education sciences

MDPI

Article

An Inclusive Early Childhood Education Setting according to Practitioners' Experiences in Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Evie Jusni [1], Elina Fonsén [1] and Raisa Ahtiainen [2,*]

[1] Department of Education, Institute of Educational Leadership, University of Jyväskylä, 40014 Jyväskylä, Finland; evie.y.jusni@jyu.fi (E.J.); elina.k.fonsen@jyu.fi (E.F.)
[2] Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Helsinki, 00014 Helsinki, Finland
* Correspondence: raisa.ahtiainen@helsinki.fi

Abstract: In Indonesia, the definition of inclusive education tends to be a narrow one. Even though the goal of the national policy on inclusive education underlines non-discrimination for all learners, early childhood education (ECE) practices still do not accommodate every child's needs. This study focuses on inclusive practices in ECE by exploring the provision of inclusive ECE in Yogyakarta, one of the big cities in Indonesia, where ECE inclusive pedagogy has been implemented for more than five years. By exploring ECE practitioners' experiences, this study aims to discuss the (mis)alignments between inclusive education policy and practices. The data sources are two-fold. First, we conducted online interviews with ECE manager and teachers (N = 5). The second form of data comprised ECE teachers' online discussions on the topic of inclusion. The data collected were analysed using a thematic analysis method. The results indicate that distributed leadership, an organisational culture that respects diversity, and inclusive ECE pedagogy are the main aspects that need to be developed to enable inclusive ECE.

Keywords: inclusion; education; inclusive education; early childhood education; early childhood education in Indonesia

Citation: Jusni, E.; Fonsén, E.; Ahtiainen, R. An Inclusive Early Childhood Education Setting according to Practitioners' Experiences in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. *Educ. Sci.* **2023**, *13*, 1043. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13101043

Academic Editor: James Albright

Received: 10 August 2023
Revised: 16 September 2023
Accepted: 9 October 2023
Published: 17 October 2023

1. Introduction

Inclusive education has been a great challenge for the Indonesian educational system. Inclusion has brought a new educational paradigm to a country where special education has been implemented for decades and is regulated in the National Education System policy. Aditomo [1] and Sebba and Ainscow [2] highlight that in adopting the notion of inclusive education, it should correspond with both the existing educational system and the concept of inclusion itself. In Indonesia, amid the alteration in these educational systems, the definition of inclusive education has come to constitute a narrow concept. Mulyadi noted [3] that the national policy on inclusive education highlights respect for diversity and non-discrimination among all learners, but the practices are still fragmented regarding disabled and non-disabled children. Furthermore, the education system does not yet accommodate all groups of vulnerable and disadvantaged children in terms of gender, demographics, religion, socio-economic status, and children with high intelligence and special talents. Currently, the gaps in policy implementation are influenced by the segregation culture in society, which contributes to discriminatory attitudes toward children with special educational needs (SEN) when they are included in a mainstream educational setting [4].

Historically, the Indonesian founding father Ki Hajar Dewantara founded a preschool program in 1922 after returning from exile in the Netherlands [5]. Furthermore, Islamic organisations also have a long tradition of establishing Islamic kindergartens, named Raudhatul Athfal, which form part of the country's education system [6]. However, beyond this, the development of early childhood education (ECE) before the 2000s was not well documented. In 2012, the Indonesian government created the Directorate of Early

Childhood Education (DECE) and, in 2003, the government developed three forms of ECE organisations in Indonesia: formal ECE, which includes kindergartens and Islamic kindergartens as the focus of ECE services for children aged four to six years old; non-formal ECE, consisting of, e.g., private playgroups for children aged two to four years old and day care for children aged zero to six years old; and informal ECE, which comprises family-based services [6,7]. These forms of ECE are intended to promote ECE that is more developmentally sensitive and play-based, instead of the prior kindergarten learning methods, which were conservative and drill-oriented [6].

According to the Indonesian Central Bureau, about 90% of kindergartens are owned by private sector bodies, while Islamic kindergartens are regulated by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA). Non-formal and informal ECE are all organised within the private sector.

In Indonesia, ECE is not part of compulsory education. In managing ECE settings, all the organisations are still in the process of adopting the National Standard of ECE policy no. 146/2014, which sets out how children with SEN should be included, though unfortunately there is a lack of curriculum guidance on inclusive pedagogy. Presently, most ECE settings show discrepancy in their internal policies and have organisational structures that are hardly inclusive. The implementation of inclusive practices is dependent on their professionalism as well as the cultural background [8].

Private ECE bodies seem to have difficulties in developing their practitioners' capabilities because the government does not consider practitioners in non-formal and informal ECE as teachers [9]. Consequently, non-formal and informal practitioners are not entitled to attend government-led teacher training. Furthermore, formal ECE practitioners receive very limited government-led teacher training because of budget limitations [10], which includes limited inclusive education training for ECE manager and teachers. Previous research shows that teachers are concerned about children with SEN who are left out of mainstream school due to the school culture and lack of inclusion-related policies at schools [4,11,12].

In terms of ECE leadership, hierarchical leadership is common in Indonesia because of the top-down governmental concept of professionalism, which does not differ between primary and secondary education [9]. The leader is an individual expert principal and functions as an extension of the government. They are charged with developing the strategic plans of the educational organisation, setting its vision, and increasing teachers' productivity [13–16]. This type of leadership limits the opportunities for practitioners to develop their leadership skills in order to enhance the organisation. In other contexts, leadership has been described as an interpretative phenomenon, which reflects the views of everyone engaging in the educational setting instead of the leader's own ideas alone [17]. Furthermore, Ebbeck and Waniganayake [18] emphasise the importance of distributed leadership, which places specialist knowledge at the core of the organisational culture, upholds the value of collective intelligence, and enables each practitioner's expertise to be integrated in organisations' improvement.

In Indonesia, in order to evolve inclusive education, there is a need to develop an appropriate ECE pedagogy and organisational culture through leadership by modifying top-down concepts into collaborative concepts. Therefore, this study focuses on exploring inclusive ECE in Yogyakarta, aiming to answer the research question, "What makes an inclusive ECE setting?" To that end, this research examines inclusive pedagogy, the organisational culture, and the leadership structure through ECE teachers' experiences, beliefs, feelings, and strategies related to inclusive practices.

1.1. Theory

Inclusive education is representative of the notion of "education for all" (EFA). In order to promote social inclusion, the education sector is considered an activator in achieving togetherness in society. Furthermore, inclusive education is expected to minimise the segregating concept whereby there is a distinction made between mainstream educational settings and special education, as though there is a diverse group of children who can only

be handled with a variety of methods targeted to support their needs [19,20]. Following the emergence of the basic premise of inclusive education as described above, the inclusive teaching movement has become a cornerstone of contemporary education reforms [21,22]. However, in the move toward providing an educational setting where all children are educated, nurtured, and included despite their different abilities, genders, socio-economic classes, and cultural backgrounds (e.g., language, ethnicity), the concept of inclusive education is evidently still contested [23].

1.1.1. Inclusive Pedagogy

Pedagogy refers to the act of teaching and discourse whereby activities are consciously designed and led in order to improve learning [24,25]. Therefore, in developing the concept of ECE pedagogy, the socio-cultural perspective is concerned with the influence of the setting in which children learn, the children's experiences of mutual interaction with adults and other children, and tools and other resources that support learning [26–28]. Consequently, this perspective defines a feature of a setting as it being a supportive environment, which involves a responsible and responsive adult [29]. In socio-cultural theory, pedagogy is built through proximal guided interaction, whereby the indirect action of adults supports children's progress toward knowing and gaining cultural tools and values of their society. This type of pedagogy includes physical activities, verbal language, non-verbal gestures, and emotional engagement in developing a positive learning nature.

When we consider the big ideas of ECE pedagogy, Stephen [30] proposes child-centred practices and play as the first concern in the provision. She explains the notion of child-centred practices as providing opportunities for children to choose ways in which to spend their time in the setting, whilst play focuses on the medium used for children's learning processes. Furthermore, in reviewing the use of child-centeredness, Chung and Walsh [31] suggest that the practice is in children's interests as it promotes their participation in decision-making, which supports them in meeting their potential. Meanwhile, Siraj-Blatchford and Sylva [32] consider a child-centred socio-cultural approach as emphasising dialogue and interaction. Therefore, they suggest child-centred practices strike a balance between child- and adult-initiated learning activities as part of finding the most effective approach to optimising each child's cognition, social skills, and character. From this perspective, sensitive and supportive adults who can promote sustained shared thinking during children's learning experiences are essential. Elsewhere, in terms of play, Stephen [30] suggests that besides acting as a medium for learning when appropriate, play can also contribute to ensuring children have opportunities to engage and participate in learning. Furthermore, children are playful, and the author points out that through play, they may develop more fine distinctions and learn more joyfully, which is part of the evidence-based rationale that play benefits children in a learning environment.

In drawing attention to ways of supporting learning in the socio-cultural tradition, Rogoff et al. [33] identifies two forms of central learning that guide participation practices: mutual bridging of meaning, which refers to understanding as a result of interaction processes to generate learning and achieve particular goals; and mutual structuring, which happens when children and adults determine activities together, such as domestic routine activities, play, classroom events, and conversation. By making choices, children become capable of structuring their learning, and they acquire the tools for thinking and acting through participation in particular tasks. To promote these two central learnings, practitioners should consider "active learning" in ways open to both spontaneous and planned play, children's exploration, and more experiential learning. Thus, practitioners need to be flexible in giving instruction and applying learning methods that "engage and challenge children's thinking using real-life and imaginary situations" [34] (p. 5). In this spirit, Stephen [30] noted that active learning is useful as part of an inclusive approach since it facilitates children's participation in the curriculum in some way. It also fosters children's input, which might lead important insights to be gathered that support the aims of inclusion [35,36].

