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Faculty Attitudes towards Inclusive Education in Gilgit-Baltistan: A Case Study of Public Sector Universities

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the attitudes of university faculty/Teachers in Gilgit-Baltistan towards inclusive education, focusing on the awareness, teaching efficiency, resource availability, and personal characteristics influencing their approach to students with special needs. Utilizing a quantitative research design, data were collected from a sample of 163 faculty members across five public sector universities using a stratified random sampling technique. The findings reveal that while faculty demonstrate strong awareness and positive attitudes towards inclusive education, challenges such as inadequate training, limited resources, and a lack of specialized support hinder effective implementation. Notably, faculty' personal characteristics, such as empathy and flexibility, were positively correlated with successful inclusive practices. The study highlights the need for professional development programs and improved resource allocation to enhance faculty readiness and efficiency in managing inclusive classrooms. It recommends targeted training on inclusive strategies, the provision of assistive technologies, and fostering a supportive learning environment to address the identified gaps and promote more effective inclusion in higher education institutions in the region.

Key words: Inclusive Education, Faculty Attitudes, Gilgit-Baltistan, Public Universities

INTRODUCTION

Every individual has the fundamental right to receive education, and it is essential to ensure that all learners, regardless of their abilities, are provided with quality learning opportunities. Teacher Attitudes play a key role in promoting inclusive education and offering support to students with special needs. However, the effectiveness of inclusive education efforts largely relies on the mindset of teachers, especially when their attitude toward students with special needs is positive. Attitudes are negative or positive developments are called attitudes that display a prejudice in responding predictably. They are based on knowledge, affect emotions and behavior, and can be understood as the visible outcomes of customs, practices, testaments, values, morals, and religious beliefs. Attitudes have the potential to influence the quality of life of individuals with



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disabilities negatively or positively. The individual view of a teacher in the process of educating a child with disabilities (Boyle, Anderson, & Allen, 2020) A person's way of thinking affects their daily behavior and also shows how ready a teacher is to accept inclusive education. The beliefs that teachers hold about children with disabilities can greatly influence those students' emotional, social, and learning development. Because of this, general education teachers must be open to teaching students with disabilities. Many researchers have highlighted that knowing teachers' opinions and values about inclusion is important for making inclusive education work well. A person's way of thinking affects their daily behavior and also shows how ready a teacher is to accept inclusive education. The beliefs that teachers hold about children with disabilities can greatly influence those students' emotional, social, and learning development. Because of this, general education teachers must be open to teaching students with disabilities. Many researchers have highlighted that knowing teachers' opinions and values about inclusion is important for making inclusive education work well (Jardinez & Natividad, 2024).

Equally, the negative attitude of teachers or not understanding the needs of special students can lead to unfair treatment and poor learning. Since universities are such an important key part of education in Gilgit-Baltistan, the study of what teachers of the universities think and feel about special education is very imperative. Their attitudes can make us understand what is going on right now and what is yet to be done so as to improve (Khalid & Othman, 2022). It can also assist the university in developing larger training programs for university faculty/teachers and implement larger policies to promote inclusive education. The study aims to find out what university faculty/teachers think about and how willing they are to support inclusive teaching in higher institutions. The research paper will also look into some of the challenges they face and what kind of support or training can help them to better accommodate the students with different requirements. The plan is to use this information and make the education process within universities more inclusive and equitable to all (Lockmun-Bissessur, Samy, & Peeroo, 2024). The research shows that the opinions and values of normal teachers and the learning and growth of teachers in terms of teaching students with disabilities a question that needs to be addressed in the courses for teacher training (Pugach, 2005). Many studies on inclusion and student experiences have understated the part the teacher plays. Understanding the critical roles teachers play in developing inclusive classrooms is important; while integration in schools starts with them, it is absolutely necessary that the education system supports them through access to appropriate materials and the delivery of supportive guidance and effective policy. Though derived from analyses, attitudes can importantly influence teachers' affect and behavioral meanings. While teacher attitudes to attachment may be a likeness of their larger value system, as well as predictive of the work environment and society one is exposed to, negative attitudes can be detrimental for the students under their educational care. Negative perspectives could profit the following views, such as some students cannot learn, teachers do not need to teach students with diverse needs, no time to modify the curriculum, and kids with special needs are better educated outside mainstream schools. The latter is normally huddled under the outstanding of choice, and is in the student's own interest (Mansouri, Miller, Kurth, & Ruhter, 2024).

