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TEACHERS' CHALLENGES AND ADAPTIVE PRACTICES IN IMPLEMENTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: EVIDENCE FROM PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN SINDH, PAKISTAN

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Abstract
With the evolution of the concept of inclusive education in order to provide equal opportunities for education to all students irrespective of their differences, there is no denying that the approach is becoming one of the most important trends in the field of education. Although there have been efforts from the policies' side to incorporate inclusive practices in Pakistan, implementing inclusive education in Pakistani public schools poses some challenges. This research will focus on exploring the challenges teachers face during the implementation of inclusive education in Sindh public schools, Pakistan. The current research followed an empirical methodology involving the adoption of a mixed methods research design for analyzing teachers' experiences and difficulties associated with implementing inclusive education in public school settings in Sindh province, Pakistan. In this context, a convergent parallel design was adopted whereby quantitative data as well as qualitative data were collected simultaneously, analyzed separately, and then merged to offer an in-depth analysis of the research question. Quantitative data were collected using a questionnaire survey tool targeting public school teachers, while qualitative data were obtained via semi-structured interviews conducted among selected respondents. The quantitative data analysis involved the use of statistical tools such as inferential statistics, while qualitative data were subject to content analysis. Results indicated that there were various challenges for teachers in practicing inclusive education. Some of the challenges reported by teachers included lack of professional training, lack of instructional materials for special needs students, overpopulation of classes, lack of administrative support, lack of parental participation, and lack of school facilities that could cater to the needs of the special education learners. Additionally, teachers faced problems of meeting the diverse learning needs of all the students because of a lack of skills and support from other professionals. Notwithstanding the presence of the above mentioned challenges, teachers used different strategies to cope with the issues. The coping strategies used by teachers included adopting different instructional methods, participating in peer consultation, pursuing professional development activities, implementing differentiation strategies, and communicating with parents and school administrators. The research adds to the existing literature base related to inclusive education in Pakistan with its findings on the experiences of public school teachers in Sindh. It presents the practical difficulties that the teachers encounter during the process of inclusive education along with their

coping mechanisms which help them implement inclusive education effectively. The research provides an important contribution in the policymaking efforts of the stakeholders concerned with formulating measures that enhance the quality of inclusive education in the public education system of Sindh.

INTRODUCTION

Inclusion has emerged as one of the most significant educational reforms in the twenty-first century and increasingly becomes perceived as a basic human right. The notion of inclusive education is based on the ideas of equity, social justice, and equal participation and implies the necessity of providing quality education for all individuals irrespective of disability, socioeconomic background, race, language, gender, or other characteristics in general educational contexts (Jardinez & Natividad, 2024; Wider et al., 2026). The principles of international policy documents, such as Salamanca Statement, UNCRPD, and SDG 4, emphasize the worldwide commitment to building inclusive and equitable education systems. Recent researchers point out that inclusion does not imply the physical integration of individuals with disabilities in mainstream classes but rather refers to the transformation of educational cultures, policies, and practices in order to provide opportunities for diverse learners' participation and success (Atanasova & Papen, 2026; Wider et al., 2026).

During the past two decades, governments around the world have adopted policies meant to enhance inclusive education. However, the adoption and implementation of inclusive education is still inconsistent from country to country. While the adoption of such policies has been on the increase, the translation of these policies into practice has remained a challenge. There is consistent evidence that teachers are the key stakeholders in the implementation of inclusive education due to their direct influence on the learning process of the learners (Burak et al., 2026; Mazzuki, 2026).

Multiple problems associated with the introduction of inclusive education have been revealed in international studies. Such problems include unpreparedness of teachers professionally and insufficiently specialized training, unavailability of adequate instructional materials, overcrowding, lack of access to relevant support services, rigidness of the curriculum, and insufficient administrative support (Chitiyo, Motitswe, & Taole, 2026; White & Fletcher, 2026). New findings from varied educational environments show that teachers face problems associated with uncertainties in regard to adapting instruction and managing classes when they teach students with varying needs (Utami, 2026; Burak et al., 2026). Similar issues have been identified in various countries regardless of their development, which proves the presence of a global nature of the problem. Further research carried out in South Africa, Indonesia, Europe, and other regions confirms that teacher preparedness and availability of appropriate resources remain essential factors for success (Chitiyo et al., 2026; Utami, 2026).

