

ATTITUDES, PREPARATION, ACCEPTABILITY, AND PRACTICES TOWARD INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: A COMPARISON BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOL TEACHERS

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Abstract:

This study examined the attitudes, training and preparation, acceptability, and practices toward Inclusive Education among public and private school teachers in the Schools Division of Mandaue City. Using a descriptive cross-sectional survey with 350 teachers, results revealed that teachers held neutral attitudes ($\bar{x}=3.25$) and perceptions of their preparation and training ($\bar{x}=2.84$) for inclusive education. Teachers agreed on the acceptability of inclusion ($\bar{x}=4.20$). There was moderate evidence ($\bar{x}=3.29$) of inclusive practices across general education, class participation, curriculum, instruction, assessment, family-school partnerships, team collaborations, and school improvement. Both public and private school teachers maintained a balanced view of inclusion, often influenced by limited familiarity and training. Private schools demonstrated stronger consistency in curriculum, collaboration, and support, while public schools were progressing but needed enhanced accessibility and teamwork. Teacher preparation proved crucial in promoting inclusive practices. Continued professional development and institutional support remain essential to advance inclusive education in both sectors.

Keywords: Inclusive Education or IE, special education or SPED, attitudes, preparation and training, acceptability, practices

Introduction:

Nature of the Problem

The movement toward inclusive education gained significant momentum with the 1994 Salamanca Conference, which emphasized the urgent need to reform education systems to make them capable of educating all children within their local communities. The Salamanca Statement recognized that:

Regular schools with an inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society, and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system.

At its core, inclusive education seeks to ensure that all learners, regardless of their abilities or backgrounds, are welcomed and supported in mainstream schools.

In the Philippines, this global call has been echoed through various laws and policies spanning decades. As early as the 1935 Commonwealth Act No. 3203, provisions were made for the care and protection of disabled children. Subsequent laws, including the Republic Act Nos. 3562 and 5250 in the 1960s mandated the training of teachers and administrators for special education. The Magna Carta for Disabled Persons (Republic Act 7277) in 1992 further affirmed the right of persons with disabilities to full integration into society, including access to education. Most recently, Republic Act No. 11650 (2022) institutionalized a policy of inclusion and services for learners with disabilities, strengthening the country's commitment to inclusive education.

Despite these legal frameworks, the readiness of Philippine schools and educators to embrace inclusive education remains a pressing concern. Efforts to promote inclusive education are hindered by limited awareness and insufficient teacher preparation. Many regular schools still lack access to inclusive classrooms, and there is often reluctance to address the needs of children with disabilities. Teachers, classmates, parents, and even communities sometimes lack the necessary sensitivity and understanding, resulting in discrimination and missed opportunities for learners who require tailored educational support.

Current State of Knowledge

Globally, inclusive education (IE) is understood to mean that all children, including those with disabilities and those from minority backgrounds, learn together in the same classrooms. According to UNICEF, IE provides meaningful

learning opportunities for groups traditionally excluded from education systems, fostering environments where diversity is valued and all students benefit from growing and learning side by side.

A crucial determinant of the success of inclusive education is teachers' attitudes toward it. Studies indicate that teachers who hold positive views of IE are more likely to implement it effectively (De Boer et al., 2010; Boyle et al., 2020). Conversely, negative attitudes and feelings of inadequacy in teaching students with disabilities pose significant barriers. Spalleta (2020) highlighted how teachers' reluctance or perceived lack of competence directly undermines efforts to build inclusive classrooms.

Many teachers worldwide feel ill-equipped to practice inclusive education due to insufficient training. Singal (2015) and Wodon et al. (2018) observed that IE often constitutes only a minor part of teacher education, if addressed at all, and the availability of such training frequently depends on a country's economic capacity (Friedman et al., 2016).

In the Philippine context, these challenges are compounded by resource constraints. Many public schools, whether urban or rural, lack adequate facilities and materials for inclusive education. Muega and Echavia (2011) found that although an inclusion policy exists, many teachers have yet to fully appreciate or embrace its importance. Broader obstacles such as rigid curricula, passive teaching approaches, insufficient specialized staff, unsupportive leadership, and socio-cultural attitudes toward disability also continue to impede the effective implementation of inclusive education (Eide & Ingstad, 2011; Eleweke & Rodda, 2002; Rose, 2010; Srivastava et al., 2015).

Notably, while policies and legal frameworks have been extensively studied, less research has focused on teachers' lived experiences with inclusive education in actual classrooms. Muega (2016) reported that although teachers acknowledge the importance of teamwork for successful inclusion, many question whether they have truly done their best to implement inclusive practices. Hornby et al. (2013) emphasized that facilitating the effective adoption of evidence-based practices remains essential for inclusive education to thrive.

