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Attitudes and opinions of primary school teachers towards inclusive education

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the schools where primary school students under temporary protection study, focusing on inclusive education. In this mixed-method study, quantitative data were analysed using statistical analysis methods and qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis methods. convergent/parallel mixed methods research design, one of the mixed research designs, was used in the study. In the qualitative dimension of the study, primary school teachers with students under temporary protection in Samsun province are involved. In the quantitative dimension, 240 randomly selected primary school teachers constitute the study population. In the study, the Teacher Attitude Scale in Inclusive Education, developed by Ünal Şimşek and a semi-structured interview form were used. SPSS21 software was used for quantitative data analysis, and MAXQDA 2020 software was used for qualitative data analysis. The research revealed that teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education are generally positive. However, while teachers' attitudes towards the subject did not differ significantly based on their training status in inclusive education, a significant difference was found depending on the presence of students under temporary protection in the classroom. In addition, while trying to carry out activities for inclusive education, primary school teachers emphasised that students under temporary protection negatively affected the classroom environment, which in turn reflected poorly on them. Finally, it was concluded that the most significant deficiency in inclusive education is that the subject is not fully known.

Keywords: Temporary protection, Students under temporary protection, Migration, Mixed method study.

Introduction

To leave a more livable world for future generations, those who will build the future must be well educated now. Additionally, the obstacles to equal opportunities should be removed by ensuring education is a right accessible to all, regardless of their means. It will not be enough to make legal arrangements for this purpose. In addition, it is necessary to raise global awareness on the issue and to believe in its importance. People migrate from their places of residence to seek opportunities in other places or countries, mainly due to wars, natural disasters, and famines. Children are the most negatively affected by this situation. In addition to hunger and misery, these children are deprived of educational opportunities, and on the one hand, their own lives are darkened, and on the other hand, they can create problems in the places where they settle. For this reason, the seriousness of the issue is considered too important and sensitive to be ignored.

Migration is the movement of people from their place of birth to a different place, where they live

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permanently or temporarily (Castles, 2010). According to Sahin (2001), migration is defined as “the act of moving people individually or collectively for various reasons,” and there are multiple motivations for migration. Although wars, natural disasters, economic difficulties, political pressures and family reasons are the most common reasons for migration (Mansoor & Quillin, 2006), the main reason is that people seek better conditions to sustain their lives.

Although migration movements are more organised and international in modern times, they impact both the migrants and the destinations. While migrants invest in a place to build a new life, destinations face various challenges in integrating them (King, 2012). In this context, language, culture and economic factors play an important role in the integration process (Berry, 2002).

On the other hand, in many countries, policies and strategies are being developed to understand the effects of migration and to integrate migrants. These policies aim to support migrants in building a new life and facilitate the integration process in the places where they go. Indeed, The mass migration caused by the civil war in Syria has once again emphasised the importance of migrant integration. Syrian migrants have left their countries and sought refuge in different geographies. This situation has revealed the importance and necessity of the integration process in their destinations (The United Nations Refugee Agency [UNHCR], 2019).

The civil war in Syria and the resulting migrations have had a significant impact on neighbouring countries such as Turkey. In particular, Turkey stands out as a country where Syrian migrants intensively seek refuge and are provided with temporary protection. Turkey has quickly taken measures against this migration movement and supported Syrian migrants by establishing temporary accommodation centres (Directorate of Migration Management, 2021). However, the integration process of Syrian migrants has faced language, cultural and economic challenges. In this context, it is important to provide integration services such as language training, job opportunities and social services (Berry, 2002; Ciyer, 2010; King, 2012).

Turkey has been hosting millions of Syrians since the beginning of the civil war in Syria. However, long-term solutions for asylum-seekers have not yet been established in Turkey, and most of them live under temporary protection status. Since the beginning of the Syrian crisis, Turkey has been one of the countries receiving the highest number of refugees in the international community. According to recent data from the Directorate of Migration Management, as of March 2023, there are 3,435,298 registered Syrians under temporary protection in Turkey (Directorate of Migration Management, 2023). Syrians under temporary protection are housed in camps designated by the Turkish government or by their own means, and can access health services and education.

There is a strong link between migration and education. The increase in international migration has impacted the education systems and policies of countries. The children of migrants need to receive education in the countries of destination and endeavour to integrate into local education systems. Therefore, the education levels of migrants are closely related to the reason for migration and the education systems of the countries they migrate to (Günkor, 2018). In addition, the level of education of migrants is also a determining factor in finding a job in their new country, adapting and participating in society (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2009).

Education has been an important part of people’s lives throughout human history, playing a significant role in the development and growth of societies and enhancing the quality of life.

However, for many years, education has been presented as a service accessible only to an elite minority (Hooks, 1994; McLaren, 1995). The shift in education from a minority group to the general public is a long process dating back to our recent history. This process can be realised through the implementation of policies that promote equality and inclusion in education systems. These policies aim to facilitate minority groups' access to education, increase the diversity of learning materials and the representation of minority cultures (Tabak, 2019). Therefore, the concept of inclusive education has gained importance in recent years. Inclusive education is an approach that aims to ensure that all students receive education in accordance with their different characteristics and needs (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO], 2009).

Inclusive education is based on the idea that all people have the right to equal and fair education. This idea was first included in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 (United Nations General Assembly [UN], 1948). Article 26 of the Declaration states that "The right to education shall be made available to everyone". This statement emphasises that the right to education should be provided equally for everyone, not only for a certain group of people.

Inclusive education is an approach where the education system accepts everyone, ensuring that every student has equal opportunities. Inclusive education is especially designed for disadvantaged groups, students with disabilities, students with language or cultural differences and students with different learning needs. Inclusive education helps students to accept, understand and respect each other in the educational environment (Kayabaşı, 2022; Kırılmaz & Öntaş, 2020; Tanç, Mert & Açıık, 2024). It also allows students to learn according to different learning styles and speeds. Inclusive education also makes an important contribution to the education of migrant students. Many immigrant students face new cultural and language barriers, which can delay their adaptation process. The inclusive education approach is designed to support these students in their adaptation process.

