Review of: "Perceptions and Teaching Strategies for School Inclusion"

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Global comment: Good work. I genuinely enjoyed reading this manuscript and feel it holds considerable potential. The topic is compelling, and the approach undertaken offers valuable insights. Below are my suggestions aimed at further enhancing the paper's impact and clarity. I believe these adjustments will not only strengthen the argument but also highlight the significant contributions your work offers to the field. Please consider my comments as constructive suggestions. I look forward to seeing the continued development of this promising research.

Abstract

Your abstract offers a thorough overview of your study. However, enhancing its appeal could further engage readers and underscore the significance of your research. I suggest a better articulation of the research approach and methods used, emphasising the major findings and their relevance to the field, to clearly articulate the research's impact and its potential to influence future practices and studies.

For instance:

"The integration of students into educational environments is profoundly influenced by teachers' perceptions, beliefs, and emotions, alongside their methodological adaptations to embrace classroom diversity. This study delves into teachers' attitudes towards student inclusion and explores the strategies employed to facilitate such inclusion in classrooms. Through a quantitative, descriptive research design, this paper analyses responses from 60 Early Childhood and Primary Education teachers, utilizing the Teacher Perceptions Questionnaire on Inclusive Pedagogy and the Teaching Adaptations Scale. The findings reveal a positive stance on student inclusion among teachers and identify effective strategies for fostering inclusion in mainstream settings. This research contributes to the existing body of literature by highlighting the crucial role of teacher perceptions in educational inclusion and underscores the practical implications for enhancing inclusive practices in educational institutions."

Although, consider revising the abstract according to the information that you will potentially introduce in revising your manuscript.

Introduction

Your introduction provides a comprehensive overview of the multifaceted concept of inclusion, linking it to important themes such as diversity, social justice, equity, human rights, and democracy. The connection to educational policies and

practices, the role of teacher training, and the importance of understanding teacher perceptions and strategies for inclusive education are well-articulated.

Following your thorough introduction, I have a few suggestions for potential improvements or areas of further exploration:

1. Consider clarifying the main thesis or argument early on to guide readers through the content. A clear, concise statement of the study's objectives or research questions could help focus the reader's attention.

2. The transition between paragraphs could be smoother and more objective. Consider linking each paragraph more explicitly to the central thesis of your work.

3. While you've done well to situate your study within a broad context, a brief discussion of the gaps or limitations in the current understanding of teacher perceptions and inclusive strategies could strengthen the rationale for your study. Highlighting what makes your study unique or necessary might compel your audience to read further.

4. You've outlined a dual objective towards the end of the introduction, which is great. However, it might be beneficial to expand slightly on how these objectives will contribute to the field. Will your study propose new frameworks, validate existing theories, or suggest practical strategies for educators? Why is your study relevant?

5. While you reference a wide range of sources, consider briefly discussing any critiques or counterarguments to the prevailing theories or practices in inclusive education. This will not only demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the field but also position your study within a broader debate.

6. You hint at the practical implications of your study in terms of teacher perceptions and methodological strategies. Making explicit the potential impact of your findings on policy, practice, or further research could make a compelling case for the significance of your work.

7. Ensure that all references are formatted correctly and consistently throughout your text. It might also be beneficial to double-check that all the cited works are directly relevant to your study's focus to maintain a tight scope.

Major concern

Based on the introduction you've provided, it appears you've made a solid effort to contextualize your study within the broader literature on inclusive education, teacher perceptions, and teaching strategies. However, the introduction primarily focuses on theoretical underpinnings and legislative context, with less emphasis on empirical works that have directly investigated the study aims. For a study that seeks to analyse teacher perceptions of educational inclusion and explore the methodological strategies they employ, it's critical to directly address existing empirical research on these topics. The literature on the topic is abundant. More specifically, this could involve:

a. Summarizing Key Findings: Provide a brief overview of what recent empirical studies have found regarding teachers' perceptions of inclusion and the effectiveness of various inclusive teaching strategies. This not only situates your study within current research but also highlights the contribution your research aims to make.

b. Identifying Research Gaps: While your introduction mentions the importance of understanding teacher perceptions and inclusive strategies, it could be strengthened by explicitly stating how existing empirical research is insufficient or where gaps in the literature exist. This could involve pointing out a lack of research on specific aspects of inclusion,

such as particular strategies within diverse classroom settings or the impact of teacher training on perceptions of inclusion.

c. Linking to Your Study's Aims: After discussing existing empirical work, directly tie these discussions to your study's objectives. For example, if empirical studies have shown mixed results regarding the relation between attitudes and practices, or the effectiveness of certain inclusive strategies, state how your study aims to further investigate these strategies in your specific context.

d. Highlighting the potential of your study: If your study addresses an area that has been underexplored in empirical research, highlight the novelty of your work. This could be in terms of geographical context, educational levels, specific populations, or teaching strategies that have not been adequately covered in existing studies.

