



## A Study on Attitudes of General Education Teachers towards Inclusive Education for Students with Intellectual Disability in the Varanasi District of Uttar Pradesh

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**Abstract:** The present study aimed to investigate the attitudes of general education teachers towards inclusive education (IE) for students with intellectual disabilities (ID) in the Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh. The purpose of this research is to inquire into the attitudes of general education teachers on IE, to identify the factors that contribute to the formation of those attitudes, and to determine whether or not these factors influence the inclusion of children with ID in regular classroom settings. Education can be a form of bias when it fails to address diversity and individual needs adequately. We know, however, that children with ID, like members of other disadvantaged populations, face discrimination and are not provided with educational opportunities that are suited to their special requirements in mainstream institutions of higher learning. A good education helps children with ID to grow emotionally, socially, intellectually, and morally. Human dignity relies in large part on one's level of education. Significant changes to the educational system have occurred over the past few decades as an outcome of a growing commitment on the part of many countries to include children with ID in traditional academic settings. Inclusion refers to efforts to maintain students with ID in general education rather than segregated programs. The current study made use of a descriptive survey technique. The participants were all general education teachers working in the Varanasi districts of Uttar Pradesh. Fifty-three general education teachers from twelve schools with varying management systems (government, aided, and private) were selected for this study, employing a non-probability, purposeful sampling technique. This research showed that most general education teachers have positive attitudes toward providing IE for students with ID. The research conclusions will inform the design of effective policies to promote IE, improving the quality of life and social conditions across the country. This study will help academics on the right route by revealing which areas of professional development, orientation, and awareness activities for general education teachers towards IE for students with ID in the Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh.

**Keywords:** Attitudes, General Education Teachers, Inclusive Education, Students with Intellectual Disability, Varanasi, and Uttar Pradesh.

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## INTRODUCTION

General education teachers with usually developing children have a different perspective on the IE. However, the kind and severity of students' disabilities affect teachers' openness to providing adaptations and their confidence in managing the classroom. Teachers in general school environments are concerned that children with ID and emotional and behavioural disorders will not be able to keep up with the curriculum's rapid evolution and the increased demands placed on them as students and teachers. Teachers in regular schools often feel unequipped to handle a big class of typically developing students and a small class of those with IE. General education teachers' attitudes toward this age group substantially impact the quality and efficacy of learning for the existing population of children with ID. As per IE's guiding principles, children who need extra help in school should get the same opportunities their typically developing peers do. It has been proven that children's academic and social results improve when given the resources and assistance they need to thrive. As a bonus, IE may lessen the negative effects of stereotyping by giving students from both groups more chances to interact with one

another and learn to value their differences and similarities. Students with disabilities can benefit from IE in many ways, including improved academic performance and an increased understanding of social justice and empathy (Salend, 2008). Today's classrooms frequently house a diverse group of students from various backgrounds. Quality teacher preparation in regular classrooms is essential to successfully implementing IE (Mitchell, 2010). Many teachers are confident or willing to take on the additional responsibility of supporting these students with ID since they lack diversity education.

Since it is widely held that teachers' good attitudes about IE are essential for the effective execution of IE programs, understanding teachers' attitudes towards IE is a pressing issue. In the last two decades, many studies have used teachers' attitudes (Norwich, 2008; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). Integrating general education teachers' ideas into creating effective inclusion programming is essential. Exploring where your positive and negative attitudes came from will help you start making some changes. General education teachers have great expectations for the intellectual, social, and

behavioural growth of students with ID who are engaged in the classroom. However, numerous teachers in the traditional model need more resources and expertise to properly apply IE in their classrooms. Since general education teachers figured that the IE helped children feel like they belonged in society and influenced them to learn effectively, they had a negative attitude towards the IE because they believed that having a mixture of students with behavioural challenges and students with ID made the class not easily manageable. The needs of children with ID, especially those with emotional or mental health concerns, are not often met by teachers in regular classrooms. This may be because traditional classroom teachers need more expertise to cope with these students, pushing them to make quick decisions with inaccurate information. Teachers typically believe they are equipped to satisfy the needs of all children, even those with ID. General education teachers have made many claims about IE. However, there is currently a lack of evidence to support these claims. The study aims to survey general education teachers in the Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh about their attitudes toward IE.

