



Educators' Perception On Intersectionality As A Framework For Inclusive Education

Pratyay Malakar, Director, Programs & People, Educators For Equality

Abstract

Despite significant strides in promoting inclusive education globally, India has faced persistent hurdles in integrating groups of students who face multiple marginalization on the basis of their identities, into mainstream classrooms. The study explores the historical context, legislative frameworks, and the evolution of inclusive education in India, highlighting the need to shift towards an intersectional approach. Emphasizing the importance of intersectionality, the paper contends that inclusive education should extend beyond disability-centric perspectives to address the diverse needs of all marginalized groups. The research employs a quantitative survey model to gather insights from in-service teachers, assessing their familiarity with intersectionality, beliefs in its significance, comfort in addressing identity issues, and the incorporation of inclusive practices. Findings reveal a positive correlation between teachers' familiarity with intersectionality and their comfort in addressing identity issues in the classroom. It also discusses the challenges in implementing intersectionality which include limited awareness, resistance from communities with entrenched biases, and a lack of resources. The study underscores the need for comprehensive teacher training, curriculum adjustments, and practical experiences in inclusive settings. It advocates for a transformative approach to teacher preparation, infusing intersectionality into the core of inclusive education training.

Keywords: intersectionality, inclusive education, teacher preparation, identities

Introduction

The inclusive education tenet was reaffirmed at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal (2000) and accepted at the "World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality" in Salamanca, Spain, in 1994. The United Nations Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disability Proclaiming Participation and equality for all provide additional support for inclusion. Recently, there has been agreement among Indian scholars and educators to embrace inclusive instruction in traditional classrooms.

90% of India's 40 million children with physical and mental disabilities have been excluded from mainstream education since the 1990s. This was due to unaware school management and over-anxious parents, who discouraged disabled children from entering classrooms. (Kumar, 2007). Social justice and equity demanded preferential access to schools for these children.

Special education began in the 1880s in India as a unique program for disabled students who were independent from the regular school system. In 1883, Bombay became home to the first deaf school, while in 1887, Amritsar became home to the first blind school. There were 32 schools for the blind, 30 for the deaf, and 3 for the mentally handicapped in 1947. The number of these institutions increased at an accelerating rate. By 2000, there were approximately 3,000 special schools (Department of Education, 2000). In the 1960s, the Indian government created a program to train educators to educate students with visual impairments. Gradually, comparable curricula for kids with different disabilities were created.

Unfortunately, the lack of standard course curricula, inconsistent admissions requirements, and a significant dearth of teacher educators and relevant literature cast doubt on the caliber of the instructors who had received training. Thus, the Indian government's Ministry of Welfare understood in the 1980s how important it was to have an organization overseeing and regulating HRD initiatives related to handicap rehabilitation.

Everyone has the right to equality of status and opportunity, as stated unequivocally in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution, which was adopted on November 26, 1949. Article 41 of the Indian Constitution's Directive Principles upholds the rights to employment, education, and, in certain situations, public aid, even in the event of disability. Furthermore, all children up to 14 years of age are guaranteed free and obligatory education under Article 45. Based on this, the parliament passed the Constitution (86th Amendment) Act of 2002, establishing education as a fundamental right for all children between the ages of six and fourteen. Moreover, on November 28, 2001, the Lok Sabha approved the 93rd Amendment to the Indian Constitution (now known as the 86th).

The constitutional promise to provide inclusive and comprehensive education for all children was the foundation for the Right to Education Act of 2009, a landmark legislation in India. However, in the Indian context, the perception of inclusive education has been predominantly centered around students with disabilities, potentially overlooking the needs of other marginalized groups such as Dalit or queer children with disabilities. This focus on disability-centric inclusion may inadvertently disadvantage gender non-conforming or dalit children, whose educational challenges extend beyond disability considerations. Similar to the observations in Austria (Feyerer, 2012), there is a need to broaden the discourse on inclusive education in India to encompass a more comprehensive understanding that addresses the diverse needs of all marginalized groups within the educational landscape.