Statements of the Problem

Inclusive education plays a vital role in ensuring equal learning opportunities for all students, yet its success largely depends on teachers' awareness, perceptions, and commitment to inclusion. In Gilgit-Baltistan, where higher education institutions are still



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developing inclusive practices, the attitudes of university teachers toward Inclusive education remain a crucial but underexplored area. Research has shown that teachers' beliefs strongly shape classroom practices, resource utilization, and their willingness to support students with disabilities. However, challenges such as limited professional training, inadequate resources, and institutional constraints may influence teachers' readiness to adopt inclusive practices. Despite global and national policy commitments to inclusive

Research Objectives

- 1- To assess the awareness of public sector university Faculty/teachers towards inclusive education
- 2- To evaluate the faculty attitudes towards inclusive education, including their support for integrating students with special needs into regular classrooms.
- 3- To examine the perceived teaching efficiency of university faculty/teachers in managing inclusive classrooms and their readiness to adopt inclusive teaching strategies
- 4- To identify the availability and adequacy of support and resources provided to faculty/teachers for the inclusion of students with special needs in their classrooms.
- 5- To explore the personal characteristics of Faculty/teachers, such as their experience, training, and attitudes towards students with disabilities, that influence their approach to inclusive education.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Inclusive education encompasses all students and includes Special Educational Needs, integrating to understand and capture all diversity through learning. This is integrated into all forms of learning to provide equal opportunities to students, regardless of physical, intellectual, and emotional challenges (UNESCO, 1994). Along with the Salamanca Statement, which applies locally and globally to Gilgit-Baltistan, mainstream education opportunities should be offered to students with disabilities as a basis for inclusive education. Nonetheless, it is recognized and supported, inclusive education remains challenging, specifically and most notably in areas with fewer resources, including Gilgit-Baltistan.

Awareness of Inclusive Education

Teachers' understanding of inclusive education principles is pivotal to its effective application. Studies show that those educators most acquainted with the policies tend to practice inclusivity more readily in their teaching (Tah, 2025). In the case of Gilgit-Baltistan, where numerous schools and institutions still operate with infrastructural and resource deficits, differences in teachers' awareness levels regarding inclusive education and practices can be quite pronounced. The initiatives taken to improve educator awareness about the needs of SEN students, inclusive teaching approaches, and the use of assistive technology within the education system remain important. For instance, in Gilgit-Baltistan, teachers' limited knowledge regarding the support services for SEN learners greatly affected their practices of mainstreaming these learners (Haideri & Parveen, 2025).



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Teachers' Attitudes towards Inclusive Education

Teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education significantly shape its effectiveness. For fostering an inclusive learning atmosphere, positive attitudes from teachers towards SEN students are essential. According to research, teachers who perceive inclusivity as a value rather than a burden are more inclined to adopt effective practices for the integration of SEN students (Charitaki, Kourti, Gregory, & Öztürk, 2022). The attitude of teachers in Gilgit-Baltistan towards inclusive education is influenced by various personal factors, training, and the societal attitude towards people with disabilities. A study by Khan (2019) highlights that in the rural parts of Gilgit-Baltistan, teachers' attitudes towards inclusion are often fearful and apprehensive due to inadequate training, a lack of resources, and societal stigma attached to disabilities. Such attitudes can obstruct the effective execution of inclusive practices in classrooms. Therefore, there is an essential need for attitude modification programs for teachers (Haideri, Ahmad, & Hafeez, 2025).

