student organizations, and university leadership—in providing services that support the academic continuity of students with disabilities This writing will show the percentage and findings of stakeholder efforts in policy making, policy implementation and the results and differences of campuses that implement inclusive campus policies. Furthermore, there is limited discussion regarding the assessment indicators that can be used to measure the effectiveness of services provided to students with disabilities in higher education institutions. Therefore, this study aims to describe several relevant services that need to be supported by stakeholders to support the inclusion of people with disabilities in higher education in Indonesia.

METHOD

The method for this research uses descriptive qualitative methods. A qualitative approach can uncover deeper meanings and values behind the social phenomenon of inclusion, with the aim of providing a broad explanation when revealing problems (Lawrence Neuman, 2014). The data obtained is secondary data collected from news, journals, published articles, and the government's survey results that are reviewed using case studies of several campuses in Indonesia. The data analysis techniques used in the study involve several stages, including data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Miles et al., 2014). Data validity testing techniques use data source triangulation, focusing on data obtained from informants, so that the validity of the research can be accurate (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Indonesia embraces an inclusive education philosophy that rejects segregation, emphasizing the importance of integrating persons with disabilities into the mainstream education system, including at the university level. This approach is in line with Law No. 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities, which affirms the right of persons with disabilities to obtain education without discrimination. Within this framework, the Ministry of Education encourages both public and private universities to build inclusive systems through policies outlined in Minister of National Education Regulation

No. 70 of 2009 on Inclusive Education and Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System. These two regulations reinforce the principles of non-discrimination and equal access to education. However, in practice, there are still complexities in the implementation of services, and the roles of various stakeholders in realizing truly inclusive and disability-friendly higher education in Indonesia are not yet optimal (Aulia et al., 2019; Riyadi, 2021). The result and discussion section will focus on the main challenges in implementing inclusive higher education, particularly regarding financial factors, infrastructure limitations, and the role and initiatives of stakeholders within the campus environment.

Financial Factor

Financial and Logistical Constraints are also a hindrance that are still faced by both the government, educational facilities, and the disabled. Building specialized campuses with tailored infrastructure, technology, and staffing would require major investment (Chagnon-Lessard et al., 2021). Lack of funds to fulfill infrastructure needs can be an obstacle to fulfilling disability services in faculty units (Wandalia & Dahlawi, 2022). With the limited State Revenue and Expenditure Budget provided, the government and most universities may focus solely on retrofitting existing campuses with Ramps, Braille signage, Screen readers, and Accessible toilets. In addition to the infrastructural hindrance, many universities still have Low Awareness and Capacity to cater to the disabled, as there is still a lack of expertise and training practices in inclusive education. Disability support services (e.g., accessibility offices) are also still rare or underdeveloped. This leads to practical exclusion, even if campuses claim to be inclusive. The number of relatively low enrollment of students with disabilities accessing higher education in Indonesia is a result of barriers in earlier education levels, social stigma for the disabled, lack of support systems and infrastructure that facilitates the disabled.

Aside from the financial problems faced by the campuses and universities, the students themselves faced similar financial issues. As published by the national socioeconomic survey in Indonesia, 11,42% of the disabled in Indonesia lived in poverty as of May 2025. This number is significantly higher compared to the National Poverty Rate, which is 8,5%. The main factor as to why poverty is so prevalent among the disabled is due to low workforce participation for the disabled living under Poverty in Indonesia. Only about 44–45% of disabled individuals are in the labor force, far below the 69–70% participation rate of non-disabled Indonesians. Even then, many of the disabled are employed informally or self-employed with unstable and low incomes. While only 22–57% have formal jobs. Ironically, disabled individuals are in need of higher living costs as they face extra expenses. Needs such as healthcare, assistive devices, and dedicated transportation, which aren't included in official poverty calculations, underestimate their real plight of need for higher income (Creed et al., 2024; Karan et al., 2023). Low education level is also the main source of hindrance faced by the disabled. As educational attainment is significantly lower in the disabled community, it limits their job opportunities (Morwane et al., 2021; Wondemu et al., 2022). To address this issue, the Government needs to create a more inclusive policy design more accessible education and employment, comprehensive social protection, and better-disaggregated data to ensure nobody is overlooked.

