Investigation on Teachers' attitude in Implementation of Inclusive Education in Public Primary Schools in Dodoma Region-Tanzania

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Abstract
This study examined teachers attitude towards implementation of inclusive education in public primary schools in Dodoma Region. The study aimed on investigating attitudes of teachers in a course ofimplementing inclusive education in Public Primary schools in Dodoma region. The study was guided by theory of justice pioneered by John Rawls in 1971. The study employed convergent design under mixed approach. Both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used to sample respondents. Simple random sampling technique was used to get the respondents. The target population involved 08 District Education Officers (DEO's), 13 head teachers, 280 teachers and 9,100 pupils. The study sampled of 12 schools, 07 DEO's, 12 head teachers, 84 teachers and 144 pupils, making a total of 237 respondents. The instruments used to collect data were questionnaires, interview guides, and focus group discussion guide and observation schedule. To obtain reliability for quantitative research instruments Cronbach Alpha of 0.819 was calculated while conformability of qualitative data was ensured by increasing transparency with regards to adherence to data collection procedures and ethics. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Data were coded and analyzed through frequencies, percentages, and mean scores in tables and interpreted in relation to the research question. The results from the findings revealed that teachers in inclusive primary public primary schools in Dodoma Region had positive attitude in implementing inclusive education. The study concluded that, good policy and the effectiveness of Tanzania National Strategy for Inclusive Education in Tanzania has enabled teachers to have positive attitude in implementing inclusive education in public primary schools in Dodoma region.The study recommends that there should be regular and periodical teachers training programsto foster the positive attitude of teachers in inclusive classes in public primary schools.

Keywords: Public primary schools, Inclusive education, training and teachers' attitude

1. Introduction

Education is a process of acquiring and developing accumulated new knowledge, wisdom, attitudes, values, and skills as a result of growth, maturation, and learning which can be best utilized for life in a changing society (Sodirjonov, 2020). Education is one of the most important necessities of our life for it teaches us how to think, and how to work properly (Slater et al., 2020). Education is among the important human rights which enable people to solve social, political, economic, and cultural problems prevailing in society.The concept of inclusive education instigated in the Salamanca statement with aframework for action on special needs education in 1994. It necessitates all governments to adopt some law or policy stipulating principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools (Magnússon, 2019). This indicates that the school should meet the educational needs of all children irrespective of their disabilities. Inclusive Education ensures that all children irrespective of their disability being able to learn together with normal children in ordinary schools.

Inclusion is a culture in itself which is created by people with commitment, enthusiasm, and determination to overcome the stumbling blocks that will persistently ascend. It is reflected in environments, behaviour, language and the continual challenging of oppressive values and attitudes, such as disablism. Expanding access to inclusive education is part of a worldwide agenda today. Several studies related to inclusive education has been taken by various researchers at different levels. Saloviita (2020). found lack of training in inclusive education may lead to lower level of positive attitudes towards the inclusion among teachers.Implementation of inclusive education in Tanzania is guided by the Education and Training Policy of 1995 and Education Training Policy of 2014. The education landscape in Tanzania has also been guided by the Ten-year Education Sector Development Plans (ESDP), which ran from 2007/08 to 2016/17. Due to various national and international developments in education; and following the introduction of a new Education and Training Policy in 2014, it has become necessary to review this ESDP to strategically position the education sector to address contemporary and future needs social, political and economic needs of children with disabilities in the country.

Studies suggest that it is important to investigate the attitudes of teachers, since this aspect of the teacher largely influences their performances in inclusive settings. Looking at this from an international perspective; several researches have indicated that teachers have mixed views towards inclusion. Dordevic et al. (2018) for instance, examined how educators in Serbia and Norway felt about inclusion. They revealed that teachers expressed optimistic views towards the process of inclusion. Likewise, Kundu and Rice (2019) found that teachers from New Delhi, India also depicted positive perceptions of the inclusive process. This very favourable outlook on inclusive education is certainly not seen everywhere in the world; as Opoku et al (2021) conversely established that in the country of Ghana, teachers had very undesirable attitudes when it comes to having students with special educational needs in their classrooms. This contradictory view paves a way for the researcher to investigate teachers attitudes towards implementation of inclusive education in public primary schools in Dodoma region.

