

Deconstructing NGO's impact on education policies in Indonesia: The case of inclusive education

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Abstract

This thesis explores the influence of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) on the discourse surrounding inclusive education policy in Indonesia since 1998. Although inclusive education has been officially recognised through legal reforms and international agreements, how its meanings are constructed, contested, and institutionalised has not been thoroughly examined. Using Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA), particularly focusing on the concepts of genealogy, archaeology, and governmentality, this research critically investigates the role of NGOs as discursive agents in shaping the narratives of inclusive education.

This research examines three Indonesian NGOs by analysing policy documents, advocacy materials, and public communications. It aims to identify the discursive strategies used to advance a rights-based perspective on disability and education. The results indicate that these NGOs have significantly contributed to the redefinition of inclusive education, moving away from a medical and charity-centric framework towards one rooted in social justice and human rights. Nonetheless, this transformation is not fully realised; state institutions still exert discursive control by selectively adopting NGO language, using deficit-based terminology, and consistently sidelining disabled voices in the policy-making process.

This study advances critical policy scholarship by emphasising NGOs' intricate and often conflicting role, serving both as advocates and as regulatory entities involved in promoting inclusion. It illustrates the importance of FDA in showcasing how power and knowledge flow within educational discourse and provides insights into the discursive conflicts that support the pursuit of inclusive education in Indonesia.

Keywords: Inclusive Education, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Indonesia, Policy Discourse, Civil Society, Post-structuralism, Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

Declaration

I certify that this thesis:

1. does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university
2. and the research within will not be submitted for any other future degree or diploma without the permission of Flinders University; and
3. to the best of my knowledge and belief, does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'F. A.' or similar, written in a cursive style.

Date 5 June 2025

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You are great, you are loved!

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1. Problem Overview

As one of the most populous countries, Indonesia has one of the most extensive education systems in the world regarding the number of students and schools across all education levels. Approximately 52 million students, 3 million educators, and over 400 thousand school buildings make it one of the biggest globally (Statista, 2024). Among those are around 1 million students with disability (Purbasari et al., 2022). However, many students present considerable challenges, such as accessibility, teacher-student ratio, curriculum development, and implementation. One of the metrics used for assessing the quality of teaching and learning, based on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) score, shows that Indonesia consistently placed towards the bottom (Mustafa, 2023).

Additionally, as one of the countries with the most islands, more challenges arose on how to keep the education quality equal across the nation. Although the Indonesian Government has given tremendous attention to education, it still faces challenges. Ariyulinda (2016) argues that the policy for adequate public facilities is not even of moderate quality, and discrimination against disabled people is still very much apparent. Looking at the status quo, the equal access right is still far from being implemented. World Bank (2024) reported that one out of 3 disabled children still do not have adequate access to education; this includes when they are in school and are unlikely to get enough support.

This thesis focuses on analysing the development of the discourse of inclusive education led by several NGOs or the network of NGOs at the grassroots level, as well as in political discussions. In Indonesia, an NGO is called an *LSM (Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat)* or directly translated to a self-supporting society organisation that advocates for various issues from human rights, education, environment and culture that work on a local, national, or international level. The role of NGOs in the decision-making process is considered vital as they provide a monitoring system for government policies and provide alternatives in the discourse. However, the rise of NGOs did not start until the late 90s when some NGOs emerged focusing on human rights, environmental issues, and democracy, right before the authoritarian Suharto governance fell. NGOs' impact, especially on education, became more prominent

post-Suharto Government when there was a demand for a more democratic society (Newberry, 2010; Yumasdaleni & Jakimow, 2017). The discourse on the thesis is derived from the Foucauldian understanding of discourse, which refers to the group of statements belonging to a single formation system that encompasses not only the language used to label things but also the practices that enable what to be said, including language and speech (Scott et al., 2017).

Despite having clear regulations about inclusive education, the discourse on inclusivity has only recently become a public discussion in Indonesia. The Indonesian constitution clearly states that every citizen has the right to equal access to education regardless of their economic, social, and political background. The law has granted the rights of people with disability according to Law No.4 of 1997 on the Disabled (Pemerintah Republik Indonesia, 1997). For all levels of education, the Indonesian Government has passed several regulations regarding inclusivity and special needs for disabled students, such as Law Number 13 of 2020, which regulates the need for facilities to accommodate disabled students through inclusive or special schools (Pemerintah Republik Indonesia, 2020). The introduction of Permendiknas No. 70 in 2009 marked a significant policy shift, mandating that children with disabilities have the right to education alongside their peers in general schools (Novrizal & Manaf, 2024). Law Number 23 of 2003 and Law Number 13 of 2020 (Pemerintah Republik Indonesia, 2020) also emphasized support for disabled students, ensuring they receive appropriate education through Sekolah Luar Biasa (Special School). These laws were enacted to guarantee that every disabled person enjoys the same rights as any Indonesian citizen, without discrimination in any sector, including education. There has been a clear development in the discourse on inclusivity using language and better accommodation for people with disability through various government policies. However, how these policies were discussed and, most importantly, how NGOs influence this policy discourse is still unclear. There is also a puzzle of how inclusion has been shaped, negotiated, and contested at the discursive level.

As one of the actors most frequently interacting with marginalised communities, NGOs are one of Indonesia's strongest stimuli for inclusive education policy. While the importance of NGOs has been discussed widely, there has not been much literature focusing on the development of inclusive education concentrated on policies, not to

mention very little literature focusing on the Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA). Pallas and Urpelainen (2012) provide a comprehensive analysis of how NGOs can be an effective tool for monitoring policies but also neglect the power of the network created by NGOs to perform such actions and lead the discourse of monitoring by a third party. Another research shows NGOs in education, such as Plan Indonesia's involvement in Early Childhood Education in East Nusa Tenggara (Aboud et al., 2016); however, rather than showing collaboration between NGOs and the Government, the research focuses on contrasting the performance of both. Becirevic and Dowling (2013) also thoroughly explain how the international organisation influences disability and inclusion policies in Bulgaria and Herzegovina. However, the research does not touch base on the debate, dilemmas and tensions in disability inclusion policies within the system.

That being said, while considerable research has been done on the role of NGOs in shaping education policy, most of the research uses a traditional approach that focuses only on implementation and program evaluation, which can be pretty problematic (Ball, 1995) because those approaches may exclude the values, beliefs, knowledge, and voices, especially those of marginalised groups, which is vital as in inclusive education as they are the target of the policies. The traditional policy implementation and program evaluation approach also ignores the historical and cultural background of the policy's formulation and social reality. There is a noticeable gap in studies examining their influence on inclusive education policies in Indonesia in shaping and constructing inclusiveness in education. Despite inclusive education being a focal point of Indonesia's educational reforms, there is limited understanding of how NGOs advance these policies through direct or indirect government engagement.

While inclusive education has gained prominence within Indonesian education policy since the post-Reformasi era, little is known about the discursive processes that shape how inclusive education is understood, framed, and institutionalised. Most existing research focuses on implementing inclusive education programs or the barriers to achieving inclusive schooling. However, few studies critically examine how discourse is produced, negotiated, and contested, notably by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating within shifting political contexts. This thesis

investigates this puzzle: How is inclusive education policy discourse constructed in Indonesia, and what role do NGOs play in shaping, legitimising, or resisting that discourse? This thesis aims to address these gaps and puzzles in the literature by analysing how NGOs' initiatives can construct inclusive education in Indonesia, focusing on the historical report by the selected NGO and how their approach evolved using the FDA approach.

1.2. Thesis Question and Objective

This thesis aims to explore how power relations and knowledge production within NGO networks have influenced the framing and governance of inclusive education policy in Indonesia. By employing FDA, this study seeks to uncover the underlying assumptions, values, and power dynamics embedded in these discourses and how they have evolved since the 1998 reformation.

The research question guiding this study is:

How have NGO initiatives impacted the discourse of inclusive education policy in Indonesia?

The study's objective is to critically examine how NGO networks have shaped the discourses surrounding inclusive education policies in Indonesia, focusing on how these discourses influence policy formation, implementation, and social practices.

This thesis draws on Michel Foucault's genealogy, archaeology, and governmentality concepts to critically analyse inclusive education policy discourse in Indonesia. Genealogy allows for the tracing of historical shifts and ruptures in the framing of disability and inclusion, archaeology helps uncover the underlying discursive structures and silences that shape what is considered possible or legitimate within policy, and governmentality provides a lens to examine how NGOs participate, not only in resisting but also in governing inclusion. Together, these tools provide a layered understanding of how power, knowledge, and discourse interact within the development of inclusive education policy.

Based on the theoretical framework and previous studies, this research anticipates that NGOs have contributed significantly to shifting the discourse around inclusive education from a deficit-based, medicalised model toward a rights-based, social model of disability. It is expected that NGOs act not only as challengers of state

discourse but also as disciplinary agents, shaping behaviour and knowledge through their engagement in teacher training, advocacy, and curriculum development. This study adopts a document-based analysis to examine how NGOs contribute to developing and transforming inclusive education discourse in Indonesia through their policy texts, advocacy materials, and public communication.

1.3. Thesis Structure

The first chapter of the introduction includes an overview of the problem, a problematisation of the problem, and the rationale for the thesis.

The second chapter will be the literature review and theoretical framework of the thesis, in which the chapter will discuss FDA, inclusive education, and its application in Indonesia. The chapter will also discuss NGOs' activities and influence on decision-making in Indonesia

The third chapter will discuss the methodology of the thesis, including the philosophical stand, approach, and methods for collecting and analysing the data.

The fourth chapter will discuss the research findings, highlighting NGOs' discourse strategies in influencing inclusive education.

The fifth chapter is the discussion chapter, which applies the theory to the findings and its implications.

The last chapter includes the thesis's conclusion, future research perspective, and limitations.

