Article

Influence of Perception on the Readiness of Teachers in Inclusive Education

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Abstract: This study aimed to assess the perception and readiness of general education teachers toward inclusive education. A descriptive-correlational research design was used to describe the relationship between teachers' perceptions and their level of readiness for implementing inclusive education. A total of 60 teachers from Nangka National High School participated in the study. Data were collected using the Inclusive Education Questionnaire (IEQ), adapted from Blackie (2010), which consisted of Likert scale-based items to measure perceptions and readiness. Results showed that teachers have a positive perception of inclusive education, recognizing its benefits for addressing diverse learning needs and fostering student belonging. Teachers' readiness was also found to be at a "ready" level with strengths in differentiated instruction and professional development but lower scores in resource availability and assistive technology training. A moderate positive correlation was found between perception and readiness, indicating a significant relationship. The study concludes that improving teachers' perceptions through continuous training and support can further enhance their readiness for inclusive education implementation.

Introduction

Inclusive education refers to the practice of integrating all students, including those with disabilities, into mainstream educational environments where they can learn alongside their peers. It aims to create equitable learning opportunities for all, regardless of their differences, such as learning abilities or socio-economic backgrounds (Rotko & Klopota, 2023). Inclusive education emphasizes the removal of barriers that hinder participation and learning for students with

special educational needs (SEN) (Shutaleva et al., 2023). It also promotes a sense of belonging and social inclusion, supporting the holistic development of all learners (Balasubramanian & Banerjee, 2024). Fostering collaboration among teachers, students, and parents, inclusive education aligns with global objectives of achieving educational equity (Ediyanto et al., 2024). Additionally, it recognizes and values diversity in classrooms as a strength that enhances learning outcomes for all students (Nwosu et al., 2021). Inclusive education is grounded in a human rights framework, emphasizing that every child has the right to education (Katıtaş & Coşkun, 2020). It also aims to address disparities in education systems, particularly in developing nations (Sharma, 2024). Fostering respect for differences, inclusive education enhances societal acceptance and promotes equal opportunities (Meda et al., 2023).

Teachers' perceptions play a vital role in the successful implementation of inclusive education, as their beliefs and attitudes significantly impact their classroom practices (Rosenberg et al., 2023). Positive perceptions among teachers lead to more inclusive practices, fostering better educational outcomes for students with special needs (Triviño-Amigo et al., 2022). Teachers' readiness encompasses their knowledge, skills, and confidence to implement inclusive strategies in diverse classrooms (Kadum et al., 2024). Professional development and teacher training programs are critical to improving readiness and fostering inclusive attitudes (Novopashina et al., 2024). Without proper training, teachers may feel unprepared, leading to negative perceptions and resistance toward inclusive education (Ustinovskaya, 2024).

One major challenge in inclusive education is the lack of teacher preparation, particularly in specialized pedagogies for students with disabilities (Ruhan Karadağ & Yeganeh, 2021). Another common issue is insufficient resources, such as teaching aids, assistive technologies, and infrastructure, which are crucial for inclusive practices (Balasubramanian & Banerjee, 2024). Teachers often face large class sizes, limiting their ability to provide personalized attention (Shutaleva et al., 2023). Research on inclusive education highlights the importance of teacher training and policy reforms. Studies by Shutaleva et al. (2023) and Sharma (2024) emphasize that teachers play a pivotal role in inclusive education's sustainability.

Although existing studies extensively evaluate teacher perceptions and readiness for inclusive education, there remains a significant lack of specific research focusing on how these perceptions vary based on regional and institutional contexts. Factors such as geographic location, availability of resources, socio-economic disparities, and institutional policies can create significant differences in how teachers perceive their ability to implement inclusive education. For example, schools in urban settings may benefit from better infrastructure and professional development programs, fostering a higher level of teacher readiness, whereas rural or underfunded

institutions may face challenges in accessing similar opportunities. Furthermore, institutional variations such as differences in administrative support, inclusive education frameworks, and teacher training curricula—can significantly influence teachers' attitudes and preparedness. Addressing these gaps is essential to develop targeted policies and interventions that cater to diverse educational contexts. Future research should explore these regional and institutional disparities to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with inclusive education, ultimately ensuring equitable implementation across different. This research provides critical insights into improving teacher readiness and positive perceptions, ultimately fostering inclusive practices that benefit all learners. Effective training programs can equip teachers with skills to address students' diverse needs.

