

Attitudinal Experiences in Implementing Inclusive Education: A phenomenological Study on Special Education Teachers of Regular Primary Schools at Sebeta Town in Ethiopia

Reta Kumsa Dube¹ and Alemayehu Teklemariam Haye²

¹Lecturer at Ambo University, Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education, PhD Candidate at Addis Ababa University, Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

²Lecturer at Addis Ababa University, Department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Corresponding author: retadube@gmail.com

Abstract:

The aim of this study is to investigate the meaning of attitudinal experiences of implementation of inclusive education on six teachers of special needs education who are currently teaching in the ordinary classrooms in two regular primary schools at Sebeta Town in Oromia Region. It is a phenomenological hermeneutic qualitative research design. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. Teachers who are licensed in both regular and special needs education (SNE) teaching professions were selected purposively. Thematic analysis was employed and four themes emerged. The major findings showed that all teachers have strongly believed in teaching of all children in the ordinary classrooms. The aggregated forms of attitudes of all teachers have been positive. All teachers also have positive cognitive and affective domains of attitudes. But there are teachers who have positive and negative attitudes for the behavioral domain. The teachers had better positive attitudes during their study at SNE teacher Education College than during their actual teaching at schools. The positive attitudes of teachers declined in the schools by negative factors. Special needs and inclusive education (SNIE) courses had played the most important roles in developing positive attitudes during teacher education. But the negative attitudes of school principals and educational administrators towards SNIE had major contributions in adversely affecting positive attitudes of teachers during their actual teaching. The readiness of SNE teachers to implement IE when teaching the subjects independently in ordinary classrooms is too weak. So, barriers that negatively affected the positive attitudes of the teachers need to be alleviated by the stakeholders. Training that address all three domains of attitudes with specific emphasis on the behavioural component should be designed.

Key words: Inclusive education, attitudes, special education teachers, regular primary schools, Ethiopia

Introduction

For decades, educational development has increasingly shifted towards the direction of IE and additional shifts have been also observed in the conceptualization of IE (Linder et al., 2023). There is no one universally accepted definition of IE. Different scholars; and local national and international institutions define IE in accordance with their contexts. For example, according to the Salamanca Statement UNESCO (1994), IE refers to a form of schooling in which the supports required by a child with SENs is brought into the mainstream classroom in order to ensure effective education. As to UNESCO (1994) since every child has unique interest and learning needs, educational program should be designed and implemented in the way that it meets the needs of the wide diversity of all children in their local schools with their peers. On the other hand, Engelbrecht et al.(2017) defined IE as welcoming of all students to general-education schools and classrooms, not segregating students on the basis of their abilities or other individual or sociocultural characteristics. There are also many other definitions in literatures. With regard to difficulty of provision of constant definition for IE, Linder et al. (2023) showed that the complexity of IE cannot be summed up within a single straightforward definition or interpretation and its understandings remain heterogeneous.

Different researchers also have forwarded their reflections regarding the concepts of IE in different ways. For instance Mieghem et al.(2018) showed that IE can be regarded as an educational philosophy as it involves ideas on how education and schools should be organized. According to Bartonova (2016), IE is a wide range of strategies, activities, and processes that seek to realize the right to quality, useful, and adequate education of individuals with SENs. Engelbrecht et al.(2017) also pointed out that IE is generally seen as being about access to education, acceptance and participation, and the promise of quality education for all. Cimsir and Carney (2016) stated that in IE, emphasis is given to the existing school system to adapt to the individual students' needs. Thus, in inclusive settings, students with SENs receive their entire academic curriculum in mainstream education being enrolled with students of their age groups (Desombre et al., 2018). Bartonova (2016) further underpins that IE is a process having many perspectives and levels, that has variation with the education system in different countries and which depends on the type of SENs of the students. Moreover, IE is a transformative change process which entails changing the structure, organization, learning, curriculum and assessment of the education system (United Nations Children's Fund, 2013)

UNESCO (1994) and different researchers highlighted that teachers are the key role players for the successful implementation of IE (Baldiris Navarro, et al.,2016; Engelbrecht et al., 2017; Mieghem et al., 2018; Mónico et al.,2018). Thus, the necessity of preparation of teachers for IE has got great emphasis. In this case, according to the conference of Salamanca, UNESCO (1994), all governments are urged to ensure teacher education programmes, both pre - service and in-service, should address the provision of special needs education (SNE) in inclusive school and specialized training in SNE leading to additional qualifications should normally be integrated with or preceded by training and experience as a regular education teacher in order to ensure complementarily and mobility. UNESCO(2009) also indicated that teacher-education programmes, (both pre-

service and in-service) should be reoriented and aligned to IE approaches to give teachers the pedagogical capacities necessary to make diversified students participate in the classroom. Also according to Sharma and Nuttal (2016), teacher education programmes have a responsibility to ensure that graduate teachers develop attitudes that are necessary prerequisites for creating inclusive classrooms.

The other is, despite its complexity and challenging nature, studies indicate that IE has got global acceptance (Kurniawati et al., 2016; Mieghem et al., 2018; Mónico et al., 2018). Ethiopia is also one of the world countries which accepted IE as world agenda and it endeavors to its implementation. In support of this, there are documents such as, the constitution of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia FDRE (1994), the FDRE Ministry of Education “Education and Training Policy” MOE (1994), Special Needs Education Program Strategies MOE (2006), Special Needs or Inclusive Education Strategy, MOE (2012) and Education Sector Development Programs (ESDPs) especially ESDP IV, MOE (2010) and ESDPV, MOE (2015) and some others. According to Semela (2014), Ethiopia introduced IE to its education system post-communist era. Thus, in the country, there are strong legal and policy grounds that promote IE.

On the other hand, the thought of IE has also been shifting the practices of education towards the direction of IE worldwide though variations are present among different countries depending on their contexts. For instance Black-Hawkins (2012) showed that developments have taken place at international, national and local levels that have encouraged more inclusive forms of educational provision. Also as to Kurniawati et al. (2016) and Stemberger and Kiswarday (2017), including students with SENs in regular classrooms has become a global trend. The worldwide trend towards IE means that all students are increasingly being placed in general-education classrooms, regardless of their diverse educational needs (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). As international policies have continually strived for the inclusion of students with SENs, a large number of countries now provide a better education for students with SEN (Kurniawati et al, 2016). However, despite the increasing number of students with SENs in ordinary classrooms, according to Schwab (2018), inclusive practices are varying widely all over the world. The tendency of increment of students and students with SENs in the ordinary classroom in Ethiopia is also similar with the world trend due to the impact of IE policy. For example, as to Education Statistics Annual Abstract MOE (2019) the enrolment rate of children in general and students with SENs in the primary schools in particular is highly increased. Franck and Joshi (2017) also indicated that Ethiopia has promoted the goal of IE while rapidly increasing school enrolments to meet universal basic education. Similarly, the report of Special Needs or Inclusive Education Strategy MOE (2012) maintained that majority of children with disabilities and learning difficulties are being served in an inclusive classroom.

There are also some actions taken by the government with regard to teacher preparations and the school curriculum design in implementing IE at the school level. Thus, it is indicated that different universities and colleges started SNE teachers education programs and SNE (of three credit hours as common course) was mainstreamed across all teacher education and training institutions in the country (ESDPV MOE, 2010).