Chapter 2 Framing Inclusive Education and NGO Influence: A Critical Review of the Literature

2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides debates based on the previous research on inclusive education policies, both in terms of the role of NGOs in advocating for inclusiveness. After setting out the discussion on inclusivity, the chapter will continue with the literature on inclusive education in Indonesia and how the discourse has developed throughout history, with the late 90s era set out as the starting point. It will also highlight the measurement of inclusive education according to recent scholars. Second, the literature review will discuss how NGOs are defined and how they work. The chapter will also explore the dynamic relationship of various stakeholders, including NGOs and the government, in the decision-making process.

2.2. Inclusive Education in Indonesia

2.2.1. Evolution of inclusivity and inclusive education policies

The evolution of education policies in Indonesia has undergone several significant updates. Before 1998, several laws administered the Indonesian education system, such as Law Number 4 in 1950 and Law Number 2 in 1989 (Anisa Rahma et al., 2023), which did not mention inclusive or special schools. The absence of regulation related to education for disabled students significantly affects service provision. The fundamental right of all children to get equal access to education only emerged in 2003 through Law Number 23 of 2003, which became the standard of education regulation in Indonesia (Pemerintah Republik Indonesia, 2003). Before the concept of inclusive education emerged, Indonesia, like many other countries, had a particular school for disabled students called Sekolah Luar Biasa (SLB)/Special School. Sekolah Luar Biasa (SLB)/Special Schools are education systems for students who have difficulty following the learning process due to physical, emotional, mental, and social disabilities but have the potential for extraordinary intelligence and talent (Baihaqi, 2023).

In the Indonesian context, the Ministry of Education of Indonesia defined inclusive education as an educational service system that requires children with special needs to study in nearby schools and general classes with friends of the same

age (Kementerian Pendidikan, 2023). However, the Indonesian government has not always prioritised inclusive education until recently, with the constant push from domestic and international actors. Special education has been the focus of the Indonesian government. Special education itself sparks many debates among scholars. Special education proponents argue that a school's inclusiveness does not necessarily improve the experiences of students with learning disabilities. Supporters of special education have consistently advocated for maintaining separate arrangements for students with disabilities, such as specialised classes and schools. Their reasoning is founded on the belief that segregation is necessary for the benefit of these students (Slee & Tomlinson, 2018). Kauffman et al. (2018) further argue that since each student is different, applying inclusion will put them at a disadvantage. Anderson et al. (2023) further argue that 'full inclusion' is the true enemy of special education, and it is instead a dissolution of an already complicated matter of inclusive education.

On the other hand, the existence of special schools has received much criticism. Lindsay (2003) argues that special schools hinder students' rights and educational opportunities. Slee and Allan (2001) also critique the rhetoric surrounding 'special educational needs' as a euphemism for the failure of the educational system to serve all students effectively, asserting that legitimate inclusion requires acknowledging and addressing these systemic issues. Regarding student performance, Buckley et al. (2006) show that when comparing Down syndrome students in special schools to teenagers in mainstream schools, teenagers in mainstream schools have better communication skills, more expressive behaviour and better literacy skills. Similarly, Jobe et al. (1996) argue that special education classes do not achieve better outcomes than their peers in regular education. This has led to calls for a more integrated approach to education that combines general and special education into a single system.

Most government regulations and international organisations, including the Indonesian government, agree on the definition of inclusive education derived from the Salamanca Statement. It is argued that there is a need to shift from traditional, unique education models, which often involve segregated classrooms, to inclusive education, where students with disabilities are educated alongside their peers in

regular classrooms (Anderson et al., 2023). This transition is part of a broader movement to reform educational practices and improve outcomes for all students, including those with disabilities (Jobe et al., 1996). The inclusiveness policy's broad definition is that inclusion concerns all children who face barriers to play, learning, and participation, regardless of the reasons behind these barriers (Booth et al., 2002; Moriña, 2019; Slee, 2018).

The government of Indonesia already has a commitment towards inclusive education under Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 70 of 2009 about Inclusive Education for Students with Disabilities and Potential Intelligence and/or Special Talents, as well as the guide on inclusive education developed by the Ministry of Education in 2022. However, based on the report from the World Bank (2023), the implementation has not been fully optimised. The implementation gap partly arises from the division of responsibilities: the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology sets policies and regulations, while their execution is the responsibility of local governments, which often creates a backlog. On the implementation level, it is found that students with a disability are still being refused when registering for public school despite regulations of anti-discrimination already legalised by the government (Paramitha, 2017). However, despite this progressive rhetoric, as seen in many policy documents, the policy lacks precise implementation mechanisms.

2.3. Foucauldian Studies in Policy Research

Foucault's definition of discourse pertains to the collection of utterances associated with a singular systemic construction. This formation system includes the terminology employed for labelling and the actions that facilitate expression, encompassing language and speech. Foucault characterises discourse as “practices that systematically constitute the objects and subjects of their discussion” (Scott et al., 2017). In its most fundamental definition, discourse denotes written or verbal communication between humans that consists of multiple sentences. It is essential to acknowledge that conversation transcends mere words (Schmidt, 2008). Language studies may concentrate on the precise meanings of words, although the phrase "language" includes all linguistic and symbolic units, such as things like road signs.

Furthermore, discourse examines the broader ramifications of language within a particular setting, which refers to the discourse's social, cultural, political, and historical background (Gill, 2000). A discourse is "a collection of ideas, concepts, and categories that assign meaning to social and physical phenomena (Bertella & Tomassini, 2024). Taylor (1997) perceives education policy as a product of political conflicts about interpreting education or as a manifestation of the politics surrounding rhetoric and policies. These conflicts entail competitors pursuing divergent goals, wherein language, especially discourse, is utilised strategically.

One of the most notable concepts in using FDA is the concept of governmentality. Governmentality investigates rationalities and strategies in government practices and power exertion, as explained by Foucault (Hook, 2001). Government activity is reasonable and follows a set of practices with a defined goal (Stevenson & Cutcliffe, 2006). Foucault's concept of governmentality provides a new type of power known as the apparatus of security, which targets populations and exploits political economy as a new form of knowledge via government-specific tactics and technology. It emphasises the relationship between power, knowledge, and the management of populations, focusing on how individuals are governed through societal norms and regulations (Belov, 2024). Glenn (2019) argues that Foucault's concept of governmentality extends beyond a traditional statist understanding of government, encompassing both the governance of others and self-governance. It involves regimes of institutionalised practices characterised by routinised and ritualised actions.

There has been an increase in the use of the FDA both as a method and as a methodology in the policy context. Most of the studies uncover the power dynamics of the actors in shaping the discourse. Stevenson and Cutcliffe (2006) demonstrate and illustrate how Foucault serves as an analytical tool for 21st-century psychiatric practices and the analysis of constant observation. Similarly, Keeley et al. (2024) also employed the FDA to analyse media representations of neglect experienced by individuals with intellectual disabilities. FDA allows researchers to explore how different subject positions are constructed through discourse. Each discourse reveals various aspects of how neglect is portrayed in the media and the implications for public perception.

Mac Naughton (2005) explains the Foucault approach in education, particularly in early childhood studies, that the discourse of early childhood education originated from educators' discussions, parents' newsletters, and conferences, while the discourse of inclusive education comes from society organisations and the government. In the context of the use of the FDA concerning non-governmental or international organisations, Deuel (2022) the FDA examines the intricacies of international organisations' governance policies, which have redefined and reshaped the objectives of higher education and its function as a governmental technology. The study, however, is not country-specific, so it is hard to see the real example of the changing of the discourse. Similarly, Bo (2017) also utilised the FDA's use of genealogy and archaeology to dismantle how the government shapes the education discourse in Cambodia.

While the previous study that used the FDA in their methodology fits well with the policy education study, little to no studies have been found using it in inclusive education policy and practices, and several studies also put it in particular institutions or on a global scale, not country-specific. Studies that use the FDA as their methodology usually focus on governmentality, discursive formation in general, and how policies emerge as a part of discourse (Fimyar, 2008; Lather, 2006; Petersen, 2015). DeJaeghere et al. (2015) thoroughly explain how inclusivity can be achieved by exploring evolved inequalities. Employing Fraser's multi-dimensional approach to analyse discursive formations of inequality, DeJaeghere et al. (2015) demonstrate how these policy discourses produce a non-ethnic economic citizen with socialist inclinations, which diminishes cultural or social acknowledgement and political representation. However, none of the studies elaborate much on the inclusivity of education.

2.4. NGOs and Policy Influence

2.4.1. NGO and Decision-Making Process

The term "Nongovernmental Organisation" is broad and subject to various interpretations. Some have encountered ambiguous terms and acronyms used to characterise development-related organisations. Although the term "NGOs" is frequently used, other similar terms are commonly mentioned, such as "non-profit,"

"volunteer," and "civil society" organisations or associations. Scholars have also defined it, such as Kieu and Singer (2017) who define NGO as a civil society-based agency contributing to policy provision in the development and decision-making process, which the thesis focuses on. UNDP also refers to NGOs as Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) that operate outside of the government and market sectors and are separate from family units, where individuals come together to pursue common goals or interests in the public sphere, for example, local community groups, faith-based groups, independent research instituted, and non-profit media outlets (Salamon, 1996; Tomlinson, 2013). In addition to the state being the first sector and the market being the second, these terms refer to civil society organisations that can be categorised as the third sector (Salamon, 1996).

