

# Teacher Adequacy and Projected Needs: Challenges and Future Direction for Special Schools in Central Kalimantan

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## ABSTRACT

Special education in Central Kalimantan Province faces significant challenges in ensuring quality education for children with disabilities, particularly regarding the availability and adequacy of competent teachers. The shortage of qualified educators negatively impacts learning outcomes and the overall effectiveness of state special schools (SLB). This study analyzes the adequacy and projected teacher needs in public SLBs over the next five years, while also exploring perspectives on teacher availability, workload, and learning quality. This research employs a mixed-methods approach with an explanatory sequential design, beginning with quantitative data collection and analysis, followed by qualitative exploration. The study involved 20 state SLBs in Central Kalimantan Province, utilizing descriptive statistics, teacher needs projection, and an interactive data model for analysis. Findings reveal serious gaps in the number and quality of teachers in state SLBs, hindering their capacity to deliver optimal education services for students with disabilities. The projected demand underscores an urgent need to address teacher shortages and improve instructional quality. The study highlights the importance of collaboration between the Central Kalimantan Provincial Government and local universities to accelerate the establishment of a special education (PLB) undergraduate program and enhance teacher training. Strategic action is crucial to improving special education services in Central Kalimantan. Strengthening teacher recruitment, training, and professional development will ensure that students with disabilities receive the support necessary for optimal growth and active participation in society.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the human rights of every Indonesian citizen, including persons with disabilities, which must be fulfilled by the state (Mangku, 2020; Yuliartini, 2021). Fulfilling the right to

education for persons with disabilities will provide opportunities for them to be equal to others and no longer be marginalized (Nisa, 2019). One of the obligations that must be carried out by the central and regional governments in Indonesia based on Government Regulation Number 13 of 2020 on Proper Accommodation for Learners with Disabilities is the provision of proper accommodation for persons with disabilities, including the provision of special education teachers at educational institutions that accept students with disabilities (article 5 paragraph 3 letter b). The availability of teachers in sufficient quantity and quality will support an environment conducive to the educational process and the achievement of school goals to produce expected graduates (Nurfatimah et al., 2022). Especially in special schools (SLB), the availability of teachers of sufficient quantity and quality for various types of disabilities of children with special needs is a necessity (Suparno, 2007).

However, the challenge of providing special education teachers in Indonesia is still a fundamental problem faced by the central and local governments (Tiwan, 2021). The imbalance in the ratio between the number of teachers and students with disabilities (SWD) still occurs today, which results in the low achievement of educational goals in SLB (Febriani, 2014; Nabiela & Ulfatin, 2023). Referring to the Regulation of the Head of the Civil Service Agency (Perka. BKN) Number 19 of 2011 concerning General Guidelines for Preparing Civil Servant Needs, the ideal ratio between teachers and SWD in SLB is 1:5. However, in reality, most SLBs have not been able to meet this standard. As a result, teachers' workload becomes higher, and attention to each student becomes less than optimal, thus affecting students' academic, social, and emotional development (Bondebjerg et al., 2023). In addition, there are still many special education teachers with non-PLB backgrounds who do not have adequate competencies to deliver special programs (Ditjen GTK, 2020). This lack of specialized preparation and skills makes them unable to effectively support SWD, which has a direct impact on the quality of education students receive (Diana et al., 2020; Istiyati et al., 2023). In fact, the special education teacher profession should be taught by educators who have a special education background (Wulan & Apriliani, 2017).

The phenomenon of an imbalance in the ratio between the number of state SLB teachers and SWD is also a serious threat faced by the Central Kalimantan provincial government, especially the Central Kalimantan Provincial Education Office, where: (1) in the next 5 years, 60% of teachers and principals who have the status of State Civil Apparatus (ASN) in state SLB will retire; (2) 20% of Non-Permanent Teachers (GTT) in state SLB will be appointed as Government Employees with Work Agreements (P3K) and will get assignments outside SLB; and (3) there has been no recruitment or formation of ASN teachers in state SLB for the last 5 years (Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi Kalimantan Tengah, 2023). This situation is very concerning considering that SWD citizens have the right to get proper education, one of which is through the support of an adequate quantity and quality of teachers in accordance with the type of disability (Suparno, 2007). Therefore, planning for the fulfillment of human resources to ensure the availability and balance of the ratio of teachers and SWD is a necessity to support the implementation of a conducive education and learning process in SLB.