#### **Attitudes of General Education Teachers towards Inclusive Education**

The present study assessed general education teachers' attitudes on IE for children with ID in regular classrooms and any differences. This study explored how teachers' attitudes impact IE implementation. Education for children with special needs demands work and competence. Since student-teacher contact is essential to learning, teachers' attitudes affect impaired students' achievement in inclusive contexts (Ernest & Rogers, 2009). Teacher attitudes affect their ability to connect and care about children. Successful learning requires teachers to treat students impartially. Teachers who challenge and trust students are valued. Teachers of special needs students should be hopeful. All children, including those with ID, benefit from teacher attention and direction. Teachers' views determine ID students' inclusion. Education must be inclusive. IE alone can protect children's education and promote education for everybody. Most agree that inclusive schools require teachers. IE succeeds because teachers are hopeful. Only an average classroom teacher, the child's peers, and those interacting with the ID youngster can decide on inclusion. The classroom reflects teachers' attitudes toward socioeconomic children, who benefit from positive reinforcement and clear standards. Career and personality affect general education teachers. Teachers' attitudes influence IE success in traditional schools (Frost, 2012). Teachers' attitudes toward IE have been explored earlier. Initial studies indicated no disputes between teachers on student diversity and emotional conduct. Knowing how general education teachers feel about IE has become essential for conducting the adoption of assessments for children with ID in the Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh.

This form of teaching allows students of diverse ages and skill levels to learn together. Everyone, from children and their families to teachers and lawmakers, should see pupils' differences as assets rather than weaknesses. While IE is sometimes framed as an attempt to reintegrate troubled youth into mainstream society, its positive effects on the classroom environment are felt by all students. According to the UNESCO definition of inclusion from 2009, people with disabilities should not have their needs prioritized over those without disabilities. IE has spent considerable resources studying the occurrence of individual distinction. Students, including those with special needs, can benefit from an entire general education program. Pearce (2008) says inclusive teachers must have a good attitude toward students with ID. Teacher attitudes are essential to assessing IE achievement (Ilisko, 2021; SaÓte, 2016). Teacher attitudes affect disabled students' progress (Ernest & Rogers, 2009; Goyena, 2008; Rizzo & Vispoel, 1992). Hernandez *et al.* (2016) describe inclusive classrooms as challenging for teachers without preservice preparation and inclusive practice skills. Teacher inclusion perceptions must be assessed and addressed to adopt inclusive procedures. Today, IE is respected for helping students with ID reach their potential, promoting equality, and providing a globally inclusive environment for their development. Social acceptance, peace, and teamwork are IE principles. General education teacher has to promote IE for students with ID in the Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh.

#### **The Problem Statement**

The study shows that implementing IE can be challenging (Tungaraza & Lyakurwa, 2013). Accessible education for all students is challenging to achieve due to several factors. Teachers' attitudes against students with disabilities are major barriers to the implementation of IE in many countries, as per a study by Dagnew (2013). According to research (Paschal *et al.*, 2020), teacher opinions on students with impairments play a significant role in determining whether or not these students are integrated into regular classrooms. Traditional teachers are important for the success of IE since they are often the only children in these situations who will ever know (Tungaraza & Lyakurwa, 2013). A teacher's attitude may be determined by several factors, including the extent and severity of the student's disability, the teacher's own experiences, the teacher's gender, and the availability of sufficient resources. The outcomes of this study stress the need to provide teachers with various effective methods, optimistic attitudes, and significant authority. Teachers' attitudes need to change so that students with ID can be accepted into regular classes. The investigator wanted to hear from primary school teachers who have used IE in their classrooms. Therefore, the study entitled: "A Study on Attitudes of General Education Teachers Towards Inclusive Education for Students with Intellectual Disability in the Varanasi District of Uttar Pradesh."