Grounded in the theoretical framework of social–emotional development, the ecological theory of human development of Bronfenbrenner [37] and the socio-historical theory of Vygotsky [26] postulate that cognitions, emotions, and relationships are constructed as part of social interactions. The socio-cultural perspective promotes a supportive environment in educational settings; thus, social–emotional learning (SEL), as the process of education and socialisation related to the individual and their social relations, problem-solving skills, and competencies, is proposed by Reicher [38]. This process is influenced by complex interactions of several factors such as individual, situational, and cultural factors. At its core, besides focusing on being child-centred, effective SEL also provides a supportive learning environment with enhanced social–emotional environmental factors that support children's learning experiences and remove learning barriers. SEL was adopted by Gunter et al. [39] (p. 151), who referred to it as the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), described as "the process whereby children are able to acknowledge and manage their emotions, recognise the emotions of others, develop empathy, make good decisions, establish positive friendships, and handle challenges and situations effectively" Gunter et al. [39] also suggested that SEL can enable children to develop empathy through the skills of identifying their emotions as well as those of others. For that reason, Weissberg et al. [40] and Whitcomb [41] recommend that SEL programs should work to encourage positive behaviours such as caring, kindness, and success and prevent bullying and later problem behaviours. Furthermore, it is recommended that the relationships among children and practitioners are developed so that both parties are more responsible for learning and thus teaching is effective [40].

The practices of SEL are appropriate for all grades [39], but it will be more beneficial if there is an early intervention in preschool since the early years are a crucial period for social and emotional development, wherein young children begin to recognise and differentiate their feelings, either in positive or negative ways, and they learn to regulate their emotions [42]. At this time, it is important to support young children to get along with others, develop friendships, pay attention, adjust to different social rules, follow particular directions, and manage their emotions. Furthermore, children need to have social–emotional learning skills in order to be ready to engage with systems outside their home [39,43]. In order to teach children the techniques of managing emotions, recognising others' emotions, and initiating appropriate social interactions, practitioners can craft repeated positive experiences and introduce children to SEL [44]. SEL emphasises developing a better understanding of the rationale of using their manners instead of receiving advice-directed teaching alone; as a result, the children are more conscious in practising their values repeatedly [39].

1.1.2. Organisational Culture

As an extension of ecological theory, Bronfenbrenner and Ceci [45] developed the bioecological model of development, recognising that development emerges from the interaction between individuals and the context (e.g., the environment). It further formulates the role played by that individual, which is influenced by time and proximal processes. Viewing ECE settings as an ecological focus, Brierley and Nutbrown [46] state that as an extended world for children beyond their home, the ECE setting as a mesosystem will impact children's and families' experiences of culture. This mesosystem picture can be reflective of teachers' experiences, which come to affect the culture, attitudes, relationships, and practices within the ECE setting. In terms of child development, Faulkner et al. [47] view cultural processes in two senses. Firstly, children's development is culturally related to the particular environment they occupy and how they are encouraged to talk, behave, think, and feel, which results, for instance, in them building relationships with others in ways that are culturally defined. Secondly, child development is itself culturally constructed as it reflects just one of the forms of childhood's world.

In analysing an educational organisation, Lawton [48] (p. 6) classifies the levels of organisational culture as follows: "behaviour (including the visible aspects of curriculum,

pedagogy, and assessment) being part of the surface culture (or ethos); fundamental beliefs being part of the deep structure of culture; with attitudes and values existing somewhere in between the surface culture and the deep culture but overlapping both of them". In addition, an organisational culture influences the effectiveness of the management, with impacts for children and their families. At the same time, these outcomes are also affected by interactions at the macrosystem level. Kagan and Dermody [49] denote the three systemic outcomes as quality of service and support, equitable distribution, and sustainability over time, which impact the services in ECE. The attribute of quality refers to the ECE program, the provider, and the ECE staff. Equity refers to equal opportunities and protecting children and their families from deprivation. Finally, sustainability means ensuring the ECE service can be operated effectively in any circumstances, which is closely related to a set of financial, political, situational, and other contextual variables. The macrosystem needs to support and strengthen the mesosystem and microsystem of ECE services in order to ensure there are positive systemic outcomes for children and their families [50].

1.1.3. The Role of Culture in Developing an Inclusive Setting

The cultural–historical dimension is one of the core issues of inclusive education [21]; thus, the ECE setting needs to consider taking a cultural approach with its curriculum in order to provide culturally responsive practices. When doing so, it will actively engage children and allow them to construct their own sense of identity, teach them to respect others' cultures, help them to integrate in a multicultural society, help them to develop a positive self-concept, and support them to learn about diversity and similarities as human beings through play [51]. When developing an inclusive setting by using the index of inclusion, Booth et al. [52], put creating an inclusive culture as the groundwork for producing inclusive policies and evolving inclusive practices. In the cultural dimension, inclusive values should be forged where the acceptance, collaboration, security, and encouragement of the setting's community promote that everyone is valued. These inclusive values will be shared by all teachers, children, and parents, as well as the management, which should be a consideration when developing inclusive policies and which should stimulate collaborative relationships. Mortimer and Johnson [53] define an inclusive policy as a policy that means all children, regardless of background, needs, or beliefs, will be fully accepted in a setting. It vigorously aims to develop a setting for all by supporting diversity and participation. Moreover, an inclusive culture also stimulates changes in practices so they become more responsive to the diversity of children and families, as well as promoting and facilitating children's voices through organising play and learning [52]. In developing models of cultural inclusion, Corbett [54] distinguished four key areas as follows: a setting that involves an inclusive culture is firstly concerned with "teachers listening" and respecting any viewpoints that might be beyond their own perspective and/or experience; secondly, teachers recognise multiple intelligences of children, regardless of their social and academic status; thirdly, the setting provides equal opportunities, which requires teachers who are able to deal with unequal social capital; and fourthly, the setting has specific teaching values as its priority.

1.1.4. Organisational Culture and Leadership

At its essence, the quality of leadership may vary depending on the context of the organisation [55]. In describing a contextual model of leadership, Nivala [56] proposes the three dimensions of ECE leadership as (1) embodying a mission that is strongly felt, along with the aims and ambitions of the setting, which function as foundations for core task development and leadership style; (2) guiding management and administrative tasks; and (3) the vision of the ECE setting. All dimensions are interconnected and embraced in the ECE strategy, which is aimed at working toward the vision. In studying the cultural context of leadership, we need to consider it as socially constructed; therefore, Nivala [56] suggests a model for taking a contextual approach to leadership in a day care setting by considering the ecological approach in education of Bronfenbrenner [27,37], as explained in the section

on inclusion and culture above. If we analyse the interaction between leaders and practitioners who think about the organisation, along with the physical features and values in the environment, this constitutes a microsystem culture. Nevertheless, it also can be represented as a mesosystem when we see the setting as an extended world of children [46] that involves parents and children as part of the organisational culture. Accordingly, as elements of the key culture of the setting, these people and their cooperation will continuously construct its social reality. Furthermore, other ecological layers of the system will construct the features of the setting's secondary culture through intense communication; for instance, the council's regulation will give direction to the setting's ECE programs.

1.1.5. Leadership

Fonsén [17] and Hujala [57] define leadership in order to build a foundation of quality early childhood education and care (ECEC) through a contextual approach. In this approach, leadership involves an integration of the vision, mission, core task, and management. Then, leadership empowers the mission-based work, coordinates the quality of core tasks, and improves any processes toward the vision. Ahtiainen et al. [58] defines leadership as an interconnection between the essence of ECE, the actors who engage in the process, and structures of the environment. Furthermore, Fonsén [17] proposes that leadership is an interpretative phenomenon whereby the views of everyone within the setting, including families, are considered instead of the leader's own ideas alone. Breaking it down, Waniganayake [59] (p. 98) suggests that "Leadership is a learnt trait and mentorship is one way of acquiring a sound grounding on how leadership works in practice" Chiefly, a contextual approach to leadership promotes practitioners' and families' engagement. Furthermore, under collaborative leadership, Thornton [60] and Lambert [61] propose the leader should promote leadership experiences for all team members through a shared vision to bring power to all practitioners and to work collaboratively. In other words, Waniganayake et al. [62] (p. 18) suggest that collaborative leadership "offers increased vitality and strength to the whole organisation" by providing opportunities to everyone to jointly make decisions, whether or not they hold leadership roles. Likewise, this type of leadership promotes ongoing professional development programs through the leader's support, mentoring, and respectful and collaborative relationships [60]. Additionally, it encourages practitioners' reflection on frameworks and leadership roles, inquiry, and self-assessment in order to develop collaborative cultures [61,63]. Accordingly, Ebbeck and Waniganayake [18] view this style of leadership as a participatory and decentralised approach.

Distributed leadership is a style of leadership that supports all members to have leadership ability and a willingness to lead by extending legitimised leadership roles to the staff. To succeed, it needs communication, planning, a policy system, and progress monitoring in its implementation [64]. Furthermore, those strategies are necessary to generate effective collaboration in seeking comprehensive solutions for how to energise personnel and sustain networks [65]. Distributed leadership emphasises placing specialist knowledge at the core of the organisational culture [18,62], valuing collective intelligence, and integrating each practitioner's expertise in the setting's improvement. As such, distributed leadership is a type of leadership that is relational and has dynamics of power-sharing [66,67].