Special Needs or Inclusive Education Strategy, MOE (2012) also showed that Ethiopia introduced IE course (i.e. of three credit hours) in all pre-service and in-service teacher education programs. Moreover, A Master Plan for SNE, MOE (2016) also stated that cluster programs for SNE are offered by ten teacher education colleges in Ethiopia in different regions. This means SNE as a field of study is studied with other two subject fields e.g., SNE +Biology +Chemistry. It is also indicated that new school curriculum is prepared from point of IE (ESDP V MOE, 2015). Other important thing is, as to Franck and Joshi (2017), there are cluster center schools which have resource centers and itinerant SNE teachers who are responsible for working with several cluster schools. Hence, the existing education policies, teacher education programs, the new school curriculum, the presence of resource centers and itinerant teachers for SNE; and the presence of diversified students in the ordinary classrooms enforce regular teachers to implement IE. On the other hand, UNESCO (1994) and different researchers highlighted that teachers are the key role players in the successful implementation of IE (Baldiris Navarro, et al., 2016; Engelbrecht et al., 2017; Mieghem et al., 2018; Mónico et al., 2018) and they need to be competent in implementation of IE (Galović et al., 2014; Štemberger & Kiswarday, 2017; United Nations Children’s Fund, 2013). To this effect, different researchers indicated that attitude is one of the very important components of competence in IE (Baldiris Navarro et al., 2016; Mu et al., 2015; Pantić & Wubbels, 2012; Visković & Jevtić, 2017). This means teachers need to have positive attitudes towards IE.

Attitude is internal state of a person which biases or predisposes a person towards evaluative responses of some degree of favourability if the attitude is positive, or towards unfavourability if the attitude is negative whereby the responses can be cognitive, affective or behavioural, and overt or covert (Eagly, 1992). The cognitive component consists of an individual’s beliefs or knowledge about the attitude object, the affective component refers to feelings about the attitude object, while the behavioural component reflects someone’s predisposition to act toward the attitude object in a particular way (Kurniawati et al., 2014). Therefore, in line with this, Štemberger and Kiswarday (2017) indicated that in context of inclusion, attitude has three dimensions: cognitive which represents individual’s belief and knowledge of inclusion, affective which represents expression of emotions and motivation to inclusion and behavioural which represents readiness for a proactive action in inclusive settings. Moreover, attitude is the input which also influences the process and the outcome of IE (Mieghem et al., 2018). As Mónico et al. (2018) showed, attitudes can either promote or hinder efforts towards inclusion. Although, attitude toward inclusion is influenced by many factors (Štemberger & Kiswarday, 2017), for the inclusion process to be successful positive attitudes towards inclusion of children with SNE are critical (Cimsir & Carney, 2016).

The positive attitude of teachers towards IE is believed to be significantly important to achieve its implementation. For instance, as to Linder et al. (2023) teachers’ positive attitudes are the most important key factor for the successful implementation of IE. This is further strengthened by Štemberger and Kiswarday (2017) as saying teachers’ attitudes towards IE are significantly important. On the other hand, Paju et al. (2015) also

indicated that integration of pupils with special needs and disabilities into regular schools requires the school staff demonstrate positive attitudes to respond to the individual needs of all children. Moreover, Štemberger and Kiswarday (2017) in other way also showed that implementation of inclusive practice requires teachers to be equipped with inclusive values and beliefs that will enable them to meet diversity among learners who are members of their learning society within the school classes.

Though there are variations on its levels, it has been long since many world countries as well as Ethiopia have begun the process of implementing IE with due consideration on teachers' positive attitudes towards IE. Since the inceptions of IE, studies on teachers' attitudes towards IE have been continuing rigorously and there have been also inconsistent findings. For instance Linder et al. (2023) indicated that there is an ongoing process of researchers investigating teachers' attitudes towards inclusive schooling. On the other hand, Varcoe and Boyle (2013) indicated that researchers' findings on in-service teachers' attitudes is inconsistent. Kurniawati et al.(2016) also indicated research on teachers' attitudes towards IE has shown mixed results: some are positive some are negative and others are neutral. Also as to Schwab (2018) inclusive practice of teachers in relation to attitudes is varying widely over the world. On the other hand, specifically to Ethiopia it is stated that the findings of research conducted at different times on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion is not similar (Terfassa et al., 2016).

Due to the complexity of IE and the working conditions of teachers in unlimited contexts, there are various factors that affect teachers' attitudes according to the contexts in which they teach. As long as IE practice is not laying its bases very well in the school systems and the regular teachers are not accustomed to implementing it, studying teachers' attitudes towards IE is unquestionably very important within their contexts. For example according to Linder et al. (2023) what interventions are most effective in altering teachers' attitudes to strengthen their commitment to inclusion is yet a largely open question. This also implies the necessity of research on teachers' attitudes towards IE. On the other hand, although there are studies with dissimilar findings on teachers' attitudes towards IE in Ethiopia, there is no exploratory and descriptive qualitative study that investigated attitudes of special education teachers teaching in ordinary classes considering the cognitive, affective and behavioural domains of attitudes in long time processes starting from teacher education till during teaching in the school. Considering that special education teachers have taken by far more courses of IE and/or SNEs than regular teachers who in most cases have taken one common course of three credit hours and also as it is believed their role is exclusively important in struggling for actualization of IE, the researchers believe that understanding of the meanings of attitudinal experiences of special education teachers towards implementation of IE as the teachers lived it is very important. Therefore, this study is a phenomenological research design conducted on the topic 'Attitudinal Experiences of Special Education Teachers of Regular Primary Schools at Sebeta Town in Implementing IE.' The purpose of this phenomenological study is to describe the meaning of the lived attitudinal experiences of implementation of IE for six special education teachers teaching in the ordinary

classrooms of Mulugeta Gedlie and Dima Guranda government primary schools at Sebeta Town in Oromia Region. To this level implementation of IE includes all kinds of involvements that have been made by the ordinary school primary teachers in all processes thought to be helpful for the actualization of IE in the ordinary schools in addition to implementing it in the ordinary classes. The following are the basic questions of this study:

1. What are the meanings of lived experiences of special education teachers regarding their attitudes towards implementation of IE?
2. What are the themes that are emerged?
3. What are the textural and structural descriptions of attitudes of special education teachers towards implementation of IE?
4. What is the essence of attitudes of special education teachers towards implementation of IE?

Research Methods

Design of the Study

This study employs a phenomenological hermeneutic qualitative research. A phenomenological research is the study of the life world as we immediately experience it, prereflectively, rather than as we conceptualize, theorize, categorize, or reflect on it and which can also be used in education (Adams & Manen, 2025). The special education teachers in this study are those who studied SNE teacher educations and have been teaching in contexts of educational system promoting IE. In this regard, they are believed to have lived experiences with regard to attitudes towards implementation of IE within their contexts. On the other hand, they can be conscious of those experiences and can also share what exactly their lived experiences of this phenomenon look like. Therefore, as the intention of this study is to explore the meanings of attitudinal lived experiences on the basis of the descriptions given by the special education teachers, a phenomenological study can fit to it. On the other hand, hermeneutic phenomenology is a kind of phenomenological research that is interpreting the “texts” of life (Creswell, 2007; Grondin, 1994). Utilizing hermeneutic approaches helps to describe, translate and clarify the beliefs, skills and feelings of persons about the phenomena (Lueger & Vettori, 2014). Moreover, the main goal of hermeneutic phenomenology is creating understanding of the socially constructed realities in the past and how they are exactly formed (Vettori, 2018). Based on these, this study was conducted with the belief that the reality of attitudes towards implementation of IE is socially constructed and consists of teachers’ subjective experiences being in interpretivist world view. The researchers also did not want to suspend completely from the reality but want to use their prior experiences to mediate between the meanings in order to make the meanings more sensible. However, when doing this, the researchers brought to forth the reality in the way meanings were given by the teachers according to their lived experiences. As a matter of these facts, hermeneutic approach was employed.