Inclusive education is crucial for children from all levels to receive education under equal conditions. Although the history of inclusion in education is quite old, its importance has increased even more due to the intensive influx of asylum seekers to our country. With the arrival of asylum-seekers to our country, the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) has accelerated its efforts on inclusive education and increased its number. First of all, in 2014, the Ministry of National Education of Turkey opened Temporary Education Centres (TECs) providing education in Arabic for asylum-seeking children with the circular numbered 2014/21 titled "Education and Training Services for Foreigners". Afterwards, these education centres were closed and asylum-seeking students were enrolled in schools where Turkish children were educated in order to ensure their integration into the system. In this context, training on "Inclusive Education" has begun, particularly for teachers in schools with asylum-seeker students (Demir Zengin, Uğur Mutlu, & Haşıl Korkmaz, 2024; Öztürk et al., 2017). As stated by Özer Yürür et al. (2016), the inclusion of Syrian students in the education system has brought along various problems in terms of infrastructure, resources, programme, school climate, adaptation, language and communication.

As a result of the internal conflicts in Syria, a mass of migrants who are under temporary protection in our country and whose future fate is uncertain have been formed. This mass includes individuals from all age groups. According to the study conducted by Şen and Vural

(2014), 75 per cent of the migrants from Syria are women and children. Children who came to our country at a very young age were victims of the war, could not receive the necessary education in their country, lagged behind their peers and were psychologically badly affected. Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1989, states that Primary education should be free of charge and compulsory for every child". Education is one of the most natural rights of children all over the world, and its access should not be prevented for any reason. Many asylum-seeking children who experience psychological traumas and cannot participate in education are more vulnerable to various dangers of the outside world. These vulnerable children are subjected to social exclusion, child marriage, material and moral exploitation, use as cheap labour and discrimination. It is essential that asylum-seeking children, who have faced a significant trauma, enter the educational environment and integrate into the society in the country of migration.

In Turkey, there are 927,722 students under temporary protection at primary school age (Directorate of Migration Management, 2023). This number corresponds to 10% of the primary school students in our country. With the increasing number of students under temporary protection in our country, inclusive education has started to gain importance. Although the history of inclusive education dates back to ancient times, it has only recently come to the agenda and been mentioned in our country.

Education aims to prevent these children from becoming a lost generation. Studies on inclusive education, which has become more important with the increasing number of asylum-seeking students today (Amaç, 2021; Çolak Seymen et al., 2024; Demir Zengin, Uğur Mutlu, & Haşıl Korkmaz, 2024; Erdemirci & Özdemir, 2024; Françoise, Florence & Isabelle, 2022; Karataş & Hamurcu, 2024; Köse, Yiğit et al. 2024; Oğlakçı & Amaç et al. 2024; Tanç, Mert, & Açıık, 2024; Vural, 2022) are pretty few. Although seminars and in-service trainings on inclusive education are given to teachers and administrators in our schools, there are few studies on how they reflect on the education process (Ayan Ceyhan, 2016).

In this mixed-method study, an attempt was made to approach the subject from a broader perspective. With the qualitative dimension of the research, the aim was to address the subject in depth. Therefore, it is thought that the research will provide important ideas for disadvantaged students in schools to benefit from educational activities and practices effectively and with high quality. In this context, the primary purpose of the research is to examine the schools where primary school students under temporary protection are located, from the perspective of stakeholders, in terms of inclusive education. For this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought:

1. What is the level of teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education according to the sub-dimensions of the scale?
2. Do teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education differ significantly according to whether there are students under temporary protection in their classrooms?
3. Do teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education differ significantly according to whether they receive training (in-service training, seminar, course, etc.) on inclusive education?
4. What are the opinions of primary school teachers about inclusive education?

Method

Design

This study is a mixed-method research that aims to examine primary schools where students under temporary protection study, focusing on inclusive education. Mixed-method research involves collecting both quantitative and qualitative data to understand problems, integrating these data sets, and evaluating and interpreting them on a common denominator (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). In this study, convergent/parallel mixed methods research design, one of the mixed method designs, was employed. Convergent/parallel mixed methods research design is a mixed research design in which both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis processes are carried out simultaneously. This design allows both qualitative and quantitative findings to be collected and analysed separately, after which the results of the two types of data are combined and discussed from a broad perspective (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). This study aims to provide a more comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the evaluation of primary schools where students under temporary protection study, focusing on inclusive education, using a convergent/parallel mixed methods research design. In this context, with the qualitative dimension of the research, an attempt was made to reveal children under temporary protection's access to education and the quality of the education provided. The quantitative and qualitative dimensions of the research were conducted in parallel.

In the quantitative dimension of the study, the survey model, a type of descriptive research model, was used. In this context, classroom teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education were examined with an appropriate scale, and the data obtained were analysed and interpreted. In the qualitative dimension of the study, the case study design was used to determine the views and experiences of teachers towards inclusive education. This design is a qualitative research design in which more than one data collection tool can be used, and the experiences of individuals living in a context about a phenomenon are tried to be revealed (Yin, 2018).

Participants and procedure

The study population of this research consists of teachers from primary schools where students under temporary protection study, affiliated with the Directorate of National Education in the Atakum and İlkadım districts of Samsun province. The sample of the study consists of 240 primary school teachers selected by random sampling method. Among the teachers participating in the study, 128 had students under temporary protection in their classrooms, while 112 did not. Considering the status of the primary school teachers who participated in the study regarding their training on inclusive education, 159 received inclusive education, while 81 did not.

