
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Gauging The Personal Attributes and Attitudes of Teachers Toward Inclusive Education

Reynan Batain

Mandaue City Sped Center High School

Corresponding Author: Reynan Batain, **E-mail:** reynan.batain1@gmail.com

| ABSTRACT

This study assessed the personal attributes and attitudes of teachers toward inclusive education. The study was conducted at Mandaue City Sped Center High School (MCSCHS) for the school year 2023-2024. Using universal sampling, 58 junior high school teachers participated, completing a five-part questionnaire that included the Brief Resilience Scale, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, Life Orientation Test, and an adapted attitudes towards inclusion scale. Data analysis employed frequency counts, percentages, weighted means, and Pearson's *r* correlation. Results revealed that respondents were predominantly female, highly educated, with diverse specializations and teaching experience. Teachers demonstrated high levels of resiliency, self-esteem, and optimism, as well as positive attitudes towards inclusive education. However, no significant relationship was found between personal attributes and attitudes towards inclusive education. The study concluded that while teachers possess strong psychological resources and positive attitudes, these attributes are not significantly related to their attitudes towards inclusive education, suggesting other factors may play a more crucial role in shaping inclusive practices. Recommendations include continued personal development for teachers, focusing on specific skills and knowledge related to inclusive education, and implementation of targeted professional development programs by school administrators to address practical challenges of inclusive education.

| KEYWORDS

Inclusive education, general education teachers, resiliency, self-esteem, optimism, teacher attitudes, teacher personal attributes

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

ACCEPTED: 10 April 2026

PUBLISHED: 24 May 2026

DOI: 10.32996/bjtep.2026.5.5.5

Introduction

Inclusive education has become a major priority in basic education because schools are increasingly expected to respond to learner diversity within regular classrooms rather than through separate or exclusionary arrangements. The global movement toward inclusion emphasizes that all learners, including those with disabilities, learning difficulties, behavioral needs, linguistic differences, and other diverse characteristics, should have meaningful access to quality education in ordinary school settings. UNESCO (2020) strongly frames inclusion as a system-wide commitment, arguing that education systems must remove barriers to participation and achievement instead of requiring learners to adjust to rigid school structures. In this context, general education teachers play a central role because they are usually the first professionals responsible for planning instruction, managing classrooms, assessing learning, and fostering peer acceptance. Recent literature also stresses that inclusive education is not only a matter of placement but also of teacher readiness, school culture, and classroom-level practices that support belonging, participation, and learning for all students (UNESCO, 2020; European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2022).

The successful implementation of inclusive education depends greatly on the personal attributes of teachers, particularly resiliency, self-esteem, and optimism. Teaching in inclusive classrooms can be professionally rewarding, but it may also involve challenges such as differentiated instruction, collaboration with specialists, behavioral management, limited resources, parental expectations, and pressure to meet diverse learning outcomes. Resiliency enables teachers to adapt, recover, and continue

functioning effectively despite these demands. Hascher, Beltman, and Mansfield (2021) explained that teacher resilience is closely connected to well-being, professional commitment, and the ability to manage stress in changing educational environments. Similarly, Sokal, Trudel, and Babb (2020) noted that teachers' capacity to cope with uncertainty and instructional change became especially important during periods of educational disruption. In inclusive education, resilient teachers are more likely to remain flexible, seek solutions, and sustain positive engagement with learners who require additional support.

Self-esteem is another important personal attribute because it influences how teachers perceive their own worth, competence, and ability to contribute meaningfully to student learning. Teachers with healthy self-esteem are more likely to approach inclusive teaching with confidence, communicate positively with learners, and maintain professional motivation even when classroom challenges arise. Although self-esteem is often studied as a general psychological construct, recent research continues to recognize its role in personal adjustment, emotional stability, and social functioning (Orth & Robins, 2022). In the teaching profession, self-esteem may shape how educators respond to feedback, manage classroom difficulties, and participate in collaborative decision-making. When teachers believe that they are capable and valued, they may become more open to adopting inclusive strategies and working with learners who have diverse needs. Conversely, low self-esteem may contribute to avoidance, anxiety, or resistance when teachers feel unprepared for inclusion. For this reason, assessing teachers' self-esteem provides insight into the internal confidence that may support or hinder inclusive education practices.

