



## Management of Cooking Education to Improve Independence and Motor Skills of Students With Mild Intellectual Disabilities at SLB BC YPLAB Wartawan

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**Abstract:** This study aims to examine the management of culinary arts learning in making vegetable soup as a medium for training independence and developing fine motor skills in students with mild intellectual disabilities at the BC YPLAB Wartawan Special School (SLB) in Bandung. Using a qualitative case study approach, this study involved one culinary arts teacher and two students with mild intellectual disabilities. Data collection methods included classroom observation, interviews, and documentation. The results of the study indicate that adaptive and repetitive learning management successfully improved students' independence, strengthened their fine motor skills, and built their self-confidence in practical activities. Evaluation was conducted informally through direct observation, focusing on cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development. Based on these findings, practice-based learning management can be an effective model for special needs education, with an emphasis on vocational skills tailored to the individual needs of students.

**Keywords:** Learning Management, Culinary Arts, Mild Mental Retardation.

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji pengelolaan pembelajaran tata boga dalam kegiatan membuat sayur sop sebagai media pelatihan kemandirian dan pengembangan motorik halus siswa tunagrahita ringan di Sekolah Luar Biasa (SLB) BC YPLAB Wartawan, Kota Bandung. Dengan pendekatan kualitatif studi kasus, penelitian ini melibatkan satu guru tata boga dan dua siswa tunagrahita ringan. Metode pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi kelas, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengelolaan pembelajaran yang adaptif dan berulang berhasil meningkatkan kemandirian siswa, memperkuat keterampilan motorik halus, serta membangun kepercayaan diri siswa dalam aktivitas praktis. Evaluasi dilakukan secara informal melalui observasi langsung, dengan fokus pada perkembangan kognitif, afektif, dan psikomotorik. Berdasarkan temuan ini, pengelolaan pembelajaran yang berbasis praktik langsung dapat menjadi model efektif untuk pendidikan anak berkebutuhan khusus, dengan penekanan pada keterampilan vokasional yang sesuai dengan kebutuhan individu siswa.

**Kata kunci:** pengelolaan pembelajaran, tata boga, tunagrahita ringan.

### Introduction

Children with mild intellectual disabilities face challenges in intellectual, social, and adaptive skills, so the learning process must prioritise concrete, repetitive, and intensive methods (Mastiani et al., 2021). Within this framework, learning management, which includes planning, implementation, and evaluation, is a key element to ensure that the learning process is effective and meaningful (Setiawati, 2023). However, in reality, there is often a gap between what children with mild intellectual disabilities truly need and the teaching approaches applied. This is particularly evident in practical skill learning, such as cooking, where the methods used are sometimes not sufficiently child-friendly or aligned with their learning styles. These children are not incapable; they simply require more concrete, gradual, and life-relevant approaches. For example, students with CSF and HFM often struggle to identify various types of vegetables, distinguish kitchen utensils, or complete simple steps such as washing ingredients, cutting vegetables, and preparing them into a meal. Tasks that seem straightforward to us can pose significant challenges for them. Therefore, the learning process they undergo must be able to bridge these challenges with patience, creativity, and empathy. Their fine motor



skills have not developed optimally, so learning requires special strategies (Mutia Fitri Yana, Riyuzen Praja Tuala, 2025). This highlights the importance of more responsive learning management that addresses the real needs of students.

Life skills such as cooking do not merely build students' technical abilities in managing food. More than that, these activities also shape character traits such as responsibility, discipline, and self-confidence. For children with mild intellectual disabilities, learning through direct experience, such as making vegetable soup, is a very effective method in developing their potential comprehensively. In addition to strengthening practical skills, these activities also play a role in training social skills through interactions between students and educators during the learning process. Therefore, culinary arts education should not be viewed solely as a vocational skill but also as an educational therapy tool that has a positive impact on children's psychosocial development. Furthermore, the success of learning management is greatly influenced by teachers' readiness in understanding students' individual needs. Teachers do not only function as conveyors of material but also as designers of learning experiences that are appropriate for the learning styles of students with mild intellectual disabilities. Therefore, synergy is needed between needs-based planning, participatory methods, and comprehensive and continuous evaluation. This approach allows students not only to receive instruction but also to apply the skills they have learned in their daily lives.