Teaching Efficiency and Readiness to Adopt Inclusive Strategies

The teaching effectiveness in inclusive classrooms largely depends on the teacher's preparedness and willingness to implement inclusive approaches. It is not enough for teachers to only know about inclusive practices; they need to be able to put them into action. (Dewi, 2024) suggested that professional development and sustained support focused on inclusive teaching approaches do help teachers become more willing to use them. In the case of teachers in Gilgit-Baltistan, a lot of the teachers do not have the appropriate skills or the training to handle a diverse classroom for effective inclusive teaching. Additionally, teachers in the region also have very little access to training in special education. In his study about Gilgit-Baltistan, Ahmed and Khan (2020) reported that teachers working in the region faced significant challenges in the management of inclusive classrooms, particularly when including SEN students without appropriate support and resources.

Availability and Adequacy of Support and Resources

Sufficient support and resources are necessary if inclusive education is to be successful. Lack of resources, such as lack of trained staff, teaching materials and assistive technology, is cited as one of the primary barriers to successful inclusive education (Forlin 2010). In Gilgit Baltistan, these resources are generally inadequate, particularly in far-flung areas. A study by (Kiran, 2025) reported that though attempts were made for inclusion of SEN students in some schools in Gilgit-Baltistan, the absence of support facilities such as trained special education teachers and assistive technologies considerably affected the education these learners. The lack of resources not just hinders teachers from practicing inclusive techniques but also the quality of academic results and general well-being atomic ensuring a safe and inclusive learning environment and well-being of SEN students. Therefore, addressing the gaps in resources is crucial for ensuring that teachers can effectively cater to the needs of all students (Haideri, Ahmad, & Hafeez, 2025).

Personal Characteristics of Teachers Influencing Inclusive Education

Education has always been a cornerstone of society, providing individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to grow both personally and professionally. It equips people with the tools to thrive and succeed in life, offering not only academic knowledge but also fostering critical thinking and creativity (Spiel, Schwartzman, Busemeyer, & Cloete, 2018). Educational institutions support people of all ages by helping them develop the



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skills necessary to tackle future challenges. This aligns with the idea of lifelong learning, nurturing the habits required for success both at work and in personal life. Investing in education is, therefore, investing in a future where individuals can reach their full potential. However, negative perceptions of students with disabilities can hinder inclusion and act as a barrier to inclusive practices (Bunch & Valeo, 2004). For an inclusive education system to thrive in Gilgit-Baltistan, it is crucial to improve teacher education and shift attitudes towards disabilities.

Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research design, utilizing a descriptive survey approach, to assess faculty/teachers attitudes toward inclusive education across five public universities in Gilgit-Baltistan. The total population consisted of 163 teachers, from Karakorum international university Gilgit Main Campus (64), KIU Ghizer Campus (16), KIU Hunza Campus (20), KIU Diamer Campus (13), and University of Baltistan (50). Stratified random sampling was used to ensure representation from various departments and academic ranks. Data were collected through a self-administered questionnaire covering teachers' awareness, beliefs, challenges, knowledge of students with special needs, and preparedness for inclusive teaching. The questionnaire used a Likert-scale format to measure attitudes.

Data collection began after obtaining permission from each university's administration. Confidentiality was maintained, and participation was voluntary. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, and One-Way ANOVA was used to compare attitudes across the universities. If significant differences were found, post-hoc tests identified specific differences between universities.

Ethical Considerations

In this study, all participants gave informed consent, fully understanding the purpose of the research and their role in it. Teachers were told that participation was voluntary, and they could withdraw at any time without any consequences. The study received ethical approval from the relevant university bodies before data collection began, ensuring that all procedures followed ethical guidelines. These steps were taken to ensure the study's integrity and protect participants' rights and well-being.