The study group for the data collected through the qualitative method consists of 15 primary school teachers with students under temporary protection in their classrooms. The selection of the participants was carried out using criterion sampling, one of the purposeful sampling methods. In selecting the participants, it was considered that they had various demographic characteristics and different experiences in inclusive education. In this way, the aim was to examine inclusive education in depth from different perspectives. In the collection of quantitative data, the "personal information form" developed by the researcher and the "teacher attitude scale in inclusive education" developed by Şimşek (2019) were used. The "semi-structured interview form" developed by the researchers was used to collect qualitative data.

The personal information form used to collect teachers' demographic information included data such as age, gender, education level, teaching experience, whether there were students under temporary protection in their classrooms, and whether they had received training on inclusive education. This information was used to understand teachers' profiles and to evaluate the effect of demographic factors in the analyses. The Teacher Attitude Scale in Inclusive Education, developed by Şimşek (2019), consists of 22 items used to measure teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. The scale is divided into two sub-dimensions. While there are 15 items in the "Necessity of Social Cooperation in Inclusive Education" sub-dimension, there are seven items in the "Necessity of Increasing Interest in Inclusive Education" sub-dimension. In the scale, items 2, 3, 7, 11 and 15 are reversed. The scale was developed using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1 point) to agree (5 points) strongly. Teachers can get a minimum of 22 and a maximum of 110 points from the scale. Teachers with high scores indicate that they have a positive attitude towards inclusive education. The reliability of the scale was determined using the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient calculated for both dimensions of the scale was found to be 0.91. In this study, the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient calculated for the application reliability of the Teacher Attitude Scale in Inclusive Education was found to be 0.89.

Semi-structured interview forms developed by the researcher were used to collect qualitative data. The form includes questions covering topics such as teachers' experiences, opinions, difficulties and suggestions about inclusive education. The reasons for preferring interviews are to collect data from participants in line with the research questions and to provide a more detailed analysis through flexible communication as the conversation progresses (Akman Dömbekçi & Erişen, 2022). Semi-structured interviews include both fixed-choice answers and provide the opportunity to obtain in-depth information in the relevant field. For this reason, it provides the researcher with the advantages of communicating more easily with the participants, ease of analysis and obtaining detailed information (Büyüköztürk et al., 2014). The semi-structured interview form prepared for the teachers began with the creation of a question pool, which was developed by first reviewing the literature. Then, in order to ensure the content validity of the possible interview questions, the opinions of three educational programme experts and one field expert were consulted. The form, organised in line with the experts' recommendations, was applied to two teachers, and the comprehensibility of the questions was reviewed.

Measures

During the data collection process, firstly, Ethics Committee Permission was obtained from Ondokuz Mayıs University Social and Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee with the decision dated 30.12.2022 and numbered 2022-1096. Then, after obtaining research permission from the Ministry of National Education, the teachers were informed about the research by visiting the schools. The teachers who volunteered were asked to fill out the scale according to the instructions. Then, the teachers who volunteered for the interview were given the necessary preliminary information, and interviews were conducted in accordance with the "Semi-structured Interview Form". The interviews lasted an average of 30 minutes. In addition, the interviews were recorded with a voice recorder after obtaining permission from the participants. The voice recordings were transcribed and translated into writing in computer environment. The researchers personally conducted the research design, development of the semi-structured interview form, data collection, analysis and reporting processes.

Data analysis

The data collected from the primary school teachers with the Teacher Attitude in Inclusive Education scale were analysed with SPSS 21 software. Before analysing the quantitative data, various methods were used to determine the normality of distributions for each dependent variable. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used since the sample size was 240 participants (McKillup, 2012; Shapiro & Wilk, 1965). According to the test results, if the p-value exceeds the critical value at a certain significance level, it is concluded that the distribution is not suitable for normal distribution. The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test of the Attitude in Inclusive Education scale were significant: $p\text{-value} = 0.000$. This result indicates that the sample is not normally distributed. Therefore, the Mann-Whitney U test was used to analyse the data. The significance level was determined as $p < .05$ in the analyses.

Qualitative data were analysed using the thematic analysis method. Qualitative data were analysed through a detailed examination of the transcripts containing the views and experiences of the participants. In this context, the transcripts of the interviews were carefully read and divided into meaningful units, which formed the basis for creating themes for analysis. Themes were identified by analysing the data in terms of content and grouping the units with similar meanings. The themes were transformed into meaningful conceptual categories by associating them with the aims and research questions of the study. With the determination of the themes, each unit was coded. Codes are labels representing the content of the data. Each code represents the relevant topics and sub-themes in the analysis process. The codes were then classified and grouped within the framework of the relevant themes and sub-themes. This process helped to structure and analyse the data. The classified and grouped themes were analysed in depth, and comments were made on their meanings. The data were analysed meaningfully by considering the relationships and patterns between the themes. The results of the analyses were reported in a meaningful way through themes and sub-themes. The findings are presented in relation to the relevant literature and research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Validity, reliability, and ethical considerations

In order to ensure internal validity in the semi-structured interview form used in the collection of qualitative data, the content of the interview form was evaluated by academicians who are experts in the field of education and feedback was received on the appropriateness, scope and comprehensibility of the questions (Merriam, 2013; Patton, 2014). In addition, during the presentation, the research findings were supported, and participant confirmation was provided by using direct quotations from the participants' statements. Internal validity shows how accurately and reliably the measurement tool measures the variables within the scope of the research (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). External validity determines the generalisability of research results across different times and sample groups. In order to increase external validity, participants with different characteristics from different schools were included in the study. This contributes to the research in terms of generalisability of the findings (Shadish, Cook & Campbell, 2002).

In order to ensure the external reliability of the research, the interview process and questions were standardised. The same questions were asked to all participants, and interviews were conducted under similar conditions. External reliability is related to whether the research can yield similar results when conducted at different times and under similar conditions (Yin, 2018).

In this context, methods such as purposive sampling, coding by another researcher and comparison of codes were used.