Infrastructure Limitation

Access to universities for people with disabilities in Indonesia remains a significant challenge due to several infrastructural factors. A lot of Indonesian universities are also still operating using buildings that were not designed with accessibility in mind and have not yet been retrofitted (Asmiati et al., 2023; Liritantri et al., 2021). There is also still the lack of accommodations made for the disabled, as there are often no standardized procedures for academic accommodations such as extended test times, note-takers, Braille textbooks, or sign language interpreters. Unprepared faculty and staff are also one of the hindrances faced by the disabled students, with most educators and administrative staff still lacking in awareness and not trained to support students with disabilities. Digital divide is also one of the main factors hindering the teaching and learning activities for the disabled students (Liu, 2021). Some digital course materials may not be in accessible formats (e.g., no screen reader-compatible PDFs, no captioning for videos, and no easy two-way access from the internet support). Lack of assistive technology also contributes to the factors listed, as universities still rarely provide or support screen readers, Braille displays, or other assistive technology for the disabled (Dabi & Golga, 2024; Kisanga & Kisanga, 2022; McNicholl et al., 2021). Limited Inclusive Policies are also a factor contributing to the low enrollment of disabled students. While laws like National Law No. 8 of 2016 (the Disability Rights Law) exist, the enforcement and implementation of the law itself are weak.

Many children with disabilities in Indonesia face barriers at the primary and secondary school levels, with limited pathways from Primary to Higher Education, greatly reducing the number of student candidates who can qualify for university later (Isnawati et al., 2025; Rahajeng et al., 2024; Yunitasari et al., 2025). While some universities also use entrance processes (e.g., health checks or physical tests) that may indirectly exclude students with disabilities, holding them to enroll in the universities. This created a gap between the disabled students and the other students in universities. And by studying in the Special School, they may not prepare them adequately for mainstream higher education. The gap is also known to create a stigma, misunderstandings, and social prejudice about disabilities that are still persistent to this day, leading to a lack of empathy or even outright discrimination by the other students, the staff, and even the professors in some universities.

Stakeholder's Effort

Efforts by university stakeholders in Indonesia to create more inclusive and disability-friendly campuses have progressed throughout the years, although significant hindrances remain. Here are some concrete efforts that have been or are currently undertaken. Several universities have begun to formulate Internal Campus Regulations inclusion policies, including the establishment of Disability Service Units at several campuses (e.g., Brawijaya University and Airlangga University) (Hikmah et al., 2021; Masadhe et al., 2021). Campuses are beginning to recognize the importance of faculty and staff capacity in supporting students with disabilities, for example, Sign language training for lecturers and staff are currently underway on some of the campus that implements this policy. Examples of efforts implemented by USAID, Erasmus, and the World Bank includes Determining the physical/digital gap and ensuring the integrity of services for students with disabilities, Conducting Capacity Building for lecturers/staff through trainings funded by USAID

and Erasmus, and deepening the handling of potential cases when facing students with disabilities, Infrastructure investments made from proposals approved by the World Bank for accessibility, implementing policies and SOPs for accommodation, providing an inclusive budget line, and student participation in policy-making from the three donors (Erasmus, USAID, and the World Bank). Finally, there is monitoring and measuring the retention, employment, and sense of belonging of students graduating from inclusive universities. Several Social and disability inclusion workshops are also held in and out of universities that enrolls students with disabilities, lastly, Universities also had Collaboration with NGOs or disability communities for education to give seminars and training for the staffs and lecturers to handle and taking care of students with disabilities and needs.Partnerships with Government and Non-Profit Organizations, such as Working with the Ministry of Higher Education, or other collaborations with NGOs, or local disability organizations on the Inclusive Campus program, and More accessible physical facilities are also being built at all universities implementing inclusion policies, including ramps and elevators in lecture buildings, dedicated restrooms for people with disabilities, additional guidance blocks for the visually impaired, wheelchair-accessible study spaces, and more facilities for teaching and learning activities. Provisions of Admission of Students with Disabilities through Special Pathways are also available, as Several state universities have begun providing special quotas or affirmative action pathways for students with disabilities in their admission selection process, with the program also providing assistance during selection tests for applicants with disabilities (Hardwick & Whittington-Walsh, 2023; Salmi & D'Addio, 2021).