Previous studies have emphasised vocational aspects over the overall learning management context (Hidayat, 2021; Mutiah, 2021). Other studies have raised topics related to learning management in SLBs, particularly in the context of vocational and life skills. For example, a study by (Dacholfany et al., 2023) highlights the importance of skill learning strategies to support the independence of children with special needs. These studies mostly focus on programme implementation and materials, but have not specifically examined the overall learning management in a specific activity, such as making vegetable soup in culinary arts. The novelty of this study lies in its comprehensive focus on the planning, implementation, and evaluation of culinary arts learning in the activity of making vegetable soup as a medium for training independence and fine motor skills of students with mild intellectual disabilities in SLB.

Based on the context and existing gaps, this study aims to understand how culinary arts learning management, particularly in the activity of making vegetable soup, can help improve the skills and independence of students with mild intellectual disabilities. The main focus of this study is to describe the process of culinary arts learning management comprehensively and in accordance with the situation, which includes planning, implementation, and evaluation. It is hoped that the results of this study can be used as a reference in designing more adaptive and effective learning in special schools (SLB).

## **Method**

This study used a qualitative approach with a case study to examine the management of culinary arts learning for students with mild intellectual disabilities at SLB BC YPLAB Wartawan, Bandung. This approach was chosen to explore in depth the learning process that occurs in a real and limited context. The research subjects consisted of one culinary arts teacher and two students with mild intellectual disabilities in grade X. They were selected purposively because they were directly involved in learning to make vegetable soup. Data collection techniques included classroom observation during learning, interviews with teachers, and documentation



in the form of lesson plans, learning outcome records, and photos of activities. The research procedure began with the planning stage, followed by data collection, processing, and analysis. Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing, applying triangulation techniques to enhance the validity of the findings.

## **Result and Discussion**

This study aimed to understand how the culinary arts learning process, especially in making vegetable soup, was carried out by students with mild intellectual disabilities at SLB BC YPLAB Wartawan. The researchers involved two students, CSF and HFM, and a teacher through interviews, direct observation, and documentation studies to capture the dynamics that occurred in the classroom. The results of the study indicate that learning takes place in an adaptive manner and pays attention to the characteristics and needs of each student. The learning atmosphere created allows students to be actively involved, try things out directly, and gradually improve their motor skills and independence.

### **1. Learning Planning**

Learning planning is a crucial initial stage in the educational process, especially in special needs schools (SLB), where students have special educational needs. Based on interviews with a teacher at the SLB, it was found that in developing the Lesson Plan (RPP), the teacher applied a simple but well-organised structure. The learning objectives set by the teacher were realistic, namely for students to recognise the ingredients and tools used in cooking, understand the sequence of steps in the cooking process, and practise them directly with adequate guidance. This planning process is also tailored to the students' abilities, considering the characteristics of students with mild intellectual disabilities who have dominant visual and kinesthetic learning needs. This aligns with research findings stating that lesson planning should consider the learning styles of students with intellectual disabilities (Setiawati, 2023).

For example, in teaching cooking skills, teachers not only provide theory but also show the step-by-step cooking process through direct demonstrations. After that, students are asked to practise what they have been taught with the help of clear and simple instructions. With this approach, students not only gain theoretical knowledge but also practical skills that can be applied in their daily lives. This shows that lesson planning in SLB must consider the principles of learning based on direct experience, which is highly relevant to constructivism theory that emphasises the importance of practical experience in the learning process (Setiawati, 2023).

The lesson planning carried out by teachers at this special school does not only refer to general educational theories but also considers the characteristics and specific needs of students with intellectual disabilities. The theories used as a basis for designing lessons serve as descriptive tools that illustrate how effective learning can be applied to students with special needs. This is in line with the view (Setiawati, 2023) which emphasises the importance of adaptive planning, i.e. planning that can be adjusted to the conditions and abilities of students. Thus, learning in SLB does not only rely on theory, but also focuses on the diversity of learning styles and student needs.