1.1.6. Leadership in Inclusive Education

Leadership is one of the key factors of inclusive education's implementation. Certainly, strong and supportive leadership is highly needed in order to enact an inclusive vision [68]. Through this kind of leadership, the setting can create an inclusive culture, develop inclusive policies, produce an accommodative curriculum, and train practitioners to assist all children in a diverse classroom [52]. Furthermore, Schuelka et al. [69] propose that the most inclusive educational setting is led by people who promote inclusive values, vision, and autonomy, provide motivation, and trust the team members in the setting. Likewise, UNESCO [16] (p. 47) determines some indicators of an inclusive setting supported by the leadership as follows:

- Everyone is made to feel welcome.
- Students are equally valued.
- There are high expectations for all students.
- Staff and students treat one another with respect.
- There is a partnership between staff and families.
- The educational setting is accessible to all students.
- Senior staff support teachers in making sure that all students participate and learn.
- The educational setting monitors the presence, participation, and achievement of all students.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Research Questions

The aim of this research was to explore practitioners' experiences related to concepts of inclusion and practices in inclusive ECE. The main research question focused on describing a general strategy for developing inclusive ECE and the sub-questions on detailed experiences of ECE practitioners and inclusive ECE pedagogy:

1. The main research question:

   What makes an inclusive ECE?

2. The sub-research questions:

   What are practitioners' feelings, opinions, and beliefs related to the concepts of inclusion in ECE?

   What is the strategy for evolving an inclusive ECE pedagogy?

2.2. Qualitative Research Method

In this study, a qualitative method was deemed the most appropriate to answer the research question. Maxwell [70] perceives that qualitative research allows the researchers to deeply comprehend situations, events, and actions by considering specific settings where the participant's role is enacted. Accordingly, to explore the experiences, feelings, values, and views of ECE practitioners, this research employed qualitative inquiry through interviews and focus group discussions [71,72].

2.3. Conducting the Research

This research took place in one ECE setting, a private playgroup (non-formal ECE) that has been implementing inclusive practices in the setting for more than five years. The location of the ECE setting is in one of the big cities in Indonesia, Yogyakarta, which is well-known as a student city. This ECE setting was chosen after considering the length of experience in implementing inclusive pedagogy. The research participants were one ECE manager and four ECE teachers, all of whom had been teaching for more than six months. This research was conducted in 2019 and the duration was one month, spanning the research introduction, building rapport, and data collection.

2.4. Data Collection

This research used five individual online semi-structured interviews with outlined prompts and probes to explore teachers' experiences, feelings, and beliefs [73,74]. Interviews were conducted online as that is an inexpensive approach, which only required the researcher made sure all participants had a suitable device, the same software installed, and a broadband Internet connection. The researcher needed to create an appropriate atmosphere so the participants would feel secure enough to talk spontaneously, which required creative ways of using virtual visual aids when speaking face-to-face over Skype. These also served to reduce anxieties, generate a relaxed online environment, and help build rapport [74]. To help with that rapport, the researcher was clear, non-threatening, friendly, personable, and respectful [71].

This research also used an online focus group discussion to acquire diverse opinions of the participants in one real-time online communicative session [75]. Even though there are some limitations to video conferencing, emotion can still be expressed. The visual cues in face-to-face group interaction can influence the responses of other participants, such as by indicating whether a participant enjoys what is said or showing how they feel about a discussion thread. Furthermore, the researcher can gain an understanding of the social relationships among the participants as long as the researcher can function as a good moderator [76]. When using Skype as the chosen technology, its chat rooms offer the opportunity for split screens and shared screens, so the researcher can follow the particular dialogue between participants as well as the group dynamic. Whether online or offline, focus group discussion is useful for orienting to a particular focus, generating insights, generating and evaluating data, gathering qualitative data on attitudes, values, and opinions, empowering participants to speak out, and reaching a group consensus in a short time with low cost [76,77].

2.5. Data Analysis

This study applied thematic analysis to identify patterns from the data in order to describe the phenomena. The analysis began with transcribing the interview and focus group discussions and followed with generating insights into the phenomena by engaging with the data, coding those, and linking the codes to themes [78]. The themes were outlined by bringing components together or fragments of experiences or ideas, which are often meaningless when viewed alone [79]. The next step involved referring back to the related literature and then making inferences from both the interviews and focus group discussion in order to develop an argument for each theme. When the literature was interwoven with the findings, the researcher constructed a plot line that helped the reader to understand the concept of the research findings [80]. In these ways, thematic analysis can support rich and insightful understandings of multifaceted phenomena, be applied across theoretical and epistemological approaches, and assess and improve existing theory [81].

2.6. Validity and Reliability

This research adopted a multi-method approach by applying individual online interviews and a focus group discussion, which provided complementary information from various perspectives, to bring more confidence to the findings and thus attain data scientific validity. This multi-method idea of data collection allows one to enhance the understanding of a social construction by adding layers of information from different methods, which validate and enhance one another [75]. Arksey and Knight [82] (p. 76) suggest that "having more than one interviewee present can provide two versions of events—a crosscheck—and one can complement the other with additional points, leading to a more complete and reliable record". In this way, it is also possible to detect how the participants agree and disagree with each other and describe the relationships between them.

Considering the contested issues in inclusive education, the researcher needed to define the exact meaning of inclusion applied in this research, correlating that with the wider literature on the specific topic [71]. The researcher deemed that the meaning of inclusion would take a broad definition including all children in the setting instead of focusing on children with SEN. It was also decided that it would encompass the school as a supportive community for diversity, children's choice, and reducing barriers to access and participation through providing equal opportunities to all children [36,83–86]. This constructed meaning of inclusion was found to align with the findings when they were compared and contrasted; hence, the interpretations made were meaningful to the participants and the research demonstrated construct validity [87].

2.7. Ethical Considerations

According to Ess [88], online research must protect individuals' rights, mainly the right to privacy. This research was developed by referring to Cohen et al. [71] and BERA [89], in

which key points are outlined that should be addressed when obtaining informed consent in consideration of the issues around ethics in online research. The key points are guarantees of privacy, voluntary participation, the researcher(s) obtaining permission to conduct the research, and participants' confidentiality [90], both of their identity, in general, and as the source of the data provided. In this case, ensuring anonymity meant the use of a code to identify each participant and the use of a password to protect the data files [91]. The principle of beneficence was also upheld, meaning research benefitted all involved, along with that of non-maleficence, meaning the individuals in the research were put at no risk of harm [92].

In this research, written documents were used to obtain informed consent, as the medium that best protects the human subject [88]. Since this was a study group of ECE team members, permission was secured from the leader. Before signing their informed consent, they were provided with a detailed explanation of the research procedure and guidance materials, which explained the research did not provide incentives for participation. They also completed forms giving the go-ahead for distance communication between the researcher and participants. Distance communication using technological devices can raise technical issues, particularly during data collection. To minimise these, the researcher provided technical instructions and offered related support during the data collection process. Furthermore, it was ethically important to outline what would to count as data [71]; therefore, it was explained that the interview and focus group discussion data would be collected as long as the video camera was switched on. Prior to beginning the study, these ethical points were included in the Faculty of Art and Culture Education ethical application, which received ethical approval from the University of Hull, constituting permission to conduct the research.

3. Results

From the research, findings emerged in three main themes and eight sub-themes. Leadership is the first main theme, which acts as a starting point and plays an important role. Leadership initiates the vision of the organisation, professional development, and collaboration, which are all sub-themes. Following this, organisational culture is the second main theme, which involves positive attitudes and positive relationships (both sub-themes) in describing the interactions among the people within the setting. Then, ECE inclusive pedagogy is the third main theme, which reflects the strategy for how to incorporate inclusive practices in ECE through play and learning activities. These three themes are outlined in Figure 1. A double-facing arrow reflects how the values of the playgroup involve interconnection among the three themes.

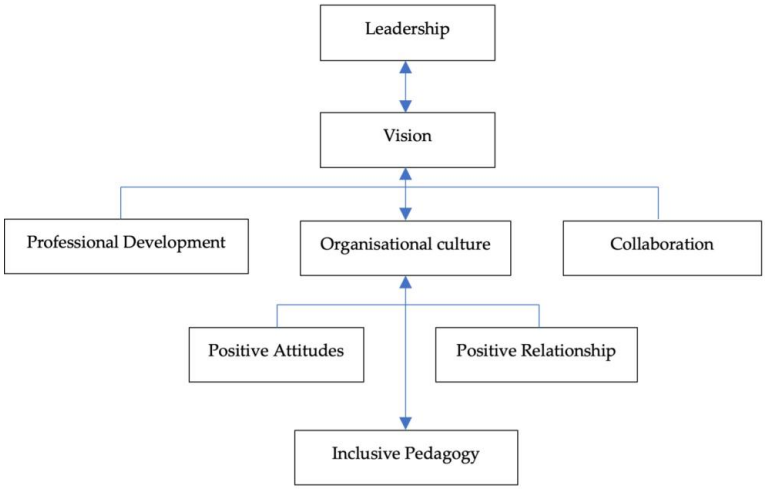

Figure 1. The relationships among themes.

3.1. Leadership

In an educational setting, leadership can take many forms and be presented in various ways in order to improve the quality of the program [93,94]. To develop an inclusive setting, it is important to have a strong and supportive leader who enacts an inclusive vision, values, and beliefs, which are demonstrated through commitments, formal and informal statements, interests, actions, how the staff members are organised, and the physical surroundings [68,69]. Accordingly, to provide an example from the interview data, the manager expressed her belief and values on inclusion through her statements as below:

> *Inclusion is a trait. Actually, I think it is one of the fluidities of our playgroup. I mean, we always think carefully about what we would like to do. Since inclusion is a new term, it might be a familiar term for educational practitioners but for our society, inclusion only becomes a label of the ECE's name. We try to maintain a parent's expectation of an inclusive ECE as a setting for integrating children with SEN as is familiar in Indonesian people's understanding. For us, inclusion is a trait, its values which we should promote in our learning practices.*

3.1.1. Vision

Teachers also reflected ECE vision through the value they placed on openness and hospitality.

