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# IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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#### **Abstract**

The aim of this research is to determine the implementation of inclusive education for children with special needs, determine the supporting factors and obstacles in implementing inclusive education programs and determine the perceptions of school principals and teachers regarding the implementation of inclusive education for children with special needs. This research uses a qualitative descriptive method, the subjects of this research are the school principal, class teacher and class IV ABK students. Data collection techniques use observation, interviews and documentation. The results of this research obtained the following results: (1) The process of implementing inclusive education for children with special needs at SD Negeri 5 Langsa class IVa has been implemented well by the class teachers, although it has not been implemented perfectly and further evaluation still needs to be carried out. (2) The supporting factor for the implementation of inclusive education in this school is that the teachers at SD Negeri 5 Langsa have previously been provided with knowledge about inclusive education through the education department, support from parents and regular students who can receive it. differences, while the inhibiting factors are the unavailability of special accompanying teachers, and the teacher's lack of understanding regarding the delivery of certain material. (3) The views of teachers and school principals regarding inclusive education implemented in elementary schools are very good. Teachers and school principals really appreciate the existing regulations because inclusive education really helps students with special needs get the same services as students in general.

Keywords

Implementation, Inclusive Education, Children with Special Needs



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#### INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, there are still several schools that accept children with special needs but do not implement inclusive education so that these children lack knowledge and attention. In Indonesia, there are still several schools that accept children with special needs but do not implement inclusive education, so these children lack knowledge and attention. (Harefa et al., 2023). There are two models of education for children with disabilities: segregation and integration. The first model is segregation education known as the Special Schools (SLB) axis. The second model is a beautiful form of integrated education, a combination of special education and regular education or what we know as inclusive education with educational levels including elementary school, middle school, high school and college. Apart from these two models of educational services for children with disabilities, there is a beautiful concept of mainstream education, namely an education system that places children with disabilities in regular schools with the provisions of following the applicable curriculum. However, it is usually held for children whose illnesses do not impact cognitive abilities such as epilepsy, asthma and sensory disorders as well as children with disabilities (Hartadi et al., 2019).

According to their unique needs, children with special needs (ABK) usually attend special schools (SLB). Something revolutionary must be done to address this, such as providing opportunities and chances for children with disabilities to obtain teaching education in general education institutions. We call this kind of learning design inclusive education. One way to think of inclusion is as a way to address and overcome differences between all people by increasing engagement in education, culture, and society while reducing marginalisation in and out of educational activities(Anggita Sakti, 2020). This includes customising and changing content, methodologies, frameworks and plans within a standardised system with the common understanding that inclusion is an obligation to educate every child within the same age range.

In reality, many schools are still unable to fully implement inclusive education programmes. In addition to inadequate infrastructure and human resources, there is a lack of understanding of the goals and benefits for children with and without special needs. (Sembung et al., 2023). When education is implemented in the field, it is often evaluated whether or not children with special needs are provided Similar and concurrent educational interventions for children with special needs will only hinder the educational process and have a negative impact on children in general. This approach to education will have consequences. Among the children, there are typical

children and children with special challenges, such as disinterest, neglect, and lack of independence, self-confidence, and unpreparedness for social life. Despite the fact that it is inclusive(Lestari et al., 2022).

Children with special needs must be educated in schools that are tailored to their needs, namely Special Schools (SLB). This has quickly and unexpectedly led to the dehumanization of children with special needs, which in turn has exacerbated the process of separating children with special needs from children in general. Therefore, a child with special needs must be considered carefully when interacting with the general public. To encourage interaction and respect every child's right to learn and be able to handle failure, there is a concept of inclusive education for every child in Indonesia. Inclusive education, like Anjarsari, is a method that accepts all students with special needs in regular schools located in the surrounding area, while still providing various learning and support services according to student needs. It is also possible to define experiential learning as a process that combines philosophy and practice. Inclusive education involves thinking about how education and schooling should be organized (Angreni & Sari, 2020)

Likewise, from a psychological and methodological perspective, the efforts that teachers must make are appropriate to carry out an efficient learning process. According to humanistic psychology, educational services for children with special needs are essentially humanitarian efforts that must be carried out in an effort to maximize potential and increase human dignity. Meanwhile, from an educational perspective, providing education for children with special needs is a joint obligation between the separatist government, the government, and guardian activists as well as educational foundations in particular. (Fitri Simamora et al., 2022). Teachers, parents and the general public must be aware of children with special needs considering the current situation. This is so that no one views children with special needs as weak individuals who do not have the right to receive educational services.

