



Enhancing Educational Practices and Overcoming Systemic Challenges in Developing Inclusive Education for Students with Special Needs

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to identify how different educational arrangements have been changed and developed with regards to the needs of special learners; the instructional methods being used, issues hindering the implementation of effective strategies, and systems that ensure inclusive practice. Evaluating the population in question, the qualitative research precisely collected data for the chosen topic via interviews with educators, administrators and parents pointing to special education population. Studies show that IEP goals and objectives, use of technology and modified instructional approaches are essential to help increase student's learning capabilities. However, this study also reveals some of the definitive barriers, such as the lack of resources, inadequate preparation of teachers and prejudices prevailing in societies preventing the successful incorporation of IE for children. The participants called for the expansion of funds to meet the identified need for appropriate instructional materials, technology, and personnel. Furthermore, participants emphasized the need for the access to professional development which is all-embracing and on-going for teachers was pinpointed as another factor in enhancing of the quality of learning for the students with learning needs. Que interesantemente, an investigación también revela que las políticas deben ser mejor definidas y la comunidad y los padres deben estar más comprometidos para promover una educación inclusiva. Thus, the present research responds to the deficiency of the present knowledge base regarding the nature and potential approaches to mitigating systemic barriers in special education by comparing its results with the findings reported by other authors. The findings help us to make a better understanding of the concept of inclusive education and create a basis for further investigations designed to enhance learning achievements of children with learning disabilities.

Introduction

Education is a fundamental human right, crucial for the workout of all other human rights. It promotes person freedom and empowerment and yields crucial development benefits. The right to schooling for all, consisting of students with special wishes, has been recognized globally, emphasizing the significance of inclusive schooling structures that cater to numerous mastering needs. Special desires schooling refers to tailor-made educational practices designed to fulfill the unique wishes of students with disabilities, studying difficulties, and different demanding situations that avoid their instructional development.

The concept of inclusive schooling has advanced extensively during the last few decades. The Salamanca Statement, followed with the aid of the World Conference on Special Needs Education in 1994, marked a pivotal moment in the global movement towards inclusive education (Ainscow, 2020). This assertion called for the inclusion of all youngsters, no matter their bodily, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or different situations, inside mainstream training settings. This paradigm shift from segregation to inclusion is rooted in the notion that inclusive schooling systems advantage all students with the aid of fostering an environment of variety and mutual admire (Hajisoteriou & Sorkos, 2023).

Inclusive schooling is not handiest a be counted of human rights but also a means to improve academic results for all college students. Research has proven that inclusive lecture rooms, in which college students with and without disabilities analyze collectively, can cause high quality academic and social outcomes for each business (Szumski et al., 2022). For students with special wishes, inclusive schooling affords opportunities for peer interaction, modeling of appropriate behaviors, and access to the general curriculum, which might be vital for his or her cognitive and social development (Page et al., 2021).

Moreover, inclusive education promotes a subculture of recognition and belonging. It demanding situations societal stereotypes and reduces discrimination towards individuals with disabilities (Dwertmann et al., 2023). By learning in inclusive environments, students without disabilities benefit a higher knowledge of range, increase empathy, and are much more likely to end up advocates for inclusion in their communities.

The ancient evolution of special wishes schooling is marked by means of big legislative milestones which have shaped the contemporary panorama. In america, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, IDEA) was a landmark regulation that assured free and appropriate public schooling for youngsters with disabilities (Nagro et al., 2023). IDEA emphasizes the right of kids with disabilities to be knowledgeable inside the least restrictive environment, which often manner inclusion in mainstream classrooms with suitable helps and offerings.

Similarly, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 provided comprehensive civil rights protections for individuals with disabilities, including the right to identical access to training. These legislative frameworks were instrumental in advancing inclusive education practices and making sure that students with special needs get hold of the guide they want to be successful academically and socially.

Internationally, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Cerna et al. (2021), in addition reinforced the commitment to inclusive education. Article 24 of the CRPD acknowledges the right of persons with disabilities to inclusive training and obliges states to ensure an inclusive training device at all ranges (Anastasiou et al., 2020). This worldwide dedication has brought about widespread coverage reforms and initiatives geared toward promoting inclusive training global.