Setting: The study is conducted in two government primary schools at Sebeta town in Oromia regional state, 25 km away from Addis Ababa, to the south west. The town is a home for multilingual and multicultural society (Birhane, 2020). In the town, there is a boarding Special School for the Blind, many regular schools and a College of SNE Teachers. The two sampled schools have many opportunities to implement IE. There are SNE resource centers and the support from itinerant teachers for the schools. The itinerant teachers are assigned by MOE and give support to the cluster schools in the town. There are also teachers who studied both regular and SNE teaching profession in the sampled schools. The two schools have long age of teaching experiences and one of the schools has good experiences of teaching and supporting students with SNE in both special classes and in inclusive classrooms. Since the two schools are with long ages, they have many experienced teachers, large number of diversified students, many classrooms and large spaces.

Participants: six special education teachers (3 males and 3 females) were selected purposively. In phenomenological research, 5-25 participants are recommended (Polkinghorne, 1989, as cited in Creswell, 2007). The inclusion criteria includes teachers who are licensed in both regular and SNE teaching professions, who had at least a minimum of three years of experiences of teaching in the ordinary classrooms, who had experiences of teaching students with SNE and who were found on teaching in ordinary classrooms holding subjects during the study. Teachers teaching in the ordinary classrooms who studied SNIE only as a common course were not included. The participants are 41-56 years old. The participants have total teaching services between 11-37 years since being regular teacher and between 5-16 years since being SNE teachers. All studied SNE after they had been teaching between 6-22 years in the ordinary schools being regular teacher in TTI (12+1). They studied SNE in different modalities: purely SNE or SNE as major or minor clustered with one other subject (SNE major + Afan Oromo or SNE minor+ English) or SNE as focus or non-focus clustered with two other subjects (SNE focus +Math + Physics, SNE focus +Chemistry +Biology and Biology focus+ Chemistry +SNE non-focus). In this study ‘focus’ in three cluster subjects means, of the total credit hours offered for the overall study, most of the credit hours are assigned to the subject considered as focus in comparison to other areas like non-focus subjects, professional courses, common courses and practicum courses. One participant studied pure SNE in regular program at certificate level but the rest studied in summer program at diploma level. Only a female teacher who studied SNE independently at certificate level in regular program conducted practice of teaching in special schools. In upgrading diploma level education to first degree qualification, one participant studied pure SNE but the other three studied other fields (Amharic or Afan Oromo Languages). Only two female diploma graduates have not upgraded their qualifications. The total credit hours for SNE courses covered by each participant from least to maximum are: eighteen, twenty one, thirty, forty one, sixty five and one hundred seven. During the interview the grade levels taught by the teachers were ranging from grade 2-8. The teachers taught one of the subjects (Afan Oromo, Amharic, English, or Math) given that the time allotted to one period is 40 minutes. They all teach in the classrooms composed of diversified children

with different ages, sex, mother tongues, family backgrounds and some other individual differences and in which in most cases children with hearing impairments, emotional and behavioral problems and reading and writing difficulties were commonly found. According to classroom observations made, all teachers mostly taught through lecture method using textbook, chalk and blackboard being in front of the classrooms; their lessons were teacher centered. They all use a ‘one lesson plan fit for all students’ and did not adapt their lessons and assessments according to the needs of different children. They all never use individualized educational planning. All the teachers teach large number of diversified children alone, with no assistant to help them and their workloads are also high.

Demographic Information of the Participants

False name	Sex	Age	Education Level	Service years: pre and post studying SNE and total			Field of study during:			Study Program for SNE
				Pre-SNE	Post-SNE	Total	TTI	Diploma	1 st Degree	
Girma	M	40	SNE-diploma Afan Oromo-BA	8	9	17	General except SNE	SNE major Afan Oromo minor	Only Afan Oromo - SNE common course	Summer
Mosisa	M	32	SNE-Diploma and BA	6	5	11	General except SNE	Three cluster subjects: SNE focus + Chemistry+ Biology.	Only SNE	Summer
Hana	F	56	SNE-TTI Amharic-BA	21	16	37	1.General except SNE and 2. Only SNE	Amharic major English minor	Amharic only-SNE common course	Regular
Gete	F	50	SNE - Diploma	19	9	28	General except SNE	Three cluster subjects: SNE focus +Math +Physics	Did not study	Summer
Tehun	F	52	SNE Diploma	20	9	29	General except SNE	Three cluster subjects: Biology focus	Did not study	Summer

								+Chemistry +SNE		
Busa	M	51	SNE- diploma Afan Oromo BA	22	8	30	General except SNE	English major SNE minor	Only Afan Oromo -SNE common course	Summer

Data collection: Semi-structured interviews were used. According to Creswell (2007) data collection in phenomenological studies consists of an in-depth and multiple interviews with participants. As to Ruslin et al (2022) semi-structured interview is more powerful than other interviews in helping to get in-depth information through conversation by using structured and unstructured interviews as needed. So, as the participants in this study are required to share their lived experiences in depth and in details, the researchers believed semi structured interviews are most appropriate for data collection. The interview questions were developed by researchers in such a way that they could elicit the lived experiences of teachers. The interview questions were first prepared in English and translated to Afan Oromo and Amharic Languages. Some of the questions are: What do your attitudinal experiences towards SNE and IE look like since studying education of special education teacher? How have been your attitudes towards the necessity of teaching students with SENs in the ordinary classrooms? What do your willingness of teaching students with SENs in the ordinary classrooms look like? What do your feelings like when you have students with SENs in your classrooms? Feedback was also given on the instrument by a researcher in SNIE department of Addis Ababa University and certain modifications were made on it. The letters of permission were obtained from Addis Ababa University and also from Sebeta Town Education Office and submitted to the schools. The school also showed good willingness for the study and good rapport was created with the school administrators, the participants and some other school staffs. The purpose of the study, the role of the participants, the duration of the study and some other important issues were explained to the participants. The participants and the researcher obtained signed consent letters. A one-on- one interviews were made and tape recorded. During the interview the interviewer was asking questions, listening to the interviewee attentively being immersed in the conversations, giving clarifications where necessary, observing non-verbal emotional manifestations of the interviewee, encouraging to speak out when there was lack of interest on something important for the study, managing/controlling the conversation within its scope and encouraging the continuation of flow of conversation when tend to pause. Data were stored in computer file systems.

Data Analysis: In this study, methodological themes thought helpful according to Manen (1997) in the analysis of hermeneutic phenomenological study were used. The recorded interview data in Afan Oromo or Amharic languages were transcribed verbatim. All participants checked their respective transcribed verbatim and agreed that the

transcriptions were their own lived experiences. Each participant was debriefed for their respective transcriptions to clarify some opinions lacking clarity when transcribing the interviews. The transcribed data then translated to English from the two languages by language experts. The transcribed data were read repeatedly, thoroughly and carefully. Then there were identifications of meaning units and formulation of meanings for the identified meaning units. Clustering of meanings in to sub-themes and themes were made. Based up on the themes emerged, textural and structural descriptions were made. The essence of the study was also presented. Representation of the data was made in discussion.

Evaluation and trust worthiness: There was validation of lived experiences using member check and participants read transcribed verbatim. The collection of lived experiences was made making many field visits for a long period of time. Continuous analysis was made being immersed in the lived experiences.

