

Citation: Shehzad, M., Khan, M. L., & Noor, H. S. (2023). Sentiments, Attitudes and Concerns toward Inclusion of Public School Teachers about Disabilities. *Global Educational Studies Review*, VIII(II), 454-466. [https://doi.org/10.31703/gesr.2023\(VIII-II\).41](https://doi.org/10.31703/gesr.2023(VIII-II).41)

Sentiments, Attitudes and Concerns toward Inclusion of Public School Teachers about Disabilities

Moazzam Shehzad *

Muhammad Luqman Khan †

Hafiza Shabnum Noor ‡

Corresponding Author: Moazzam Shehzad (Speech Language Pathologist, Rashid Hospital, Shahkot, Punjab, Pakistan. Email: moazzams838@gmail.com)

Abstract: *This study was conducted on assessment of sentiments, Attitudes and concerns towards the inclusion of public-school teachers about disabilities. Data was collected from public school teachers. A cross-sectional study was done in 6 month time period and will be evaluated side by side. Approximately 600 participants were the part of study using nonprobability convenient sampling. Results showed that the intervention increased the self-efficacy of teaching, producing more favourable cognition and affective attitudes toward inclusive education, and minimized teacher concerns. However, there was less evidence regarding the impact of inclusive classroom practices. Awareness programs should be devised so that teachers could understand their responsibilities better while being in a classroom with a disabled student.*

Key Words: Sentiments, Attitudes, Concerns, Public School Teachers, Disabilities, Cross-Sectional Study, Suitable Strategies, and Fluctuated Levels

Introduction

Normal students and a student with special needs are different in some aspects such as communication abilities, sensory abilities, emotional and behavioural development, mental characteristics or Physical characteristics. An inclusive education system permits students with special needs to be educated with other students in a general classroom (Emmers, Baeyens, & Petry, [2020](#)).

The general education classroom system was initiated for sorting the special needs of the students with disabilities due to the efforts of the parents for demanding equal educational

rights for their children. Many scholars propped up inclusive education and call attention towards the value of integration of these students in the classroom without considering any difference between them. Persons with disabilities traditionally are likely to suffer from classroom segregation, discrimination and fundamental forms of inclusion (Forlin, C Loreman& Sharma, [2014](#)).

This study targets to inspect the teacher's sentiments towards those students who are having special needs, concerns and attitudes about inclusive education with regard to demographic variables that include gender, grade level, area, race, interaction with

* Speech Language Pathologist, Rashid Hospital, Shahkot, Punjab, Pakistan.

† Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Riphah International University, Faisalabad Campus, Punjab, Pakistan.

‡ Senior Lecturer, Riphah College of Rehabilitation & Allied Health Sciences, Riphah International University, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

disabled persons as well teachers' experience (Aunos, & Feldman, [2002](#)).

Inclusive education recalls the need for change in education programs of the teachers with the objective of improving the special needs for educating the students in regular schools. Successful enforcement of inclusive education likewise last training for inclusive education, experience in exclusive classrooms, gender, teaching experience and interaction with disabled persons (Takahashi, Tsurumaki, & Ozeki, [2016](#)).

Inclusive Practices are inhibitor or favored by a lot of factors for example in-service training, teacher's beliefs, students' attitude towards disabled peers, teacher's efficacies and their attitudes and Pre-Service (Burke, & Sutherland, [2004](#)).

Knowledge and experience of disabled students are straight linked with a positive attitude of the education teachers towards inclusion. Enhancement in the learning environment is supported mainly by the understanding of the teacher's attitude towards inclusion. When disabled students are adjusted in the regular classroom then the positive attitude of teachers is very necessary for their success (Tasnuba, & Tsokova, [2015](#)).

The factor which is considered to be the most contributing factor to successful inclusive Practices is the teacher's attitude which gained the attention of researchers. Because teachers' attitudes are the main factors that can both support or deny the inclusion program for its successful implementation. Factors affecting the teacher's attitude and their attitudes in regard to inclusion and the relationship between them are mainly focused. There are multiple main factors that play a contributing role towards teacher's attitudes that are degree of administrative support, type and severity of disability and prior training. Evidence showed that the special education teacher's attitude towards inclusion is more favourable. After a comparison between special and general school teachers, some were even not able to find any difference between the general and special education teachers. It is noticed that general

education teachers and pre-service special education try to study the feasible factors impacting the attitude towards inclusion. And those possible factors are the cooperating teachers in the field, previous attitudes, type and severity of disability, personal experience with the disabled and age of the students (Tasnuba, & Tsokova, [2015](#)).