RESULTS

Table 1: Demographic Information of the Respondents

Sr. Variables	Group	Frequency	Percentage
1 Gender	Male	108	66.3%
	Female	55	33.7%
2 Age	25-32	51	31.3%
	33-42	78	47.9%
	43-52	22	13.5%
	53-65	12	7.4%
3 Teaching Experience	1-5 years	40	22.7%
	6-10 years	56	31.8%
	11-15 years	33	18.8%



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Sr. Variables	Group	Frequency	Percentage
	More than 15 years	34	19.3%
4 Designation	Lecturer	113	69.3%
	Assistant Professor	34	20.9%
	Professor	16	9.8%
5 Department	Faculty of Social Science	42	25.8%
	Faculty of Arts and Humanities	58	35.6%
	Faculty of Life Science	34	20.9%
	Faculty of Natural Science	19	11.7%
	Faculty of Engineering and Technology	10	6.1%
6 University	KIU Main Campus	64	39.3%
	KIU Ghizer Campus	16	9.8%
	KIU Hunza Campus	20	12.3%
	KIU Diamer Campus	13	8.0%
	University of Baltistan	50	30.7%
7 Qualification	M.Phil.	100	61.3%
	PhD	63	38.7%
8 Relative Disability	Yes	76	46.6%
	No	87	53.4%

The table provides the demographic breakdown of study participants. A majority of participants were male (66.3%), and most were aged between 33 and 42 years (47.9%). Regarding teaching experience, most had 6-10 years (31.8%). In terms of designation, the majority were lecturers (69.3%), followed by assistant professors (20.9%) and professors (9.8%). The largest group was from the Faculty of Arts and Humanities (35.6%), and most participants were from KIU Main Campus (39.3%) and the University of Baltistan (30.7%). In terms of qualification, 61.3% held an M.Phil. Degree, while 38.7% had a PhD. Additionally, 46.6% reported having a relative with a disability. This data reflects a diverse group of participants across various demographic factors.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Public Sector University faculty Awareness of Inclusive Education

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
I am aware of the different types of special needs.	6 (3.7%)	6 (3.7%)	17 (10.4%)	69 (42.3%)	65 (39.9%)	4.11	0.988
I have received training on teaching students with special needs.	28 (17.2%)	41 (25.2%)	30 (18.4%)	36 (22.1%)	28 (17.2%)	2.97	1.363
I am familiar with the laws and policies related to inclusive education.	14 (8.6%)	31 (19.0%)	35 (21.5%)	49 (30.1%)	34 (20.9%)	3.36	1.246



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Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
I know how to create an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for students.	19 (11.7%)	25 (15.3%)	31 (19.0%)	58 (35.6%)	30 (18.4%)	3.34	1.268
I am aware of the resources available to support students with special needs.	17 (10.4%)	15 (9.2%)	22 (13.5%)	75 (46.0%)	34 (20.9%)	3.58	1.217

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics on public sector university faculty/teachers' awareness of inclusive education. The results show that faculty/teachers have strong awareness of different types of special needs, with a mean of 4.11 and a low standard deviation of 0.988, indicating consistent responses. However, their familiarity with training for teaching students with special needs is more varied, with a mean of 2.97 and a higher standard deviation of 1.363, suggesting a lack of uniform training. Teachers are moderately familiar with laws and policies related to inclusive education (mean = 3.36, SD = 1.246), and their ability to create Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) shows mixed responses, with a mean of 3.34 and SD of 1.268. The awareness of available resources was the most favorable (mean = 3.58, SD = 1.217), indicating good awareness of support resources. Overall, teachers show strong awareness of special needs and resources but need improvement in training and knowledge of policies and IEPs.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on Public Sector University faculty Attitudes towards Inclusive Education

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
I believe that students with special needs should be integrated into regular classrooms.	17 (10.4%)	18 (11.0%)	76 (46.6%)	52 (31.9%)	00 (0.0%)	4.00	0.923
I think that inclusive education promotes social acceptance and understanding.	2 (1.2%)	2 (1.2%)	25 (15.3%)	70 (42.9%)	64 (39.3%)	4.18	0.823
I believe that students with special needs can learn and achieve academic success in an inclusive setting.	3 (1.8%)	8 (4.9%)	18 (11.0%)	81 (49.7%)	53 (32.5%)	4.06	0.894
I think that inclusive education requires additional resources and support.	5 (3.1%)	2 (1.2%)	9 (5.5%)	72 (44.2%)	74 (45.4%)	4.53	3.306
I believe that inclusive education is beneficial for all students.	8 (4.9%)	7 (4.3%)	82 (50.3%)	65 (39.9%)	00 (0.0%)	4.32	1.076

