

Local knowledge in inclusive education: a systematic literature review

Dwitya Sobat Ady Dharma¹, Mumpuniarti², Ariefa Efianingrum³, Ibnu Syamsi²

¹Department of Educational Sciences, Graduate School, Yogyakarta State University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

²Department of Special Education, Faculty of Education and Psychology, Yogyakarta State University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

³Department of Philosophy and Sociology of Education Program, Faculty of Education and Psychology, Yogyakarta State University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This article presents a comprehensive literature review on the role of local knowledge in inclusive education. Employing a systematic review methodology, the study involved goal setting, article selection through abstract and keyword analysis, thorough reading, data abstraction, and subsequent analysis using Publish or Perish 8, Mendeley, and VOSviewer. The review focused on articles published in Scopus-indexed journals between 2020 and 2023. Initial searches identified 259 articles, which were refined to 68 based on their relevance to the research questions. The analysis of these 68 articles revealed three principal findings: i) the diversity of local knowledge in the implementation of inclusive education; ii) global support for integrating local knowledge within inclusive education frameworks; and iii) strategies for incorporating local knowledge into educational practices. These findings underscore the potential of local knowledge to enhance inclusive education through culturally relevant and contextually sensitive approaches, fostering more holistic and responsive educational practices. The review emphasizes the necessity of adapting educational strategies to local contexts to better meet the needs of diverse student populations. It advocates for further research to explore local knowledge in greater depth, aiming to develop more effective and contextually appropriate strategies to improve inclusivity and responsiveness in education globally.

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Corresponding Author:

Dwitya Sobat Ady Dharma

Department of Educational Sciences, Graduate School, Yogyakarta State University

Caturtunggal, Depok, Sleman, Special Region of Yogyakarta 55281, Indonesia

Email: dwityasobat.2022@student.uny.ac.id

1. INTRODUCTION

Several studies have indicated that the implementation of inclusive education has a positive impact on students' development [1]–[3]. The execution of inclusive education supports the success of gender equality [4], [5], religious moderation [6], sensitivity to different languages [7]–[9], and creates equitable education for all [10]–[12]. However, the reality is that many schools declare themselves as inclusive but fail to practice inclusivity. Mere declaration is insufficient; schools need a strong understanding of the concept of inclusive education. The implementation of inclusive education should encompass elements of equity, diversity, meaningfulness, sustainability, and acceptance.

Systematically studying the concept of inclusive education in recent literature is of paramount importance [13]–[15]. In today's era, many countries are promoting the implementation of inclusive education in line with human rights campaigns [16], [17]. However, the implementation of community-based

inclusive education remains relatively under-researched. Thus far, inclusive education implementation has consistently referenced global guidelines [18], [19], despite each country holding different values regarding inclusivity [20]–[23]. Based on these studies, there is a pressing need for literature exploring inclusive education in local contexts in detail.

This preliminary study seeks to explore an overview of articles on inclusive education within the reviewed local context, employing a systematic literature review method for analysis. Despite previous literature reviews on the concept of inclusive education [24], a context-based review incorporating the latest literature within the local context has not yet been conducted. The findings of this research aim to provide a contemporary conceptual framework for comprehending contextualized inclusive education. The primary research question posed is how recent literature contributes information on inclusive education within the local context. The specific research questions (RQ) are:

- i) How do indigenous communities utilize local knowledge diversity in implementing inclusive education? (RQ1)
- ii) How does global support facilitate the implementation of local knowledge in the context of inclusive education? (RQ2)
- iii) What forms does the integration of local knowledge take within the context of inclusive education? (RQ3)

2. METHOD

This research employed a systematic literature review. The researchers endeavored to discover and interpret relevant and significant findings related to the research questions and the theme of inclusive education within the context of the local culture. The aim of this literature review was to comprehend and establish the foundational understanding of inclusive education within the framework of the local culture using the most recent literature. The study reviewed articles from English-language journals indexed in Scopus between 2020 and 2023 using the Publish or Perish 8 application. The researchers inputted data to map the relevance and substance of articles using Mendeley and VOSviewer version 1.6.19. The keywords ‘indigenous inclusive education’ yielded 200 articles, ‘indigenous local knowledge education’ yielded 9 articles, ‘inclusive local knowledge education’ yielded 130 articles, and ‘indigenous knowledge education’ yielded 200 articles. After reviewing titles, abstracts, and keywords, 68 articles that aligned with the theme were selected. The researchers then scrutinized the content of the articles, performed data abstraction, analysis, and presented the findings. Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of articles based on the keywords.