It is important to note that the educational theories applied in lesson planning at SLB must be able to describe the real situations and conditions faced by students with intellectual disabilities. This adaptive planning aims to create an inclusive learning environment where all students, without exception, can access learning materials according to their abilities and needs. Therefore, the application of appropriate methods, such as demonstrations and hands-on



practice, is a very appropriate choice in the context of learning in SLB. This is because these methods provide opportunities for students to learn through direct experience, which is easier to understand and accept for students with intellectual limitations. Furthermore, (Setiawati, 2023) also mentions that vocational skills planning in SLB should be based on real-life experiences that students can practise, as well as considering the individual needs of each student. Learning skills that are integrated with real life not only provides practical benefits for students but also increases their confidence in their daily lives. In this regard, planning that involves students in practical activities relevant to their lives is a crucial step in ensuring the success of learning.

Thus, learning planning in SLB is not merely about compiling lesson plans that cover learning objectives and materials, but also requires special attention to the development of methods that are appropriate for students with learning disabilities. Good planning must be able to provide meaningful learning experiences that can improve students' practical skills in their lives and facilitate the development of skills that can be applied in real-world contexts.

## 2. Implementation of Learning

This shows that learning that involves physical touch and direct demonstration is very important in helping students understand more abstract learning processes. Teachers also give verbal instructions very carefully, paying attention to the needs of students who may need more time to understand each step. This approach not only gives students the opportunity to practise practical skills, but also helps them build confidence through direct action. This method is very effective in helping students with mild intellectual disabilities to learn daily life skills that they can apply outside the classroom. In this case, the theory of learning by doing is very relevant to apply, because students gain learning experiences through direct action, which is in line with their more dominant kinesthetic characteristics. The theory of learning by doing explains that learning experiences gained through direct action are easier for students to understand and remember.

This is also reinforced by (Mastiani et al., 2021), who stated that practical vocational methods can increase the confidence, skills, and learning motivation of students with intellectual disabilities. Learning that involves direct involvement in practical activities not only makes students more active but also gives them the opportunity to understand concepts directly and concretely. In this context, the cooking practice carried out by students at SLB is a form of learning that can have a positive impact on the development of their life skills.

The application of repetitive and structured learning is in line with the constructivist approach, which emphasises the importance of direct experience and reinforcement in the learning process. Students not only learn theory, but are also encouraged to apply the knowledge they have acquired in real-life situations. In the context of vocational education in SLB, this approach contributes significantly to improving students' practical skills, which they can use in their daily lives. Thus, the implementation of learning in SLB, which is carried out in a gradual, structured, and practice-based manner, provides a meaningful learning experience for students. This also reinforces the belief that education for students with intellectual disabilities should prioritise a more concrete, practical approach that focuses on developing skills that can be directly applied. This approach, which combines *learning by doing* theory with direct guidance from teachers, has proven effective in helping students with intellectual disabilities develop skills that are useful in their lives.



### 3. Learning Evaluation

Learning evaluation is an important component of the educational process, especially for students in special needs schools (SLB). Based on observations and interviews with SLB teachers, learning evaluation in SLB is conducted informally, with an observational approach based on recording student progress. Teachers directly observe the learning process in the classroom and record every progress made by students in each learning activity. This informal evaluation allows teachers to better understand students' abilities and development in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects.

During the evaluation, the teacher noted that students in the CSF (Physical Sensory Impairment) category were not yet able to name the ingredients verbally, but were able to recognise and point them out correctly. On the other hand, students in the HFM (Mental Function Impairment) category were already able to name the ingredients and follow the steps in the cooking process in a simple manner. However, teachers observed that HFM students required a little extra guidance to ensure that they could follow the sequence of steps correctly. This evaluation measurement was informal, as it was not conducted through written tests or exams, but rather through direct observation and more flexible recording according to the daily needs of students.