Effective human resource planning in the education sector is essential to anticipate the problem of teacher shortages in schools, including special schools, which are often caused by retirement, transfer, and death (Ismatiah et al., 2023). Through good planning, clear information about the need and adequacy of teachers- both quantitatively and qualitatively- can be obtained (Sangsurya et al., 2021). In this case, planning for teacher needs in SLB needs to be carried out on an ongoing basis and based on accurate data so as to ensure that regions have an adequate number of teachers and the right quality to support students with disabilities.

Similar situations are also found in other countries that face challenges in addressing the imbalance in the ratio of teachers and SWDs. In India, for example, the government faces a huge challenge to ensure an ideal teacher to SWD ratio. One of the efforts made is to introduce the Distance Education for Special Education Teachers program, which allows online and flexible teacher training, especially to reach remote areas (Singal & Muthukrishna, 2016). In addition, the Indian government also set quotas for the recruitment of special education teachers as part of a national policy to increase the availability of suitably trained educators.

In the United States, to address ratio imbalances, the Teacher Shortage Areas Nationwide Listing program is used to identify teacher shortage areas so that the government can prioritize resource allocation in areas of need (McLeskey et al., 2004). This policy is also integrated with incentives to attract special education teachers to shortage areas, as well as the use of technology to manage real-time student-teacher ratio data. This data is then used to project future teaching force needs to optimize the distribution of educational resources. Relatively more progressive, Finland has a highly structured education policy, including for SWD education, that ensures the teacher-student ratio remains low (ideal). The Finnish government works with local education authorities to periodically evaluate the need for teaching staff by analyzing the number of SWDs and the type of disability. The results of this evaluation then form the basis of planning for future teacher needs, as part of a strategy that supports continuing professional development for teachers (Sabel et al., 2010).

Effective planning is essential to address the shortage of special education teachers, which stems from inadequate recruitment strategies (McLeskey et al., 2004; Payne, 2005). Teacher planning should be based on current availability, adequacy, and future projections to guide recruitment, professional development, and budget allocation. This study aims to: (1) assess the current availability and adequacy of state SLB teachers in Central Kalimantan and (2) project teacher needs for the next five years.

## 2. METHODS

This research uses a mixed methods approach with an explanatory sequential design to analyze the adequacy and projected needs of public special education teachers in Central Kalimantan Province. This research design begins with quantitative data collection and analysis first, which aims to provide an overview of the phenomenon under study, followed by qualitative data collection to enrich or explain more deeply the results of quantitative analysis (Creswell & Clark, 2018). The descriptive quantitative approach is used to describe certain phenomena or variables in the form of numbers and facts that can be analyzed statistically. The descriptive quantitative approach is used to describe certain phenomena or variables in the form of numbers and facts that can be analyzed statistically.

Sugiyono (2018) explains that descriptive quantitative methods are suitable when research aims to describe certain phenomena or variables in the form of numbers and facts that can be analyzed statistically. The research subjects consisted of 20 state SLBs located in Central Kalimantan Province. Data collection was carried out through documentation studies, which included information related to the number of SWD, disability categories, number of study groups (*rombel*), number, and qualifications of teachers. Data on the current and projected availability and needs of state SLB teachers based on student disabilities were analyzed using descriptive statistics and projection data analysis. Projection analysis is the numerical result of a particular set of assumptions about the future (Smith et al., 2013), and predicts future conditions based on past and current data (Matin, 2013). This projection analysis refers to Perka. BKN Regulation Number 19 of 2011, which regulates and serves as a reference for calculating the need for special education teachers for various levels. This projection analysis is carried out by calculating the projected growth in the number of SWD, projected current and future teacher needs, and teacher surplus / shortage. The projection analysis of the availability and needs of state SLB teachers also uses several methods. The analysis of the projected availability and needs of state SLB teachers also uses several mathematical equations that refer to research conducted by Febdian (2013) and Azizah (2019), and uses the Ministry of Education and Culture's rules as explained by Kintamani (2013).