Ethics: This study was conducted with permission of Addis Ababa University and Sebeta Town Education office. The interview questions were evaluated by SNE researcher and a research advisor at Addis Ababa University in the department of Special Needs and Inclusive Education. Each participant received an informed consent letter. Hence, the purpose of the study, the duration they would take part in the study and their roles were explained to them. They were also informed about confidentiality and absence of potential risk in the study.

The Findings

The Time Teachers Got Awareness of SNE

Except one participant who studied SNE at TTI level the rest did not know anything about SNE by the time they joined SNE Teachers College. In this regard, the participant Girma, for example described:

I heard about SNE during joining Sebeta SNE Teachers College. I asked what SNE was and I was told that it is about teaching children with disabilities (ChwDs). So, I understood the presence of education for disability and SNE when joining SNE Teachers College.

On the other hand, regarding how she was introduced with SNE and how she became confused with the term of SNE during joining SNE teachers college another participant named Gete also stated:

When I joined Sebeta SNE Teachers College, I applied to study Math as a major subject area. But I was told to study SNE focus +Math +Physics. As I did not know about SNE before, I asked what SNE was about and I was told that SNE was good and was encouraged to join it.

Mosisa also said, "I knew nothing about SNE when coming to Sebeta SNE Teachers college." It was mandatory to study SNE as one of the subjects at Sebeta SNE Teachers College with one or two other subjects. But unlike the others, Hana said, "Before joining Sebeta SNE Teachers Training Institution, I had already taken SNE common course of 3

credit hours when I studied my diploma in Amharic Language.” Except a participant who studied SNE at certificate level, the others joined SNE teachers college for just to upgrade their educational level from TTI to diploma by studying subjects of study other than SNE; not because they developed interest in SNE. For instance Mosisa said, “I went to Sebeta SNE Teachers College to study Chemistry but I was assigned to SNE focus +Chemistry +Biology by drawing the chance.”

Attitudes of Teachers towards the Necessity of Including All Children in Ordinary Classrooms

The necessity of inclusion of students with disabilities and the learning of all in ordinary classroom have been strongly believed by all participants since studying education of SNE teacher. All not only believe in inclusion of those children but also underscored that they should come to ordinary classrooms. For example, comparing and contrasting the advantages of inclusion and the disadvantages of segregation of children with disabilities, Girma stated the attitude he had during his study at the teachers education college as, “I had positive attitude towards that children with SENs should learn in inclusive classroom because I understood that boarding school segregates children and if they learned with their peers, they would not be isolated.” Similarly, he expressed his thought referring to the time he is teaching as follows:

Children with SNEs should learn with their peers in the regular classrooms because they can learn equally as their peers. Instead of being segregated, if they come to school, sit, learn, stay and return to their home with their peers, they will be motivated to say that “I can learn”. It will also make their peers develop positive attitude towards children with disabilities and show willingness to support them. (Girma)

Tehun on her part indicated, “I supported the idea of teaching students with SNE in the regular classroom very much, if children are segregated, they will be affected psychologically.” On the other hand, the possibility of getting supports from the others and possibility of integration and participation with the society have got stress in addition to strongly accepting their inclusion. Likewise Busa described:

I accept the teaching of students with disabilities in regular classroom because they can integrate with the society and can do what the society can do. But if they learn separately being isolated, they cannot get the support from their colleagues and they are also separated from the society.

Teachers’ Attitudes towards Special Needs and Inclusive Education

The teachers reported the attitudinal experiences they have had since studying SNE in general sense (without their domains) and by their levels (cognitive, affective and behavioural domains). In this case, in a general sense all indicated that they have developed strong positive attitudes towards SNIE since studying SNE. For example: Busa expressed, “The attitudes I had towards education of students with SNE after I had learned SNE have become positive.” Similarly Girma told, “My attitudes towards education of children with SNE have been completely positive.” In relation to cognitive domain too, all have strongly believed that SNIE is good and necessary. For instance, referring to her

time of study, Gete said, “I believed very much in the necessity of SNIE and in teaching of ChwDs in inclusive classrooms.” Regarding during teaching, for example Hana stated, “I believe in special needs and in inclusive education, they are necessary, I am positive to them, teaching children inclusively teaches them unity, equality and love.” Regarding affective domain all also have been happy of SNIE and liked it since their study. In this case as an instance Tehun indicated, “I have liked SNIE very much.” But concerning the behavioural domain, differences exist among participants during the two phases. During the study, except two participants the rest had strong motivation to implement IE. Of those who had readiness to act for example, Tehun noted, “I had strong decision to implement IE and not to retreat back from putting it in to practice.” But contrary to this, of the two teachers who did not show inclination to act for example Mosisa described:

I never thought implementing IE. Instead I had been thinking about completing my education and getting my salary be improved, that was the reality. I thought to teach natural science that I studied with SNE but not to teach children with SEN’s.

On the other hand, during few years after graduation most of them had strong interest to implement IE although that type of motivation could not continue within the schools due to some hindering challenges they faced. Some of them even began to act in the schools. In relation to this for example Gete told, “I was ready to put in to practice SNIE after completing my study; as soon as I graduated I asked the school to assign me in integrated class for the deaf.” Hana also described the next:

As soon as I graduated, I thought I had to do something for them [CHwDs]. I enthusiastically prepared well to teach them. I have been willing to put in to practice SNIE in the school. I had been struggling to put it into effect. However, the school had not been cooperating with me.

While one of the two teachers who did not have readiness to implement IE during the study time developed positive attitudes to act after graduation, the other one did not show that kind of attitudinal change. So, Mosisa told, “I have begun working on SNIE being itinerant teacher.” But Busa told, “If we had had interest to support those children, we could have made a lot, but there is absence of readiness and willingness in implementing SNIE; on my part, I do not have interest.”

Factors Affecting Attitudes of Teachers towards Special Needs and Inclusive Education

Positive factors used to develop their attitudes positively during their study and negative factors affecting their attitudes negatively during teaching were indicated. Participants unanimously indicated education of SNE as contributing factors in positively developing their attitudes towards SNIE during the study although variably, they also indicated other factors like: seeing students and teachers who were blind and conducting teaching practices in special schools as factors developing the positive attitudes. But during teaching, mainly absence of support from educational administrators raised as negative factors affecting their attitudes negatively. In addition, other factors such as: lack of skills of SNIE, large class size, shortage of time, lack of awareness, absence of transportation budget, absence of incentive, lack of collaborative work, misuse of budget

and materials for SENs and absence of department and focal person for SNE were also indicated as negative factors.. For instance in relation to this, referring to during college study Girma described:

When I had entered in to education and had seen those children with visual impairments of school for the blind in the college compound and teachers who were blind that had taught me, my attitudes had been changed completely. Knowledge of SNE I acquired in the college had brought great impact on my attitudes of education of children with special needs. It changed me completely.

Hana also told, “The education changed my attitudes towards students with SENs very much; during teaching practice I understood that implementation of SNIE was possible.” Referring to during his teaching, Girma also said, “The negative and discouraging attitudes of educational leaders towards SNE, absence of encouragement, silence from concerned body and inability to master SNIE skills have lowered my attitudes towards teaching all children meeting their SENs.” Similarly, Hana described angrily what affected her attitudes towards SNEs as follows:

I do not give much attention to students with SNEs as I did before because I faced many problems when teaching them alone in special class. That time, there wasn't any support I got from the school administration. After waiting for positive response to my request of unfulfilled support from the school administration for long in vain, I made a decision to resign as an assistant person, and said 'good bye' to it. So, that affected my attitudes towards SNE.