In spite of all these challenges, however, teachers are found to show high levels of resilience and adaptation in their endeavors to make classrooms inclusive. There is much evidence in the existing literature which shows that teachers adopt several strategies for adapting to their educational context in order to meet learners' varying needs. These include differentiated instruction, collaboration, peer assistance, flexible management, individualization, and creative utilization of resources (Ghanamah & Masri, 2026; White & Fletcher, 2026). All these allow teachers to cater to learners' needs in the presence of contextual constraints. Besides, studies have found that good coping and adaptation mechanisms can help neutralize the negative impact of resource constraints in education (Irshad & Amjad, 2026; Ghanamah & Masri, 2026).

The current trend in scholarly literature on inclusive education has been towards the need to study the resilience and adaptation among teachers in the process of inclusion. Previous literature has mainly concentrated on obstacles and deficiencies in relation to teachers being passive recipients of policies in inclusion settings. Recent literature on the topic has taken a different

perspective which advocates for viewing teachers as active players who negotiate and cope with inclusion difficulties (Atanasova & Papen, 2026; White & Fletcher, 2026). Such understanding becomes especially relevant when considering that the process of sustaining inclusion can only be possible under resource-poor conditions. Therefore, the call has been made for greater interest in the ways teachers cope with their challenges.

The issues that come with implementing inclusive education are even more serious in developing nations where there are structural limitations in the education system like poor funding, lack of proper infrastructure, lack of specialized manpower, and inadequate professional development (Chitiyo et al., 2026). In most of the developing nations, schools are not able to provide services required for inclusive learning and therefore leave more work on the teachers of the classroom.

Issues of teacher readiness, access to resources, and policies have always been consistent in studies undertaken in the developing world (Utami, 2026; Chitiyo et al., 2026).

There have been efforts by the government of Pakistan in embracing inclusive education through several policies and international commitments to it. Nonetheless, there exist several barriers to inclusive education in the public education sector of the country. There have been studies that reveal some of the major barriers such as poor preparation of teachers in dealing with diversity, unawareness of teaching methods suitable for diverse learners, physical inaccessibility of schools, poor instruction materials, and lack of institutional support among others (Jardinez & Natividad, 2024; Chitiyo et al., 2026). Moreover, many teachers admit being poorly prepared to handle diverse learners in mainstream classes (Burak et al., 2026; Mazzuki, 2026).

In the country of Pakistan, there are some specific situations in the province of Sindh that make it relevant for the investigation of inclusive education issues. In particular, Sindh represents significant diversity in terms of language, culture, economic status, and educational resources.

There are still inequalities in public schools in the province related to school infrastructure, training of teachers, and availability of special services. On the one hand, the policies of the province and the country provide for inclusive educational approaches; on the other hand, the practical situation looks quite differently.

Though there has been an increase in the number of studies concerning inclusive education in Pakistan over the past few years, there are still some notable gaps. The existing literature on this topic mainly revolves around teachers' attitude towards inclusion, implementation issues, preparedness, or perceived barriers (Burak et al., 2026; Utami, 2026). Much less attention has been devoted to researching the coping strategies used by teachers when facing certain problems implementing inclusion in their everyday professional activities. Furthermore, there is a lack of research investigating teachers' perceptions and coping strategies at the same time in public schools of Sindh province.

It is important to fill this gap in theory and practice. Theoretically, studying teachers' difficulties along with how they cope with these difficulties leads to a better understanding of teacher agency, resilience, and inclusive teaching (Atanasova & Papen, 2026; Ghanamah & Masri, 2026). Practically, this evidence will help policymakers, school administrators, and teacher educators develop relevant interventions to overcome the barriers of implementation and increase the competence of teachers. Understanding of teachers' experiences in Sindh can also add to international debates on inclusive education implementation in developing countries.

Consequently, the current research intends to investigate the perceived problems of teachers and coping mechanisms used in practicing inclusive education at public schools in the province of Sindh in Pakistan. Through investigating not only the hurdles faced by teachers but also the adaptive approaches used by them, the current research hopes to make a contribution to the international literature on inclusive education.

Objectives

1:To identify the major challenges faced by

teachers in promoting inclusive education in government schools in Sindh, Pakistan.
2:To explore the coping mechanisms employed by teachers in managing learning diversity in inclusive classrooms.
3:To explore the implications of these challenges and coping mechanisms on teaching efficiency and learning achievements.
4:To offer useful recommendations for improving teachers' support and training in promoting inclusive education in Sindh.