Results

The level of teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education

The results were organised and interpreted in tables in parallel with the research questions. The findings related to the question "What is the level of teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education according to the sub-dimensions of the scale?" are given in Table 1.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics on teacher attitudes towards inclusive education

Scale Factors	N	Min	Max	\bar{x}	Sd
The necessity of social cooperation in inclusive education	240	1,87	4,87	3,93	0,49
The necessity of increasing interest in inclusive education	240	1,14	5,00	4,50	0,62
Teacher attitudes in inclusive education	240	1,82	4,73	3,93	0,47

When Table 1 is examined, it is determined that the attitude scores of primary school teachers towards the necessity of social cooperation in inclusive education, as a sub-dimension, vary between 1.87 and 4.87, with a mean of 3.93 (± 0.96). It was determined that the attitude scores of the teachers towards the sub-dimension of the necessity of increasing the interest of teachers in inclusive education varied between 1.14 and 5.00, and the mean was 4.50 (± 0.626). It was determined that the general attitude scores of primary school teachers towards inclusive education varied between 1,82 and 4,73. The mean of the general attitude scores of primary school teachers towards inclusive education was found to be 3,93 ($\pm 0,479$). The general attitude scores of primary school teachers towards inclusive education are at a high level. The results of the "Mann-Whitney U" test, conducted to determine whether the attitudes of primary school teachers towards inclusive education significantly differ based on the presence of students under temporary protection, are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Mann-Whitney U Test on the comparison of primary school teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education according to the presence of students under temporary protection in their classrooms

	Being under temporary protection status	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	U	p
The necessity of social cooperation in inclusive education	There are	128	112,99	14462,50	6206,50	0,07
	No	112	129,08	14457,50		
The necessity of increasing interest in inclusive education	There are	128	110,07	14089,50	5833,50	0,01*
	No	112	132,42	14830,50		
General attitudes towards inclusive education	There are	128	110,72	14172,50	5916,50	0,02*
	No	112	131,67	14747,50		

According to the table 1, while the sub-dimension scores of the necessity of social cooperation in inclusive education did not show a significant difference according to the presence of temporary protection status students in the classroom ($U=6206,500$; $p>0,05$), the sub-dimension scores of the necessity of increasing interest in inclusive education showed a significant difference according to the presence of temporary protection status students in the classroom ($U=5833,500$; $p<0,05$). Based on these findings, it can be said that the scores of the sub-dimension of the necessity of increasing interest in inclusive education of the primary school teachers who do not have temporary protection status students in their class are significantly higher than the scores of the primary school teachers who have temporary protection status students in their class. When the overall scale is analysed, it is seen that the general attitudes of Primary school teachers towards inclusive education differ significantly according to the

presence of temporary protection status students in the classroom ($U=5916,500$; $p<0.05$). In this context, it can be said that the general attitudes towards inclusive education scores of primary school teachers with students who do not have temporary protection status in their class are significantly higher than those of teachers with students who do have temporary protection status. The results of the “Mann-Whitney U” test, which assesses whether the attitudes of primary school teachers towards inclusive education differ based on their training status, are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Mann-Whitney U Test on the comparison of primary school teachers’ attitudes towards inclusive education according to the status of receiving training on inclusive education

	Receipt of education	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	U	p
The necessity of social cooperation in inclusive education	Received	159	122,73	19514,00	6085,00	0,48
	Did not receive	81	116,12	9406,00		
The necessity of increasing interest in inclusive education	Received	159	122,51	19479,50	6119,50	0,52
	Did not receive	81	116,55	9440,50		
General attitudes towards inclusive education	Received	159	122,82	19528,50	6070,50	0,46
	Did not receive	81	115,94	9391,50		

According to the table 1, The scores of the sub-dimension of the necessity of social cooperation in inclusive education ($U=6085,000$; $p>0,05$), the sub-dimension of the necessity of increasing interest in inclusive education ($U=6119,500$; $p>0,05$) and the overall scale ($U=6070,500$; $p>0,05$) did not show a significant difference according to the status of receiving education on inclusive education. Based on these findings, it can be said that the status of receiving education on inclusive education has no effect on primary school teachers attitudes towards inclusive education.

Opinions of primary school teachers about inclusive education

The data on the question “What are the opinions of primary school teachers about inclusive education?” were obtained through semi-structured interviews with primary school teachers and analysed in MAXQDA software. Code matrix maps were created by means of codes related to themes.

The results obtained as a result of the analysis were grouped under seven themes as “the effects of having students under temporary protection on the classroom environment”, “the necessity of inclusive education”, “requirements for the implementation of inclusive education”, “activities for inclusive education”, “being a teacher in a classroom where students under temporary protection study”, “cooperation process in inclusive education”, “suggestions”. The findings related to the theme of the effects of having students under temporary protection on the classroom environment are given in Table 4.

Table 4 The effects of having students under temporary protection on classroom environment

Theme	Sub theme	The code	Teacher codes (T)
The Effects of Having a Student Under Temporary Protection on the Classroom Environment	Positive Effects	Çokkültürlülük	T13, T14
	Negative Impacts	Deterioration of Classroom Climate	T2, T5, T6, T7, T8,
		Financial hardship	T4
		Student’s family environment	T8, T10, T14, T15
		Behavioural problems	T2, T7, T10, T12, T15
		Academic problems	T3, T14
		Language Problem	T1, T3, T8, T10, T11, T14, T13,
	No Effect		T9

According to Table 4, teachers' views on the theme of the effects of having students under temporary protection on the classroom environment were discussed under three sub-themes: positive effects, negative effects and no effect. Some of the teachers emphasised that the presence of students under temporary protection in the classroom enabled students to develop their perspectives on multicultural environment. One of the teachers' views on this issue is given below.

"Children are together with people from a different culture, and they try to understand them. When these children grow up and attend university, they will be with people from different cultures, encountering them at this age, which improves their empathy. In this way, they have positive aspects." (T14)

The negative effects of having a student under temporary protection in the classroom were mentioned as deterioration of the classroom climate, financial difficulties, the student's family environment, behavioural problems, academic problems and language problems. One of the teachers' views on this issue is given below.

