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Challenges Faced by Primary School Students with Special Needs

Abstract

Including children with special needs in regular education is a pressing global issue that demands attention from educational institutions and policymakers. This study focuses on the challenges faced by primary school children with special needs and aims to contribute to developing inclusive practices and policies. It investigates the specific obstacles and provides recommendations for improving these students' educational experiences and outcomes. The study also explores the perspectives of various stakeholders, including educators, parents, and children, to inform the development of inclusive practices, teacher training programs, and policy-making. Additionally, the research delves into the specific challenges faced by students with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), speech or language disorders, emotional or behavioral disorders, and physical disabilities, offering practical strategies for supporting their unique learning needs. The study's findings and recommendations provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders promoting inclusive education in Albanian primary schools.

Keywords: *special needs, primary schools, challenges, educators, parents, children, teacher training, learning support*

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1. Introduction

Education is a right for all children, regardless of their abilities or disabilities. However, including children with special needs in regular education has become a complex issue that requires attention from educational institutions, policymakers, and society. Many countries face challenges in providing an accessible and effective education for children with special needs. This study aims to contribute to creating inclusive practices and policies that can benefit all children in primary schools.

Including children with special needs in regular education is an increasingly significant issue worldwide. Despite efforts to provide inclusive education, major challenges still need to be addressed. To effectively meet the educational needs of these students, initiatives and policies must take these challenges into account. Primary schools are responsible for educating a diverse range of students, including those with special needs. However, obstacles to effectively including these students include insufficient funding, inadequate facilities, and a lack of specialised teacher training. Social and cultural barriers can also impact their educational experiences. This study aims to comprehensively examine the difficulties faced by primary school children with special needs, contributing to the existing body of knowledge on this critical issue. It delineates these children's unique challenges and offers recommendations for improving their educational experiences and outcomes. Furthermore, it provides valuable insights into the current obstacles and potential solutions by exploring the perspectives of various stakeholders, including educators, parents, and children. This can help inform the development of inclusive practices in primary schools, teacher training programs, and policy-making.

This study examines the educational techniques historically and currently employed for children with special needs, mainly focusing on the challenges faced by primary school students. Considering their significant influence, the research also addresses the appropriate strategies for educators and other students to support these children. The study aims to thoroughly understand the barriers that hinder these students' educational experiences and outcomes. Additionally, it offers practical approaches and recommendations to promote inclusive education for special needs pupils in Albanian primary schools.

1.2. Research questions

R.Q.1. What are the specific challenges primary school students with special needs face regarding inclusive education practices?

R.Q.2. How does the lack of specialised support services affect these students' educational experiences and outcomes?

R.Q.3. What is the level of training of teachers and educators for these children?

R.Q.4. How can cooperation between various stakeholders—including educators, parents, and legislators—be strengthened to provide greater support to primary school pupils with special needs?

2. Literature Review

The educational experiences and support needs of children or students with special needs can change based on their learning difficulties, disabilities, or developmental characteristics. The following are some classifications of special needs pupils according to various learning profiles:

2.1. Students with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

ADHD individuals often struggle with impulsiveness, hyperactivity, and lack of focus, which can impact their academic performance due to difficulty concentrating. To aid in their concentration and self-control, accommodations such as preferred seating, scheduled breaks, organisational aids, and behaviour management strategies can be beneficial (Brown B., 2019).

2.2. Students with Speech or Language Disorders

Children with speech or language difficulties may struggle to communicate, articulate, and understand language. They can benefit from speech therapy, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices, and linguistic therapies (Larissa Hirsch, 2021).

2.3. Students with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders

These children might struggle with regulating emotions, handling behaviour, or coping with academic stress. Strategies such as behaviour plans, therapy, programs focused on social and emotional learning, and trauma-informed approaches can support their emotional health and academic success (Daniels, 2020).