Literature Review

Inclusive Education

Inclusive education is a global educational movement for educational reform to provide equal opportunities for all students to learn and participate in the classroom regardless of their disabilities, socio-economic background, gender, or their learning abilities. Inclusive education is supported by the philosophy of inclusion, which promotes the principles of participation, equity, and social justice in the classroom. In the context of international educational discourses, it is agreed upon that "inclusive education aims to break down the barriers to learning and participation and to recognize diversity in the learner as an educational strength rather than weakness." Inclusive education is also supported by the fact that its success is largely dependent upon teachers, as teachers act as the primary agents in the implementation of the policy of inclusion in the classroom (Muneer et al., 2024).
The case is quite the same in developing countries such as Pakistan, as the concept of inclusive education is in its developing stages. Though the policy is in support of inclusion, its implementation is not without its challenges.
The concept of inclusive education is based on the principles of equality, human rights, and social participation. The transformative learning theory states that inclusive education helps teachers and students develop critical thinking, empathy, and collaborative learning environments, which lead to empowerment. Inclusive classrooms cultivate the acceptance of diversity, facilitating the holistic development of students (Saleem et al., 2024) .
However, it requires significant changes in the philosophy, curriculum, classroom management, and assessment. The teachers need to develop the skill of differentiated instruction, individualized learning, and collaborative teaching to accommodate the needs of students. It becomes difficult for teachers to develop such skills without training.
In Pakistan, inclusive education has officially been recognized in the educational policy; however, it has yet to be implemented in a consistent manner. According to research findings, it has been observed that teacher education programs in Pakistan are not sufficient for inclusive education. Even though higher education authorities have recommended that inclusive education be included in teacher education programs, only a few universities have included inclusive education in their curriculum (Khurshid & Farooq, 2024).
As a result of such a lack of education inclusive education, teachers often view inclusive education as an added burden rather than a feasible education approach. Research findings based on inclusive education in inclusive schools in Pakistan have also shown that inclusive education faces many obstacles in society, such as a lack of awareness and commitment to inclusive education.
Inclusive education has also been considered a stigmatized concept in society, especially in public schools where facilities are scarce (Kamran et al., 2024).

Teachers' Perceived Challenges in Inclusive Education

1. Lack of Professional Training

The most frequently cited barrier to inclusive education is a lack of professional training among teachers. Teachers may feel incapable of handling a variety of cognitive, behavioral, and physical abilities among their pupils. An empirical research on teachers' perceptions in Pakistan found professional training, instruction, assessment strategies, and collaboration to be key developmental needs for teachers to effectively teach in an inclusive education system (Kalsoom & Masood, 2024) .
Moreover, according to global literature, a lack of pedagogical training results in low teacher confidence and poor instructional strategies in an

inclusive education system.

2. Limited Resources and Infrastructure

Another important barrier to inclusive education is a lack of necessary training materials, assistive technology, and classroom support services. Inclusive education requires special training materials, aids, and facilities. However, public schools face a scarcity of training
materials, aids, and facilities. For instance, public schools in Pakistan face a scarcity of training materials, aids, and facilities (Kaji & Dutta, 2026) .

This scarcity may be more pronounced in public schools in Sindh, particularly in view of a scarcity of funding, a high student-teacher ratio, and infrastructural inequalities.

3. Difficulties in Managing the Classroom

Teachers experience difficulties in managing diverse students in an inclusive classroom setting. Students with behavioral problems, emotional problems, and communication problems require individual attention, which often disrupts normal classroom routines. According to studies on inclusive classrooms, it was found that students with emotional-behavioral problems and communication problems impact the delivery of curriculum significantly (Shilvani et al., 2024) .

Teachers often experience difficulties in balancing curriculum completion with individual attention to students with problems, resulting in teacher burnout.

4. Curriculum Adaptation and Assessment Difficulties

In an inclusive classroom, curriculum adaptation is often seen as a difficulty because traditional curricula were developed with homogeneous classrooms in mind. Curriculum adaptation in an inclusive classroom often requires teachers to be flexible in assessment and learning outcomes. Teachers often feel that curriculum adaptation is a difficulty because they do not have enough autonomy in curriculum adaptation.

5. Attitudinal and Social Barriers

Teacher attitude, parental attitude, and social factors play an important role in inclusive education. Teachers may initially have reservations due to an increased workload, academic performance, and administrative support.

A study carried out in Pakistan emphasizes that there is a need to promote awareness and collaborative school culture to enhance teacher attitude toward inclusion (Kamran et al., 2024)

Coping Strategies Adopted by Teachers

In spite of many barriers and hindrances, teachers do implement many strategies to cope with inclusive education.

1. Differentiated Instruction

Teachers often make changes in content, teaching processes, and learning products to accommodate diverse learners in an inclusive classroom. This strategy allows teachers to make changes in their teaching processes as per students' capabilities and learning styles (Shilvani et al., 2024) .