Optimism also has significant relevance in inclusive education because it reflects the teacher's tendency to expect positive outcomes and to believe that difficulties can be addressed through effort, support, and appropriate strategies. Optimistic teachers are more likely to view learner diversity as manageable and meaningful rather than as a burden. In positive psychology, optimism is associated with persistence, problem-solving, and psychological well-being, especially in demanding work environments (Waters et al., 2021). Within schools, optimism may encourage teachers to try differentiated activities, collaborate with colleagues, and maintain high expectations for students with additional needs. During recent years, education systems have faced disruptions, including pandemic-related learning gaps, mental health concerns, and increased diversity in classrooms; these conditions have made teacher optimism even more important for sustaining constructive attitudes toward change (Sokal et al., 2020). Therefore, understanding the level of optimism among general education teachers can help explain how they emotionally and cognitively approach inclusive education and whether they are likely to support its goals.

Despite the growing body of literature on inclusive education, a research gap remains in understanding how specific personal attributes of general education teachers relate to their attitudes toward inclusion, particularly in local school contexts. Many studies have examined teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education in relation to training, teaching experience, type of disability, administrative support, and availability of resources (Saloviita, 2020; Yada et al., 2022). However, fewer recent studies have given equal attention to internal teacher qualities such as resiliency, self-esteem, and optimism as possible foundations of inclusive attitudes. Existing research often emphasizes external barriers, such as lack of facilities or insufficient professional development, while less attention is given to the psychological strengths that may help teachers remain committed to inclusion even when resources are limited. This gap is important because inclusive education is not implemented by policy alone; it is enacted through teachers' daily decisions, emotional responses, and beliefs about learners.

This study is therefore directed toward assessing the level of resiliency, self-esteem, optimism, and attitudes of general education teachers toward inclusive education. Focusing on these variables, the research aims to provide a clearer understanding of how teachers' internal strengths may support their willingness to accept, accommodate, and teach diverse learners in regular classrooms. The findings may help school leaders, teacher educators, and policymakers design more responsive professional development programs that do not only address technical teaching strategies but also strengthen teacher well-being, confidence, and positive expectations. This direction is consistent with recent calls to view inclusive education as both a structural and human process, requiring supportive systems as well as prepared and psychologically empowered teachers (UNESCO, 2020; European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2022).

Literature Review

Inclusive education literature consistently emphasizes that teachers' attitudes are among the strongest school-level factors affecting the success of inclusion. Positive attitudes are associated with greater willingness to adapt instruction, collaborate with specialists, accept learners with diverse needs, and create classroom environments where all students can participate meaningfully. UNESCO (2020) argues that inclusion requires education systems to identify and remove barriers that limit learner participation, while the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (2022) stresses that teacher professional learning should prepare all teachers, not only special educators, to support diverse learners. Recent empirical studies similarly show that teachers' acceptance of inclusive education is shaped by preparation, experience, perceived competence, and available support. For example, Saloviita (2020) found that teacher attitudes toward inclusion vary according to contextual and professional factors, while Yada et al. (2022) reported that teachers with stronger self-efficacy tend to hold more favorable attitudes toward inclusive education. Schwab et al. (2022) also emphasized that inclusive teaching requires not only policy support but also teachers' confidence and readiness to respond to learner diversity. These findings suggest that attitudes toward

inclusion are not fixed; rather, they are influenced by teachers' beliefs, resources, professional learning, and daily classroom experiences.