About challenges inhibiting his motivation to implement IE in the schools Mosisa who is also an itinerant teacher described the following:

Many challenges are there. When I rotate on nine cluster schools for the purpose of SNIE, I used transportation fee from my own pocket. The organization that had been paying for fuel and incentive of itinerant teacher stopped it. The school directors did not support us in identifying children with SENs. Even children identified did not receive any support from the school. School leaders do not want you work on SNIE but to work only on the regular one. The school leaders utilize the resources they receive in the name of supporting children with SENs to carry out their routine administrative duties. I heard that in other place SNE teachers had additional payment and that encouraged them to work on it with interest.

One of the female teachers also revealed that administration problems, lack of skills and large class size made her lack motivation to act on SNIE in the school. So, Gete stated: “Large number of students in a class is a challenging issue in using differentiation, and it became difficult for me to use SL, in addition to administration problem that became obstacle to me in supporting children with ASDs.” Another female teacher also described various problems that affect her motivation to act:

To teach inclusively, the time is less; what can we do with all of these students? The children who did not learn anything and did not identify letters before coming to primary school were brought to us. We faced problem in teaching children who could not Afan Oromo Language [the medium of instruction]. There is shortage of skills and the families of the children are not willing to come when we call them to school. (Tahun)

Discussion

The aim of this study is to investigate the meanings of attitudinal experiences of

implementation of IE for six special education teachers who are teaching in the ordinary classrooms. As teachers are recognized as key players in supporting the process of leading to inclusive educational systems (Baldiris Navarro et al., 2016; UNESCO, 1994), positive attitudes of teachers are critical for the success full inclusion of students with SENs in the mainstream classrooms (Cimsir & Carney, 2016; Kurniawati et al., 2016; Salovita & Schaffus, 2016). As to this study, by the time the participants joined the SNE college/institution of teacher education, they were graduates of different educational levels. One participant graduated in diploma in teaching Amharic Language and certificate level for teaching at regular primary schools. The other participants had only certificate in teaching at regular primary schools. Among the participants, only the teacher who graduated in diploma had awareness of SNE since by the time she studied her diploma program, she took a course of SNE in three credit hours that had been mainstreamed as a compulsory course in all teacher education institutions.

According to ESDPIV MOE (2010) SNE was mainstreamed across all teacher education and training institutions in the country. However, SNE was not mainstreamed in all teacher education programs when all the participants studied teaching profession at certificate or TTI level. In joining SNE institution of teacher education, the teacher who had awareness of SNE had intention of studying SNE while the others who had joined SNE college planned to study other fields of study, not SNE. It was during the process of registration that they even acquainted with the term of SNE spontaneously. At the registration time, the teachers got confused as they had no prior information on the term SNE. But, as they were briefed of what it is and encouraged by those who knew about it, they joined SNE department. Although the teachers were very enthusiastic in improving their educational levels from certificate to diploma, according to the college, studying SNE with other subject had been compulsory. Therefore, the participants were compelled to study SNE about which they had not known before. So, all participants, except one, acquainted with SNE after they had joined SNE teachers college. In consistent to this, many studies that focused on investigating the impact of the training of SNIE courses covering different ranges of hours on pre—service or in-service teachers attitudes towards IE also indicated that some of /all of the participants had not undertaken previous training on SNE (Kurniawati et al., 2016; Sharma & Nuttal, 2016; Stella et al., 2007).

The other is about teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of all children in ordinary classrooms. Inclusive education is about welcoming of all students to general-education schools and classrooms (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). However, some study results on attitudes indicated that primary teachers had positive attitudes towards inclusion of specific category of students with SENs (de Boer et al., 2011; Mónico et al., 2018; Mukhopadhyay, 2014; Yeo et al., 2014). Also, according to a systematic review of primary school teachers' attitudes towards IE by Linder et al.(2023) regular primary school teachers do not favor the inclusion of all students when it comes to the concept of inclusion for all students. But According to Štemberger and Kiswarday (2017) primary teachers have positive attitudes towards inclusion of all children regardless of their ability. Congruent to this, all of the participants of this study have strongly believed in teaching

of all children in the ordinary classrooms since studying SNE. Although most of them joined the field unintentionally, they could develop strong positive attitudes towards SNIE during their study. They have accepted inclusion of all children because they have believed inclusion has many advantages whereas segregation causes various problems to children with SENs from different aspects. In this study, belief in the necessity of giving attention to SNE especially by educational leaders and teachers is indicated. The presence of such attitudes on the parts of teachers is very important because the responsibilities of the two are directly connected to education of children. For instance, the notion of teachers as key agents in IE is underscored by UNESCO (1994) and by many researchers (Baldiris Navarro, et al., 2016; Engelbrecht et al., 2017; Mieghem et al., 2018; Mónico et al., 2018). At the presence of cooperation and commitment from all, the belief in the possibility of teaching all children in the same class is also reflected. Teachers' positive attitude towards the possibility of implementation of IE is one of the most important inputs in teaching all children meeting their SENs in the ordinary classrooms. The findings of a case study on a highly effective inclusive school in Florida by McLeskey et al. (2014) are reflections of these attitudes of the teachers. The beliefs in learning of all children in the same classrooms were expressed not with uncertainty but with the determination that "It should be!" Teaching of all children in ordinary class room is also believed not as something given to children as merit but seen as their right. Understanding inclusion of all children from the perspective of children's right and law is also very important attitudes that SNE teachers should have in the process of dealing with IE. In line with this, the Salamanca Statement UNESCO (1994) and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities United Nations (2006) also have made inclusion the right of students with SENs.

Teachers' attitudes towards SNIE with their attitudinal domains are also important theme of this study. By definition attitude is internal state of a person which biases or predisposes a person towards evaluative responses of some degree of favourability if the attitude is positive or towards unfavourability if the attitude is negative in which the responses can be cognitive, affective or behavioural and overt or covert (Eagly, 1992). Attitude towards IE has three dimensions: cognitive - represents individual's belief and knowledge of inclusion, affective- represents expression of emotions and motivation to inclusion and behavioural- represents readiness for a proactive action in inclusive settings (Štemberger & Kiswarday, 2017). According to the findings of this study, attitudes towards SNIE can be presented in a general sense i.e. in its aggregated form and also according to their components. So, in its aggregated form, all participants have had strong positive attitudes towards SNIE as of the time they studied SNE. As studies indicate, attitudes of primary school teachers towards IE in general sense are not consistent: positive, negative, neutral or ambivalent attitudes were reported (Kurniawati et al., 2016; Linder et al., 2023; Schwab, 2018; Terfassa et al., 2016; Varcoe & Boyle, 2013). In view of these, the finding of this study matches with the positive findings. There are also other findings that made their focuses on SNE teachers' attitudes. As to study in Botswana by Mukhopadhyay (2014), primary teachers who were formally trained as special needs educators possessed a strong positive attitude towards inclusion

of learners with SNE. Similarly, a study in Saudi Arabia by Alharthi and Evans (2017) indicated that special education teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education were positive.

Interesting finding is when the three domains are checked separately. In this regard, in the case of cognitive and affective components, all have had strong positive attitudes since their study. However with respect to behavioural component, there have been differences. On the other hand, with respect to concept of IE, its necessity and the necessity of teaching of all children in the ordinary classrooms meeting their SENs, their beliefs and understandings have been very strong. In line with this, Mukhopadhyay (2014) also revealed that most of the primary teachers were positive towards the concept of IE. Likewise, in this study, all the participants unanimously believed in the principles and concept of IE. Even their beliefs are not easily affected by external negative factors that affected their behavioural domains in some cases. However, the finding of this study contrast with a systematic review by Linder et al. (2023) which indicated that regular primary school teachers do not favor the inclusion of all students when it comes to the concept of inclusion for all students. About affective domain, it is indicated that even when teachers believe inclusion is important, this does not necessarily imply they are willing to accept students with disabilities in their own classrooms (Mezquita-Hoyos et al., 2018).