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Jury, M. *et al.* (2021): The level of success in implementing IE appears to be directly related to teachers' attitudes about it. The study aims to confirm and broaden previous conclusions about the connection between student disabilities and teachers' integrity in the French language classroom. A total of 311 teachers participated in an online survey. The findings also demonstrated that the status of the teacher made a difference, with special education teachers having more positive attitudes than regular teachers, even if both groups were less enthusiastic about enrolling children with Autism than pupils with other disabilities. The findings and their implications for education for those who work with pupils with Autism are discussed.

Singh, S. *et al.* (2020): Given the significance of teachers' attitudes to the success of the IE program, this study set out to study their attitudes and points of view. In Gaya, Bihar, all future teachers were surveyed. We employed quota sampling to select 108 future and present primary and secondary teachers from 11 schools under public and private management. We are especially curious about how attitudes on IE vary among teachers concerning delivery mode, gender, and geographic location. The information was collected via a survey that asked teachers about their thoughts on IE. The findings indicate that teachers generally hold a positive attitude toward IE. Teachers-to-be and city dwellers often viewed IE with greater approval than their rural and pre-service colleagues. However, we found no statistically significant gender gap in teachers' attitudes toward IE.

Galaterou, J. *et al.* (2017): There has been a shift in recent years towards an IE in the field of disabilities. The study examined whether teachers' demographics (gender, age, and job stress) were linked to how they saw IE in the classroom. The study included the participation of 208 Greek teachers from grades 1-12 across five prefectures. For instance, newer teachers had higher levels of optimism than their more seasoned colleagues. However, no discernible disparities between both genders were found. Not only did researchers note unusually high levels of stress, but they also identified where it came from. Lastly, a decrease in teachers' positive attitudes toward IE was associated with increased stress levels in the classroom.

### The Objective

To find out the level of attitude among general education teachers towards inclusive education for students with intellectual disability in the Varanasi District of Uttar Pradesh.

### The Research Questions

1. What is the level of attitude among general education teachers towards inclusive education for students with

intellectual disability in the Varanasi District of Uttar Pradesh?

1.1 What is the difference between gender, age, experience, and educational qualification among general education teachers regarding their attitudes toward inclusive education for students with intellectual disability in the Varanasi District of Uttar Pradesh?

1.2 What are the attitudes about inclusive education that differ for the types and locations of schools among general education teachers for students with intellectual disability in the Varanasi District of Uttar Pradesh?

### Operational Definitions

#### Attitude

Attitude can be considered a mental representation of a person's emotional state, and it influences how that person reacts to an issue. Attitude is a person's manner of thinking about something. This could be another person, a thing, or even an idea.

#### Inclusive Education

An inclusive education accommodates students of varying academic, emotional, linguistic, and social backgrounds by creating a welcoming classroom setting. The term "inclusive education" refers to including students with and without disabilities in mainstream classrooms. In this context, "inclusion" refers to classroom environments where students with and without disabilities work together.

#### General Education Teachers

The phrase general education teacher is often used interchangeably with teacher to indicate the professional who instructs students. A teacher helps others learn and grow or teaches and trains people under their care.

#### Intellectual Disability

"Intellectual disability is a condition characterized by significant limitations in intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviour that originates before the age of 22." (AAIDD, 2021).

In this study, the term 'students with intellectual disability' refers to individuals who have mild and moderate IQ on the standardized test attending inclusive education in the district of Varanasi in the State of Uttar Pradesh.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Method

The method used in this study was a descriptive survey. A survey study uses quantitative techniques to describe and uncover measurable connections between established variables. The study aimed to examine general education teachers' attitudes towards IE for Students with IE in the Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh.

**Population and Sampling Technique**

Respondents were selected using a structured method of purposeful sampling. Borg and Gall (1989) describe how an investigator could employ purposeful sampling to select respondents that would yield useful insights into the research question. This method was chosen so that comprehensive information regarding teachers' attitudes on IE could be collected. Fifty-three general education teachers from the Varanasi district in Uttar Pradesh participated in the study.