2. Collaboration and Peer Support

Collaboration among teachers, special educators, parents, and school administration is an important strategy adopted by teachers to cope with inclusive education. Teachers often team up with other teachers and special educators to share the burden of teaching and make learning more effective. Studies emphasize collaborative relationships as an important factor in inclusive education (Kalsoom & Masood, 2024) .

According to studies on inclusive classrooms, it was found that rigid assessment systems and standardized curriculum delivery impact inclusive classroom delivery significantly because teachers feel compelled to complete the curriculum rather than focus on learning outcomes.

3. Professional Development and Self-Learning

Teachers may also practice informal learning strategies such as workshops, peer mentoring, and reflective teaching to make up for inadequate formal training. Teachers benefit from continuous professional development in terms of increased confidence and teaching effectiveness.

Transformative learning strategies empower

teachers to think and act in a way that promotes inclusive teaching strategies that foster social justice and equity among students (Saleem et al., 2024).

4. Building Positive Teacher-Student Relationships

Emotional connections between teachers and students have been cited as effective in curbing students' behavior and promoting inclusion. Teachers build positive relationships with students, and this allows students with special learning needs to participate in learning activities more effectively (Muneer et al., 2024) .

5. Instructional Flexibility and Remedial Support

Teachers provide remedial teaching and flexible teaching strategies to cater to slow-learning students and students with learning disabilities. This allows teachers to manage their classes despite structural limitations (Khalid, 2018) .

Theoretical Perspective Supporting Teachers' Coping Strategies

Inclusive education is more aligned with social constructivist theory and transformative learning theory, which emphasize cooperative learning and knowledge construction. Teachers' coping strategies are a reflection of adaptive professional behavior, which is a result of contextual challenges. Transformative learning theory encourages teachers to be more open to alternative teaching strategies and develop more inclusive learning strategies.

In addition, resilience theory indicates that teachers' coping strategies contribute to their professional sustainability in a challenging learning context.

Research Gap in the Context of Sindh, Pakistan

Although there is a wealth of international literature on inclusive education, there is a lack of empirical research conducted specifically on public schools in the Sindh region. Existing research conducted in Pakistan mostly focuses on policy perspectives and teacher training aspects rather than exploring the experiences of teachers.

In addition, most of the literature focuses on urban private schools and higher education institutions, creating a gap with regard to rural schools and government schools where the learning context is more challenging. It is imperative to understand the perception of teachers in the Sindh region to contextualize the concept of inclusive education.

Significance of Investigating Teachers' Perceptions

Teachers' perceptions can impact teachers' behavior, classroom environment, and consequently, learner outcomes. Investigating teachers' perceptions of challenges can aid policymakers in identifying systemic shortcomings, and examining teachers' perceptions of coping strategies can help policymakers identify strategies being implemented by teachers.

This research can contribute to: Enhancing teacher trainingprograms,Strengthening institutional support systems, Guiding inclusive policy implementation, Enhancing education equity in Pakistan.

Conclusion

From the literature, it is evident that inclusive education is a widely accepted transformative approach to ensuring education equity; however, it is also evident that teachers' preparedness, institutional support, and teachers' coping strategies can impact its success. Teachers face a variety of challenges such as training, resource, classroom management, curriculum, and socio-cultural barriers. Despite teachers' perceptions of overwhelming barriers to inclusive education implementation, teachers use a variety of coping strategies such as differentiated instruction, collaboration, professional development, and building relationships to ensure inclusive education implementation.

Further research is needed to explore teachers' perceptions in public schools in Pakistan, particularly in Sindh province, to understand teachers' experiences in inclusive education implementation. Investigating teachers' perceptions of challenges and coping strategies can aid policymakers in ensuring teachers' meaningful involvement in inclusive education

implementation.

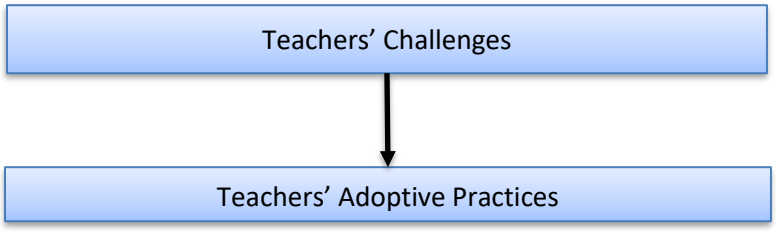
Conceptual Framework

This research assumes that the process of implementing inclusive education depends on the obstacles faced by teachers as well as adaptive actions to deal with them. Based on Transformative Learning Theory and Resilience Theory, the framework assumes that teachers experience in inclusive classrooms are determined by contextual, institutional and pedagogical conditions. On the other hand, teachers exhibit agency and resilience in the way they utilize certain coping mechanisms to ensure participation and learning for all students.

