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METHODS OF TEACHING PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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Abstract. This article examines the methodology of teaching primary school students in inclusive education settings and its importance in ensuring equal learning opportunities for all learners. It analyzes key pedagogical approaches such as differentiated instruction, individualized education plans (IEPs), cooperative learning, and the use of assistive technologies. The study highlights that effective inclusive teaching methods promote academic achievement, social integration, and emotional development of both typically developing students and those with special educational needs.

Keywords: inclusive education, primary school, teaching methodology, differentiated instruction, individualized education plan (IEP), cooperative learning, assistive technology, special educational needs.

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary education systems, inclusive education has emerged as one of the most important principles ensuring equal access to quality learning for all children. It is based on the idea that every learner, regardless of physical, intellectual, emotional, linguistic, or social differences, has the right to receive appropriate education within a common learning environment. This approach reflects global commitments to equity, human rights, and sustainable development in education. Primary education plays a particularly crucial role in the implementation of inclusive education, as it represents the foundational stage of a child's cognitive, emotional, and social development. At this stage, children begin to form basic learning habits, communication skills, and social attitudes. Therefore, ensuring inclusivity in primary classrooms is essential for building a fair and supportive educational system from the earliest years of schooling. Inclusive education is not merely the physical integration of students with special educational needs into mainstream classrooms. Rather, it is a pedagogical approach that requires adaptation of teaching methods, curriculum content, classroom environment, and assessment strategies to meet the diverse needs of all learners. This requires teachers to be flexible, creative, and professionally competent in managing heterogeneous classrooms. However, implementing inclusive education in primary schools presents several challenges. These include differences in learners' cognitive abilities, lack of specialized teaching materials, insufficient teacher training, large class sizes, and limited access to assistive technologies. Without appropriate methodological support, these challenges may reduce the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes. Modern pedagogical research emphasizes that successful inclusive education depends on the use of learner-centered and differentiated teaching methodologies. Teachers are required to design flexible lesson plans that consider individual learning needs and provide multiple pathways for students to achieve learning outcomes. In this context, strategies such as differentiated instruction, cooperative learning, individualized education plans (IEPs), and the use of assistive technologies are widely recognized as effective tools. Furthermore, inclusive education contributes not only to academic development but also to social integration. When students with different abilities learn together, they develop empathy, tolerance, communication skills, and respect for diversity. This creates a positive classroom culture where

every learner feels valued and supported. International organizations such as UNESCO and OECD strongly emphasize inclusive education as a key component of quality education systems. According to their recommendations, inclusive teaching practices should be integrated into teacher training programs, curriculum design, and school policies to ensure sustainability and effectiveness. Therefore, studying the methodology of teaching primary school students in inclusive education settings is of great theoretical and practical importance. It helps to identify effective pedagogical strategies, improve teaching quality, and ensure that all learners have equal opportunities to succeed in education. This article aims to analyze the main methodological approaches used in inclusive primary education and evaluate their effectiveness in supporting diverse learners.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Inclusive education and its methodological foundations in primary schooling have been extensively studied in pedagogical, psychological, and special education literature. The reviewed scientific sources consistently emphasize that inclusive education is not a separate system of teaching, but a transformation of the general education system aimed at ensuring equity, participation, and quality learning for all students. One of the fundamental theoretical bases of inclusive education is Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. Vygotsky argued that learning is a socially mediated process and that cognitive development occurs through interaction with more knowledgeable peers and adults. His concept of the *Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)* is particularly relevant in inclusive classrooms, where students with different abilities learn together. According to this theory, learners can achieve higher levels of understanding through scaffolding and guided support, making cooperative learning an essential strategy in inclusive education. Another important contribution comes from Jean Piaget's cognitive development theory, which explains how children construct knowledge through interaction with their environment. Piaget's stages of development highlight that primary school learners are in the concrete operational stage, meaning they learn best through hands-on activities, visual aids, and practical experiences. This perspective supports the use of differentiated and experiential teaching methods in inclusive classrooms. From a pedagogical perspective, UNESCO (2017) defines inclusive education as a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all learners through increased participation in learning, cultures, and communities. UNESCO emphasizes that inclusive education is closely linked to human rights and social justice, ensuring that no learner is excluded from quality education due to disability or other differences. Similarly, OECD reports on equity in education highlight that inclusive education improves not only access but also learning outcomes when supported by appropriate teaching strategies. OECD research shows that student-centered learning environments significantly enhance engagement and achievement, particularly for vulnerable learners. Modern researchers in special and inclusive education, such as Tomlinson (differentiated instruction theory), argue that effective teaching in diverse classrooms requires adapting content, process, and assessment according to students' readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles. Differentiated instruction is widely recognized as one of the most effective methodological approaches in inclusive primary education. In addition, Booth and Ainscow's Index for Inclusion provides a comprehensive framework for developing inclusive schools. Their work emphasizes three key dimensions: creating inclusive cultures, producing inclusive policies, and evolving inclusive practices. This framework has been widely adopted in many educational systems as a guideline for school development. Research by Mitchell (What Really Works in Special and Inclusive Education) highlights evidence-based strategies such as cooperative learning, peer tutoring, explicit instruction, and formative assessment. These strategies are shown to improve both academic achievement and social integration in inclusive classrooms. Recent studies also