**Variables of the Study**

Demographic variables such as age, gender, educational qualification, type of school, location, and experience were employed for statistical analysis in this study.

**Tool**

Data collection is an essential part of every research. Data collection for each study requires the creation of appropriate tools, the use of appropriate measuring processes, and the selection of the relevant characteristics of the samples gathered. The researcher used a rating scale containing 11 questions on general education teachers' attitudes towards IE for students with ID in the districts of Varanasi in the state of Uttar Pradesh took part in the study.

**Reliability of the Tool**

**Table: 1.1 Reliability of the Tool**

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Attitude	0.594	11

The reliability of the questionnaire is evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. The following table 1:1 gives the initial Cronbach's alpha for the construct considered. The result shows that most of the construct has a reliability of less than 0.6, which is not highly reliable (The reliability should be more than 0.6).

**Ethical Statements of the Study**

Under local legislation and institutional policy, an ethical review and permission for the study involving humans were not essential. Everyone who took part in the study has provided written consent to take part. Ethical considerations that were built into the informed consent were:

- Confidentiality,
- Data security,
- The participant's ability to opt out of the study at any time, and
- When studying with people, preserving confidentiality was one of the most pressing ethical concerns.

**Data Collection Procedure**

The researcher will create a device to aid in the gathering of information. Tools will be distributed to general education teachers at schools in the Varanasi districts of Uttar Pradesh.

**Statistical Techniques**

Descriptive statistics like Mean, Standard Deviation, frequency, percentage, etc., were computed to examine the data. Inferential statistics like z-tests were also utilized.

**Data Analysis of Research Questions**

The method used in the study is exploratory, as it operates by scoring the variables. The collected data covers both the qualitative and quantitative data. Accordingly, the study uses qualitative and quantitative techniques to analyse data. The first stage examined the descriptive statistics of the measurement items and assessed their reliability. The data were analysed via SPSS 20.0 for Windows. Descriptive statistics were used to describe and summarize the properties of the mass of data collected from the respondents. Parametric statistics like one-way ANOVA and Z-test were used to compare the factors considered between different levels of the demographic variables. A level of 0.05 was established a priori for determining statistical significance. The following Table 1:1 gives the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

**Table: 1.1 Demographic characteristic of the respondents**

S. No	Variable	Group	Frequency	Percent
1	<b>Gender</b>	Male	15	28.3%
		Female	38	71.7%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100</b>
2	<b>Educational Qualification</b>	Postgraduate	37	68.8%
		Graduate	10	18.9%
		Diploma	06	13.3%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100</b>
3	<b>Age</b>	Below 30 years	12	22.6%
		31-40 years	21	39.6%
		Above 40 years	20	37.7%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100</b>
4	<b>Experience</b>	Below 5 years	10	18.9%
		5-10 years	14	26.4%
		Above 10 years	29	54.7%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100</b>
5	<b>Types of School</b>	Government	12	22.6%
		Aided	13	24.5%
		Private	28	52.8%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100</b>
6	<b>Location of School</b>	Urban	23	43.4%
		Semi-Urban	16	30.2%
		Rural	14	26.4%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100</b>

**Research Question: #1**

**What is the level of attitude among general education teachers towards inclusive education for students**



**with intellectual disability in the Varanasi District of Uttar Pradesh?**

To find the level of attitude among general education teachers towards inclusive education for students with ID in Varanasi, the respondents are asked 11 questions on a five-point Likert scale.