The attitude of regular education teachers is having weakness in their confidence in their own educational skills as well as the support quality individually they are having. These teachers are very confident about the disabled characteristics in which they don't have to add any additional instructional skills to their methods. It brings tension, strain and stress for both the students and teachers when proper and substantial training is not given to the teachers (Engelbrecht, Savolainen, Nel & Malinen, [2013](#)).

That's why providing the teachers with the proper and substantial training will not only ease the teachers or make them feel relaxed but it will also be very beneficial for the students. The help provided by the principal established on having the belief on the importance of disabled students, manages the general education teaching behaviors and methods. So, the overall implementation of inclusive education can be made possible by properly guiding the educational teacher. The general education teachers start collaborating with the special education Teachers for discussing and solving the problems related to inclusive classrooms when they are provided with enough support by their administrators (Parasuram, [2006](#)).

When there is a decrease in the confidence level of the school training teachers towards the activities for the disabled students shows that are lacking sufficient training on the inclusion education. The supportive role of students with the disabilities and sentiments of the teachers about the nature of disabilities are having an influence on effective inclusionary Practices (Carroll, Forlin, & Jobling, [2003](#)).

Attitudes of teachers towards inclusion are not much affected by the gender distinction but

some studies show that male genders are more positive towards inclusion whereas some shows that female teachers are willing to support disabled student. The individuals that are interacting with other people who are having disabilities also affect the attitude towards the inclusion program. In-service teachers and teacher-training students are those variables that have an influence on the establishment of inclusion education (Parasuram, [2006](#)).

Amalgams of integrating components that are three in number are dependent on the diversity in the objective of attitude are the affective, cognitive and conative behavioural responses. A teacher's inclusive attitude is affected by both contact positively and work experience. The crucial thing for inclusion is the interaction of the university students with those individuals that are having special needs or disabilities. Because it modifies and enhances the attitude and beliefs towards them. There are many social factors that affect Practices in schools, resources, and distribution, implementation of inclusion in schools, policy, support of teachers and administrators themselves, and cultural and organizational framework (Leikin, Subotnik, Pitta-Pantazi, Singer, & Pelczer, [2013](#)).

During the pre and in-service teacher's training, the knowledge related to the special education needs of the students is also an important factor that needs to be in consideration. The main factor that affects the key role of successful inclusion is the teachers' professional training. Other than pre-service, the in-service training was calling attention as a productive way to the betterment of the teacher's attitude towards inclusion. Teachers of Elementary school play a least important role than the teachers of high school in the positive attitude of the teachers towards the integration. So, high school teachers express a more constructive and Practical attitude towards inclusion as compared to elementary school teachers (Sharma, Forlin & Loreman, [2008](#)).

The present studies' findings didn't assist the research that is previous that those who

participate in inclusive education in the training didn't assist the pre-service teachers with a much productive sentiment towards the disabled students. This may be due to the assistance for inclusive education and shortage of the guarded planned training. In the early years of the preparation programs the teachers, and the educators don't think about inclusion (Murphy, M. [1996](#)).

Children having a physical disability are more accepted for inclusion than that of children having intellectual disabilities. Most of the difficulties that the majority of teachers have to face are to meet up behavioural and emotional difficulties, followed by children with the impairment of hearing and also followed by the children that are having visual impairments (Zhao, [2007](#)).

The inclusion entails a lot of changes that are in the pedagogy, curriculum and techniques of the assessment. The inclusive education system depends a lot on teacher's attitudes and also on the educational background of the teachers and it also depends on the effective cooperation of the schools, teachers and many other factors (Takala, Pirttimaa, & Törmänen, [2009](#)).

The objective of this study was to explore the sentiments, attitudes, and concerns towards the inclusion of public-school teachers about disabilities.

Literature Review

McCracken, Chapman, and Piggott ([2023](#)) worked on inclusion illusion: a mixed-methods study of pre-service teachers and their preparedness for inclusive schooling in Health and Physical education. Comparison of Brunei pre-service student teachers' attitude to inclusive education and specific disabilities, implications for teacher education.

