

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

# Primary School Principals' Views on the Required Conditions for a Successful Implementation of Inclusive Education<sup>†</sup>

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## Abstract

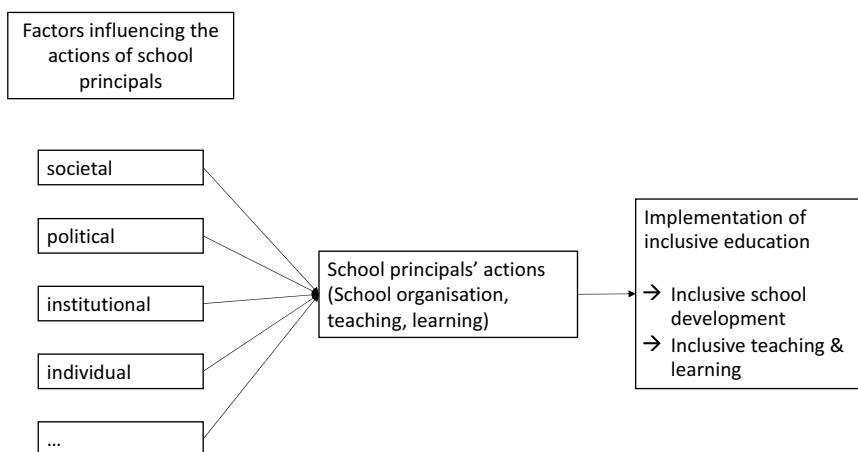
Following the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities, questions concerning the joint education of students with and without special educational needs remain to be answered. Currently, there is a need for knowledge about the necessary conditions for a successful implementation of inclusive education. Thus, the aim of the present study is to identify conditions for the implementation of inclusion that are seen as necessary by primary school principals. Therefore, 32 primary school principals were interviewed. The results of the interview study reveal that factors like personnel, financial and material resources as well as building infrastructure in primary schools are seen as important requirements for the successful realisation of inclusive education. Apart from that, the importance of attitudes towards inclusion and sociopolitical conditions for the realisation of inclusion became apparent. Further conditions, which are mentioned from the interviewed principals' point of view, are related to teacher training, appropriate class sizes and, for example, opportunities for exchanging information. The results of the study indicate that there are essential obstacles as perceived by primary school principals that can impede the implementation of inclusion in primary schools.

**Keywords:** inclusive education; school principals; primary school; required conditions

Due to the critical role of school principals regarding school development and quality (Huber & Muijs, 2010) and thus in particular with respect to the realisation of inclusive education, the purpose of this study is to identify necessary requirements for the implementation of inclusive education from the perspective of primary school principals. Since the ratification of the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities (UN, 2006) in many countries, school systems are undergoing significant changes. Within this transformation, teachers and school principals are faced with different challenges concerning the successful implementation of inclusion in schools. In order to ensure the premise of organising learning environments that address a diversity of students' learning needs, an adequate basis has to be established at school level, meeting the required conditions. This is closely linked to the question of how inclusive education can be implemented at school in the best possible way. Concerning this matter, school principals are considered a key component for the development of inclusive schools due to their influence with regard to school development and school direction (Ainscow et al., 2013; Hoppey & McLeskey, 2013; Salisbury, 2006; Salisbury & McGregor, 2002; Waldron et al., 2011).

Leadership practices have gained much attention in research with regard to school organisation, teaching and students' outcomes (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Liebowitz & Porter, 2019). There is evidence

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**Figure 1.** Theoretical Framework of Factors Influencing the Actions of School Principals.

for the importance of successful school leadership in terms of its relation to school organisation, teaching and learning (Leithwood et al., 2020; Liebowitz & Porter, 2019). In particular, ‘school leadership improves teaching and learning, indirectly and most powerfully, by improving the status of significant key classroom and school conditions ...’ (Leithwood et al., 2020, p. 12). In general, it is assumed that successful leadership is characterised by four areas of practice: setting directions, building relationships and developing people, developing the organisation to support desired practices and improving the instructional program (Leithwood et al., 2020). In terms of inclusive education, the support of collaboration among teaching staff gains increasing importance in school principals’ areas of responsibility. As collaborative practices at school are associated to be necessary prerequisites for a successful implementation of inclusive education (Löser & Werning, 2015; Lütje-Klose & Urban, 2014), school principals are expected to support and offer opportunities for teachers’ collaboration (Badstieber et al., 2018). This includes, for instance, the establishment of specific time frames for collaboration and communication (Badstieber et al., 2018; Waldron & McLeskey, 2010).