Briefly, to better address empirical works in your introduction, consider adding relevant empirical findings related to your study's aims. This will not only strengthen your rationale for the study but also demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the field and where your research fits within it.

Materials and methods

Your Materials and Methods section provides a clear and concise overview of your research methodology.

Participants

1. Consider mentioning if these teachers were randomly selected or if there was a specific criterion for choosing them, besides their professional experience in attention to diversity.

2. If possible, include a rationale for your sample size. Is 60 considered sufficient for the aims of your study, and is there any statistical power analysis or precedent in similar studies that guided this choice?

Design

You've clearly identified the study as exploratory with a cross-sectional survey design aimed at describing teacher attitudes and identifying inclusive methodological strategies.

1. It might be beneficial to briefly discuss why this design is the most suitable for your research objectives, particularly in terms of its strengths in capturing a snapshot of current practices and perceptions.

Instruments

The detailed description of the instruments used, including the Teacher Perceptions Questionnaire on Inclusive Pedagogy and the Teaching Adaptations Scale, is excellent.

1. Consider adding a brief justification for selecting these specific instruments over others, such as their relevance to your research questions or their proven reliability and validity in previous studies.

You've done well to include the reliability coefficients for the instruments, which supports their credibility.

1. It could be useful to also mention any steps taken to ensure the validity of these instruments in the context of your

study, or any adaptations made to better fit your research aims.

Procedure and data analysis

Your description of the procedure and data analysis methods in sections 2.4 and 2.5 provides a straightforward and methodical approach to conducting your research.

Procedure

It's great that you've outlined the process of selecting educational centers and obtaining voluntary participation through their management teams.

1. Including a mention of obtaining informed consent, including informed consent, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw would strengthen the ethical considerations of your study.

Analysis of Data

1. Considering the exploratory nature of your study, it could be useful to explore whether any additional analyses might be warranted based on the data you collect. For instance, correlational analyses to explore relationships between variables (e.g., between teacher attitudes and the use of inclusive strategies) or regression analyses if predicting factors influencing teacher attitudes. For instance, You could explore how attitudes translate into actual practices in the classroom, potentially identifying a gap between beliefs and practice.
2. Briefly mention any steps taken during data preparation, such as handling missing data or outliers.

Results

The presentation of your results offers a clear and structured overview of the teachers' perceptions towards inclusion across three key dimensions: basis of inclusion, training and resources, and personal supports.

1. Consider using the terms *M* for mean and *SD* for standard deviation.
2. Consider also discussing the significance of these findings in relation to the scores' possible ranges.

I will draw attention to some aspects that can be highlighted in the presentation of results, but above all, to be considered in the discussion.

1. "Basis of Inclusion". Your results indicate a generally positive attitude towards educational inclusion among teachers. This is a critical area for discussion connecting with existing literature.
2. "Training and Resources". The average score in this dimension suggests that teachers perceive their training and available resources as somewhat inadequate. This is a critical area for discussion, as it highlights a potential barrier to effective inclusive education. You might discuss how this finding aligns with or diverges from existing literature on teacher preparedness for inclusion and suggest areas for improvement in teacher education programs.
3. "Personal Supports". The scores here indicate that personal support is available to some extent, but perhaps not adequately meeting teachers' needs. This finding could lead to discussions about the types of support teachers find

most beneficial and how educational institutions can better provide these supports. Comparing these findings with previous research could reveal common challenges and innovative solutions in different contexts.

Considering the detailed breakdown in Table 2:

1. "Basis of Inclusion". The item-level analysis provides a nuanced understanding of teachers' attitudes toward inclusion. High scores on items related to the fairness of inclusion, the benefits of inclusive education, and support for inclusion among teachers indicate strong foundational beliefs in favour of inclusive education. This suggests not only a general positive disposition towards inclusion but also specific areas where teachers feel strongly supportive.