The terminology used to describe various NGOs frequently reflects the multiple cultures and histories NGOs have developed rather than any content, role, or type of organisation. For instance, "charity" and "voluntary organisation" are frequently used in the UK, reflecting a long history of volunteerism and voluntary work influenced by charity laws and Christian principles. Because of the market's dominance and the fact that citizen organisations can receive financial rewards for proving that they are operating for the public good rather than for profit, the term "nonprofit organisation" is frequently used in the United States (Lewis et al., 2020). Unlike the two countries above, in the Indonesian context, the NGO is *Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat* (LSM) or People's Self-Reliance Development Groups. The key point is the word "Swadaya", which means self-reliance. Concerns about politics have led some Indonesian NGOs to reject the direct translation of the term "NGO" due to the perception that it has connotations similar to those of the government (Cleary, 1997). In the authoritarian government of Suharto, LSM wants to avoid conflict with the government so they can still exist. Therefore, the discourse around the functions of the LSM is to help development rather than impose a threat to the government (Hadiwinata, 2003).

It is suggested that NGOs are heavily involved in several steps in advocating policy-making, including initial policy making, policy application, monitoring and evaluation, testing and improvement, and policy review (Bryce, 2009; Muhdi, 2019). Pallas and Urpelainen (2012) argue that NGOs benefit civil society by monitoring policies, legitimising the state's efforts in policy conception for domestic audiences,

building reciprocal relationships, and preventing accusations of free-riding in the government's policy-making process. NGOs can also play a significant role in highlighting policy failure, prompting government action. NGOs can work alongside the government to provide data, shape public views, and facilitate marginalised civil society's voices. NGOs' influence on policy also extends through their extensive network as solid networking within the same field, both nationally and internationally, enables them to collaborate more effectively (Bryce, 2009; Nardi, 2018). Through a transnational network, NGOs can influence policy-making processes across all sectors and all levels, whether local, national, or international (Appe, 2016; Nardi, 2018). Strong relationships with the donors also enhance NGOs' policy influence, with donors often coming from philanthropy, bilateral relations, or international aid, each with its interest. As recipients, NGOs can deliver interest in their respective fields (Miller-Grandvaux et al., 2002).

Conversely, some argue that NGOs might challenge the government's authority and policy-making processes. Several scholars argue that NGOs might threaten the government's legitimacy by constantly questioning government policies and providing a better service than the government for those NGOs that operate in education or health (Miller-Grandvaux et al., 2002; Young, 2020). Häse (2012) points out that NGOs might have conflict with the government, especially when their movement is deemed politically sensitive. NGOs can be seen as challengers to the government as they are often perceived as opposing national interests, influencing public policy, and questioning governmental decisions. This creates a relationship filled with dubiousness and challenges in policy discourse, such as in the case of Malaysia (Hooi, 2013). Similarly, in the Indonesian case, in the early days of its development, NGOs were usually the ones to blame by the government as the source of social instability because of their power to gather masses and the worry of political agitation (Cleary, 1997; Juliantara, 1999). NGOs rely heavily on donors as not-for-profit organisations to ensure they can run their operations. The influence of donors might pose questions about their donor's interests rather than the mission they are trying to achieve. This can create a challenge where the government that holds the most power might question its legitimacy and effectiveness when those NGOs lobby with the government (Rathod, 2015).

2.4.2. Studies exploring the role of NGOs in shaping education policy globally and in Indonesia

In the Indonesian context, NGOs are generally divided into two main categories: development and mobilisation (Juliantara, 1999). The development category refers to organisations focusing on conventional community development programs, namely irrigation, drinking water, health centres, agriculture, livestock, handicrafts, and other forms of economic development. The second category is mobilisation NGOs, which focus on the education and mobilisation of people with low incomes around issues related to ecology, human rights, the status of women, legal rights to land ownership, the rights of small traders, people experiencing homelessness and squatters in big cities (Mansour, 1998; Rizky, 2017). NGO development in Indonesia can be traced back to the late 1980s. However, the sprout of NGO activities, especially in the education sector, peaked after the collapse of the authoritarian former Indonesian president, Soeharto. As capitalism and democracy have gained prominence in Indonesia, local NGOs have increasingly gained prominence and influence within the country's public sphere (Antlöv et al., 2012).

Various types of NGOs advocate for multiple issues, including those with local, national, and international scope. In the education sector, NGOs primarily advocate for inclusive education and provide schools to those unreachable by the government, especially in less-developed or marginalised areas (Bulkley & Burch, 2011; Yemini & Sagie, 2015). In some cases, NGOs even act as primary education providers in partnership with private entities. Collaboration between public and private agencies can lead to more comprehensive and effective policy implementation (Daojiu, 2014).

In the context of education policy, it is argued that NGOs will focus more on specific policies, such as promoting inclusive education, altering curricula, and improving teacher training and recruitment, rather than overhauling the entire education system (Miller-Grandvaux et al., 2002). Their involvement is evident globally, from specific focus areas to nationwide movements. For instance, in Vietnam, Kieu and Singer (2017) several NGOs present detailed explanations of their collaborative efforts to tackle educational issues affecting high school and university students and teachers. NGOs' significant contributions to education are also observable in several African countries. Africa Educational Trust, a medium-sized

NGO, actively provides scholarships to thousands of scholars across South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, and other Southern African countries (Brophy, 2020). In Egypt, local and international NGOs advocate for early childhood education for marginalised individuals in three main areas: enhancing educational efficiency, providing support, and conducting seminars and lectures to improve teachers' capacities and strengthen school-parent relationships to emphasise the importance of education (Ahmed, 2020).

Most studies have shown how influential NGOs are in the decision-making process in a democratic society. However, there has been a gap where few studies focus on how the NGOs build their influence and campaign around the discourse and how NGOs affect it. Therefore, this study aims to fill the gap by showing how, throughout history, NGOs have influenced the discourse around inclusive education as a means of human rights and development. Many studies have demonstrated the importance of NGO influence on the decision-making process. Still, very few analyse the dynamic relationship between NGOs and the government in this process, particularly in inclusive education. Existing literature reveals that NGOs are crucial in advocating for policy reforms and advancing social inclusion within the education sector. However, studies on NGO-government collaboration targeting inclusive education in Indonesia are notably scarce. Most studies focus on broad educational reforms or address the barriers marginalised students face without dissecting the advocacy processes that lead to policy change. Moreover, while the FDA has been applied extensively in Western policy studies, its utility in analysing policy networks within Indonesia still needs to be explored. This thesis fills these gaps by using the FDA to investigate the discourse development that leads to policy changes and how NGOs can become vital actors in the process, thereby contributing new insights to the body of knowledge in the theoretical discourse.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological framework and research design used to investigate how NGOs influence inclusive education policy discourse in post-1998 Indonesia. This study is anchored in the FDA approach and grounded in a critical, post-structuralist understanding of power, knowledge, and language. Rather than focusing on the outcomes of inclusive education policy or program implementation, this research centres on how discourse is constructed, circulated, and contested by key actors, particularly NGOs within the policy arena.

The chapter begins by detailing the ontological and epistemological positioning of the research, followed by an explanation of FDA as both a theory and method, emphasising the concepts of genealogy and archaeology. It then outlines the research design, including the rationale for adopting a document-based qualitative approach, the criteria for selecting NGO and policy texts, and the data collection and organisation processes. Profiles of the three selected NGOs are presented to contextualise their discursive significance in the inclusive education landscape. Finally, the chapter reflects on the limitations and ethical considerations of the study, acknowledging both the strengths and constraints of working with discourse and documentary sources. Through this methodological framework, the study seeks to uncover the mechanisms through which inclusive education is framed, whose knowledge is legitimised or marginalised, and how NGOs operate as agents of resistance and regulation within the broader terrain of educational governance in Indonesia.

3.2. Research Approach

This research is guided by the post-structuralism paradigm. Post-structuralism is a complex theoretical framework that emerged as a reaction to structuralism, emphasising the instability of meaning and the fluidity of concepts. The post-structuralism paradigm is used in this context because it allows for a nuanced analysis of language, knowledge, and power, emphasizing the fluidity of meaning and the role of context in shaping understanding (Mason & Clarke, 2010). Post-structuralism challenges the idea that texts or social structures have fixed meanings and that society has a universal truth (Mac Naughton, 2005). It suggests that meaning is constructed

through language and is subject to change over time and across contexts. This perspective is crucial in understanding how discourses shape our perceptions of reality (Ball, 1995). This approach allows a nuanced understanding of how discourses manifest in everyday practices and interactions. According to post-structuralism, language and social interactions construct meanings in educational policies rather than fixing them. An essential component of post-structuralism is the connection between knowledge and power. Post-structuralism, precisely the Foucault approach, emphasises power's role in defining societal truth and knowledge. Several scholars put Foucauldian theory in postmodernism as it shares similar characteristics to social constructivism (Khan & MacEachen, 2021), a branch of theory under postmodernism. However, social constructivism cannot explain the power relations of actors. That being said, since FDA focuses on creating meaning for social actions, practices, and texts through a lens of power relations, it is a constructionist approach regardless of whether it is perceived as poststructuralist or postmodernist (Hodges et al., 2008; Sharp et al., 2017).

Foucault's approach falls under the qualitative research method. Qualitative research aims to comprehend and interpret the meanings, contexts, and individual or group experiences. It uses text-based data to investigate intricate social phenomena, commonly employing open-ended questions, observations, interviews, focus groups, or visual or textual information analysis (Walker et al., 2023). Using a qualitative approach is best suited to answer the research question because it seeks to understand the subjective interaction of humans (Khan & MacEachen, 2021). In this case, the interaction of various groups influences inclusive education policies. Specifically, discourse analysis uses the language presented in a corpus or body of data to draw meaning. As (Krzyżanowski & Wodak, 2009) stated, "discourse analysis provides a general framework to problem-oriented social research." Discourse analysis is used to research the use of language in the context of various social problems (i.e., issues in society that affect individuals negatively). Discourse analysis seeks to examine the functions of language, specifically the purposes for which language is employed and how meaning is constructed across diverse contexts, including social, cultural, political, and historical frameworks of the discourse (Potter, 2004). Discourse analysis is conducted through socio-political methodologies,

predominantly FDA, and language-in-use frameworks, commonly called socially situated text and talk.