According to (Safera & Hasan, 2019), context-based and observation-based evaluation is very appropriate for vocational education for children with special needs. This evaluation allows teachers to measure students' actual abilities in the context of the activities they are doing, such as cooking in this case. With this evaluation approach, teachers can more easily assess students' practical skills that may not be achievable through traditional assessments. Observation-based evaluation provides a clearer picture of students' abilities and progress in terms of life skills, which is the main objective of education in SLB. However, although informal observation-based evaluation is very effective, the development of more individualised and tiered assessment tools is still very much needed.

In line with this, (Mastiani et al., 2021) emphasise that context-based and observation-based vocational evaluation allows teachers to better understand students' capacities in the context of activities that are relevant to their lives. This is particularly important in SLB education, which aims to prepare students to be independent and have practical skills that can be applied in their daily lives. This practice-based evaluation provides a clearer picture of students' actual abilities and offers more constructive feedback for their development.

Thus, learning evaluation in special needs schools must continue to consider the special needs of students and prioritise a more observational and behaviour-based approach. This informal evaluation contributes significantly to the comprehensive mapping of students' abilities and is an effective tool for designing learning that is more tailored to the individual needs of students. However, the development of more structured and tiered assessment instruments is needed to ensure that evaluations are more comprehensive and can measure student achievement more objectively.

### 4. Impact on Student Independence and Motor Skills

The implementation of learning in Special Schools (SLB) is not only aimed at improving students' knowledge and skills, but also at strengthening their independence in daily life. Based on observations of cooking activities involving students with CSF (Physical Sensory Impairment) and HFM (Mental Function Impairment) categories, there were significant developments in terms of independence, fine motor skills, and active participation of students.



During the cooking process, students with mild intellectual disabilities showed improvements in various aspects, especially in self-confidence and practical skills.

These positive impacts are in line with the views of (Efendi & Ratih, 2023), who state that vocational skills taught systematically can improve students' adaptive abilities, preparing them for a more independent life. In the context of education in SLB, practical skills such as cooking have a broad impact in preparing students to function more independently in society. In addition, the ability to complete practical tasks with minimal guidance increases students' self-confidence, which is an important step in their learning process.

Furthermore, (Mutiah, 2021) emphasises the importance of vocational learning in shaping the work character and social responsibility of SLB children. Vocational learning not only teaches practical skills but also shapes students' character in terms of cooperation, responsibility, and discipline. Cooking activities conducted at SLB, for example, not only improve students' motor skills but also build strong work character, as students must follow procedures in the correct order and work together in teams to complete tasks. This structured and practice-based learning approach provides dual benefits, namely developing technical skills and forming positive attitudes towards work. The importance of practical skills in vocational education in SLB is in line with the *learning by doing* approach, which allows students to learn through direct experience. This type of learning has a greater impact than just learning theory, because students can directly feel the results of their actions. With this approach, students not only gain theoretical knowledge, but also skills that are useful in the context of their real lives.

The impact on students' independence and motor skills at SLB emphasises the importance of practice-based vocational learning that can increase students' self-confidence, fine motor skills, and active participation in daily activities. By adopting a learning model based on practical skills, SLB can provide more relevant and beneficial education for students, preparing them for a more independent and self-reliant life. Therefore, further development of a sustainable vocational learning model in special needs schools is essential to ensure that students receive an education that meets their needs and enables them to compete in the real world.

## Conclusion

This study concludes that the management of culinary arts learning, particularly in the activity of making vegetable soup, has a positive impact on the independence and fine motor skills of students with mild intellectual disabilities at SLB BC YPLAB Wartawan. This activity not only develops students' practical skills but also enhances their self-confidence and sense of responsibility. Structured and practice-based learning has proven effective in helping students master important life skills, such as washing, cutting, and cooking ingredients with minimal guidance. This aligns with the 'learning by doing' theory, which emphasizes the importance of hands-on experience in the learning process. However, this study has several limitations, including its focus on one practical activity in the context of culinary arts and the limited involvement of only two subjects. Therefore, further research is needed to explore more diverse vocational learning models and involve a larger number of students to assess their impact more comprehensively. Additionally, the development of more structured and tiered evaluation instruments is also crucial to ensure that the evaluation process can objectively and sustainably reflect students' abilities.



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