"There are mostly conscious hitting incidents among children; there is much violence. There is violence among children, and they set a bad example to other children in terms of violence. Secondly, swearing incidents are very high, and they swear excessively. This causes the spread of swearing in the classroom environment." (T14)

The opinion of a teacher that students under temporary protection do not have any effect on the classroom environment is as follows.

"There is no negative situation for me. My students are very harmonious, there is one Iraqi and one Syrian, even the Syrian is very good academically." (T9)

The opinions of Primary school teachers who have students under temporary protection in their classrooms on the theme of the necessity of inclusive education are given in Table 5 under 4 sub-themes: from the point of view of school administration, from the point of view of state policies, from the social point of view and the lack of necessity of inclusive education.

Table 5 The Necessity of inclusive education

Theme	Sub Theme	Code	Teacher codes (T)
The Necessity of Inclusive Education	In terms of School Management	Reducing Class Size	T10
		Inclusive education with limited duration	T13
	In terms of State Policies	Inclusion of Kurdish in the Turkish education system	T11
		Distribution of foreigners	T15
		Failure to enforce the rules	T1, T7
		Adapting inclusive education to the Turkish education system	T8, T11
	Social Aspects	Contribution to social development	T4, T6, T7, T13, T14
		Providing equal opportunities	T1, T2, T3 T4, T9, T12, T14
		Establishing the need for communication	T14, T15
	Not Required		T5

According to Table 5, primary school teachers expressed their views on the necessity of inclusive education in terms of the duty of the school administration to reduce the class size. One of the teachers' views on this issue is given below:

"This year, we received training from the Ministry of National Education on this subject. It is good as long as the class sizes are low, but when the class sizes are high, it's easy to tell the

teacher to do this or that, so go ahead and do it yourself. How much better it would be if the class size did not exceed 20.” (T10)

Regarding the policies that the state should implement for inclusive education in schools where students under temporary protection study, Primary school teachers mentioned that inclusive education is programmed according to the cultures and education systems of other countries and that it is not compatible with our Turkish education system and that it should be adapted again according to the Turkish education system. One of the teachers' views on this issue is given below:

“... There are not only Syrians but also students from certain regions of the country. For example, there should have been a study on the east and southeast. ...” (T11)

In the necessity of inclusive education in schools where students under temporary protection are studying, Primary school teachers have expressed that inclusive education contributes to students' sociability, enables children to approach different cultures with tolerance, has an important place in the formation of equal opportunities among students, and contributes to the learning of Turkish by creating a need for communication, especially for foreign students. Some of the opinions of the teachers on this subject are given below:

“I find it very positive because if we can characterise the school as a sample of life, as mentioned in inclusive education, we encounter disabled individuals in our social life, we encounter people who grow up in different situations. As a matter of fact, there is an inclusion programme, which contributes to the social development of children in inclusive education.” (T4)

The opinions of Primary school teachers with students under temporary protection in their classrooms on the requirements for implementing inclusive education are presented in Table 6, under two sub-themes: from the perspective of teachers and from the perspective of education coordinators.

Table 6 Requirements for the implementation of inclusive education

Theme	Sub Theme	Code	Teacher codes (T)
Requirements for the Implementation of Inclusive Education	In terms of Teachers	Teacher encouragement	T9
		Availability of trained trainers	T3, T13, T14
	For training coordinators	Interpreter support	T11
		Turkish language education in extracurricular time	T2, T15
		Construction of regional schools	T5, T11
		Providing a suitable environment	T6, T8, T12, T14
		Raising awareness of parents	T10, T11, T12, T14, T15
		Compulsory pre-primary language education	T1, T9, T15
		Reduced class sizes	T10, T15
		Stretching the curriculum	T10
		Good coordination of training	T4, T7, T8

According to Table 6, regarding the requirements for teachers for the implementation of inclusive education in schools where students under temporary protection are studying, Primary school teachers stated that teachers should encourage students in this regard, and that teachers who are trained and educated in this field should work in classes where foreign students are present. Some of the teachers' views on this issue are given below:

“... We need to be trained on the subject in terms of our approach to them. I am empathising now, what would I expect if the same thing happened to us? I went to another country and took my child to a school. How does the teacher behave? Is he/she like a second citizen? Most of our people are seen like that in Europe... Our society and teachers need to be educated. The person in front of you is yours. Once that person arrives, we need to help them at every point. Teachers need to change, they need to develop, they need to receive in-service training in this field, and schools need to be equipped accordingly.” (T3).

In terms of the requirements for education coordinators for the implementation of inclusive education in schools where students under temporary protection are studying, Primary school teachers should be provided with interpreter support to schools, Turkish language teaching should be implemented outside of normal lesson times, foreign students should be gathered in certain parts of the cities and special schools should be built for them, appropriate environment and materials should be provided for the implementation of inclusive education in schools, They also stated that parents should be made aware and educated about inclusive education, foreign students should receive compulsory language education in preschool education before they start primary school, class sizes should be reduced so that teachers can deal with their students more comfortably, the curriculum should be stretched and more time should be created to deal with students one-on-one, and education should be well coordinated. One of the teachers' views on this issue is given below:

“Regional schools can be organised, they can be gathered in certain schools instead of scattering them in every school....” (T11)

The opinions of Primary school teachers with students under temporary protection in their classrooms on the theme of activities for inclusive education are presented in Table 7, under two sub-themes: activities for parents and activities for students.

Table 7 Activities for inclusive education

Theme	Sub Theme	Code	Teacher codes (T)
Activities for Inclusive Education	For parents	Having an interpreter	T15
		Parent awareness raising	T7, T14
	For students	Learning by doing and experiencing	T4, T9
		Individual studies	T2
		Peer education	T1, T9, T15
		Use of gestures and facial expressions	T15
		Assigning tasks in activities that they can do	T1, T9, T15
		Material use	T1, T3, T4, T8, T10, T15
		Non-discrimination	T3, T5, T9, T12, T13

According to Table 7, teachers stated that interpreters should be present in schools where students under temporary protection study to facilitate communication with parents and cooperation in monitoring their students' education. One of the opinions of the teachers on this issue is given below:

“In parent-teacher meetings, I definitely invite someone who speaks Turkish, someone who speaks Arabic Turkish, to meet with me when they come to the meeting. We definitely have an interpreter there, somehow I ask them for him/her or I call one of the people who speak Turkish at school for translation.” (T15).