In analyzing the projected needs of teachers in state SLB, a non-policy approach was used. The non-policy approach in projecting teacher needs in state SLB focuses on historical trends without being influenced by changes in government policies or political decisions (Warsono, 2018). This approach prioritizes empirical data and mathematical calculations based on historical data from the last few years (Hermawan, 2014), such as the number of SWDs, the number of teachers, the ratio of SWDs per teacher, and the estimated growth of SWDs. Several stages were carried out in analyzing data on the projected needs of state SLB teachers with this non-policy approach. These stages began with collecting historical

data on the number of SWDs and teachers for each disability in the last five years. Furthermore, the growth trend in the number of SWDs for each disability in recent years was analyzed. The next stage is the calculation of projected state SLB teacher needs using a geometric growth model by considering the ideal teacher-SWD ratio. The geometric growth model is one of the models commonly used to estimate projections based on historical data trends that assume that the growth rate of the number of SWDs will remain constant during the projection period (Ramadhani & Siagian, 2024).

After analyzing quantitative data on teacher availability, adequacy, and future needs in state SLBs in Central Kalimantan, this study conducted in-depth interviews with principals, teachers, and the Head of the Special Education Division. These interviews aimed to explore their perspectives on the findings. A qualitative approach provided deeper insights beyond numerical data (Moleong, 2007), capturing complex social realities. Data were analyzed using Miles et al.'s (2014) interactive model, with validation through source triangulation to ensure accuracy and credibility.