Access to Technology and Information is also one of the improvements made to campuses with enrolled disabled students (Seale et al., 2021). Provision of digital/audio books for people with visual impairments with campus applications or websites that are more accessible (for example, those that can be used with screen readers and educational videos with closed captions), as well as Sign language interpretation services during lectures or seminars. By forming Advocacy and Engagement for Students with Disabilities, universities can form a community of students with disabilities to advocate for their rights on campus using digital-based media or offline-based Inclusive campus activities such as seminars, social media campaigns, or commemorating the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

In creating a truly inclusive campus, services for students with disabilities should not be limited to physical aspects and policies but should also include communication access and diversity of language needs. Students with sensory disabilities, such as deafness or visual impairments, require support services such as sign language interpreters, learning materials in Braille or audio formats, and assistive technology that facilitates their participation in the teaching-learning process. This is where the involvement of stakeholders, including faculty members, program administrators, and disability services units, becomes crucial in providing adaptive and equitable communication methods. Recognition of the diversity of communication methods is also part of the effort to bridge the campus community, ensuring that all students can participate fully without linguistic or social barriers. Therefore, strategies for developing inclusive services must integrate language access and communication dimensions as an integral part of a fair higher education system.

Furthermore, the role of stakeholders is important because services for students with disabilities are not merely administrative matters but also involve values of justice, respect for diversity, and the fulfillment of human rights. Higher education institutions, as educational institutions, have a

moral and legal responsibility to ensure an equitable learning environment. Therefore, stakeholder involvement in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of services is crucial to ensure that existing policies do not remain merely symbolic. Active involvement of various parties also enables the creation of service innovations, stronger oversight, and open dialogue between students with disabilities and educational institutions. Thus, stakeholder participation not only strengthens the operational dimension of services but also accelerates the transformation of campus culture towards equitable inclusion.

Stakeholders who can be involved in supporting inclusive services in higher education include various internal and external elements of the campus. Internally, the university administration and faculty leadership play a strategic role in setting policies and allocating budgets for disability services. Faculty members and educational staff directly contribute to creating an adaptive learning environment through flexible teaching methods and the use of assistive technology. Student organizations can also actively participate in advocacy, mentoring, and strengthening social solidarity among students. Externally, local government agencies, disability communities, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can provide support in the form of training, technical assistance, funding, or policy input. Collaboration among these stakeholders is a crucial foundation for the development of a responsive and sustainable service system.

One of the most reliable One of the most reliable sources for searching for inclusive campuses is the UNESA-Dimetrics website launched by Surabaya State University in August of 2022 (Chariro & Pribadi, 2024). The first ranking system was launched on August 15, 2022, with the results announced in December 2022. A total of 125 universities from around the world participated. Meanwhile, the second edition of the UNESA-DIMETRIC 2024 was announced in December 2024. This time, only 43 institutions from various countries were evaluated, with the top 10 as follows: University of Alicante – Spain, The Open University – UK, UNESA, Surabaya – Indonesia, Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya – Indonesia, Brawijaya University – Indonesia, University of Jember – Indonesia, UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi – Indonesia, Hamzanwadi University – Indonesia, Bina Mandiri University Gorontalo – Indonesia, PGRI Argopuro University Jember – Indonesia

The UNESA-DIMETRIC assessment can be seen as an effort by the campus and other stakeholders to implement programs aimed at creating a more inclusive university for students with disabilities studying at campuses in Indonesia and other countries. In summary, the assessment consists of commitment, strategic plans, regulations, infrastructure, collaboration, accessibility, accommodations, student and employee participation, accessibility, research, and services. The primary focus of the assessment is the university leadership's commitment to disability inclusion in its vision, mission, and strategic policies. This refers to the extent to which university leadership, particularly the rector and management, demonstrate a strong and concrete commitment to making the campus an inclusive and equitable environment for people with disabilities. This means that leadership does not merely provide symbolic support but also ensures that the principle of disability inclusion is an integral part of the university's development direction, from student admission policies, providing accessible facilities, to establishing disability support units. Furthermore, integrating disability inclusion strategic plans into the institution's medium- and long-term planning is a strategy for developing accessible infrastructure, strengthening

disability support services, developing adaptive curricula, and enhancing human resource capacity to serve students and staff with disabilities equitably. By incorporating inclusion into strategic planning, the university demonstrates that inclusion is not just a temporary social project, but an integral part of the institution's sustainable development direction that can be measured in the long term.