Recent literature also highlights the importance of teachers' personal attributes, including resiliency, self-esteem, and optimism, in sustaining effective inclusive practices. Resiliency helps teachers manage stress, recover from setbacks, and remain committed despite classroom challenges. Hascher, Beltman, and Mansfield (2021) described teacher resilience and well-being as closely connected to professional functioning, especially when educators face complex demands. Sokal, Trudel, and Babb (2020) likewise showed that teacher resilience, efficacy, and attitudes toward change became critical during educational disruption, suggesting that adaptable teachers are better positioned to respond to diverse learner needs. Self-esteem is also relevant because teachers who value themselves and believe in their professional worth are more likely to engage confidently in challenging teaching situations. Orth and Robins (2022) explained that high self-esteem is associated with better adjustment, persistence, and social functioning, which may support teachers in inclusive classrooms. Optimism further strengthens inclusive practice because it encourages teachers to expect improvement, persist with interventions, and maintain high expectations for learners. Waters et al. (2021) noted that optimism and other positive psychological resources can protect well-being and promote constructive coping. Similarly, Collie (2021) found that teacher well-being is linked to motivation and workplace functioning, while Granziera et al. (2023) emphasized that teachers' psychological resources are important for managing professional demands. Taken together, these studies indicate that inclusive education is supported not only by training and policy but also by teachers' internal strengths that influence how they respond to diversity, difficulty, and change.

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to determine the level of general education teachers' personal attributes and their attitudes toward inclusive education. Following the explanation of Oh and Pyrczak (2023), this design was appropriate because it allowed the researcher to describe existing characteristics of the respondents and examine the relationship between variables without manipulating the study environment. The study was conducted at Mandaue Sped Center High School, Mandaue City Division, and involved general education teachers handling inclusive classes. Data were gathered through a modified survey questionnaire composed of five parts. The first part collected the respondents' profile. The second part measured resiliency using items adapted from the Brief Resilience Scale developed by Smith et al. (2008), which assesses an individual's ability to recover from stress and adversity. The third part assessed self-esteem using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale by Rosenberg (1965), a widely used instrument for measuring self-worth and self-acceptance. The fourth part measured optimism using items adapted from the Life Orientation Test developed by Scheier and Carver (1985), which evaluates respondents' general outlook and positive expectations in life. The fifth part assessed teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education using an adapted questionnaire from Wilkerson (2012). The questionnaire contained 6 items for resiliency, 10 items for self-esteem, 10 items for optimism, and 14 items for attitudes toward inclusion. Responses were interpreted using a five-point scale, with weighted means used to determine the level of each variable. Pearson's r correlation coefficient was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between teachers' personal attributes and their attitudes toward inclusive education.

Results

Table 1. Level of Personal Attributes of the Respondents Towards Inclusive Education in Terms of Resiliency

S/N	Indicator	WM	Verbal Description
1	I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times.	3.84	High
2*	I have a hard time making it through stressful events.	3.21	Moderate
3	It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event.	3.83	High
4*	It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens.	3.34	Moderate
5	I usually come through difficult times with little trouble.	3.17	Moderate
6*	I tend to take a long time to get over set-backs in my life.	4.36	Very High
	Aggregate Weighted Mean	3.63	High

Table 1 shows that the respondents' resiliency obtained an aggregate weighted mean of 3.63, interpreted as High. The highest-rated indicator was "I tend to take a long time to get over set-backs in my life" with a weighted mean of 4.36, described as Very High. Since this is a negatively stated item, the result suggests strong recovery from setbacks after reverse scoring. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicator was "I usually come through difficult times with little trouble" with a weighted mean of 3.17,

interpreted as Moderate. This implies that although teachers are generally resilient, some still encounter difficulty handling stressful situations. Thus, wellness programs, mentoring, peer support, and stress-management activities may help strengthen teachers’ resiliency in inclusive classrooms.

