



## **Attitudes of Teachers Education Centres to Special Education Inclusion**

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### **Abstract**

The current tendency in special education is the pedagogy of inclusion. Teachers' views on inclusive education were analysed in connection to their age, gender, and degrees of job stress. Twenty-eight hundred and eighteen elementary and secondary school educators from five different prefectures in Greece participated in the study. For this study, we used a questionnaire about teachers' occupational stress to identify specific sources of stress in the classroom and the Opinions Relative to the Integration of Students with Disabilities (ORI) scale to investigate teachers' perspectives on including students with disabilities in regular classrooms. Independent factors included teachers' gender, age, and job strain. Some teachers, especially the older ones, had just somewhat favourable views toward inclusion. In particular, younger educators were more optimistic than their more senior colleagues. But there were no distinguishing characteristics between the sexes. Moreover, elevated stress levels were noted, and the sources of that stress were identified. Additionally, negative views toward inclusive education were linked to higher levels of occupational stress among instructors.

**Keywords:** inclusive education; teachers' attitudes; teachers' occupational stress

### **Introduction**

Over the last several decades, a shift toward inclusive education has radically altered how students with various types of impairments are educated. The desire for education for all was addressed in the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994), which sought to do so by making mainstream education accessible to all pupils. This Statement argues that public schools with an inclusive orientation work to eliminate prejudice, build welcoming communities, and pave the way for a more accepting and equitable society for everyone. Each kid has unique traits, passions, skills, and educational requirements, and it's important to focus on those positives rather than dwell on any weaknesses. Instead of forcing children to fit the mould of the current educational system, schools should tailor their programmes to the individual requirements of their students. It is debatable whether or not the established and executed integration of various student groups in Greece has been successful. Greek law mandates several different approaches to mainstreaming students with disabilities and special educational needs, including (a) having the general education teacher support the student in conjunction with the state Center for Differential Diagnosis, Diagnosis, and Support (KE.D.D.Y. ), (b) having the general education teacher support the student in conjunction with a special educator in cases of more severe special educational needs, and (c) having the student attend the Special Integration cl. However, there is a sizable population of pupils that are sent to special schools since it is believed that they cannot be met by traditional educational programmes. It is quite clear that institutional adjustments are required before kids with special needs may be properly served in regular classrooms. However, it seems that teachers' engagement is crucial to the success of inclusive education. Educators' actions, methods, theoretical frameworks, and pedagogical techniques all have a significant impact on whether or not the integration succeeds.



### **Teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education**

Research on educators' perspectives has been conducted in almost every advanced nation. Numerous studies show that educators are hesitant and fearful to execute integration policy, even when it is mandated at the state level. The vast majority of educators have either indifferent or unfavourable views about inclusive education on average, instructors had a somewhat unfavourable attitude toward inclusive education. The educators who took part in their research were undecided on whether or not students with impairments should be included in regular classes. On the other hand, there have been a number of studies that show that instructors may have anywhere from somewhat favourable views to very positive ones: Teachers' resistance to universal inclusion and suggestions of targeted instruction for marginalised student populations belie a more nuanced picture of their support for inclusive education. Recent research has corroborated the results of the aforementioned literature study. Furthermore, some studies demonstrate that the implementation of inclusive education in reality, where the role of the state is predominating, may be very different from the agreement of instructors with the concept of integration in theory and their readiness to educate these kids. Teachers' apprehension may be a result of the low government funding, which results in shortfalls in staff and equipment. Teachers' doubts in their own abilities and in the suitability of schools to provide an inclusive learning environment can have a negative role. Some educators, however, claim that their schools are effectively implementing inclusion strategies and have a very positive outlook on the topic.