Thus, despite global and national strides toward inclusive education, substantial gaps persist, particularly in how teachers are prepared, supported, and motivated to teach diverse learners. Exploring teachers' attitudes, training, preparation, and actual classroom practices is vital to identify both persistent challenges and potential opportunities to strengthen the delivery of inclusive education in Philippine public and private schools.

Theoretical Underpinnings

This study is anchored on an integrated framework drawing from behaviorism, cognitivism, and constructivism - three foundational learning theories that collectively support effective inclusive education (IE) practices (Fig. 1). Behaviorism informs IE by emphasizing structured environments and observable outcomes, where techniques such as direct instruction, task analysis, and positive reinforcement help shape appropriate learning behaviors, particularly beneficial for students who need clear routines and explicit guidance. Cognitivism complements this by focusing on mental processes, providing strategies like concept mapping, scaffolded questioning, and metacognitive prompts that help all learners connect new ideas to prior knowledge and actively process information. Meanwhile, constructivism highlights the importance of meaningful, hands-on, and socially interactive learning, enabling teachers to design collaborative projects and real-world problem-solving activities that honor diverse perspectives and abilities. When teachers use all three, they create classrooms that are structured, mentally engaging, and meaningful for everyone - helping all students feel included and able to learn in their own way.

Objectives

This study explored the attitudes, training and preparation, acceptability, and practices related to Inclusive Education among public and private school teachers. Specifically, it aimed to: (1) describe the attitudes of public and private school teachers toward Inclusive Education; (2) assess their perceptions of their preparation and training for Inclusive Education; (3) determine the level of acceptability of Inclusive Education among these teachers; (4) evaluate the extent of their practices in implementing Inclusive Education; and (5) examine whether there are significant differences and relationships between and among the levels of attitudes, training and preparation, acceptability, and practices between public and private school teachers in the implementation of IE.

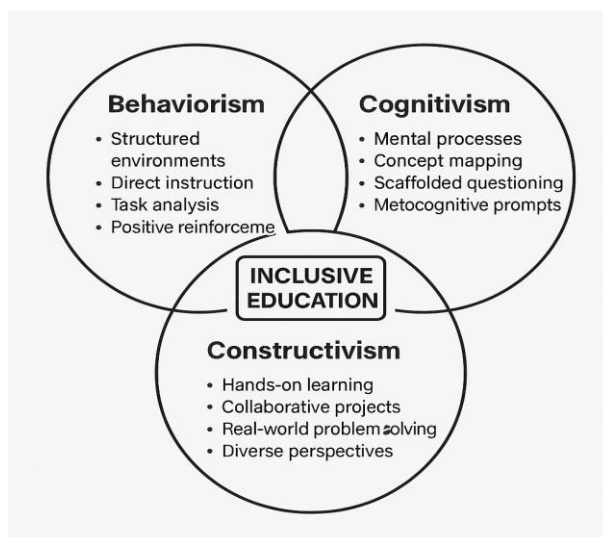


Figure 1. Theoretical framework of the study.

Methodology:

Research Design

The research utilized a descriptive cross-sectional survey research design. This approach aimed to describe certain sets of data at a specific point in time using reliable and valid survey instruments (Cherry, 2022). The study employed this design to describe the state of inclusive education among the respondent teachers in terms of their attitudes, training and preparation, acceptability, and practices.

Study Respondents

The population of the study consisted of 2,155 teachers assigned to the Mandaue City Division. Using multi-stage sampling, 258 public school teachers and 92 private school teachers were selected as respondents.

Instrument

The primary instrument used in this study is a structured survey questionnaire. It particularly used the following tools: (1) Modified Scale of Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusive Classrooms (STATIC). The Scale of Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusive Classrooms (STATIC) was originally developed by Cochran and validated in 1997 and was used to assess teachers' attitudes toward full-inclusion education; (2) Evaluation of Teachers' Preparation and Training for Inclusion; and (3) Practices for Inclusive Education Scale developed by Jorgensen (2002). The survey instrument used in this study demonstrated good internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.85, which is considered acceptable for reliability.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher sought approval from the School Division Superintendent and coordinated with the school principals. Upon receiving approval, data collection was immediately initiated through the virtual workspace over a period of 45 days.

Data Analysis and Statistical Treatment

The data collected were gathered and treated using descriptive and inferential statistics such as weighted mean, t-test, and Pearson's r.

Ethical Consideration

The researcher ensured that all research protocols involving ethics in research were complied with for the protection of all teacher respondents and the institution involved in the conduct of the study. The researcher assured that the teachers' consent was considered for their inclusion in the study. Furthermore, teachers' participation in the study did not have a bearing on their performance. Within the scope of the study, the researcher assured that there was negligible or minimal risk in the participation of the teachers in the research study. The respondents were free to

skip specific questions if they felt discomfort or inconvenience or if they believed they did not have the proper authority to answer such questions in the survey questionnaire. Additionally, the teacher respondents were not given incentives or monetary compensation for their participation in the study.