The responses are scored as 1 for ‘Strongly disagree,’ 2 for ‘Disagree,’ 3 for ‘Undecided,’ 4 for ‘Agree,’ and 5 for ‘Strongly agree’. The total score of the 11 questions for all 53 respondents is found, based on which we calculate the mean % score of the level of attitude among general education teachers towards inclusive education for students with ID in Varanasi  $[MPS = \frac{MeanScore \times 100}{Maximumpossiblescore}]$ . This score is classified into one of four groups: poor or low if the mean % score is less than 35%; average if the mean % score is between 35 and 50 percent; good or medium if the mean % score lies in the interval 50 to 75% and excellent or high if the mean % score is above 75%. A one-sample Z test is carried out to test the significance. The following table gives the Mean, SD, Mean % Score and Z value of the variable considered. (Loyd, B. H., & R. R. Abidin. R. R. (1985). Revision of the Parent Stress Index. *Journal of Pediatric Psychiatry*, 10(2), 169).

**Table: 1.3 Mean, standard deviation for the level of attitude among general education teachers towards inclusive education**

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Mean % score
Attitudes	53	41.26	4.16	75.03

**Interpretation**

From Table (1.3) it is found that the Mean value and Mean score value of the level of attitudes towards inclusive education for students with intellectual disability among general education teachers working in an inclusive setting in the Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh are respectively 41.26 and 75.03 with the standard deviation value of 4.16. From the results, it concluded that the mean score (75.03) of level of attitudes towards inclusive education among general education teachers working in inclusive setting in the Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh is more mean value (41.26). Therefore, the researcher concluded that the

level of attitude toward inclusive education (IE) for students with an intellectual disability is excellent (the score lies in the interval 50 to 75% and excellent or high).

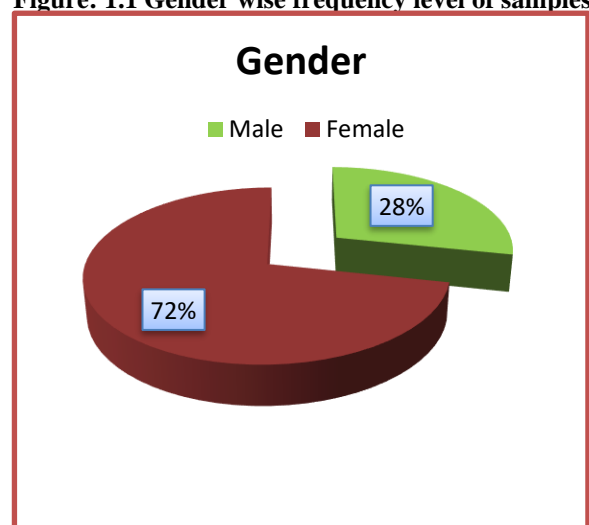
**Research Question: #1:1**

**What is the difference between gender, educational qualification, age, and experience among general education teachers regarding their attitudes toward inclusive education for students with intellectual disability in the Varanasi District of Uttar Pradesh?**

**Table 1.4 Means, Standard deviation and Z value for Gender**

Variables	Group	N	Mean	SD	Z	P Value
Attitude	Male	15	42.13	4.64	0.956	0.344
	Female	38	40.92	3.96		

**Figure: 1.1 Gender wise frequency level of samples**



**Interpretation**

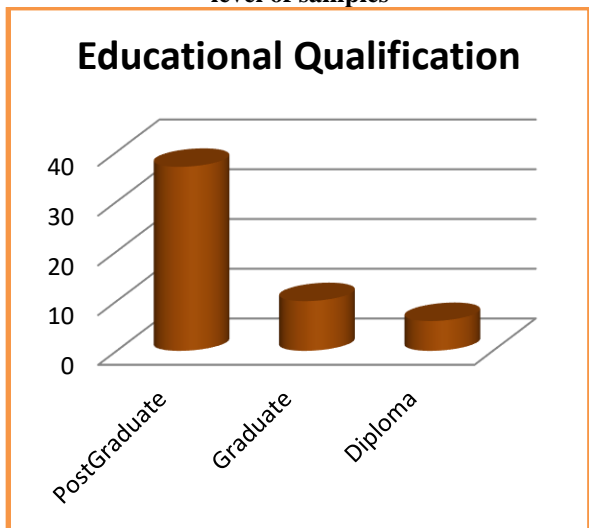
A one-sample analysis of variance is used to test hypotheses about means when there are three or more groups of one independent variable. In this case, educational qualification, age and experience were considered the independent variable, which included three groups each. So, ANOVA was used to compare the mean scores of different educational qualifications, age and experience groups and the result is exhibited in Table 1.