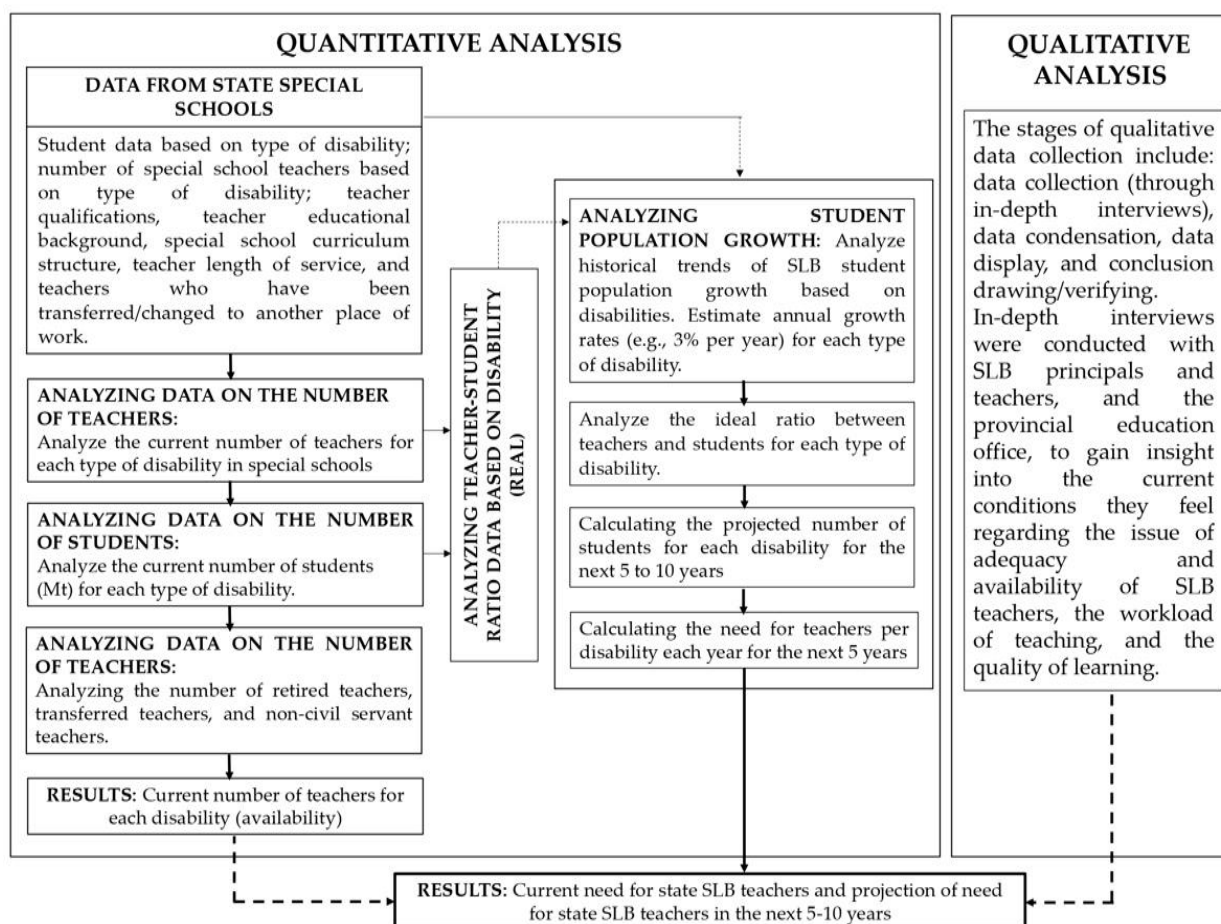


Figure 1. Stages in analyzing the adequacy and projection of state SLB teacher needs

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. Findings

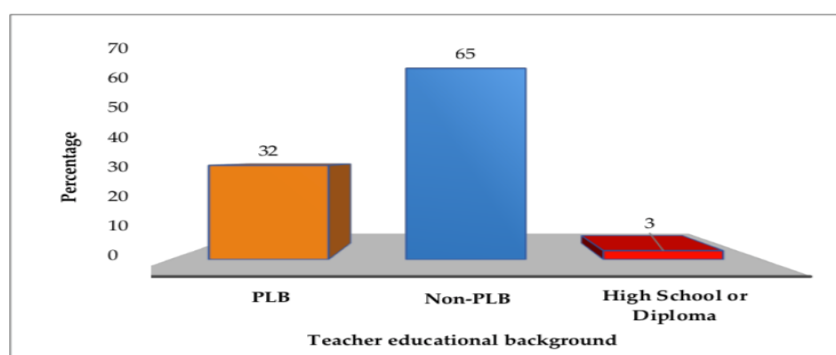
##### 3.1.1 Availability and adequacy of the state SLB teachers

Table 1 presents the actual conditions related to the number and educational background of teachers and the number of SWDs in 20 state SLB in Central Kalimantan Province. Table 1 also presents information on the number of teachers, the proportion of teachers with special education backgrounds (PLB), non-PLB, and SMA or Diploma. This information is important to determine the extent to which the availability and competence of teaching staff meet the needs of special education in the region.

**Table 1.** Recapitulation of data on teachers and SWD in Central Kalimantan Province

Number	School	Number of Teachers with Educational Background:			Numbers of SWD
		High School/ Diploma	Bachelor/ Master PLB	Bachelor/ Master Non-PLB	
1.	State SLB 1 Buntok		1	12	41
2.	State SLB 1 Kasongan		3	13	35
3.	State SLB 1 Kuala Kapuas		8	19	63
4.	State SLB 1 Kuala Pembuang			18	36
5.	State SLB 1 Muara Teweh		14	11	68
6.	State SLB 1 Nanga Bulik		3	8	42
7.	State SLB 1 Palangka Raya	4	26	26	266
8.	State SLB 1 Pangkalan Bun		2	12	104
9.	State SLB 1 Pulang Pisau		11	8	61
10.	State SLB 1 Sampit		3	14	60
11.	State SLB 1 Sukamara		4	3	16
12.	State SLB 2 Kasongan			18	36
13.	State SLB 2 Palangka Raya		10	14	95
14.	State SLB 2 Pangkalan Bun		4	11	64
15.	State SLB Kuala Kurun		1	10	35
16.	State SLB Laung Tuhup		2	6	35
17.	State SLB Puruk Cahu	6	1	4	43
18.	State SLB Tamiang Layang		5	4	58
19.	State SLB 2 Sampit		5	8	36
20.	State SLB 3 Sampit		7	4	46
<b>Amount</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>223</b>	
<b>Amount overall</b>			<b>343</b>		<b>1240</b>