Statement of the Problem

Teachersattitudes play a pivotal role in ensuring the success of inclusive education because successful inclusion depends on developing and sustaining positive attitudes (Boyle et al, 2020). Children with special needs are perceived negatively by Tanzania society (African Initiative, 2018) in that, most learners do not enroll in inclusive primary schools since they are neglected group whose value to economic development is minimal or not existing. Despite the governments' undying efforts over the years to curb the problem of exclusion among children with special educational needs, this problem has persistently been on the increase. Since teachers are product from the society is crucial to investigate their attitudes in including learners with disabilities in regular public primary schools.

The findings from (Nyaaba et al, 2021; Vanderpuye et al., 2020 & Butakor 2018) in Ghana concerning teachers' attitudes towards implementation of inclusive education provided three different responses on teachers' attitude (Positive, faintly positive and negative respectively) The difference on teachers' attitude towards implementation of inclusive education drawn from Ghana justifies that the debate of teachers' attitudes in implementation of inclusive education is not conclusive, therefore, the current study investigated teachers' attitudes in relation towards implementation of inclusive education in Tanzanian public primary schools.

Research Question

What are primary school teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in public primary schools in Dodoma Region?

Significance of the Study

The findings of the study will be of great significance to educational stakeholders such as district education officers, heads of schools, quality assurance officers and pupils with and without disability in the education sector as it is expected to widen their understanding on the implementation of inclusive education in primary schools. The study will provideinsight to policy makers with data and information to be used to design appropriate policy based on implementation of the National Strategy on inclusive education in primary education. The result of the study will provide knowledge, experience and realities on how inclusive primary education is practiced in Tanzania in the era of implementing the National Strategy on Inclusive Education. The findings furtherwill influence to review and develop plans and programmes pertaining to implementation of the national strategy on Inclusive Education in primary schools to prepare quality teachers with positive mind set to carter for the needs of inclusion in primary schools. Finally, and most importantly, the study offers a significant contribution to the wider body of knowledge based on teachers' attitudes towards implementation of inclusive education in primary schools. Teachers and other education stakeholders can access the materials for improvement of inclusion practices in society.

Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the Cognitive Theory which has been pioneered by Jean Piaget John in 1936. Burman (2021) assert that, Cognitive theory suggests that individuals' beliefs and perceptions influence their behavior. In the context of teachers and inclusive education, their attitudes and beliefs about inclusion can significantly impact their implementation practices.

Research by Avramidis et al, (2019) contend that teachers with positive attitudes towards inclusion were more likely to adopt inclusive practices in the classroom. This indicates that cognitive factors, such as beliefs and attitudes, play a crucial role in shaping teachers' behaviour in implementation of inclusive education. Cognitive theory also emphasizes the importance of perspective-taking in understanding others' experiences and needs. In the context of inclusive education, teachers' ability to take the perspective of students with diverse abilities and backgrounds is crucial for creating inclusive learning environments. A study by Khasawneh, (2023) found that teachers who engaged in perspective-taking were more likely to have positive attitudes towards inclusive education and were better equipped to meet the diverse needs of their pupils.

Cognitive theory, particularly in the context of education, plays a significant role in shaping teachers' attitudes and their implementation of inclusive education. Inclusive education refers to the practice of providing equitable and quality education to all pupils, regardless of their abilities, disabilities, or other diverse characteristics. Cognitive theory provides insights into the relationship between teachers' attitudes and the implementation of inclusive education. Teachers' beliefs, perspective-taking abilities, and exposure to professional development programs can significantly influence their attitudes towards inclusive education and subsequently impact their practices in creating inclusive learning environments. Understanding and addressing cognitive factors are essential for effectively implementing inclusive education.

