



## RESEARCH ARTICLE



# Improving the understanding of guidance studio facilitators in Malaysia on inclusive learning

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## ABSTRACT

This article is a report on community service activities carried out through international education real work activities held on Penang Island, Malaysia. This activity was carried out at the Indonesian guidance studios in Malaysia, namely Permai Kulim and Permai Penang. Both guidance studios have the same characteristics of their students, namely having different backgrounds and needs, therefore the concept of inclusive learning is very appropriate if implemented in this service activity. This activity was carried out through seven activities starting from mapping, socialization, training, mentoring, monitoring evaluation, writing results, to follow-up and program dissemination. The results obtained showed that there was an increase in facilitator understanding between before and after the training was given, so it can be said that this activity was successful.

## KEYWORDS

Facilitator; learning center; inclusive learning

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## 1. Introduction

The service provided in this community service activity is to increase the understanding of the Guidance Studio facilitators in Malaysia about inclusive learning. Why is this discussion important because currently with the very rapid development and the increasing number of undocumented children born to illegal Indonesian migrant workers, the fate of the children born is unfortunate, sometimes the children are born with congenital diseases due to parents who are not under sufficient medical supervision. This is certainly a serious problem related to the sustainability of children

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born without documents, so facilitators in the guidance studio must understand and comprehend the various differences that exist.

This service answers the needs of the facilitators in the two studios, namely a deep understanding of inclusive learning. The existence of two central guidance studios with 100 students makes the facilitator's understanding of inclusive learning a must-know. The Permai Kulim and Permai Penang Guidance Studios are destinations for children of undocumented migrant workers, this is certainly a central learning center in the area.

Inclusive can not only be applied in social life, but can also be implemented in the realm of education. In the world of education, inclusive means education that is friendly to everyone regardless of where they come from and their different backgrounds. The issue of inclusive education has become a discussion and is then stated in a policy that requires the government to provide services and facilities, as well as guarantee the implementation of quality education in educational units of all types, paths, and levels of education according to their needs and abilities.

From the results of the community service that has been carried out previously, it can be seen that the facilitators in the guidance studio, including in Permai Kulim and Permai Penang, have not implemented inclusive principles in the learning that is carried out, therefore it is necessary to provide a deep understanding and explanation of inclusive learning, especially for the management of non-formal schools so that all children of Indonesian citizens who do not have documents can get their right to education.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. *Non-formal education*

Non-formal education is one of the educational pathways recognized in the education system in Indonesia. The definition and description of non-formal education can be found in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. The definition of non-formal education according to article 1 paragraph 12 is that non-formal education is an educational pathway outside formal education that can be implemented in a structured and tiered manner.

Non-formal education aims to develop the potential of students with an emphasis on mastery of functional knowledge and skills (Zaifullah et al., 2023), apart from that, non-formal education also aims to instill attitudes and personalities that are beneficial according to the needs of students. In its implementation, non-formal education can be organized by the community, educational institutions, organizations, or other agencies that focus on improving the competence and skills of the community in the form of services such as courses, training, study groups, community learning activity centers, and religious study groups. Non-formal education plays an important role in providing

alternative education for the community, especially in meeting the needs of lifelong learning (Nurlitasari et al., 2023)

## *2.2. Learning models in the classroom*

The classroom learning model is a framework or approach used by teachers to design, organize, and implement teaching and learning activities so that learning objectives can be achieved effectively and efficiently. Learning models are usually based on learning theories, student characteristics, learning objectives, and the material being taught. The selection of learning models depends on learning objectives, student characteristics, and the subject matter being taught. A combination of several models is also often used to create an optimal learning experience. Learning models in the classroom that can be done include: direct learning, problem-based learning, cooperative learning, project-based learning, discovery-based learning, and differentiated learning (Anjani, 2018; Mahardhani et al., 2023; Wahyuni et al., 2024).

## *2.3. Inclusive learning*

Inclusive learning is an educational approach that ensures all learners, including those with special needs or different backgrounds, have equal learning opportunities in the same classroom environment (Nadhiroh & Ahmadi, 2024). The goal is to create a learning environment that values diversity and supports all students to reach their full potential. Inclusive learning is essential for non-formal education because non-formal education has a flexible and strategic role in covering various groups in society, including those who are often marginalized in the formal education system (Wulandari et al., 2024).

Inclusive non-formal education is an essential tool for creating just, equitable and empowered societies. By integrating the principles of inclusion, non-formal education not only provides learning opportunities for all but also strengthens social cohesion, values diversity and creates positive change in the lives of individuals and communities.

## *3. Methods*

The method in implementing this community service is through a community-based participatory approach, which means that in this case the team enters the guidance studio community environment to analyze needs and then will hold discussions, mentoring, and training in order to answer existing problems regarding inclusive learning. This activity was carried out in January - March 2025 at Permai Kulim and Permai Penang Guidance Studios. Both of these guidance studios have the same student

characteristics because the backgrounds of the students' parents are different, so the facilitator must be responsive to existing problems (Table 1).