The study by Mukhopadhyay (2014) also indicated that most of the teachers did not have a favorable attitude towards the inclusion of learners with SENs in their classrooms. But in contrast to this, the affective domain of attitudes of all participants in this study has been positive since their study. Similar to this study, there are also studies either directly conducted on in-service teachers or after the in-service training on SNIE which showed that teachers had positive affective domain of attitude (Franck & Joshi ,2017; Kurniawati et al., 2016 ; Sharma et al. ,2017; Štemberger & Kiswarday, 2017). In reflection of affective domain, the participants in this study used terms like, "still I like it very much", "very happy of it", "developed much interest in it", "like all aspects of it" and the like to express their liking SNIE. Concerning the behavioral domain, response of favorability and un- favorability were present during the two phases. For example, while they were studying at the college, except two male teachers, the others had been ready and decided to put into practice SNIE. Especially one of the two participants with unfavorable attitude has never showed inclination to act since then. A study in Indonesia by Kurniawati et al.(2016) also indicated that in-service teachers' behavioural attitudes after in-service training of 32 hours on SNIE did not show progress but rather made a small decrease although the cognitive-affective showed significant progress(Kurniawati et al.,2016). As to reviews of studies by Linder et al.(2023), when teachers have been found to hold positive views towards the general philosophy of inclusion(cognitive domain), at the same time, they are also hesitant about implementing inclusion in their classes(behavioral domain). But the other participants of this study had strong inclination to act during the study and for some times after the study. However, the type of motivation they had during the study could not continue but rather reduced in the school when they faced discouragement mainly from educational administrators. Therefore, there are

participants who could own the three domains of attitudes during the study and during some school years. Regarding the possession of the three components of attitudes as to Štemberger and Kiswarday (2017), Slovenian primary school teachers are in favor of inclusion in all three levels. According to this study, there have been the gradual deteriorations of behavioural domain during the school years over time.

The other important theme is concerning factors affecting attitudes of the teachers towards SNIE. It had been spontaneous and without having its awareness that most participants joined the field of SNE; however, they have owned some sorts of attitudes towards SNIE during and after the study. What so ever their attitudes have been, there have been some enabling factors to own that kinds of attitudes. Related to this, for example: Štemberger and Kiswarday (2017) stated that attitude toward inclusion is influenced by many factors. Saloviita and Schaffus (2016) also indicated that teachers' attitudes towards inclusion have connections to some larger societal variables. There were important factors used in developing positive attitudes during the study and that have been negatively affecting their attitudes during teaching. As previously indicated from point of attitudes, most teachers showed interesting change in the institution/college. While the cognitive and affective attitudes for all participants had been positive, the behavioral attitudes had been positive for most of them. In bringing of such important changes in all teachers, education of SNE had played significant roles irrespective of some other important factors. In consistent to this, there are many findings which showed that offering SNIE training to pre-service or in-service primary teachers brought positive attitudes towards SNIE (Galović et al., 2014; Kurniawati et al., 2014; Mukhopadhyay, 2014; Sharma and Nuttal, 2016; Štemberger & Kiswarday, 2017; Varcoe & Boyle, 2013). But in contrast to this, according to Terfassa et al. (2016) training on SNE [compulsory course of 3cr.hrs] did not bring significant change on teachers' attitude. Though SNIE courses expected in bringing positive attitudes, the presence of the college in compound of school for the blind likely to play important roles in that regard because there were teachers who developed positive attitudes towards SNIE when they observed school for the blind, students and teachers who were blind in that compound. Seeing lecturers who are blind and receiving their courses contributed in construction of positive attitudes. Lastly, but very importantly, conducting teaching practices in special schools for one case also used to build positive attitudes. Related to this, Mónico et al. (2018) stated that experience and contact of regular teachers with SEN students eventually change teachers' negative attitude. This, on the other hand, confirms that teachers' experience and contacts with students and teachers who are blind and students with other types of SENs contributed to changing the participants' attitudes.

According to Engelbrecht et al (2017) the continually changing personal understandings of inclusive education of the teachers, in dynamic interaction with contextual issues, determine how inclusion is enacted in the teachers' classrooms and how they teach and support learners. In view of this, the attitudes began to develop very well during the study did not show developmental progresses within the school but they were rather dwindling. This is because, though most cases at the exit from the institution/college had strong behavioural attitudes, there had been a sense of desparations

and loss of readiness to put SNIE in to practice due to negative factors they encountered during teaching. Consistent to this, Thu et al., (2022) indicated that teachers believed the school environment is a key enabler or inhibitor of inclusive practice. As to this study the school environments became challenges to the teachers so that their behavioural attitudes could not continue as during the training. On the other hand, with regard to the improvement of teachers' attitudes, Kurniawati et al. (2016) indicated that providing more inclusive experience, either inside or outside the classroom, is essential for teachers. Paradoxically and surprisingly, it has been the negative attitudes of school directors and educational leaders towards SNIE which mainly have been affecting attitudes of SNIE teachers during teaching. In support of this, Alharthi and Evans (2017) showed that lack of administrative support is one of the frequent barriers that impact the development of IE. Deneke (2020) also revealed that there was very poor administrative support from school principal for the inclusion of children with disabilities in the mainstream classrooms. Also as to Bedasa (2017), poor leadership practices in IE were major factors negatively affecting teachers' attitudes towards IE. Basically the role of the school administration is significantly important to implement IE. For example, according to Thu et al.(2022), to enable inclusive practice, school leaders and governors must create the right conditions and supports for teachers in including and promoting an integrative and accepting environment. As to Sharma et al. (2017) also one way to improve teachers' attitudes could be ensuring that they are well supported by school leaders and the system. Presenting the very importance of school directors as evidence, the case study of a highly effective inclusive school in Florida by McLeskey et al.(2014) revealed that the school principal played very important roles ;the staff worked collaboratively and the administration and teachers were committed to meeting the needs of all students.

On the other hand, lack of skills of SNIE, large class size, inadequate time allocation, discouragement from leaders, absence of support and encouragement/incentives, silence from concerned body and the like were among negative factors affecting teachers' attitudes towards SNIE. In considering skills of IE as affecting factor in implementation of IE, Mukhopadhyay (2014) indicated that most of the teachers did not have a favourable attitude towards the inclusion of learners with SENs in their classrooms due to lack of essential skills in IE. Thu et al.(2022) also stated that shortage of specific skills and time pressures challenged teachers[in Vietnam] to implement IE; smaller class sizes were also called for by the participants to enable them implement IE. According to Kurniawati et al.(2016) teachers [study in Indonesia] appear to hold concerns in relation to large classroom size.

The progress of the attitudes in terms of their domains in the long time processes since they studied SNE show that all participants have had strong positive attitudes at the cognitive and affective levels. But at the behavioural levels there have been different attitudinal experiences. During and after the study the behavioural attitude of one male participant who studied SNE as non-focus has not been positive; rather it inclined to negative. On the contrary, another male participant who studied SNE as focus who did not have positive behavioral attitude during the study, developed positive attitude during teaching. The attitudes of two participants- one male and one female, both studied SNE

as major courses, and who had experiences of supporting children in special classes with no assistant personnel had been strong during the study and after certain years in the school but severely diminished later on during teaching ;even inclined to negative. Of the other two female participants (who studied SNE as focus or as non-focus) had been strong during the college and after few years in the school but decreased gradually though not inclined to negative.