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics for public sector university faculty/teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. The results show that most faculty/teachers agree



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with the integration of students with special needs into regular classrooms (mean = 4.00), with a moderate level of agreement. Faculty/Teachers strongly support the idea that inclusive education promotes social acceptance and understanding, as reflected in a mean of 4.18 and low variability. They also believe that students with special needs can achieve academic success in inclusive settings (mean = 4.06). However, there is a significant consensus (mean = 4.53) that inclusive education requires additional resources and support, although the wide standard deviation suggests some variation in responses. Finally, teachers strongly agree that inclusive education benefits all students (mean = 4.32). Overall, teachers have a positive attitude towards inclusive education, but there is some variation regarding the resources required and the integration process.

Table 1.4: Descriptive Statistics on Public Sector University faculty Teaching Efficiency and Readiness to Adopt Inclusive Strategies

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
I feel confident in my ability to teach students with special needs.	3 (1.8%)	23 (14.1%)	37 (22.7%)	59 (36.2%)	41 (25.2%)	3.69	1.057
I think that I have the necessary skills to teach students with special needs.	2 (1.2%)	24 (14.7%)	44 (27.0%)	58 (35.6%)	35 (21.5%)	3.61	1.020
I believe that I can make a positive impact on the lives of students with special needs.	5 (3.1%)	17 (10.4%)	18 (11.0%)	84 (51.5%)	39 (23.9%)	3.83	1.010
I feel that I have the necessary knowledge to teach students with special needs.	3 (1.8%)	24 (14.7%)	34 (20.9%)	67 (41.1%)	34 (20.9%)	3.66	1.044
I think that I can adapt my teaching methods to meet the needs of students with special needs.	1 (0.6%)	16 (9.8%)	31 (19.0%)	69 (42.3%)	46 (28.2)	3.88	0.954

Table 1.4 presents the descriptive statistics on public sector university faculty/teachers' teaching efficiency and readiness to adopt inclusive strategies for students with special needs. The results show that faculty/teachers generally feel confident in their ability to teach and support these students, with the highest mean score of 3.88 for adapting teaching methods. Faculty/Teachers also report strong confidence in making a positive impact on students' lives (mean = 3.83) and in having the necessary skills (mean = 3.61) and knowledge (mean = 3.66) to teach students with special needs. The data indicates that while teachers are generally prepared, there is still room for improvement in enhancing their skills and knowledge for more effective inclusive teaching practices.

Table 1.5: Descriptive Statistics on the Availability and Adequacy of Support Resources in Public Sector Universities



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Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
I have access to the resources and support I need to teach students with special needs	11 (6.7%)	45 (27.6%)	29 (17.8%)	61 (37.4%)	17 (10.4%)	3.17	1.147
I think that the school administration provides adequate support for teaching students with special needs	13 (8.0%)	27 (16.6%)	35 (21.5%)	64 (39.3%)	24 (14.7%)	3.36	1.159
I believe that I have the necessary technology to support teaching students with special needs	8 (4.9%)	57 (35.0%)	22 (13.5%)	51 (31.3%)	25 (15.3%)	3.17	1.205
I think that I have access to professional development opportunities to improve my skills in teaching students with special needs	7 (4.3%)	32 (19.6%)	30 (18.4%)	63 (38.7%)	31 (19.0%)	3.48	1.135
I believe that I have the necessary support from my colleagues to teach students with special needs	8 (4.9%)	28 (17.2%)	35 (21.5%)	59 (36.2%)	33 (20.2%)	3.50	1.141

Table 1.4 presents the descriptive statistics on the availability and adequacy of support resources for teaching students with special needs in public sector universities. The data reveals that faculty/teachers generally feel neutral to positive about the resources available to them. For example, most faculty/teachers agree that they have access to necessary resources (mean = 3.17) and that the school administration provides adequate support (mean = 3.36), although there are some concerns, as reflected by the percentage of teachers who disagree. In terms of technology, teachers express mixed feelings (mean = 3.17), with a significant portion feeling they lack the necessary technological support. On professional development, faculty/teachers feel more positive (mean = 3.48), with most agreeing they have opportunities to improve their skills. Additionally, support from colleagues is seen as generally positive (mean = 3.50), with a majority of teachers feeling supported by their peers. The standard deviations indicate that responses were fairly consistent across the participants, though some areas, like technology and administrative support, could benefit from improvement.