2.4. Students with Physical Disabilities

Children with physical disabilities might experience challenges with moving around, ongoing health issues, or limitations in their senses that can restrict their involvement in educational environments. Adjusting accessibility, using specialised equipment, providing physical therapy, and incorporating inclusive design features can all contribute to their participation and learning in school. Individuals with special needs need support from others to develop the confidence needed to carry out tasks. People with sensory and motor impairments can benefit greatly from the social encouragement they receive from peers, family, educators, and community members (Domene, 2015).

Each of these categories reflects a distinct subset of children with special needs, and it is critical to understand the distinctive strengths, challenges, and support strategies that can assist each learner. Understanding the different educational requirements of students with special needs allows educators, parents, and professionals to work together to develop inclusive and supportive learning environments

that cater to all learners' diverse abilities and potential. In recent years, there has been an increasing acknowledgement of the need for inclusive education, which seeks to ensure fair access to quality education for all students, regardless of their unique learning needs and skills. In Albania, as in many other countries, inclusive education has developed as a core idea that guides educational policy and practice. Despite concerted attempts to promote diversity in elementary schools, students with special needs face substantial hurdles.

The assessment commences by delving into the prevalent challenge of inadequate resources in primary schools, encompassing a lack of specialized equipment, skilled personnel, and suitable instructional materials. It then addresses how limited access to specialized support services, such as speech therapy and personalised education plans, could impede students' academic progress and social integration. Moreover, the study delves into the adverse effects of stigma and social isolation on students with disabilities, underscoring the importance of nurturing inclusive attitudes and providing supportive educational environments.

 Additionally, the research examines policy implementation, infrastructure constraints, socioeconomic barriers, and cultural attitudes that impact the educational outcomes of children with special needs. This study aims to apprise policymakers, educators, and stakeholders about the pressing challenges confronting inclusive education in Albania and advocate for targeted interventions and reforms to ensure that all students have equitable opportunities to learn and flourish.

2.2.1. Lack of Adequate Resources

One of the most significant issues faced by primary school pupils with special needs in Albania is a lack of suitable resources. Smith (2018) and Jones and Brown (2020) found insufficient resources, such as specialised equipment, skilled workers, and acceptable training materials. Despite efforts to promote inclusive education, many Albanian primary schools lack the infrastructure and support mechanisms required to accommodate the different requirements of students with disabilities. This lack of resources hinders the successful implementation of inclusive strategies and maintains discrepancies in educational achievements for children with special needs.

2.2.2. Limited Access to Specialized Support Services

Lack of access to specialist support services is a significant issue for primary school children with special needs. According to Kola's (2019) study, many schools lack qualified specialists, such as speech therapists and special education teachers, to offer tailored help to pupils with various learning challenges. Insufficient availability of support services may lead to children not getting the adjustments and accommodations they need to do well in school.

2.2.3. Stigmatization and Social Isolation

Students with exceptional needs in primary schools frequently struggle with stigmatisation and social isolation. According to research by Lluka and Koleci (2018), peers frequently discriminate against and mistreat students with impairments, which can have a detrimental effect on their self-esteem and ability to integrate into society. Creating a supportive school climate for all children requires addressing stigmatisation and encouraging inclusive attitudes among instructors and students.

2.2.4. Limited Professional Development Opportunities

Teachers' abilities to serve students with various learning needs are a major factor in how well inclusive education works. Studies have shown that teachers lack access to ongoing professional development opportunities. Teachers may find it difficult to differentiate instruction, adopt inclusive teaching practices, and establish inclusive learning environments if they do not have access to pertinent training and assistance. It is imperative to invest in teacher professional development to develop pedagogical techniques, encourage staff collaboration, and ultimately improve outcomes for students with special needs (Adams, R. (2017).

2.2.5. Lack of Inclusive Education Policies and Practices

Despite efforts to promote inclusive education, significant policy implementation and practice gaps still exist in Albania. A study by Demiraj and Gjikolli (2018) found that integrating children with special needs into mainstream schools is hampered by the absence of a comprehensive, inclusive education policy. Disparities in educational achievements result from schools' frequent struggles to offer diverse learners the necessary assistance and adjustments.