Regarding the activities that should be implemented for students in inclusive education in schools where students under temporary protection study, Primary school teachers stated that they design activities by doing and experiencing for the problems they may encounter in life with

their students, that they do individual studies with students, that they frequently use peer education in their lessons, that they try to communicate with students who do not speak Turkish by using their gestures and mimics more intensively, that they assign them to activities that they can do more in lessons, and that they use materials more intensively in their lessons. Some of our teachers, on the other hand, stated that they did not design a special activity for foreign students because they thought this would be seen as discrimination. They did the same activities for them as they did for other students. One of the teachers' views on this issue is given below:

"Since it is the first grade, we use this inclusive education mostly in the first stage. I prepare at home, bringing many materials and doing group work with them. We include students from all levels and assign tasks they can handle, especially in the visual arts. We do this work frequently. In literacy studies, we use our smart boards to display various materials visually. We can prepare and show activities that will appeal to every student type from there." (T10)

The opinions on the theme of being a teacher in a classroom where students under temporary protection study are presented in Table 8, organised under the sub-themes of positive and negative aspects.

Table 8 Being a teacher in a classroom where students under temporary protection are learning

Theme	Sub Theme	Code	Teacher codes (T)
Being a Teacher in a Classroom where Students under Temporary Protection are Learning	Positive Aspects	Increased patience	T15
		Increased awareness	T2, T3, T11, T13, T15
		Recognising different cultures	T3, T8, T14
		Increased job satisfaction	T4
		Going abroad	T7
	Negative Aspects	Prejudices	T3, T4, T9, T11
		Communication problems	T1, T9, T14, T15
		Feeling of inefficiency	T8, T11, T14, T15
		Behavior problems	T1, T3, T7, T12
		Deterioration of classroom climate	T2, T3, T13
		Extra fatigue	T2, T5, T10, T15

According to Table 8, teachers expressed the positive aspects of being a teacher in a classroom where students under temporary protection are studying, such as increasing their patience, increasing their awareness after being in the same classroom with them, getting to know different cultures, experiencing more professional satisfaction, and going abroad to receive training about foreign students. One of the teachers' views on this issue is given below:

"On the positive side, I learnt a little bit about their culture. Sometimes I give examples to the other children, saying, "Look what they have been through; do not be so coy." Look, they have been through bombs. If you fall, you immediately start to moan." (T3)

The Primary school teachers stated that they had to deal with the prejudices of students, parents and the administration, and that they had communication problems with students and parents. They did not know Turkish well, so they felt a sense of inefficiency when their efforts were unrequited, and the classroom climate could be disrupted more easily because foreign students had more behavioural problems. That teaching in such a classroom created extra fatigue. One of the teachers' views on this issue is given below:

"From my point of view, there are level differences. Syrians are never mainstreamed. You can send other children to RAM and get a report, but Syrians do not have that. Also, Syrians are placed in classes according to age. For example, let us say a child who has never read 1-2-3 is 9 years old and starts directly from the 4th grade. That is a bit of a problem. However, it would be much better if they were placed according to their achievement level. Because of the level

differences, it becomes difficult for me to help them and manage the classroom climate...”
(T3)

Teachers’ views on the theme of co-operation in the inclusive education process in schools where students under temporary protection study are presented in Table 9, organised under three sub-themes: co-operation with students, school administration, and parents.

Table 9 Collaboration process in inclusive education

Theme	Sub Theme	Code	Teacher codes (T)
Collaboration Process in Inclusive Education	With students	Interpreting support from students	T1
		Changing student profile of the school	T15
		Increased workload of the administration	T15
		School management follows the usual procedure	T5, T6, T11, T14
	With school management	Lack of interest of foreign parents	T1, T2, T3, T4, T7, T8, T11
		Prejudices of Turkish parents	T3, T11, T14
		Awareness of Parents	T10, T13, T14

According to Table 9, regarding cooperation in the inclusive education process in schools where students under temporary protection study, primary school teachers stated that they receive interpreting support from their students who know Turkish and Arabic well. One of the teachers’ views on this issue is given below:

“If we have problems with students, we take foreign students who speak Turkish with us. They act as interpreters for us. That is how we communicate.” (T1)

Regarding the process of cooperation with the school administration in the process of inclusive education in schools where students under temporary protection study, Primary school teachers stated that the school administration tries to implement whatever the usual procedure is, that the workload of the administration increases with the arrival of foreign students, that the student profile of the school has changed and that parents who have the means prefer to send their students to private schools. One of the teachers’ views on this issue is given below:

“Now it is like this, when too many students pile up in one place, our administrators are tired, our administrators are trying to explain things to them, and they cannot communicate with them easily. They only come to school when they want something. They were given a bag from the very beginning. They do not go out the door with a bag full of stationery. ...” (T3)

Regarding cooperation with parents in inclusive education for students under temporary protection, Primary school teachers stated that foreign parents are generally indifferent to the school and their children and are not very favourable to cooperation. Turkish parents have prejudices against foreigners. These are reflected in their children, and parents’ awareness affects their interest in their children and cooperation with the school. One of the teachers’ views on this issue is given below:

“Children do not discriminate, but parents impose their own ideas on children at home. When I make them sit together, there is no problem, but the next day, their parents call me. The prejudices of adults affect children. My Turkish parents do not want foreigners either...” (T3)

The suggestions regarding the inclusive education process in schools where students under temporary protection study are given in Table 10 under two sub-themes: suggestions for parents and suggestions for education coordinators.