Table 2. Level of Personal Attributes of the Respondents Towards Inclusive Education in Terms of Self-Esteem

S/N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	4.16	High
2*	At times I think I am no good at all.	3.47	High
3	I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	4.22	Very High
4	I am able to do things as well as most other people.	4.16	High
5*	I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	3.55	High
6*	I certainly feel useless at times.	3.88	High
7	I feel that I’m a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	3.93	High
8*	I wish I could have more respect for myself.	3.09	Moderate
9*	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	4.22	Very High
10	I take a positive attitude toward myself.	4.33	Very High
	Aggregate Weighted Mean	3.90	High

Table 2 shows that the respondents’ self-esteem obtained an aggregate weighted mean of 3.90, interpreted as High. This indicates that the teachers generally possess a positive sense of self-worth, confidence, and personal acceptance, which are important in handling inclusive classroom responsibilities. The highest-rated indicator was “I take a positive attitude toward myself” with a weighted mean of 4.33, described as Very High. This suggests that the respondents tend to view themselves positively and believe in their personal value. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicator was “I wish I could have more respect for myself” with a weighted mean of 3.09, interpreted as Moderate. Since this is a negatively stated item, it implies that some teachers may still experience self-doubt or a need for stronger self-acceptance. Therefore, schools may strengthen teachers’ self-esteem through recognition, supportive leadership, professional development, mentoring, and wellness activities.

Table 3. Level of Personal Attributes of the Respondents Towards Inclusive Education in Terms of Optimism

S/N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	In uncertain times, I usually expect the best.	3.83	High
2	It’s easy for me to relax.	3.41	High
3*	If something can go wrong for me it will.	3.05	Moderate
4	I am always optimistic about my future.	4.09	High
5	I enjoy my friends a lot.	4.41	Very High
6	It’s important for me to keep busy.	3.74	High
7*	I hardly ever expect things to go my way.	3.22	Moderate
8	I don’t get upset too easily.	3.57	High
9*	I rarely count on good things happening to me.	3.43	High
10	Overall, I expect more good things to happen to me than bad.	4.50	Very High
	Aggregate Weighted Mean	3.73	High

Table 3 shows that the respondents’ optimism obtained an aggregate weighted mean of 3.73, interpreted as High. This indicates that the teachers generally have a positive outlook in life and tend to expect favorable outcomes despite challenges in inclusive education. The highest-rated indicator was “Overall, I expect more good things to happen to me than bad” with a weighted mean of 4.50, described as Very High. This suggests that the respondents strongly maintain hopeful expectations and confidence in positive possibilities. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicator was “If something can go wrong for me it will” with a weighted

mean of 3.05, interpreted as Moderate. Since this is a negatively stated item, it implies that some teachers may still experience occasional pessimistic thoughts. Therefore, schools may further enhance teachers' optimism through supportive leadership, positive workplace relationships, mental health programs, and professional encouragement.

Table 4 shows that the respondents' attitudes toward inclusive education obtained an aggregate weighted mean of 3.23, interpreted as Neutral. This indicates that the teachers neither strongly support nor strongly oppose inclusive education for students with autism. The highest-rated indicator was "I would welcome the opportunity to participate in a consultant teacher model" with a weighted mean of 4.47, described as Very Positive. This suggests that teachers highly value collaboration, regular consultation, and the sharing of methods and materials between general and special education teachers. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicator was "Most or all separate classrooms that exclusively serve students with autism should be eliminated" with a weighted mean of 2.14, interpreted as Negative. This implies that respondents may still see the importance of separate classrooms for some learners. The findings suggest the need for stronger teacher training, collaboration, and institutional support to improve positive attitudes toward inclusion.