However, successful leadership practices are also a matter of factors that have an impact on principals’ actions and their school management. This leads to the question of which factors can influence principals’ actions regarding school development and especially regarding the development of inclusive schools. Principals’ leadership depends on various circumstances and cannot be considered completely detached and independently. Thus, school principals’ actions with regard to school organisation and the provision of necessary conditions for teaching and learning are influenced by several factors such as society, educational policy, institutional conditions and principals’ personal resources and competencies as an individual factor (see Figure 1; e.g., Brauckmann-Sajkiewicz et al., 2020; Hallinger, 2011, 2018). As principals’ school management in general cannot be considered without taking into account various factors, such as the above mentioned, it seems necessary to examine which requirements are relevant for the implementation of inclusive education.

The aim of the present study is to investigate German primary school principals’ views with respect to the required conditions for a successful realisation of inclusive education. Germany is a federal republic consisting of 16 federal states, with the organisation of the school system regulated individually in each of the different states. Accordingly, in Germany, the implementation of inclusive education is not consistent and differs among the federal states (Klemm, 2018; Löser & Werning, 2015; Werning, 2017). However, this is not only the case in Germany: ‘The practical state of inclusive education in many countries differs widely, between and even within schools’ (Haug, 2017, p. 206). Since the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities in 2009, schools in Germany are expected to realise inclusive education. However, there is a lack of specific guidelines related to the role and tasks

of principals in this regard (Badstieber et al., 2018). With the resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (2011), recommendations for the implementation of inclusive education in Germany were provided and the realisation of inclusive schooling was initiated.

Although inclusive education is the goal, the education system in Germany operates on the basis of a dual system involving regular schools and special schools (Klemm, 2018; Powell et al., 2016). For instance, in the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia, special schools still exist for the different special needs categories, including learning, speech, emotional and social development, hearing and communication, vision, mental development as well as physical and motor development. Since the 2008/2009 school year, the exclusion rate in the federal state has decreased from 5.2% to 4.6% in the 2016/2017 school year, while the overall average in Germany declined from 4.9% to 4.3% over this period (Klemm, 2018). In contrast, in the federal state of Lower Saxony, for example, the exclusion rate has fallen from 4.4% (2008/2009) to 3.4% (2016/2017) in this period (Klemm, 2018). This federal state aims to close special schools for learning difficulties (Werning, 2017).

Regarding the question about how to implement inclusive education in the best possible way, there seems to be no unified model for the development of an inclusive school (Dyson, 2010). In this regard, Waldron et al. (2011) point out that the development of effective and inclusive schools does not depend on particular changes, such as external support or an extensive supply of resources, but instead is feasible in a school with the usual resources. However, they emphasise that, in addition to, for example, using resources optimally, it depends on the willingness and competencies of the school principal (Waldron et al., 2011). Thus, the development of an inclusive school seems to be possible on the basis of modifications in the given conditions at a school, but with principals displaying commitment to inclusive education and putting emphasis on the creation of an inclusive school culture (Salisbury & McGregor, 2002). The results of a study by Salisbury (2006) indicate that the level to which inclusive education is implemented in a school and thus the disparities in the realisation of inclusive education can be attributed to the principal's view of inclusion. The results of several studies reveal that school principals can facilitate school development towards inclusion by taking certain actions, such as supporting collaborative structures and accomplishing a distributed leadership (e.g., Kugelmass & Ainscow, 2004; Waldron & McLeskey, 2010). In their case study with an effective and inclusive school, Hoppey and McLeskey (2013) found that successful leadership is characterised by taking care of teachers and investing in them personally, protecting them against external pressure as well as supporting their professional development. Another case study with an effective and inclusive school identified the following features with regard to the leadership at this school: setting the direction for the school, redesigning school organisation, improving the working conditions, providing high-quality instruction and using data for decision-making (Waldron et al., 2011).

Within research regarding the successful implementation of inclusive education, the role of school principals is increasingly becoming more central as they usually have an essential function with respect to school development in general. With school principals being referred to as key elements for the development of inclusive schools, it seems essential to take their views about conditions for inclusive education into consideration as their leadership practices are affected by various factors (e.g., Brauckmann-Sajkiewicz et al., 2020; Hallinger, 2011, 2018). In some studies, school principals from different types of schools were asked about requirements and changes needed for the implementation of inclusive education. The results indicate that factors such as personnel, training, facilities, cooperation, smaller class sizes and policy support are perceived as necessary conditions for a successful realisation of inclusive education (e.g., Singer et al., 2016; Subba et al., 2019).