### **Factors influencing the attitudes of teachers**

According to the research done so far, there are a number of factors that contribute to the diversity of educators' perspectives. In all of our inquiries, we strictly monitor two critical demographics: gender and age. When compared to males, women tend to express more optimistic views. The most optimistic views on inclusion come from the youngest and oldest educators. There are, however, a number of studies that can't pinpoint any age or gender disparities among their subjects. Teachers' tolerance increases as they gain knowledge, and having worked with children who have impairments in the past seems to be the deciding factor in whether or not they have a positive outlook. It indicates that instructors' familiarity with students with disabilities is aided by the adoption of an inclusive practise or by just coming into touch with such students. Teachers who have received training in Special Education are more likely to have an open mind towards including their students in mainstream classrooms. Teachers of younger students tend to have more upbeat perspectives, whereas those of older students tend to have more negative ones. Teachers' self-efficacy has also been connected to how their students regard them, as those with higher levels of confidence in their own abilities tend to be more upbeat about their profession. Researchers also use instructors' willingness as a separate variable to examine how they think. In particular, students who have a favourable impression of their professors are more likely to persevere through challenging situations and accept even the harshest of interventions. Teachers' perspectives on workplace stress have been the subject of limited, secondary research. Sukbunpant, interviews as part of their research, and they found that stress was a common reason given for not enacting inclusiveness. Negative views about integration may be traced back to the added stress of accommodating a kid with special needs in a mainstream classroom, as well as the lack of cooperation from parents. They used a teacher stress scale based on Galloway's to find no statistically significant link between perceptions and actual stress levels.

**Teachers' occupational stress** at work is an issue in many fields, but it's especially severe for educators. When teachers feel negative emotions like anger, worry, emotional tension, irritation, or despair because of work, they are said to be experiencing occupational stress. Teachers in both regular



and special education settings have been the subject of research on their stress levels and the sources of that stress in a wide range of nations.

### **Occupational stress in the implementation of inclusive education**

The potential sources of tension for educators who are tasked with bringing inclusive education into their classrooms. The majority of teachers are worried about how to handle children with impairments and the rest of the class at the same time, according to studies. Teachers' worries were shown in a variety of ways, but time constraints, student behaviour difficulties, and how peers treated a student with a disability were all very telling. Many educators also reported feeling overwhelmed by a lack of preparation for dealing with problems of inclusion and special education. Nearly nine out of ten respondents expressed doubt that the training was tailored to the specific requirements of students with disabilities. However, teacher stress levels remained quite low, and it indicated that those with prior experience or training in the integration process found that having such background greatly reduced their stress levels.

### **Comparison of occupational stress for teachers of special and general school**

Numerous studies have looked at the stress experienced by special educators on the job, with an emphasis on distinguishing their experience from that of general education instructors. According to Lazarus's (2006) research, special educators face moderate to low levels of stress compared to instructors in regular classrooms. Organizational factors, such a lack of knowledge about how the crisis was being handled, insufficient oversight, and a lack of teamwork among co-workers, were identified as major drivers of stress. However, educating kids with exceptional needs reduced their stress expression. Those who had previously worked with pupils who needed more support reported feeling less stressed. This was ascribed to the fact that special education teachers in Greece had a more flexible curriculum and lower-class sizes than their regular education counterparts. Pepe and looked at the strain that comes from dealing with the difficult behaviours of certain elementary school kids. The findings showed that 'externalising behaviours' were viewed as the most stressful by 80% of general instructors whereas only 57% of special education teachers felt the same way. The second group consisted of weak character, high-needs kids. It's important to remember that in Italy, kids with impairments are fully integrated into regular classes, thus the varying needs of the many specialists working in the same space account for the observed variations.

### **Conclusion**

Disabled students' educational experiences have been revolutionised by the advent of inclusive education. To address the need for education for all, the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) was drafted. The results of Greece's efforts to integrate its diverse student body remain debatable. It seems that teachers' engagement is crucial to the success of inclusive education. Several studies have shown that the gap between teachers' theoretical support for inclusive education and their actual desire to educate kids with special needs may be rather large. Teachers' apprehension may be a result of the low government funding, which results in shortfalls in staff and equipment. For example, educators who have received specialised training in the education of kids with special needs are more likely to be patient and understanding with their pupils with disabilities. Researchers have looked at how teachers see stress in the workplace. the elements that may create stress to teachers in the implementation of inclusive education, however there is no statistically significant association between perceptions and the degree of stress experienced. The majority of teachers are worried about how to handle children



with impairments and the rest of the class at the same time, according to studies. Stress levels were much lower among those who had prior experience with and proper training for the integration process. Researchers in 2006 found that special education instructors had greater levels of stress than their general education counterparts, but still suffered low to moderate levels of stress. Those who have worked with kids who had impairments reported feeling less stressed in an Italian research. This is because special education teachers in Greece work with smaller classrooms and have greater leeway in designing lessons.

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