



Inclusive Education for Indigenous Students in the Indonesian Context

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Anak Rimba (The Jungle Child)

<https://youtu.be/iqNXIlktnk>



The social, psychological, and cultural environment of indigenous communities in Indonesia serves more as hampering factors rather than supporting factors.

Boy, around 12 years old, is a child with polio. A health facilitator gave Boy crutches. Other children were wondering what it was and afraid that Boy would fall because he was not used to it. He used the crutches just for the photoshoot. The next day, they hung the crutches on a palm tree because it was considered to be a bother. This community has high mobility, so the items they take care of are only for basic needs, such as cooking utensils and machetes. They are a hunting and gathering society, so if they don't go for a day, they can't eat. Boy is involved in the hunting and gathering activities, but not as intense as a normal child. They grumble, "handicap child, can't work". Boy will be carried by his grandmother to look for food, sometimes other siblings help. Boy's enthusiasm for learning is high, but until now he still can't read and write. (Yohana, educator of Anak Rimba, Komunitas Konservasi Indonesia Warsi).

- The importance of social inclusion in relation to experiences of friendship and social acceptance within educational experiences.
- Student perceptions of social inclusion and acceptance does not always correlate with subjective interpretations of adults



Jago is deaf and around 17 years old. He is active in helping his parents to hunt and gather (collecting and selling fallen palm fruit for family needs). He is eager to learn but is often ridiculed by his friends because of his inability to learn, for example, his friends have memorised A-E, yet he hasn't memorised it yet. Just last month, there was a 2-week visit by university students to the community. Every day the uni students run morning exercises and study time. Jago always joined both programs. Until one day, it was the time the students had to go back to the city. Jago wanted to join them and got on the bus. He didn't want to come down and cried when we told him to. We had to carry him off the bus and as soon as he got off the bus, the group immediately departed. It seems that the experience of 2 weeks with the uni students was very memorable for him. He can get access to education from us, but I think the friendship and acceptance of the uni students really impressed him. The uni students also understood that he has special needs, so they treated him well, not like his friends. (Yohana, educator of Anak Rimba, Komunitas Konservasi Indonesia Warsi).



Handmade walker created by a father for his twin daughters who cannot walk

In West Timor, East Nusa Tenggara, due to limited social support from the community and inaccessibility of most public spaces, and to prevent further discrimination in the future, a father constructed a walker for his 7 years old twin daughters who are unable to walk.

This family has lived in poverty as the father, the lone breadwinner in the family, generates an income of less than USD 50 per month. The walker, as seen in the figure below, is considered by the father as **a symbol of hope**, a hope for a better environment provided by local leaders for his twin daughters so that they can at least access and participate in education within their community.



Kahumbu Nganji, a man from Ata caste in Sumba who was appointed as a village official. He never went to school.

Cultural practices that hamper access to education

Poverty makes indigenous parents prioritize livelihood over education

Lack of attention on contextualized special education and special service education in Indonesia

Ways Forward

Students

- Hearing voice of students
- Researching with students
- Co-designing with students

Context and Culture

- Disability and culture
- Disability and context
- Disability across cultures and within contexts



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Thanks!

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