### **Research Question**

In order to appropriately support schools on their way to inclusion, it seems essential to examine their needs with regard to the implementation of inclusive education. The aim of the present study is to identify the conditions necessary for the development of inclusive education from the perspective

of school principals. Within the school system in Germany, the realisation of inclusive education, apart from preschool, chiefly takes place at the primary school level (Klemm, 2015). Therefore, the investigation especially focuses on primary schools and aims to identify the required conditions on the basis of individual interviews with school principals. The research question is: What do primary school principals perceive as necessary conditions that have to be fulfilled for a successful implementation of inclusive education?

## Methods

### Participants

The sample of this study consists of 32 primary school principals and vice principals from Germany (predominantly from North Rhine-Westphalia), whose experience in school administration varies from 1 month to 26 years. The majority of the participants were female ( $n = 27$ ). The principals are on average 52 years old ( $SD = 8.62$ ) and their professional experience as a teacher ranges from 6 to 41 years. The involved principals were randomly selected and personally asked to participate in the study. The informed consent of the participants was obtained verbally. There were no ethical concerns in conducting the study, and the Declaration of Helsinki was followed.

### Data Collection

For the purpose of the study, a qualitative research approach was employed. The major benefit of qualitative methods is that they allow a deeper insight into the object of investigation. A qualitative approach was used in order to identify necessary requirements from school principals' perspectives for the implementation of inclusive education and the difficulties they encounter in the context of inclusive school development. Data were collected through individual interviews with the help of an interview guide. The first part of the guide consists of questions regarding demographic information following a set of questions with regard to inclusion. For instance, principals were asked to give information on their understanding of inclusion and inclusive education, their attitudes towards inclusion, conditions for the implementation of inclusion and their self-efficacy beliefs regarding the implementation of inclusion. The length of the conducted interviews ranged from  $Min = 10.35$  min to  $Max = 31.50$  min, with an average of  $M = 19.51$  min ( $SD = 5.53$  min). The tape-recorded interviews were afterwards transcribed for the analyses and were translated from German into English. In this paper, the focus of the study is put on the question about required conditions for the implementation of inclusive education. The primary school principals were asked the following question: 'What are the necessary conditions that have to be fulfilled for a successful implementation of inclusive education from your point of view? (sociopolitical, institutional or in-school structures)'. The information in parentheses was additional and not addressed in all interviews.

### Data Analysis

The analysis of the transcribed interviews is based on the concept of grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The main goal of the grounded theory approach is to generate a theory from the data (Charmaz, 1996; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The grounded theory approach is characterised by inductive and deductive procedures and the development of a theory step by step from the gathered data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Based on this approach, the analysis was carried out by coding the data of the interviews and developing categories through constant comparisons (Charmaz, 1996; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The development of the categories was conducted by the first author and another person, who first independently identified concepts and then developed the categories jointly in agreement through exchanging. In a next step, the interrater reliability, describing the degree of agreement between two raters regarding the categories, was checked. Therefore, the common codings of the two persons were compared with the codings of a third independent person, who was asked to apply the

developed categories to the data. The interrater reliability ranged from  $\kappa_{\min} = .72$  and  $\kappa_{\max} = 1.0$ , which can be interpreted as substantial to (almost) perfect agreement (Landis & Koch, 1977).

## Results

Following analysis of the data collected from 32 German primary school principals, 12 key factors were identified as important to the successful implementation of inclusive education. The school principals stated requirements such as personnel, financial and material resources, infrastructure, training, attitudes, sociopolitical conditions, cooperation and opportunities for exchanging information, class size, the composition of the learning group and further in-school factors.

### **Personnel, Financial and Material Resources, Building Infrastructure**

Almost all of the primary school principals ( $n = 25$ ) point out the need for some kinds of resources, like personnel, financial and material resources or adequate infrastructure regarding the facilities at school, to enable the successful realisation of inclusion:

*So, it is simply necessary that the spatial and financial possibilities, material possibilities are given. Personnel above all. (Principal 12)*

*Material and personnel resources should be available, the school must be big enough, the rooms. (Principal 20)*

*Personnel resources, sufficient personnel resources, thus, ideally two teachers per class, so twice the number of teachers. Financial resources by the school authorities, which is the lesser problem for us . . . . And rooms, of course. (Principal 25)*