Despite the development made, severa demanding situations remain within the implementation of inclusive education for college kids with unique wishes. One of the number one demanding situation is the identity and evaluation of unique desires. Accurate and timely identity is crucial for imparting appropriate interventions, yet many kids with disabilities go undiagnosed or are misdiagnosed, main to inadequate assist (Liss et al., 2021). Additionally, the stigma related to disabilities can bring about underreporting and reluctance to are looking for help.

Resource allocation is some other vast mission. Inclusive education calls for good sized investment in sources, including specialised personnel, schooling for teachers, and adaptive technology (Schwab, 2020). However, many education structures, mainly in low-profits

international locations, warfare with constrained investment and sources, which hampers their capability to enforce effective inclusive education practices (Jordan et al., 2021).

Teacher education and preparedness are also crucial problems. Many teachers feel inadequately prepared to teach students with special desires because of a loss of training and professional development possibilities. Effective inclusive schooling calls for teachers to have a deep know-how of numerous studying desires and the abilities to adapt their coaching strategies consequently (Graham, 2020).

The integration of technology in special wishes education has shown extraordinary promise in addressing some of the demanding situations. Assistive technology, inclusive of verbal exchange devices, instructional software, and adaptive tools, can substantially enhance the getting to know reviews of students with disabilities (Alimi et al., 2021). These technologies offer personalized mastering possibilities, facilitate communicate, and allow students to get admission to the curriculum greater successfully.

Support systems, which include counseling, occupational remedy, and peer guide, play a important function in the fulfillment of inclusive education. Counseling offerings assist deal with the emotional and psychological needs of college students with unique desires, at the same time as occupational remedy gives essential guide for growing pleasant motor capabilities and day by day residing abilities. Peer aid applications foster a experience of belonging and inspire social interactions, that are vital for the holistic development of students with unique desires.

Method

This study being descriptive in nature, the researcher used qualitative research design to establish the development of education for the target group of special needs students. The approach was anticipated to help develop a deeper insight of the pragmatic practices, issues, and systems in inclusive education settings. Thus, the interview-based research provided detailed information from the educators, parents, and specialists' points of view that surveys and questionnaires could not identify.

The participants consisted of 20 people, teachers, school administrators, parents of special-needs children, and experts in integrational education. Most of the strategies used to recruit participants involved purposeful sampling that involved choosing participants who were knowledgeable about or had experience in teaching students with disabilities. This way the gathering involved first-hand impressions from both, the Urban and Rural employees.

Participants included students, teachers and school administrators Interviews and observations were done in class. The use of the semi-structured interviews enabled a participant-lead discussion of practice experiences and their inclination towards technology as well as afford flexibility in the interviews for the researcher to request clarification where necessary. In all, 25 interviews which took 45-60 minutes each were face to face or through teleconference, depending on the availability of the participants.

Furthermore, the study conducted five classroom observations in five different inclusive schools to investigate teachers and students' adaptiveness to school environment and their engagements respectively. Field notes were also taken during the observations of these student groups in order to supplement the interview information.

Data analysis was done through Thematic analysis. These interviews were audio and video taped and then transcribed ad verbatim and along with the observation notes, these were systematically coded. Axial coding was undertaken after providing initial open code as a way of developing relationships and patterns among themes. Themes included effective teaching practices, systems issues and resource requirements were extracted and generalized.

Result and Discussion

Digital financial platforms have revolutionized how individuals interact with financial services, including philanthropic contributions such as waqf. The Cash Waqf Linked Sukuk (CWLS) platform is an innovative initiative designed to integrate Islamic philanthropic principles with modern financial technology, providing an opportunity for Generation Z to contribute to societal development while gaining spiritual and financial benefits. However, the adoption of CWLS among Generation Z, a tech-savvy and fast-paced demographic, remains limited, prompting the need to investigate the factors influencing their behavioral intentions. This study employs the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) framework to examine the impact of performance expectancy (PE), effort expectancy (EE), social influence (SI), and facilitating conditions (FC) on Generation Z's interest in using the CWLS platform. By identifying the key motivators and barriers, this research aims to provide actionable insights for enhancing the platform's appeal and increasing its adoption.