2. The relatively lower score on the item concerning all students learning in a standardized environment indicates potential concerns or realism about the challenges of fully inclusive settings, especially for students with moderate to severe disabilities. This could lead to a discussion about differentiated instruction and the need for flexible teaching strategies.

3. "Training and Resources". The detailed item scores provide insight into specific areas where teachers feel their training and resources are lacking, notably in having sufficient time and material resources to attend to students with Special Educational Needs (SEN). This highlights a critical gap between the ideal of inclusion and its implementation in classrooms.

4. Given these insights, recommendations could focus on specific types of training (e.g., time management, resource allocation) and the provision of additional resources tailored to the needs of all students.

5. "Personal Supports". The scores on personal support from the PT teacher and psychopedagogical team suggest that while some support is perceived, there's room for improvement in its effectiveness or availability. This may point to the need for more targeted support services and better coordination among support staff and classroom teachers.

6. Based on the specific areas identified where training and resources were deemed inadequate, professional development programs could be tailored to address these gaps, focusing on practical strategies for inclusion, managing diverse classrooms, and leveraging limited resources effectively.

7. The feedback on personal supports underscores the importance of a collaborative approach to inclusion. Enhancing communication and collaboration between classroom teachers and support specialists could optimize the support provided to all students.

8. The nuanced responses at the item level should inform both policy discussions and practical interventions in schools. For example, policies could prioritize the allocation of resources and supports based on the specific areas identified as lacking by teachers.

9. These detailed insights into teachers' perceptions should guide the development of more nuanced and effective inclusion strategies that acknowledge both the strengths and limitations of current practices.

10. The Teacher Teaching Adaptations Scale. Provides essential insights into how teachers implement inclusive educational strategies across various dimensions. This section effectively quantifies the extent to which teachers utilize classroom organization, teaching and evaluation, clustering, and teaching adaptation strategies.

11. Your results indicate that teachers frequently employ classroom organization and teaching and evaluation strategies with high mean scores. This suggests a strong foundation in the application of inclusive practices. Highlighting this

positive finding in your discussion could underscore the readiness and capability of teachers to support inclusive education. Comparing these findings with previous research could help identify if this is a widespread phenomenon or unique to your study's context.

12. The scores for clustering and adapting activities suggest a moderate to high application but also indicate room for improvement, especially in clustering strategies for small group activities. Discussing how these strategies contribute to inclusive education and the potential barriers to their more widespread use could provide valuable insights. This could involve exploring teacher confidence, training on specific adaptation strategies, differentiated instruction, and inclusive pedagogy, or resource availability.

13. The breakdown of scores for specific practices within each dimension reveals critical areas of strength and potential gaps. For instance, the high scores in establishing norms and routines, and considering the needs of students with SEN in programming, indicate a structured approach to inclusion. Meanwhile, lower scores in certain clustering strategies may point to challenges in implementing more differentiated instruction. Highlight this in your discussion - discuss how these specific practices align with inclusive pedagogy principles and where targeted professional development could enhance teacher competency.

Conclusions and discussion

Your "Conclusions and Discussion" section effectively summarizes the findings of your study, connecting them to the broader context of educational inclusion. It succinctly wraps up the research objectives, clearly presents the main findings, and acknowledges the progress towards and challenges of fully implementing inclusive education. To further enhance this section, consider the following:

1. Specifically address the apparent contradiction regarding teachers' training adequacy and adaptation strategies to strengthen your argument.
2. Providing a more comprehensive view of how the representativeness of your sample might affect the generalizability of your findings, along with discussing any methodological constraints, could add depth to your analysis.
3. Offer specific directions for future research based on your findings, such as exploring the effectiveness of particular training programs or strategies in diverse educational settings, longitudinal studies on teacher perceptions, or qualitative research exploring teachers' experiences in more depth.
4. Detailing concrete implications for educational practice and policy could enhance the utility of your conclusions, making your findings more actionable for practitioners and policymakers.

Major concern

1. Relate your findings to existing literature on teachers' perceptions and practices of inclusion and the challenges they face to highlight your study's contributions and the gaps it addresses.
2. Discuss the practical implications of your findings for educational policy, teacher training programs, and school administration, specifically addressing gaps in training and resources.
3. Discuss how your findings contribute to theoretical frameworks or concepts related to educational inclusion,

elaborating on the alignment with existing theories and implications for further theoretical development.