Results and Discussions:

This section presents, analyzes, and interprets the data that were gathered to carry out the pre-determined objectives of the study.

Table 1
Teachers' Attitudes toward Inclusive Education

Attitudinal Statement	Public		Private		Aggregate Mean	DI
	Mean	DI	Mean	DI		
1. I am confident in my ability to teach children with special needs.	2.97	Neutral	3.64	Agree	3.31	Neutral
2. I have been adequately trained to meet the needs of children with special needs.	2.41	Disagree	3.38	Neutral	2.90	Neutral
3. I become easily frustrated when teaching students with special needs.	2.64	Neutral	2.12	Disagree	2.38	Neutral
4. I become anxious when I learn that a student with special needs will be in my classroom.	2.67	Neutral	1.99	Disagree	2.33	Neutral
5. Although children differ intellectually, physically, and psychologically, I believe that all children can learn in most environments.	4.01	Agree	4.17	Agree	4.09	Agree
6. I believe that academic progress is possible in children with special needs.	4.03	Agree	4.24	Agree	4.14	Agree
7. I believe that children with special needs should be placed in special education classes.	4.15	Agree	3.49	Neutral	3.82	Agree
8. I am comfortable teaching a child that is moderately physically disabled.	3.35	Neutral	3.53	Agree	3.44	Neutral
9. I have problems teaching a student with cognitive deficits.	2.88	Neutral	2.82	Neutral	2.85	Neutral
10. I can adequately handle students with mild to moderate behavioral problems.	3.23	Neutral	3.65	Agree	3.44	Neutral
11. Students with special needs learn social skills that are modeled by regular education students.	3.56	Agree	3.88	Agree	3.72	Agree
12. Students with special needs have higher academic achievements when included in the regular education classroom.	2.69	Neutral	3.01	Neutral	2.85	Neutral
13. It is difficult for children with special needs to make strides in academic achievement in the regular education classroom.	3.17	Neutral	2.77	Neutral	2.97	Neutral
14. Self-esteem of children with special needs is increased when included in the regular education classroom.	3.07	Neutral	3.77	Agree	3.42	Neutral
15. Students with special needs in the regular education classroom hinder the academic progress of the regular education student.	2.65	Neutral	2.39	Disagree	2.52	Neutral
16. I don't mind making special physical arrangements in my room to meet the needs of students with special needs.	2.83	Neutral	3.58	Agree	3.21	Neutral
17. Adaptive materials and equipment are easily acquired to meet the needs of students with special needs.	3.33	Neutral	3.46	Neutral	3.40	Neutral

18. My principal is supportive in making needed accommodations for teaching children with special needs.	4.20	Agree	4.02	Agree	4.11	Agree
19. Students with special needs should be included in regular education classrooms.	2.98	Neutral	3.26	Neutral	3.12	Neutral
Aggregate Weighted Mean	3.20	Neutral	3.30	Neutral	3.25	Neutral

Legend: 4.51 – 5.00 - Strongly Agree; 3.51 – 4.50 – Agree; 2.51 – 3.50 – Neutral; 1.51 – 2.50 – Disagree; 1.00 – 1.50 - Strongly Disagree

Table 1 presents the attitudes of primary and secondary teachers from public and private schools toward inclusive education (IE). Overall, teachers displayed a neutral stance on IE, as reflected by the aggregate mean of 3.25, with both public ($\bar{x}=3.30$) and private ($\bar{x}=3.20$) school teachers showing similar levels. This balanced view may be linked to their limited exposure to inclusive practices and uncertainty about how best to address diverse learning needs in the classroom.

Notably, teachers strongly agreed that academic progress is possible for children with special needs ($\bar{x}=4.14$) and that their principals are supportive in making necessary accommodations ($\bar{x}=4.11$). This optimism underscores a shared belief that, with the right support, students with special needs can thrive, a finding that resonates with Avramidis and Norwich (2002), who emphasize that positive teacher attitudes are crucial for successful inclusion. They found that when teachers have high expectations for students with disabilities, it leads to better outcomes. Similarly, the agreement on principals being supportive in making accommodations mirrors the findings of De Boer et al. (2011), who highlighted the importance of administrative support in fostering an inclusive environment. Both studies underline the belief that with the right support, students with special needs can thrive academically.

Teachers also recognized that although students differ widely in abilities, all children can learn in most environments ($\bar{x}=4.09$). At the same time, many supported the placement of students with special needs in specialized classes ($\bar{x}=3.82$), suggesting a view that personalized settings may better meet these learners' unique needs. Interestingly, teachers agreed that inclusive settings provide valuable opportunities for students with special needs to develop social skills by interacting with peers ($\bar{x}=3.72$), echoing Monsen et al. (2014) on the social benefits of inclusive classrooms.