> *Every child is welcome. We are so diverse here. This playgroup concept is based on social-environmental instead of business. It is different from other playgroups. It promotes social-emotional development of children, children's interaction with their environment, that is why the building is designed as semi-outdoor. It reflects our openness.* (Teacher 3, over 3 years of work experience)

Furthermore, in the focus group discussion on inclusive education, the consensus of the group was that they tended to perceive inclusive education as a broad term as proposed by Nutbrown et al. [83], instead of focusing on children with SEN alone. Moreover, they stated that their ECE setting has a different concept of inclusive education compared to most other ECE settings.

> *Education provides opportunities to all children to learn with all their differences. Education that takes into account each child by selecting appropriate methods based on their condition that may in some ways need assistance from related professionals. In this setting we interpret inclusion as diversity, which perhaps outsides, inclusion is interpreted as only educating children with SEN, but our ECE setting has a different understanding of the inclusion term.*

3.1.2. Professional Development

The practitioners also expressed that they felt fully supported by the management through the manager. She promoted all teachers' willingness to learn as one of the core values that was the most emphasised in the setting. Learning could be achieved in several ways, such as becoming involved in many kinds of training, developing a learning plan through the curriculum, and adapting/transforming learning by engaging ECE practices in the playgroup.

> *I have joined the training for several times. It could be in-house training or external training. But for external training it should be aligned with the playgroup vision, it must promote the diversity in this playgroup.* (Teacher 3, over 3 years of work experience)

A reflective session at the end of the day was another ongoing learning method to enhance the capacity of the teachers. As the manager had competence in inclusive education, one-to-one mentoring was also applied in the setting. In addition, there was peer mentoring among teachers, particularly between experienced and junior teachers.

> *As a junior teacher, they were helpful. Particularly for the routines such as how to communicate in a positive way to children. I asked many things to them, and they always*

> *helped and gave good direction. Moreover, the playgroup design is really different from my previous setting, so they help me to recognise the spots here, how to maintain it, and how to fit myself with the playgroup concept.* (Teacher 2, 1 year of work experience)

3.1.3. Collaboration

Good teamwork was a strength in this ECE setting, with the practitioners sharing values as well as implementing inclusive pedagogy.

> *. . .because of we are a small team, thus all of the issues must be discussed and try to be solved as soon as possible, we made a group decision even though without the presence of the manager. So, it doesn't drag on and could prevent the worst situation. That's why we have reflection and discussion sessions every day.* (Teacher 3, over 3 years of work experience)

The teachers also described how collaborative work was adopted when assisting children in the classroom. The shared role in the classroom was in determining the learning plan, and otherwise everyone understood their separate roles in day-to-day activities; the teachers expressed feeling that this strategy was helpful in supporting the children's learning.

3.2. Organisational Culture

Becoming a welcoming playgroup required that the practitioners fully recognised its core values. In the online focus group discussion, all practitioners agreed that the playgroup promoted the value of all teachers welcoming and including every child in learning and play, regardless of a child's background, as well as promoting positive attitudes about differences.

3.2.1. Positive Attitudes

Practitioners' stories described positive relationships with children as well as parents. They mentioned some ways in which they had built positive relationships within the setting, and they described building positive relationships with children as critical in the playgroup given the children's differences.

> *A child is unique as an individual, he/she brings his/her own characteristics, talents and abilities.* (Teacher 1, over 4 years of work experience)

The teachers demonstrated positive attitudes toward welcoming the children by recognising that every child is different. The teachers also expressed the belief that their differences supported the children to learn more about life, how to respect others, and how to work together in tolerance.

> *Every child is born different, they were born into the world by carrying their own story, their own luck, talents, and everything within them is not the same. Thus, they have diverse needs and characteristics. . . .from diversity, children can learn about life. They are learning about respect, appreciation, togetherness, and tolerance.* (Teacher 3, over 3 years of work experience)

Additionally, the teachers expressed positive perceptions of children with SEN. They noted there was a shifting perception of children with SEN, influenced by the former culture of the organisation. One teacher also recognised that her perception of children with SEN was different from that of society.

> *In my previous setting, there were some children with SEN. Usually, parents and their peers said that they are the troublemaker or naughty, nosy child and annoying child. Actually, they are not, they only have different ways of communicating and asking their friends to play. We have to change our mind set to see children with SEN.* (Teacher 3, over 3 years of work experience)

3.2.2. Positive Relationships

Several approaches, such as positive communication, using equal language, and promoting openness between practitioners and children, were mentioned that had helped build positive relationships, trust, and comfort.

> *Personally, for me, the most identical culture in this playgroup is the use of positive communication. . . .particularly when communicating with children, such as reminding them to be careful when running around. For example, we often say, 'Let's keep walking dear' instead of 'Don't run'.* (Teacher 2, 1 year of work experience)

While building positive relationships with parents, the teachers also encouraged parents' involvement in their children's development and ECE. The teachers expressed the belief that to best support the children's learning, they had to work together with the parents and build trust from the parents.

> *The playgroup reassures parent's involvement here. We fully realise that we cannot work alone to promote children's development. In addition, these past few years, there was an increment of tuition fees. However, parents still back to enrol their younger child to play here. It is like an appreciation for us. It might be because of their positive experience working with us and the satisfaction on the development of their older child.* (Teacher 1, over 4 years of work experience)

3.3. ECE Inclusive Pedagogy

The teachers noted that they played a critical role in ensuring that all children were included in learning and play; given that role, they needed to develop an appropriate learning strategy that accommodated all children's diversity. The teachers mentioned several strategies when accommodating diversity that focused on appreciating children's voices, taking a child-centred approach, and developing good habits.

> *In this playgroup we instilled group agreement such as have to share the toys, if you want to borrow your friend's belonging, you have to ask permission, all of these toys are belongs to us, so we have to take care of it together. . . .we are prompting it regularly, every day at circle time and free play. . .then finally the children do it automatically.* (Teacher 3, over 3 years of work experience)

The teachers also described encouraging the children to make their own decisions. In the beginning, the teachers provided the children with two choices to choose between, to encourage the children to make a decision and learn the consequences of their decision. In time, they allowed the children to make their own choices by considering whether something was good for them or not. This decision-making also offered an opportunity for the children to express their opinions.

> *Children are also treated with choice. There are times when a child also has to make a decision, thinking whether it is good or not for them.* (Teacher 2, 1 year of work experience)

The practitioners emphasised several aspects of social–emotional learning to be promoted when implementing ECE pedagogy, such as empathy, recognising and managing emotions, and assertiveness. The teachers described focusing more on socio-emotional development than cognitive development, with a belief that cognitive competence would develop through managing socio-emotional skills.

> *Obviously, learning on socio-emotional and empathy are a fine point here, I can feel it. I mean, we instil the sense of social-emotionality in children rather than cognitive point but I think their cognitive ability will come along.* (Teacher 1, over 4 years of work experience)

The teachers also described their focus on establishing positive relationships between themselves and the children, and among the children. As the children were their partners in their work, building good relationships and trust with the children were important

objectives. Such positive relationships then supported the socio-emotional development of the children.

> *Personally, I saw that the social-emotional skills of children are improved, they become independent, have empathy and care. It might be our target on cognitive aspects not really high. We prefer to stimulate their good relationship.* (Teacher 2, 1 year of work experience)

Respecting diversity was highlighted as one of the core values within the setting; therefore, there were changes in teaching methods to adjust to the children's characteristics in class based on regular observations. In this sense, the ECE setting was characterized by a flexible method of learning based on the children's learning needs. The teachers were familiar with changing their approaches, particularly in terms of learning methods.

> *There is no fixed particular method in assisting children here. We often have discussion sessions after learning hours, so we discuss what happened today and what we will do for tomorrow. We shared, then the manager might give some inputs, then we made a preparation for tomorrow based on the children's development. And the next day we did the same way too.* (Teacher 1, over 4 years of work experience)

In order to instil knowledge, practice social–emotional skills, and create an ECE culture, the teachers promoted repetition of targeted behaviours as a means of developing good habits, which started at the beginning of the academic year. According to the teachers, a good habit could be shaped after two or three months of routine.

> *We develop routines. Firstly, we help children by informing, explaining the reason, giving an example, and prompting it. . . .commonly, in July until October we build habits and independence of children through repetition. In November and December, the children are already getting used to it, hence in the second semester they are able to lead their independence.* (Teacher 1, over 4 years of work experience)

In terms of implementing the most suitable learning practices based on the children's needs, the teachers described conducting a daily evaluation after the school hours. By reflecting on the learning process and the children's behaviours, they came up with insights that then helped when developing further learning plans. All of the reflections were recorded, as well as the progress of the children's development, which was later reported to the parents at the end of the semester.

> *We have a break time from 12.00 until 13.00. Afterwards, we should do three kinds of records such as firstly, daily reflection of teaching and learning activities. It should be written and discussed in order to find the gaps, bring up recommendations and prepare learning materials for the next day. Secondly, children observation. We record the detailed activity of each child, the progress as well as the support needed. And thirdly, making child activity documentation in the communication book between Playgroup and parents.* (Teacher 3, over 3 years of work experience)

4. Discussion

Promoting inclusive education is an important international aim as part of meeting Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, aimed at ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. The main aim of inclusive education is to improve the participation of all individuals in learning, communities, and cultures within education through acts to recognise and respond to the diverse needs of all learners [38,85,95–97]. Furthermore, developing inclusive ECE is also essential to meet the target of SDG 4.2 by 2030, which is to ensure all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education, in order to be ready for primary education [98]. The results of this study indicate that the selected playgroup has built a strong commitment to evolving into an inclusive culture in the organisation as well as ECE inclusive practices, despite the many challenges and different points of view regarding inclusive education. The willingness and commitment to develop inclusive practices has

been initiated by the leadership and now there is a shared inclusive vision among all members in the setting, who hold positive values around respecting any differences and they all have the objective of including every child in learning and play regardless of their background.