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to assess the perception and readiness of general education teachers towards inclusive education. The design integrates both descriptive and correlational approaches to understand the relationship between teachers' perceptions and readiness without manipulating variables. A quantitative methodology was adopted, utilizing surveys to collect numerical data, which were analyzed using statistical tools. The study focused on 60 teachers from Nangka National High School, selected from the total population of 78 teachers. The primary instrument used for data collection was the Inclusive Education Questionnaire (IEQ), originally developed by Blackie (2010) and further adapted for this research. The questionnaire consists of two sections: the first section gathers demographic information such as age, gender, field of specialization, highest educational attainment, and length of service; the second section assesses teachers' perceptions and readiness for inclusive education through a 5-point Likert scale. The Likert scale ranged from "Very Positive" (4.21–5.00) to "Very Negative" (1.00–1.80), providing a systematic and quantifiable measure of teachers' attitudes. Statistical tools such as the weighted mean were used to interpret the average ratings for perceptions and readiness, while Pearson's correlation coefficient was applied to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables. The study followed a structured process: the Input phase established the study's foundation and research tools; the Process phase involved data collection and analysis; and the Output phase presented findings and actionable recommendations. This methodology ensured a comprehensive exploration of the research objectives and provided valuable insights into the factors influencing teachers' perceptions and readiness for inclusive education.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. Level of Perception of the Respondents towards Inclusive Education

Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
I am well-informed about the importance of special education training for teachers.	4.15	Positive
I am knowledgeable about the challenges faced by students in an inclusive classroom.	3.97	Positive
I am aware of the need for proper information and background in special education as a teacher.	4.18	Positive
Recognizing the value of inclusive education is essential in addressing the diverse needs of students.	4.68	Very Positive
Awareness of inclusive education positively influences the overall learning experience for both mainstream and special needs students	4.52	Very Positive
I am conscious of the specific challenges that may arise when mainstreaming students with special needs.	4.17	Positive
I am informed about the benefits of collaboration between general education and special education teachers for effective education	3.95	Positive
Ongoing professional development is necessary for mainstream teachers to stay aware of inclusive education practices.	4.43	Very Positive
I actively seek opportunities to increase my awareness and understanding of inclusive education principles in classrooms.	4.13	Positive
I understand the role of special education in enhancing the overall educational experience for students.	4.30	Very Positive
I am aware of the various strategies that can be employed to create an inclusive classroom environment.	3.78	Positive
Recognizing the individual needs of mainstream students with special needs is an important aspect of effective teaching.	4.57	Very Positive
I am conscious of the impact that inclusive education can have on the social and emotional development of all students.	4.25	Very Positive
I am aware of the benefits of inclusive education in fostering a sense of belonging among mainstream and special needs students	4.18	Positive
Recognizing the diversity within mainstream students is crucial for implementing inclusive education practices.	4.27	Very Positive
I am informed about the legal and ethical aspects related to inclusive education in classrooms.	3.70	Positive
I actively seek resources to stay updated on best practices in inclusive education for teachers.	3.68	Positive
I believe that increasing awareness among teachers about special education positively impacts the overall educational system.	4.55	Very Positive
I am open to adapting my teaching methods to better accommodate the diverse needs of students.	4.45	Very Positive
I feel that inclusion will not work at any schools that have too many learners in a class.	4.13	Positive
I feel that inclusion increases my work load.	3.55	Positive
I feel that inclusion provides an opportunity for learners to become accustomed to a variety of people in a situation that is	4.15	Positive
Aggregate Weighted Mean	4.14	Positive