Another important thing is with regard to descriptions of the essence of the object of the phenomenon under the study. In this regard, attitudes towards SNIE for almost all special education teachers had not been developed until they had come to study SNE as their profession through the in-service training program though they had been regular teachers before that. On the other hand, attitudes towards SNIE had a range of contexts which could positively or negatively affect it. In this regard, contexts during the study were found to be very important in development of positive attitudes whereas that in the school could not be so. This implies that the teaching environments in regular primary schools in which they had been teaching before joining education of SNE teacher were unable to influence their attitudes because the teachers joined SNE College without having some sorts of attitudes towards SNIE. Therefore, in developing positive attitudes of SNE teachers towards SNIE, the SNE teachers college/institution environments were found to be by far very important in comparison to their school environments. This is because, before studying SNE, the schools could not develop any sorts of attitudes towards SNIE in the teachers. During the study, however, attitudes towards SNIE were developed from zero level to drastically growing strongly positive in most cases at all levels (cognitive, affective and behavioral). On the other hand, after their study, the previously positively constructed attitudes especially the behavioral attitudes gradually getting diminished in the school environments where it is expected to develop better.

There are contributing factors for what happened to attitudes in the two settings. In the study environments, SNIE courses, exposure to students and teachers with visual impairments and involvement in teaching practices in special schools could bring positive attitudes. But in the school contexts, negative attitudes from school directors and educational administrators, absence of collaborative work, lack of skills of SNIE, large number of students in ordinary classrooms, shortage of teaching period, absence of incentives for being SNE teacher, presence of students who could not communicate with medium of instruction and presence of children who directly joined primary school without attending early child hood education or without getting appropriate knowledge and skills in preschools affected negatively attitudes towards IE. There are different attitudinal levels towards SNIE which could not be equally developed or affected. The potential sustainability of different domains of positive attitudes towards SNIE in the long time processes are also unlikely similar. According to this study, the cognitive and affective domains have continued positively whereas the behavioral domain has continued deteriorating in most cases. The sensitivity of the three domains to negative factors is unlikely similar. As to this study, the behavioural domain of attitude towards SNIE is more sensitive to negative factors than its cognitive and affective domains. According to this study, understanding of SNIE ideally during the training and in practice

during teaching differently affected attitudes of teachers towards it. Understanding of SNIE in the school setting where it needs to be interpreted had been reversing the positively constructed attitudes in the college. Especially, those who had been teaching and /or supporting CHwDs in special class under unsupportive conditions became more susceptible to developing negative behavioural attitudes towards SNIE. Thus, contexts of negative experiences with CHwDs in special classes had brought more negative attitudes towards SNIE than teaching in the ordinary classrooms.

Conclusion

Six regular primary school teachers who studied both regular and SNE teaching profession were interviewed. Four themes: the time teachers got awareness of SNE, attitudes of teachers towards the necessity of inclusion of all children in the regular classrooms, teachers' attitudes towards SNIE and factors that have affected attitudes of teachers towards SNIE generated: All participants, except one, acquainted with SNIE after they had joined SNE teachers college. All teachers also strongly believe in inclusion of all children in the ordinary classrooms. In a general sense, all teachers have had strong positive attitudes towards SNIE since they studied SNE. But as per the levels of attitudes, all have had positive cognitive and affective attitudes towards SNIE since their study. But concerning the behavioral domain, there have been teachers who have and do not have positive attitudes. Concerning important factors in developing positive attitudes during the study, SNIE courses played very important roles in addition to some other factors. But during teaching, the negative attitudes towards SNIE mainly from the school directors and educational administrators negatively affected the positive attitudes of the teachers. Hence this study is important to mitigate the existed leadership problems. In addition, the study is important to document the positive attitude of teachers for the implementation of IE. The collaborative work and positive attitudes from educational leaders are very important for the utilization of the positively constructed attitudes of teachers towards SNIE. This study, however, is not without limitation. The findings did not include the attitudes of education leaders, supervisors, students and parents. We strongly recommend case studies design that can include many stakeholders on the attitude towards SNIE. Many local and international researchers have suggested the need for further research (Mónico et al., 2018; Nilsen, 2018; Tekle Mariam, 2016) on how the school environments either favor or hinder inclusion. Strategies that would make sustain the positively constructed attitudes of teachers towards SNIE are very important.***

References

- Adams,C.,&Manen,M.(2025).Phenomenology. Sage Research Methods.
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412963909.n317>
- Alharthi, N., & Evans, D. (2017).Special education teachers' attitudes towards teaching students with learning disabilities in middle schools in Saudi Arabia, *International Journal of Modern Education Studies*, 1(1),01-15. <http://www.ijonmes.net>
- Baldiris Navarro, S., Zervas, P., Fabregat Gesa, R., & Sampson, D. G.(2016).Developing

- teachers' competences for designing inclusive learning experiences. *Educational Technology & Society*, 19 (1), 17–27.
- Bartonova, M. (2016). Aspects of inclusive education within the Czech educational system. *International Journal of Developmental Disabilities*, 62(1), 51-62. <https://doi.org/10.1179/2047387715Y>
- Bedasa, K. (2017). *Attitudes of teachers and students towards inclusive education in two selected primary schools in Sebeta town, Oromia region* [unpublished master's thesis]. Addis Ababa University, College of Education and Behavioral Studies.
- Birhane, A. D. (2020). Menstrual hygiene management: A study of adolescent schoolgirls in Sebeta town, Oromia region, Ethiopia. *Global Drugs and Therapeutics* 5. <https://doi.org/10.15761/GDT.1000175>
- Black-Hawkins, K. (2012). Developing inclusive classroom practices: What guidance do commercially published texts offer teachers? *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 27(4), 499-516. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2012.720412>
- Cimser, E., & Carney, J. V. (2016). School counsellor training, attitudes, and perceptions of preparedness to provide services to students with disabilities in inclusive schools in Turkey. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2016.1240340>
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- de Boer, A., Pijl, S. J., & Minnaert, A. (2011). Regular primary school teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education: A review of the literature. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 15(3), 331-353. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603110903030089>
- Deneke, Z. (2020). *Practices and challenges of inclusion of children with disabilities the case of Dagimawe Birhan government primary school in Addis Ababa*. [Unpublished master's thesis]. Addis Ababa University, College of Education and Behavioral Studies. URI: <http://etd.aau.edu.et/handle/123456789/24305>
- Desombre, C., Lamotte, M., & Jury, M. (2018). French teachers' general attitude toward inclusion: the indirect effect of teacher efficacy. *Educational Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2018.1472219>
- Eagly, A. H. (1992). Uneven progress: Social psychology and the study of attitudes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 63 (5), 693–710.
- Engelbrecht, P., Savolainen, H., Nel, M., Koskela, T., & Okkolin, M. (2017). Making meaning of inclusive education: Classroom practices in Finnish and South African classrooms compare. *A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 47 (5), 684–702. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2016.1266927>
- Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. (1994). *Constitution of the federal democratic republic of Ethiopia*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Franck, B., & Joshi, D. K. (2017). Including students with disabilities in education for all: Lessons from Ethiopia. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 21(4), 347-360. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2016.1197320>
- Galović, D., Brojčin, B., & Glumbić, N. (2014). The attitudes of teachers towards inclusive