In this context, personnel resources seem to be especially important: 'For me, the personnel equipment is really the most important' (Principal 19). With regard to infrastructure, some of the principals, for example, mention the need for more rooms in school that can be used flexibly and make teaching and learning in small groups possible. However, it is noticeable that although infrastructure is seen as important, a few principals seem to perceive construction requirements as a more minor problem for the implementation of inclusion at school, as one of the principals states that 'the constructional arrangements are a piece of cake' (Principal 13). Along with infrastructure, another principal mentions that material resources are also not as crucial as personnel resources for the implementation of inclusive education:

*We need personnel support, that is the most important, because, like I said, certain materials or rooms . . . that is not as difficult as compensating for an additional pair of hands and an additional pair of eyes. (Principal 9)*

One of the principals describes personnel resources in a more detailed way. Thus, according to this principal, personnel should comprise not only regular and special education teachers but also different professionals like therapists and young people who could support teachers:

*That school gets the appropriate personnel, be it teacher aides, special education teachers, but also perhaps young people, who get involved at school, be it federal volunteer service . . . That it is easier to get therapists into the school . . . So, basically, you need a lot of helping hands in school to really implement inclusion. (Principal 30)*

### Training

In addition, the teachers should be prepared and receive the necessary training for teaching in the inclusive classroom. The importance of training was mentioned by six primary school principals. They stress the importance of preservice training so that preservice teachers can be adequately prepared to teach in the inclusive classroom:

*So, first of all, the staff must be trained better. Regular primary school teachers also have to come much more into contact with the topic of inclusion in their studies and traineeship. (Principal 2)*

One of the principals mentions that an important factor concerns in-service training and that teachers need to be further trained. This principal criticises that trainings are not effective if they are incompatible with teachers' working schedules. As stated by the principal, further training after a long day of teaching can be exhausting and therefore teachers may benefit little from it. Apart from being in accordance with teachers' workload, trainings also should be tailored to the schools' needs, as this principal emphasises that 'there should be way more precisely fitting trainings' (Principal 30).

### Attitudes

The principals state that positive attitudes towards inclusion are essential ( $n = 14$ ). For instance, one of the principals believes that it is not only about having more teachers at school but also about the teachers' attitudes towards inclusion: 'Thus, not only having enough teachers but teachers who ... bring an inner attitude towards it' (Principal 21). Furthermore, not only the stakeholders' but also society's willingness and acceptance in relation to inclusion are seen as a factor playing a crucial role in the successful implementation of inclusion:

*Yes, first of all I think all those involved, politics as well as the society, and accordingly, of course, all institutions that belong to it, must have the willingness for inclusion. So, you have to have this connecting view rather than the separating view. (Principal 1)*

*The attitude is the basic requirement for the entire college. Everyone must stay behind it, including all other employees. It is not just teachers that work here. This is of absolute importance. (Principal 19)*

Some principals also hint at parents' attitudes towards inclusive education and make clear that there are families or parents displaying negative attitudes towards the implementation of inclusive education, because they are concerned that their children will not be able to learn properly in the inclusive classroom:

*I believe that the acceptance in society must become greater. So there are still families who say, 'No, my child should not learn together with the children with special needs'. You hear that, not so often, but there are still some: 'I want my child to be together with high-performing students', so that they can be further promoted. I think there needs to be a rethink. (Principal 24)*

### Sociopolitical Conditions

Furthermore, some principals ( $n = 10$ ) indicate that sociopolitical changes are also necessary. For instance, it is argued that changes are needed in society. In this regard, some principals' responses indicate that inclusion has to become a basic principle in society and does not only concern schools. This stresses the importance of realising inclusion in different areas in society, as one of the principals questions why inclusion is supposed to be limited to school level and argues that 'in many other societal structures, something has to happen' (Principal 15). Similarly, another principal states, 'What is still

missing is also often the education of the public' (Principal 28). The principals' responses make clear that society's view and approach to inclusion and to people with special educational needs have to change. In this respect, one of the principals expresses that 'the society, thus, a city, must set out and work inclusively overall' (Principal 31). In addition to changes in society, more support and action are expected from politics, as one principal emphasises: 'Politically, in any case, that the big rethink must come' (Principal 26).