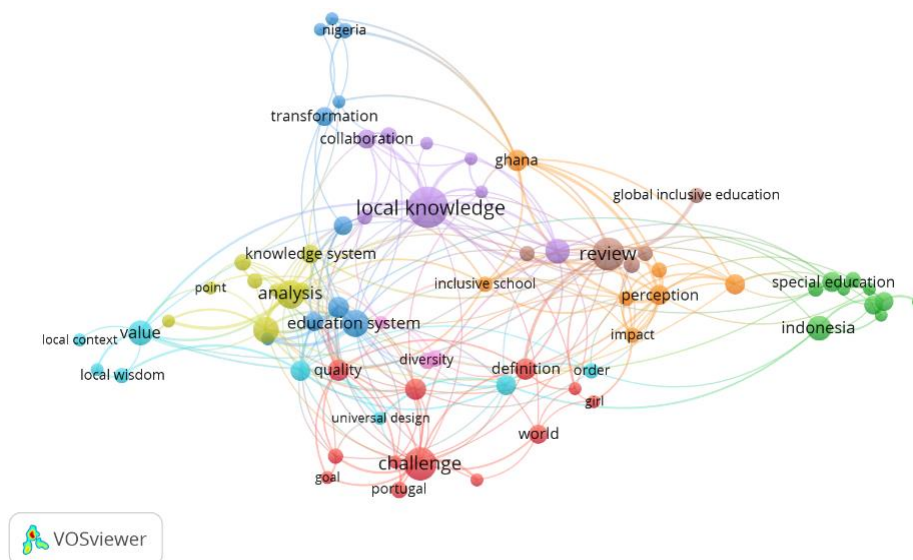


Figure 1. Initial network visualization

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research findings elucidate the outcomes of data synthesis evaluation aimed at addressing the research questions based on the initial visualization mapping of interconnections among articles. The

mapping results were founded on article titles, publication years, regions, and relevance to three research questions. The mapping of outcomes is illustrated in Table 1 for research question 1, Table 2 for research question 2, and Table 3 for research question 3.

Table 1. Scopus-indexed articles relevant to research questions 1

Number	Relevance to theme	Year	Region
1	Diversity of local knowledge [25]	2023	Uganda
2	Diversity of local knowledge [26]	2022	Australia
3	Diversity of local knowledge [27]	2023	Zimbabwe
4	Diversity of local knowledge [28]	2022	Philippines
5	Diversity of local knowledge [29]	2022	South Africa
6	Diversity of local knowledge [30]	2022	Kenya
7	Diversity of local knowledge [20]	2022	Colombia
8	Diversity of local knowledge [31]	2022	Maori
9	Diversity of local knowledge [32]	2021	New Zealand
10	Diversity of local knowledge [33]	2021	Canada
11	Diversity of local knowledge [34]	2021	New Zealand
12	Diversity of local knowledge [35]	2020	Latin America

Table 2. Scopus-indexed articles relevant to research questions 2

Number	Relevance to theme	Year	Region
1	Global support [36]	2023	Pacific Islands
2	Global support [37]	2023	Australia
3	Global support [38]	2023	Australia
4	Global support [39]	2023	Australia
5	Global support [40]	2023	Australia
6	Global support [41]	2023	Brazil
7	Global support [42]	2023	Canada
8	Global support [43]	2023	Ecuador
9	Global support [44]	2022	Nigeria
10	Global support [22]	2022	Ghana
11	Global support [45]	2022	Global
12	Global support [46]	2022	Global
13	Global support [47]	2022	Norway
14	Global support [48]	2022	Canada
15	Global support [49]	2022	Brazil
16	Global support [50]	2022	Global
17	Global support [51]	2022	USA, Canada, and Australia
18	Global support [52]	2022	South Africa, Ghana, and Uganda
19	Global support [53]	2023	Australia
20	Global support [54]	2021	Nepal
21	Global support [55]	2021	Canada
22	Global support [56]	2021	United States
23	Global support [57]	2021	Australia
24	Global support [58]	2021	Philippines
25	Global support [59]	2020	Australia, New Zealand

