
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Assessing Teachers' Individual Traits and Perspectives on Inclusive Education

Mary Jane Mañago

Mandaue City Comprehensive National High School

Corresponding Author: Mary Jane Mañago, **E-mail:** maryjanemanago7@gmail.com

| ABSTRACT

Inclusive education implementation in educational institutions has presented teachers with various challenges in accommodating learners with special needs. This descriptive-correlational research investigated the relationship between personal attributes and attitudes toward inclusive education among 55 general education teachers at Mandaue City Comprehensive National High School. The study utilized a modified survey questionnaire comprising five sections: teaching background, brief resilience scale, self-esteem scale, optimism assessment, and teachers' attitudes toward inclusion. Statistical analysis employed frequency count, weighted mean, percentage, and Pearson's R-value. The findings revealed that most respondents were female teachers with diverse academic specializations and varying years of teaching experience. While respondents demonstrated high levels of resiliency, self-esteem, and optimism, the study found no significant correlation between these personal attributes and their attitudes toward inclusive education ($r=0.231$, $p>0.05$). This suggests the need for a comprehensive intervention plan to enhance teachers' capacity for inclusive education and ensure the successful integration of all students in regular classrooms.

| KEYWORDS

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

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

ACCEPTED: 09 May 2026

PUBLISHED: 25 May 2026

DOI: 10.32996/jlds.2026.6.7.3

Introduction

Inclusive education has become an important concern in basic education because schools are now expected to respond to learner diversity within regular classroom settings (Landsman & Lewis, 2023). Rather than separating learners according to disability, learning difficulty, language background, behavior, or other differences, inclusive education promotes meaningful participation and access to quality learning for all students (Hudym et al., 2024). Inclusion therefore requires more than physical placement in general classrooms; it also depends on classroom practices, teacher preparedness, peer acceptance, and school environments that reduce barriers to learning (Darwish et al., 2025). Recent scholarship emphasizes that inclusive education should be understood as a continuing process of improving equity, participation, and learning opportunities for diverse learners (Ainscow, 2020).

General education teachers are central to the success of inclusive education because they directly plan lessons, manage classroom behavior, assess learning, and create conditions for student belonging (Burden, 2025). Their attitudes toward inclusion can influence how they respond to learners with additional needs and how willing they are to adjust instruction. Research has shown that teachers' beliefs, confidence, and perceived competence are strongly connected with their acceptance of inclusive practices (Yada et al., 2022). For this reason, examining teacher-related factors is essential in understanding how inclusion is carried out in everyday classroom situations.

Among the personal qualities that may influence inclusive teaching, resiliency is especially important. Inclusive classrooms can present challenges such as differentiated instruction, collaboration with specialists, limited materials, behavioral concerns, and pressure to address varied learning outcomes. Resilient teachers are better able to adjust to these demands, manage stress, and

continue performing their professional responsibilities despite difficulties. Teacher resilience has been described as a dynamic process shaped by personal strengths and contextual support, allowing teachers to sustain commitment and effectiveness in challenging school conditions (Gu, 2020).

Self-esteem is also relevant because it affects how teachers view their own competence, value, and capacity to contribute to student learning (Fairlamb, 2022). Teachers with positive self-esteem may be more confident in trying inclusive strategies, communicating with learners, and participating in collaborative decision-making (Anamalia & Suprihatiningrum, 2025). In contrast, low self-esteem may lead to hesitation, anxiety, or avoidance when teachers feel unprepared for diverse classroom situations. Recent psychological literature continues to show that self-esteem is linked with adjustment, well-being, motivation, and social functioning, making it a meaningful factor in professional behavior and personal confidence (Orth & Robins, 2022).

Optimism likewise supports inclusive education because it reflects a teacher's expectation that challenges can be addressed through effort, support, and appropriate strategies (Park et al., 2025). Optimistic teachers may be more willing to view learner diversity as manageable rather than burdensome. They are also more likely to persist when students require additional assistance and to maintain constructive expectations about learner progress. Recent research connects optimism with well-being, coping, and adaptive functioning, especially when individuals face demanding or uncertain conditions (Rand et al., 2020).

Although many studies on inclusive education focus on teacher training, resources, administrative support, and teaching experience, there remains a need to examine teachers' internal strengths as possible influences on their attitudes toward inclusion. Reviews of inclusive education research suggest that inclusion is shaped by both system-level conditions and classroom-level teacher responses, making teacher characteristics an important area for continued study (Van Mieghem et al., 2020). Therefore, assessing resiliency, self-esteem, optimism, and attitudes among general education teachers may provide a clearer understanding of how personal strengths support the implementation of inclusive education.