In contrast to language-in-use approaches, which emphasise linguistic details like grammar and diction, socio-political approaches to discourse analysis focus on language's impact on social context and vice versa (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). The Foucauldian approach employs a historical and political analysis of documentation across time and the conceptual understanding of power for interpretative purposes. Foucault posits that once a discourse is established, it disseminates throughout society. Specifically, FDA is essential to this study because it critically interrogates how inclusive education is discursively constructed rather than treated as a fixed or universally agreed-upon concept. Unlike positivist or policy implementation approaches that tend to assume policy as a linear outcome of institutional decision-making (Ball, 1995), FDA enables this research to explore how power, knowledge, and language interact to produce dominant and marginalised meanings of inclusion

3.2.1. Foucault's genealogy and archaeological approach

The genealogical analysis explores how a specific policy evolved through discursive practices, referring to “the constitution of the subject within a historical context” (Moghtader, 2016b). This examination highlights how the discourse surrounding education policy operates as a truth regime influenced by historical power dynamics. Foucault's concept of ‘genealogy’ includes various conceptual elements, resulting in multiple practical interpretations. This concept is often linked to his archaeology of knowledge, which investigates the discursive formation of different kinds of knowledge. Foucault contends that conventional historical methods, which perceive the present as a direct continuation of the past, do not adequately account for the present. Instead, he introduces genealogy as a novel historical approach that prioritises the relationships of knowledge, power, and truth over absolute historical facts (Moghtader, 2016a; Scott et al., 2017). Genealogy analyses the events and processes that shape the present, rejecting the quest for a singular historical narrative or origins. It critiques the intricate nature of these processes to gain insights into contemporary contexts. Foucault underscores that meanings are contextually defined, setting himself apart from historians who aim to uncover universal truths of the past (Scott et al., 2017).

Foucault's genealogical method critiques assertions of truth, power dynamics, and subjugation mechanisms (Moghtader, 2016a). Genealogy examines discourses in their institutional contexts, viewing discourse as dynamic instead of static. It uncovers the historical forces and mechanisms that shape discourse. Stevenson and Cutcliffe (2006) explain that genealogical analysis evaluates the "conditions, limits, and institutional frameworks of discursive formation". The mechanisms of power differ across historical contexts, impacting discourse in various ways. Genealogy investigates these power mechanisms during different periods and within varying discursive formations. Central to genealogy, power is conceptualised not as a fixed hierarchy of states and institutions but as a networked organisation (Hall & Taylor, 1996). Power only materialises when acted upon rather than assumed in concentrated or diffuse forms. Foucault perceives power as repressive and generative (Stevenson & Cutcliffe, 2006).

Foucault argues that power relies on knowledge systems. Foucault believes that the desire for knowledge, depending on institutional backing, applies pressure and limitations to others' discourses (Mahon, 1993). Thus, power is regulated by social forces that uphold political and social orders. These norms dictate which statements are deemed true within society, typically controlled by influential groups. The genealogical analysis explores how institutional mechanisms translate knowledge into education policy, functioning as power, knowledge, and truth regimes. Knowledge in education policy emerges from power struggles, revealing how discourse is shaped by those who can speak and circulate ideas. This study analyses how development ideas are integrated into education policy, particularly inclusive education policy, reflecting the dynamics of power relations. Foucault's approach also acknowledges the evolving nature of policy development, which Ball (1991) emphasises this incremental aspect. The genealogical analysis focuses on how policies evolve, the rationality of policy production, and the formation of temporary alliances amid conflicting interests (Gale, 2001). It scrutinises changes in power relations and the roles of various actors while analysing the historical context of policy choices. Genealogy supplements Foucault's archaeology of knowledge by understanding the discursive rules shaping objects in history (Rae, 2020). This methodology combines an analysis of discourse with power dynamics, emphasising that both arise from a "dispersion system" that generates discourse and power.

Genealogy aims to uncover the historical contexts of our existence, and a key aspect of this endeavour is the archaeological examination of the rules that shape the formation of objects (Mahon, 1993). Archaeology reconstructs the knowledge structure through discursive formation (Moghtader, 2016a). Foucault used the term "archaeology" to describe his research method in the history of thought. This approach delves into the past, revealing the discursive remnants of various historical periods and reassembling them like different layers or strata, each displaying its unique structured pattern of statements and order of discourse (Garland, 2014). In contrast, genealogy investigates the rules, forces, and institutional mechanisms that enable or restrict what can be articulated within the discourse. As a method, archaeology facilitates the understanding of discourse, including discursive statements and formations (Deuel, 2022). Archaeology seeks to reveal structural order, structural differences, and the discontinuities that separate the present from the past. In contrast, genealogy aims to illustrate "descent" and "emergence," as well as how the contingencies of these processes continue to influence the present. The genealogy guided the temporal organisation and interpretation of NGO activities from the 1990s to the present, while archaeology is used to identify dominant and marginalised knowledge formations within policy and advocacy texts.

FDA is particularly well suited to this research for two reasons. First, the study is concerned with how inclusive education is discursively constructed, legitimised, and contested within Indonesian policy, a question requires attention to both language and power. FDA allows discourse analysis not merely as text but as a system of knowledge shaped by institutional, historical, and political forces. Second, the research focuses on the role of NGOs as non-state actors who influence policy narratives. FDA's genealogy and archaeology tools enable a critical tracing of how NGO discourses emerge, how they challenge dominant state narratives, and how they may become governance instruments. Alternative methods, such as thematic or policy evaluation approaches, would not adequately capture the historical and power-laden dimensions of these discursive shifts, nor the embeddedness of NGO discourse within broader regimes of truth.

3.3. Research Design

3.3.1. Applying FDA genealogy and archaeology

Through his genealogy and archaeology, Foucault's discourse analysis establishes a data collection and analysis method. This study largely relies on textual sources, which form the archive for the upcoming discussion and analysis. The research prioritises existing data, excluding on-site observations or interviews due to time and budget limitations. To conduct FDA of a large body of documents, one must first gather a comprehensive archive from a specific time along with all discursive elements that facilitate the reconstruction of the governing rules. This archive helps illuminate the processes and politics within a scholarly domain and the discourses that were selectively adopted and recontextualised to form specific knowledge. It serves to identify "the systems that define statements as events along with their conditions and domain of occurrence and objects, including their potential and usage context (Foucault, 2013). Through the archive, the researcher can identify or reveal the discursive statements. This thesis's resources include NGO reports and publications, government policy documents, academic literature, and media articles. Criteria for data selection include using the words NGO, Education, and Indonesia across several sites such as Flinders Library, Scopus, and Google Scholar. The data was then scanned for its relevance, and duplicates were removed.

I utilised both genealogy and archaeology to compile the data archive from the 1990s to 2024 for the analysis. Using genealogy, data are organised chronologically according to the NGOs' periodisation from the 1990s to 2024, divided into three distinct phases: pre-1990, early 2000s to late 2010s and 2010 onwards. I also collected historical documents, as they provide insights into the processes and politics surrounding education policy and the discursive construction of such policies. These documents will assist in exploring how power shaped specific choices and decisions regarding education policy. With this genealogical approach to data collection, I aimed to create a data corpus that analyses how policies evolve, identifies the social actors involved in education policy formulation, and examines the role of NGOs in shaping these policies. Following Foucault's archaeological framework, texts were gathered based on defined criteria. These texts elucidate how education policy, particularly

inclusive education, is formulated within the government and the influence of NGO initiatives on decision-making processes.

3.4. Scope and Delimitation

This research covers an approximate 20-year timeframe. It is based on the history of NGOs in Indonesia, which did not see much growth until the late 1990s, especially in the education sector. This focus will primarily include data from the late 1990s until 2024, such as NGO annual reports on education and their activities in their campaign. Data gathered in this report will be from the selected NGOs' press releases, reports, and activities. It is worth noting, however, that most of these data are published in Indonesian. This factor, however, is not a limiting factor in interpreting the data because, as a native speaker of the language, the researcher has a comprehensive understanding of the language. This thesis also has a geographic focus only on Indonesia, as similar research with the same approach has not been conducted in the chosen country. Focusing only on inclusive education policy discourse limits the vast dataset in the education-related sector.

3.5. Limitation

Using the FDA as a research method has several limitations that are inherent to the approach. FDA excludes social procedures that correspond directly with the speaking subject's taboos, rituals, and privileges (Hook, 2001). In the case of inclusive education discourse, this means dismissing any source that stems from the rituals and privileges of a group of people. This is a straightforward exclusion, as rituals and privileges cannot be counted towards a discourse. Genealogy primarily emphasises the power relations that shape contemporary practices. This focus can sometimes overshadow other important factors, such as social, economic, or cultural influences that also contribute to the development of these practices. Genealogy aims to trace the complex processes that shape the present, but this complexity can also be a limitation. The intricate nature of these processes may make it difficult to draw clear conclusions or apply genealogical insights straightforwardly, potentially leading to confusion or ambiguity in understanding historical developments (Garland, 2014). While this study offers profound insight into discourse formation, its text-based focus limits engagement with how policies are interpreted or contested in everyday school

or community contexts. This could be addressed in future research through ethnographic or participatory methods.

3.6. Selection of NGOs for Analysis

The NGOs chosen in this study must meet several criteria to be included, which are better suited to the purpose of the study. To examine how NGOs or the network of NGOs can influence the discourse, these organisations need to have a national presence and direct contact with policy, either by actively advocating for inclusivity or publicly making an official statement about their views on inclusive education. With this approach, this thesis successfully eliminates NGOS that are locally based or whose scope is limited to the provincial level and have little to no policy-related activities.