Research on inclusive education has generally concentrated on teaching students with and without disabilities together. Many studies (Farrell et al. 2007; Reicher 2010; de Boer, Pijl, and Minnaert 2012; Baeten and Simons 2014) have looked at the academic accomplishment of children with and without disabilities, teacher practices, the element of social-emotional inclusion, and attitudes toward inclusive education.

Undoubtedly, these investigations have yielded rich soil for the field of inclusive education scholarship. Nevertheless, it is important to note that inclusive education is not limited to including students with disabilities; it also tries to ensure that all students receive an education that meets their needs (UNESCO 2009). It is not sufficient to use the word "inclusive education" in this context and limit it to just including children with disabilities; instead, all children must be included.

In line with this approach, in this article, I argue for the need to broaden the definition of inclusive education in the Indian school context. I provide a short definition of inclusive education and intersectionality, then assess educators' perception of inclusive education and intersectionality, the challenges of looking at intersectionality in classrooms, and how intersectionality can be helpful for the successful implementation of inclusive education.

Inclusive education

There are certain commonalities, but inclusive education can mean different things to different people in different situations. These are the following: the desire to create a more equitable education system, a more just society, and the belief that extending mainstream schools' responsiveness to students' various learning barriers can help make these goals a reality (Engelbrecht, Green, Swart, & Muthurkrishna, 2001).

The educational framework of inclusion focuses on the participation of all students in the educational system (UNESCO, 2005), with competing definitions varying across nations (Waitoller and Kozleski 2013). UNESCO defines inclusion as a process that addresses diversity of needs by increasing participation in learning, cultures, and communities and reducing exclusion. This involves changes in content, approaches, structures, and strategies, with a shared vision covering all children of the appropriate age range and the belief that the regular system is responsible for educating all children. This is the exact situation when intersectionality can be most helpful. Analyzing and conceptualizing educational challenges using a multi-axis approach provides a method that can "more comprehensively answer questions" of need, justice, and equality in today's schools (Grant & Zwier 2011).

Most individuals with disabilities have societal characteristics that may marginalize them more than their disability. These include racial minorities, low-income households, and second-language learners. Scholars must recognize intersections between race, class, gender, disability, language abilities, and national origins when discussing inclusive education, as these factors should be considered (García & Ortiz, 2013) (Kozleski et al., 2014).

A person's experience inside an educational system is shaped by various elements, such as power dynamics or categories, and discriminatory, excluding, and marginalizing practices are pervasive. Therefore, inclusive education is more than just put into practice. Educational institutions are enveloped in socio-historical gravity" because "the societies in which inclusion is carried out are historically stratified, in part as a result of the influence of power" (Erickson 2004, as cited in Kozleski, Artiles, and Waitoller 2014, p. 239). Put another way, understanding the society in which inclusion is to be implemented is a prerequisite for its successful implementation.

Therefore, discourse regarding inclusive education needs to be recentered at the crossroads—or intersections—of students' diverse identities in light of these intersections of identity and society. Furthermore, it necessitates that academics take a far more nuanced approach to their research, avoiding the narrow-minded belief that each person has a single identification marker and instead considering the socio-historical significance of a community (Crenshaw 1989).

Intersectionality

Kimberlé Crenshaw first developed the idea of intersectionality as a reaction to this shortsighted perception of individuals. Initially, she used the term to analyze the multiple and overlapping discrimination experienced by African-American women in the American context (Crenshaw 1989, 1991). To summarize her argument, Crenshaw asserted that antidiscrimination legislation in the United States did not protect African-American women because, when making legal claims against an employer, this particular group of women had to choose between either their race or gender, even though the discrimination they faced came at the "intersection" between these two identities.

Contrary to previous theories that hold that discrimination primarily stems from a single identification marker of an individual, intersectionality contends that all facets of an individual's identity must be considered since they interact with one another and influence how they are perceived in society. Furthermore, it is impossible to observe these identity aspects separately (Cooper 2016). According to Collins (2015), the various facets of an individual's identity are not "unitary, mutually exclusive entities, but... reciprocally constructing phenomena."