This study focuses on the levels of resiliency, self-esteem, optimism, and attitudes of general education teachers toward inclusive education. By examining these variables, the study may contribute to a better understanding of how teachers' psychological strengths relate to their willingness to accept, accommodate, and teach diverse learners in regular classrooms. The findings may help guide professional development programs that strengthen not only instructional skills but also teacher confidence, emotional readiness, and positive expectations for inclusive practice.

Literature Review

Inclusive education research highlights that teachers' attitudes are a key factor in determining how successfully inclusion is practiced in regular classrooms. When teachers hold supportive views toward inclusion, they are more likely to adjust lessons, use flexible teaching strategies, collaborate with other professionals, and promote active participation among learners with diverse needs. These attitudes are shaped by several factors, including teachers' preparation, classroom experience, confidence, and the level of support they receive in school. Woodcock, Sharma, Subban, and Hitches (2022) emphasized that teachers' beliefs and confidence strongly influence their willingness to implement inclusive practices. Similarly, Finkelstein, Sharma, and Furlonger (2021) found that teacher preparation and perceived competence are important in developing positive attitudes toward students with diverse learning needs. These studies suggest that teachers' attitudes toward inclusion are not permanent; they can improve when teachers are given meaningful training, practical support, and opportunities to develop confidence in inclusive teaching.

Recent studies also show that teachers' personal attributes may help sustain inclusive practices, especially when classroom demands are challenging. Resiliency allows teachers to manage stress, adjust to difficulties, and continue supporting learners despite limited resources or complex classroom situations. Mansfield, Beltman, Broadley, and Weatherby-Fell (2020) explained that teacher resilience involves the capacity to adapt and remain effective in the face of professional challenges. Self-esteem is also important because teachers who believe in their own value and professional ability may be more willing to engage with difficult teaching tasks and respond positively to learners' needs. Bleidorn and colleagues (2023) noted that self-esteem is connected with well-being, adjustment, and effective social functioning. Optimism further supports inclusive education because it helps teachers maintain positive expectations, persist with interventions, and believe that learners can improve with appropriate support. Capone and Petrillo (2020) found that positive psychological resources contribute to teachers' well-being and work engagement. In the same way, Buonomo, Fiorilli, and Benevene (2020) reported that teachers' personal resources are related to their ability to cope with professional stress. Together, these findings indicate that inclusive education depends not only on policies, training, and resources but also on teachers' internal strengths, which influence how they respond to learner diversity, classroom challenges, and educational change.

Methodology

This study used a descriptive-correlational research design to assess the personal attributes of general education teachers and their attitudes toward inclusive education. This design was considered appropriate because it enabled the researcher to describe the respondents' existing characteristics and determine the relationship between variables without manipulating the research setting. The study was conducted at Mandaue Sped Center High School, Mandaue City Division, among general education teachers

handling inclusive classes. Data were collected using a modified survey questionnaire consisting of five sections. The first section gathered the demographic profile of the respondents. The second section measured resiliency using items adapted from the Brief Resilience Scale by Smith et al. (2008), which evaluates a person’s capacity to recover from stress and adversity. The third section assessed self-esteem through the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale by Rosenberg (1965), which measures self-worth and self-acceptance. The fourth section measured optimism using items adapted from the Life Orientation Test by Scheier and Carver (1985), which assesses general expectations and positive outlook in life. The fifth section evaluated teachers’ attitudes toward inclusive education using an adapted questionnaire from Wilkerson (2012). The instrument included 6 items for resiliency, 10 items for self-esteem, 10 items for optimism, and 14 items for attitudes toward inclusive education. Responses were rated using a five-point scale. Weighted mean was used to describe the level of each variable, while Pearson’s *r* correlation coefficient was applied 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.	3.82	High
2*	I have a hard time making it through stressful events.	3.07	Moderate
3	It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event.	3.75	High
4*	It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens.	3.29	Moderate
5	I usually come through difficult times with little trouble.	3.25	Moderate
6*	I tend to take a long time to get over set-backs in my life.	3.33	Moderate
Aggregate Weighted Mean		3.42	High

The data show that the respondents have a high level of resiliency, with an aggregate weighted mean of 3.42. The highest mean was obtained by the statement “I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times,” with a weighted mean of 3.82, indicating that teachers generally recover well from difficulties. However, several indicators were rated moderate, particularly those related to stressful events and setbacks. This suggests that while teachers are generally resilient, some still experience challenges in coping with stress.

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.	4.13	High
2*	At times I think I am no good at all.	3.22	Moderate
3	I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	4.16	High
4	I am able to do things as well as most other people.	4.22	Very High
5*	I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	3.78	High
6*	I certainly feel useless at times.	3.78	High
7	I feel that I’m a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	4.16	High
8*	I wish I could have more respect for myself.	3.29	Moderate
9*	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	4.20	High
10	I take a positive attitude toward myself.	4.27	Very High
Aggregate Weighted Mean		3.92	High

The data show that the respondents have a high level of self-esteem, with an aggregate weighted mean of 3.92. The highest rating was given to the statement “I take a positive attitude toward myself,” with a weighted mean of 4.27, followed by “I am able to do

things as well as most other people," with 4.22. These results indicate that teachers generally possess confidence, self-worth, and positive self-regard, although some still reported moderate concerns about self-respect and personal adequacy.