Table 1.6: Descriptive Statistics on Public Sector University faculty Personal Characteristics Influencing Inclusive Education

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
I am patient and understanding when working with students with special needs.	4 (2.5%)	10 (6.1%)	32 (19.6%)	60 (36.8%)	57 (35.0%)	3.96	1.008
I am flexible and adaptable	10	31	78	44	00	3.96	0.841



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Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
when teaching students with special needs.	(6.1%)	(19.0%)	(47.9%)	(27.0%)	(0.0%)		
I am empathetic and caring when working with students with special needs.	3 (1.8%)	4 (2.5%)	30 (18.4%)	60 (36.8%)	66 (40.5%)	4.12	0.919
I am willing to learn and improve my skills in teaching students with special needs.	12 (7.4%)	12 (7.4%)	77 (47.2%)	62 (38.0%)	00 (0.0%)	4.16	0.853
I am committed to providing high-quality education to students with special needs	2 (1.2%)	13 (8.0%)	13 (8.0%)	64 (39.3%)	71 (43.6%)	4.16	0.962

Table 1.6 presents descriptive statistics on the personal characteristics of public sector university faculty/teachers that influence inclusive education. The data shows that faculty/teachers generally rate themselves highly in terms of qualities essential for working with students with special needs. For instance, the majority of teachers consider themselves patient and understanding (mean = 3.96), flexible and adaptable (mean = 3.96), and empathetic and caring (mean = 4.12), with high levels of agreement (36.8% to 40.5%). Additionally, most teachers express a strong willingness to learn and improve their skills (mean = 4.16) and are committed to providing high-quality education to students with special needs (mean = 4.16). The standard deviations are relatively low, indicating consistent agreement among teachers in their personal commitment and approach to inclusive education.

Table 1.7: One-Way ANOVA Results for Differences in Variables Influencing Inclusive Education across Public Sector Universities

Variable	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Awareness of Inclusive Education					
Between Groups	6.598	4	1.649	1.889	0.115
Within Groups	137.925	158	0.873		
Teachers' Attitudes towards Inclusive Education					
Between Groups	3.220	4	0.805	0.910	0.459
Within Groups	139.724	158	0.884		
Teaching Efficiency for Inclusive Strategies					
Between Groups	2.964	4	0.741	1.117	0.350
Within Groups	104.801	158	0.663		
Support Resources					
Between Groups	8.873	4	2.218	2.406	0.052
Within Groups	145.649	158	0.922		
Personal Characteristics					



Variable	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5.771	4	1.443	3.140	0.016
Within Groups	72.592	158	0.459		

The One-Way ANOVA results in Table 1.7 show no significant differences in Awareness of Inclusive Education ($p = 0.115$), Teachers' Attitudes towards Inclusive Education ($p = 0.459$), and Teaching Efficiency for Inclusive Strategies ($p = 0.350$). However, Support Resources showed marginal significance ($p = 0.052$), and Personal Characteristics showed significant differences ($p = 0.016$) across universities. These findings highlight variations in Support Resources and Personal Characteristics that require further attention.

The Post Hoc LSD test revealed significant differences in Support Resources between KIU Main Campus and Baltistan University ($p = 0.024$), and Ghizer Campus and Baltistan University ($p = 0.020$). For Personal Characteristics, KIU Main Campus scored significantly higher than Baltistan University ($p = 0.008$), and Diامر Campus scored better than Hunza Campus ($p = 0.041$). These results suggest that KIU Main Campus and Ghizer Campus perform better in terms of Support Resources and Personal Characteristics, while Baltistan University and Hunza Campus need improvement in these areas.