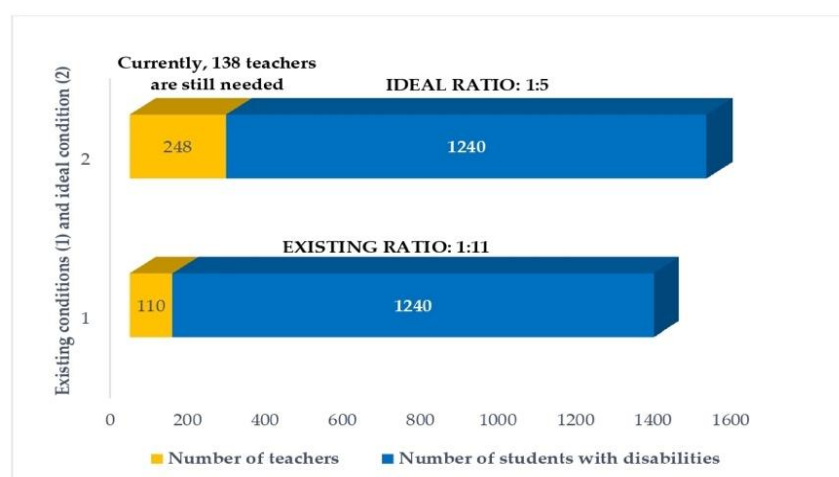
Based on the data in Table 1, the actual condition in Central Kalimantan Province shows that there are 343 teachers teaching in state SLBs. Of these, 223 teachers (around 32%) have a background in special education. However, 110 teachers (around 65%) do not have a background in PLB (non-PLB), and as many as 10 teachers (around 3%) have a high school or diploma education background. Table 1 also shows that there are 1240 SWDs from all schools. This indicates a serious challenge in providing specially trained teachers to meet the needs of SWDs. To understand the context of this data, it is important to look at the availability and adequacy of teachers in terms of educational background and the existing teacher-SWD ratio.



**Figure 2.** Comparison diagram of the educational background of the state SLB teacher in Central Kalimantan Province

Teachers with PLB backgrounds are the most qualified to handle SWD in state SLBs. Of 343 teachers, only 110 (32%) have PLB qualifications, making them valuable assets. Meanwhile, 223 teachers (65%) come from non-PLB backgrounds, requiring additional training to effectively teach SWD. Additionally, 10 teachers (3%) have only a high school diploma, an inadequate qualification for special education. Without specialized training, this group may struggle to provide appropriate learning support, highlighting the need for further education and training. Teachers with a high school diploma still need to attend training or further study to better meet the needs of SWD in state SLBs.

The availability of teachers with a background in special education is very important in SLB because SWDs require a different and more specific approach. If only considering teachers with a background in PLB, which amounts to 110 people, then with a total of 1,240 SWDs, the ratio of teachers and SWDs for PLB teachers is around 1:11. This ratio is still far from the recommended ideal ratio of 1:5. With an ideal teacher-SWD ratio of 1:5, there is still a need for 138 teachers with a special education background to optimally serve the number of SWDs (see Figure 3). This number of teachers with special education backgrounds indicates the availability of teachers who are specifically trained to handle SWDs.



**Figure 3.** Comparison diagram of the ratio of teachers and the SWD in the state SLB in Central Kalimantan Province (existing conditions vs. ideal conditions)

However, when viewed from the aspect of adequacy, this number of 110 teachers with a background in PLB is still inadequate. The 110 PLB-trained teachers for 1,240 SWD in SLB remain insufficient, posing challenges in providing specialized education. Given the diverse disabilities requiring individualized methods, increasing PLB-trained teachers is crucial for quality education. With a 1:11 teacher-SWD ratio, individualized learning and guidance may be less effective. A lower ratio would allow for better assessments, personalized programs, and greater student support. To enhance learning quality and SWD well-being, teacher adequacy must be improved to meet ideal standards.

The research findings that reveal the complexity of the problems caused by the unideal ratio of teachers with PLB backgrounds were complained about by principals and teachers of state SLB in Central Kalimantan Province. One of the principals of state SLB said that with the limited number of teachers with a PLB background, the quality of learning is not optimal.

