

## An Inclusive Pedagogical Approach in Teaching Dance for People with Disabilities at the Guriang Tujuh Studio

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### Abstract

Education is a process to develop human resources which is carried out systematically and in stages. This study aims to analyze the implementation of inclusive pedagogy in dance instruction for persons with disabilities at Sanggar Guriang Tujuh, Lebak, Banten. This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The findings reveal that inclusive pedagogy is implemented through adaptive teaching strategies utilizing demonstration, imitation, and drill methods, combined with differentiated instruction and multisensory approaches. The learning process is no longer oriented toward rigid movement standards but instead accommodates the diverse physical and sensory abilities of learners. The results also indicate that this approach fosters a participatory and non-discriminatory learning environment while enhancing motor skills, self-confidence, and artistic expression among participants with disabilities. Furthermore, Sanggar Guriang Tujuh functions as an alternative space that not only serves as an art learning center but also as an inclusive social laboratory that promotes social integration and individual empowerment. This study contributes theoretically to the development of inclusive pedagogy in arts education and practically to community-based inclusive dance learning models grounded in local cultural values.

### Keywords

dance education, disability, inclusive arts, inclusive pedagogy.



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## INTRODUCTION

Education is a process of developing human resources, implemented systematically and in stages. To develop individuals into independent and free individuals, within the world of education, there is a science that explains teachers' abilities to understand students: pedagogy. According to Endang Pasaribu (2026), in her book "PEDAGOGIC SCIENCE: Theory and Application in Education," pedagogy is the study of how the educational process occurs, why certain methods are effective, and how educators can create an optimal learning environment. Pedagogy focuses on how to educate, not just what is taught. (Pasaribu & Th, 2026)

Pedagogy is not only about educating ordinary children in general; it also encompasses the educational process for inclusive children or children with special needs. Florian (2014) proposed the concept of "inclusive pedagogy," which emphasizes that learning strategies must be designed for all students, not simply making special adjustments for students with specific needs. With this approach, student diversity is not seen as a barrier but rather as an asset in the learning process.

Inclusive education is an approach that provides opportunities for all children, regardless of physical, mental, or intellectual conditions, to learn together in a shared environment. Inclusive education affirms that every individual has an equal right to receive a quality education. Research shows that the implementation of inclusive education provides significant benefits, both academically, socially, and emotionally, for students from diverse backgrounds (Balkist, 2020). Pramesworo et al. (2025) suggest that the effectiveness of inclusive learning is measured by the extent to which the curriculum and teaching methods can adapt to accommodate different needs, so that each individual can derive maximum benefit from the educational process. Inclusion is not merely an educational concept but also a social principle that ensures the full participation of every individual in society. This principle emphasizes the importance of adapting the environment, systems, and policies so that everyone, including people with disabilities, can contribute optimally and obtain their rights fairly without discrimination.

Dance, as an art form, can be a means of communication through body movement, allowing the ability to convey emotions, thoughts, and presence clearly without the need for speech. Therefore, dance can be used as a medium for inclusive education for children and people with disabilities. Through dance instruction, children with disabilities can practice gross and fine motor skills, thus becoming more sensitive and fluent in communicating through their bodies.

Children with disabilities who can effectively participate in dance instruction include those with hearing impairments and those with speech impairments. These disabilities are not restricted in their ability to move their entire body, which is very beneficial for improving communication through movement. Dance also allows them to explore many things through performance, thus developing not only communication but also skills and self-confidence. Therefore, alternative spaces are needed that can accommodate their needs. One example is the Sanggar Guriang Tujuh Indonesia in Lebak, Banten.

The Guriang Tujuh Indonesia Studio is located in Cemplang Alun-alun Village, Warunggunung Village, Lebak Regency, Banten. Guriang was founded on December 11, 2012, by artist and writer A. Dede Majid. What began as a casual discussion sparked a growing interest in the arts, particularly theater. To realize these concepts and ideas, Guriang collaborated with various communities, resulting in numerous writings that fueled his unwavering drive to create. Here, the work focuses not only on movement techniques but also on the process of self-expression. Guriang welcomes a wide range of groups, from elementary school children to college students, including children with disabilities. Guriang serves as both a traditional arts studio and an inclusive creative laboratory.