2. Review Of Related Literatures

Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusive Education

Vochacha (2018) carried out the study in Czech Republic on Teachers Attitudes in Inclusive Education. The objective of the study was to find the teachers' personal attitudes towards the inclusive education, both from the point of its very first introduction to them and then after one-year period of full running of the system. The research has been realized by the means of multiple case study. Teachers' attitudes were gained from semi-structured in-depth interviews. All interviews were recorded, then rewritten, analysed by open coding system. The research was realized among six women and two men Participants were asked thirteen questions mapping their personal opinions on inclusive education in Czech Republic after this lasted one-year period. The findings revealed that, the outcome of given research among teachers provides more of negative attitude to inclusive education in Czech Republic. Participants' attitudes are quite different and mostly dependent on the length of teaching practice and they are also dependent on individual experiences with pupil with special educational needs. This study has informed the current study that teachers could be working while their attitude are negative in inclusion settings. The previous study did not exhaust the information on why teachers had negative attitude. The current study filled the knowledge gap by investigating the type of disability and its influence on teachers' attitudes in implementation of inclusive education.

Ediyanto et al. (2021) conducted the study in Indonesia on Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education.The purpose of this study is to understand Indonesian teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education. This study surveyed 243 Indonesian teachers using the Teacher Attitudes toward Inclusion Scale (TATIS) instrument. The findings showed that 79.4 % of Indonesian teachers held a moderate attitude toward inclusive education. In addition, the number of teachers

who had a high (8.6 %) attitude towards inclusive education was less than those who held a low one (11.9 %). There were no significant differences based on demographic data such as gender, age, highest education, teaching experience in general education, and teaching experience in inclusive education. The previous study informed the current study that, gender, age, education level, and teaching experience was not a determinant of teachers' attitudes in implementation of inclusive education. However, the former study could not explain whether teaching categories had any influence in determining teachers' attitudes in teaching inclusive classes. The current study filled the knowledge gap and examined regular teachers and special education teachers and their attitudes in implementation of inclusive education.

Butakor (2018) conducted the study in Ghana on Analysis of Ghanaian Teachers' attitude towards inclusive education. The purpose of this study was to examine Ghanaian teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. The Multidimensional Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education Scale (MATIES) was used. Questionnaires were administered to 280 selected teachers in Ghana. The results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis revealed that the three-factor structure of the MATIES theorized that, Inclusive education was not supported by the Ghanaian teachers. Exploratory factor analysis yielded a correlated four factor solution. These four factors were labeled Behavioural, Affective, Positive Beliefs, and Negative Beliefs. The reliability coefficients for these four subscales were 0.90. 0.86, 0.77, and 0.73, respectively. The former study informed the current study on that teachers were not positive in implementing inclusive education in Ghana, the number of reasons were justified to point out teachers' negative attitudes in inclusion. The current study believes the justification for teachers negative differs in terms of geographical boundaries and hence the current study is assessing teachers' attitude towards implementation of inclusive education in Dodoma region.

Nyaaba et al. (2021) conducted a study in Ghana on Pre-service Teachers' Attitude and Perceived Challenges about Inclusive Education in Ghana. The study aimed at finding the attitude of pre-service teachers and their perceived challenges about inclusive education in Ghana. The study employed a convergent mixed method with a sample of 112 sandwich pre-service teachers at the Gambaga College of Education. The quantitative research approach consisted 10-item questionnaire scale on Attitude towards Inclusive Education (AIE) scale. Data were collected using both the questionnaire and focus group discussion. The findings revealed that the pre-service teachers have positive attitude towards inclusive education. The study findings provided useful information that teachers in Ghana are prepared for the movement towards achieving inclusive education. The current study investigated teachers' attitude towards implementation of inclusive education in Tanzanian public primary schools to ascertain their preparedness for inclusive education.

Vanderpuye et al. (2020) conducted the study in Ghana on Sustainability of inclusive education in Ghana: teachers' attitude, perception of resources needed and perception of possible impact on pupils. In this study, 501 participants representing a cross-section of pre-service teachers from three public colleges of education in Ghana were surveyed about their views regarding disability, level of discomfort interacting with people with disabilities and attitudes towards inclusive education. The results indicate that the pre-service teachers understood disability as an interaction between biological and environmental factors and felt comfortable interacting with people with disabilities. The findings indicated that, pre-service teachers were prepared to teach

inclusive classes and their attitudes towards inclusive education were faintly positive. The previous study did not indicate the reasons of faintly positive attitudes, the current study investigated the role of head and DEOs in shaping teachers' attitudes in implementation of inclusive education.