*“The ratio is not ideal. With the limited number of teachers with PLB backgrounds, we are forced to rely on teachers with general education backgrounds. But this does have a direct impact on the quality of learning. Although they are dedicated, they often find it difficult to provide appropriate learning for children with special needs.” (W.KS-SLBN 1 P.Bun, 2024)*

One teacher with a non-PLB background expressed various problems in the implementation of their duties that they faced while working in SLB. They were accepted to work in SLB based on the

available formations, even though their educational background was not linear for the job. They chose this for a better future as a teacher. But over time they felt the enormous challenge of realizing quality learning for SWD, mainly due to irrelevant competencies and the limited professional development they have received so far.

*“Our biggest challenge is the lack of ongoing training. Although we have had short trainings organized by the education office and the university, we feel it does not equip us enough to handle the specific needs of SWD. These activities are rarely conducted, maybe only once a year. Our workload is getting heavier, and we honestly feel that the quality of learning is not optimal.”* (W. G-SLBN 1 Sampit, 2024)

On the other hand, for teachers with PLB backgrounds, the non-optimal implementation of tasks from teachers with non-PLB backgrounds adds to their workload.

*“I am the only teacher with a special education background here, while my colleagues come from general education. This makes my workload heavy, as I often help them with SWD learning. Although they handle the teaching, they struggle with designing and implementing appropriate lessons, requiring my assistance and adding to my burden.”* (W. G-SLBN 1 Buntok, 2024)

The problems faced by state SLBs related to the imbalance in the ratio of teachers and SWDs, as well as the majority of non-PLB teachers who do not have sufficient capacity to optimize learning services in SLBs, are well realized by the Central Kalimantan Provincial Education Office. However, with limitations in teacher appointment policies by the government and a limited budget from the Central Kalimantan Provincial Government, this problem is increasingly complex.

*“We are aware of the shortage of special education teachers in Central Kalimantan and continue to address it, though the challenge is significant. Each year, we report this issue to the Head of Service for follow-up with the Governor, but recruitment is determined by the provincial government and Regional Personnel Agency (BKD), aligning with central policy. While waiting, we are working to collaborate with universities to establish a PLB study program, ensuring graduates are ready when positions open. We will keep advocating for more PLB teacher recruitment to strengthen SLB education.”* (W. Kabid-PLB Disdik-KT, 2024)

### 3.1.2 Projected SLB teacher needs based on SWD

Table 2 shows the results of the analysis of the projection of the need for state SLBs teachers for the next five years. The assumptions used in this analysis, as previously explained, are non-policy, namely using trends based on education data from the last few years.

**Table 2.** Projected need for state SLB teachers in Central Kalimantan Province (next 5 years)

Type of Disability	Projected Teacher Needs					Total
	2025/ 2026	2026/ 2027	2027/ 2028	2028/ 2029	2029/ 2030	
Blind	6	7	8	9	10	39
Deaf	45	49	53	58	63	269
Mentally disabled	125	135	145	156	168	730
Physically disabled	15	17	18	20	21	91
emotional disturbance	0	1	1	1	1	3
Disturbance concentration & hyperactivity	11	14	17	20	25	87
Autism	65	75	86	99	114	438
Down Syndrome	3	4	4	5	6	21
Double	2	2	2	2	2	10
Cerebral palsy	0	0	0	0	0	0

Type of Disability	Projected Teacher Needs					Total
	2025/ 2026	2026/ 2027	2027/ 2028	2028/ 2029	2029/ 2030	
<b>Total</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>1688</b>

Based on the projection results in Table 2, the number of teachers required increases from 274 teachers in the first year to 409 teachers in the fifth year, with a total requirement of 1,688 teachers over five years. This increase is in line with the expected growth in the number of SWDs in state SLBs, as well as the target to achieve the ideal teacher-SWD ratio of 1:5. The projection assumption using the ideal ratio of 1:5 departs from the principle that each teacher in SLB should handle a maximum of five SWDs to provide optimal attention and learning. This ratio is particularly important in education for SWD, where each SWD may require a more personalized and intensive approach to learning. This needs projection shows that to achieve the 1:5 ratio, great efforts must be made in terms of recruiting new teachers and improving the competency of existing teachers.