Navarro-Mateu, Franco-Ochoa, Valero-Moreno, and Prado-Gascó ([2020](#)) participated in research on attitudes, sentiments and concerns about inclusive education of teachers and teaching students in Spain". There were a total of 647 subjects; 324 in-service teachers of age 35 to 58 years and 323 university students

of age 18 to 45 years. The positive attitude towards inclusion was mostly shown by the female students and their attitude was linked with social dominance and empathy

Emmers, Baeyens and Petry (2020) have worked on attitudes and self-esteem teachers towards including in higher education on inclusive education. All levels of education, primary, secondary and high education had these consequences. There is a lack of research investigating the relationship between behaviour self-specific and the attitude of teachers. Different institutions that are 19 in number and the participants are 75 teachers. Sentiment attitudes, concerns regarding inclusive education revised (RACIE-R) and the teacher self-efficacy inclusive practice (TEIP) scales were used, with an additional self-constructed questionnaire. Findings showed a moderate level of teaching self-efficacy, more related to a positive attitude.

Kuyini et al., (2020) were contributing to a study on "teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, attitude and concerns about implementing inclusive education in Ghana, Dergi Park. The researcher collected data from primary school teachers that are 134 in two regions. In this study, the teachers of Ghana have moderate levels of self-efficacy, less positive attitude and concerns about inclusive education.

Carew, Deluca, Groce and Kett (2019) researched how to educate disabled children to drink effectively by preparing the teachers and there is little study within middle and low-income countries. Intervention's impact was made to enhance the teaching efficiency, attitude and practices for improving inclusive beliefs and reducing the concerns around inclusion with disabled children within the Lake region of Kenya.

Above mentioned literature shows that school teachers' attitudes towards students with special needs are mixed; some teachers are supportive but some are not and feel them as a burden. The gap lies in finding more details about the attitude that a teacher in Pakistan may have while dealing with a child with a disability. Indigenous literature on this topic is missing.

Materials and Methods

Study Design

A cross-sectional study design was used to study the sentiments, attitudes and concerns of public school teachers about disabilities toward inclusion.

Population and Sampling

Data has been collected from 600 public school teachers.

Sampling Technique

Non-probability convenient sampling technique was used to collect the data.

Data Collection Procedure

The two data collection questionnaires were used in order to identify sentiments, attitudes and concerns of public school teachers about inclusive education.

1. A revised (SACIE-R) scale for measuring pre-service education
2. A revised (SACIE-R) scale for measuring pre-service teachers' perceptions about inclusion teachers' perceptions about inclusion

Data Collection Tools

Data had collected through a questionnaire comprising two major sections.

1. Demographics information of the sentiments, attitudes, and concerns of public school teachers about disabilities.
2. Study variables

Data Analysis

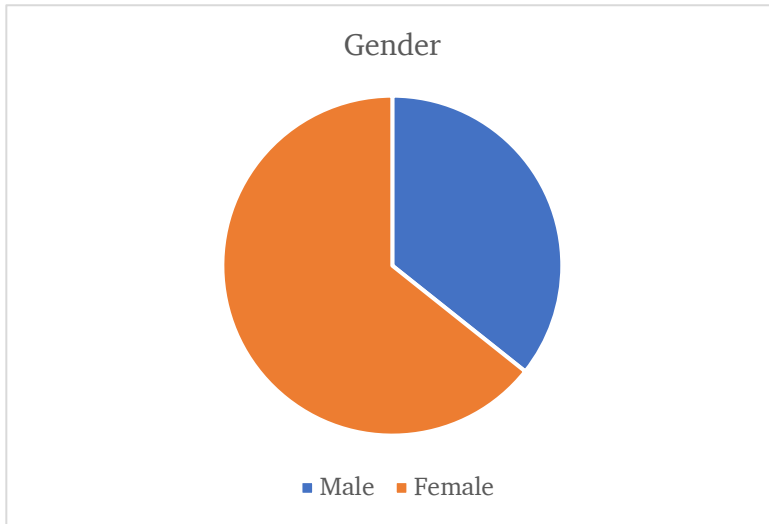
Data were analysed by using the SPSS 16.0 statistical software.

RESULTS

The purpose of the study was to measure the sentiments, attitudes, and concerns regarding the inclusion of public-school teachers about disabilities. SPSS 21 descriptive statistics results are shown in frequencies and percentages through tables and bar graphs.