Hundreds of NGOs were identified in the initial screening. Three significant NGOs were chosen as the sample for this research: Himpunan Wanita Disabilitas Indonesia (HWDI) or The Indonesian Women with Disabilities Association, Sasana Inklusi dan Gerakan Advokasi Difabel (SIGAB) Indonesia or Centre for Inclusion and Disability Advocacy Movement, and Yayasan Wahana Inklusif Indonesia (YWII) or Wahana Inclusive Indonesia Foundation. Brief profiles and their activities are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Brief Overview of selected NGOs

NGO	Year Established	Key Activities	Advocacy Focus	Discursive Strategies	Policy Influence
Himpunan Wanita Penyandang Disabilitas Indonesia	1997	- Women-focused disability programs- Capacity building- Media advocacy	Gendered experiences of exclusion	Intersectional discourse (gender + disability)	Informed gender-inclusive education strategies
SIGAB (Sasana Inklusi dan Gerakan Advokasi Difabel)	2003	- Legal advocacy- Research and policy briefs- Public campaigns	Anti-discrimination and disability rights	Legal framing of inclusion; participatory discourse	Influenced national disability action plans
Wahana Inklusif	2013	- Community Outreach-	Accessibility in	Rights-based discourse;	Contributed to district-

Indonesia Foundation		Inclusive education workshops - Teacher training	mainstream schools	inclusion as a social justice imperative	level curriculum adjustments
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To answer the research question, this study examines the discursive strategies employed by three selected NGOS across different historical periods. It focuses specifically on how these organisations frame, legitimise, and advocate for inclusive education through documents such as reports, position papers, training manuals, press releases, and public campaigns. Using FDA, the study interrogates how these texts produce and circulate meanings about inclusion, disability, and the role of education and how such meanings align with or challenge dominant state narratives. Through genealogical and archaeological methods, the analysis identifies shifts in discourse over time, exploring how NGOs shape policy ideas, knowledge systems, and social norms around inclusive education. Rather than measuring direct policy outcomes, the research highlights how NGOs function as discursive actors who intervene in meaning-making processes that ultimately shape the trajectory of inclusive education reform.

Chapter 4 Findings: Discursive Strategies and Influence of NGOs in Inclusive Education Policies in Indonesia

4.1. Introduction

The discourse surrounding inclusive education in Indonesia has evolved through ongoing negotiations among various stakeholders, particularly NGOs, the government, and international bodies, in shaping policy discourse by advocating for recognising inclusive education as a fundamental right, challenging exclusionary policies, and producing knowledge that influences national and local policy frameworks. Their engagement extends beyond mere advocacy, as they also construct and legitimise alternative narratives that contest dominant state discourses on disability and education.

This chapter examines how NGOs' initiatives influence the policy discourse of inclusive education. It focuses on how they frame disability and inclusive education, their discursive strategies, and the key shifts in policy language resulting from their advocacy. Guided by FDA, this chapter deconstructs the power dynamics between NGOs and the state, highlighting how NGOs function as mediators of discourse, translating international frameworks into localised narratives while negotiating with governmental structures that often resist full inclusion. By analysing NGO discourse, this chapter contributes to understanding how non-state actors challenge, reshape, and reframe the policy landscape of inclusive education in Indonesia, revealing their successes and the ongoing structural barriers they confront. This chapter shows how NGOs play a significant and complex role in shaping the discourse of inclusive education policy in Indonesia, not only by introducing rights-based and socially inclusive language but also by challenging, negotiating with, and at times reinforcing the dominant state discourse. Through various forms of advocacy, teacher training, public engagement, and policy influence, NGOs act as discursive agents who seek to shift meanings around disability and inclusion. However, their impact is constantly mediated by institutional power structures, persistent deficit-based frameworks, and the state's control over official policy language and implementation.

4.2. Discursive Strategies Used by NGOs

4.2.1. How NGOs frame children with disability.

In developing the discourse of inclusive education, in terms of defining inclusivity, most NGOs, if not all, share a similar definition derived from both UNESCO and UNICEF. SIGAB borrows the definition of inclusive education from UNESCO (2017): "Inclusive education means that all children are in the same classroom, in the same school. This means providing real learning opportunities for groups that have traditionally been marginalised, not only children with disabilities but also minority language speakers. Inclusive education is the most effective way to ensure that all children have fair opportunities to attend school, learn, and develop the skills they need to thrive. ". UNICEF (2017) defines it as follows, "Inclusive education seeks to identify and eliminate all barriers to education. It encompasses everything from the curriculum to pedagogy and teaching." SIGAB opposes the idea of special education that the current government currently has, pointing out that it is ineffective and neglects children's right to learn and socialise with their peers (SIGAB Indonesia, 2022). It negates the very idea of inclusion itself when special education is still considered vital in disability discourse, as the advocacy is for the same rights and treatment.

Furthermore, YWII addressed the conversation about the terms used for children with disabilities that are often discussed in society, such as "special children" or "inclusive children. Besides, people often use the word "sorry" when they want to talk about someone with a disability before discussing that child. The Executive Director of the YWII, Tolhas Damanik, stated that using certain terms is sometimes intended to soften or create a more positive image of the word "disability" itself. The intention is to avoid offending any party. Tolhas has pointed out that "disability" is inherently part of a person's identity, just like other personal identifiers such as gender, race, or employment status. Therefore, there is no need to euphemise the term (Yayasan Wahana Inklusif Indonesia, 2019). Moreover, introducing new terminology such as "inclusive children" is unnecessary, especially since it does not even exist in the Indonesian Dictionary. Additionally, Tolhas emphasised that the improper use of terminology could lead to labelling people with disabilities. Hence, using the correct term, such as "persons with disabilities," is more appropriate and recommended (Yayasan Wahana Inklusif Indonesia, 2019). This is supported by several scholars

who highlight that labelling children with terms other than children with disability will negatively affect children's social development (Green, 2003; Yolanda & Setyono, 2023)

4.2.2. Key discursive shifts in policy documents.

One of the prominent discourses in the public sphere is how the term disability is used, whether formally within the government and officials or informally in everyday conversation. The evolution of disability-related terminology in Indonesia is closely linked to the understanding and articulation of disability in government policies and by disability movements. The shifts in the language can be tracked through the evolution of policy documents, especially education regulations. Before 1997, the Indonesian government had not had any regulation regarding students with disability, let alone inclusive schools. The previous regulations, such as Law Number 4 in 1950 and Law Number 2 in 1989, did not mention anything about service to people with disability (Anisa Rahma et al., 2023). It only came into discussion upon the enactment of Law No. 4 of 1997 on people with disability. Throughout the older and new eras, from 1945 to pre-1998, the state employed various terminology to denote individuals with disabilities. These encompassed *penyandang cacat* (individuals with disabilities), *penderita cacat* (persons afflicted by disabilities), *bercacat* (defective individuals), *kekurangan jasmani dan rokhani* (physically and mentally impaired), and *penyandang kelainan* (individuals with abnormalities) (Suharto et al., 2016).

Local NGOs have set a clear definition of disability, which differs from the English definition. The term "difabel" is derived from the English word "diffable," an acronym for "differently able people," meaning individuals who are capable in different ways. The term "*difabel*" is used as a counter to "*penyandang cacat*" (persons with disabilities) and the negative connotations associated with it (Tsaputra, 2019). According to SIGAB Indonesia (2024b), disability is viewed as a reality that arises due to the failure of the environment, government, and society, as well as social structures and systems in responding to the realities of disability. For instance, a person without both legs can only be mobile using a wheelchair and in an environment without stairs, which differs from most people who move around by walking. However, living in an environment that does not accommodate this reality forces the person to be confined due to the lack of access to wheelchairs, the presence of stairs in buildings, and the

absence of disability-friendly transportation. In such a situation, the individual is disabled by their environment.

The Indonesian government eventually addressed the debate over finding a replacement for the term “*penyandang cacat*” (people with defects) while implementing and translating the UNCRPD into Indonesian for ratification. In 2009, the Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) held a seminar at MoSA’s Physical Disability Rehabilitation Centre in Cibinong, West Java. The event gathered representatives from disabled people’s organisations (DPOs), primarily based in Java to discuss alternative terminology for disability in Indonesian (Tarsidi & Somad, 2009). Nine terms were proposed, with the three most recommended being *difabel*, *orang berkebutuhan khusus* (people with special needs), and *penyandang ketunaan* (people with impairments). However, participants could not agree on a single preferred term to replace *penyandang cacat* for the UNCRPD law. Due to this, MoSA and the Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights held a separate meeting in Bandung in March 2010, where it was ultimately decided that *penyandang disabilitas* (people with disabilities) would be used in the law for UNCRPD ratification (Pusat Perkumpulan Penyandang Disabilitas Indonesia, 2010). Despite the continued effort to mainstream the word “*difabel*” into the inclusive education discourse in Indonesia, the policy language of the word has yet to be applied. Most, if not all, the policy documents found in the analysis still use the term “*Penyandang Disabilitas*” rather than the word “*Difabel*”. This is also evident in the study done by Maftuhin (2016) that shows the use of the word people with a disability, although increased, is still relatively low compared to the phrase “people with defect”.

NGOs in Indonesia also initiated the debate on how disability is viewed within academic and disability activity discourse, which led to the discourse shift within the government. NGOs in Indonesia, such as *Persatuan Penyandang Disabilitas Indonesia* (PPDI)/ Indonesian Association of People with Disabilities, HWDI, SIGAB, and some other NGOs, which formed a network of NGO called the National Disability Movement that led the discourse on the social model versus the competing discourse of the medical model, which significantly influences political views in the disability discourse (Millati, 2016; Yulianto, 2011). The ratification of the CRPD prompted Indonesians with disabilities and the National Commission on Human Rights to oppose

the implementation of the Handicapped Act, which framed disability as a medical issue, and to initiate a campaign asserting that this perspective was socially constructed and reinforced by the Act (Robinson & Fisher, 2023). In the previous regulation, Law No. 4 Year 1997 relied heavily on the medical model that saw people with disability as mere defects and focused on what was wrong with the person rather than what they could do as functional human beings in society. In contrast, the social model sees disabled humans as they are, just different, like gender or race (Australian Federation of Disability Organisations, n.d.). The enactment of Law Number 8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities is seen as the government's effort to apply the social model approach instead of the medical model approach in its predecessor regulation. This enactment cannot be separated from NGOs' advocacy and outreach efforts in engaging with the government, bringing forward movement ideas rooted in the social model perspective (Dibley, 2019; Millati, 2016).