In the proposed framework, the perceived challenges of teachers will be the independent construct. Some of the challenges include lack of professional training for teachers, lack of teaching aids, crowded classrooms, rigid curriculum, poor infrastructure, workload pressures, among others. The challenges above can hinder the process of implementing inclusive education as well as teachers' efforts to meet different learning needs of students.

To counter the challenges above, teachers use adaptive practices which work as mediating mechanisms. Some of the coping mechanisms include differentiated instruction, collaboration with other teachers, peer support mechanisms, participating in professional development programs, flexibility in managing classrooms, modification of teaching/learning activities, and utilization of locally available materials.

In addition, the model postulates that coping mechanisms play an important part in determining success in inclusion because successful inclusion is characterized by better involvement of students, equality in the learning process, positive environment in the classroom, and more efficient teaching practices. Inclusion would be supported by the help from institutions through training and other policies.



Methodology

This study has utilized the mixed-methods convergent parallel research design to investigate the perceived challenges and coping strategies of teachers in the implementation of inclusive education in public schools of Sindh, Pakistan. Quantitative data were collected through structured questionnaires among about 150 teachers using the multistage sampling technique, while the findings were complemented through the collection of qualitative data through interviews among 15–20 teachers using the purposive sampling technique. Quantitative data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics, while the findings were complemented through the thematic analysis of the interview data. The integration of both quantitative and qualitative findings would provide the validity of the research, along with the comprehensive understanding of the implementation of inclusive education.

Philosophical stance

The research adopted **a pragmatic philosophy**. This philosophy focuses on the selection of appropriate research methodologies based on their

practicality in solving educational problems in real-life contexts, rather than being based on any other single tradition of thought.

Pragmatism is also useful in ensuring that both quantitative and qualitative data are used in studying inclusive education in such contexts. Recent educational research indicates pragmatism as an emerging paradigm in mixed-methods research due to its problem-centered and flexible nature (Dube et al., 2024; Foster, 2023). This philosophy helped in understanding the challenges facing teachers and coping mechanisms in complex contexts (Schoonenboom et al., 2024).

Research Design

This study used **a mixed-methods approach** in its research design in order to understand teachers' perceived challenges and coping mechanisms in implementing inclusive education in public schools in Sindh, Pakistan. Mixed-methods research combines both quantitative and qualitative aspects in order to obtain a comprehensive view of complex educational issues (John W. Creswell & Vicki L. Plano Clark, 2018). As inclusive education is multifaceted in its social, institutional, and pedagogical aspects, it cannot be explored using only one methodological approach. Therefore, using both numerical and experiential aspects enabled in-depth exploration of the subject.

This study used convergent parallel mixed-methods design. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected, analyzed, and then synthesized in order to validate findings.

Quantitative Population and Sampling

sampling

The **quantitative phase** of this study aimed at teachers who teach in public schools that practice inclusive education in Sindh, Pakistan. The population for this study included primary and secondary teachers who worked in government schools that catered to students with special educational needs. A **multistage sampling technique** was used in this study. The technique selected the districts for this study, then selected schools through random selection, and finally selected teachers through convenience sampling. A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 88 complete responses received and used for analysis. This number was sufficient for representing teachers statistically (John W. Creswell & Vicki L. Plano Clark, 2018; R. Burke Johnson & Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, 2020).

Qualitative population and sampling

The **Qualitative Phase** targeted teachers who had hands-on experience in the implementation of inclusive education in public schools in Sindh, Pakistan. The target population includes primary and secondary school teachers who instruct diverse learners. A **Purposive Sampling Technique** was utilized to recruit "information-rich" participants who could provide in-depth understanding of the challenges they experience and their coping mechanisms. Around 15-20 teachers were targeted to be interviewed using the **semi-structured interview technique**, which would provide in-depth understanding of their experiences. This is in line with the principles of qualitative research (Yvonna S. Lincoln & Egon G. Guba, 1985; Johnny Saldaña, 2021).