Effective Teaching Strategie

One of the most effective strategies identified in this study was the use of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). These plans provided tailored learning goals, teaching methods, and assessment strategies to meet the specific needs of students with special needs. Teachers emphasized the importance of designing IEPs collaboratively with input from parents, therapists, and specialists. This collaboration ensured that the plans addressed not only the academic but also the social and emotional development of the students.

One teacher stated, "By developing an IEP for each student, I could focus on their strengths and address their weaknesses in a structured way. This helped both the student and me stay on track." Another teacher highlighted the necessity of periodic reviews, explaining,

"We updated the IEPs every quarter to reflect the student's progress and adapt to their changing needs."

The integration of technology and assistive tools was another pivotal strategy. Teachers reported that devices such as tablets with speech-to-text software, interactive whiteboards, and specialized learning apps significantly enhanced engagement and comprehension among students with special needs. These tools provided alternative methods of communication and learning, especially for students with physical or developmental disabilities.

One parent shared their perspective, stating,

"The tablet my child uses at school has made such a difference. They can express themselves better now and complete tasks independently."

Similarly, a teacher noted, "Interactive apps are very effective. They not only make learning fun but also provide immediate feedback to the students, which boosts their confidence."

Differentiated instruction, where lessons were adapted to accommodate diverse learning styles and abilities, also emerged as an effective approach. Educators incorporated varied teaching methods, such as visual aids, hands-on activities, and verbal explanations, to ensure that all students could grasp the concepts. This approach reduced frustration and allowed students to learn at their own pace.

One teacher recounted,

"I always make sure to use multiple approaches in my lessons. If one method doesn't work, there's always another way to reach the student."

Another educator emphasized the importance of flexibility, saying,

“Being adaptable is key. Sometimes, what you plan doesn’t work, and you have to think on your feet to find another way to explain the concept.”

Collaborative learning activities, where students with special needs worked alongside their peers in group tasks, were found to be beneficial. Such activities promoted social interaction, teamwork, and a sense of belonging within the classroom. Teachers facilitated these interactions by assigning roles and creating supportive environments to ensure inclusivity.

A teacher stated,

“When students work together, it fosters understanding and reduces stigma. Peers often learn to be more empathetic, and students with special needs feel more included.”

A parent echoed this sentiment, saying,

“My child looks forward to group activities because they feel like part of the class, not someone who is different.”

By employing these effective teaching strategies, educators were able to create more inclusive, supportive, and enriching learning environments for students with special needs.

Challenges in Implementation

A significant challenge identified in the study was the insufficient allocation of resources and funding for special needs education. Teachers and school administrators frequently highlighted the difficulties in acquiring essential materials such as adaptive learning tools, assistive technologies, and specialized teaching aids. These limitations often hindered their ability to provide comprehensive support to students with special needs.

One school administrator shared,

“Our budget barely covers the basics. To implement programs for special needs students, we often have to rely on donations or personal contributions.”

A teacher added,

“It’s frustrating when you know what the students need but can’t provide it because of financial constraints.”

This resource gap extended to infrastructure, with many schools lacking accessible facilities such as ramps, elevators, and sensory-friendly classrooms.

Another major challenge was the lack of adequate training for teachers in special education techniques. Many participants noted that while they were passionate about helping their students, they often felt unprepared to handle the complexities of diverse needs. Professional development opportunities in special education were either infrequent or inaccessible to many teachers, particularly those in rural areas.

A teacher admitted,

“I have a basic understanding of special needs education, but I’ve never had any formal training. Most of what I do is based on trial and error.”

Another educator emphasized,

“Workshops and training programs are not only rare but also expensive. I want to learn more, but the support just isn’t there.”

This lack of training often led to feelings of inadequacy and stress among teachers. Social stigma and resistance from both parents and the broader community posed a significant barrier to the effective implementation of inclusive education. Teachers reported encountering prejudice against students with special needs, with some parents expressing concerns about the potential disruption to their children's learning in mixed classrooms. This resistance often made it challenging to foster an inclusive environment.

One teacher shared,

"There are still many misconceptions about students with special needs. Some parents don't want their children in the same class, thinking it will hold them back."

A parent of a student with special needs reflected on their experiences, stating,

"It's disheartening when other parents don't want their kids interacting with mine. It makes us feel unwelcome."