2.2.6. Inadequate Policy Implementation

Although inclusive education regulations are in place in Albania, there are still obstacles to their successful implementation (Johnson, 2020). Policymakers, educators, and stakeholders must work together to translate the goals of fairness and inclusion into real results, even while legislative frameworks and policy papers may promote these concepts. Unclear rules, inadequate monitoring procedures, and poor coordination among pertinent agencies can cause discrepancies between policy intent and practice. Comprehensive policy frameworks, sufficient financing, open accountability systems, and significant stakeholder participation are necessary for strengthening policy implementation and ensuring that the needs and rights of students with special needs are met.

2.2.7. Infrastructure and Accessibility Issues in Schools

The physical layout, for example, of Albania's primary schools may provide challenges for children with special needs, especially those with mobility issues. Accessible classrooms, elevators, and ramps

are commonplace in schools, but many lack them, making it difficult for students with disabilities to get around. Ensuring equal chances for all students and fostering inclusivity requires upgrading the accessibility of school buildings and infrastructure. Albanian primary schools frequently lack the physical infrastructure to make them accessible to pupils. Some students with special needs cannot fully participate in school activities due to inaccessible facilities, prevalent architectural barriers, and inadequate assistive technologies. In addition, the scarcity of specialised services and modes of transportation makes accessibility issues much more severe, especially in the countryside. To ensure that all students can access and traverse educational environments independently, addressing infrastructure and accessibility challenges involves strategic planning, investment in retrofitting existing facilities, and adherence to universal design principles (Kondi, 2019).

2.2.8. Language and Communication Barriers

Communication difficulties might arise for students with speech or language impairments while interacting with peers and teachers. This may make it more difficult for them to engage completely in class activities and cause them to feel alone or frustrated. To overcome these obstacles, speech therapists may need to provide specific assistance and alternate communication techniques. Individualised education plans, or IEPs, are necessary for many special needs students to specify their specific learning objectives, accommodations, and support services. Nonetheless, the creation and execution of IEPs in Albanian schools could be uneven or nonexistent in others. Without individualised programs that consider their unique requirements, children could find it challenging to get the proper support and instruction (Chiang ,H H.M Raley S.K, 2018).

2.2.9. Mental Health and Well-being

One of the primary mental health and well-being problems experienced by students with special needs is anxiety. Many students with special needs experience anxiety due to the challenges they face in their daily lives, such as difficulty communicating and socialising with others and the pressure to meet academic expectations. Anxiety can lead to physical symptoms such as headaches, stomachaches, and fatigue, which can interfere with their ability to learn and engage in school. Depression is another common mental health problem experienced by students with special needs. Depression can be caused by feelings of isolation and the challenges of navigating a world that is not always accommodating to their needs. It can also be difficult for students with special needs to communicate their feelings and emotions, which can lead to a sense of frustration and hopelessness. Other mental health and well-being problems experienced by students with special needs include trauma-related disorders, bipolar disorder, and obsessive-compulsive disorder. These problems can significantly impact students' ability

to learn and function in school and have long-term effects on their mental health and well-being. It is crucial to recognise that mental health and well-being problems are not a result of a student's disability but rather are associated with the significant challenges they face in their education and daily life. Thus, it is essential to provide students with special needs with appropriate support, accommodations, and interventions to address these mental health and well-being problems. This support could include counselling, therapy, and social and emotional learning interventions to develop students' coping skills and resilience (Barry Coughlan, 2013).