### 3.2. Discussion

Until the 2024/2025 academic year, only 32% of the 343 teachers teaching in public SLB in Central Kalimantan Province have Special Education (PLB) qualifications. Most teachers come from non-PLB backgrounds, have diplomas, and are even high school graduates. The lack of teachers with PLB qualifications is a major challenge for the future of special education in this region, considering that PLB-qualified teachers have a deeper understanding of the needs of students with special needs (SWD) and more effective teaching strategies (Hastuti, 2018).

Previous studies (Savage & Erten, 2015) have shown that the quality of teaching in SLB is highly dependent on the knowledge and skills of teachers in adapting learning to the needs of SWD. Teachers without a background in SWD do not have adequate education and preparation to manage SWD learning (Poerwanti et al., 2015). Therefore, the availability of trained teachers is essential to achieving positive learning outcomes. Teachers with SWD training are more effective in managing heterogeneous classes, creating a supportive environment, and improving student learning outcomes (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Maithya et al., 2024; Barizi & Idris, 2009).

The phenomenon of the lack of teachers with expertise in SLB occurs not only in Central Kalimantan but also in Indonesia in general and even at the global level. Several SLBs in Indonesia still experience a shortage of teachers with a PLB background, which has an impact on the low quality of learning for SWD (Zakia, 2015). Katsiyannis et al. (2003) found a shortage of qualified teachers for all disabilities, worsened by high retirement rates and insufficient university graduates. In addition, the low interest of prospective students in the teaching profession in the field of special education also worsens this situation (Han et al., 2018). At the global level, the profession of special education teacher is not the main choice for prospective students, which results in a lack of graduates who meet the qualifications to teach in SLB (Mason-Williams et al., 2020; McLeskey et al., 2004).

In addition to the lack of teachers with special education backgrounds, the ratio of teachers to students with special needs in public special schools in Central Kalimantan is currently 1:11, much higher than the ideal ratio of 1:5 set in the regulation (Lindsay, 2007; Sailor, 2017). This ratio is a major obstacle in providing much-needed individual attention to SWDs, who often require more intensive attention than regular students. A lower ratio allows teachers to more effectively manage and support students' academic and emotional needs (Hume et al., 2021). Conversely, a high ratio can lead to teacher burnout and decrease teaching effectiveness, which ultimately harms student learning outcomes (McLeskey et al., 2012).

The projection of the need for state SLB teachers in Central Kalimantan in the next five years shows an increase in the number of teachers from 274 to 409 people to meet the ideal ratio of 1:5. This increase in demand not only reflects local conditions but is also in line with national trends that show an increase in the number of SWDs requiring special education services. As an illustration, in Indonesia, the

number of SWDs increased by 15% between 2021 and 2023, while the number of SLB teachers only increased by 5% in the same period (Kemendikbudristek, 2023).

Addressing this problem requires concrete breakthroughs. To achieve success in special education, the education system needs to pay attention to the special needs of SWD by providing an adequate number and quality of teachers (McLeskey et al., 2012). However, current policies in Indonesia still focus on competency improvement programs for non-special education teachers who teach in special education schools. This program aims to equip them with the skills needed to handle SWD but is still not optimal in improving their competency. One of the main challenges is that despite the increase in competency through training, many non-special education teachers still have a low understanding of psychology, special needs, and special pedagogical strategies for SWD (Martika et al., 2016; Warman, 2021). Limited training duration and lack of ongoing support hinder a deep understanding of inclusive learning (Yusuf & Sari, 2017). Iramadhani et al. (2024) also found that competency programs benefit PLB-background teachers more, while non-PLB teachers struggle with appropriate methods and SWD psychology.

Based on this phenomenon, strategic steps involving policy improvements to recruit and intensively train current teachers are a necessity. Accelerating the establishment of undergraduate special education study programs in universities in various regions, including Central Kalimantan Province, and simultaneously increasing the number of trained teachers in special education in the next five years is an urgent matter that must be done immediately because, in reality, until now, there are only 13 universities in Indonesia that organize undergraduate special education study programs (Pandito & Diva, 2024). The lack of institutions that provide special education teacher preparation programs has an impact on the quality and quantity of teachers in special education.