Research Instruments

The study used two research instruments, which were appropriate for the proposed mixed-methods design. For the quantitative component, a **structured questionnaire** was designed on the basis of literature on inclusive education to measure teachers' perceived challenges, support, and coping using a five-point Likert scale. For the qualitative component, **semi-structured interview protocols** were used to assess teachers' experience, belief, and coping in an inclusive education setting. The use of both quantitative and qualitative methods in the study provided depth, rigor, and comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of interest (John W. Creswell & Vicki L. Plano Clark, 2018; Johnny Saldaña, 2021).

Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire

The validity and reliability of the questionnaire were ensured by several methods. **Content validity**: The experts in the area of inclusive

education and educational research were consulted to assess the relevance and clarity of the questionnaire. The pilot study was carried out with 20 teachers. **Construct validity:** The questionnaire was found to be consistent with the frameworks of inclusive education. The reliability of the questionnaire was ensured by calculating the value of, which **Cronbach's alpha coefficient** was above **0.70**. Thus, the reliability and validity of the questionnaire were established. According to Lee J. Cronbach (1951), Rensis Likert (1932), and John W. Creswell (2018), the value of the reliability coefficient should be above 0.70.

Data Collection Procedure

Quantitative Data Collection

The process of **quantitative data collection** took place after seeking formal permission from educational authorities and school administrations. Questionnaires were sent to selected teachers in public schools in both hard copy and online formats. This ensured maximum data collection. The teachers were made aware of the purpose of the research, and consent was obtained before proceeding with data collection. The questionnaires were filled in during school hours to ensure maximum convenience for the participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured during data collection. This is in line with standard survey research methodologies (John W. Creswell & Vicki L. Plano Clark, 2018; Earl Babbie, 2021).

Qualitative Data Collection

The **qualitative data collection** process consisted of conducting semi-structured interviews with 15-20 purposively selected teachers who have direct experience in implementing inclusive education in public schools of Sindh. The interviews were carried out either personally or virtually and lasted around 30-40 minutes each. The process was recorded with the participants' permission. The data collected was then transcribed. Ethical considerations were strictly maintained during the data collection process. Confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation were the ethical considerations maintained during the data collection process. The process was carried out according to the ethical considerations of Yvonna S. Lincoln & Egon G. Guba (1985); Johnny Saldaña (2021).

Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative data analysis process involved coding and inputting the survey data into a statistical package for further systematic analysis. Descriptive statistics were used in the form of frequency distributions, percentages, means, and standard deviations to describe teachers' perceptions of challenges and coping strategies. Inferential statistics were used in the form of independent samples t-tests and ANOVA to assess differences in teachers' perceptions according to demographic variables, i.e., teaching experience, qualification, and school location. This method assisted in identifying patterns, relationships, and trends in the data, which provided quantified insights into implementing inclusive education (John W. Creswell & Vicki L. Plano Clark, 2018; R. Burke Johnson & Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, 2020).

Qualitative Data Analysis

For the **qualitative data analysis**, **thematic analysis** was used in interpreting teachers' experiences and coping mechanisms in inclusive education. The interview data was analyzed by repeatedly reading the interview transcripts in order to observe patterns. The coding of the interview data was done in three ways: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. The themes that were developed were training, class sizes, resource availability, and strategies. This method enabled richer understandings of the data, which is also known as qualitative data (Johnny Saldaña, 2021; Yvonna S. Lincoln & Egon G. Guba, 1985).

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

The **integration of quantitative and qualitative findings** was done during the interpretation phase of the research process in order to attain methodological triangulation and arrive at an in-depth understanding of the implementation of inclusive education. Quantitative findings

revealed general trends and patterns in the challenges and coping mechanisms faced by teachers, while the results of the qualitative data provided in-depth information by unveiling the experiences and coping mechanisms of the participants. The comparison and synthesis of quantitative and qualitative findings revealed the converging, diverging, and complementary aspects of the results, which made the findings more credible and richer in nature, and the statistical trends were explained in an effective manner through the experiences of the participants (John W. Creswell & Vicki L. Plano Clark, 2018; R. Burke Johnson & Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, 2020; Schoonenboom, J., 2024).

Ethical consideration

The study was conducted in accordance with strict **ethical considerations,** and the rights of the participants were respected. The teachers were well informed about the purpose of the study, and **informed consent** was sought before the study. Confidentiality and anonymity of the participants were maintained by ensuring that personal identifiers were removed from the data sets. The participants were free to withdraw from the study at any time. The study also sought approval from the relevant authorities in the educational field, ensuring that the study was conducted in accordance with international and national laws and regulations (Orb, A., 2001; Saunders, M., 2019; Resnik, D.B., 2020).