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.	3.76	High
2	It's easy for me to relax.	3.65	High
3*	If something can go wrong for me it will.	2.98	Moderate
4	I am always optimistic about my future.	4.29	Very High
5	I enjoy my friends a lot.	4.25	Very High
6	It's important for me to keep busy.	3.91	High
7*	I hardly ever expect things to go my way.	2.62	Moderate
8	I don't get upset too easily.	3.25	Moderate
9*	I rarely count on good things happening to me.	3.20	Moderate
10	Overall, I expect more good things to happen to me than bad.	4.40	Very High
	Aggregate Weighted Mean	3.63	High

The data reveal that the respondents have a high level of optimism, with an aggregate weighted mean of 3.63. The highest rating was given to the statement "Overall, I expect more good things to happen to me than bad," with a weighted mean of 4.40, followed by "I am always optimistic about my future," with 4.29. This indicates that teachers generally maintain positive expectations and hopeful views, although some moderate responses show occasional uncertainty during difficult situations.

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.	3.16	Neutral
2	It is seldom necessary to remove students with autism from regular classrooms in order to meet their educational needs.	3.47	Positive
3	Most or all separate classrooms that exclusively serve students with autism should be eliminated.	2.53	Negative
4	Most or all regular classrooms can be modified to meet the needs of students with autism.	3.96	Positive
5	Students with autism can be more effectively educated in regular classrooms as opposed to special education classrooms.	2.98	Neutral
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.	3.55	Positive
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.	3.15	Neutral
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.	3.15	Neutral
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.	3.15	Neutral
10	I find that general education teachers often do not succeed with students with autism, even when they try their best.	2.71	Neutral
11	I would welcome the opportunity to team-teach as a model for meeting the needs of students with autism in regular classrooms.	3.91	Positive

S/N Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
12 All students benefit from team teaching; that is, the pairing of a general and a special education teacher in the same classroom.	4.04	Positive
13 The responsibility for educating students with autism in regular classrooms should be shared between general and special education teachers.	4.05	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.	4.04	Positive
Aggregate Weighted Mean	3.42	Positive

The data show that the respondents have a positive attitude toward inclusive education, with an aggregate weighted mean of 3.42. The highest rating was given to shared responsibility between general and special education teachers, with a weighted mean of 4.05, followed by team teaching and consultant teacher collaboration, both with 4.04. These results suggest that teachers value collaboration in supporting students with autism. However, some neutral and negative responses indicate reservations about full inclusion and eliminating separate classrooms.

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	0.152	Negligible Positive	0.269	Do not reject H ₀	Not Significant
Self-esteem and Attitudes	-0.004	Negligible Negative	0.977	Do not reject H ₀	Not Significant
Optimism and Attitudes	0.126	Negligible Positive	0.360	Do not reject H ₀	Not Significant

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

The data show that the relationship between teachers' personal attributes and their attitudes toward inclusive education is not significant. Resiliency had a negligible positive relationship with attitudes, with an r-value of 0.152 and a p-value of 0.269. Optimism also showed a negligible positive relationship, with an r-value of 0.126 and a p-value of 0.360. Meanwhile, self-esteem had a negligible negative relationship, with an r-value of -0.004 and a p-value of 0.977. Since all p-values are greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Discussion

The findings indicate that the respondents generally possess positive personal attributes that may support their work in inclusive classrooms. Their resiliency, self-esteem, and optimism were all interpreted as high, suggesting that they are capable of recovering from challenges, maintaining confidence in themselves, and holding positive expectations despite classroom difficulties. Among the three attributes, self-esteem obtained the highest aggregate weighted mean, followed by optimism and resiliency. This implies that the teachers generally value their professional worth and believe in their ability to perform their responsibilities. However, some moderate responses in resiliency and optimism show that certain teachers may still experience difficulty in managing stress, setbacks, and uncertainty. The respondents also showed a positive attitude toward inclusive education, particularly in areas involving collaboration between general and special education teachers. They expressed support for shared responsibility, team teaching, and consultation as ways to address the needs of learners with autism. However, the correlation results revealed that resiliency, self-esteem, and optimism had no significant relationship with attitudes toward inclusive education. This means that although the teachers demonstrated high personal attributes, these qualities did not strongly influence their attitudes toward inclusion. Their views may be shaped more by other factors such as training, experience, resources, administrative support, and classroom conditions.