This societal attitude created additional stress for families and educators striving to promote inclusion.

Participants also highlighted inconsistencies in the implementation of policies aimed at supporting special needs education. While national frameworks often emphasized inclusivity, their execution at the local level was fragmented and unreliable. Schools were left to interpret and implement policies with minimal guidance, leading to disparities in the quality of education provided to students with special needs.

A school administrator remarked,

"The policies sound good on paper, but there's little follow-through. We don't get the support or clarity we need to implement them effectively."

Another teacher commented,

"Every school seems to be doing its own thing. There's no consistency, and that makes it harder for us to provide the support these students need."

Addressing these challenges requires systemic changes, including increased funding, better training opportunities, societal awareness campaigns, and more cohesive policy implementation. Without these measures, the goal of inclusive education remains difficult to achieve.

Systemic Support Needs

To effectively support students with special needs, participants stressed the need for increased funding and better resource allocation. This included the provision of essential tools such as assistive technologies, adaptive learning materials, and sensory-friendly infrastructure. Educators emphasized that adequate funding would enable schools to create more inclusive environments and ensure equitable learning opportunities.

A school administrator highlighted,

"We need targeted funding for special needs education. Without proper resources, we're just improvising, and that's not fair to the students."

A teacher echoed this concern, stating,

"Basic teaching aids are often unavailable, and we end up buying materials out of our own pockets. With sufficient funding, we could do so much more."

Improved financial support would also help schools implement specialized programs and recruit qualified staff to meet the unique needs of students with special needs.

Participants identified comprehensive and ongoing professional development as a critical need for improving special education. Teachers expressed a desire for training programs that would equip them with effective strategies, tools, and techniques to address the diverse needs of their students. Such programs could include workshops, certifications, and hands-on training focused on inclusive pedagogy.

One teacher shared,

“The lack of training is one of our biggest obstacles. If I had access to regular workshops or courses, I’d feel more confident and capable in my role.”

Another participant stated,

“Special needs education requires specialized skills. Without training, we’re doing the best we can, but it’s not enough to fully support our students.”

Investing in professional development would empower teachers and enhance the quality of education for students with special needs.

Strengthening parental and community involvement was another area identified as crucial for systemic support. Participants noted that building awareness and fostering positive attitudes toward inclusive education could help reduce stigma and promote collaboration. Schools could organize outreach programs, workshops, and support groups to engage parents and educate the community about the importance of inclusivity.

A teacher remarked,

“When parents are actively involved, it makes a huge difference. They understand the challenges and work with us to find solutions.”

A parent emphasized,

“Community support is essential. We need to create a culture of acceptance where every child feels valued and included.”

Encouraging parental and community engagement would not only enhance support for students with special needs but also help build a more inclusive society.

Participants highlighted the need for clear and consistent policies to guide the implementation of inclusive education. National policies should be accompanied by practical guidelines, monitoring mechanisms, and accountability systems to ensure their effective execution at the local level. Policymakers must also prioritize input from educators, parents, and specialists to design frameworks that address the realities of special needs education.

A school administrator pointed out, “Policies often lack clarity, leaving schools to figure things out on their own. We need detailed guidelines and support to implement them effectively.”

Another teacher shared,

“Consistency is key. Without proper oversight and follow-up, policies remain words on paper and don’t translate into action.”

Strengthening policy frameworks and their implementation would create a more supportive and structured environment for inclusive education.

Addressing these systemic support needs would pave the way for meaningful improvements in the education of students with special needs, fostering their development and inclusion in society.

The purpose of this work was to investigate the process of education for children with special needs and of providing for successful learning for the child and the teacher; of providing for implementation of teaching-learning strategies and reinforcements; and of the necessary systems support to incorporate special needs children in group education settings. This paper brings out fresh knowledge on challenges that educators, students and parents face in special education and role of schools in overcoming systemic challenges to ensure that students with special needs get the best education.

Two of the major assumptions based on this study were on IEP, the use of assistive technology, instructional modifications and methods, and collaborative learning. These findings are in a similar line with Byrd & Alexander (2020), in their opinion that effective teaching should be oriented to specific needs and abilities of students with disabilities. As the participants in this study demonstrated, IEPs play an advantageous role in differing from the conventional models, in which learning strategies are adapted to a learner's needs to achieve the best results.