Joint Display of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Quantitative Findings	Supporting Qualitative Theme(s)	Integrated (Meta) Inference
Teacher's perceived lack of parental involvement as a greatest challenge (M=4.18)	Theme 6: Community and Parental Challenges showed that parents were not willing to take their disabled children to school because of stigmatization and culture. There were also cases where teachers conducted community awareness campaigns and counseling.	Results reveal the reason for the high challenge score attributed to parent participation. This is because stigma in the community and lack of parent awareness hinder family participation, showing that inclusive education needs strong comm Qualitative unity-school links.
Shortage of teaching material (M = 3.91) and Inadequate physical infrastructure (M = 3.42) were major barriers	Theme 8: Resource and Infrastructure Requirements pointed out deficiencies in assistive devices, ramp facilities, resource rooms, and materials for inclusive education. Teachers stressed the importance of increased government spending in this regard.	Inadequate resources and infrastructure emerge as significant obstacles that stand in the way of successful inclusive education in public school environments, according to both sets of data.

Large class size (M = 3.66) teacher workload (M=3.55), and limited time for individual attention (M=3.44) hindered inclusion.	Theme 5: Implementation Issues involved overcrowding, multigrading, high workload, and lack of time to accommodate individual differences among learners.	The qualitative data explains the numerical data by revealing that the classroom situation limits teachers' ability to offer personalized teaching.
Teacher reported Moderately high use of coping strategies, including create use of local recourses (M = 4.28), adapting activities (M = 4.19), peer assistance (M = 4.18), and collaboration (M = 4.15).	Theme 3: Classroom Practices for Inclusion and Theme 7: Collaboration and Support Networks talked about differentiated teaching, peer tutoring, cooperative learning, activity-based learning, and collaboration with fellow teachers and parents.	Qualitative evidence proves that teachers use inclusive teaching strategies irrespective of the contexts, showing their professionalism and flexibility in teaching practice.
Teachers reported engaging in professional development (M = 4.12), but institutional training support received only moderate ratings (M=3.23).	Theme 2: Professional Development and Capacity Building also showed that teachers valued the training provided by SELD, PITE, UNICEF, HANDS, and SPO; however, they felt that these trainings were not long enough to develop their competencies.	Although teachers are always on the lookout for opportunities for professional development, it was found through qualitative data analysis that current programs need to be of longer duration
Institutional support was perceived as Moderate, particularly regarding school management support (M = 3.45), teaching resources (M = 3.49), and government initiatives (M = 3.55).	Insufficient administrative support, absence of specialists, limited resources, and collaboration between stakeholders were stressed in Themes 5, 7, and 8.	Both databases reveal that even though there is some institutional support, there is still a need for better implementation of policy, administration involvement, and resource management.
Teachers adjusted instruction according to learner's needs (M = 4.10) and practiced differentiated teaching (M = 3.98).	Themes 3 and 4 discussed learner-centered instruction, learning through activities, performance assessment, differentiated instruction, and strategies for disabled students.	The findings from the qualitative analysis complement the quantitative data by showing how teachers apply the principles of inclusion in their teaching practices.

Communication with parents received the lowest coping strategy score (M = 3.67).	Theme 6: Community & Parental Challenges highlighted that teachers faced parental resistance, stigma against disability, and lack of community awareness.	This relatively low quantitative score reflects the challenges that teachers face while working with parents, especially in rural areas where there are misconceptions about disability.
Teachers perceived inadequate specialized personnel and inclusion related training (M = 3.23).	Themes 2, 5, and (theme 10 Recommendations for Enhancing Inclusive Education) emphasized the importance of continuous mentoring, specialization, additional staffing, and more extensive professional development.	The two datasets clearly indicate the need for professional development along with the involvement of specialists in increasing teacher readiness

Meta-Inference (Interpretation/Conclusion of the Joint Display)

The combination of quantitative and qualitative findings illustrates significant similarities between both datasets. The main barriers to the implementation of inclusive education, according to the quantitative data, include parental participation, lack of learning resources, overcrowded classes, low level of professional preparation, and insufficient institutional support. Qualitative findings provided more detail about these barriers and showed that they were caused by the impact of community discrimination, lack of training, insufficient infrastructure, overload, and limited administrative support. At the same time, both datasets illustrated that teachers used various inclusive techniques, such as differentiated instruction, peer tutoring, collaborative teaching, and flexible use of available resources. From this point, the contribution of teachers to the promotion of inclusive education is significant; however, only their dedication and flexible approaches are not sufficient for the successful implementation of inclusive education. Inclusive education needs additional support from institutions in the form of professional development, resources, support from administration, collaboration with community, and policy development by the government. Thus, qualitative findings help to clarify quantitative data on the issue.