Based on these findings, KIU Main Campus and Ghizer Campus are recognized as the top performers, especially regarding Support Resources as well as Personal Characteristics. These universities appear to provide better support and have teachers with substantial personal characteristics, which are vital to establishing an inclusive educational environment. In contrast, Baltistan University seems to be struggling in Support Resources as well as Personal Characteristics, which indicates that improvements are needed in these elements in order to provide a more inclusive and supportive educational atmosphere for faculty and students. Moreover, Hunza Campus needs support with Personal Characteristics; notably, its scores are significantly less than those of Diامر Campus. Subsequently, Baltistan University and Hunza Campus should focus more on improving faculty allocation, development, and training to boost inclusivity and overall educational standards.

Discussion

The results of this study support previous research focusing on the importance of teachers' attitudes and awareness on the adoption of inclusive education. Most teachers recognized the importance of the integration of students with disabilities into regular classrooms, and therefore, teachers' awareness of various special needs was substantial. This is consistent with previous research, such as Sharma (2006), who states that teachers familiar with the relevant inclusive education policies tend to execute them. However, teachers' knowledge deficiencies on specialized inclusive education practices remain, such as constructing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), which is in line with the challenges Mahmood (2018) reported regarding the lack of training and awareness in Gilgit-Baltistan.

Similarly, while the majority of teachers demonstrated a positive attitude towards inclusive education, the variation in responses regarding resource availability underscores a common global challenge. Forlin (2010) discusses how inadequate resources hinder effective inclusion, and our study corroborates this claim by revealing



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that teachers felt the need for better support, particularly in terms of technology and administrative resources. The One-Way ANOVA results further highlight a significant gap in resources and personal characteristics between universities. This finding resonates with Butt's (2021) report, which notes that resource inadequacies in Gilgit-Baltistan significantly impact the implementation of inclusive education.

Despite these challenges, the personal characteristics of teachers in the region—such as empathy, flexibility, and willingness to improve—were rated highly, supporting the idea that teacher disposition plays a crucial role in the success of inclusive education. The positive attitude of teachers towards making a positive impact on students' lives is consistent with Ainscow's (2005) assertion that professional development enhances teachers' readiness for inclusive practices. However, the study also reflects the need for continuous professional development and resource support, especially in under-resourced areas like Baltistan University and Hunza Campus, which scored lower in both support resources and personal characteristics.

Conclusions

The research shows the situation of inclusive education within the region's public sector universities. While teachers demonstrate awareness and hold constructive attitudes regarding inclusive education, there is a demonstrated need for further professional training, particularly in the areas of specific competencies and IEPs, which is also a finding of the research. For more remote campuses like Dimer campus and Hunza Campus, a lack of adequate resources remains a major challenge for inclusive education. This work also highlights the importance of teachers' affective dispositions, where positive personal dispositions synergize to enable success in inclusive practices within a class.

Recommendations

- 1- **Enhance Teacher Training Programs:** Universities in Gilgit-Baltistan should invest in specialized training for teachers in understanding inclusive education, focusing on developing IEPs and the use of assistive technology. Training should be region-specific, tailored to the identified gap in this study.
- 2- **Improve Resource Allocation:** To combat the challenges of inadequate resource, universities, in particular Baltistan University and Hunza Campus should prioritize the provision of assistive technology, teaching materials and specialized personnel as well as the recruitment of assistive staff. These universities should provide inclusive education.
- 3- **Facilitate Ongoing Professional Development:** Professional development programs should be instituted to assist teachers in accommodating the instructional needs of inclusive classrooms. These programs should provide teachers with tools for addressing the challenges of resource-scarce situations, as this study has uncovered.
- 4- **Foster a Positive Attitude toward Inclusion:** To improve teacher preparedness for inclusive education, attitude modification programs should be instituted. Such programs can help resolve negative perceptions and misconceptions on students with special needs in order to promote a more inclusive and supportive environment.



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- 5- **Focus on Personal Characteristics:** Universities should put more focus on building personal qualities like empathy, patience, and flexibility in their teacher training programs. This study shows that teachers with these traits are better at creating classrooms where all students feel included and supported.

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