### **Cooperation**

Cooperation is another requirement that is highlighted as essential by some principals ( $n = 7$ ) for a successful realisation of inclusion. This issue concerns cooperation among staff, between regular and special education teachers, or cooperation with different professions in general:

*We need a communicative network to exchange information. In principle, all instances that are involved ... so that we can ... also work here on site and exchange information and I think can consult corresponding professions for advice over and over again. (Principal 29)*

### **Opportunities for Exchanging Information (Time)**

In the context of cooperation, the need for opportunities supporting the cooperation becomes evident ( $n = 4$ ). Cooperation is considered necessary for an adequate implementation of inclusion; however, the required structures seem to be lacking. Time appears to be necessary in order to enable cooperation and opportunities for consultation and discussion between staff/teachers of different professions so that the different competencies can be used in an optimal way:

*A very big factor is time. One must take the time; it is not provided from outside. It would be better if it would be provided from outside in the form of less teaching. That schools that are on the way to inclusion absolutely need time, where colleagues are not teaching, but where consultation can take place and the exchange of information. (Principal 28)*

### **Class Size**

The interviews ( $n = 3$ ) further reveal that class size can be critical for the implementation of inclusive education, as one principal points out that class size should be reduced: 'We need smaller learning groups' (Principal 29). Another principal also mentions the need for smaller class sizes in order to be able to teach the children in an appropriate way:

*We still have buildings here that were built in the 1960s; they are planned for classes of 30 with frontal direction, but that is absolutely not suitable for inclusive classes. In general, the class sizes are way too big. (Principal 22)*

### **Composition of the Learning Group**

Furthermore, it becomes apparent in the interviews that the composition of the learning group can complicate the implementation of inclusive education ( $n = 3$ ). In particular, pupils with emotional and social special educational needs seem to be perceived as challenging, which is also related to the lack of appropriate conditions in this regard. One principal explains that the education of children with certain special educational needs is difficult due to the lack of personnel resources:

*But with learning [disabilities] or also emotional-social development, mental development, quite difficult, we are not nearly ready for that in school in terms of personnel requirements, that we can do all this without any problems. (Principal 13)*

Another principal highlights that children with emotional and social special educational needs are difficult to supervise in the inclusive classroom, 'because they can also disturb a whole class, thus obstruct others in their learning and, above all, themselves' (Principal 22).

### **Further In-School Factors**

Other principals ( $n = 2$ ) think that changes are needed related to instruction or assessment and grades. Thus, one principal suggests to 'open classes wider' (Principal 5). Another principal indicates that an evaluation system based on grades is incompatible with inclusive education and that the same learning goals cannot be expected for all pupils in the inclusive class. This principal argues that 'the grades have to be abolished. These goals that have to be reached by everyone at the end of a class have to be abolished, to have to repeat a class has to be abolished' (Principal 4).

## **Discussion**

The purpose of the present study was to identify conditions that primary school principals assume to be crucial for a successful implementation of inclusion. Therefore, individual interviews were conducted with primary school principals in Germany, where the implementation of inclusive education was initiated with the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities in 2009. The results of this study reveal that, from primary school principals' perspectives, personnel resources seem to be perceived as the most crucial factor for a successful implementation of inclusive education. Apart from this, further resources such as funding and building infrastructure as well as appropriate materials for inclusive teaching and learning are reported as key requirements for a successful implementation of inclusive education. It becomes clear that the absence of these factors can be challenging for principals and restrain the realisation of inclusive education to a considerable extent. These findings corroborate the results of previous studies with school principals from different types of schools (Singer et al., 2016; Subba et al., 2019). The results are also supported by studies that have investigated teachers' views (e.g., Cambridge-Johnson et al., 2014; Hunter-Johnson et al., 2014).

The findings further indicate that although resources such as infrastructure or appropriate materials were also mentioned as important conditions, a few principals pointed out that these aspects were more minor problems. It seems that inclusive education is largely seen as feasible without special materials or infrastructure. Of more importance seems to be the availability of staff. Furthermore, teacher training also emerged as an important requirement for the implementation of inclusive education. This result is widely consistent with previous research (e.g., Anderson et al., 2007; Fuchs, 2010; Hunter-Johnson et al., 2014; Singer et al., 2016; Subba et al., 2019). Additionally, attitudes towards inclusion are perceived as important for a successful realisation of inclusion. Within research regarding the successful realisation of inclusive education, teachers' attitudes have received much attention in the last few years (e.g., Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; de Boer et al., 2011). However, attitudes were not solely limited to school staff in the present study. The interviewed principals considered society's attitudes and willingness as important requirements for the successful implementation of inclusive education. In addition, sociopolitical changes were mentioned as necessary. This finding implies that a holistic approach is necessary for a successful realisation of inclusion, which is not only limited to education and school but also is a societal concern.