As Indonesia has ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) [99], it is obligatory that efforts are made in the country to promote inclusive education covering the principles of a child-rights-based approach. Inclusive practices encourage every individual's right to *non-discrimination*, which was reflected in the findings with the importance of all children being welcome at the playgroup and in how the practitioners expressed that all children should have access to equal opportunities and the best possible outcomes. The findings also indicate that the playgroup facilitates the learning of some children who may need more support than others to overcome barriers and difficulties in learning. Children's right to *dignity* is also promoted by the playgroup, which was seen in the teachers' positive attitudes toward the children's differences. Furthermore, the teachers described nurturing and treating the children with care during learning activities in the setting. Additionally, the research results show that the playgroup supports the *best interests of the children* by designing learning and play areas that are safe for the children. In addition, the data show that the playgroup provides opportunities for children's *participation*, where children may be involved in deciding what is best for them. Furthermore, the children have a space to express their views and feelings as well as ask questions. The playgroup also promotes children's health by providing snacks with organic ingredients and takes a child-rights-based approach in its organisational culture and ECE pedagogy, to support the rights of *life, survival, and development*. In sum, its strong willingness and commitment to create an inclusive culture and pedagogy can be interpreted as a strategy to develop an inclusive ECE setting.

In the national context, the (mis)alignments between inclusive education policy and practices are the main challenge in the ECE system in Indonesia. Therefore, it is crucial to discuss three macro-level systemic factors—quality, equity, and sustainability—that influence early years children and their families through the lens of systems theory [100,101]. First of all is *the quality of services and support* in formal and non-formal inclusive ECE in Indonesia. As mentioned in the introduction, the support in terms of inclusive ECE is still fragmented and somewhat limited to children with SEN, which excludes other diversities of children, as stated in the national policy of inclusive education [3]. In addition, curriculum guidelines on inclusive pedagogy do not exist and there is limited teacher training on inclusion provided by the government [10]. To fill this gap, the findings show that the playgroup's manager has organised in-house training for the teachers as well as mentoring on inclusive pedagogy in order to develop a quality ECE program and strengthen the teachers' capacity, which is necessary to allow the children to reach their potential. Second, it seems there is still a long way to go to *equalise opportunities* [102] for all children to access inclusive ECE. In Indonesia, a scarcity of inclusive ECE, lack of inclusive curriculum guidelines, and difficulties faced by private ECE bodies seeking to enhance their teachers' capacity relating to inclusion all hinder children's access to inclusive education. The research results show that the playgroup fortunately hired a manager competent in inclusive education; therefore, the playgroup is more welcoming than normal for children from diverse backgrounds, not only those with SEN. The organisational culture of this playgroup also sees all children in the setting as equal. Third, there are still many challenges encountered in ensuring the *sustainability* of inclusive ECE services. This is closely related to a set of financial and political variables, and current regulation [101] determines that ECE is not compulsory education. As a result, a large number of ECE settings are owned in the private sector and financial support from the government is limited. The results of this study show that even for a playgroup with a broader concept of inclusive education compared to other ECEs, the support from the government is still inadequate. Consequently, as a private ECE, the playgroup must largely struggle alone with financial issues. As a recent result, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the playgroup, along with other private ECEs,

could not operate as any government support ceased while the funding was redirected toward emergency health [101,103].

In the context of the ECE setting, teachers are policymakers within the classroom and hold the key roles in terms of the success of inclusion [104]. The data from this study indicate that sustaining inclusive values requires teachers' genuine commitment to inclusion, positive attitudes toward inclusion, and efforts to forge collaborative relationships with the children and their parents. Referring to the model of cultural inclusion developed by Corbett [54], all four key areas are fulfilled by the selected playgroup, as follows:

First, the setting's inclusive culture is revealed by its high concern for children's voices, which reflects "teachers listening". Furthermore, they respect any viewpoints that might be beyond their own perspective and/or experience. In addition, the teachers' voices, feelings, and needs are heard and addressed by the leader.

Second, the teachers respect the diversity of the children, regardless of their social and academic status. Focus group discussion data demonstrated that the teachers hold positive attitudes toward diversity and exceedingly recognise the meaning of differences among children when learning. They believe that every child is unique and has their own characteristics, talents, and abilities, even though the children come from different backgrounds in terms of social, cultural, and economic status.

Third, the setting provides equal opportunities, supported by teachers who are able to deal with unequal social capital. Focus group discussion data revealed that one of the playgroup's core values is seeing all children as equal. Furthermore, in interview data, the teachers explain how they provide equal opportunities for the children to be included in playing and learning, so that each child has an equal right regardless of their background and abilities. For instance, the teachers may provide several alternative activities, so the children can choose which they prefer. Moreover, when managing relationships with parents, the equality principle is again key in this setting. Upholding effective communication in order to collaborate with parents regardless of their economic and academic status is aimed at optimising children's development. In addition, to work collaboratively, the teachers also consider one another as equal and worthy of mutual respect, regardless of their position. All opinions should be heard and there are shared roles, even though the staff members have different lengths of working experience in the setting.

Fourth, the setting has specific teaching values as a priority. This boils down to the core idea of making the playgroup a fun place for learning and one that is welcoming for all children; consequently, teachers build positive communication, promote children's participation, and support a friendly environment.

The playgroup in this study nurtures a strong inclusive culture. In particular, it does so in its pedagogy by adopting a child-centred approach, fostering the social–emotional development of children, and encouraging reflective practitioners. Referring to those core values, a child-rights-based approach is a nuance in the playgroup's learning practices. Aligned with the key idea in ECE pedagogy, child-centred practices are applied by putting the children at the heart of learning activities [30] and considering children's views and best interests, which encourage the children to become independent, responsible, and confident.

The theoretical framework of social–emotional development, which includes ecological theory [37] and socio-cultural theory [26], holds that social interaction influences the construction of children's cognition, emotions, and social development. Vygotsky [26] highlights culture as a significant aspect of learning, and language is the root of the culture; therefore, children learn and develop through interaction with adults and other children within their role in the ECE community. The ECE community can be seen as a microsystem that also involves interaction with the upper-level ecological systems, such as the mesosystem of the society surrounding the ECE setting, as well as the macrosystem of educational policy, which dynamically influence one another [45]. Those kinds of interactions affect how ECE pedagogy can be developed within the setting.

In studying SEL programs and strategies in the educational setting, Jones and Bouffard [105] distinguish three main interrelated SEL skills: Firstly, there are emotional pro-

cesses, including some skills such as emotional knowledge (the ability to identify emotions precisely), emotion regulation (the ability to manage emotions and take perspective), and empathy [42]. Secondly, social skills include the abilities to identify and understand social cues, interpret behaviours of others, and interact positively with others. Thirdly, cognitive regulation skills include the abilities to focus on one task as well as switch to another task, pay attention and remember instructions, and restrain desires. SEL practices are suitable for all grades [39], but they will be more beneficial when they are applied from preschool [42]. Subsequently, Reicher [38] proposes SEL as encompassing a person-centred approach and environmental focus in developing effective learning. A person-centred approach promoting the knowledge and skills of SEL can take the form of social–emotional-related education on socio-cultural values, manners, and assertiveness; flexible interaction; and activity-based learning. Meanwhile, an environmental focus aims to develop a safe, caring, and supportive learning environment that promotes positive attitudes, responsive communication and relationships, active participation, and openness with children, parents, and communities.

The results of this study show that in developing an inclusive ECE setting, the playgroup started with leadership. The nature of leadership is closely related to the context of the organisation, which may differ from one to another. In a contextual approach, leadership is understood as part of the cultural reality in the setting [56]. Meanwhile, the ecological approach [37] is used to describe the leadership system and interaction between several microsystems, such as teachers, parents, and children, who collaborate in a mesosystem in order to lead activities or solve problems and are influenced by the ECE's inclusive culture. This active interaction will further develop an appropriate type of leadership for the setting [106].

The results also indicate that a shared vision and values among teachers, children, and parents promote the development of ECE's inclusive culture, such as ongoing learning, seeing all children as equal, and respecting diversity. This culture is always considered in any learning practices and collaborative work within the setting. Furthermore, it promotes a willingness to share power and support leadership experiences for everyone in the setting, including children [62]. When making a decision for collective purposes, teachers do so together through a process of group consensus, which is usually enacted in daily reflection sessions. These practices reflect collaborative leadership, as suggested by Thornton [60] and Waniganayake et al. [107].

When analysing the type of leadership from the teachers' and manager's stories in the data collection, the impression is gained, as Rodd [93] concluded from the leadership literature in the educational sector, that leadership is about vision and influence. A clear vision, such as leaders' dreams and hopes for inclusion, will provide the philosophy adopted by teachers, form a route for any actions, guide decision-making, lead new approaches and practices to be explored, as well as inspire policy improvements, which can improve the morale and self-esteem of the teachers [58].

The playgroup defines leadership as the capacity, ability, or set of strategies to lead, as well as a product of the group's endeavours, which aligns with the suggestion in Rodd [93]. A teacher's story revealed there was a time when the manager was not in the setting for several months as she took a break for her own educational purposes. Nevertheless, the playgroup kept running well because there is a clear policy system and shared power [64], whereby the teachers are entitled to develop planning and suitable strategies based on the needs highlighted through regular discussion sessions at the end of each day. These practices drive distributed leadership, as suggested by Waniganayake et al. [62], where sharing leadership through dialogue among people within the setting enables a range of team members to develop planning, policy systems, and strategies for progress monitoring. Subsequently, professional development is created from teacher-led ongoing learning, as well as leaders, which is related to inclusion [52]. Furthermore, the collective action in the setting constitutes an ongoing effort to reduce barriers to playing, learning, and participation by holding the vision strong. This is supported by regular discussion and

reflection sessions about the vision, values, culture, and practices, which sustain a sense of belonging to the philosophy [61]. A collaborative decision-making practice is founded on democratic values, which are associated with an inclusive culture. Moreover, collaboration also engages people outside the teaching team, such as parents, community members, and professionals, to work together to make it an even more inclusive setting [52,108]. Ebbeck and Waniganayake [18] proposes that collaborative work in leadership hinges on the belief that together will be more competent, creative, and smarter, as well as better able to respond to multifaceted challenges.