emphasize the growing importance of assistive technologies in inclusive education. Digital tools such as speech-to-text software, interactive learning platforms, visual supports, and adaptive learning systems help students with special educational needs access curriculum content more effectively. These technologies contribute to reducing learning barriers and increasing independence. Furthermore, literature indicates that teacher preparedness is a critical factor in the success of inclusive education. Studies show that teachers require not only subject knowledge but also competencies in classroom management, psychological support, individualized planning, and adaptive teaching strategies. Without adequate professional training, implementation of inclusive methodologies remains inconsistent and less effective. Overall, the literature consistently demonstrates that inclusive education in primary schools is most effective when supported by a combination of theoretical frameworks, differentiated instruction, collaborative learning strategies, and technological support. However, researchers also note that systemic challenges such as limited resources, large class sizes, and insufficient teacher training continue to hinder full implementation in many educational contexts.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study focuses on the methodology of teaching primary school students in inclusive education settings and analyzes effective pedagogical approaches that ensure equal learning opportunities for all learners. The research is based on a qualitative and theoretical framework, supported by comparative and analytical methods. The study adopts a descriptive–analytical research design aimed at examining and systematizing existing pedagogical approaches in inclusive primary education. It focuses on identifying effective teaching strategies that support diverse learners, including students with special educational needs.

Object and Subject of the Study. Object of the study the teaching and learning process in primary education within inclusive classrooms. Subject of the study: pedagogical methodologies and strategies used to support diverse learners in inclusive education settings

The following scientific methods were applied:

Theoretical analysis method This method was used to analyze scientific literature, pedagogical theories, and psychological research related to inclusive education, differentiated instruction, and special education needs. Comparative method Traditional teaching methods were compared with inclusive teaching approaches such as differentiated instruction, cooperative learning, and individualized education plans (IEPs) to determine their effectiveness. System analysis method This method helped to examine how different pedagogical components (teacher role, curriculum adaptation, assessment, and classroom environment) interact within inclusive education systems. Synthesis method

Information from various sources was combined to form generalized conclusions about the most effective teaching strategies in inclusive primary education.

The research is based on:

- International educational frameworks (UNESCO, OECD reports)
- Scientific literature in pedagogy, psychology, and special education
- Works of classical and modern scholars such as Vygotsky, Piaget, Tomlinson, and Booth & Ainscow