There is a shift from a charity-based approach to a rights-based approach to the rights of people with disabilities, as outlined in the CRPD convention. Working together, the government and NGOs aim to shift this perspective (Himpunan Wanita Disabilitas Indonesia, 2021b). A charity-based approach involves giving resources from the wealthy to the poor, creating a power imbalance where donors decide how to meet recipients' needs. While charity organisations have historically addressed service gaps, this approach is criticised for masking systemic issues and limiting beneficiaries' decision-making power (Katsui, 2009). Under the charity-based approach, disability issues were solely the responsibility of the Social Affairs Ministry. The rights-based approach recognises each person's intrinsic value, focusing on identifying their strengths and nurturing their talents for the individual and society (Schulmann et al., 2017). People with disabilities are considered integral to society, so their rights are addressed across multiple ministries and agencies. This is further supported by Peters (2007) findings that argue that using a rights-based approach will help shift the way society sees people with disability from a deficiency to a well-functioning citizen.

4.3. NGO Influence on Policy Discourse

4.3.1. Advocacy & Policy Engagement

One of the most notable efforts in constructing the discourse in inclusive education is the advocacy and policy engagement by NGOs and their networks. HWDI, with its NGO network comprising 11 other NGOs in the disability movement, provided a policy brief following the Indonesian government's report on implementing the newly ratified convention (Himpunan Wanita Disabilitas Indonesia, 2021c). The NGOs in the network individually submit a report to the CRPD committee that contains the List of Issues (LoI), pointing out what the government has done successfully in implementing the convention and, most notably, what the government has failed to do in almost 10 years after the ratification. The joint effort of NGO networks led to more robust advocacy, pushing the Indonesian government to harmonise the national legislation, including regional governments, in which the HWDI spokesperson, in her statement, noted that the regional government has little to no understanding of the concept of disability (Antara News, 2022). In the same statement, HWDI also emphasises the need for change in the regional government's perspective from charity-based to rights-based. This is crucial as it ignites the question of whether the regional government comprehends the disability issue well and how they could formulate policies on that issue. Furthermore, the effort also sees the more robust implementation of the convention by calling out the hesitancy of the Indonesian government in acknowledging the rights of people with disability by constantly using a medical-based approach and not revoking policies that discriminate against people with disabilities (Himpunan Wanita Disabilitas Indonesia, 2021c).

After CRPD ratification, several follow-up regulations at both national and regional levels have been established, although challenges persist. Acting as mediators of power, NGOs strive to translate global inclusive education frameworks into localised discourse by consistently advocating to the regional government, influencing how policy is interpreted at the implementation level in provincial and city contexts. All three NGOs demonstrate a consistent and robust approach in working with the regional government to shape the discourse and encourage the government to implement national law. HWDI has conducted numerous workshops with the regional government to discuss policy implementation, specifically focusing on women

with disabilities and how the government should protect these most vulnerable groups. Key advocacy efforts include the Bengkulu Province workshop (2024b) with local stakeholders, the Association of Indonesian Mayors Symposium (2019), and the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection workshop (2024a). Specifically in Bengkulu Province, HWDI and its network's effort might have sparked the initiation of the legislation in the regional parliament held in December 2024, which is expected to be legally administered into law by early 2025 (SinarFakta.Com, 2024).

Convincing the regional government to enact a specific regulation in the disability sector is not a tranquil undertaking. The regional government controls the discourse by deciding which policies should be prioritised for discussion in the regional parliament and policy agendas, where disability issues are considered less urgent than economic or other matters deemed more important (SIGAB Indonesia, 2024a). This control limits the ability of NGOs to influence policy decisions and engage in discussions that affect the community. By sidelining disability issues, the government diminishes the diversity of perspectives in public debates, which are essential for a healthy democratic process. Ultimately, the suppression of public debates in policy discussions leads to a narrow interpretation of social issues and hinders the region's overall development.

However, despite the challenges, several regulations have been enacted, partly advocated and guided by the advocacy activity of NGOs such as SIGAB Indonesia (SIGAB Indonesia, 2022) and HWDI. One of the most notable regulations is by the Province of Jakarta through the Regional Regulation of the Special Capital Region of Jakarta Province Number 10 of 2011 concerning the Protection of Persons with Disabilities. This regulation, though not effectively implemented (Angelica, 2021), is among the first in the nation. Of Indonesia's 38 provinces, 15 have at least one regulation for disability rights. Despite increased awareness, this number is still low, especially at the regency/city level, with only 15 out of 514 regencies and cities having regulations for the rights of people with disabilities (Australia Indonesia Disability Research and Advocacy Network, 2022).

SIGAB and HWDI developed a guide for smaller NGOs in advocating for inclusive education to construct more profound and more rigorous policy discussions for inclusiveness nationally. Guides and trainings provide crucial resources for

Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPD) by providing insights into how they can engage in the planning processes to ensure that the needs of persons with disabilities are adequately represented and addressed in regional development initiatives (SIGAB Indonesia, 2024c). They argued that the changes in national and regional can only be done together with other smaller NGOS with a smaller scope, such as at the provincial or city level (SIGAB Indonesia, 2022). Additionally, HWDI also produces several policy briefs and reports submitted to the international organisations within their network to help push the Indonesian government for its efforts to create a more inclusive policy (Himpunan Wanita Disabilitas Indonesia, 2021a, 2021c, 2023).

4.3.2. Research & Knowledge Production

Knowledge production in inclusive policies in disability policy studies is called Emancipatory Disability Research (ERD). ERD empowers individuals with disabilities and their organisations to generate knowledge about their own experiences and the various obstacles (social, economic, and cultural) that hinder their full and effective participation in society (Robinson & Fisher, 2023). ERD has a clear link and is coherent with the CRPD; in fact, it is highly suggested. This approach guides all NGOs in this research to be actively researched to have strong data to construct meaning and shape discourse. Knowledge production in inclusive education revolves around pedagogy, curriculum, and teachers' approaches and attitudes (Peters, 2007; Saha, 2024). Pedagogy and curriculum affect how discourse is developed within a school environment while governing how teachers conceptualise their role in implementing inclusion. The curriculum influences teachers' perceptions of their roles, which must be restructured to provide comprehensive training on inclusion principles (Laskar, 2017). A supportive educational environment, characterised by effective pedagogy and collaboration, is essential for successfully implementing inclusive school practices (Dapudong, 2014).

YWII built its curriculum and learning models for training and teaching (Yayasan Wahana Inklusif Indonesia, n.d.-b). This NGO-produced training material consistently frames inclusive education as a pedagogical standard rather than a specialised intervention. Looking at the curriculum developed, every single child in the care of YWII will receive an Individual Learning Program (ILP) designed based on the

assessment results and evaluated every three months. The development of the ILP can be adjusted to align with the school's needs (Yayasan Wahana Inklusif Indonesia, n.d.-b). The approach taken by YWII mimics the South Australian curriculum development for children with disabilities, which is personalised to meet students' needs and is adjustable (Department for Education, 2024). Despite being effective, the curriculum development does not have a standard reference, and administration or documents are absent in the form of books or on websites and other media (Utami, 2023).

Despite the government's institutionalisation of inclusion through national curricula, a pragmatic effort has yet to be seen from the regional government to provide more teacher training, as it is a critical factor in reinforcing inclusive education (Pit-ten Cate et al., 2018). NGOs have constantly argued that teacher training is vital in shaping inclusive education discourse, where teachers are positioned as key agents of change (Yayasan Wahana Inklusif Indonesia, n.d.-a), yet professional development programmes are rare (Paramitha, 2017). Responding to the government's incapability to provide the requirements for inclusive education, YWII offers extensive training for teachers working in inclusive schools (Yayasan Wahana Inklusif Indonesia, n.d.-a). Through these extensive teacher training programmes, NGOs engage in governmentality by shaping pedagogical norms.

4.3.3. Media & Public Awareness

Media plays a significant role in shaping public discourse, arguably even more so when examining social constructions, particularly in the context of acceptance discourse. NGOs use media as a platform to create an inclusive education discourse that challenges the dominant state narrative, which often frames inclusion as an economic or logistical burden rather than as a fundamental right (Arika, 2020). Through press releases, social media campaigns, and advocacy films, NGOs aim to shift public perception and reinforce a rights-based understanding of disability in education. They produce engaging social media campaigns to normalise inclusive education discourse across various platforms. Content may include videos, testimonials, and infographics that reframe disability not as an impairment but as a social construct. This is evident in several social media posts, such as YWII's Instagram infographics that challenge the euphemisms surrounding what children with

disabilities can or cannot do, emphasising that these children are just like any other kids who need to play, learn, and socialise (Yayasan Wahana Inklusif Indonesia, 2024b). YWII's and SIGAB's online campaign has also been using personal stories of children with disabilities attending mainstream school (SIGAB Indonesia, 2024d), and even has international achievements (Yayasan Wahana Inklusif Indonesia, 2024a). This narrative, which is framed around dignity, normalcy, and participation, rejected deficit-based portrayals and positioned inclusion as a public right rather than institutional charity. This type of storytelling aligns with the rights-based discourse found in Law No. 8 of 2016, showing how media campaigns shift public perception and reinforce the legitimacy of inclusive frameworks within official documents.