The ongoing learning practices and collaborative work promoted by the ECE vision seem to be part of working life every day at the selected playgroup. The staff's activities that are part of a participation process and presented as a product of group work imply the practices of distributed leadership [18,62,93]. Such participation will contribute to the setting's transformation and enhance its progress toward achieving its objectives [19,36], as Dinham et al. [65] (p. 145) contend that "transformation cannot be achieved through responding to centralised control or by acting alone. Instead, by allocating appropriate resources, including sufficient personnel 'to energise and sustain' network".

The results indicate that the playgroup applies distributed leadership, which is closely related to an inclusive culture [21,52]. In order to explore leadership, as suggested by Waniganayake et al. [107], the first element to be analysed is *the person (the leader).* As a leader, the manager has fulfilled three essential elements of successful ECE leadership, as suggested by Sergiovanni [109]. These are: (1) Empowerment: she regularly shares the vision and encourages all teachers to include it as standard in the way they learn, behave, and prepare and implement learning practices, as well as when they assist children and collaborate with each other. She also provides wide participative opportunities in group goal-setting through encouraging personnel development, and consensus-building practices in program development. This empowerment strategy aims to increase the responsibility and accountability of the team. (2) Enablement: the manager tries to offer inspiration to all members by sharing ideas and thoughts, being a role model, and supporting the teachers based on their needs. She engages in one-to-one assistance for new teachers and existing teachers, including those who have different perspectives on inclusion. (3) Enhancement: she also engages in group assistance during daily reflection sessions to stimulate learning, build team cohesiveness and a culture of trust, and prepare plans for improvement. Additionally, she assists the practitioners to create an inclusive culture together through maintaining a feeling of acceptance, support, and security, encourages the learning process through collaborative relationships, and recognises contributions by celebrating achievements.

The second element to be analysed is *the position (authority to make decisions).* In enacting distributed leadership, the setting should provide clarification of its purpose, strategic frameworks, and the agreed roles and responsibilities of each individual. Furthermore, in terms of shared powers, delegated tasks will be set up based on individual functions and performance standard measurement. However, each individual always provides assistance through mentoring relationships, which are aimed at enhancing expertise and developing appropriate leadership. In the case of monitoring and evaluation, a regular review in the form of a daily reflection session is conducted to ensure that the setting is run according to its objectives. Furthermore, for collective purposes, decisions are jointly made with a group consensus either among teachers or engaging parents, such as when changing methods of learning or encouraging children, increasing tuition fees, organising field trips, or holding parents' meetings and annual events. Nevertheless, in terms of special cases or related to grand strategic plans, the manager may decide something by herself or in consultation with other leaders in the main management.

Lastly, the third element to be analysed is *the place (organisational setting).* Interview data show that the setting opens up wide opportunities for transformation, with the manager and practitioners describing many changes and fluid processes in the development of the setting. The transformation, and going through continuous learning, lead to active modification of the approaches to applying values and practices, and in the process, the

practitioners build collaborative relationships that facilitate the achievement of the setting's objectives. Through these practices, the setting reflects conscious cooperation, as suggested by Nivala [56]. This type of cooperation stimulates distributed power, encourages learning, sees leadership as a common interest, and builds supportive behaviour between the leader, teachers, and children, which create the culture of the setting.

Certainly, the results of this small-scale qualitative study make only a small contribution to meeting the SDG goal. However, they are more intended to highlight the value of the voices and experiences of teachers who work with and promote inclusive practices in ECE. These teachers' accounts are not only important for ECE development in Indonesia but also in other developing countries where inclusive education is emerging, in accordance with the international agenda of SDG 4.2. Nevertheless, future research is needed into strategies to develop inclusive ECE in other cultural and policy contexts.

5. Conclusions

To summarise the results, there are three main aspects of inclusion in ECE settings that need to be developed, which are interconnected and dynamic. In parallel with the index of inclusion in early years and childcare, as suggested by Booth et al. [52], those are leadership, organisational culture, and ECE pedagogy. In this particular research, in the context of Indonesian ECE, developing leadership is the most important point. There are complexities of interconnections among the related elements in developing an inclusive setting, but in the selected playgroup, this began with developing collaborative leadership [18,60,62] to advocate a strong vision and promote shared leadership roles and responsibilities among all members within the setting. This is aimed at inspiring and maintaining the intended culture and practices and, furthermore, achieving positive outcomes. In order to foster leadership among the staff members, the playgroup encourages professional development through regular training, and an ongoing learning process by developing the curriculum and holding regular reflective sessions. Collaborative leadership certainly supports collaboration, which mainly involves practitioners participating in regular discussions of the vision, values, and pedagogy, as well as building partnerships with parents (as the most important people outside the team) in order to enable all children to participate in learning and play.

The second main aspect of inclusion in ECE settings is developing the organisational culture. In this case, the playgroup upholds fundamental beliefs, such as maintaining children's rights, respecting diversity, ensuring equality, engaging in ongoing learning, and promoting fun learning. This ethos generates positive attitudes among the practitioners, children, and their parents around welcoming differences, promoting children's rights, holding positive perceptions of children with SEN, and supporting inclusive education. Moreover, it motivates the practitioners to face any challenges in including children with, e.g., SEN or different nationalities in play and learning. Subsequently, their positive attitudes stimulate positive relationships either between practitioners and children or between practitioners and parents. These positive relationships are constructed through positive communication, equal opportunities, and openness. Down the line, this developed culture can influence both leadership roles and the ECE pedagogy.

Finally, the third main aspect of inclusion in ECE settings is the ECE pedagogy. Herein, the fundamental beliefs in the setting can be seen through the visible aspects of the practitioners' and children's behaviour, the curriculum, and teaching and learning [48]. These emerge from the interaction and interrelations within the social and physical features of the setting [45], which contribute to establishing ECE processes [110]. Furthermore, inclusive ECE pedagogy requires respecting diversity through valuing any viewpoints, recognising the multiple intelligences of the children, and supporting child-rights-based approaches in the practices carried out. Not only that, it encourages teachers' listening, promotes children's participation in making group agreements, and gives opportunities for children to choose their preferred activity. In that sense, practitioners can provide alternative activities, flexible methods, and modify the instructions when necessary. Furthermore, a positive

relationship culture as part of inclusive ECE pedagogy will foster the social–emotional development of children. Accordingly, practitioners should apply child-centred practices and adopt a supportive environmental focus. By doing so, practitioners can support the skills development of children in recognising and managing their emotions, empathy, assertiveness, and responsibility when making decisions. Additionally, to engage children in adopting socio-cultural values, practitioners may use regular repetition of the targeted behaviours in order to support the children in developing good habits. Finally, reflective practices are also encouraged in inclusive pedagogy as a medium for continuous learning, as well as evaluating practices' effectiveness and maintaining a positive climate.

Overall, against a background of gaps between inclusive policies, societal culture, and inclusive practices in Indonesia, at the microsystem level, developing the three key aspects highlighted in this article—distributed leadership, organisational culture, and a flexible approach to ECE pedagogy—can offer an effective strategy for developing an inclusive ECE setting.

Author Contributions: Conceptualisation, E.J., E.F. and R.A.; methodology, E.J.; investigation, E.J.; resources, E.J.; writing—original draft, E.J., E.F. and R.A.; supervision, E.F. and R.A.; project administration, E.J. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: Open access funding provided by University of Helsinki.

Institutional Review Board Statement: This study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of the British Educational Research Association and approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Hull, Approval Code: 1819700139023, Approval Date: 11/06/2019.

Informed Consent Statement: Written informed consent was obtained from the participants to publish this paper.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

1. Aditomo, A. *Panduan Pelaksanaan Pendidikan Inklusif*; Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan dan Perbukuan Kementrian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset dan Teknologi: Jakarta, Indonesia, 2021.
2. Sebba, J.; Ainscow, M. International Developments in Inclusive Schooling: Mapping the issues. *Camb. J. Educ.* **1996**, *26*, 5–18. [CrossRef]
3. Mulyadi, A.W.E. Policy of inclusive education for education for all in Indonesia. *Policy Gov. Rev.* **2017**, *1*, 201–212. [CrossRef]
4. Poernomo, B. The implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia: Current problems and challenges. *Am. Int. J. Soc. Sci.* **2016**, *5*, 144–150.
5. Suyanto, S. *Konsep Dasar Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*; Departemen Pendidikan Nasional RI: Jakarta, Indonesia, 2005.
6. Formen, A. In human-capital we trust, on developmentalism we act: The case of Indonesian early childhood education policy. In *Contemporary Issues and Challenge in Early Childhood Education in the Asia-Pacific Region*; Springer: Berlin/Heidelberg, Germany, 2017; pp. 125–142.
7. Yulindrasari, H. Neoliberal early childhood education policy and women's volunteerism. In Proceeding of the International Conference of Early Childhood Education "Negotiating Practices of Early Childhood Education", Bandung, Indonesia, 18–19 November 2014.
8. Hakim, L. Early Childhood Practitioners' Insights on Professionalism: Views from Indonesia. Master Thesis, Victoria University of Wellington: Wellington, New Zealand, 2014. Available online: https://researcharchive.vuw.ac.nz/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10063/4881/thesis.pdf?sequence=1 (accessed on 15 July 2023).
9. Yulindrasari, H.; Ujianti, P.R. "Trapped in the reform": Kindergarten teachers' experiences of teacher professionalisation in Buleleng, Indonesia. *Policy Futur. Educ.* **2018**, *16*, 66–79. [CrossRef]
10. Yoshikawa, H.; Kabay, S. The Evidence Base on Early Childhood Care and Education in Global Contexts. Background Paper for the UNESCO 2015, Education for All Global Monitoring Report. New York University. Available online: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000232456 (accessed on 15 July 2023).
11. Ediyanto, E.; Atika, I.N.; Kawai, N.; Prabowo, E. Inclusive education in Indonesia from the perspective of widyaiswara in center for development and empowerment of teachers and education personnel of kindergartens and special education. *Indones. J. Disabil. Stud.* **2017**, *4*, 104–116.