Figure 1

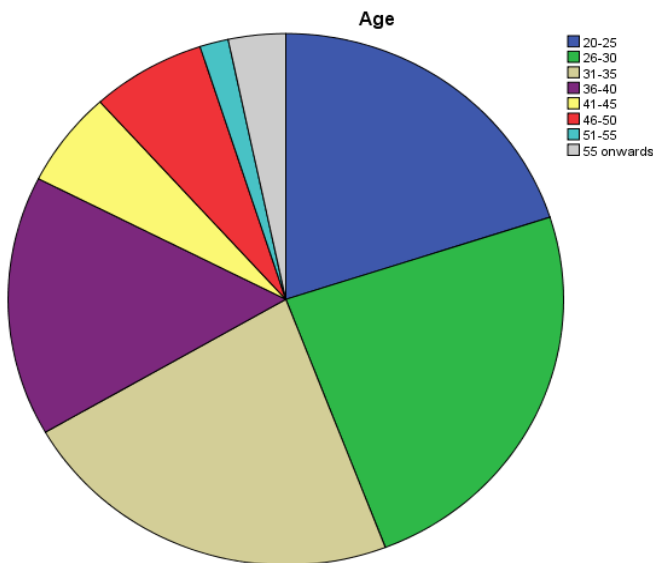
The data was divided into two parts male and female the ratio of these two Categories.



According to this pie chart male ratio in the data is 214 (35.7%) and the female ratio in the data is 386 (64.3%).

Figure 2

The selected population was teaching the grade of early childhood, primary, secondary, and special education.



According to this bar graph, the teaching staff is more in education i.e. 248 and its frequency is 41.3%.

Table 1

Teaching		Frequency	Per cent
Valid	Early Childhood	76	12.7
	Primary/Elementary	90	15.0
	Secondary	186	31.0
	Special Education	248	41.3
	Total	600	100.0

About 76 out of 600 people are teaching early childhood which is about 12.7%, 90 out of 600 are teaching primary students 15.0%, 186 people teaching secondary 31.0% and 248

were teaching special education at 41.3% which is the highest of the whole data.

The data was collected from an educated population the frequency table of that population is as below.

Table 2

Education		Frequency	Per cent
Valid	Secondary level	12	2.0
	Bachelor's level	45	7.5
	Master's level	341	56.8
	Above Master's	202	33.7
	Total	600	100.0

Around 12 of the data, the population was educated till secondary 2%, 45 people were educated till their bachelor's 7.5%, 341 people were educated till their master's 56.8% and 202 were above master's 33.7%

According to the data, the highest education is a master's degree which is 341 people with a percentage of 56.8%.

By this demographic, the researcher takes an idea about how much training the sample had in educating a student.

Table 3

Level of Training in Educating Student		Frequency	Per cent
Valid	None	45	7.5
	Some	288	48.0
	High	267	44.5
	Total	600	100.0

According to this table, the sample has some level of training that is 288 and its percentage was 48%.

According to this result, the level of training in educating students is some 288 and 48.0%

Table 4

Knowledge of Local Legislation and Policies		Frequency	Per cent
Valid	None	45	7.5

Knowledge of Local Legislation and Policies		
	Frequency	Per cent
Poor	87	14.5
Average	159	26.5
Good	201	33.5
Very Good	108	18.0
Total	600	100.0

According to this table, the result shows that most of the people i.e., 201 reported that they had good knowledge of legislation and policies.

Teachers were asked about their confidence in teaching children with disability. Their scores were as follows.

Table 5

Confidence in Teaching Children		
	Frequency	Per cent
Valid	very low	69
	Low	90
	Average	186
	high	171
	very high	84
	Total	600

According to the data received 186 teachers report having average confidence which is around 31% of the data.

Teachers were asked about their experience of teaching disabled children and the date was reported by frequency which is shown below.

Table 6

levels of Experience		
	Frequency	Per cent
Valid	Nil	18
	some	543
	high	39
	Total	600

According to this table, the sample had some level of experience in teaching children which is 543 90.5%.

Teachers were asked to fill out a questionnaire by which their concern was recorded. The teachers were concerned about their disabled children.

Table 7

ITEM1		
	Frequency	Per cent
Valid	Disagree	140
	Strongly Disagree	175
	Agree	140
	Strongly Agree	145
	Total	600

According to the results, 145 out of 600 teachers were concerned about their children with disability which is 24.2% of the total population.

Table 8

ITEM2		Frequency	Per cent
Valid	Disagree	105	17.5
	Agree	290	48.3
	Strongly Agree	205	34.2
	Total	600	100.0

The results show that 290 of the teachers think that they end up with a disability.

Table 9

ITEM3		Frequency	Per cent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	145	24.2
	Disagree	200	33.3
	Agree	155	25.8
	Strongly Agree	100	16.7
	Total	600	100.0

According to the results teacher somehow disagree with this point and 200 of them reported this. Other than those some teachers strongly agree with this point as well that students who cannot express themselves must be in regular classes which are 100 and about 16.7% of the data.