At the Guriang Tujuh Studio, students learn not only about drama and scripts but also about cultivating the body through dance. The learning methods are diverse, including inclusive dance lessons. Inclusive dance lessons focus not only on movement techniques but also on the process of self-expression. Dance movement is used as a medium to express identity, emotional experiences, and even trauma through non-verbal body language. Furthermore, dance activities also provide therapeutic benefits, helping to release negative emotions, increase dopamine production, and strengthen participants' self-confidence. Therefore, transformation is needed through an inclusive pedagogical approach, one of which is implementing one that views diversity as potential and strength in the learning process.

This research is purposeful because it positions dance not only as a therapeutic tool for people with disabilities but also as a pedagogical space capable of creating innovation in arts learning. The author observes that the inclusive approach at Sanggar Guriang Tujuh opens up opportunities for the birth of new forms of expression in dance itself. Although Sanggar Guriang Tujuh has practiced inclusive teaching, documentation of a systematic pedagogical model especially one that integrates local Banten wisdom is lacking.

## **METHODS**

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach to explore the application of inclusive pedagogy and examine the instructional dynamics in dance training for people with disabilities. According to Sugiyono (2017), descriptive qualitative research is used to understand phenomena in their natural state, with the researcher as the primary instrument. Therefore, this research involves participants to explore and understand the issues in depth.

In the data collection process, the researcher followed several systematic stages. First, through Participatory Observation, the researcher actively participated in the routine practice schedule and dance performances at the Guriang Tujuh Studio. These observations provided factual data on how dance was transformed to make it accessible to all participants. Second, through Documentation, the researcher collected data in the form of visual recordings and field notes. This data was strengthened by a literature review on the development of inclusive learning media including the effectiveness of using digital aids as a basis for additional information to broaden the analytical context regarding the evolution of pedagogy at the research site. Third, through Interviews, the researcher gained in-depth information regarding the background to the selection of an adaptive dance curriculum, the challenges encountered in the teaching process, and the administrators' perspectives on the participants' emotional and social outcomes.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The inclusive approach at the Sanggar Guriang Tujuh dance studio has successfully constructed a space for equal expression, as evidenced by the participants' performance achievements in various performance schemes tested during the research period. Observational data revealed that dance instruction no longer relies on a single, rigid movement standard but instead adapts choreography based on each individual's physical and sensory capabilities. Research demonstrated significant improvements in motor skills and self-confidence among participants with disabilities after receiving intervention through

differentiated instruction methods. The use of demonstration, imitation, and drill methods has been shown to accelerate participants' understanding of rhythm and spatial composition.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of inclusive pedagogy is reflected in the creation of a collaborative learning environment, where interactions between participants become more organic and free from stigmatizing boundaries. Findings indicate that the non-verbal communication patterns developed by instructors are able to bridge cognitive barriers in transferring dance aesthetic concepts. Overall... 1. The Novelty of an Inclusive Pedagogical Approach to Dance Teaching

Inclusive pedagogy in dance teaching at the Guriang Tujuh Studio looks beyond traditional teaching and learning activities, but rather at a process of deconstructing the aesthetics of movement. From a progressive arts education perspective, the dance classroom is transformed into a dialogical laboratory where students' physical or intellectual disabilities are not seen as limitations, but rather as creative potential that generates new movement vocabulary.

Research on inclusive pedagogy has been extensively conducted by formal institutions. Although the study of dance for people with disabilities has flourished in formal institutions, no research has been found specifically analyzing the inclusive pedagogical process at the Guriang Tujuh Studio. However, this study positions itself as the first to specifically examine inclusive education practices at the Guriang Tujuh Studio. Therefore, there have been no studies documenting or analyzing how children with special needs experience dance training in this creative space. Therefore, this research fills the gap in data regarding the instructional dynamics and social interactions of people with disabilities within the Guriang Tujuh Studio ecosystem.

A key gap in previous research is that few studies systematically formulate instructional strategies or effective teaching methods for people with disabilities outside of formal school settings. The focus of inclusion research often focuses on formal special schools (SLB). Studies on independent arts communities with a more organic and flexible approach, such as Sanggar Guriang Tujuh, remain scarce.