It is worth noting that based on a study in Albania regarding children with difficulty, some main findings were made (Meço, 2018):

55.8%. More than half of the sample faces a slight or more severe functional difficulty (reporting "a little difficulty" or more) in at least one of the functional areas. 10.4% of the sample faces marked difficulties or total impossibility in at least one of the areas of functioning. In other words, 1 in 10 children in Albania has a disability. 45.4% of children aged 2-17 years included in the study reported experiencing at least a mild level of difficulty in one of the areas of functioning (but not going beyond this difficulty). 4% of children with disabilities in Albania are equipped with a medical-legal certificate. 66% of children with disabilities live in families with low income, while 30% of them live in families with average monthly income. Prevalence is higher in low-income families, with 58% of mothers and 33% of fathers either unemployed or employed part-time/seasonally. 78.8% of these families consist of four to six members. 75.7% of children with disabilities attend daycare, kindergarten or school. For the same age groups, this number is much higher for children without disabilities (93.1%). This difference deepens even further if we take into account the fact that only 61.3% of children who have been evaluated by a medical or multidisciplinary commission regarding their disability attend a pre-university education institution. 38.6% of parents of children with disabilities are dissatisfied with the expenses they have to make to receive the service, compared to 17.7% of parents of children who do not have disabilities or have mild functional difficulties. Within the framework of differences within general health services, differences are reported between the group of parents of children with disabilities and parents of children who do not have disabilities or have mild functional difficulties.

3. Methodology

The primary purpose of this study is to examine and see what challenges these children face in primary schools. This study covers the theoretical and practical aspects based on multiple investigations. Given the study's exploratory nature, we employed research and quantitative approaches to thoroughly

understand the nature of the problem by examining the challenges faced by the school and their underlying causes. Through a focused recruitment procedure, this study examines highly trained specialists who could offer insightful commentary on these students' difficulties and possible ways to overcome them. The practices employed and their impact on the process are ascertained using this methodology. A questionnaire was taken in several classrooms at various schools in one city to obtain the required data.

3.1. General Overview

The quantitative technique is selected to explain, measure, and determine amounts. Qualitative approaches involve analysing the data gathered through observation, interviews, and examining the documents in their original contexts.

3.2. Participants

This study involved both teachers and students. The students were in grades 5 through 9, and the teachers were from various schools in their respective areas. A total of 41 participants took part in the survey, including 20 students and 21 teachers. The teachers were between 25 and 55 years old. The students who completed the questionnaire were in grades five through nine and were always accompanied and supported by their teachers.

3.3. Data Collection Tools

This study employs two distinct data collection methods: surveys administered to students and teachers. By integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches, a more comprehensive understanding of Albania's educational system for students with special needs can be attained. Quantitative data allows for measurable insights into policy and practice outcomes, while qualitative methods offer valuable perspectives on the cultural, attitudinal, and values-based aspects influencing educational processes. The study aims to contribute to a deeper comprehension of the educational landscape for children with special needs in Albania through the combination of these approaches.

3.3.1. Survey Questionnaire

The survey involved 20 students and 21 teachers. The students were asked questions with yes-no answers, while the teachers were asked questions that required more detailed responses. The survey covered topics related to the student's difficulties, feelings about learning, and relationships with friends and teachers. Additionally, the questionnaire addressed the challenges faced by teachers working with these students and asked for their suggestions on what could be changed to benefit the children and themselves. By exploring teachers' difficulties when working with these students, the

study has initiated an important conversation about best supporting these students within the education system.

3.4. Limitations of the Study

This study is subject to certain limitations. Firstly, it was conducted in only two schools. Secondly, the number of students participants was limited to 20, and the questions posed to them were designed to be answered with a simple yes or no to prevent fatigue. Additionally, the participating teachers held a master's degree in the relevant field, as this requirement was outlined in the questionnaire.

4. Results

The results section presents the students' and teachers' questionnaires.

4.1. Students Questionnaire

4.1 Student Grade Distribution	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Second Grade	2	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%
Fourth Grade	3	15.00%	15.00%	25.00%
Fifth Grade	7	35.00%	35.00%	60.00%
Sixth Grade	6	30.00%	30.00%	90.00%
Eighth Grade	2	10.00%	10.00%	100.00%

Thus, 10% (2) of the students are in the second grade, and 15% (3) are in the fourth grade, with three students. There are seven students in the fifth grade, representing 35% (7) of the total; six students make up the sixth grade, or 30% (6), and two students make up the eighth grade, or 10%.

S.Q.2. Do you feel supported by your teachers and peers in the classroom?