The existence of formal disability inclusion policies that support the rights and access of persons with disabilities can be formulated into formal regulations developed and implemented by universities to ensure the rights, protection, and full access of persons with disabilities in all aspects of campus life. These policies can take the form of regulations, decisions, service guidelines, or standard operating procedures that specifically regulate admission, learning processes, facilities, and support services for students and staff with disabilities. These policies also serve as a legal basis for advocating for disability rights and as a tool for evaluating institutional performance in implementing inclusion principles. Support for implementing regulations requires organizational structures and internal service units that address disability inclusion issues, referring to the existence of organizational structures and specialized units within the university that are officially responsible for issues related to disability and inclusion. These units may include disability service centers, accessibility offices, or inclusion divisions operating under the direct coordination of university leadership. Their primary functions include providing support services, assessing special needs, developing appropriate accommodation strategies, and facilitating communication between students with disabilities and the academic community. Another assessment is collaboration with external disability organizations, which should be a commitment of the university to build synergies with external institutions or organizations focused on disability issues, whether at the local, national, or international level. This collaboration can take the form of training programs, joint research, mentoring students with disabilities, developing inclusive curricula, and even policy consultation. Through this collaboration, universities can strengthen their internal capacity, ensure a more participatory approach, and expand their support network for the disability community on campus. External collaboration also helps universities align their service standards with proven best practices.

The availability of accessible and disability-friendly facilities and infrastructure is crucial to ensure that people with disabilities can move independently and equally on campus. Physical facilities such as ramps, elevators, special toilets, disability-friendly classrooms, and Braille or audio signs are vital elements to support mobility and comfort. Universities need to design and build facilities in accordance with universal design principles so that every individual, regardless of their physical condition, can access all areas of the campus and receive services easily and safely.

Reasonable and fair accommodations: Special arrangements, such as various forms of academic and non-academic accommodations for people with disabilities, enable them to participate equally in academic and non-academic processes without facing barriers. These accommodations encompass various aspects, such as extended exam times, use of assistive devices, specialized assistance, and learning materials in accessible formats like Braille, audio, or digital formats. This accessibility enables students with disabilities to learn equally and independently, without being hindered by physical or informational barriers. Finally, research and community services play an important role in promoting understanding, innovation, and concrete solutions related to disability and inclusion issues. Universities are expected to actively develop research that focuses on the

needs, potential, and challenges faced by people with disabilities, from social, educational, technological, and policy perspectives. Additionally, community service activities can be directed toward empowering disability communities through training, mentoring, and advocacy for their rights. By incorporating disability into their research and community service agendas, universities not only create new knowledge but also become agents of social change, directly contributing to the formation of a more inclusive and equitable society.

Based on the December 2024 ranking results announced in January 2025 UNESA ranked third in the world with a score of 83, demonstrating high quality in campus inclusive services and governance, formal policies, internal service units, technology support, and collaboration with external disability organizations and research innovation have formed an inclusive, sustainable campus culture and become a reference at the national and international levels. Other universities in Indonesia can follow to achieve the same or even higher level as UNESA in implementing a more inclusive campus. This is necessary to prepare for the future of individuals with disabilities and to raise their own standards of living.

The findings of this study reveal that disability inclusion in Indonesian universities has not been implemented systematically. The obstacles that arise are not only structural, such as the lack of facilities and effective policies, but also cultural, such as the low awareness and readiness of internal campus actors in dealing with the diverse needs of students with disabilities. Although some universities have made initial efforts to adopt an inclusive approach, there are no standardized evaluation indicators to assess the achievements and quality of services provided. The absence of these standards results in inclusion policies and practices lacking a consistent direction. This research emphasizes the importance of formulating inclusive service indicators as part of institutional transformation toward a campus that truly guarantees equal access and participation.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the implementation of disability inclusion in Indonesian universities still faces complex challenges, both in terms of policy, infrastructure, human resource capacity, and overall institutional readiness. Although there are regulations requiring the establishment of Disability Service Units, their implementation has not been comprehensive, and not all universities have effective support systems. Budget constraints, lack of accessible facilities, and low levels of understanding and training for disability services hinder the realization of an inclusive campus for students with disabilities. On the other hand, various campus initiatives are beginning to emerge, such as the development of internal policies, collaboration with disability organizations, and infrastructure improvements, which demonstrate an initial commitment toward a more inclusive transformation. The practical implications that can be drawn are that it is important for universities to develop measurable and applicable inclusive service indicators as a reference for evaluating and improving support for students with disabilities. The findings of this study introduce Inclusive Capability Realization as a new theoretical framework that explores how higher education institutions realize inclusivity through three key indicators: Accountability of Disability Needs, Cultural Responsiveness Capacity, and Disability Conversion Support. This framework not only expands the academic discourse on inclusion metrics but also offers a conceptual model that can

be used to understand and measure the dynamics of institutional change toward a truly inclusive campus. Additionally, collaboration between institutions, including the government, disability organizations, and educational institutions, needs to be strengthened to ensure that inclusive policies are implemented consistently and sustainably across all universities in Indonesia.

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