Another factor that emerged as being important is related to cooperation and opportunities for exchanging information. Within the premise of adequate support for students with special educational needs, collaborative practices are seen as a key element of inclusive education (Löser & Werning, 2015; Lütje-Klose & Urban, 2014). Collaboration is also emphasised as one of the four core values for teachers



working in inclusive classrooms within the *Profile of Inclusive Teachers* by the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2012). The organisation of those collaborative structures at school is in turn dependent on the principal who can establish the required conditions. However, it becomes clear that principals' opportunities for the support of collaboration can be limited and they cannot provide enough time for the teaching staff to meet and exchange information.

A further issue concerned class size, which is perceived as too large for an appropriate realisation of inclusive education. The statements of some principals highlight the need for smaller class sizes. This finding is consistent with the results of previous studies with teachers and principals (e.g., Anderson et al., 2007; Hunter-Johnson et al., 2014; Singer et al., 2016). Inclusive education is associated with individualised learning opportunities and meeting the individual needs of all students. It seems evident that this premise cannot be fulfilled adequately without reducing the class size. Another stated aspect is related to the composition of the learning group. As one of the more difficult special educational needs, emotional-social impairment of children was mentioned in the interviews. This result also emerged in research on teachers' attitudes towards integration and inclusion, indicating that emotional-behavioural difficulties are among those special educational needs that are related to more negative attitudes of teachers (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; de Boer et al., 2011). Apart from this, the results also suggest that the realisation of inclusive education is also associated with changes in instruction and assessment.

The findings of this study support the framework of aspects influencing the actions of school principals. The conditions perceived as necessary by the interviewed principals are generally in line with these aspects. Leadership is affected by several internal and external factors, such as societal, political conditions or institutional and personal factors (e.g., Brauckmann-Sajkiewicz et al., 2020; Hallinger, 2011, 2018), which therefore can be seen as indirect factors having an impact on the successful realisation of inclusion, with the school principal mediating between various expectations by taking into account given conditions (Badstieber et al., 2018). The findings of this study indicate that from the principals' perspectives conditions are seen as important that are similar to factors that affect leadership. It seems obvious that, in the absence thereof, a successful realisation of inclusive education can be impeded to a substantial degree. Considering the primary school principals' responses, it became clear that personnel resources seem to be a very important condition for the successful implementation of inclusive education. As an implication, it can be concluded that teacher education and preparation related to inclusive teaching are essential. Consequently, ensuring an appropriate inclusive education system especially goes hand in hand with adequate teacher preparation and development for inclusive education (Haug, 2017). Furthermore, the availability of personnel resources in terms of special needs teachers is also a question of resource allocation. An input-oriented resource allocation is associated with an increased number of diagnoses, but a throughput orientation may not meet demand and fairness (Goldan, 2021).

This study also has some limitations. Although the investigation provides insight into school principals' views on the required conditions for a successful implementation of inclusion, it is still not a representative study since different countries have different educational policies and school systems. In future research, more detailed information regarding necessary conditions could be further obtained by examining the schools more closely, such as in terms of their equipment or the number of students with special educational needs, as different school environments or settings can require different conditions. In addition, it may also be of interest to investigate the principals' experience and knowledge with regard to inclusion in this context.

All in all, the results of this study with German primary school principals make clear that the realisation of inclusion requires many conditions, such as institutional, political or societal factors, which can facilitate school principals' efforts in developing an inclusive school. The findings further suggest that from the school principals' views, not all conditions seem to be equally crucial for the successful implementation of inclusive education but that some factors seem to be prioritised. For instance, the results indicate that the implementation of inclusive education is not primarily a question of major changes in schools, but seems to be particularly related to personnel resources, which may be seen

as a pivotal point in this context. Moreover, the study shows how some conditions are interlinked. It can be seen that many categories are related to personnel resources, such as training, cooperation and opportunities for exchanging information. The perceived challenges with regard to the composition of the learning group can also be partly attributed to a lack of personnel resources.

## Conclusion

The findings of this study suggest that inclusive education can be successfully realised by focusing on personnel and providing adequate teacher training on inclusive education. Apart from this, attitudes towards inclusion are seen as important and thus seem to be another critical condition from the principals' perspective. Furthermore, this study indicates that inclusive education not only refers to schools but also is a societal concern, which emphasises the necessity of changes in society's approach to inclusion.

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