To address these challenges, the Central Kalimantan Government must take integrated steps. Through its Education Office, it should collaborate with universities, like the University of Palangka Raya, to establish a PLB undergraduate program for qualified teachers. Such partnerships are key to effective special education (Saputra, 2018; Todd, 2007). Providing incentives and scholarships can also boost student interest in PLB Nordness et al. (2022).

Scholarships help reduce financial barriers for prospective PLB students and attract more candidates to special education (Maher, 2011). Zascavage et al. (2008) found that scholarship-based programs enhance teaching quality by motivating students to deepen their PLB knowledge and commit long-term. This support is expected to produce skilled graduates to meet SLB teacher needs in Central Kalimantan. To ensure qualified teachers, the Central Kalimantan government and universities must develop a practice-based PLB curriculum. Integrating internships in SLB and inclusive schools provides hands-on experience in managing diverse classrooms (Florian, 2019; Prater & Sileo, 2002). Van Laarhoven & Conderman (2011) emphasize the need for assistive technology training for students with disabilities, while Wojcik et al. (2004) highlight its role in improving accessibility. Thus, the PLB curriculum must equip students with technological skills to enhance education quality for SWD.

Besides establishing a PLB study program, intensive continuous training for non-PLB teachers in special education is crucial. This training enhances teaching quality in SLB, addressing diverse student needs through behavior management, assistive technology, and differentiated learning (Atsnan et al., 2020). It also strengthens teachers' ability to assess and overcome challenges (Caturwangi et al., 2017) while fostering skills in classroom action research and scientific writing (Hidayat & Noormiyanto, 2020). Continuous training is a key element in improving teachers' skills, especially in managing special classes and designing flexible learning (Hume et al., 2021).

In this context of continuous training, universities have a strategic role not only as professional development centers that provide workshops, seminars, and intensive training but also in developing training programs that are relevant to the real problems faced by SLB teachers. Universities play a key role in professional development by providing relevant training through workshops and school partnerships (Windrawanto, 2015). Strong policy support is essential, including incentives for teachers to encourage participation (McLeskey et al., 2012). To ensure sustainability, periodic evaluations should guide program improvements and maintain relevance (Kraft & Christian, 2021; Khaksar et al., 2023).

With inclusive training and solid policies, special education can continuously adapt to meet SWD needs.

Implementing these steps is challenging due to differing stakeholder visions, limited resources, and policy alignment needs. However, collaboration between the Central Kalimantan Education Office, universities like the University of Palangka Raya, and SLB is essential to addressing the special education teacher shortage and ensuring sustainable programs. Government support through funding and scholarships (Ebersold & Meijer, 2016) will strengthen this synergy, ultimately providing quality education for children with disabilities and preparing them to contribute to society.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study highlights that the main challenge of PLB in Central Kalimantan Province lies not only in the availability of teachers, but also in the suitability of teacher competencies to the specific needs of SWD. The imbalance in the ratio of teachers with and without a special education background, as well as the ratio of teachers to SWDs that do not meet ideal standards, emphasizes the importance of improvements in designing strategic and sustainable planning that must be carried out by the Central Kalimantan Provincial government, especially by the Central Kalimantan Provincial Education Office. Improving the quality of special education cannot be achieved by simply increasing teaching staff, but must also be accompanied by ongoing training that allows teachers to adapt to the needs of each student. For this reason, collaboration between the Central Kalimantan provincial government and universities is a crucial need that must be carried out immediately to prepare new prospective educators, while strengthening the competence of existing teachers. We recommend further research to be able to produce a planning model for meeting the needs of special education teachers that can integrate projections of student growth, disability categories, and ideal ratios to be studied in the future. In addition, an in-depth study of special education policy models that consider incentive-based recruitment strategies, competency development through technology, and cross-sector collaboration is also needed in the academic world in the future. A focus on strengthening the capacity of non-PLB teachers can also be a key element to ensure that they can effectively meet the needs of students. Continuous policy evaluation is needed to ensure that the strategies implemented remain relevant and adaptive to changing needs. With the synergy between education planning and policy, it is expected that PLB in Central Kalimantan Province can provide optimal special education services, facilitate the maximum development of SWD, and prepare them to contribute to society actively.

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