12. Djone, R.R.; Suryani, A. 'Indonesian teachers' perspectives on the impact of child work on students' learning outcomes. In *American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting 2018: The Dreams, Possibilities, and the Necessity of Public Education*; American Educational Research Association (AERA): Washington, DC, USA, 2018.
13. Mulyasa, E. *Standar Kompetensi Dan Sertifikasi Guru*; Remaja Rosda Karya: Bandung, Indonesia, 2007; ISBN 979-692-796-9.
14. Hidayat, R.; Ulya, H.; Pakuan, D.U.; Arsip, S.; Republik, N. Kompetensi kepala sekolah abad 21: Sebuah tinjauan teoretis. *J. Kepemimp. Dan Pengur. Sekol.* **2019**, *4*, 61–68. [CrossRef]
15. Damanik, E. *Principal Leadership Style and Its Impact on School Climate and Teacher Self-Efficacy in Indonesian Schools*; Curtin University: Bentley, WA, Australia, 2014.
16. UNESCO. *What Makes a Quality Curriculum? Current and Critical Issues in Curriculum and Learning*; IBE Council: Geneva, Switzerland, 2016. Available online: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000243975 (accessed on 15 July 2023).
17. Fonsén, E. Dimensions of pedagogical leadership in early childhood education and care. In *Researching Leadership in Early Childhood Education*; Hujala, E., Waniganayake, M., Rodd, J., Eds.; Tampere University Press: Tampere, Finland, 2013; pp. 181–191. ISBN 978-951-44-9173-3.
18. Ebbeck, M.; Waniganayake, M. *Early Childhood Professionals: Leading Today and Tomorrow*; Elsevier: Sydney, Australia, 2003; ISBN 0864331703.
19. Ainscow, M. *Understanding the Development of Inclusive Schools*; Routledge: Oxfordshire, UK, 2002. [CrossRef]
20. Spandagou, I.; Armstrong, D.; Armstrong, A.C. Inclusive Education: International Policy & Practice. *Incl. Educ.* **2009**, 1–176. [CrossRef]
21. Artiles, A.J.; Kozleski, E.B. Beyond convictions: Interrogating culture, history, and power in inclusive education. *Lang Arts.* **2007**, *4*, 351–357.
22. Ferguson, D.; Kozleski, E.; Smith, A. Transforming general and special education in urban schools. In *Effective Education for Learners with Exceptionalities*; Emerald Group Publishing Limited: Bingley, UK, 2003; ISBN 978-0-76230-975-7.
23. Armstrong, F.; Armstrong, D.; Barton, L. *Inclusive Education: Policy, Contexts and Comparative Perspectives*; Routledge: Oxfordshire, UK, 2016.
24. Alexander, R. Still no pedagogy? Principle, pragmatism and compliance in primary education. *Camb. J. Educ.* **2004**, *34*, 7–33. [CrossRef]
25. Watkins, C.; Mortimore, P. Pedagogy: What do we know? In *Understanding Pedagogy and Its Impact on Learning*; Mortimore, P., Ed.; Paul Chapman/Sage: London, UK, 1999; pp. 1–19.
26. Vygotsky, L.S.; Cole, M. *Mind in Society: Development of Higher Psychological Processes*; Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA, USA, 1978.
27. Bronfenbrenner, U. Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *Am. Psychol.* **1977**, *32*, 513. [CrossRef]
28. Tharp, R.G.; Gallimore, R. *Rousing Minds to Life: Teaching, Learning, and Schooling in Social Context*; Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, 1991.
29. Bowman, B.T.; Donovan, M.S.; Burns, M.S. Eager to Learn: Educating Our Preschoolers. [Full Report and Executive Summary.]. National Academy Press, 2101 Constitution Avenue, N. 2001. Available online: https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED447963 (accessed on 10 December 2019).
30. Stephen, C. Pedagogy: The silent partner in early years learning. *Early Years* **2010**, *30*, 15–28. [CrossRef]
31. Chung, S.; Walsh, D.J. Unpacking child-centredness: A history of meanings. *J. Curric. Stud.* **2000**, *32*, 215–234. [CrossRef]
32. Siraj-Blatchford, I.; Sylva, K. Researching pedagogy in English pre-schools. *Br. Educ. Res. J.* **2004**, *30*, 713–730. [CrossRef]
33. Rogoff, B.; Paradise, R.; Arauz, R.M.; Correa-Chavez, M.; Angelillo, C. Firsthand Learning through Intent Participation | Rogoff | Análise Psicológica. Available online: http://publicacoes.ispa.pt/index.php/ap/article/view/126 (accessed on 10 December 2019).
34. Executive, S. Building the Curriculum 2. Available online: https://education.gov.scot/media/3mglewdo/btc2.pdf (accessed on 10 December 2019).
35. Corbett, J.; Slee, R. An International Conversation of Inclusive Education. In *Inclusive Education: Policy, Contexts and Comparatives Perspectives*; Armstrong, F., Barton, L., Armstrong, D., Eds.; David Fulton: London, UK, 2000; pp. 133–146.
36. Messiou, K. Understanding marginalisation in education: The voice of children. *Eur. J. Psychol. Educ.* **2006**, *21*, 305. [CrossRef]
37. Bronfenbrenner, U. *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design*; Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA, USA, 1979.
38. Reicher, H. Building inclusive education on social and emotional learning: Challenges and perspectives—A review. *Int. J. Incl. Educ.* **2010**, *14*, 213–246. [CrossRef]
39. Gunter, L.; Caldarella, P.; Korth, B.B.; Young, K.R. Promoting social and emotional learning in preschool students: A study of Strong Start Pre-K. *Early Child. Educ. J.* **2012**, *40*, 151–159. [CrossRef]
40. Weissberg, R.P.; Durlak, J.A.; Domitrovich, C.E.; Gullotta, T.P. Social and emotional learning: Past, present, and future. In *Handbook of Social and Emotional Learning: Research and Practice*; The Guilford Press: New York, NY, USA, 2015; pp. 3–19.
41. Whitcomb, S.A. Strong start: Impact of Direct Teaching of a Social-Emotional Learning Curriculum and Infusion of Skills on Emotion Knowledge of First Grade Students. Doctoral Thesis, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR, USA, 2009. Available online: https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/handle/1794/10332 (accessed on 10 December 2019).