However, some reservations emerged. Teachers gave neutral responses when asked whether students with special needs hinder the progress of their peers ($\bar{x}=2.52$), with private school teachers tending to disagree more strongly, reflecting greater confidence in inclusion's benefits. Similarly, teachers expressed occasional but not consistent frustration ($\bar{x}=2.38$) or anxiety ($\bar{x}=2.33$) about teaching students with special needs. These mixed feelings align with the findings from Pearce and Forlin (2016), who noted that general-education teachers often feel underprepared to meet the needs of students with disabilities, which can result in mixed feelings about inclusion. Similarly, Spalleta (2020) highlighted that teachers' negative attitudes toward inclusion, including doubts about their ability to effectively teach students with disabilities, contribute to the challenges of full-inclusion classrooms.

Taken together, these findings highlight a teaching force that is cautiously optimistic yet still grappling with gaps in training and experience, pointing to the need for continued professional development and support to strengthen inclusive practices.

Table 2
Teachers' Preparation and Training for Inclusive Education

Perception Statement	Public		Private		Aggregate Mean	DI
	Mean	DI	Mean	DI		
1. I would prefer to have students with specific educational needs in my classroom.	2.15	Disagree	2.54	Neutral	2.35	Disagree
2. A child with specific educational support needs does not disrupt the classroom routine and disrupt the learning of his/her classmates.	2.14	Disagree	2.14	Disagree	2.14	Disagree
3. We should place students with special educational needs in mainstream schools even if we do not have the appropriate preparation to do so.	2.01	Disagree	1.65	Disagree	1.83	Disagree
4. Students with specific educational support needs can follow the day-to-day curriculum.	2.37	Disagree	2.38	Disagree	2.38	Disagree

5. I am not worried that my workload will increase if I have students with specific educational supports needs in my class.	2.26	Disagree	2.49	Disagree	2.38	Disagree
6. I know how to teach each of my students differently according to their characteristics.	2.65	Neutral	2.99	Neutral	2.82	Neutral
7. I know how to design teaching units and lessons with the diversity of students in mind.	2.48	Disagree	2.99	Neutral	2.74	Neutral
8. I know how to adapt the way I assess the individual needs of each of my students.	2.71	Neutral	3.00	Neutral	2.86	Neutral
9. I know how to handle and adapt teaching materials to respond to the needs of each of my students.	2.79	Neutral	3.14	Neutral	2.97	Neutral
10. I can adapt my communication techniques to ensure that all students can be successfully included in the mainstream classroom.	2.75	Neutral	3.11	Neutral	2.93	Neutral
11. Joint teacher-support teacher planning would make it easier for support to be provided within the classroom.	3.15	Neutral	3.42	Neutral	3.29	Neutral
12. I believe that the best way to provide support for students is for the support teacher to be embedded in the classroom, rather than in the support classroom.	2.90	Neutral	3.16	Neutral	3.03	Neutral
13. The role of the support teacher is to work with the whole class.	2.90	Neutral	2.60	Neutral	2.75	Neutral
14. I consider that the place of the support teacher is in the regular classroom with each of the teachers.	2.81	Neutral	2.90	Neutral	2.86	Neutral
15. The educational projects should be reviewed with the participation of the different agents of the educational community (teachers, parents, students).	3.16	Neutral	3.45	Neutral	3.31	Neutral
16. There must be a very close relationship between the teaching staff and the rest of the educational agents (AMPA, neighborhood associations, school council)	3.19	Neutral	3.46	Neutral	3.33	Neutral
17. The school must encourage the involvement of parents and the community	2.82	Neutral	2.93	Neutral	2.88	Neutral
18. Each member of the school (teachers, parents, students, other professionals) is a fundamental element of the school.	3.47	Neutral	3.74	Agree	3.61	Agree
19. The school must work together with the resources of the neighborhood.	3.33	Neutral	3.50	Neutral	3.42	Neutral
Aggregate Weighted Mean	2.74	Neutral	2.93	Neutral	2.84	Neutral

Legend: 4.51 – 5.00 - Strongly Agree; 3.51 – 4.50 – Agree; 2.51 – 3.50 – Neutral; 1.51 – 2.50 – Disagree; 1.00 – 1.50 - Strongly Disagree

Table 2 summarizes how public and private school teachers perceive their preparation and training for inclusive education (IE). Overall, teachers showed a neutral stance, with an aggregate mean of 2.84, suggesting they may not feel fully equipped or confident to implement inclusive practices. This neutrality likely reflects gaps in training, limited access to resources, and varying levels of institutional support.