4.2 Support from Teachers and Peers	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Supported	18	90.00%	90.00%	90.00%
Not Supported	2	10.00%	10.00%	100.00%

The majority of respondents, or 90% of 18 students, feel that their classmates and teachers assist them in the classroom, according to the statistics provided. However, given that 10% of respondents said they did not feel supported.

S.Q.3. Do you feel like you have the necessary resources to succeed academically?

4.3 Academic Resources Availability	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative Percent
Have Resources	3	15.00%	15.00%	15.00%
Lack Resources	17	85.00%	85.00%	100.00%

Most respondents, 85% or 17 students, do not believe they have the resources to succeed in school. Only 15% or 3 respondents believe they have the resources necessary to thrive academically.

S.Q.4. Have you ever felt excluded or left out because of your special needs?

4.4 Feelings of Exclusion Due to Special Needs	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Felt Excluded	8	40.00%	60.00%	60.00%
Not Excluded	12	60.00%	40.00%	100.00%

We can infer from the provided data that a sizable portion of respondents, approximately 60%, or 12 students, felt marginalised or left out at school due to their unique needs. It is also important to note that 40% or 8 student respondents said they had never felt excluded.

S.Q.5. Do you feel comfortable asking for help when you need it?

4.5 Comfort in Asking for Help	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Comfortable	15	75.00%	75.00%	75.00%
Uncomfortable	5	25.00%	25.00%	100.00%

The data shows that 75%, or 15 primary school students with special needs, feel comfortable asking for help, suggesting some support and accessibility in the educational system. However, 25%, or 5 students, feel uncomfortable, indicating barriers to accessing help.

S.Q.6. Do you have friends in your classroom?

4.6 Presence of Friends in the Classroom	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Have Friends	14	70.00%	70.00%	70.00%
Lack Friends	6	30.00%	30.00%	100.00%

30% or 6 students of these students lack friends, possibly due to social isolation, communication difficulties, or lack of social skills.

S.Q.7. Have you made any friends in your classroom who also have special needs?

4.7 Friends with Similar Special Needs	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Have Friends with Similar Needs	15	75.00%	75.00%	75.00%
Do Not Have Friends with Similar Needs	5	25.00%	25.00%	100.00%

75% (15) of students made friends, while 25% (5) of these students have not made friends, suggesting a need for further investigation and interventions to promote social connections.

S.Q.8. Do your classmates include you in activities both in and outside of school?

4.8 Inclusion in School Activities	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Included	7	35.00%	35.00%	35.00%
Not Included	13	65.00%	65.00%	100.00%

The data shows that 65% of 13 students with special needs are not included in school activities, which causes social isolation and affects their academic progress. Only 35%, or 7 students, have friends in their classrooms, highlighting the need for improved social support networks and inclusion programs.

4.2. Teachers Interview

We asked the 21 teachers who teach these children questions to understand better where the difficulties are and what they need or lack the most. We must remember that the teacher is crucial to these children's progress. Three questions were included about this topic with the teachers, and I also did it as a discussion.

I.Q.1.What types of special needs do primary school students in your schools typically have?

Summarising all their answers: Since primary school pupils' special needs might vary greatly, there is no definitive response to this question. Nonetheless, learning impairments, autism spectrum disorder (ASD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), physical disabilities, and speech and language difficulties are among the prevalent forms of special needs. Additional conditions that may call for specific accommodations or support include emotional or behavioural disorders, disorders processing sensory information, and medical issues. Individual pupils will have different needs based on particular situations, which may require customised interventions and modifications.

I.Q.2. What challenges do you have while working with students with special needs, and how do you manage these challenges?

The teachers responded as:

1.   Limited Resources: Teachers may find it challenging to address their pupils' individual needs if they lack access to special education resources such as professional development, specific instructional materials, and assistive technology.

2.   Inadequate Training: Frustration and stress can result from some teachers' lack of adequate training

3.   Classroom Management: Teachers may struggle to manage a classroom with students with different abilities and learning styles. They may also have difficulty identifying, evaluating, and managing the needs of pupils with special needs.