Researchers observed the learning methods of children with special needs who studied together with ordinary children in general. However, researchers see that children with special needs who study with ordinary children are often ignored by their teachers, because teachers consider children with special needs to be unable to receive lessons like students in general. One way to solve this puzzle is to implement inclusive education in learning at SD N 5 Langsa. Researchers have made observations at SD N 5 Langsa, in this school there are several children with special needs who study together with the main children in general, namely in class 4 a.

Children with special needs at SD N 5 Langsa are included in the type of children with special needs who experience learning difficulties. Children are very slow and have difficulty learning to accept the lessons delivered by the teacher. Inclusive education is an education system created to realize the concept of education for all by integrating children with special needs in a learning environment that extends to elementary school children (Bahri, 2021). In the Minister of National Education Regulation Number 70 of 2009, inclusive education is defined as an education delivery system that provides opportunities for all students with disabilities and who have the potential for intelligence and/or special talents to participate in education together with other students.

Inclusive education programs in schools involve integrating students from different grade levels into the same learning environment and program. By collaborating with students with special needs in the school environment, this program will have a positive and very constructive impact. Integrate them. School life that occurs outside of school. To live in downstream society, a person must have high communication and interpersonal skills; To live well in downstream society, individuals must develop themselves because of this important education. Despite differences in ability and temperament, a teacher and a student with special needs can learn together. (Manurung et al., 2022)

Conceptually, inclusive education places children with disabilities in state schools with their peers, as an alternative to special education in special schools. This approach aims to reduce discrimination and enable children with disabilities to develop optimally through wider interaction and socialization. Inclusive education has been implemented in Indonesia, even down to elementary school level, but still faces a number of problems (Sukmaretny, Darmawati, 2020). These include a lack of teacher competence in dealing with children with disabilities, a lack of supporting facilities, a lack of curriculum adaptation and various characteristics of children with disabilities that require different approaches. The importance of further study of the problems faced in elementary schools in implementing inclusive education emphasizes the need for an indepth understanding of the obstacles and challenges faced by schools and teachers. This provides the basis for more targeted and effective improvement efforts to support inclusive education in Indonesia(Hakim Hidayat et al., 2024).

This problem has also been discussed by several previous studies, some of which are research on 'Implementation of Inclusive Education at Serang Pengasih Kulon Progo State Elementary School' by Niga Anggraini Pratiwi, 2019. The results of this study indicate that the

implementation of inclusive education in the cultural dimension shows the rejection of children with disabilities, less than optimal collaboration between educators and parents / guardians, no experts such as Special Assistance Teachers (GPK), additional hour services and sanctions, and socialisation related to inclusive education to all school members (Sangadji, 2022).

Research conducted by Hasan Baharum, Robiatul Awwaliyah, 2019 on 'Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs in the Perspective of Islamic Epistemology' can see that in the perspective of Islamic epistemology also considers that inclusive education is very important to implement. It is proven that the implementation of inclusive education at SD Negeri 2 Cingkes is very effective in providing opportunities for all students who have abnormalities and have the potential for intelligence and / or special talents to participate in education or learning in an educational environment together with students in general. (Baharun & Awwaliyah, 2018).

Then it can also be seen from research on 'Inclusive Education Practices in Elementary Schools' by Fatkhul Arifin, Asep Supena, Yufriati 2023. The results of the study say that the implementation of the inclusive education programme implemented in public elementary schools is well implemented, it just needs support from all parties, especially the government that facilitates schools for inclusive education, the number of special assistant teachers and of course parents(Arifin et al., 2023). Then there is also research conducted by Syaiful Bahri, 2022 on 'Inclusive Education Management in Elementary Schools' it can be seen that the management of inclusive education at SD Negeri 2 Barabai, Hulu Sungai Tengah Regency is good. This is evidenced by data verification with a data assessment rubric, that from the results of observations, interviews, and documentation shows that the management of inclusive education at SD Negeri 2 Barabai consists of 8 scopes, namely curriculum management, learner management, financing management, management of educators and education personnel, community relations management, school culture and environment management, and special service management. (Bahri, 2021).