Intersectionality in Inclusive Education

As previously mentioned, intersectionality has primarily been applied to gender studies (Nash 2008); nevertheless, researchers in other fields have started to include it in their work (Jiménez-Castellanos and García 2017). Although many academics still view intersectionality as a "future perspective" in inclusive education, it is gaining traction (Artiles, Dorn, and Bal 2016).

According to Grant and Zwier (2011), the use of intersectionality in the educational setting enables the analysis of the interplay between these individual or group characteristics and organizational responses to them, as well as the simultaneous interactions among, for example, gender (dis)ability, migrant background, race, and class for any given child. Because of how schools address or fail to address the intersection of their identities and instead respond to only one aspect of students' needs, intersectionality thus helps explain why some students (such as refugee students with behavioral disorders) experience varying degrees of exclusion in schools (Waitoller and Kozleski 2013).

Intersectionality in inclusive education refers to the idea that marginalized students often experience multiple forms of discrimination at individual and institutional levels. This creates social and educational stratification, which activists aim to counteract. However, they often need to consider the intersecting nature of these effects in their definition and implementation of inclusive education. Combining intersectionality and inclusion could help identify discrimination and exclusion processes (Hancock, 2007).

Research Gap and Purpose of this Study

Studies in the Middle East and South Asian countries reveal that educators' views on inclusive education significantly impact how they run their classrooms and comprehend and analyze the assistance provided. Research indicates that more responsible special educators are more likely to embrace strategies that involve kids with behavioral, emotional, and social challenges (Hind, Larkin, & Dunn, 2019). Teachers with active inclusion experience—that is, those who execute inclusion programs—have more positive attitudes, according to research by Avramidis, Bayliss, and Burden (2000). Furthermore, research has shown the significance of professional development in fostering inclusive views.

In India, research on educators' perceptions towards an intersectional, inclusive education approach is limited; hence, through this article, I want to understand and examine the thinking of Indian teachers toward intersectionality as a framework for inclusive education.

Research Design

In this study, the survey model, one of the quantitative research designs, was used. A survey model is a research approach that aims to define a past or present situation as it exists. In this model, there is no effort to change or influence whatever is the subject of research. This method aims to search for answers to the question of what the

current state of the event or problem is that is desired to be investigated with field scanning (Yorek et al., 2008; Koruoglu et al., 2015).

Sampling Method

A convenience selection technique was used in this study to choose participants from my network of in-service teachers. Convenience sampling is choosing participants who are easily available and accessible to the researcher. It is frequently chosen due to its practicality and accessibility. In this case, 200 teachers were conveniently reached to participate in the study and made up the sample. I distributed a Google Form questionnaire as part of the outreach, and 103 teachers in the designated network responded. Convenience sampling is acknowledged for its effectiveness in participant recruitment. However, it is crucial to realize its limitations, including the possibility of bias and the difficulty of extrapolating results to larger groups. Convenience sampling was used in this study to enable a practical and quick data collection process, providing insightful information from a portion of the network's in-service instructors.

Data Analysis

For every item in the study, frequency and percentage values were computed using the collected data (Ugulu, 2009; Yorek & Ugulu, 2015). To ascertain whether there was a relationship between the questionnaire's sub-dimensions based on the data gathered, the Pearson correlation coefficient was also computed. Following the computation of the correlation coefficients, a subsequent step in the analysis involved the application of a t-test. This additional statistical test, often employed in exploring differences between two groups, was conducted to delve deeper into the relationships identified by the correlation analysis.

Data Collection Tool

A close-ended questionnaire (with two questions) was designed to investigate educators' perceptions towards inclusive education. The questions were mostly based on 5-point scales with responses ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, always to never, etc. Every response was scored later based on the answer (0 to strongly disagree and 4 to strongly agree) for the analysis. The qualitative questions involved the challenges of implementing intersectionality as a tool for inclusive education. Once all of the data was collected, it was analyzed using Google Sheets, and all information obtained was kept confidential and only seen by the researcher.