**Table 1. Stages of community service activities**

Stage	Activity
Stage 1`	Mapping and recording initial conditions at partners
Stage 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Socialization is carried out to discuss with partners regarding implementation preparations, implementation time, members involved and socialization regarding topics of service at partners.</li> <li>- Pre-test to determine the facilitator's initial understanding</li> </ul>
Stage 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training for facilitators in each coaching studio on inclusive learning</li> <li>- Post Test to determine the level of facilitator's understanding</li> </ul>
Stage 4	Assistance to teachers in implementing inclusive learning in two tutoring studios, namely Permai Kulim and Permai Penang
Stage 5	Monitoring and evaluation of inclusive learning (monitoring and evaluation are carried out by assessing all activities in partners starting from the pre-implementation, implementation and post-implementation stages through observation methods of learning carried out by facilitators)
Stage 6	Preparation of reports and output
Stage 7	Follow-up on program implementation

Each of the seven stages has a different purpose, so that its implementation will be carried out gradually from the beginning. However, the implementation in the table can be carried out simultaneously if the implementation can indeed be combined.

## 4. Results and discussion

### 4.1. Mapping and recording initial condition at partners

Initial mapping of partners was conducted in order to identify what the partner's problems were. The community service workers together with student members conducted direct observation at the Permai Kulim and Permai Penang Guidance Center locations, in one day the team directly observed the learning process being carried out so that the team could find out directly how the process of transferring knowledge and skills was carried out to all students. Furthermore, the team recorded what was obtained and what was seen during the observation. The team also conducted interviews with facilitators, teachers, managers, and students to strengthen what the team had seen in the field (Figure 1).

The results obtained during the observation were then identified and coded to facilitate organization. The team identified all problems, selected the most urgent

problems faced by partners, and from the results obtained, the facilitators indeed needed a better understanding related to inclusive learning.



**Figure 1.** Coordination at the Permai Kulim Guidance Studio

#### ***4.2. Socialization and pre test***

Socialization is carried out as an inseparable part of this community service activity. The community service provider conducts socialization at the beginning of the activity by conducting interviews with the manager to convey the results of the observation. The community service team holds discussions with the manager about the implementation of this community service activity which consists of preparation for implementation, stages of implementation, and mentoring carried out, as well as monitoring and evaluation.

In addition to socialization, the team also conducted a pre-test activity for the facilitators in order to find out the level of understanding of the facilitators about inclusive learning carried out in the guidance studio. The results obtained showed that the understanding of inclusive learning by the facilitators was still low, at 70%. Based on this, the implementation of training in inclusive learning must be carried out.

#### ***4.3. Training for facilitators and post test***

The implementation of training for facilitators and teachers from the Permai Kulim and Permai Penang guidance studios was carried out through guided learning activities. The team provided an understanding of the theories in inclusive learning to teachers and facilitators, this was done in addition to providing an understanding of new concepts, it was also done through teaching practices that were carried out.

To find out the level of understanding of the facilitators in the two guidance studios, the service team conducted a post-test, the results of which will later be used as a basis for follow-up to carry out activities independently in the field. The value obtained in the post-test showed an increase from the pre-test value, which was 95%, which means there was an increase and shows that the knowledge given to the facilitators can be well received (Figure 3).



**Figure 2.** Material provision activities at the Penang Permai Guidance Studio

#### ***4.4. Assistance to teachers in implementing inclusive learning***

After the training activities are completed, the activities carried out by the community service are to provide assistance when the facilitators and teachers in the guidance studio implement inclusive learning. The team provides assistance using observation sheets and discussion activities are carried out at the end of the week for one month of the assistance. This is intended to find out that the knowledge that has been given to the facilitator can be well received.

In addition, the service team also saw an increase in the level of understanding that occurred according to what was conveyed by students at the Permai Kulim and Permai Penang Guidance Centers. Students said that the learning carried out by the facilitator became easier to understand with the learning models used being increasingly diverse.

#### ***4.5. Monitoring and evaluation***

Monitoring and evaluation are carried out by the community service in order to ensure that what has been conveyed previously can be implemented properly in the guidance studio. Monitoring and evaluation are generally carried out by the community service

team to see that this activity is carried out properly and correctly. The success of this activity can be imitated by other guidance studios in Malaysia in the context of implementing inclusive learning (Figure 3).



**Figure 3.** Discussion of implementation of training activities

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the activities that have been carried out by the community service, it can be seen that the problem of inclusive learning is an important thing that must be understood by facilitators at the Permai Penang dan Permai Kulim Guidance Studios. The community service hopes that what has been implemented in the guidance center can be disseminated to other guidance centers because the characteristics of guidance centers in Malaysia are mostly the same. This community service project has several shortcomings, such as the relatively short implementation time so that it is not possible to conduct an in-depth analysis of the inclusive learning materials, and the small number of facilitators so that knowledge is not evenly distributed in all guidance studios. Furthermore, in order to strengthen the implementation of inclusive learning in future community service projects, it is recommended that inclusive learning modules be created that are contextual and applicable, involve participants from various guidance institutions, and establish closer cooperation with educational institutions and the government.

## Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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