Table 3. Scopus-indexed articles relevant to research questions 3

Number	Relevance to theme	Year	Region	Number	Relevance to theme	Year	Region
1	Forms of integration [60]	2023	Vietnam	17	Forms of integration [76]	2022	Ecuador
2	Forms of integration [61]	2023	Canada	18	Forms of integration [77]	2022	South Africa
3	Forms of integration [62]	2023	Chile	19	Forms of integration [78]	2022	Argentina
4	Forms of integration [63]	2023	Finland	20	Forms of integration [79]	2022	Senegal
5	Forms of integration [64]	2023	Latin America	21	Forms of integration [80]	2022	Mexico
6	Forms of integration [65]	2023	Latin America	22	Forms of integration [81]	2022	United States
7	Forms of integration [66]	2023	Ghana, Canada	23	Forms of integration [82]	2022	Indonesia
8	Forms of integration [67]	2023	Africa (North and West)	24	Forms of integration [83]	2021	United States
9	Forms of integration [68]	2023	Canada	25	Forms of integration [84]	2021	Pakistan
10	Forms of integration [69]	2023	Australia	26	Forms of integration [85]	2021	Australia
11	Forms of integration [70]	2023	United States	27	Forms of integration [86]	2021	Australia
12	Forms of integration [71]	2023	Indonesia	28	Forms of integration [87]	2021	Australia
13	Forms of integration [72]	2023	Kenya	29	Forms of integration [88]	2021	Australia
14	Forms of integration [73]	2022	Australia	30	Forms of integration [89]	2021	Australia
15	Forms of integration [74]	2022	United States	31	Forms of integration [90]	2020	Philippines
16	Forms of integration [75]	2022	United States				

3.1. Diversity of local knowledge in the implementation of inclusive education

Local knowledge in various countries reflects philosophies that have been passed down through generations. A study conducted in Uganda indicates that peer support interventions will promote the successful implementation of culturally appropriate inclusion. This philosophy is known as *Obuntu bulamu*. *Obuntu* refers to goodness, humanity, or solidarity, while *bulamu* means life. The phrase can be translated as “good life” or “meaningful life.” It embodies positive values and humanitarian principles that underpin Ugandan culture [25]. The study in South Africa explains that the philosophy of *Obuntu* fosters cooperation and reduces academic competition to create a more inclusive school environment, embodying humanitarian values and student well-being [29]. In Zimbabwe, the *Unhu/Obuntu* philosophy contributes to discussions on inclusive education and the decolonization of education in post-colonial countries [27].

In Kenya, there exists the philosophy of *Harambee*, which translates to “let’s pull together” or “let’s work together.” Culturally, this term is often used to denote a spirit of collaboration and cooperation. *Harambee* integrates cultural practices and local experiences into education, as well as the active involvement of all stakeholders in designing inclusive education policies [30]. Meanwhile, studies in Northern Australia highlight the importance of collaboration and strong cultural relationships in developing inclusive cross-cultural communication approaches. This collaboration, known as *Räl-manapanmirr ga dhä-manapanmirr*, involves various cultural groups and can create a collaborative space that respects diversity [26]. In Canada, there exists the Anishinaabe pedagogy philosophy, referring to an educational approach rooted in the culture and traditions of the indigenous Anishinaabe Community in North America, encompassing regions of Canada and the Northern United States. This pedagogy is based on Anishinaabe cultural values emphasizing holistic, inclusive learning integrated with nature and daily life [33].

Studies in New Zealand elucidate the philosophy of *Talanoa vā*, which refers to an open process of dialogue and discussion centered around active listening, mutual respect, and the sharing of experiences [32]. Other research mentions the philosophy of *Talanoa Moana*, emphasizing an inclusive and open discussion process. *Talanoa Moana* connects Pacific indigenous understanding with an inclusive approach to early childhood education, serving as a vital foundation for revitalizing identity and relationships within the educational context in New Zealand [34]. Furthermore, in New Zealand, there is the concept of *Te Tīrewa Marautanga*, referring to the educational curriculum. This curriculum is designed to meet educational needs from a Maori cultural perspective, encouraging a profound understanding of Maori heritage and traditions [31].

In the Philippines, there is a term called *Iloco Ammu* that signifies the recognition of *Iloko* people's identity, culture, and their close connection to language and traditions. This study highlights the significance of a cultural approach in Philippine education, especially by leveraging indigenous knowledge resources such as the *Iloco* language [28]. In Colombia, there is the practice of *Buen Vivir* within the context of the Misak community in Colombia, providing a robust foundation for an inclusive approach to education and the preservation of indigenous culture [20]. *Buen Vivir* practices offer an inclusive vision centered around community perspectives, emphasizing the importance of respecting the universe. This notion inspires the development of indigenous education concepts within an inclusive educational framework [35].