In addition, there is also research by Mardiana, Ahmad Khori 2021 on 'Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs in Elementary Schools' which states that there are public or private elementary schools that have already accepted children with special needs, there is no readiness to organise inclusive education or there is no individualised education programme for children with special needs, such as the availability of special assistant teachers and coaching for teachers to get training in handling children with special needs as well as more complete facilities

and facilities at school, especially for learning media (Mardiana & Ahmad Khoiri, 2021). From some previous studies, we can see some differences from this study, namely that previous studies did not focus on the types of special needs children being studied, while this study focuses on slow learning special needs children.

From the previous explanation, it can be interpreted that inclusive education aims to provide opportunities for all students with special needs or special needs to obtain quality and meaningful educational opportunities while still realizing the implementation of education that respects diversity and is not discriminatory. Inclusive education improves relationships between teachers and students, between teachers and parents, and between parents and students. Learning methods are carried out in various ways so that children feel motivated to learn. The lesson material is presented in a more interesting and fun way so that children can absorb the lesson material provided. Evaluation is carried out based on assessments carried out differently according to the development of each student's abilities (Adibussholeh HM & Wahyuni, 2021). This explanation is also supported by inclusive theory which explains the importance of inclusive education. The theory of inclusion in the education of children with special needs is rooted in the principles of human rights, equality and accessibility. Basically, this theory emphasizes that everyone has the right to receive quality education in the arts, regardless of disability or difference. In practice, implementing inclusive education involves various aspects, including teacher training, curriculum changes, adjustments to physical facilities, and counseling support. The goal is to create a welcoming and inclusive learning environment for all students. (Susanto, 2019).

Data obtained at SD N 5 Langsa showed that there were 4 children with special needs who were slow learners, often lagging behind other friends, especially with a lack of attention from teachers. This makes children with special needs at SD N 5 Langsa, specifically in class 4 downstream, marginalized and must receive the same attention as other students. With this inclusive education research, it is hoped that education in Indonesia can pay more attention to children with special needs (ABK) in elementary schools in general so that they can still enjoy learning like students in general. Based on what has been explained about teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education and the personality traits that can influence attitudes, the author wants to see how inclusive education is implemented for children with special needs in elementary schools, the supporting and inhibiting factors for its implementation. inclusive education at SD Negeri 5 Langsa and also wanted to see how teachers and principals view the implementation of

inclusive education at SD Negeri 5 Langsa.

#### **METHOD**

The research location was carried out at SDN 5 Langsa, precisely in Class 4A, located on Jl. Teuku Chik Ditunong, Gampong Jawa, District. Langsa City, Langsa City, Aceh Province. And the research implementation period starts from January to July 2024. The aim of this research is to find out how inclusive education is applied to children with special needs in elementary schools, what are the supporting and inhibiting factors for implementing inclusive education and how it is implemented. the views of school principals and teachers regarding the implementation of inclusive education for children with special needs at SD Negeri 5 Langsa.

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method, where data collection techniques in this research are through interviews, observation and documentation. The informants interviewed in this research were the school principal and class 4a teacher. Researchers use unstructured interview techniques, namely interviews that do not follow a fixed format or list of questions. In this interview the interviewer has the freedom to ask questions that are spontaneous and in accordance with the respondent's response.

Observations in this research are researchers who observe the way teachers teach without causing changes to ongoing learning activities. Documentation is used to obtain documentary data such as the condition of teachers, students, employees, history of establishment, facilities and infrastructure at SD N 5 Langsa. The presentation of data here is limited as a collection of information that provides the possibility to draw conclusions and take action. Conclusions are drawn after the data is arranged systematically and neatly.

#### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data were collected using observation, interview and documentation methods. The research took place on 10-12 June 2024. The observation method was carried out by observing the profile of children with special needs and learning activities in the implementation of inclusive education at SD Negeri 5 Langsa. In addition to observation, input collection is also carried out by interview and documentation methods which usually use pivot evidence. Interview activities were carried out with Mrs Kasmawati as the Principal of SDN 5 Langsa in the Principal's room on 10 June 2024, then the researcher also conducted an interview with Mrs Chairul Husna in class IV Ambang Indah on 10 June 2024.