Results

In this study, in-service teachers' views on intersectionality as a framework for inclusive education were evaluated from a quantitative research perspective. For this purpose, the findings obtained with the questionnaire are presented in tables in this section. The total number (n) of respondents in the study is 103. The age, gender, and educational qualification-wise distribution of the respondents are given in Table 1. There were four age categories such as 18-25, 25-32, 32-39, and 40 & above. Most respondents were from the age group of 25-32 years. The calculated mean age of the participants was approximately 27.75 years. The participants' median and modal age fall under the same 25-32 age category. The gender distribution of the respondents was divided into four groups (men, women, non-binary, and people who did not want to share). Women were the highest in terms of number of respondents (71.84%). Out of 103 respondents, 59.22% were postgraduates, whereas the rest of the respondents (40.78%) completed their graduation. Of the all 103 participants, 63.11% still needed to complete a formal teacher education course such as D.El.Ed, B.Ed, M.Ed, etc. Most of the 38 participants who completed the formal teacher education course have finished their Bachelor of Education (78.95%).

Table 1: Demographic Details of the Respondents (n=103)										
Factors	18-25		25-32		32-39		40&above		Mean	SD
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Age (in Years)	32	31.07	59	57.28	5	4.85	7	6.8	27.75	2.43
	Men		Women		Non-Binary		Prefer not to Say			
Gender	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
	20	19.42	74	71.84	3	2.91	5	4.85		
Educational Qualification	Graduation				Post Graduation & above					
	f		%		f		%			
	42		40.78		61		59.22			
Formal Teacher Education	Completed				Not Completed					
	f		%		f		%			
	38		36.89		65		63.11			
Type of Teacher Education Course (n=38)	D.El.Ed (Diploma in Elementary Education)		N.T.T.E (Nursery Teacher Training Education)		B.Ed (Bachelor of Education)		M.Ed (Master of Education)			
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
	2	5.26	2	5.26	30	78.95	5	13.16		
Teaching Experience (in Years)	0-2		2-5		5-10		10-20		20 & above	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
	40	38.83	41	39.81	14	13.59	6	5.83	2	1.94

The responses obtained bas on participant's understanding of the concept of Intersectionality is presented in Table 2. Here, we see that most of the participants were from a range of somewhat familiar with the concept of intersectionality. Many participants (95.15%) also see the importance of incorporating multiple identity factors like gender, caste, religion, disability, and first language in their classrooms.

Questions	Responses									
	Very Familiar		Somewhat Familiar		Neutral		Not Very Familiar		Not Familiar at all	
Familiarity with the concept of intersectionality in education	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
		34	33.01	54	52.43	3	2.91	7	6.8	5
Importance of multiple identity factors (gender, caste, religion, first language, disability)	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
	1	0.97	3	2.91	1	0.97	17	16.5	81	78.64

The data obtained from the analysis made for the comfortness and teacher actions of the participants are presented in Table 3. Majority of the the participants (83.5%) felt comfortable in addressing the issues related to identity factors like gender, caste, religion, and disability in their classrooms. A very huge number (69.91%) of the respondent teachers also expressed that they consciously discuss or incorporate activities related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. On the contrary, some of the participants still feel that their current teaching skill is not effective (14.56%), and a majority of them is still unsure if they have the right skill to teach about inclusion or if they are doing enough about it in their classrooms (40.78%).