Table 10

ITEM4		Frequency	Per cent
Valid	Disagree	195	32.5
	Strongly Disagree	125	20.8
	Strongly Agree	125	20.8
	Agree	155	25.8
	Total	600	100.0

According to this data, teachers were asked to rate what they feel is difficult to cater for a large number of students in class. Their response shows that 125 teachers reported that it is not difficult at all, and the same amount of teachers i.e., 125 reported that it is difficult to cater for a class of many students.

Table 11

ITEM5		Frequency	Per cent
Valid	Disagree	235	39.2
	Strongly Disagree	185	30.8
	Strongly Agree	100	16.7
	Agree	80	13.3

ITEM5		
	Frequency	Per cent
Total	600	100.0

This data shows that 100 teachers from the data think this. And remaining to deny this statement.

Table 12

ITEM6			
	Frequency	Per cent	
Valid	Agree	40	6.7
	Disagree	145	24.2
	Strongly Disagree	365	60.8
	Strongly Agree	50	8.3
	Total	600	100.0

Teachers disagree with this statement. And only 50 8.3% teachers think that those students who are not attentive must be in a regular class.

Table 13

ITEM7			
	Frequency	Per cent	
Valid	Disagree	100	16.7
	Agree	335	55.8
	Strongly Agree	165	27.5
	Total	600	100.0

According to this result, 335 of the teachers will have a student with a disability it is almost agree that their workload will increase if they 55.8% of the data.

Table 14

ITEM8			
	Frequency	Per cent	
Valid	Strongly Disagree	270	45.0
	Disagree	125	20.8
	Agree	125	20.8
	Strongly Agree	80	13.3
	Total	600	100.0

According to the results, 270 45.0% of teachers report that they disagree on this topic. And 125 20.8% of teachers agree with this notion.

Table 15

ITEM9			
	Frequency	Per cent	
Valid	Disagree	110	18.3
	Strongly Disagree	270	45.0
	Agree	155	25.8
	Strongly Agree	65	10.8

ITEM9		
	Frequency	Per cent
Total	600	100.0

According to this survey, teachers report that they disagree with the notion that it would be

terrible if they had a disability, and it was around 270 45% of the data.

Table 16

ITEM10			
	Frequency	Per cent	
Valid	Strongly Disagree	290	48.3
	Disagree	190	31.7
	Agree	100	16.7
	Strongly Agree	20	3.3
	Total	600	100.0

Teachers were asked to give a view on this notion that it would be a stress if they could attend students of disability in their classes. 290 disagree with this and it was about 48% of the data.

was seen how special education experts feel while dealing with such children.

A study was conducted by Carew, Deluca, Groce and Kett (2019) in Kenya to ascertain the impact of an inclusive education intervention on teacher preparedness to teach children with disabilities. Results showed that the intervention increased the self-efficacy of teaching, producing more favourable cognition and affective attitudes toward inclusive education, and minimized teacher concerns. However, there was less evidence regarding the impact of inclusive classroom practices. The rise in teaching self-efficacy over the intervention period was also found to predict concerns over time. It also revealed that the teachers who had disabled children in their class were overly concerned about their attention on the kid who was disabled. Statuesque results were gathered when it was seen how prepared are the teachers to deal with children having disabilities in their classroom.

Discussion

In the present study, light has been shed on the details related to the demographic information that has been taken from the teachers as their age and gender. 600 teachers were approached to collect data into account for the study from various institutions. The main aim was to see the sentiments, attitudes and concerns they have towards the admission of some children with disability in their school.

A research conducted by Bibi, Khalid and Hussain (2019) in Pakistan, 85 teachers throughout Punjab were elected to take their views. The results displayed that job satisfaction was found to be positively correlated with affective and normative commitment, but they weren't related to the commitment of teachers in underprivileged working situations and the satisfaction of their duties. It further reflected that the majority of teachers who are performing in the education sector may affect children with disabilities instead of the teachers who are performing at a mainstream school in Pakistan. The same results were seen in the present study where it

Conclusion

It was seen that most of the teachers found dealing with a disabled child in their classroom a challenge and a responsibility as well. They need special training and skills, but they are open to new experiences and dealing with such children, especially in inclusive school systems. They are having the basic information about

the situation they are dealing with when having a disabled child in their classroom.

Recommendations

1. A larger sample size could have been taken where multiple cities of Pakistan could be targeted so that the generalizability of the research could increase.
2. Other sectors of teachers could be taken as well from other levels of education like on college or university level.
3. Awareness programs should be devised so that teachers could understand their responsibilities better while being in a classroom with a disabled student.