Table 4. Level of Attitudes of the Respondents Towards Inclusive Education

S/N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	All students with autism should be educated in regular classrooms with non-handicapped peers to the fullest extent possible.	3.29	Neutral
2	It is seldom necessary to remove students with autism from regular classrooms in order to meet their educational needs.	3.38	Neutral
3	Most or all separate classrooms that exclusively serve students with autism should be eliminated.	2.14	Negative
4	Most or all regular classrooms can be modified to meet the needs of students with autism.	4.05	Positive
5	Students with autism can be more effectively educated in regular classrooms as opposed to special education classrooms.	2.79	Negative
6	Inclusion is a more efficient model for educating students with autism because it reduces transition time, i.e., the time required to move from one setting to another.	3.33	Neutral
7	Students with autism should not be taught in regular classes with non-disabled students because they will require too much of the teacher's time.	2.45	Negative
8	I have doubts about the effectiveness of including students with autism in regular classrooms because they often lack the academic skills necessary for success.	2.21	Negative
9	I have doubts about the effectiveness of including students with autism in regular classrooms because they often lack the social skills necessary for success.	2.26	Negative
10	I find that general education teachers often do not succeed with students with autism, even when they try their best.	2.31	Negative
11	I would welcome the opportunity to team-teach as a model for meeting the needs of students with autism in regular classrooms.	4.22	Very Positive
12	All students benefit from team teaching, that is, the pairing of a general and a special education teacher in the same classroom.	4.16	Positive
13	The responsibility for educating students with autism in regular classrooms should be shared between general and special education teachers.	4.22	Very Positive
14	I would welcome the opportunity to participate in a consultant teacher model, i.e., regular, collaborative meetings between special and general education teachers to share ideas, methods, and materials as a means of addressing the needs of students with autism in regular classrooms.	4.47	Very Positive
	Aggregate Weighted Mean	3.23	Neutral

Table 5 shows the test of relationship between the respondents' personal attributes and their attitudes toward inclusive education. Results revealed that resiliency and attitudes had an r -value of -0.045 with a p -value of 0.735, self-esteem and attitudes had an r -value of -0.206 with a p -value of 0.122, and optimism and attitudes had an r -value of -0.078 with a p -value of 0.559. All p -values were greater than the 0.05 level of significance, leading to the decision to not reject the null hypothesis. This means that resiliency, self-esteem, and optimism have no significant relationship with teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education. The negligible negative correlations suggest that the relationship between these variables is very weak. Thus, teachers' attitudes may be influenced more by training, experience, resources, and institutional support.

Table 5. Test of Relationship Between the Personal Attributes and Attitudes of the Respondents Towards Inclusive Education

Variables	r-value	Strength of Correlation	p-value	Decision	Remarks
Resiliency and Attitudes	-0.045	Negligible Negative	0.735	Do not reject Ho	Not Significant
Self-esteem and Attitudes	-0.206	Negligible Negative	0.122	Do not reject Ho	Not Significant
Optimism and Attitudes	-0.078	Negligible Negative	0.559	Do not reject Ho	Not Significant

Significant at $p < 0.05$, two-tailed.

Discussion

Overall, the findings reveal that the respondents possess positive personal attributes that may support their role as general education teachers in inclusive classrooms. Their resiliency, self-esteem, and optimism were all interpreted as high, suggesting that they generally have the emotional strength, confidence, and positive outlook needed to face teaching challenges. These qualities are important because inclusive education often requires teachers to adjust instruction, manage diverse learner needs, and respond to stressful classroom situations. However, some indicators were rated moderate, showing that certain teachers may still experience difficulty in handling adversity, self-doubt, or occasional pessimistic thoughts. This implies that while the respondents are generally psychologically prepared, continuous support is still necessary to strengthen their coping skills, self-worth, and positive mindset.