Teachers largely agreed that each member of the school community - teachers, parents, students, and other professionals is a fundamental part of fostering inclusion ($\bar{x}=3.61$), emphasizing a belief in the importance of collective effort. However, they were mostly neutral when it came to collaboration with neighborhood resources and other educational agents, hinting at limited partnerships that could otherwise strengthen inclusive efforts.

The findings also reveal uncertainty about managing inclusive classrooms. Teachers expressed neutral feelings about their ability to adapt teaching materials, communication techniques, assessments, and lesson designs to meet diverse student needs, with means ranging from 2.74 to 2.97. This suggests they recognize the importance of inclusivity but

are hesitant about their capacity to adjust instruction effectively, possibly due to inadequate training or lack of exposure to best practices.

Furthermore, when it came to integrating students with specific educational support needs into mainstream classrooms, teachers voiced clear concerns. They generally disagreed that such integration would not disrupt routines, that these students could easily follow the regular curriculum, or that it wouldn't increase their workload. This indicates significant apprehension about handling diverse needs without proper preparation, echoing the findings of Galiatsos et al. (2019) and Ecoben (2019), who emphasize the gap in teacher preparation, revealing that many teachers feel unprepared to address the diverse needs of students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms. The concerns expressed by teachers regarding the integration of students with special educational needs in mainstream classrooms align with findings from Galiatsos et al. (2019), who highlight that teachers feel unprepared to teach students with disabilities in full-inclusion classrooms.

Overall, these insights point to the pressing need for more targeted professional development and stronger collaborative frameworks to build teachers' confidence and capability in delivering inclusive education.

Table 3
Teachers' Acceptability of Inclusive Education

Perception Statement	Public		Private		Aggregate Mean	DI
	Mean	DI	Mean	DI		
1. I believe children with disabilities should attend their neighborhood schools.	4.16	Agree	4.41	Agree	4.29	Agree
2. I think all children, regardless of disability, have the right to study in mainstream classes.	4.07	Agree	4.28	Agree	4.18	Agree
3. I feel every child needs the opportunity to study in a regular classroom setting.	4.28	Agree	4.03	Agree	4.16	Agree
4. I am comfortable working with children with disabilities.	4.29	Agree	4.21	Agree	4.25	Agree
5. I am confident that the admission of students with special learning needs in regular classrooms benefits all students, including those in the mainstream.	4.15	Agree	4.25	Agree	4.20	Agree
6. I see inclusive education as an opportunity to foster friendships among a wide variety of children, each with their own needs and abilities.	4.09	Agree	4.00	Agree	4.05	Agree
7. I believe inclusive education provides opportunities for students to learn about and accept individual differences, reducing harassment and bullying.	4.25	Agree	4.36	Agree	4.31	Agree
8. I understand that while Individualized Education Program (IEP) can increase the workload, they contribute significantly to the success of inclusive education.	4.01	Agree	4.23	Agree	4.12	Agree
9. I see that inclusive education system as more effective than general special education programs in supporting students with special needs	4.23	Agree	4.40	Agree	4.32	Agree
10. I am committed to teaching students with special learning needs, recognizing that inclusive education supports the growth of all learners despite varying achievement levels.	4.29	Agree	4.22	Agree	4.26	Agree
11. I believe inclusive education program, while challenging, are not only theoretically sound but also practical with the right support.	4.20	Agree	4.01	Agree	4.11	Agree
12. I recognize that the unique needs of some students with disabilities may sometimes be better served in specialized settings.	4.39	Agree	4.23	Agree	4.31	Agree
13. I believe children with severe disabilities may benefit from additional support	4.05	Agree	4.10	Agree	4.08	Agree

through special education classes, when necessary, to better meet their educational needs.						
Aggregate Weighted Mean	4.19	Agree	4.21	Agree	4.20	Agree

Legend: 4.51 – 5.00 - Strongly Agree; 3.51 – 4.50 – Agree; 2.51 – 3.50 – Neutral; 1.51 – 2.50 – Disagree; 1.00 – 1.50 – Strongly Disagree

Table 3 highlights how teachers from both public and private schools view the acceptability of inclusive education. Overall, they expressed strong agreement, with an average mean of 4.20. This suggests that teachers generally support integrating students with disabilities into mainstream classrooms, reflecting a positive foundation for inclusive practices across both school sectors.

Teachers agreed that inclusive education is often more effective than traditional special education in supporting students with special needs, while also recognizing that some learners with complex needs may still benefit from specialized settings. This balanced perspective underscores a commitment to inclusion without overlooking the individual needs that might require tailored support.

Importantly, teachers also affirmed that inclusive classrooms offer valuable opportunities for all students to learn about diversity and acceptance, which can help reduce bullying and foster mutual respect. They supported the idea that children with disabilities should attend their neighborhood schools, reinforcing a belief that mainstream classrooms should be equipped and prepared to welcome all learners.