Questions	Responses									
	Very Uncomfortable		Uncomfortable		Neutral		Comfortable		Very Comfortable	
Comfort in addressing issues related to gender, caste, religion, first language, and disability in the classroom	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
		0	0	5	4.85	12	11.65	43	41.75	43
Conscious discussions or activities related to diversity and inclusion in teaching	Never		Rarely		Occasionally		Often		Always	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
	0	0	5	4.85	26	25.24	54	52.43	18	17.48
Effective teaching practice in fostering an inclusive environment that considers intersectionality (Self Reported)	Very Ineffective		Ineffective		Neutral		Effective		Very Effective	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
	3	2.91	12	11.65	42	40.78	39	37.86	7	6.8

The data obtained from the analysis made for the teachers' perceptions on the current structures and practices in the Indian School Education such as curriculum and training are presented in Table 4. Around 80% of the participants expressed that the current curriculum and teaching materials in school is inadequate to address the diverse needs of students coming from diverse backgrounds in terms of gender, caste, religion, disability, first

language etc. In addition to that, 75.73% of the participants noted that there was no training for them to address the intersectionality of multiple identities in their classrooms. This also shows that even the formal teacher education courses also lack the appropriate training that a new teacher should have in order to learn or deal with identity issues.

Questions	Responses			
	Not Adequate		Adequate	
Effectiveness of current curriculum and teaching materials to address the diverse needs of students in terms of gender, caste, religion, first language, and disability	f	%	f	%
	82	79.61	21	20.39
Receiving training to address intersectionality of multiple identity factors (gender, caste, religion, first language, disability)	Not Received		Received	
	f	%	f	%
	78	75.73	25	24.27

The data obtained from the analysis made for the participants' opinions on tools and strategies to implement and evaluate intersectionality in the classrooms are presented in Table 5. A lot of participants suggested that to implement intersectionality in a classroom setting; they might need coaching support (52.43%) as it will help them reflect on their skills and experiences with the help of a coach who has expertise in the area of inclusive education. The second most effective tool will be a curriculum for children (33.01%) to learn more about identities. When asked about their preferred tool for evaluating their impact, participants shared that self-reflection and classroom observation by others can be the most helpful.

Questions	Responses											
	Student Curriculum		Coaching		Workshops / Trainings		Classroom Observation & Feedback		Lesson Planning and other templates/re sources		Parents and Community Engagement	
Tools/strategies for implementing Intersectionality	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
	34	33.01	54	52.43	3	2.91	7	6.8	5	4.85	5	4.85
Tools/Strategies for assessing the impact for Intersectionality	Formal Assessments		Observation by Others		Student Feedback		Self Reflection		Others (Suggested by Participants) Hearing kids when they discuss in their respective learning group ,Check if students are able to apply the lessons in real life situations, Classroom culture			
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%				
	1	0.97	3	2.91	1	0.97	17	16.5				

The data obtained from the analysis made for the current support received from the school administration and the level of engagement of parents, are presented in Table 6. The majority of the teachers reported that they currently either do not involve (42.72%) or are not sure about involving parents (30.3%) in the discussions related to diversity and inclusion.

Questions	Responses									
	Not Involved at all		Not Very Involved		Neutral		Involved		Very Involved	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Involving parents in discussions and activities related to diversity and inclusion	11	10.68	33	32.04	31	30.1	23	22.33	5	4.85
Support from the school administration in implementing inclusive education practices	Not Supported at all		Not Very Supported		Neutral		Supported		Strongly Supported	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
	13	12.62	24	23.3	33	32.04	22	21.36	11	10.68

In order to determine whether there is a relationship between the factors of the measurement tool (questionnaire), the correlation coefficient was calculated using the Pearson correlation and the findings are presented in Table 7. There is a positive correlation between familiarity with intersectionality, belief in intersectionality, comfort in addressing identity issues, and classroom activities on inclusion.

FACTORS	1. Familiarity of Intersectionality	2. Belief in Intersectionality	3. Comfort in addressing Identity Issues	4. Classroom Activities on Inclusion	5. Training on Inclusion	6. Self-Reported Teaching Skills on Inclusion
1. Familiarity of Intersectionality	1	0.0858	0.18815	0.17541*	0.18661	0.11065
2. Belief in Intersectionality	0.0858	1	0.20256	0.19889*	0.05523	-0.047805
3. Comfort in addressing Identity Issues	0.18815	0.20256	1	0.33032	0.16132	0.30568*
4. Classroom Activities on Inclusion	0.17541*	0.19889*	0.33032	1	0.04033*	0.1458
5. Training on Inclusion	0.18661	0.05523	0.16132	0.04033*	1	0.29728*

6. Self-Reported Teaching Skills on Inclusion	0.11065	-0.047805	0.30568*	0.1458	0.29728*	1
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).						