4.   Social Stigmatization: Teachers could face unfavourable attitudes from classmates, parents, or other educators who treat their special needs students unfairly.

5.   Lack of Administrative Support: When working with pupils who have special needs, teachers here may experience additional stress and anxiety because they feel unsupported by district or school administration.

I.Q.3. Are all teachers in Albania adequately trained to work with students with special needs?

The result indicates that 86%, or 18 out of 21 teachers, were trained, while 14%, or 3, were not.

I.Q.4. Do you agree that it is important for teachers in Albania to have ongoing communication and collaboration with parents/caregivers of students with special needs?

All the teachers agreed that communication is key to these children's writing. Of course, parents are a crucial element in children's lives. Having rich communication between the teachers and the children's parents will positively affect them.

I.Q.5. Does Albania's educational system provide enough resources and support to teachers working with students with special needs?

Most of them, 90 % or 19 teachers, agree they do not have enough resources to help these children.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Looking at the children and the teacher's answers, we can say that we have reached some conclusions. Many of the children do not have confidence in themselves to express what they feel. Even though most of them feel supported by their friends or teachers, they are afraid to show what they feel. Similarly, our research has shown that specific cultural, societal, and systemic barriers may prevent Albanian primary school pupils with special needs from expressing their thoughts and feelings.

However, this can be concluded since teachers may struggle to differentiate instructions and adopt inclusive teaching practices. To develop these skills, they must encourage staff collaboration and improve outcomes for students with special needs (Adams R. 2017).

Furthermore, the Albanian educational system is lacking special education resources, knowledge, and training, which has been linked to a paternalistic and deficit-oriented approach to pupils with special needs. To meet the different requirements of their children, teachers and other school staff may feel overburdened, unprepared, or powerless. As a result, they may adopt a one-size-fits-all strategy that silences or ignores the opinions and preferences of students with special needs. Some students with special needs may be reluctant or afraid to communicate their needs and feelings because of these systemic problems. It is essential to address these systemic issues and promote a more inclusive, equitable, and empowering educational system that recognises and celebrates the diversity of its students. This can be achieved through various means, such as professional development, policy reform, community engagement, and advocacy efforts.

According to this study, the educational experiences and outcomes of Albanian primary school children with special needs are adversely affected by societal barriers, insufficient support structures, and scarce resources. Social barriers, inadequate support systems, and a lack of resources negatively impact the educational experiences and outcomes of Albanian primary school students with unique resources. To better understand the cultural, institutional, and resource-related barriers that can limit the development of Albanian primary school pupils with special needs, the study has looked at their educational experiences and outcomes. In particular, research has shown that stigmatisation and unfavourable opinions are common social barriers that special needs students must overcome. These obstacles can impact the students' motivation, sense of self-worth, and sense of community. Furthermore, the study has shown that providing high-quality education for students with special needs can be hampered by a lack of supportive infrastructure, including limited funding, inadequate teacher preparation and support, and limited access to essential resources. However, it is also worth noting that some students with special needs in our sample had positive educational experiences and outcomes despite these challenges. This may suggest that resilience, support, and individualised attention can mitigate the effects of societal and structural disadvantages. Thus, our findings suggest the need for a comprehensive and multi-layered approach to improving the educational experiences and outcomes of students with special needs in Albania, which involves addressing both the societal barriers and the support structure challenges.

The study has provided the following answers to the research questions:

R.Q.1. What are the specific challenges faced by primary school students with special needs in these schools?

Regarding inclusive education methods, Albanian primary school students with special needs confront several difficulties. According to a study (Adams R 2017), teachers' ability to serve students with various learning needs is a major factor in how inclusive education works. The study has shown that the teachers lack access to ongoing professional development opportunities, which impacts the quality of education these pupils receive if teachers feel unprepared to manage and support students with special needs. The study shows that teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education are another difficulty. Instructors believe that including students with special needs in their classes takes a lot of effort, is challenging, and is stressful. According to the report, Albanian society discourages individualism and dissent and is collectivist. As a result, some children with special needs could find it challenging to communicate their ideas and feelings in a classroom context, impacting their social conduct and academic performance. Therefore, these findings show that legislative reform, teacher training, and a shift in attitude and perspective toward inclusion are necessary to ensure effective inclusive education practices.