- education in Vojvodina. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 18 (12), 1262-1282. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2014.886307>
- Grondin, J. (1994). *Introduction to Philosophical Hermeneutics*. Yale: Yale University.
- Kurniawati, F., de Boer, A. A., Minnaert, A. E. M. G., & Mangunsong, F. (2014). Characteristics of primary teacher training programmes on inclusion: a literature focus, *Educational Research*, 56(3), 310-326, DOI: 10.1080/00131881.2014.934555
- Kurniawati, F., de Boer, A. A., Minnaert, A. E. M. G., & Mangunsong, F. (2016). Evaluating the effect of a teacher training programme on the primary teachers' attitudes, knowledge and teaching strategies regarding special educational needs. *Educational Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2016.1176125>
- Linder, K., Schwab, S., Emara, M., & Avramidis, E. (2023). Do teachers favor the inclusion of all students? A systematic review of primary school teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2023.2172894>
- Lueger, M., and Vettori, O. (2014). "Finding meaning in higher education: a social hermeneutics approach to higher education research," in *Theory and Method in Higher Education Research II*. eds. J. Huisman and M. Tight (Emerald: Bingley).
- Manen, M. (1997). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- McLeskey, J., Waldron, N. L., & Redd, L. (2014). A case study of a highly effective, inclusive elementary school. *The Journal of Special Education*, 48(1), 59–70. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022466912440455>
- Mezquita-Hoyos, Y. N., Sanchez-Monroy, M. H., Morales-Martinez, G. E., Lopez-Ramirez, E. O., & Reyna-Gonzalez, M. R. (2018). Regular and special education Mexican teachers' attitudes toward school inclusion and disability. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 7(3), 421-430. doi: 10.12973/eu-jer.7.3.421
- Mieghem, A., Verschueren, K., Petry, K., & Struyf, E. (2018). An analysis of research on inclusive education: A systematic search and meta review. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2018.1482012>
- Ministry of Education. (1994). *Education and training policy*. Addis Ababa: St. George Printing Press.
- Ministry of Education. (2006). *Special needs education program strategy: emphasizing inclusive education to meet the UPE and EFA goals*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- Ministry of Education. (2010). *Education sector development program ESDP IV (2010/11-2014/15): Program action plan/pap*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- Ministry of Education. (2012). *Special needs/ inclusive education strategy*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- Ministry of Education. (2015). *Education sector development program V (ESDP V) 2015/16 - 2019/20 : Programme action plan*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- Ministry of Education. (2016). *A master plan for special needs education/inclusive education in Ethiopia 2016-2025*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- Ministry of Education, Education Management Information System and ICT

- Directorate.(2018/2019).*Education statistics annual abstract*. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- Mónico,P., Mensah,A., Grünke,M., Garcia,T., Fernández,E.,&Rodríguez,C.(2018). Teacher knowledge and attitudes towards inclusion: A cross-cultural study in Ghana, Germany and Spain. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2018.1471526>
- Mu,G.M.; Wang,Y., Wang,Z., Feng,Y., Deng,M.,&Liang,S.(2015). An enquiry into the professional competence of inclusive education teachers in Beijing: Attitudes, knowledge, skills, and agency. *Journal of Disability, Development and Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1034912X.2015.1077934>
- Mukhopadhyay, S. (2014). Botswana primary schools teachers' perception of inclusion of learners with special educational needs. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 14(1), 33–42.<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-3802.2012.01269.x>
- Nilsen, S. (2018). Inside but still on the outside? Teachers' experiences with the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs in general education. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*.<https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2018.1503348>
- Paju,B., Rätty,L., Pirttimaa,R., Kontu,E.(2015). The school staff's perception of their ability to teach special educational needs pupils in inclusive settings in Finland. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*.<https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2015.1074731>
- Pantić,N.,&Wubbels,T.(2012). Competence-based teacher education: A change from Didaktik to Curriculum culture?.*Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 44(1), 61-87.<https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2011.620633>
- Ruslin, Mashuri,S., Abdul Rasak,M., Alhabsyi,F., Syam,H.(2022). Semi-structured interview: a methodological reflection on the development of a qualitative research instrument in educational studies. *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education (IOSR-JRME)*, 12(01) 22-29. <https://doi.org/10.9790/7388-1201052229>
- Saloviita,T.& Schaffus,T.(2016).Teacher attitudes towards inclusive education in Finland and Brandenburg, Germany and the issue of extra work. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, DOI: 10.1080/08856257.2016.1194569
- Schwab,S.(2018). *Attitude towards inclusive schooling: A study on students', teachers' and parents' attitudes*. Waxmann.
- Semela, T. (2014). Teacher preparation in Ethiopia: a critical analysis of reforms. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 44(1), 113-145.<https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2013.860080>
- Sharma,U., Aiello,P., Pace, M.E., Round,P.,& Subban,P.(2017).In-service teachers' attitudes, concerns, efficacy and intentions to teach in inclusive classrooms: an international comparison of Australian and Italian teachers, *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, DOI: 10.1080/08856257.2017.1361139
- Sharma,U.,&Nuttal,A.(2016).The impact of training on pre-service teacher attitudes, concerns, and efficacy towards inclusion. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 44(2), 142-155.<https://doi.org/10.1080/1359866X.2015.1081672>
- Štemberger,T.&Kiswarday,V.(2017). Attitude towards inclusive education: The

- perspective of Slovenian preschool and primary school teachers. *European Journal of Special Needs Education* (v (i) p.)
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2017.1297573>
- Stella, c.s.c, Forlin, c., & Lan, A.M. (2007). The Influence of an Inclusive Education Course on Attitude Change of Pre-service Secondary Teachers in Hong Kong, *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education* , 35(2), 161-179, DOI: 10.1080/13598660701268585
- Tekle Mariam, A. (2016). *Quality of interpretation services and its implication in creating inclusive classrooms for deaf preparatory school students. A publication of the Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa, EASSRR* ,32(2)
- Terfassa, D., Bersissa, A., & Tadesse, K. (2016). Teachers' knowledge, attitude and practices of inclusive education in Nekemte town and its surrounding government primary schools. *Science, Technology and Arts Research Journal*.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/star.v5i1.16>
- Thu, D.N.T., Thuy, L.T.T, Blackburn, C., & Puttick, M. (2022). Towards an ecological model of inclusive practice for children with special educational needs in Vietnam: perceptions of primary school teachers. *PRACTICE*, DOI: 10.1080/25783858.2022.2147017
- UNESCO. (2009). *Policy guidelines on Inclusion in Education*. France: UNESCO
- United Nations. (2006). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol*. New York: United Nations.
- United Nations Children's Fund. (2013). *Educating teachers for children with disabilities: Mapping, scoping and best practices exercise in the context of developing inclusive education*. Right Education and Protection Project
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (1994). *The Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education*. UNESCO.
- Varcoe, L. & Boyle, C. (2013). Pre-service primary teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. *International Journal of Experimental Educational Psychology*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2013.785061>
- Vettori, O. (2018). Shared misunderstandings? Competing and conflicting meaning structures in quality assurance. *Qual. High. Educ.* 24, 85–101. doi: 10.1080/13538322.2018.1491786
- Visković, I., & Jevtić, A. V. (2017). Development of professional teacher competences for cooperation with parents. *Early Child Development and Care*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2017.1299145>
- Yeo, L.S., Chong, W.H., Neihart, M.F. & Huan, V.S. (2014). Teachers' experience with inclusive education in Singapore. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2014.934781>