Utilising traditional media such as newspapers, television, and press releases, NGOs like SIGAB strive to highlight the importance of the rights of individuals with disabilities while framing narratives about their experiences with barriers and discrimination in accessing basic needs like education (Baktora, 2024). SIGAB director stated in the news media that even when students with disabilities have access to education, the lack of proper support from their environment makes it very challenging for them to succeed in learning (Tempo, 2020). Having open criticism in front of the media, NGOs try to pressure policymakers by exposing real-life discrimination cases, as they remain structurally embedded in society. Similarly, the head of the disability network voiced his opinion directly in front of the media for mainstreaming disability rights and for better implementation of Law Number 8 of 2016 regarding disability rights (Sekretariat Presiden, 2024). Using media as a way for the NGO to shape the discourse that led to a policy change is a strategic move, as shown in Barker (2005) that argues that media platforms are increasingly part of the “policy assemblage” process. Media is where discourse travels between NGOs, the public, and policymakers. In Indonesia, these campaigns have served to both critique state inertia and provide discursive materials that are later echoed in inclusive education practices.

4.4. Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how NGOs actively shape the discourse on inclusive education in Indonesia through advocacy, knowledge production, media engagement, and policy negotiations. Using FDA, the findings reveal that NGOs function as key discursive actors, challenging dominant state narratives and promoting

a rights-based approach to inclusive education. Their efforts have contributed to shifting policy language, reframing disability terminology, and introducing alternative perspectives that contest the state's traditionally medicalised and needs-based framework of disability.

Through advocacy and policy engagement, NGOs have played a pivotal role in ratifying international agreements, developing regional regulations, and creating guidelines that influence government decision-making at both national and local levels. Despite resistance from state institutions, NGOs continue to mediate power relations by translating global inclusion frameworks into localised policy discourses, ensuring that inclusive education remains central to political and legal discussions.

NGOs also engage in knowledge production, particularly through Emancipatory Disability Research (ERD), which empowers people with disabilities to contribute to policymaking. This approach strengthens the legitimacy of inclusive education by positioning it as a pedagogical standard rather than a specialised intervention. Teacher training programs, curriculum development, and educational resources produced by NGOs reinforce the discourse of inclusion as a fundamental educational right.

Furthermore, media and public awareness campaigns serve as powerful tools for NGOs to contest dominant narratives and mainstream the discourse of inclusive education. By leveraging social media, press releases, and public advocacy, NGOs reframe disability as a social construct rather than an individual impairment, thus challenging deficit-based representations. However, these efforts are often constrained by government-controlled narratives and the persistence of charity-based rhetoric in public discourse, highlighting ongoing discursive struggles in shaping policy.

Despite the progress made, challenges remain. Government resistance, bureaucratic inertia, and inconsistencies in policy implementation hinder the full adoption of inclusive education. NGOs continue to face barriers in translating discourse into practice, particularly at the regional level, where local governments may lack the commitment or resources to enforce inclusive policies. These tensions reflect broader power struggles in discourse production, where the state maintains control

over official narratives while NGOs attempt to introduce alternative framings of inclusion.

In conclusion, this chapter highlights how NGOs operate as discursive agents that contest, negotiate, and influence inclusive education policy discourse in Indonesia. Their success in shifting policy language and public perceptions signifies the importance of non-state actors in shaping education reform. However, the persistence of structural barriers, competing discourses, and policy implementation gaps suggest that the struggle for inclusive education remains an ongoing site of contestation. The next chapter will further examine these findings through a deeper theoretical lens, linking the discursive transformations observed to broader themes of power, knowledge, and governmentality within inclusive education policy discourse.

Chapter 5 Interpreting the Findings: A Foucauldian Analysis of Inclusive Education Policy Discourse

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents a critical theoretical analysis of the findings outlined in the previous chapter by applying FDA, with a particular focus on genealogy, archaeology, and governmentality. The aim is to examine how inclusive education policy discourse in Indonesia has been shaped, contested, and layered over time, particularly through the interplay between the state and NGOs.

Drawing on Foucault's notion of genealogy, this chapter explores the historical emergence and transformation of disability discourse, tracing how it shifted from a predominantly medical and charity-based model to a more rights-based, inclusive framework. This historical tracing captures the discontinuities, ruptures, and shifts in power relations that inform current policy. Archaeological analysis, meanwhile, is employed to uncover the discursive structures and conditions that determine what can be said, by whom, and under what authority concerning inclusive education. It exposes the silences, exclusions, and enduring assumptions that continue to shape the field.

This discussion also incorporates Foucault's concept of governmentality to interrogate how NGOs function as agents of resistance and as regulators of conduct through practices such as teacher training, curriculum development, and policy advocacy. The chapter thus analyses NGOs as counter-discursive actors and contributors to the subtle governance of inclusive education. By applying these interrelated theoretical tools, this chapter provides a deeper understanding of how power, knowledge, and discourse interact within the inclusive education policy arena, particularly within the Indonesian context. It moves beyond a descriptive account of NGO influence and critically examines how discourses are produced, legitimised, maintained, or contested. This thesis argues that NGOs in post-1998 Indonesia did not primarily function as oppositional forces to the state but rather as discursive actors that both supported and shaped the implementation of inclusive education policy.

5.2. Genealogy and archaeology of inclusive education discourse in Indonesia

Genealogy and archaeological analysis, which have been thoroughly explained in the previous chapters, are needed to analyse NGOs as agents in creating and developing the discourse. Archaeological analysis is used to see how policy evolved, whereas genealogical interpretation involves comparing policy discourses from the pre-1990s, the rise of NGOs in the 1990s-2000s, and the current policies from the 2010s to the present. Using genealogy and archaeology can catch the dynamic the government and NGOs have been shaping these discourses around inclusivity. The use of genealogy is also used by King et al. (2022) in their research attempting to unfold how religious educational discourse shifts in the education policy discourse in the US.

The objective is to analyse shifts in the exercise of political power across different periods or to identify the disjuncture or discontinuity in discourse. The discontinuity in discourse is crucial to examine how it evolved during the bracketed period and its impact on subsequent discursive formations. Foucault emphasises this point:

...discontinuity is one of those great accidents that create cracks not only in the geology of history but also the simple fact of the statement: it emerges in its historical irruption; what we try to examine is the incision that it makes, that irreducible—and very often tiny—emergence (Foucault, 1972, as cited in Bo, 2017)

The discontinuity in the discourse offers a clearer understanding of the state's and NGOs' discourse patterns in formulating and implementing inclusive education policy. The same genealogy interpretation explores the estrangements that can lead to the causes and consequences of disability-related policy choices.

During Soeharto's reign until the late 1990s, the government held most of the power, with little to no power held by third parties, NGOs included. The government had all the power to frame inclusive education, with the primary focus on framing disability as the medical and charity model focusing on segregation rather than inclusion. Government policies such as Law No.12 of 1954, Law Number 6 of 1974, Law Number 14 of 1992, Law 15 of 1992, and Law No. 4 of 1997 (Presiden Republik

Indonesia, 1954, 1974, 1992, 1997), all positioned children with disabilities as “objects of care” and rather have negative connotations of not being able to sustain themselves and helpless part of the society. The medical model was also perpetuated by the establishment of special education that further separated children with disabilities from their peers.

The emergence of local and international NGOs in the late 1990s to early 2010s, as analysed in the previous chapter, such as SIGAB Indonesia, YWIL, and HWDI, helped to shift to a new discourse of seeing disability. The discourse of the medical model was changed to a social model-led and initiated by both local and international NGOs and their networks. The initiatives emphasise the provision of better accessibility, rights fulfilment and the empowerment of people with disability. This shift in seeing disability marks the emergence of the discourse to the broader public, creating a much more significant impact. NGOs initiated various initiatives across all sectors, from policy advocacy to grassroots movements, to introduce the new discourse of inclusiveness. This is all to change the long-standing perpetuated use of the language and negative perception of people with disability. The initiatives resulted in a shift in the use of language and perception of people with disability both in the government and the public sphere. The same study by Peters (2007) further supports how language can carry power and shape perceptions of disability. Foucault’s idea of power (Rae, 2020) suggests that the way disability is discussed in policies influences how society views individuals with disabilities. For example, if policies frame disability as a problem, it can lead to negative societal attitudes and exclusion.

In recent years, from the 2010s onwards, NGOs have led many more successful attempts to advocate for the government to recognise the importance of inclusivity in education. There have been some follow-up regulations derived from the UNCRPD in 2011. One of the first regulations is Law No. 19 of 2011 regarding ratifying the UNCRPD into the Indonesian legal system. There is also Law No.8 of 2016 on Persons with Disabilities that underlines the definition of disability and the term used and highlights all the rights of people with disability. This ratification of UNCRPD and Law No. 8 of 2016 represents a discursive shift and is seen as a successful attempt. However, despite NGOs promoting the term “*difabel*,” policy documents still favour

“penyandang disabilitas,” reflecting the institutionalised power of state discourse over NGO counter-discourses (Petersen, 2015). This tension reflects the operation of a Foucauldian ‘regime of truth’ in which the state maintains epistemic authority by determining which terms are admissible in official policy discourse (Deuel, 2022). Although NGOs contest this truth by advancing alternative vocabularies, their discourses remain peripheral in formal education frameworks.

Additionally, policies and laws are written mainly by experts and institutions, rarely involving the primary victims of the system, which are disabled individuals. This phenomenon highlights whose knowledge truly matters. Foucault’s archaeology analysis (Moghtader, 2016a) emphasises this by examining whose voices are excluded or included in the discourse production. Indeed, NGOs play crucial roles in the knowledge production of the discourse, but their contributions are often overlooked. Archaeologically, this exclusion reveals the discursive rules that govern who may participate in knowledge production. The structural absence of disabled voices in policy formation is not accidental but produced through institutional norms that privilege expert knowledge and bureaucratic authority.