The findings of the present study are validated by previous research that highlights the importance of teacher acceptance in the implementation of inclusive education. For example, the study by Seman et al. (2021) found a moderate level of teacher acceptance toward the implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEP) in mainstream schools, a result that mirrors the findings of Razalli et al. (2021) who noted that many teachers, while recognizing the significance of IEP, exhibit reluctance to engage fully in its execution.

Overall, teachers see inclusive education not only as a right for all children but also as a meaningful opportunity to build friendships and nurture diverse learning environments. This collective acceptance suggests that with the right resources and collaboration, inclusive education can thrive, benefiting both students with special needs and their mainstream peers.

Table 4
Teachers' Inclusive Education Practices

Area of Practice	Public		Private		Average	Descriptive Interpretation
	Aggregate Mean	Descriptive Interpretation	Aggregate Mean	Descriptive Interpretation		
General Education Class Membership and Full Participation	2.67	Some Evidence	2.85	Some Evidence	2.76	Some Evidence
Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Support	3.02	Some Evidence	3.52	Adequate Evidence	3.27	Some Evidence
Family-School Partnerships	3.10	Some Evidence	3.62	Adequate Evidence	3.36	Some Evidence
Team Collaboration	3.24	Some Evidence	3.61	Adequate Evidence	3.43	Some Evidence
School Improvement	3.45	Some Evidence	3.78	Adequate Evidence	3.62	Adequate Evidence
Grand Mean	3.10	Some Evidence	3.48	Some Evidence	3.29	Some Evidence

Legend: 4.51 – 5.00 – Exemplary Evidence; 3.51 – 4.50 – Adequate Evidence; 2.51 – 3.50 – Some Evidence; 1.51 – 2.50 – Minimal Evidence; 1.00 – 1.50 – No Evidence

Table 4 illustrates the practices of teachers and school administrations in implementing inclusive education. Overall, the grand mean of 3.29 suggests moderate evidence of inclusive practices across key areas: (1) general education class membership and full participation, (2) curriculum, instruction, assessment, and support, (3) family-school partnerships, (4) team collaborations, and (5) school improvement. Notably, the grand mean is higher among private schools (3.48) than public schools (3.10), indicating that teachers in private schools perceive stronger support and implementation of inclusive practices.

In general education class membership and participation, there is only modest evidence (aggregate mean = 2.76), with both public and private school teachers reporting similar observations. This points to inclusion being present but still an area needing significant enhancement, particularly in ensuring full participation of students with diverse needs. Regarding curriculum, instruction, assessment, and support, there is moderate evidence overall (mean = 3.27). However, a clearer divide emerges public school teachers see only some evidence (3.02), while private school teachers report adequate evidence (3.52). This implies that private institutions may be more consistent in adapting curricula and assessments to support diverse learners.

Family-school partnerships also reflect this pattern. While there is moderate evidence overall (3.36), private school teachers highlight more robust engagement, including frequent case-management meetings and meaningful family involvement in educational planning. This finding underscores Epstein's (2011) emphasis on the critical role of family-school collaboration in improving outcomes for learners with special needs. It also aligns with Haines et al. (2017), who advocate for policies that empower families and incorporate their priorities into IEPs, practices found to be more pronounced in private schools.

Similarly, in team collaboration, the overall evidence is moderate (3.43). Yet again, private school teachers indicate stronger practices (3.61 vs. 3.24 in public schools). This suggests that private institutions may better cultivate collaborative environments among educators and specialists, echoing Paju et al.'s (2021) findings on the importance of collaboration between teaching staff as a crucial factor for effective inclusive education. The modes of collaboration are coordination, collaboration, and reflective communication.

Taken together, the results show that while inclusive education practices are evident in both sectors, they tend to be more established in private schools. This pattern suggests a need for public schools to strengthen supports, particularly in fostering teamwork, engaging families, and ensuring full participation of learners.

Table 5

Significant Difference in Attitudes, Preparation and Training, Acceptability, and Practices of Public and Private School Teachers toward Inclusive Education

Variable	Public		Private		t-value	p-value
	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD		
Attitudes of public and private school teachers toward inclusive education	3.20	0.56	3.30	0.63	-.505	0.617
Preparation and training of public and private school teachers for inclusive education	2.74	0.42	2.93	0.52	-1.213	0.233
Acceptability of public and private school teachers of inclusive education	4.19	0.11	4.21	0.14	-.417	0.680
Practices of public and private school teachers in inclusive education						
▪ General Education Class Membership and Full Participation	2.67	0.21	2.85	0.42	-.961	0.359
▪ Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Support	3.02	0.12	3.52	0.10	-11.257*	0.001
▪ Family-School Partnerships	3.10	0.13	3.62	0.11	-6.027*	0.001
▪ Team Collaboration	3.24	0.15	3.61	0.17	-4.527*	0.000
▪ School Improvement	3.45	0.11	3.78	0.05	-7.901*	0.000

*Significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

Table 5 summarizes the difference in teachers' attitudes, preparation and training, acceptability, and practices toward inclusive education

Difference in attitudes toward inclusive education between public and private school teachers toward inclusive education. Public school teachers had an average attitude score of 3.20 with a standard deviation of 0.56, while private school teachers had a slightly higher average of 3.30 with a standard deviation of 0.63. A t-test was conducted to determine if this difference was statistically significant. The resulting t-value was -0.505 with a p-value of 0.617. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, the difference is not statistically significant, indicating that teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education in public and private schools are comparable.