Despite the respondents' high personal attributes, their overall attitude toward inclusive education was neutral, and the relationship between personal attributes and attitudes was not significant. This means that being resilient, confident, and optimistic does not automatically lead to highly favorable attitudes toward inclusion. Teachers' attitudes may be influenced more by practical and institutional factors such as training, teaching experience, availability of resources, class size, administrative support, and collaboration with special education teachers. The findings imply that schools should not only focus on developing teachers' personal strengths but also provide concrete support systems. Professional development, team teaching, mentoring, and regular consultation may help teachers become more confident and more positive toward inclusive education.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study of general education teachers at Mandaue City Sped Center High School revealed high levels of resiliency, self-esteem, and optimism among the respondents, indicating strong psychological resources that could potentially support their ability to handle the challenges of inclusive education. Additionally, the teachers demonstrated positive attitudes towards inclusive education, suggesting a favorable predisposition towards implementing inclusive practices and supporting students with diverse needs. However, our analysis found no significant relationship between these personal attributes and attitudes towards inclusive education. This unexpected finding highlights the complex nature of inclusive education and suggests that positive attitudes towards inclusion may be shaped by factors beyond personal psychological attributes. These results underscore the need for a multifaceted approach to fostering inclusive practices, potentially including targeted professional development, supportive school policies, and resources that directly address the practical challenges of inclusive education rather than focusing solely on enhancing teachers' personal attributes.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Publisher's Note: All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, the editors and the reviewers.

References

- [1]. Collie, R. J. (2021). COVID-19 and teachers' somatic burden, stress, and emotional exhaustion: Examining the role of principal leadership and workplace buoyancy. *AERA Open*, 7, 1–15.
- [2]. European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education. (2022). Profile for inclusive teacher professional learning: Including all education professionals in teacher professional learning for inclusion. European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education.
- [3]. Granziera, H., Collie, R. J., & Martin, A. J. (2023). Understanding teacher well-being through job demands-resources theory. *Educational Psychology Review*, 35, 1–31.
- [4]. Hascher, T., Beltman, S., & Mansfield, C. (2021). Teacher wellbeing and resilience: Towards an integrative model. *Educational Research*, 63(4), 416–439.
- [5]. Oh, D. M., & Pyrczak, F. (2023). Making sense of statistics: A conceptual overview.

- [6]. Routledge. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9781003299356/making-sense-statistics-fred-pyrczak-deborah-oh>
- [7]. Orth, U., & Robins, R. W. (2022). Is high self-esteem beneficial? Revisiting a classic question. *American Psychologist*, 77(1), 5–17.
- [8]. Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the adolescent self-image*. Princeton University Press.
- [9]. Saloviita, T. (2020). Attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education in Finland. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 64(2), 270–282.
- [10]. Scheier, M. F., & Carver, C. S. (1985). Optimism, coping, and health: Assessment and implications of generalized outcome expectancies. *Health psychology*, 4(3), 219.
- [11]. Schwab, S., Sharma, U., & Hoffmann, L. (2022). How inclusive are the teaching practices of my German, Maths and English teachers? Psychometric properties of a newly developed scale to assess personalisation and differentiation in teaching practices. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 26(1), 61–76.
- [12]. Smith, B. W., Dalen, J., Wiggins, K., Tooley, E., Christopher, P., & Bernard, J. D. (2008). The Brief Resilience Scale: Assessing the ability to bounce back. *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 15(3), 194–200.
- [13]. Sokal, L., Trudel, L. E., & Babb, J. (2020). Canadian teachers' attitudes toward change, efficacy, and burnout during the COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, 1, 100016.
- [14]. UNESCO. (2020). *Global education monitoring report 2020: Inclusion and education: All means all*. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- [15]. Waters, L., Algoe, S. B., Dutton, J., Emmons, R., Fredrickson, B. L., Heaphy, E., Moskowitz, J. T., Neff, K., Niemiec, R., Pury, C., & Steger, M. (2021). Positive psychology in a pandemic: Buffering, bolstering, and building mental health. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 17(3), 303–323.
- [16]. Wilkerson, J. M., Smolenski, D. J., Brady, S. S., & Rosser, B. S. (2012). Religiosity, internalized homonegativity and outness in Christian men who have sex with men. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 27(2), 122–132.
- [17]. Yada, A., Leskinen, M., Savolainen, H., & Schwab, S. (2022). Meta-analysis of the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes toward inclusive education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 109, 103521.