**Table 1.5 Means, Standard deviation and F value for Educational Qualification, Age, Experience**

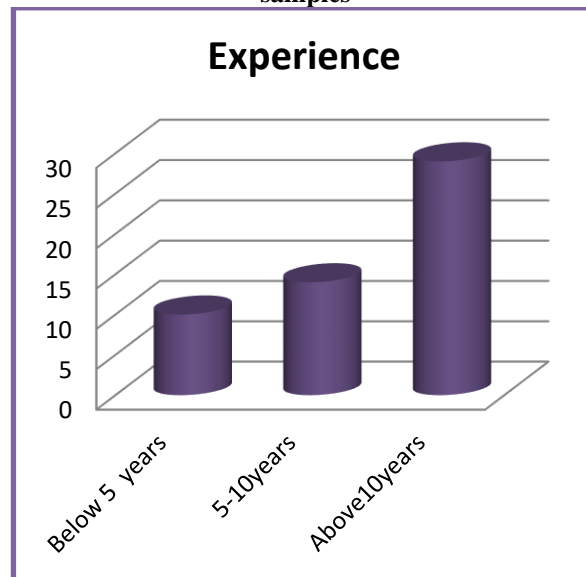
Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	Z	P value
Educational Qualification	Postgraduate	37	41.05	4.01	0.168	0.846
	Graduate	10	41.9	3.98		
	Diploma	6	41.5	5.86		
	Below 30 years	12	41.67	4.03		
Age	31-40 years	21	41.19	4.06	0.072	0.93
	Above 40 years	20	41.1	4.52		
	Below 5 years	10	43.5	4.25		

	5-10years	14	40.93	3.41		
	Above10years	29	40.66	4.32		
<b>Experience</b>					1.864	0.166

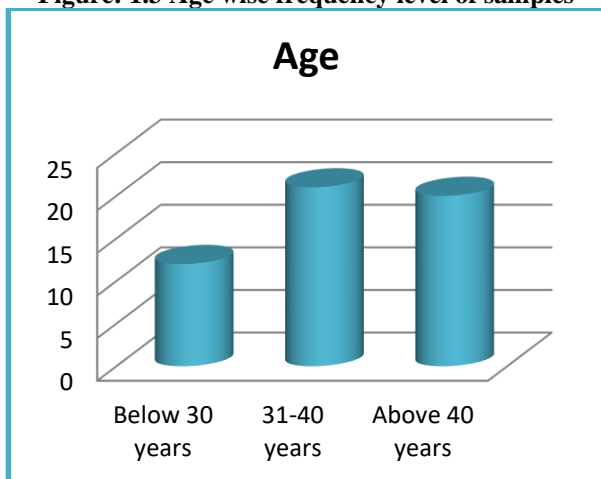
**Figure: 1.2 Educational qualification wise frequency level of samples**



**Figure:1.4 Experience wise frequency level of samples**



**Figure: 1.3 Age wise frequency level of samples**



**Interpretation**

The results of the ANOVA test depicted in Table 1.5 reveal that the statistical value of p is more than 0.05 for the variable attitude. Hence, we conclude that no significant difference exists between the different educational qualifications or age or gender for the variable attitude toward inclusive education for students with intellectual disability.