Difference in the preparation and training of public and private school teachers for inclusive education. The mean ($\bar{x}$) score for the public schools is 2.74, with a standard deviation (SD) of 0.42, while the private schools have a slightly higher mean score of 2.93 with a standard deviation of 0.52. The t-value obtained is -1.213, and the p-value is

0.233. Since the p-value is greater than the common significance level of 0.05, the difference between the public and private group training and preparation is not statistically significant.

Difference in the acceptability of inclusive education between public and private school teachers. For public schools, the mean score is 4.19 with a standard deviation of 0.11, while private schools have a slightly higher mean of 4.21 and a standard deviation of 0.14. The t-test value for this comparison is -0.417, and the associated p-value is 0.680. This high p-value indicates that the difference in the acceptability of inclusive education between public and private schools is not statistically significant, suggesting that both types of schools have similar perceptions regarding the acceptance of inclusive education.

Difference in inclusive education practices between public and private school teachers. General Education Class Membership and Full Participation. The mean ($\bar{x}$) score for general education class membership and full participation in public schools is 2.67, with a standard deviation (SD) of 0.21, while in private settings, the mean score is slightly higher at 2.85, with a standard deviation of 0.41. The t-value for this comparison is -0.961, and the associated p-value is 0.359, indicating that there is no statistically significant difference between the practices of public and private schools in terms of general education class membership and full participation in inclusive education. *Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Support.* The mean ($\bar{x}$) score for public schools is 3.02 with a standard deviation of 0.12, while private schools have a higher mean score of 3.52 with a standard deviation of 0.10. The t-value for this comparison is -11.257, and the p-value is 0.001, indicating a statistically significant difference between the two groups. This suggests that private schools exert more effort in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and support development to accommodate the needs of students with special needs compared to public schools. *Family-School Partnerships.* The mean ($\bar{x}$) for public schools is 3.10 with a standard deviation (SD) of 0.13, while for private schools, the mean is 3.62 with a standard deviation of 0.11. A t-test was conducted to compare these means, resulting in a t-value of -6.027 and a p-value of 0.001. This indicates a statistically significant difference between public and private schools in terms of family-school partnerships in inclusive education, with private schools showing higher evidence of these practices. *Team Collaboration.* For the public-school teachers, the mean collaboration score is 3.24 with a standard deviation of 0.15, while the private school teachers have a higher mean of 3.61 with a standard deviation of 0.17. A t-test was conducted to determine if the difference in collaboration scores between the two groups is statistically significant. The resulting t-value of -4.527, with a p-value of 0.000, indicates a highly significant difference between the groups. This suggests that the private school teachers and their institutions exhibit significantly higher collaboration levels compared to the public-school teachers and public schools in general. *School Improvement.* The mean ($\bar{x}$) score for school improvement in public schools is 3.45 with a standard deviation (SD) of 0.11, whereas in private schools, the mean score is higher at 3.78 with a standard deviation of 0.05. A t-test for independent samples was conducted to determine if this difference is statistically significant. The resulting t-value is -7.901, and the p-value is 0.000, indicating a significant difference between the two types of schools. This suggests that private schools are perceived to have a higher level of school improvement practices in inclusive education than public schools.

Table 6

Significant Relationship between Teachers' Attitudes and their Preparation and Training, their Level of Acceptability of IE, and their Practices towards Inclusive Education

Variable	Public		Private	
	r-value	p-value	r-value	p-value
Teachers' preparation (training) for IE	0.434*	0.000	0.472*	0.000
Teachers' acceptability of IE	-0.086	0.170	0.073	0.492
Teachers' practices in IE	0.255*	0.000	0.291*	0.005

*Significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

Tables 6 and 7 present the relationship between teachers' attitudes, preparation and training, acceptability, and practices toward inclusive education.

Relationship between the attitudes of teachers and their preparation and training for inclusive education. Data show that there is a positive relationship between teachers' attitudes and their preparation and training for inclusive education in both public and private schools, with correlation coefficients (r-values) of 0.434 and 0.472, respectively. Both relationships are statistically significant, as indicated by the p-values of 0.000, which are well below the typical significance level of 0.05. These results imply that for both public and private school teachers, there is a moderate but significant correlation between their attitudes toward inclusive education and the extent of their preparation and training. This suggests that teachers who receive more training and preparation are more likely to hold positive attitudes toward inclusive education. It emphasizes the importance of professional development and training programs in fostering positive attitudes and improving the overall effectiveness of inclusive education practices.