Discussions

The questionnaire and exploratory research design were used in this study, which aimed to quantitatively evaluate the views of in-service teachers on intersectionality as a framework for inclusive education. The findings obtained from the research are discussed below with the relevant literature.

There was a clear, significant relationship between familiarity with the concept of Intersectionality and the participant's level of comfort in addressing issues related to multiple identities in a classroom setting. I found that when teachers knew more about Intersectionality, they felt more at ease addressing issues related to students having multiple identities in the classroom. This suggests that knowing about Intersectionality can really make a difference in how teachers handle these topics. It is like a guide for teachers. It encourages them to create good conversations between different people and subjects. This way of teaching helps everyone feel included and appreciated for who they are, making learning more enjoyable (H. Kayi-Aydar et al., 2022).

There is also a significant relationship between the belief that multiple identity factors are essential for a classroom and the teachers' conscious choice to incorporate activities that promote diversity and inclusion. I resonate with Maryam Asenuga when she says *“As educators, you can either empower or oppress students by the way you choose to teach and see them. Your intentional decisions to incorporate some communities and identities into the classroom while leaving others out show which side you choose.”*

This research has also found a connection between training on inclusion and diversity and the teaching skill to foster a safe learning environment for all students, irrespective of their multiple identities. Diverse learners are produced and created by educators who practice inclusionary education. Children pick up on instructors' confidence in diversity and inclusion when they see it in action, which fosters a friendly environment that values all forms of difference. According to Bennett (2009), inclusion entails more than just student participation; it also entails the usual classroom teacher taking charge of the entire class. Possessing the proper education enables educators to take responsibility for each pupil. Teachers who have received inclusion education are better equipped to generate and cultivate a diverse student body in the inclusive classroom. Several studies have indicated that school administrators' opinions regarding including students with disabilities were significantly influenced by their professional development through in-service training in special education (Goley, 2013). Adding that training, which gives them knowledge about disabilities, managerial skills, and a grasp of the regulations that require the inclusion of children with disabilities in general education, is one of the most important factors in establishing positive attitudes toward inclusive education. According to Vazquez (2010), participants with more significant experience and those with special education training showed more favorable attitudes about inclusion.

In our study, we also asked the respondents about the prospective challenges for implementing intersectionality in a classroom setting. As suggested by the participant educators, a prevalent obstacle lies in the limited mindsets and awareness surrounding diversity and inclusion, particularly in rural and semi-urban settings. They also expressed a struggle in simplifying and explaining these concepts, faced with questions from parents and

communities entrenched in biases and traditional beliefs. In under-resourced government schools, where teaching resources are scarce, addressing issues of intersectionality becomes even more daunting. Sometimes, colleagues' lack of support, parental skepticism, and the resistance of school authorities further compound the difficulties. Ball and Green (2014) observed that the lack of proper training and experience in special education and inclusion practices is the main cause of the unfavorable attitudes of school administrators, which results in less inclusive placement for students with disabilities in general schools. We can safely assume this will also be the case when including students with multiple marginalized identities.

Teachers grapple with countering deeply ingrained racist and gendered beliefs among students, often met with reluctance to embrace ideas that challenge their cultural norms. The challenges extend to the teachers, encompassing a lack of knowledge, skills, and a fear of unintended consequences, leading to hesitancy in initiating such discussions. In this complex landscape, navigating through societal, parental, and personal barriers proves formidable, requiring a delicate balance of sensitivity, resourcefulness, and a commitment to fostering inclusivity. To foster diversity, educators must embrace all facets of inclusion. If not, the method frequently fails to provide the desired results or overwhelms teachers. Numerous educators have found that implementing a single inclusive strategy rarely yields the intended results (Katz, 2012, p. 22). The instructors understand all aspects of inclusive practice when they receive sufficient resources and staff training (Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, 2013, p. 9). Teachers who gain self-assurance in accommodating all pupils foster an environment that values variety.