Discussion and Conclusion

Results of the present study show that there are various obstacles teachers encounter in their efforts to apply an inclusive education approach in public schools. One of the significant obstacles identified by teachers is the lack of parental involvement. The results are congruent with recent studies suggesting that parental involvement is crucial for the success of inclusive education as parents play a vital role in fostering the performance and achievements of children when collaborating with schools (Hyassat et al., 2024). Likewise, studies from Pakistan show that weak interaction between parents and schools as well as the lack of community awareness hindered the implementation of inclusive practices (Virani & Ali, 2023).

Another significant result of the study is the inadequacy of the teaching resources available to children with special needs. It was noted that insufficient teaching aids pose a challenge for

meeting the varied learning needs of the students. The finding of the current study is consistent with that of Chow et al. (2024), who found limited teaching materials, absence of support staff, and lack of classroom support among the major barriers to implementing inclusive education practices around the globe.

Safdar & Rashid (2023) also noted a lack of classroom facilities in Pakistan's schools.

Additionally, the study revealed that large class sizes, workload pressures, and lack of adequate time to attend to individual students affect teachers' ability to practice inclusivity. These results concur with existing literature that reveals overcrowding in classrooms and workload pressures hinder teachers from practicing inclusivity in classrooms because they prevent them from differentiating instruction (Chow et al., 2024). Teaching in an inclusive environment often requires meeting a variety of needs among students without adequate institutional support, leading to stress and even job burnout.

Moreover, the participants faced difficulties regarding behavioral management, flexible curriculum, and evaluation process. This finding supports the claim made by research on inclusive education, which states that the fixed curriculum and traditional assessment techniques cannot cater to the needs of all

types of learners. Modern inclusive education focuses on flexible curriculum, innovative assessments,

and differentiated teaching practices to provide equal educational rights to each learner (Safdar et al., 2024). Thus, there is an immediate need for curriculum reforms and inclusive assessment techniques in the Pakistani schooling system.

However, the results show that despite all these difficulties, teachers implement various coping mechanisms to enable inclusion. In particular, the teachers mentioned changing the teaching styles in accordance with the requirements of each individual child, apply differentiation in instruction, accommodating classroom activities, and providing peer support among students. These results suggest that teachers have a positive attitude towards inclusion and constantly make efforts to create an inclusive environment. It is important to mention that other empirical research proves the connection between teachers' adaptability in their work with children and inclusive participation in classes (Breaking Barriers, 2023).

The research results indicate that collaboration among teachers and engagement in professional learning play critical roles in coping in an inclusive classroom environment. The respondents reported that they engage in collaboration to find solutions to problems that they experience in the classroom as well as seeking resources independently to enhance their teaching techniques. These results have received considerable backing from various sources of literature, which stress the significance of professional development and collaboration in improving practices of inclusive education (Safdar et al., 2024). Professional learning enhances the teachers' capacity and competence.

In terms of institutional support, it was observed that teachers received moderate support from the school administration, educational policy makers, and the government. It was noted that schools usually foster good attitudes about special children and collaborate well with teachers. Nonetheless, the lack of sufficient training and specialized support personnel was among the problems reported by teachers. The results are similar to the findings in a previous study conducted in Pakistan in which insufficient institutional support, lack of specialist professionals, and poor teacher training were among the biggest obstacles to inclusive

education (Zia et al., 2024).

In summary, the results of this research suggest that inclusive education practices are affected by interrelated aspects such as teacher readiness, institutional backing, parental participation, class environment, and resource access. Although teachers have positive attitudes and use various coping mechanisms, some challenges remain which make the inclusion process less effective within schools. This implies that educational institutions need to concentrate on teacher preparation, flexible curricula, parent involvement, resource provision, and collaboration among other important measures.

Finally, it is important to note that the analysis shows that teachers experience difficulties in practicing inclusion, especially in terms of collaboration with parents, lack of materials, workload pressure, and lack of assistance in their work(Kaji & Dutta, 2026). Despite these difficulties, teachers demonstrate resilience by using differentiated instruction, collaborating, and applying other creative methods of teaching(Agbisit, 2025). In conclusion, while there is some level of institutional support, much more effort should be made to improve training programs, create special assistance services, enhance infrastructure, and implement the policy(Kaji & Dutta, 2026). Such changes will enable significant steps toward providing equal opportunities in educational settings for all learners.

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