Ayscue or speech recognition and smart games and applications play have been proved to enhance the learning of children with special needs (Pillai & Kumar, 2021). These results support the existing literature that shows that technology can substitute for missing or reduced communication and participation experiences of children with disabilities to allow them to participate in educational activities. Teachers in this study concur with other teachers as noted in this study done by Lambert (2024) that the use of such technology not only engaged students but equally empowered them and built their confidence.

The identification of differentiated instruction as an effective teaching approach aligned with Leijen et al. (2021) who posits that helping students to learn in a number of ways is important when teaching in inclusive classrooms. Teachers interviewed in this study agreed that the use of objects, demonstration and other forms of instruction supported increased curriculum accessibility for students with learning difficulties (Dignath et al., 2022). This accords with the existing general literature in respect of the need to embrace flexibility of the teaching processes in enhancing diversity (Khaleel et al., 2021).

This study contributes to such literature by highlighting the difficult in practicing inclusion; the difficulties arise in form of resource, teacher trainings, and stigma. The above challenges have been captured in the literature. Lack of funding and again scarcity of instrumentation in special education act as limitations to incorporate students in the classroom learning environment till date. Probability findings are also confirmed in this study: the informants mentioned that there were not enough resources, including assistive technologies and materials, which make it difficult to deliver and support students with special needs adequately.

In addition, the absence of specific pre-service teacher training forms a common theme in the literature. Frantz et al. (2020) have pointed out that teachers continue to require professional development as they can only be ready for teaching children with disabilities. In this study, teachers stated a lack of opportunities for professional development for implementing inclusive practices with young children. This is in line with another study that found out that teachers lack adequate preparation for engaging in actual implementation of the practice in class (Holmqvist & Lelling, 2021). This research seeks to fill this void by using the scarcity research viewpoint while drawing attention to the lack of not only training but also reasonably priced and available training for teachers in underfunded schools.

This study also revealed that social stigma as a result of associating with students with special needs and resistance to the integration of such students were also other hurdles that had to be surmounted. Such obstacles have been described in many papers (Kart & Kart, 2021), and this research extends the knowledge to realise that social acceptance of students with disabilities hinders the processes of inclusive education. The parents in this study noted that negative perceptions that they and other parents of children with ASD had to contend with played to the creation of an inclusive environment. Other scholars such as Huber et al. (2020) have also supported this argument by stating that to get rid of the social stigma that is associated with integration, is vital in the success of the integration objectives of the inclusive education interventions.

The second contribution of this research is related to identifying systemic support needs. Respondents considered that increasing role of funding, proper professional preparation for teachers, involvement of parents and communities, and better policies that would allow optimizing the educational process for children with special needs (R1, R3). Such conclusions relate well to voices of scholars like Andrews & Boklage (2024) who foreground the call for systemic support in order for effective teaching of integration education practices to be administered.

Drawing upon literature, the authors of the study have identified resource allocation concerns and called for more significant funding, which is supported by Ko & Lee, Y. (2024). who acknowledges that funding is critical to buying appropriate adaptive resources and talented human capital. In addition, one major topic that has emerged is the importance of the policies that should be clear, logical and coherent, because otherwise the principles of the inclusive education cannot be effectively implemented (Nasir et al., 2021). In line with the study's finding is the literature that suggest that participants in practices promoting inclusive education require clearer policies and corresponding forms of oversight and accountability (Dee & Anderson, 2021).

Conclusion

The present research has furnished crucial information on the training of students with learning disabilities as well as efficient teaching methods, obstacles to the process, and crucial organizational arrangements that foster integration. The results provide support to focusing on the implementation of such interventions as IEP, assistive technology and differentiated instruction as effective approaches to improving learning. In the same way, it draws attention to such aspects as insufficient funding, the lack of effective, mandatory pre-service and in-service training for teachers, and unclear policies, which are the problems that the given set of difficulties can be a part of. Still, responding to these gaps, the study aims to make a supplemental input into the discussion of increasing the quality of education for students with special needs in the framework of an inclusive approach.

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