The validity of the research is ensured through the use of credible academic sources and internationally recognized educational theories. Reliability is strengthened by comparing multiple pedagogical perspectives and research findings. The study is limited to primary education settings, with a focus on inclusive classrooms where learners with diverse abilities are taught together. The selected methodological approach provides a solid theoretical basis for analyzing inclusive teaching

strategies and helps to identify effective pedagogical practices that support equitable education for all learners.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of teaching methodology in inclusive primary education reveals that effective inclusion is not achieved merely by placing all learners in the same classroom, but by ensuring that teaching strategies are adapted to meet diverse educational needs. The findings of this study confirm that inclusive education requires a shift from traditional teacher-centered instruction toward flexible, learner-centered, and differentiated pedagogical approaches. One of the most significant outcomes highlighted in this study is the importance of differentiated instruction. In inclusive classrooms, learners differ in cognitive abilities, learning pace, language proficiency, and emotional development. Differentiated instruction allows teachers to adjust lesson content, teaching processes, and assessment methods according to individual learner needs. This approach ensures that both high-achieving students and learners with special educational needs can progress at an appropriate pace without being excluded from classroom activities. Another important finding relates to the effectiveness of cooperative learning strategies. When students work in heterogeneous groups, they not only improve academic performance but also develop essential social skills such as communication, empathy, and teamwork. Cooperative learning creates a supportive classroom environment where students help one another, which is particularly beneficial for learners who require additional support. This aligns with Vygotsky's theory, which emphasizes the role of social interaction in cognitive development. The study also confirms that Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) are essential tools in inclusive education. IEPs provide structured learning goals tailored to individual students' needs, particularly for learners with disabilities or learning difficulties. They enable teachers to monitor progress systematically and adjust instructional strategies accordingly. However, successful implementation of IEPs requires sufficient teacher training, time, and institutional support, which may not always be available in practice. Furthermore, the use of assistive technologies plays an increasingly important role in supporting inclusive education. Digital tools such as audio-visual aids, text-to-speech systems, interactive applications, and adaptive learning platforms help remove barriers to learning. These technologies enhance accessibility and allow students with special needs to participate more actively in the learning process. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of such technologies depends on their integration into pedagogical practice rather than their mere availability. The discussion also highlights the central role of teachers in ensuring successful inclusive education. Teachers are required to act not only as knowledge providers but also as facilitators, mentors, and emotional supporters. Their ability to manage diverse classrooms, apply flexible teaching strategies, and create a supportive learning environment directly influences the success of inclusion. However, many teachers still face challenges due to limited training in special education methodologies and lack of professional development opportunities. Despite the positive impact of inclusive education methodologies, several challenges remain. These include large class sizes, insufficient teaching resources, lack of specialized support staff, and limited access to assistive technologies in some educational institutions. In addition, traditional assessment systems often fail to reflect individual learner progress, particularly for students with special educational needs. Another important issue identified in the discussion is the need for curriculum flexibility. Rigid curricula often limit teachers' ability to adapt content and pace according to learners' needs. Therefore, educational systems must provide more flexible frameworks that allow teachers to implement individualized and differentiated strategies effectively. Overall, the findings indicate that inclusive education in primary schools is most effective when supported by a combination of differentiated instruction,

cooperative learning, individualized planning, and technological support. However, successful implementation requires systemic reforms, including teacher training programs, resource allocation, and policy support. Without these conditions, the full potential of inclusive education cannot be realized. In conclusion, inclusive teaching methodology is not only a pedagogical necessity but also a social responsibility aimed at ensuring equal educational opportunities for all learners.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the methodology of teaching primary school students in inclusive education settings is a crucial component of modern educational practice aimed at ensuring equal learning opportunities for all learners. The study demonstrates that inclusive education is most effective when supported by flexible, learner-centered, and differentiated teaching approaches that consider the individual needs, abilities, and learning styles of students. The findings confirm that strategies such as differentiated instruction, cooperative learning, individualized education plans (IEPs), and assistive technologies significantly improve both academic achievement and social integration of learners in inclusive classrooms. These approaches not only support students with special educational needs but also enhance the learning experience of all students by promoting collaboration, empathy, and mutual respect. At the same time, the study highlights that successful implementation of inclusive education depends heavily on teacher competence, availability of resources, curriculum flexibility, and institutional support. Without addressing these factors, the effectiveness of inclusive teaching methodologies may remain limited. Overall, inclusive education in primary schools should be viewed as a long-term educational strategy that promotes equity, participation, and quality learning for every child. Therefore, continuous teacher training, modernization of teaching methods, and improvement of educational infrastructure are essential for achieving effective inclusive education systems.

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