Table 10 Recommendations

Theme	Sub Theme	Code	Teacher codes (T)
Recommendations	For Parents	Foreign parents learning Turkish	T1
	For education coordinators	Cooperation	T4, T14
		Suitable classroom environment	T5, T12
		Receiving education through their own education system	T11
		Reducing class sizes	T10
		Solving the Language Problem	T1, T9, T14, T15
		Adaptation of Inclusive Education to the Turkish Education System	T8
		Specialise in a certain grade level	T14
		Setting and enforcing rules	T7
		Placing students in classes appropriate to their level	T2, T3, T8, T9, T14
		Providing material support	T3, T13
		Separate Turkish education	T2
		Being in separate schools	T7
		The settlement of foreigners in a specific procedure	T5, T15

According to Table 10, concerning suggestions for parents in the inclusive education process for students under temporary protection, Primary school teachers stated that it would be beneficial for foreign parents to learn Turkish to enhance communication and cooperation. One of the opinions of the teachers on this subject is given below:

“Turkish should be taught to the parents rather than the children. We teach Turkish here, but when the child comes home, there is no one to help them or explain Turkish. At least one family member should learn Turkish because we have had many communication problems with the parents. We always looked for an interpreter at first.” (T12)

Primary school teachers emphasised that appropriate classroom environments should be provided, foreign students should be educated in separate schools suitable for their own education system, and class sizes should be reduced. They also stated that language problems of students and parents should be solved, inclusive education should be adapted to the Turkish education system, class teachers should specialise in a certain grade level, and foreign students should be placed in classes according to their levels. Teachers also stated that extra material support should be provided to classes with foreign students. Turkish education should be provided outside of school hours, and the settlement of foreigners in our country should be organised according to certain procedures. One of the teachers’ views on this issue is given below:

“... Everyone needs to be educated in a good way. ... There should be projects to integrate these children into the society and everyone should put their hands under their shoulders. ... I went as a teacher and took the seminar, but the parents are uneducated, both Turkish and foreign administrators are uneducated and uninformed, so I can only go so far. That is why you are trying to do something; this time, you are being meddlesome. It is said that you are playing to the tribunes.” (T14).

Discussion and conclusion

According to the findings of the study, classroom teachers’ attitudes towards inclusive education are generally high. Similarly, other studies in the literature (Anılan & Kayacan, 2015; Baka, 2023; Cankaya & Korkmaz, 2012; Çifçi, et al, 2019; Er & Bayındır, 2015; Fazlıoğlu & Doğan, 2013; François, Florence & Isabelle, 2022; Karataş & Hamurcu, 2024; Köse, Bülbül, & Uluman, 2019;

Korkmaz, 2011; Kuzu, 2011; Leatherman & Niemeyer, 2005; Nagase, Tsunoda, & Fujita, 2020; Özokcu, 2018; Steen & Wilson, 2020; Şimşek, 2019; Terzi, Göçen, & Altun, 2019; Varlier, 2004; Yılmaz, 2021). In addition, some studies (Chhabra, Srivastava & Srivastana, 2009; Susar Kırmızı & Duran, 2017; Sakız, 2016; Uzun & Bütün, 2016; Yatgın, Sevgi & Uysal, 2015) found that teachers had negative attitudes towards inclusive education. This may be due to the perspectives on the subject in the regions and schools where the research was conducted. For example, while a negative attitude is evident in a region or school affected by the situation, a positive approach may be seen in a region or school with fewer problems. Again, in this study, the attitudes of Primary school teachers were positive regarding the necessity of increasing interest in inclusive education, which is another sub-dimension of the questionnaire.

When the attitudes of Primary school teachers towards inclusive education were analysed according to the status of having students under temporary protection in their classes, it was found that there was no significant difference in the sub-dimension of the necessity of social cooperation in inclusive education. A significant relationship was found between teachers having students under temporary protection in their classes and the sub-dimension of the need to increase interest in inclusive education. The attitudes of teachers who have students under temporary protection in their class are more positive in this sub-dimension. Considering the general attitudes of classroom teachers, it was concluded that those without students under temporary protection in their classes were more positive. The differences in attitudes between these teachers may stem from the problems faced by those with students under temporary protection in their classrooms. In contrast to these results, Kuzu and Deniz (2019) and Tanç, Mert and Açıık (2024) found that the attitudes of teachers with refugee students in their classes were more positive. Şimşek (2019), on the other hand, found that there was no difference according to the presence of disadvantaged students in their classes.

When the general attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education were analysed, no differentiation was found based on their training status in inclusive education. The attitudes of Primary school teachers who received and did not receive training on inclusive education are similar. Similar results are found in the studies of Kozikoğlu and Yıldırımoglu (2021) and Şimşek (2019). However, in some studies (Baka, 2023; Leonard & Smyth, 2022; Tsakiridou & Polyzopoulou, 2014; Yılmaz, 2021), it was concluded that teachers who received training on inclusive education had more positive attitudes compared to those who did not. The difference in the research results is attributed to the trainees' approaches to the subject or the nature of the training provided.

In this study, the effects of having students under temporary protection on the classroom environment, the necessity of inclusive education, the requirements for the implementation of inclusive education, activities for inclusive education, being a teacher in a classroom where students under temporary protection learn, the process of cooperation in inclusive education, and suggestions were gathered at the seven themes and categories and codes belonging to these themes were created.

In this study, some primary school teachers stated that the presence of a student under temporary protection positively affected the classroom environment. In contrast, others emphasised that it had a negative impact. Teachers with a positive approach to the issue stated that the benefits of having students under temporary protection in their classrooms stem from

fostering empathy among other students. Similar results were found in the studies of Kandemir and Aydın (2020) and Tanç, Mert and Açık (2024). In fact, regarding the negative effects of having students under temporary protection in their classes, they concluded that there was an increase in behavioural problems among students, the language problems of foreign students also affected other students in the class, and the problems experienced by foreign students in their family environment and financially negatively affected the classroom climate and the academic achievement of foreign students. Again, similar results were reached in some studies on the subject (Karaağaç & Güvenç, 2019; Uysal, 2019). The difference in the results can be attributed to the personality traits of the teachers, their positive and negative experiences with the subject, and the quality of the education they received.