Conclusion

While the research outcomes generally depict a positive trajectory, the diversity of opinions among educators needs to be more consistent in the understanding and appreciation of intersectionality as a framework for inclusive education. Notably, the study reveals that teachers' knowledge and skill levels regarding students with special needs are frequently suboptimal, indicating a crucial gap in their preparedness for inclusive education. This highlights the necessity for cultivating positive attitudes and enhancing the competencies of educators, as they are instrumental in fostering a truly inclusive educational environment.

In light of these findings, it becomes imperative for all in-service and pre-service educators to undergo comprehensive training that integrates intersectionality as a foundational principle of inclusive education. This involves revisiting and expanding the curriculum to incorporate dedicated lessons and practical experiences related to intersectionality, complementing the existing special education courses. Introducing new lessons specifically designed to engage with students with diverse needs ensures a more holistic and nuanced understanding among teachers.

Moreover, the significance of practical exposure through teaching practice in schools actively implementing inclusive education cannot be overstated. Real-world application solidifies theoretical knowledge and equips educators with the skills and insights needed to navigate the complexities of diverse classrooms. Therefore, initiatives to facilitate teaching practice in such inclusive settings should be prioritized, offering educators invaluable hands-on experience.

In conclusion, while the research uncovers positive sentiments, it also signals the need for a transformative approach to teacher preparation. By infusing intersectionality into the core of inclusive education training, we can strive towards a future where educators exhibit positive attitudes and a high degree of proficiency in creating genuinely inclusive learning environments for every student.

Bibliography:

- Avramidis, E., Bayliss, P., & Burden, R. (2000). Student teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of children with special educational needs in the ordinary school. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 16(3), 277–293. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X\(99\)00062-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(99)00062-1)
- Baeten, M., & Simons, M. (2014). Student teachers' team teaching: Models, effects, and conditions for implementation. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 41, 92–110.
- Bennett, S. (2009, January 1). Including students with exceptionalities. Retrieved June 16, 2014, from <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/inspire/research/bennett.pdf>
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory, and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1989(1), 139–167.
- Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241–1299.
- Collins, P. H. (2015). Intersectionality's definitional dilemmas. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 41(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-073014-112142>.
- Cooper, B. (2016). Intersectionality. In L. J. Disch & M. E. Hawkesworth (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of feminist theory* (pp. 385–407). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dash, N. (2006). Inclusive Education: Why Does it Matter? *Edutracks*, Vol.5 No. 11, July 2006. PP. 5 – 10
- de Boer, A., Pijl, S. J., & Minnaert, A. (2012). Students' attitudes towards peers with disabilities: A review of the literature. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 59(4), 379–392.
- Farrell, P., Dyson, A., Polat, F., Hutcheson, G., & Gallannaugh, F. (2007). SEN inclusion and pupil achievement in English schools. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 7(3), 172–178. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471>
- Feyerer, E. (2012). Der Umgang mit besonderen Bedürfnissen im Bildungswesen [Dealing with special needs in the education system]. <https://www.inklusion-online.net/index.php/inklusion-online/article/view/33>.
- García, S. B., & Ortiz, A. A. (2013). Intersectionality as a framework for transformative research in special education. *Multiple Voices for Ethnically Diverse Exceptional Learners*, 13(2), 32–47.
- Goley, B. W. (2013). Are School Administrators' and Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusion Influenced by the Change Process? (University of Louisville)
- Grant, C. A., & Zwier, E. (2011). Intersectionality and student outcomes: Sharpening the struggle against racism, sexism, classism, ableism, heterosexism, nationalism, and linguistic, religious, and geographical discrimination in teaching and learning. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 13(4), 181–188.
- Hancock, A. (2007). When multiplication doesn't equal quick addition: Examining intersectionality as a research paradigm. *Perspectives on Politics*, 5(1), 63–79.
- Hind, K., Larkin, R., & Dunn, A. K. (2019) Assessing Teacher Opinion on the Inclusion of Children with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties into Mainstream School Classes. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 66(4), 424-437.
- Janshala (2003): Perspectives in Special Needs Education in India: A Journey from Isolation to Inclusion. Available on www.un.org.in/janshala/janmar03/incluson.html-38k
- Kayi-Aydar, H., & Reinhardt, J. (Eds.). (2022). Language teacher development in digital contexts. *Language Learning & Technology*, 27(1), 1–4.
- Katz, J. (2012). *Teaching to diversity: The three-block model of universal design for learning*. Winnipeg, MB: Portage & Main Press