Based on the results of an interview with Mrs Kasmawati which discusses the background of accepting children with special needs, she said that 'This school accepts children with special needs because there is already a regulation from the government directly that every public elementary school must accept children with special needs, provided that the abk that is accepted is not the type of abk that is too heavy, for example abk who have special aids'. Based on the results of the interview conducted with Mrs Kasmawati as the principal, it can be seen that SDN Langsa 5 is also ready to accept children with special needs by preparing teachers who already have more knowledge about inclusive education. This is evidenced by Mrs Chairul Husna's statement that teachers in this school have been equipped with knowledge about inclusive education by attending several trainings so as to produce teachers who are ready to educate children with special needs properly. Therefore, this school is one of the schools that implement inclusive education.

Based on the results of an interview with Mrs Kasmawati, she said that 'before accepting children with special needs in this school, the teachers have been equipped with knowledge about inclusive education through training activities held by the Ministry of Education on teaching education for children with special needs by implementing inclusive education'. From the interview extract, it is known that each teacher receives special training related to inclusive education in primary schools, where each teacher is distributed to attend the training. Parents also support the implementation of inclusive education in primary schools, but students with special needs who are accepted are still in that category. If the student falls into the category of having severe special needs then it is recommended to attend special schools only because parents of regular students are afraid that their children will be disturbed in their learning.

Learning activities at this school are the same as other schools, namely introduction, core and conclusion. Before the teaching process begins, the class teacher creates a lesson plan and syllabus using an educational database. RPP is implemented in the first semester with the value of one semester's work, and this work influences the child's development results in the previous semester with conditions that must be met in the following semester. The difference is, the indicators are adjusted to the child's abilities, the RPP used in this learning acts as an axis for children with special needs and other regular children. However, indicators for children with disabilities are not included in the RPP; The homeroom teacher only mentioned it in the book.

There are several indicators that can be used in implementing inclusive education in general education schools. These indicators include, but are not limited to, inclusive class clusters, human resources (class teachers and special assistant teachers), learning, learning processes, evaluation, facilities and infrastructure, and other related matters. However, this research focuses more on teachers' approaches to teaching children with special needs, facilities and infrastructure, learning processes, and class registration for students with special needs. (Zikrillah et al., 2024)

Based on observations, the first step in the inclusive education process is the initial stage. Previously, the homeroom teacher prepared books and equipment for teaching. Before the children begin the learning process, the class teacher directs the students to read short letters first and then continue reading prayers before learning. From the results of observations, the preliminary activities began with conditioning the students, such as turning around, asking the students to assume a neat sitting position, ready to participate in the learning process. This aims to make the class more conducive. Then the teacher prepares the child physically and psychologically by providing a kind of beautiful game but still related to the learning material. This will make the child more relaxed before receiving the material that will be presented next. This step is taken so that all students are truly mentally and physically ready to take part in learning.

The next step in the teaching process is to review the lesson material that has been previously taught, which is done by asking questions to both children with special needs and ordinary children. In discussing the questions above, everything is the same; However, because the majority of children with special needs are children with special needs, the questions that the class teacher will convey to children with special needs will be conveyed in a straightforward manner with slight modifications to the way the questions are presented to the children so that it is easier for them to understand and provide guidance so that the children can answer, these questions. The class teacher then explains the material that has been prepared. Based on the results of the observations that have been completed, the teacher explains the material that has been prepared, namely material P5 about the process of making salted eggs. In this lesson the teacher explains the learning material that underlies the learning process. At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher paints an egg.

Previously, the homeroom teacher asked students to bring tools and materials that would be used in making salted eggs. Then the teacher guides real students to carry out P5 activities, then the teacher interacts with students, especially children with learning needs in the classroom. The teacher repeats the practice of making salted eggs directly in the classroom of students with special needs. By interacting more with students with special needs, it will greatly influence students' understanding, especially students with special needs, in making salted eggs. After all the students succeeded in making salted eggs well, the teacher appreciated the activities carried out by the students so that the students felt happy and proud of themselves for successfully carrying out the business process.