Relationship between the attitudes of teachers and their acceptability of inclusive education. The relationship between teachers' attitudes and their acceptability of inclusive education shows weak or no correlation in both public and private schools. For public school teachers, the r -value is -0.086 with a p -value of 0.170, indicating a very weak negative relationship that is not statistically significant. Similarly, for private school teachers, the r -value is 0.073 and the p -value is 0.492, suggesting a very weak positive relationship, which is also not statistically significant. These results suggest that, in both public and private schools, teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education do not significantly influence their acceptance of it. This could mean that other factors, such as institutional support, resources, or personal experiences, might play a more significant role in shaping teachers' acceptability of inclusive education than their attitudes alone.

Relationship between the attitudes of teachers and their practices in inclusive education. The relationship between teachers' attitudes and their practices in inclusive education shows a moderate positive correlation in both public and private schools. For public school teachers, the r -value is 0.255 with a p -value of 0.000, indicating a statistically significant positive relationship. Similarly, for private school teachers, the r -value is 0.291 and the p -value is 0.005, also showing a moderate positive relationship that is statistically significant. This result implies that teachers who have more positive attitudes toward inclusive education are more likely to implement inclusive practices in their classrooms. This suggests that fostering positive attitudes among teachers can be an effective strategy for improving the actual practices of inclusive education. The statistically significant correlation in both public and private schools underscores the importance of supporting teachers' professional development and encouraging an inclusive mindset, as it directly impacts the way they engage with inclusive education practices.

Table 7

Significant Relationship between Teachers' Preparation and Training and their Acceptability of Inclusive Education, and Practices in IE

Variable	Public		Private	
	r -value	p -value	r -value	p -value
Teachers' acceptability of IE	0.033	0.610	0.019	0.860
Teachers' practices in IE	0.342*	0.000	0.399*	0.000

*Significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

Relationship between the preparation and training of teachers and their acceptability of inclusive education. The relationship between the preparation and training of teachers and their acceptability of inclusive education shows a very weak correlation in both public and private schools. For public school teachers, the r -value is 0.033 with a p -value of 0.610, and for private school teachers, the r -value is 0.019 with a p -value of 0.860. Both of these results indicate that the relationship is not statistically significant, as the p -values are much higher than the usual threshold of 0.05. These findings imply that, in both public and private schools, the amount of preparation and training teachers receive does not have a meaningful impact on their acceptability of inclusive education. This suggests that other factors, such as personal beliefs, administrative support, or cultural attitudes within the school environment, maybe more influential in shaping teachers' acceptance of inclusive education.

Relationship between the preparation and training of teachers and their practices in inclusive education. The relationship between the preparation and training of teachers and their practices in inclusive education shows a moderate positive correlation in both public and private schools. For public school teachers, the r -value is 0.342 with a p -value of 0.000, and for private school teachers, the r -value is 0.399 with a p -value of 0.000. Both results are statistically significant, indicating that the more preparation and training teachers receive, the more likely they are to implement inclusive education practices effectively. Findings suggest that well-prepared and well-trained teachers are more likely to engage in inclusive education practices. This highlights the importance of providing comprehensive training programs that equip teachers with the skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to implement inclusive education successfully. Both public and private schools should prioritize professional development opportunities, as these have a direct impact on the quality and effectiveness of inclusive education practices in the classroom.

Conclusions:

This study highlights that teacher in both public and private schools generally maintain a balanced, neutral stance toward inclusive education, shaped by moderate levels of preparation, training, and access to resources. While there is shared acceptance of the principles of inclusion which is a promising foundation for future efforts - practical implementation varies, with private schools exhibiting stronger and more consistent inclusive practices, particularly in curriculum adaptation, family engagement, collaborative teamwork, and continuous school improvement.

These findings underscore the vital role of sustained teacher preparation and institutional support in fostering inclusive classrooms. Although positive attitudes alone may not guarantee acceptance, they are instrumental in translating inclusive philosophies into effective classroom practices.

In light of these insights, it is recommended that the Department of Education, in collaboration with teacher education institutions, invest in comprehensive professional development programs focused on inclusive pedagogies, differentiated instruction, and collaborative strategies. Policies that allocate dedicated funding for inclusive resources and encourage meaningful family-school partnerships should also be prioritized. By strengthening teacher competencies, enhancing institutional capacities, and fostering a culture of shared responsibility, both public and private schools can more fully realize the vision of inclusive education, ensuring equitable learning opportunities for all students, regardless of their diverse needs.

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