References

- Aunos, M., & Feldman, M. A. (2002). Attitudes towards Sexuality, Sterilization and Parenting Rights of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 15(4), 285–296. <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1468-3148.2002.00135.x>
- Bibi, A., Khalid, M. A., & Hussain, A. (2019). Perceived organizational support and organizational commitment among special education teachers in Pakistan. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 33(5), 848–859. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijem-12-2017-0365>
- Burke, K., & Sutherland, C. (2004). Attitudes toward inclusion: Knowledge vs. experience. *Education*, 125(2), 163–172.
- Carew, M. T., Deluca, M., Groce, N., & Kett, M. (2018). The impact of an inclusive education intervention on teacher preparedness to educate children with disabilities within the Lakes Region of Kenya. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 23(3), 229–244. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2018.1430181>
- Carroll, A., Forlin, C., & Jobling, A. (2003). The impact of teacher training in special education on the attitudes of Australian preservice general educators towards people with disabilities. *Teacher education quarterly*, 30(3), 65–79. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ852365.pdf>
- Emmers, E., Baeyens, D., & Petry, K. (2019). Attitudes and self-efficacy of teachers towards inclusion in higher education. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 35(2), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2019.1628337>
- Engelbrecht, P., Savolainen, H., Nel, M., & Malinen, O.-P. (2013). How cultural histories shape South African and Finnish teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education: a comparative analysis. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 28(3), 305–318. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2013.777529>
- Forlin, C., Loreman, T., & Sharma, U. (2014). A system-wide professional learning approach about inclusion for teachers in Hong Kong. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 42(3), 247–260. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359866x.2014.906564>
- Kuyini, A. B., Desai, I. (Ishwar), & Sharma, U. (2018). Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, attitudes and concerns about implementing inclusive education in Ghana. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 24(14), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2018.1544298>
- Leikin, R., Subotnik, R., Pitta-Pantazi, D., Singer, F. M., & Pelczer, I. (2012). Teachers' views on creativity in mathematics education: an international survey. *ZDM*, 45(2), 309–324. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11858-012-0472-4>
- McCracken, T., Chapman, S., & Piggott, B. (2020). Inclusion illusion: a mixed-methods study of preservice teachers and their preparedness for inclusive schooling in Health and Physical Education. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 27(4), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2020.1853259>
- Murphy, D. M. (1996). Implications of Inclusion for General and Special Education. *The Elementary School Journal*, 96(5), 469–493. <https://doi.org/10.1086/461840>
- Navarro-Mateu, D., Franco-Ochoa, J., Valero-Moreno, S., & Prado-Gascó, V. (2020). Attitudes, Sentiments, and Concerns about Inclusive Education of Teachers and Teaching Students in Spain. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 521. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00521>
- Parasuram, K. (2006). Variables that affect teachers' attitudes towards disability and

- inclusive education in Mumbai, India. *Disability & Society*, 21(3), 231–242.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09687590600617352>
- Sharma, U., Forlin, C., & Loreman, T. (2008). Impact of training on pre-service teachers' attitudes and concerns about inclusive education and sentiments about persons with disabilities. *Disability & Society*, 23(7), 773–785.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09687590802469271>
- Takahashi, J., Tsurumaki, M., & Ozeki, A. (2016). Attitudes Formation of Japanese Teachers toward Inclusive Education System. *Tohoku Psychologica Folia*, 75, 1–8.
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Junichi-Takahashi-4/publication/316009715_Attitudes_Formation_of_Japanese_Teachers_toward_Inclusive_Education_System/links/58ed6e540f7e9b37ed14edb4/Attitudes-Formation-of-Japanese-Teachers-toward-Inclusive-Education-System.pdf
- Takala, M., Pirttimaa, R., & Törmänen, M. (2009). RESEARCH SECTION: Inclusive special education: the role of special education teachers in Finland. *British Journal of Special Education*, 36(3), 162–173.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8578.2009.00432.x>
- Tasnuba, T., & Tsokova, D. (2015). BRAC primary school teachers' teaching-efficacy, attitude, sentiment and concern towards inclusion of children with disabilities in regular classrooms in Bangladesh. *Asian Journal of Inclusive Education*, 3(1), 45–62.
<https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/1517940>
- Zhao, Y. (2007). Social studies teachers' perspectives of technology integration. *Journal Of Technology and Teacher Education*, 15(3), 311–33.
<https://www.learntechlib.org/primary/p/20005/>