3.2. Global support for the implementation of local knowledge in the context of inclusive education

Support for implementing local knowledge in the context of inclusive education can be found in various countries. In Australia, there is support for understanding the influence of cultural discourses on teachers' perceptions of programs focused on Aboriginal students [37]. Other studies in Australia emphasize the importance of social and cultural contexts influencing indigenous participation, as well as support for better understanding indigenous students [38], [39]. There's also support for empowering indigenous families and communities to collaborate with schools in shaping a positive future for children in various social and educational contexts [53]. Additionally, the application of anti-racism practices and transformative justice in education is considered crucial [40]. These studies provide insights into the challenges and opportunities to enhance indigenous student engagement in education in Australia.

Support for implementing inclusive education within local contexts in Canada, for instance, may involve enriching physical literacy in the context of physical education and sports [48], fostering collective participation to achieve transformative and inclusive changes for indigenous communities [55], recognizing diversity within rural communities, and making tangible efforts to combat intolerance through inclusive practical approaches [42]. Additionally, there is greater attention to the rights and welfare of indigenous communities, along with the need for collaboration from all stakeholders to ensure a more inclusive and fair future for all indigenous children [51].

Studies in US emphasize the importance of developing epistemologically inclusive didactic practices within culturally rich classroom contexts [56]. Meanwhile, other studies mention support for designing socially and inclusively oriented science education in Nepal [54], and creating inclusive education

policies in South Africa, Ghana, and Uganda [52]. In Brazil, there is support for curriculum revisions and more comprehensive teaching to address human rights issues and cultural diversity [41], [49]. Studies in Ecuador, Nigeria, Ghana, and Norway mention the important role of indigenous education in supporting local knowledge and citizenship identity the integration of indigenous knowledge into social work curricula to ensure more inclusive and diverse approaches in education and social work practices [44], and the need to develop indigenous wisdom to accommodate indigenous tribes [22], [47].

In the Philippines and Pacific Islands, there is support for integrating indigenous knowledge into educational curricula to encourage the growth of cultural identity and inclusive creativity [36], [58]. Meanwhile, in Australia and New Zealand, there is encouragement to understand and incorporate diverse cultural perspectives within the increasingly complex global classroom context [59]. Globally, there is support for recognizing and integrating indigenous knowledge into educational curricula, developing education sensitive to indigenous needs, and advocating for the development of inclusive assessments considering the cultural perspectives and values of indigenous communities [22], [45], [46], [50].

3.3. Forms of integrating local knowledge in the context of inclusive education

In Canada, studies indicate that the integration of local knowledge in education should involve indigenous elders in creating an inclusive educational environment. Integration is achieved through digital media and various learning models that foster a deeper understanding of cultural heritage [61], [66], [68]. In the United States, inclusive education integration within local contexts is accomplished through traditional storytelling methods, promoting partnerships between indigenous communities and organizations, implementing diversity-sensitive educational approaches, and peer mentoring programs [70], [81], [83]. Integration is also done by diversifying collections of children's and adolescent literature in libraries, emphasizing the inclusion of immigrant and refugee stories, bilingual books, and the representation of main characters from black, indigenous, and people of color backgrounds [74].

In Australia, integration involves aligning indigenous knowledge into 21st-century science education to culturally enrich students' learning experiences [69]. There is also the development of culturally inclusive prevention programs for indigenous and non-indigenous youth [85]. Educators use digital materials [88], art [89], and embed critically responsive pedagogical approaches in educational curricula [87]. Additionally, schools design the national indigenous science education program (NISEP) that encourages participation of all students, student empowerment, and the use of indigenous knowledge [73]. Paradigm shifts in culture and learning approaches are also made to create inclusive and safe experiences for students from diverse backgrounds [86].

In Vietnam, culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is implemented to accommodate students from diverse backgrounds [60]. In the Philippines, educational integration within local contexts involves collaboration between the government and local communities [90]. Other studies in Indonesia highlight the role of communities and school leadership in providing facilities and accessibility for students with disabilities [71], [82]. Similarly, a study in Pakistan mentions the significant role of language activists and applied linguists in supporting change through advocacy campaigns and public awareness programs [84]. A study in Kenya emphasizes the use of indigenous methodologies and appropriate instructional strategies to support students with disabilities in educational environments [72]. Other studies in South Africa and West and North Africa mention that the use of diverse native languages can build dynamic and inclusive knowledge [67], [77].