The data in Table 1 highlights the respondents' perception of inclusive education, showing overall positive to very positive attitudes. Teachers demonstrated a strong awareness of the importance of inclusive education, particularly in recognizing its role in addressing the diverse needs of students. Statements such as "Recognizing the value

of inclusive education is essential in addressing the diverse needs of students" and "Awareness of inclusive education positively influences the overall learning experience" received very positive ratings, with weighted means (WM) of 4.68 and 4.52, respectively. Respondents also showed a high level of awareness of the benefits of collaboration, ongoing professional development, and the need for adapting teaching methods, with scores ranging between 4.18 to 4.45. This reflects their readiness to support inclusive education practices. Teachers also acknowledged the challenges involved, such as increased workload (WM = 3.55) and large class sizes (WM = 4.13), though they still maintained a positive outlook overall. Notably, statements emphasizing the social and emotional benefits of inclusive education, such as fostering a sense of belonging and understanding diversity, received very positive ratings (e.g., WM = 4.25 and 4.57). This shows that teachers recognize the value of inclusive classrooms for all learners. While the overall perception remains favorable, areas like staying updated on best practices and awareness of legal aspects scored slightly lower (WM = 3.68 and 3.70), suggesting opportunities for improvement in professional development and training. Overall, the results indicate that teachers in this study have a predominantly positive perception of inclusive education, with high awareness of its importance, benefits, and challenges

Table 2. Levell of Teachers' Readiness Towards Inclusive Education

Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
I am ready in adapting my teaching methodologies to meet the diverse learning needs of students in an inclusive classroom.	4.07	Ready
I will incorporate differentiated instruction to address the varied abilities and learning styles of students, including those with special needs.	4.27	Extremely Ready
I am familiar with inclusive teaching strategies that promote active engagement and participation among students with special needs.	3.82	Ready
I collaborate with colleagues to share effective inclusive teaching practices and methodologies.	4.10	Ready
I am confident in utilizing assistive technologies to support students with special needs in my classroom.	3.93	Ready
My school provides adequate training and resources for integrating assistive technologies into my teaching practices.	3.63	Ready
I feel equipped to identify and address the specific learning needs of students with disabilities in my classroom.	3.55	Ready
I can create Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) that effectively cater to the unique requirements of students with special needs.	3.60	Ready
I am emotionally prepared to handle the diverse emotional and behavioral challenges that may arise in an inclusive classroom.	3.73	Ready
My level of empathy and understanding toward students with special needs and their families is high.	4.00	Ready
I seek support from school counselors or other professionals to address the emotional well-being of students with special needs.	4.22	Extremely Ready
I feel ready to effectively teach in an inclusive education setting.	3.77	Ready
Ongoing professional development opportunities contribute to enhancing my overall readiness for inclusive education.	4.22	Extremely Ready
I am open to continuous learning and improvement in the context of inclusive education.	4.32	Extremely Ready
The school's support system is effective in fostering the emotional, mental, and professional readiness of teachers for inclusive education.	4.18	Ready
Aggregate Weighted Mean	3.96	Ready

The data in Table 2 shows that teachers' overall readiness towards inclusive education is at a positive level, with an aggregate weighted mean of 3.96, interpreted as "Ready." Teachers expressed confidence in adapting their teaching methodologies and incorporating differentiated instruction to meet the diverse needs of students, with statements like "I will incorporate differentiated instruction" receiving an extremely ready rating (WM = 4.27). Similarly, teachers are open to continuous learning and professional development opportunities, both scoring high with 4.32 and 4.22, respectively, indicating their strong willingness to improve their inclusive education practices. Teachers also demonstrated readiness to collaborate with colleagues (WM = 4.10) and seek support from counselors or professionals (WM = 4.22) to address the emotional and academic needs of students with special needs. While most teachers feel prepared to utilize assistive technologies (WM = 3.93) and create Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) (WM = 3.60), there is room for improvement in these areas. Statements regarding the availability of school resources and training for assistive technologies scored slightly lower (WM = 3.63), suggesting a need for more institutional support. Teachers also acknowledged their emotional preparedness to handle behavioral challenges (WM = 3.73) and expressed high levels of empathy toward students and their families (WM = 4.00). Overall, the results indicate that teachers feel "ready" to teach in inclusive classrooms, with strengths in their willingness to learn and collaborate. However, targeted improvements in resources and training can further enhance their readiness for inclusive education.