From these activities, it is hoped that students will have entrepreneurial skills so that one day they can be useful or useful in the future. After the core activity is finished the teacher reinforces the explanation of making salted eggs to the students, then the teacher and students make conclusions together about making salted eggs which were learned today, after the learning process ends the teacher and students end the lesson. by saying hamdalah.

Based on the results of observations made during learning in class Iva, it can be seen that the implementation of inclusive education for children with special needs in the learning process is as shown in the following table:

Table 1. Observation Results in Class IV a

No	Aspect	Indicator	Information
1	Connection	• The teachers are friendly and warm	The teacher is very friendly and warm to students, especially students with
		• Teachers are always close to their students	special needs, and the teacher is always close to
		<ul> <li>Teachers always praise students who are slow learners</li> </ul>	the students with a smiling face and pointing at the students. Teachers also praise students when they
		• The teacher helps during learning	succeed in doing something.
2	Ability	• Teachers as student companions	During the learning process, teachers are very supportive of all students, especially
		• Teachers replace the role of parents	students with disabilities, by always accompanying students during learning and also replacing the role of parents.
3	Seating arrangement	• The teacher arranges various seats	Seating arrangements in the classroom vary, such as
		• The teacher makes	forming study groups or sitting on benches in a circle so that all students can see

		groups in a circle	each other.
4	Learning materials	Teachers create varied teaching materials  The teacher makes interesting activities	The teacher has created interesting and varied teaching materials so that students don't quickly get bored while studying, also interspersed with games to make students more enthusiastic.
5	Resource	The teacher develops a daily plan  Before starting learning, the teacher has prepared a daily plan involving students, for example the teacher asks students to bring learning media that is cheap and easy to obtain.	The teacher has created interesting and varied teaching materials so that students don't quickly get bored while studying, also interspersed with games to make students more enthusiastic.
6	Evaluation	The teacher observes the students  The teacher carries out the assessment	Teachers assess student performance, then evaluate and explain what needs to be improved in the future

Based on the table of observation results above, it can be seen that the implementation of inclusive education in class IVa has been good. It can be seen that the process of implementing inclusive education at SD Negeri 5 Langsa has gone well even though it has not yet gone well. implemented perfectly as stated in the field study, supported by expert opinions, showing that schools in providing inclusive education still need to improve themselves in their implementation to create inclusive education that truly accommodates the special needs of each child in accordance with the opinion that inclusive education is an educational service system. which provides opportunities for children to be inclusive (Muzdalifah & Fazrina, 2020). All children learn together in public schools by paying attention to diversity and individual needs so that children's potential can develop optimally.

This is in line with Howard Gardner's notion of multiple intelligences, which postulates that everyone has different intelligences. This diversity is recognised and valued in inclusive education, which offers a variety of methods for students to learn and demonstrate their understanding. Therefore, to organise inclusive education as effectively as possible, assistance

from a number of stakeholders, including parents, teachers and the community around the child, is required(Nugraheni et al., 2022). Based on previous research on 'inclusive education practices in primary schools' (Fatkhul Arifin, Asep Supena, Yufriati 2023), inclusive education programmes have been successfully implemented in public primary schools; all that is needed is support from all stakeholders, especially the government which provides funding for these schools.

Learning progress needs to be monitored to find out whether the inclusive education schedule given to students, especially children with special needs, is successful or not. (Anzari et al., 2019). If within a certain period of time children's art does not experience significant progress, then several related aspects need to be reviewed. On the other hand, if the special schedule given to the child has made significant progress, then the schedule needs to be continued while correcting or perfecting the existing deficiencies.

The implementation of this learning cannot be separated from supporting and inhibiting factors during the learning process. Apart from the benefits obtained from implementing inclusive schools for children with special needs, there are also obstacles faced in implementing fully inclusive schools. These obstacles come from inside and outside the school. Based on interviews with class teachers and school principals, the supporting factor for implementing inclusive education in this school is that teachers at SD Negeri 5 Langsa had previously been provided with knowledge about inclusive education through training conducted by the education office.