Conclusion

Despite predominantly favorable perspectives, the proximity of neutral and unfavorable responses on specific items reveals uncertainties or reluctance regarding the feasibility and efficacy of completely inclusive learning environments for learners with autism. These outcomes underscore the necessity for professional preparation and assistance to address educators' apprehensions in managing inclusive learning settings. Furthermore, the investigation revealed minimal and

statistically insignificant associations between participants' personal characteristics of resilience and positive outlook with their perspectives on inclusive education. Conversely, self-worth demonstrated a tendency toward minimal inverse correlation with statistically insignificant associations. These outcomes indicate that alternative factors beyond these personal characteristics may exert greater influence in forming their perspectives.

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]. Amalia, F. N. I., & Suprihatiningrum, J. 2025. Building academic confidence through inclusive practices: The role of family, teachers, and peers in chemistry learning. *Journal of Inclusive Educational Research*, 5 1.
- [2]. Ainscow, M. 2020. Promoting inclusion and equity in education: Lessons from international experiences. *Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy*, 6 1, 7–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20020317.2020.1729587>
- [3]. Buonomo, I., Fiorilli, C., & Benevene, P. 2020. Unravelling teacher job satisfaction: The contribution of collective efficacy and emotions towards professional role. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17 3, 736. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17030736>
- [4]. Burden, P. R. 2025. *Classroom management: Creating a successful K-12 learning community*. John Wiley & Sons.
- [5]. Capone, V., & Petrillo, G. 2020. Mental health in teachers: Relationships with job satisfaction, efficacy beliefs, burnout and depression. *Current Psychology*, 39, 1757–1766. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-018-9878-7>
- [6]. Darwish, S., Alodat, A., Al-Hendawi, M., & Ianniello, A. 2025. General education teachers' perspectives on challenges to the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in Qatar. *Education Sciences*, 15 7, 908.
- [7]. Fairlamb, S. 2022. We need to talk about self-esteem: The effect of contingent self-worth on student achievement and well-being. *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology*, 8 1, 45.
- [8]. Finkelstein, S., Sharma, U., & Furlonger, B. 2021. The inclusive practices of classroom teachers: A scoping review and thematic analysis. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 25 6, 735–762. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2019.1572232>
- [9]. Gu, Q. 2020. The role of relational resilience in teachers' career-long commitment and effectiveness. *Teachers and Teaching*, 26 2, 115–131.
- [10]. Hudym, I., Abilova, O., Potapiuk, L., Nikolenko, L., & Poliakova, A. 2024. Strategies and best practices for promoting inclusive education to meet diverse learning needs. *Conhecimento & Diversidade*, 16 42, 270–286.
- [11]. Landsman, J., & Lewis, C. W. Eds. 2023. *White teachers/diverse classrooms: Creating inclusive schools, building on students' diversity, and providing true educational equity*. Taylor & Francis.
- [12]. Mansfield, C. F., Beltman, S., Broadley, T., & Weatherby-Fell, N. 2020. Building resilience in teacher education: An evidenced-informed framework. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 89, 102998. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2019.102998>
- [13]. Orth, U., & Robins, R. W. 2022. Is high self-esteem beneficial? Revisiting a classic question. *American Psychologist*, 77 1, 5–17. <https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000922>
- [14]. Park, E., McKay, L., Carrington, S., & Harper-Hill, K. 2025. Using hope theory to understand changes from professional learning in inclusive education. *British Educational Research Journal*, 51 1, 299–320.
- [15]. Rand, K. L., Shanahan, M. L., Fischer, I. C., & Fortney, S. K. 2020. Hope and optimism as predictors of academic performance and subjective well-being in college students. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 81, 101906. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2020.101906>
- [16]. Rosenberg, M. 1965. *Society and the adolescent self-image*. Princeton University Press.
- [17]. Scheier, M. F., & Carver, C. S. 1985. Optimism, coping, and health: Assessment and implications of generalized outcome expectancies. *Health Psychology*, 4 3, 219–247. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0278-6133.4.3.219>
- [18]. Smith, B. W., Dalen, J., Wiggins, K., Tooley, E., Christopher, P., & Bernard, J. 2008. The Brief Resilience Scale: Assessing the ability to bounce back. *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 15 3, 194–200. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10705500802222972>
- [19]. Van Mieghem, A., Verschueren, K., Petry, K., & Struyf, E. 2020. An analysis of research on inclusive education: A systematic search and meta review. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 24 6, 675–689. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2018.1482012>
- [20]. Wilkerson, S. E. 2012. *Assessing teacher attitude toward the inclusion of students with autism*. Doctoral dissertation.
- [21]. Woodcock, S., Sharma, U., Subban, P., & Hitches, E. 2022. Teacher self-efficacy and inclusive education practices: Rethinking teachers' engagement with inclusion. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 117, 103802. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2022.103802>
- [22]. 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. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2021.103521>