This research explores innovations through adaptive and participatory teaching strategies. These innovations include kinesthetic adaptation techniques and dance movement modifications that do not impose standardized forms but instead explore the unique physical potential of each individual. A collaborative learning model integrates verbal, visual, and tactical instruction tailored to the spectrum of student disabilities. The Differentiated Instruction approach is a teaching strategy that differentiates material and difficulty levels based on each student's readiness and learning profile.

Dance learning has distinctive characteristics compared to other inclusive disciplines because it involves a comprehensive integration of physical and emotional aspects. Unlike other educational fields dominated by verbal literacy, dance utilizes body language as a primary communication tool. This provides a more accessible and effective space for expression, especially for people with disabilities who have verbal communication barriers. Synergizing motor and psychosomatic skills, dance integrates gross motor coordination, rhythmic sensitivity, and depth of feeling. This process not only serves as artistic education

but also acts as a kinetic-therapeutic stimulation that strengthens students' self-confidence. While cognitive learning is often individualized, dance practice at Sanggar Guriang Tujuh prioritizes diversity in physical conditions, not viewed as limitations but rather as unique and inclusive choreographic aesthetic elements.

Adaptation strategies and instruction are explored in the instructor's delivery of movement instructions, movement adaptation patterns for students with different physical disabilities, and how the social environment at Sanggar Guriang Tujuh is structured to motivate children with special needs to maintain confidence throughout the training process.

The instructor's role in creating inclusivity is no longer that of a single, authoritarian instructor, but rather as a catalyst and adapter, bridging the curriculum with the unique needs of each student. The instructor is responsible for creating a psychologically safe learning environment so that people with disabilities feel fully accepted. Furthermore, a crucial element of the instructor's skills includes the ability to modify instructional instruction in real time, transforming verbal language into visual or tactile (touch) language to ensure that choreographic messages are absorbed by all students without exception.

**Challenges and Solutions in Inclusive Dance Learning:** The inclusive dance learning process often faces complex obstacles that require creative and systematic solutions: **Communication and Cognitive Challenges;** obstacles in conveying abstract movement concepts to students with sensory or intellectual limitations. **Solutions;** The application of **Multisensory Learning principles**, where instructions are delivered through a combination of sound, visual demonstrations, and physical assistance (hand guidance) to clarify spatial orientation. **Challenges of Physical Limitations:** Variations in range of motion among students. **Solution:** Using **Differentiated Instruction strategies**, which provide different movement achievement targets while remaining within the same choreographic harmony. **Infrastructure and Accessibility Challenges:** Lack of practice space facilities that are wheelchair-friendly or accessible to users of other assistive devices. **Solution:** Adjusting the practice room layout (non-slip floors and no steps) and providing interactive media that support student independence.

The role of Sanggar Guriang Tujuh as an inclusive space. Guriang functions more than just an arts studio; it also serves as a social laboratory that breaks down barriers between people with disabilities and the general public. Here, the principles of physical and psychological accessibility are applied so that every individual has equal access to artistic experiences. Thus, Sanggar Guriang Tujuh is an oasis of inclusivity at the local level that has successfully proven that the limitations of formal spaces (such as schools) can be overcome through empowering communities that have open minds and high social awareness.

The impact of dance learning on participants has a multidimensional impact on students with disabilities, including: skills, improved motor coordination, and rhythm mastery. Self-confidence and the courage to perform in public reduce self-stigma. Thus, the most significant transformation lies not in movement skills alone, but in the growing self-esteem of participants, who now feel that their bodies are capable of creating beauty and being appreciated by others.

This contribution to the development of inclusive arts education in Banten provides an inclusive arts learning model based on local wisdom in the Banten region. This is expected to serve as a reference for other arts studios and local government policies in supporting the Inclusive City Index through cultural channels. We believe that this research's greatest contribution to the Banten region is providing empirical documentation that can be used by policymakers to replicate the Teter Guriang learning model in other regions, so that inclusive arts education is no longer a rarity.

Guriang Tujuh Studio faces the challenge of significantly heterogeneous participant abilities. Therefore, the approach used must be able to transcend traditional, often rigid pedagogical standards.