Before implementing inclusive education in schools, teachers at SD Negeri 5 Langsa had taken part in training held by the education office, in order to prepare teachers who were ready to educate students in any condition, both regular students and students with special needs. This is in line with the results of the author's research, namely that at SD Negeri 5 Langsa there are no special accompanying teachers for children with special needs, as is the case in other schools that provide inclusive education. Support from students' parents is also one of the supporting factors for the implementation of inclusive education in elementary schools, because with student support it is also very easy for the school to consult with each other about whatever is happening and what teachers should do. that boy (Baroroh & Rukiyati, 2022). Regular students in class 4a can also appreciate the presence of ABK students in their class, this really helps ABK students adapt to their surroundings because the friendly environment really appreciates the differences that exist.

Meanwhile, the inhibiting factor in implementing inclusive education is the unavailability of special accompanying teachers (GPK), because with the presence of special accompanying teachers for children with special needs, the learning process will be easier. The presence of special accompanying teachers will help smooth learning in the classroom, and the lack of teacher understanding about how to delivering material that is easy to understand about certain materials such as mathematics subject matter so that students have difficulty receiving lessons, especially students with special needs.

Perception is very important in life because perception will influence the perspective, understanding, threshold of beautiful responses, attitudes and behavior of humans towards the objects perceived. Perception is a process of using knowledge that humans already have in interpreting an object (Anggita & Triono, 2024). With knowledge, a person can provide an interpretation of the object being perceived so that it will produce an assessment or response as a good final result of perception. Therefore, understanding is very important in providing guidance to know the steps that must be taken to provide intervention for students with special needs (Fitrianasari, 2019).

The principal of SD Negeri 5 Langsa, Mrs. Kasmawat, considers inclusive education to be an important part of the school's vision and mission. A commitment to inclusion reflects the school's values and the principal plays a key role in developing inclusive policies. This involves an elite team approach, curriculum adaptation and fair assessment. Principals are responsible for providing resources for inclusion, including purchasing teaching aids and staff training. Collaboration with parents, psychologists and external organizations is important. Monitoring and evaluation are important to ensure inclusive programs run well (Mardiana & Ahmad Khoiri, 2021). Challenges such as pivot barriers and resource limitations must be overcome with effective communication and training. The aim of its implementation is to create a positive and inclusive school environment for the holistic development of all students.

In line with Iva's homeroom teacher's views on implementing inclusive education for students with special needs, Mrs. Chairul Husna really appreciates every regular school that implements inclusive education in its schools. Classroom teachers' expectations for inclusive education for children with special needs in elementary schools include: improved teaching skills, resources and support, collaboration with parents and specialists, a flexible curriculum, a supportive learning environment, and student awareness of diversity. With this hope, teachers can

be better prepared and motivated to implement effective inclusive education for all students, including those with special needs.

The existence of inclusive education provides opportunities for children with disabilities to get more stimulation from learning and playing with their peers in an inclusive education environment (Sangadji, 2022). Children with disabilities who attend inclusive education have more positive social and emotional functioning and are more likely to be accepted by their peers, have better self-perceptions, and have less disruptive behavior than those who attend special schools.

Enrolling children with disabilities in inclusive schools can help children achieve better academic achievements and social relationships, increase mobility, independence and speech development as well as provide formative experiences (Yusri, 2020). With inclusive education, children with disabilities feel at home interacting with the social environment, thereby improving learning through observation, imitation and interaction. Through inclusive education, students with disabilities and non-disabilities can interact and develop their potential in participating in learning activities.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Teachers in these classes have done a good job in implementing inclusive education for children at SDN 5 Langsa Iva who have special needs. This is shown by the use of several indicators, such as teachers' good and caring attitudes towards students, especially students with special needs. Very supportive of all students, especially class AKB, teachers have produced interesting and varied teaching materials so that students are not easily bored in learning and always give appreciation to students who succeed in achieving a goal. Even though it has not been implemented perfectly and still needs a more thorough evaluation, both learning objectives and teaching materials. Supporting factors for the implementation of inclusive education at SD Negeri 5 Langsa are that teachers at SD Negeri 5 Langsa receive training in inclusive education from the education office with support from parents and regular students. However, the lack of GPKs and teachers' understanding of material delivery are obstacles in the implementation of inclusive education at school. Principals' and teachers' views on inclusive education are important for success. Primary school classroom teachers' expectations include improved teaching skills, resource support, collaboration, flexible curriculum, learning environment and student awareness.

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