R.Q.2. How does the lack of specialised support services affect the educational experiences and outcomes of these students?

The absence of specialised support services can significantly impact the educational experiences and outcomes of students with special needs. The students require customised support services to meet their specific needs and engage in regular educational programs effectively. Lack of these services can make it more difficult for them to get an education, grow academically and socially, and realise their full potential. For example, a study by (Chiang, H H,M Raley S.K, 2018) found that one of the biggest issues affecting the education of students with special needs in these schools is the lack of access to speech therapy, assistive technology, counselling services, and other specialised support services. Without these services, some children would need mobility assistance to get to the classroom, assistive technology for communication, or occupational therapy for better handwriting. They might not be able to participate completely in their schooling or acquire the necessary skills as a result, which could lead to their social isolation or academic failure. The lack of specialist support services can majorly affect the educational experiences and results of the students with special needs. Students may find it difficult to stay up with the curriculum without access to individualized education plans (IEPs), which could result in decreased academic progress and disengagement. The absence of support services can cause

social isolation, which lowers students' self-esteem and negatively impacts their general well-being. This further impedes social integration. Furthermore, emotional and behavioral problems frequently go untreated in the lack of counseling and mental health facilities, which may lead to behavioral disorders and disciplinary measures. This lack of assistance continues as students go from school to a higher education institution or the workforce, where they could encounter obstacles at work and struggle with everyday chores, which would diminish their economic independence. Families of students with special needs suffer as well because they frequently do not have the direction and assistance required to properly advocate for their children, which results in a less encouraging atmosphere at home. Overall, these students' educational and developmental chances are significantly limited by the lack of specialised support services, which influences their academic performance, social integration, emotional health, employment in the future, and general quality of life. A comprehensive strategy including more financing, improved facilities, and a dedication to inclusive education practices is needed to close these gaps.

R.Q.3. What is the level of training of teachers and educators for these children?

Numerous studies have documented educators' insufficient training and readiness to successfully manage and assist pupils with special needs. Furthermore, one of Albania`s biggest challenges is the absence of structures and resources to support teachers' ongoing professional development programs in inclusion and special education. For instance, a study conducted in 2019 by Kola found a dearth of special education staff members and that teachers had little access to professional growth and training opportunities. These problems make it more difficult for educators to use inclusive teaching strategies, which benefit the learning experiences and results of Albania's special needs pupils. To raise educational standards and guarantee inclusive learning settings for students with special needs in Albania, instructors must receive better training and chances for ongoing professional development in inclusive education and special needs assistance. It is also important to know what these teachers need to have training for these children. For several reasons, teachers must receive specific training to work with students with special needs. To ensure that educational interventions are successful, it first enables educators to create and implement individualised education plans (IEPs) specific to each child's learning preferences, strengths, and challenges. To effectively address the diverse needs of students with disabilities, including those related to autism, ADHD, and learning disabilities, these teachers are well-versed in specific teaching strategies and interventions. These include behavioural management techniques, alternative communication methods, and adaptive technologies. Furthermore, teachers with specialised training have a greater comprehension of the many types of disabilities and how they affect

learning and development, which promotes a more patient, empathic, and successful teaching style. They are adept at handling challenging behaviours and establishing secure, encouraging learning environments. In order to give the child full support, qualified special needs educators can also work well with other medical specialists like psychologists, occupational therapists, and speech therapists. Additionally, they are essential in interacting and collaborating with parents by providing them with resources and advice to support their children`s education. To guarantee that the educational needs of these students are satisfied within moral and legal bounds, these educators are also aware of the legal rights of students with disabilities, including adherence to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and other pertinent laws. Providing fair, excellent education to students with special needs requires instructors to have received specialised training (Rama L Disha E ,2020) (Demiraj A Gjikolli B , 2018).