42. Izard, C.; Trentacosta, C.; King, K.; Mostow, A. An Emotion-Based Prevention Program for Head Start Children. *Early Educ. Dev. Early Educ. Dev.* **2004**, *15*, 407–422. [CrossRef]
43. McClelland, M.M.; Tominey, S.L.; Schmitt, S.A.; Duncan, R. SEL Interventions in Early Childhood. *Future Child.* **2017**, *27*, 33–47. [CrossRef]
44. Safe and Sound: An Educational Leader's Guide to Evidence-Based Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Programs. CASEL. Available online: https://casel.org/safe-and-sound-guide-to-sel-programs/ (accessed on 10 December 2019).
45. Bronfenbrenner, U.; Ceci, S.J. Nature-nuture reconceptualized in developmental perspective: A bioecological model. *Psychol. Rev.* **1994**, *101*, 568. [CrossRef]
46. Brierley, J.; Nutbrown, C. *Understanding Schematic Learning at Two*; Bloomsbury Publishing: London, UK, 2017.
47. Faulkner, D.; Littleton, K.; Woodhead, M. *Cultural Worlds of Early Childhood*; Routledge: Oxfordshire, UK, 2013; Volume 1.
48. Lawton, D. Values and education: A curriculum for the 21st century. In *Values and the Curriculum*; Routledge: Oxfordshire, UK, 2000.
49. Kagan, S.L.; Dermody, C.M. Toward Quality Early Learning: Systems for Success. In *Quality Early Learning: Nurturing Children's Potential*; The World Bank: Washington, DC, USA, 2022; pp. 239–279. [CrossRef]
50. Kagan, S.L.; Roth, J.L. Transforming Early Childhood Systems for Future Generations: Obligations and Opportunities. *Int. J. Early Child.* **2017**, *49*, 137–154. [CrossRef]
51. Rodd, J. Children, culture and education. *Child. Educ.* **1996**, *72*, 325–329. [CrossRef]
52. Booth, T.; Ainscow, M.; Kingston, D. *Index for Inclusion: Developing Play, Learning and Participation in Early Years and Childcare*; ERIC: Washington, DC, USA, 2006.
53. Mortimer, H.; Johnson, A. *Developing an Inclusion Policy in Your Early Years Setting*; QEd Publications: Stafford, UK, 2008.
54. Corbett, J. Inclusive education and school culture. *Int. J. Incl. Educ.* **1999**, *3*, 53–61. [CrossRef]
55. Duignan, P.A.; Macpherson, R.J. Educative leadership: A practical theory. *Educ. Adm. Q.* **1993**, *29*, 8–33. [CrossRef]
56. Nivala, V. Theoretical perspectives on educational leadership. *Underst. Leadersh. Early Child. Context Acta Univ. Ouluensis E* **1998**, *35*, 49–61.
57. Hujala, E. Contextually defined leadership. In *Researching Leadership in Early Childhood Education*; Hujala, E., Waniganayake, M., Rodd, J., Eds.; Tampere University Press: Tampere, Finland, 2013; pp. 47–60; ISBN 978-951-44-9173-3.
58. Ahtiainen, R.; Fonsén, E.; Kiuru, L. Finnish early childhood education and care leaders' perceptions of pedagogical leadership and assessment of the implementation of the National Core Curriculum in times of change. *Australas. J. Early Child.* **2021**, *46*, 126–138. [CrossRef]
59. Waniganayake, M. Leadership in early childhood lin Australia: A national review. *Cross-Cult. Perspect. Acta Univ. Ouluensis E Sci. Rerum Socialium* **1998**, *35*, 95–108.
60. Thornton, K. Courage, Commitment and Collaboration: Notions of Leadership in the NZ ECE Centres of Innovation. 2006. Available online: https://researcharchive.vuw.ac.nz/handle/10063/124?show=full (accessed on 10 December 2019).
61. Lambert, L. Leadership redefined: An evocative context for teacher leadership. *Sch. Leadersh. Manag.* **2003**, *23*, 421–430. [CrossRef]
62. Waniganayake, M.; Morda, R.; Kapsalakis, A. Leadership in child care centres: Is it just another job? *Australas. J. Early Child.* **2000**, *25*, 13–19. [CrossRef]
63. Lambert, L. A framework for shared leadership. *Educ. Leadersh.* **2002**, *59*, 37–40.
64. Waniganayake, M. Being and becoming early childhood leaders: Reflections on leadership studies in early childhood education and the future leadership research agenda. *J. Early Child. Educ. Res.* **2014**, *3*, 65–81.
65. Dinham, S.; Anderson, M.; Caldwell, B.; Weldon, P. Breakthroughs in school leadership development in Australia. *Sch. Leadersh. Manag.* **2011**, *31*, 139–154. [CrossRef]
66. Duignan, P. *Educational Leadership: Key Challenges and Ethical Tensions*; Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK, 2007.
67. Spillane, J.P.; Coldren, A.F. *Using a Distributed Perspective to Lead and Manage Change: Diagnosis and Design for School Improvement*; Teachers College Press: New York, NY, USA, 2011.
68. Schuelka, M.J. *Implementing Inclusive Education, K4D Helpdesk Report*; Institute of Development Studies: Brighton, UK, 2018.
69. Schuelka, M.J.; Sherab, K.; Nidup, T.Y. Gross national happiness, British values, and non-cognitive skills: The role and perspective of teachers in Bhutan and England. *Educ. Rev.* **2019**, *71*, 748–766. [CrossRef]
70. Maxwell, J.A. *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*, 3rd ed.; SAGE: Riverside, CA, USA, 2013.
71. Cohen, L.; Morrison, L.; Manion, K. *Research Methods in Education*, 6th ed.; Routledge: London, UK, 2007. [CrossRef]
72. Bryman, A. *Social Research Methods*, 5th ed.; Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK, 2016.
73. O'Connor, H.; Madge, C. Online interviewing. In *The SAGE Handbook of Online Research Methods*; SAGE: Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, 2008; pp. 416–434. [CrossRef]
74. O'Connor, H.; Madge, C.; Wellens, J.; Robert, S. Internet based interviewing. In *The SAGE Handbook of Online Research Methods*; SAGE: Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, 2008; pp. 271–289. [CrossRef]
75. Fielding, N.G.; Lee, R.M.; Blank, G. *The SAGE Handbook of Online Research Methods*; SAGE: Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, 2016.
76. Morgan, D.L. *Focus Groups as Qualitative Research*; SAGE: Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, 1997. [CrossRef]
77. Bailey, E.K.; Cotlar, M. Teaching via the internet. *Commun. Educ.* **1994**, *43*, 184–193. [CrossRef]
78. Morse, J.M.; Richards, L. *README FIRST for a User's Guide to Qualitative Methods*; SAGE: Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, 2002.

79. Clarke, V.; Braun, V. Thematic Analysis. In *Encyclopedia of Critical Psychology*; Teo, T., Ed.; Springer: New York, NY, USA, 2014; pp. 1947–1952. [CrossRef]
80. Aronson, J. A Pragmatic View of Thematic Analysis. *Qual. Rep.* **1995**, *2*, 1–3. [CrossRef]
81. Braun, V.; Clarke, V. Thematic analysis. In *APA Handbook of Research Methods in Psychology, Vol 2: Research Designs: Quantitative, Qualitative, Neuropsychological, and Biological, in APA Handbooks in Psychology®*; American Psychological Association: Washington, DC, USA, 2012; pp. 57–71. [CrossRef]
82. Arksey, H.; Knight, P.T. *Interviewing for Social Scientists*; SAGE: Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, 1999. [CrossRef]
83. Nutbrown, C.; Clough, P.; Atherton, F. *Inclusion in the Early Years*; SAGE: Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, 2013. Available online: https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/inclusion-in-the-early-years/book236895 (accessed on 10 December 2019).
84. Udvari-Solner, A.; Thousand, J.S.; Villa, R.A.; Quiocho, A.; Kelly, M.G. Promising practices that foster inclusive education. In *Creating Inclusive School*, 2nd ed.; Villa, R.A., Thousand, J.S., Eds.; Assosciation of Supervision of Curriculum Development: Alexandria, VA, USA, 1995; pp. 87–109.
85. The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education—UNESCO Digital Library. Available online: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000098427 (accessed on 10 December 2019).
86. Clough, P. Managing Inclusive Education: From Policy to Experience. November 1998. Available online: https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Managing-Inclusive-Education%3A-From-Policy-to-Clough/1895e1fbabb5528c7a11207589ad71ed4d719208 (accessed on 10 December 2019).
87. Cho, J.; Trent, A. Validity in Qualitative Research Revisited—Jeasik Cho, Allen Trent. 2006. Available online: https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1468794106065006 (accessed on 10 December 2019).
88. Ess, C. Internet research ethics. In *Oxford Handbook of Internet Psychology*; Oxford Academic: Oxford, UK, 2012. [CrossRef]
89. *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research*, 4th ed.; 2018. Available online: https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018 (accessed on 10 December 2019).
90. Diener, E.; Crandall, R. *Ethics in Social and Behavioral Research*; U Chicago Press: Oxford, UK, 1978; p. 266.
91. Frankfort-Nachmias, C.; Nachmias, D.; Nachmias, C. *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, 4th ed.; St. Martin's Press: New York, NY, USA, 1992.
92. LeCompte, M.D.; Preissle, J.; Tesch, R. *Ethnography and Qualitative Design in Educational Research*; Academic Press: Cambridge, MA, USA, 1993.
93. Rodd, J. *Leading Change in the Early Years*; McGraw-Hill Education: London, UK, 2015.
94. Davies, B. *The Essentials of School Leadership*; Paul Chapman Educational Publishing: London, UK, 2005.
95. Farrell, P.; Ainscow, M.; Farrell, P. *Making Special Education Inclusive: From Research to Practice*; David Fulton Publishers Ltd.: London, UK, 2002. Available online: https://research.manchester.ac.uk/en/publications/making-special-education-inclusive-from-research-to-practice (accessed on 16 December 2019).
96. Tilstone, C.; Rose, R. *Strategies to Promote Inclusive Practice*; Psychology Press: London, UK, 2003.
97. Nind, M.; Wearmouth, J.; Collins, J.; Hall, K.; Rix, J.; Sheehy, K. A Systematic Review of Pedagogical Approaches that Can Effectively Include Children with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Classrooms with a Particular Focus on Peer Group Interactive Approaches. November 2004. Available online: http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/cms/Default.aspx?tabid=331 (accessed on 10 December 2019).
98. Goal 4 | Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Available online: https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal4 (accessed on 14 September 2023).
99. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF UK. Available online: https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/ (accessed on 14 September 2023).
100. Von Bertalanffy, L. The history and status of general systems theory. *Acad. Manage. J.* **1972**, *15*, 407–426. [CrossRef]
101. Kagan, S.L.; Araujo, M.C.; Jaimovich, A.; Aguayo, Y.C. Understanding systems theory and thinking: Early childhood education in Latin America and the Caribbean. In *The SAGE Handbook of Early Childhood Research*; SAGE: Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, 2016.
102. World Development Report 2006: Equity and Development. Available online: https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/146c5855-c934-52b6-be26-50ff4013c5dc (accessed on 14 September 2023).
103. Fonsén, E.; Ahtiainen, R.; Heikkinen, K.-M.; Heikonen, L.; Strehmel, P.; Tamir, E. (Eds.) *Early Childhood Education Leadership in Times of Crisis: International Studies During the COVID-19 Pandemic*; Verlag Barbara Budrich: Kornwestheim, Germany, 2023. Available online: https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/62558 (accessed on 16 September 2023).
104. Fulcher, G. *Disabling Policies? A Comparative Approach to Education Policy and Disability*; Routledge: Oxfordshire, UK, 2015.
105. Jones, S.M.; Bouffard, S.M. Social and Emotional Learning in Schools: From Programs to Strategies and Commentaries. *Soc. Res. Child Dev.* **2012**, *26*, 1–33. [CrossRef]
106. Hujala, E. Dimensions of Leadership in the Childcare Context. *Scand. J. Educ. Res.* **2004**, *48*, 53–71. [CrossRef]
107. Waniganayake, M.; Cheeseman, S.; Fenech, M.; Hadley, F.; Shepherd, W. *Leadership: Contexts and complexities in Early Childhood Education*; Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK, 2012.
108. Miles, M.T. *The Relative Impact of Principal Instructional and Transformational Leadership on School Culture*; University of Missouri-Columbia: Columbia, MO, USA, 2002.

109. Sergiovanni, T.J. Refocusing Leadership to Build Community. *High Sch. Mag.* **1999**, *7*, 10–15.
110. Pianta, R.C. *Enhancing Relationships between Children and Teachers*; American Psychological Association: Washington, DC, USA, 1999.