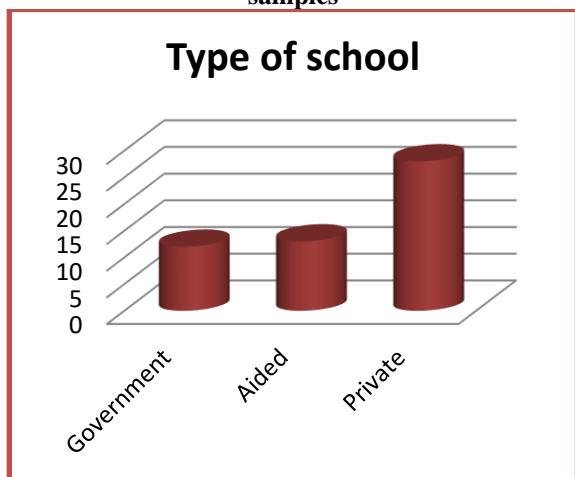
**Research Question: #1:2**

**What are the attitudes about inclusive education that differ for the types and locations of schools among general education teachers for students with intellectual disability in the Varanasi District of Uttar Pradesh?**

**Table 1.6 Means, Standard deviation and F value for type of school and location**

Variable	Group	N	M	SD	Z	P Value
Type of School	Government	12	41.25	4.88	0.039	0.962
	Aided	13	41.54	3.23		
	Private	28	41.14	4.34		
Location of School	Urban	23	41.57	3.53	0.112	0.894
	Sem-Urban	16	40.94	5.95		
	Rural	14	41.14	2.63		

**Figure: 1.5 Type of school wise frequency level of samples**



**Figure: 1.6 Location of school wise frequency level of samples**



**Interpretation**

The results of the ANOVA test depicted in Table 1.6 reveal that the statistical value of p is more than 0.05 for the variable attitude. Hence, we conclude that no significant difference exists between the different types of schools and locations for the variable attitude toward inclusive education for students with intellectual disability.

**Delimitation**

- The study was delimited to the Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh.
- The sample size is limited to 53
- The study’s sample type is limited to general education teachers in the Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh.

**RECOMMENDATION**

After sharing their findings, the researchers made some recommendations to schools, general education teachers of students with ID, and the Department of School Administration and Education responsible for

carrying out the effective execution of IE to ensure the full inclusion of students with ID in the Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh. The following recommendations are based on the primary data gathered and the secondary sources referenced.

1. The study recommends that increased awareness is very much required among general education teachers and parents regarding including students with ID in the Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh.
2. The study recommends that schools be flexible enough and relax in guidelines linked to age limit, admission, entrance examination, alternate subject, promotion and flexibility in course duration to promote IE among students with ID in the Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh.
3. The study recommends that general education teachers require more hands-on training on curriculum adaptations, which consents and enhances them to be more operative teachers in an inclusive environment.
4. The study recommends that general education teachers raise other contributions on handling students with ID to ensure the successful implementation of inclusive education in the Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh.
5. The general education teachers must collaborate with school administrations to bring improvement among students with ID in inclusive settings.
6. The study recommends that general education teachers know all the IE norms and rules for successful implementation.
7. The study recommends that all general teacher education programs include an inclusive education section.
8. The study recommends that general education teachers take appropriate measures to change inappropriate behaviors and learn new academic behaviors.
9. The study recommends that the school authorities organize teacher training workshops on IE to train the general education teachers.
10. The study recommends that students’ interests and well-being always be kept in mind while implementing IE and techniques on students with ID.

**CONCLUSION**

A positive attitude toward IE among teachers may be fostered by a framework that facilitates quality classroom education. We need to organize classes, hire more assistants, set aside more time for lesson planning, reduce the number of students with ID in each classroom, and broaden the range of ways in which parents, students, and teachers can collaborate. Teachers should have a solid understanding of inclusion theory before making curricular changes. An effective educational system that caters to the demands of modern students must be developed, no matter how challenging this task may be. This study was conducted to know the teachers' attitudes towards IE for students with ID in the Varanasi district

of Uttar Pradesh. The outcomes of this study show that general education teachers have an excellent attitude towards IE. This is due to the result of the inclusion of IE. Both male and female teachers in general education have positive attitudes towards IE for children with ID, and the teachers' gender does not influence these attitudes. Based on the findings of this study, the researcher concludes that urban teachers have a more positive attitude toward IE than those in rural areas in the Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh.

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