R.Q.4. How can cooperation between various stakeholders including educators, parents, and legislators be strengthened to provide Albanian primary school pupils with special needs with greater support?

This question, enhancing collaboration among many stakeholders, such as educators, parents, and lawmakers, is crucial to supporting Albanian primary school students with special needs. Some tactics that could be used to encourage stakeholder collaboration are as follows:

1.   Developing an inclusive policy framework: A comprehensive policy framework, including inclusive education policies, is crucial for promoting stakeholder cooperation in Albania to support students with special needs.

2.   Training and professional development for educators: Training and professional development for special education and inclusion educators can enhance their skills, support students' learning needs, and promote collaboration with parents and legislators.

3.   Encouraging parental involvement in their children's education fosters a sense of ownership, trust, and improved communication between parents and teachers.

4.   Advocating and lobbying for legislative support: Advocating and campaigning for legislative support for students with special needs can improve stakeholder collaboration by fostering an atmosphere that facilitates the adoption of inclusive policies and programs.

   It is feasible to give Albanian primary school students with special needs more help and enhance their academic results by encouraging cooperation among diverse stakeholders.

Conclusion

This study looked at students who have special needs. Managing children with exceptional needs will be one of our challenges. The research posited that sociocultural barriers, inadequate support systems, and limited resources negatively impact the educational experiences and outcomes of special needs children in primary schools.

Urgent attention and action are required to address the social and emotional obstacles that primary school children with special needs experience. The answers to the questions posed during this discussion show that many special needs school children do not get the social inclusion and assistance they require to succeed academically and socially. These results draw attention to important obstacles that adolescents with special needs face in their quest for social inclusion and connectivity, which can have a detrimental effect on their emotional health, developmental trajectory, and academic success.

Notwithstanding the obstacles, there exist prospects for formulating interventions and tactics that foster social integration, cooperation, and assistance for students with exceptional needs. Better results for all students can result from providing educators and peers with the resources they need to establish welcoming, encouraging, and accessible learning environments. We can build a more just and equitable system where all students, regardless of ability, have an equal chance to reach their potential by actively encouraging social inclusion and assistance.

As a society, we are responsible for prioritising the social and emotional well-being of primary school students with special needs. This involves establishing laws and procedures that promote cooperation, social inclusion, and support. We must ensure that every student has access to the necessary tools and assistance to develop meaningful connections, achieve academic success, and thrive socially. Through these efforts, we can foster a culture that embraces diversity, nurtures empathy, and empowers every student to reach their full potential.

Recommendations

- Comprehensive training programs should be implemented to help educators understand and address the sociocultural barriers that special needs children face.

- Community outreach programs should be developed to raise awareness about the challenges children with special needs face and promote greater understanding and support within the broader community.

- Regular professional development workshops should be focused on the latest strategies for managing and teaching children with special needs need to be arranged for teachers, administrators, and support staff.

- The number of specialised support staff, including special education teachers, speech therapists, occupational therapists, and counsellors, should be increased to provide targeted student support.

- Increased funding for special education programs should be advocated to ensure schools have the resources to effectively support students with special needs.

- All students with special needs should have access to the latest assistive technologies and adaptive equipment to facilitate their learning and participation in school activities.

- Programs that specifically aim to develop the social skills of children with special needs should be introduced, helping them build meaningful relationships with their peers.

- Comprehensive mental health services should be provided, including counselling and therapy, to address the emotional and psychological needs of students with special needs.

- The creation and implementation of policies that support the rights and needs of children with special needs should be advocated, ensuring that they receive equitable treatment and opportunities.

- Mechanisms should be established to regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of policies and programs designed for special needs education, making necessary adjustments to improve outcomes.

- Programs should offer training and resources for parents to help them support their children's education and emotional well-being at home.

- Counselling services should be provided to families to help them cope with the challenges of raising children with special needs and to strengthen family support systems.

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