While inclusive education is recognised, remnants of older exclusionary discourses persist as it has not been normalised nationwide. The remnants of the medical model persist in government policies and practices, showing the tension between historical discourses and new emerging narratives. Many instances in this thesis have demonstrated in which regional governments appear hesitant to impose more inclusive laws for people with disability. Moreover, the government also co-opts NGO discourse, adopting inclusion rhetoric without fully transforming the system by seeing inclusive education as an alternative rather than the norm. The persistence of segregated Special Schools (SLBs) alongside inclusive education reforms highlights a discursive contradiction. While NGOs have successfully promoted rights-based inclusion, the state maintains past structures of segregation. The genealogical analysis highlights these phenomena as a discursive rupture (Baumgarten & Ullrich, 2016) with the fall of the New Order and the rise of NGO influence, the coexistence of inclusive policy with segregated special education structures illustrates Foucault’s notion of ‘layered discourse’ (Scott et al., 2017), where power relations are reconfigured but not eliminated. These findings show how past ideologies and

regulations influence present education discussions and policies. These findings are also supported by King et al. (2022) who argue that despite a shift in discourse, historical influence can still linger in present practices and regulations.

5.3. Governmentality: NGOs as Disciplinary and Regulatory Actors

When applying the concept of governmentality to NGO efforts in inclusive policy initiatives, we are looking at how NGOs can regulate behaviour and enforce power (Scott et al., 2017). In the previous chapter, it was clear how NGOs provide teacher training as a substitute for the state. NGOs position themselves as the disciplinary and regulatory actors that are supposed to be held by the government. This NGO's act is seen as how they try to govern society and shape social practices (Mascia, 2020), especially for the teachers at the forefront of inclusive education. These initiatives by NGOs also contribute to shaping the concept of inclusivity in knowledge production. Through continuous mentoring, teachers can impart knowledge not only to students but also to parents. NGOs actively resist the state by influencing norms and classroom behaviour rather than merely opposing it. They produce new subjectivities, portraying teachers as inclusive agents while reinforcing broader power dynamics (Blackman et al., 2008). Using Foucault's governmentality concept, Brigg (2001) also shows how societal shifts shift because of the knowledge and power that affect the discourse of economic issues. However, although NGO-run teacher training adopts UNESCO's inclusive education framework, the overall education system is still governed by the government, reinforcing standardised learning norms and limiting the true inclusion NGOs are trying to achieve.

It might question whether NGO initiatives train teachers and advocate policy as they try to reinforce state power, which could either benefit or harm them (Mayhew, 2005). On the one hand, NGO initiatives can act as a catalyst to spark and focus debate on what is essential in the discussion of inclusive education. On the other hand, those initiatives can be seen as a threat to government legitimacy in providing services. However, they have worked together with the government, side by side, in most of their initiatives. This thesis argues that NGOs in post-1998 Indonesia did not primarily function as oppositional forces to the state but rather as discursive actors that both supported and shaped the implementation of inclusive education policy.

Through Foucauldian lenses, NGOs are understood as agents of resistance and disciplinary power where they produce alternative discourses, regulate inclusive practices through training and advocacy, and help legitimise state efforts to build an inclusive society. Rather than undermining state legitimacy, NGOs operate within and alongside state discourse, acting as both challengers and collaborators in governing inclusion. As Sending and Neumann (2006), this relationship is called governmental rationality, where political power operates *through* rather than *on* civil society.

5.4. Theoretical Contribution and Implications

The findings of this study reinforce and expand key insights from FDA by demonstrating how discourse is both a site of struggle and a mechanism of governance. In line with Foucault's concepts of genealogy, archaeology, and governmentality, the research shows that inclusive education in Indonesia is not merely a technical or administrative issue but a contested terrain shaped by historically produced narratives, institutional power, and the discursive practices of both state and non-state actors.

The NGOs examined in this study do not merely resist state narratives or advocate for inclusion as external critics. Instead, they function as discursive actors who engage in knowledge production by defining what inclusive education is, how it should be implemented, and whom it is meant to serve. They serve as agents of resistance and discipline, challenging exclusionary framings while participating in behavioural regulation through teacher training, advocacy tools, and public campaigns. This dynamic affirms Foucault's insight that power is repressive and productive (Sending & Neumann, 2006), and that those outside the state apparatus can engage in governing through discourse.

This study also contributes to the broader field of inclusive education scholarship, particularly in Indonesia and the Global South, by shifting the focus from barriers to implementation to the discursive formation of inclusion itself. It reveals that policies are not neutral reflections of societal needs but the outcome of power-laden negotiations over meaning and legitimacy. It offers an alternative to implementation-focused studies by highlighting how language, representation, and knowledge-making shape the scope and substance of inclusive education reform.

Furthermore, the findings complicate the conventional binary of NGOs as either watchdogs or service providers. Instead, NGOs emerge as ambivalent actors who both legitimise and subtly reshape state agendas; such a finding is linear to the finding of Kim (2023) and Kudejira (2023). This challenges linear models of policy influence and opens new ways of understanding how civil society participates in governing education, not only through action but through discourse. As such, this study contributes a critical, theory-driven perspective to the growing literature on inclusive education and civil society engagement in the Global South.

Thesis Conclusion

The study revealed a significant discursive shift in how disability and inclusive education have been framed over time. Before the late 1990s, the Indonesian government held near-total control over the construction of education discourse, grounded firmly in medical and charity-based models. Policies and legal frameworks from the Suharto era positioned individuals with disabilities as passive recipients of state care and reinforced segregation through the expansion of Special Schools (SLBs).

However, new discourses emerged with the rise of local and international NGOs in the post-1998 era. These NGOs promoted a rights-based and social model of disability, framing inclusive education as a matter of equality and legal obligation rather than benevolence. Through their advocacy, knowledge production, and engagement with global frameworks like the UNCRPD, NGOs contributed to the ratification of Law No. 19/2011 and Law No. 8/2016, which marked turning points in Indonesia's inclusive education landscape. Nevertheless, this shift remains partially contested as older discourses continue to linger within policy and practice.

While inclusive education discourse has evolved, deep discursive structures and institutionalised knowledge continue to shape what is possible within policy. The analysis found that despite NGOs promoting inclusive terminology such as *difabel*, government policy favours deficit-framing terms like *penyandang disabilitas*, reflecting the state's enduring authority over legitimate discourse. Moreover, the study uncovered structural silences within policymaking processes. While NGOs play a visible role in advocacy and reform, disabled individuals themselves are often excluded from participating in discourse production. Their lived experiences are filtered through institutional and expert frameworks, reinforcing a hierarchy of knowledge that privileges professional expertise over community voice.

This discursive exclusion illustrates Foucault's (Scott et al., 2017) notion of archaeological layering, where official discourse is shaped not only by what is said but by what is left unsaid. The persistence of segregated systems, such as SLBs, alongside inclusive reforms further highlights these contradictions. The findings also showed that NGOs operate not only as advocates of change but as governing agents who help shape behaviours and institutional norms. NGOs influence how inclusive

education is interpreted and enacted locally through initiatives such as teacher training, curriculum development, and policy drafting. In this way, NGOs participate in creating new subjectivities, helping to regulate society through the production of inclusive knowledge and the reshaping of pedagogical practice. However, this dual role is complex. While NGOs challenge state narratives, they also risk reinforcing state-defined boundaries by working within existing systems. Their influence, though substantial, is shaped by the terms of engagement set by the state, revealing a tension between resistance and complicity. This dynamic reflects Foucault's concept of governmental rationality, in which civil society actors become part of the apparatus of governance rather than external challengers.

By applying a post-structuralist lens to the role of NGOs in inclusive education policy discourse, this study highlights that discourse is not a passive reflection of policy but an active terrain where power and knowledge intersect. The findings contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how inclusive education is framed in Indonesia, demonstrating that NGOs do not simply advocate or implement policy, instead they participate in constructing the very discourses that define what inclusion means, who belongs, and how educational equity is imagined. This challenges simplistic accounts of policy development and affirms the importance of discourse analysis in uncovering the unseen forces shaping education reform

Implications and Recommendations

This findings of this thesis can be used beyond research area. For the policymakers, this thesis suggest that policymakers must move beyond symbolic commitments to inclusive education by addressing foundational policy elements. This entails revising legal language to adopt a social, rights-based model of disability, replacing deficit-oriented terminology with empowering alternatives. Ensuring coherence between national frameworks and decentralised regulations at provincial and district levels is crucial for enforceability. Moreover, embedding participatory discourse by involving disabled individuals and grassroots organisations throughout policy design and review processes can democratise policymaking and challenge existing exclusions.

This study opens avenues for further inquiry, such as exploring regional variations in inclusive education discourse across Indonesia's diverse socio-political

landscapes to understand alignments or divergences from national narratives. Investigating the lived experiences of disabled students, parents, and educators can provide insights into how inclusive education policies are interpreted and enacted at the school level.

Limitations of the Study

The study focused on a small sample of three NGOs. While these organisations were selected based on their visibility, experience, and contributions to inclusive education discourse, they do not represent the full diversity of Indonesia's NGO landscape. Other organisations, primarily local or grassroots NGOs, may offer different discursive strategies or priorities not captured in this research. Additionally, rather than directly observing inclusive education, the research prioritised discourse analysis, such as policy texts, advocacy documents, training materials, and public communication. As a result, the study does not address how policies are implemented in classrooms or how they affect the lived experiences of teachers and students. A practice-oriented ethnographic study could complement this analysis. The thesis also focuses on NGO discourse and its interaction with official state texts but does not include interviews or perspectives from government officials. Including state voices might have added insight into how NGOs are perceived by institutional actors and how discursive negotiations are managed from the inside.

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“I acknowledge the use of ChatGPT in the brainstorming of this assignment using the following prompt: How can I structured my thesis to provide a comprehensive explanation on the topic of NGOs inclusive education discourse? The output was evaluated and integrated with findings from the literature