The integration of local knowledge in education involves language preservation and revitalization in Finland to ensure inclusive and fair education [63]. In Chile, integration occurs within specific subjects [62]. In Argentina, the focus is on promoting ethnic identity and ethnic equality, ensuring fair education for students [78]. Meanwhile, in Senegal, a participatory approach involves collaboration between linguists and local communities to support rural multilingualism and local knowledge [79]. In Mexico, efforts are made to raise awareness of collective agency in supporting the sustainability of native languages [80]. In Ecuador, attention is given to strengthening inclusive bilingual intercultural education systems and preserving the cultural heritage and intelligence of indigenous communities [76]. Globally, complex and contextual approaches are used to enhance the quality of teacher education through educational policies [64], [65].

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the reviewed literature, it can be concluded that various forms of local knowledge across different countries play a crucial role in the implementation of inclusive education. Philosophies such as *Obuntu bulamu* in Uganda, *Harambee* in Kenya, *Räl-manapanmirr ga dhä-manapanmirr* in Northern Australia, and practices like *Talanoa vā* in New Zealand and *Iloco Ammu* in the Philippines underscore the importance of understanding and integrating cultural values within educational contexts. Global support for integrating local knowledge is evident through various initiatives in countries, such as Australia, Canada, and

the United States, which promote the recognition and development of education sensitive to indigenous communities.

In the context of inclusive education, the integration of local knowledge manifests in various forms, including community participation, curriculum development, and the use of digital media and culturally responsive instructional approaches across different nations. These initiatives highlight the necessity of considering local knowledge to create inclusive, diverse, and responsive educational environments. The significance of these findings within the literature suggests that the diversity of local approaches can enrich inclusive education practices by providing more holistic and culturally relevant perspectives. Practically, this implies that inclusive education must strive to understand and integrate local cultural values and practices to ensure that all students feel valued and supported. Therefore, this literature analysis recommends further research to explore local knowledge within inclusive education in greater depth to develop more effective and contextually sensitive strategies.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

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Name of Author	C	M	So	Va	Fo	I	R	D	O	E	Vi	Su	P	Fu
Dwitya Sobat Ady	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Dharma														
Mumpuniarti	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	
Ariefa Efianingrum	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	
Ibnu Syamsi	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

C : Conceptualization

M : Methodology

So : Software

Va : Validation

Fo : Formal analysis

I : Investigation

R : Resources

D : Data Curation

O : Writing - Original Draft

E : Writing - Review & Editing

Vi : Visualization

Su : Supervision

P : Project administration

Fu : Funding acquisition

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest related to this research, whether financial, personal, professional, political, ideological, or academic, that could influence the results or publication of this article. This research was conducted independently, without any external influence that could result in conflicts of interest. If any potential conflicts arise in the future, the authors will disclose them transparently.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data supporting the findings of this study are available in databases indexed by Scopus and can be accessed at scopus.com. Additionally, the datasets used in this study can be obtained from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. All data used in this research have been included within this article in the form of tables, graphs, or analytical narratives. Should further data access be required, the authors are willing to provide additional information in accordance with applicable data-sharing policies.

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BIOGRAPHIES OF AUTHORS

Dwitya Sobat Ady Dharma    is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Educational Sciences at the Graduate School of Yogyakarta State University. His research interests revolve around the self-development of visually impaired individuals and inclusive education. Dwitya has authored articles, books, and spearheaded various research projects. For inquiries or collaboration opportunities, he can be contacted at: dwityasobat.2022@student.uny.ac.id.






Mumpuniarti    is a professor at the Faculty of Education and Psychology, Yogyakarta State University. She holds both a master's degree in Education Management and a doctoral degree in Educational Sciences from the same university. Her research focuses on students with intellectual disabilities and inclusive education. For inquiries or collaboration opportunities, she can be contacted at email: mumpuni@uny.ac.id.



Ariefa Efianingrum    is a lecturer in the Philosophy and Sociology of Education Program, Faculty of Education and Psychology, Yogyakarta State University. Some of the courses she teaches include Sociology and Anthropology of Education, Educational Ethnography, Socio-Cultural Education, and Qualitative Research Methods. She can be contacted at email: efianingrum@uny.ac.id.



Ibnu Syamsi    is professor at the Faculty of Education and Psychology, Yogyakarta State University, Indonesia. His research focuses on entrepreneurship education tailored for children with special needs. For inquiries or collaboration opportunities, he can be contacted at email: ibnu_syamsi@uny.ac.id.