The implementation of inclusive pedagogy at the Guriang Tujuh Studio is rooted in the awareness that every individual has equal cultural rights. Observational data shows that the curriculum implementation at this studio incorporates demonstration, imitation, and drill, emphasizing instructional flexibility. Kusuma & Tri Herlambang (2025) stated that dance teaching is no longer fixated on rigid movement standards, but rather adapts choreography based on each individual's physical and sensory capabilities. Inclusivity in the dance classroom is achieved through recognizing diversity as a complex reality (Kusuma & Tri Herlambang 2025). At the Guriang Tujuh Studio, this is reflected in the instructors' efforts to recognize unique characteristics that enrich the aesthetics of movement. These findings confirm the theory (Balkist, 2020), which asserts that inclusive education is a systematic effort to improve the quality of learning for all, ensuring that no participant is marginalized due to their disability. At Sanggar Guriang Tujuh, diverse physical conditions are not seen as limitations but are instead transformed into unique choreographic elements.

Instructors at Sanggar Guriang Tujuh act as creative facilitators, bridging the gap between traditional dance conventions and participants' motoric limitations. Based on the research, three main strategies were identified:

**Differentiated process and instruction:** Referring to (Pramesworo et al., 2025), the effectiveness of inclusion is measured by the adaptation of teaching. Trainers modify the difficulty level of movements without changing the main choreographic structure. This differentiated instruction strategy ensures that each participant achieves the target achievement that aligns with their learning profile. The implementation of adaptive instruction at Sanggar Guriang Tujuh aligns with the view (Smith, 2009), which states that flexibility in inclusive arts classes allows for modification of tools and methods without compromising aesthetic value and student learning outcomes.

**Visual mentoring and visual codes:** For participants with hearing impairments, trainers implement a visual mentoring method that transforms musical accompaniment into visual cues and kinesthetic vibrations. The use of mirrors helps participants visualize posture and rhythm, aligning with the instructional needs emphasized by (Hallahan, Daniel P.; Kauffman, James M.; Pullen, 2015).

**Environmental and communication modifications:** Sanggar Guriang Tujuh creates a safe environment where communication takes place participatory between trainers and participants to jointly find solutions to specific physical challenges.

The learning experiences experienced by participants with disabilities at Sanggar Guriang Tujuh extend beyond the artistic realm to include psychological and social experiences, including kinesthetic experiences as therapy. Through a naturalistic, participatory approach, the improvement of motor coordination in participants at Sanggar Guriang Tujuh demonstrates that dance functions as a healing art. This aligns with the view (Fran J. Levy, 2014) that therapeutic expression through movement provides emotional satisfaction beyond words. Furthermore, Judith Lynne Hanna (2006) also asserts that dance activities are an effective means of improving physical and mental health through mastering aesthetic body control.

Identity empowerment through active involvement ensures that participants are no longer viewed as "objects of assistance" but rather as "subjects of art." This is a manifestation of the quality of inclusive learning, as stated by Balkist (2020), namely the condition where students feel accepted and valued within their social community.

## CONCLUSION

This research shows that Sanggar Guriang Tujuh has become a pioneer in deconstructing rigid dance standards into a humanistic and accessible learning space. By implementing methods such as demonstration, imitation, and drills, Sanggar Guriang Tujuh proves that physical differences are not barriers to artistic endeavor. By prioritizing flexibility, the teaching method no longer pursues the perfection of an "ideal" physical form, but rather celebrates anatomical diversity as a creative potential that gives rise to authentic movement aesthetics. The success of the teaching process lies in the differentiation strategy and multisensory approach. Instructors are able to play an active role as mediators, transforming verbal instructions into visual cues or kinesthetic touch, so that traditional dance material can be effectively absorbed by participants with various disabilities. Active involvement in dance significantly improves motor coordination, builds self-esteem, and removes self-stigma, allowing participants to feel recognized as empowered individuals. Through dance teaching in Banten, Sanggar Guriang Tujuh has successfully integrated inclusive values into cultural preservation. This provides a strategic contribution to the development of arts education models at the regional level and serves as concrete evidence that independent arts communities can create equitable and sustainable inclusive ecosystems.

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