In this study, Primary school teachers stated that class sizes should be smaller for inclusive education, and that the placement of foreigners should consider the school they will attend and the school's potential. In addition, they emphasised that inclusive education is not entirely suitable for the Turkish education system and that integration studies should be carried out in this regard. An understanding of education that incorporates our own culture and values should be established. It is important to recognise that foreigners may be too free in some subjects and face difficulties adapting to Turkish culture due to their different cultural backgrounds. These issues should be addressed by applying certain rules. In terms of socially inclusive education, they stated that foreign students are provided with equal opportunities to receive education and socialise like their peers in the country they migrated to. They also stated that in order for inclusive education to be implemented effectively and comfortably in the Turkish education system, parents should be involved in and support the process by raising awareness. Again, according to the teachers, the prejudices of Turkish families against foreigners hurt the friendship relations of the students in the classroom and create an additional workload for the teacher. Similarly, some studies in the literature (Arslan & Ergül, 2021; Çolak Seymen, Tuti, & Mavi, 2024; Demir Zengin, Uğur Mutlu, & Haşıl Korkmaz, 2024) also found that the negative views of families are reflected on their children. On the other hand, the fact that foreign families do not speak Turkish and even some of them are indifferent and resistant in this regard puts our teachers in a difficult situation. When the indifference of foreign families is added to the issues that need to be communicated about their children, the education and implementation processes are interrupted. According to Doğan and Telli (2022), inclusive education is an essential tool for foreign students to adapt to their host country and for their social development.

In this study, teachers stated that they carried out various activities in their classrooms, supported these activities with plenty of materials, took care not to discriminate between students, assigned the students under temporary protection to activities that they could do and worked with them individually in order to encourage them to adapt to the classroom better. Some teachers, on the other hand, stated that they did not feel the need to do a different activity for students under temporary protection. They gave them the same activities as they did for other students and did not think they needed to make a special effort for them. Balaman (2022) and Oğlakçı and Amaç (2024) highlighted the importance of using technology in inclusive classrooms. This is because the integration of technology by teachers with students under temporary protection can positively affect the inclusive climate of the classroom. In this context, Chiner and Cristina Cardona (2013) also found in their study that although teacher skills, time and material elements for inclusive education are sufficient, the principles of inclusion are not sufficiently

internalised by teachers.

In this study, Primary school teachers stated that there are positive and negative aspects of being a teacher in a classroom with students under temporary protection; positive aspects are increasing their awareness of foreigners, getting to know different cultures thanks to students under temporary protection, increasing their patience, increasing their professional satisfaction levels and going abroad within the scope of a project related to students under temporary protection. Negative aspects include extra fatigue as a result of the increased effort they spend in the classroom, difficulties in communication due to language problems, behavioural problems due to students' cultures and inability to express themselves comfortably, feeling of inefficiency due to not being able to provide the desired education to the students, and deterioration of the classroom climate as a result of all these problems. In their study, Acartürk Olçay and Çevik Kansu (2024) similarly concluded that in a classroom with students under temporary protection, problems such as long teaching time, behavioural disorders and lack of motivation were experienced.

In this study, Primary school teachers stated that in order to communicate with foreign families and students during the inclusive education process, they received support from bilingual students in their classrooms or at school. They argued that the school administration generally applied the usual procedures and that their workload increased accordingly. They also stated that foreign parents are unable to communicate due to language barriers and are generally indifferent. In contrast, Turkish parents are not very open to co-operation due to their prejudices or lack of awareness about inclusive education.

The suggestions of Primary school teachers for better management of the inclusive education process are as follows: placing foreign students in classes appropriate to their intelligence and language levels rather than according to their age, solving language problems before they start school, placement of foreigners within the framework of certain procedures, providing extra material support to schools, providing suitable classroom environments, and reducing class sizes. On the other hand, according to teachers, assigning qualified employees trained in this field to schools and regions where foreigners are concentrated, along with ensuring coordination through a systematic approach, will both reduce the workload of our teachers and enhance the well-being of students under temporary protection. Some of our teachers did not consider that inclusive education is meant to cover all students equally. They suggested that students under temporary protection should be educated in a separate school and follow the education systems in their own countries. These suggestions are contrary to the principles of inclusive education. According to UNESCO (2017), the basic principles of inclusive education are expressed as follows: Individual characteristics of students should not constitute an obstacle, differences should be seen as a richness, discrimination and exclusion against students from disadvantaged groups should be minimised, teacher and learning environment competencies should be developed and supported in line with the principle of equality, and equal, fair and inclusive learning environments should be created in cooperation with all stakeholders of society. Depending on the results of the research, the following suggestions can be made:

1. When students under temporary protection come to enrol in school, their level can be determined, and they can be placed in a class appropriate to that level.
2. Various collaboration platforms can be established to encourage cooperation and

experience sharing among teachers.

3. Digital platforms for teachers and other stakeholders can be developed to facilitate access to inclusive education materials and resources.
4. The Ministry of National Education can include modules and training focusing on inclusion in its education programmes to support inclusive education.
5. Incentive and reward programmes can be established for teachers who are successful in inclusive education. These programmes can motivate teachers by providing financial or moral support.

Statement of researchers

In this section, you are expected to declare the information regarding the titles given below.

Researchers' contribution rate statement

Author 1: Designing the study and analysing the data, writing the introduction and method, collecting the data, entering the data into SPSS, and obtaining research permissions. Author 2: Collecting data, entering data into SPSS, obtaining research permissions, collecting data, entering data into SPSS, obtaining research permissions, writing and reporting the discussion.

Conflict statement

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

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