Table 3. Test of Relationship between the Perception and Readiness of the Respondents towards Inclusive Education

Variables	r-value	Strength of Correlation	p - value	Decision	Remarks
Perception and Readiness	0.677*	Moderate Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

*significant at p<0.05 (two-tailed)

The data in Table 3 shows a moderate positive correlation between the perception and readiness of teachers towards inclusive education, with an r-value of 0.677. This indicates that as teachers' perception of inclusive education improves, their readiness to implement it also increases. The p-value of 0.000 is less than the significance level of 0.05, which means the relationship is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho), which states that there is no significant relationship between perception and readiness, is rejected. These findings suggest that teachers who have a more positive understanding and awareness of inclusive education are more prepared to adapt their teaching strategies and approaches to meet the diverse needs of students. This emphasizes the importance of fostering positive perceptions through training and professional development programs, as improved perceptions can directly enhance teachers' readiness for inclusive education. Overall, the data highlights a strong connection between teachers' attitudes and their preparedness, underlining the need for continuous support to strengthen both areas.

Discussion

The results of the study demonstrate that teachers exhibit a generally positive perception of inclusive education, with an aggregate weighted mean of 4.14. This positive perception highlights a strong understanding of the importance of inclusive education, its benefits, and the need for professional development. Teachers recognized the value of inclusive education in addressing diverse learning needs and fostering a sense of belonging for all students, as shown in statements like "Recognizing the value of inclusive education is essential in addressing the diverse needs of students" (WM = 4.68). This is consistent with previous studies emphasizing that positive teacher attitudes are a critical factor in the successful implementation of inclusive education (Sharma, 2024; Nwosu et al., 2021). Furthermore, the acknowledgment of challenges, such as large class sizes and increased workload, indicates that while teachers are supportive, they recognize the barriers that could impact effective implementation. This aligns with findings by Shutaleva et al. (2023), which highlight that teacher perceptions are influenced by both internal attitudes and external classroom constraints. Similarly, the level of readiness among teachers toward inclusive education, with an aggregate weighted mean of 3.96, underscores their preparedness to adapt teaching strategies and seek professional growth. Teachers expressed confidence in employing differentiated instruction (WM = 4.27) and demonstrated openness to continuous learning (WM = 4.32), indicating a strong willingness to improve their skills and strategies for inclusive classrooms. However, lower scores on the availability of school-provided resources and assistive technology training (WM = 3.63) reveal gaps in institutional support, which could hinder full readiness. This finding resonates with the work of Meda et al. (2023), who emphasized that teacher readiness is significantly enhanced by ongoing training, professional development, and access to adequate resources.

The significant positive correlation (r = 0.677, p = 0.000) between teachers' perceptions and readiness highlights that teachers with more favorable perceptions of inclusive education are more likely to feel ready to implement it. This supports earlier research that suggests positive attitudes among educators lead to increased confidence and willingness to adapt inclusive teaching practices (Rosenberg et al., 2023; Kadum et al., 2024). The results emphasize the need for structured training programs and institutional initiatives to improve perceptions, which in turn can enhance readiness. Providing professional development opportunities, resources, and administrative support will further bridge the gap between perception and practical implementation of inclusive education. Fostering both positive perceptions and readiness among teachers, educational institutions can strengthen the foundation for effective inclusive education, ensuring that diverse student needs are met while overcoming the existing challenges.

Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight that teachers hold a positive perception and a moderate level of readiness towards inclusive education. Teachers recognize the importance of inclusive education in addressing the diverse needs of students, fostering a sense of belonging, and improving the overall learning experience. Despite

their generally favorable perceptions, challenges such as increased workload, large class sizes, and limited institutional support for assistive technologies and resources were noted. The study also established a significant positive correlation between teachers' perceptions and readiness, indicating that more positive attitudes toward inclusive education are associated with a higher level of preparedness to implement inclusive practices. These results underscore the need for continuous professional development, access to adequate resources, and enhanced institutional support to strengthen teachers' readiness. By addressing these areas, educational institutions can create a more inclusive and supportive environment, empowering teachers to effectively meet the needs of all learners and ensuring the successful implementation of inclusive education.

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