- Kozleski, E., Artiles, A., & Waitoller, F. (2014). Equity in inclusive education: A cultural historical comparative perspective. In L. Florian (Ed.), *The SAGE handbook of special education* (Vol. 2, pp. 231–249). London: SAGE Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446282236.n16>.
- Koruoglu, Nergiz & Ugulu, Ilker & Yorek, Nurettin. (2015). Investigation of High School Students' Environmental Attitudes in Terms of Some Demographic Variables. *Psychology*, 06. 1608-1623. 10.4236/psych.2015.613158.
- MHRD (2005): Action Plan for Inclusive Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities. Available on <http://www.education.nic.in>
- MHRD (2005): Statement of Minister of Human Resources Development in Rajya Sabha on March 21, 2005. Available on <http://www.education.nic.in/htmlweb/INCLUSIVE.html>
- Nash, J. C. (2008). Re-thinking intersectionality. *Feminist Review*, 89, 1–15.
- NCF (2005): National Curriculum Framework, NCERT, New Delhi, PP.79-89.
- NCERT (2006): Assessment of Needs for Inclusive Education: Asia Pacific Region. Available on http://ncert.nic.in/sites/inclusiveducation/inclusive_education.html
- NCERT (2006): Including Children and Youth with disabilities in Education, a Guide for Practitioners, Department of Education of Groups with Special Needs, National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi. Available on <http://ncert.nic.in>
- Reicher, H. (2010). Building inclusive education on social and emotional learning: Challenges and perspectives—A review. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 14(3), 213–246. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603110802504218>.
- Sanjeev, K., & Kumar, K. (2007). Inclusive Education in India, *Electronic Journal for Inclusive Education*, 2(2).
- Sanjeev. K. (2007): Feasibility of Inclusive Education In Knowledge economy of Bihar: Initiative and Perspective at higher Level, *Peoples Dialogue on Education*, Vol.1, No.1, January issue, pp.50-59.
- Sharma, B. (2011). *Inclusive Education Needs, Practices and Prospects*. New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers, Distributors
- Swart, Estelle & Engelbrecht, Petra & Eloff, Irma & Pettipher, Raine. (2002). Implementing inclusive education in South Africa: teachers' attitudes and experiences. *Acta Academica*, 34. 175-189.
- Ugulu, I. (2009). Determination of retention of students' knowledge and the effect of conceptual understanding. *Biotechnology & Biotechnological Equipment*, 23(1): 14-18.
- Ugulu, I., Yorek, N., Baslar, S. (2015). The effect of recycling education on high school students' conceptual understanding about ecology: A study on matter cycle. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 10(16): 2207-2215.
- UNESCO (2005). *Guidelines for inclusion: Ensuring access to education for all*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO (2009). *Policy guidelines on inclusion in education*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO IBE [International Bureau of Education] (2008). *Defining an inclusive education agenda: Reflections around the 48th session of the International Conference on Education*. Geneva: UNESCO IBE.
- Vazquez, M. F. (2010). *Inclusionary Practices: Impact of Administrators' beliefs on Placement Decisions* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Central Florida Orlando, Florida).