In Ghana, Wisdom et al. (2016) made a study on Knowledge, Attitude and Preparedness of Teachers towards Inclusive Education. This study was conducted to ascertain the level of knowledge and preparedness of teachers in inclusive schools piloting inclusive education in the Ejisu Juabe Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The study utilized qualitative data collection method, and employed a purposive sampling technique to select 40 participants for the study. The finding of the study revealed that there are the setbacks to classroom inclusion such as inadequate preparation on the part of the teachers and negative attitude of teachers towards children with special needs. The previous study informed the current study that teachers were inadequately prepared and had negative attitudes in inclusive education, nevertheless the study could not mention in which areas teachers felt unprepared. The current study filled the knowledge gap by investigating teachers' preparation in terms of training, attitudes and teaching methodology.

Knowledge Gap

Studies from (Nyaaba et al, 2021; Vanderpuye et al., 2020 & Butakor 2018) in Ghana on teachers' attitudes towards implementation of inclusive education provided three different responses on teachers' attitude (Positive, faintly positive and negative respectively) The difference on teachers' attitude towards implementation of inclusive education drawn from Ghana justifies that the debate of teachers' attitudes in implementation of inclusive education is not conclusive, therefore, the current study investigated teachers' attitudes in relation towards implementation of inclusive education in Tanzanian public primary schools.

3. Methodology

The study employed convergent research design under mixed research approach. The target population for this study was; eight (7) DEOs, thirteen (13) head teachers, two hundred and eighty (280) teachers and nine thousand and one hundred (9,100) pupils. Probability and non-probability sampling procedures were employed to determine the study sample of 12 schools, 07 DEO's, 12 head teachers, 84 teachers and 144 pupils, making a total of 237 respondents. Purposive and stratified sampling techniques were used to get the respondents. The instruments used to collect data were questionnaires, interview guides and observation guide. To obtain reliability for quantitative research instruments Cronbach Alpha of 0.819 was calculated while conformability of qualitative data was ensured by increasing transparency with regards to adherence to data collection procedures and ethics. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics with the aid of Statistical Packages for Social Sciences version 25.0. Data were coded and analyzed through frequencies, percentages, and mean scores for summarization and interpretation in relation to research questions. Qualitative data was analyzed by coding contents into themes, interpreting direct quotations and presented in narrative form.

4. Findings and Discussion

Teachers Attitudes Towards Implementation of Inclusive Education

The fourth research question assessed aattitudes of primary school teachers in implementation of inclusive education. It was important for the researcher to collect information on teachers' attitude in relation to the implementation of inclusive education. Attitude influences teachers' preparedness in teaching inclusive classes. To generate information for this research question, questionnaires were used to collect information from primary school teachers and interview guide was used to collect information from head teachers and District Education Offices, Teachers' responses are summarized in table 4.7

Table 1Teachers Attitudes Towards Inclusive Education

Teachers' Responses on Teachers Attitudes Towards Implementation of Inclusive Education (n=80)

S/N	Statement	SD		D		U		A		SA		Mean
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
1.	Pupils with special needs belong in the classroom alongside their typically developing peers	8	10.0	7	8.8	8	10.0	21	26.3	36	45.0	3.88
2.	Teaching in inclusive classes demands more time and space	4	5.0	55	68.8	-	-	21	26.3	-	-	2.48
3.	Inclusive education makes difficult to manage classes during teaching	1	1.3	35	43.8	1	1.3	43	53.8	-	-	3.08
4.	Pupils who need an individualized academic program should be in regular classes	2	2.5	2	2.5	2	2.5	53	66.3	21	26.3	4.11
5.	Inclusion of pupils with special educational needs into regular classrooms creates tension in schools	-	-	5	6.3	8	10.0	52	65.0	15	18.8	3.96
6.	Pupils who do not follow school rules for conduct should not be in regular classes	-	-	6	7.5	-	-	72	90.0	2	2.5	2.13
7.	Inclusion creates too much additional work for teachers	2	2.5	22	27.5	4	5.0	50	62.5	2	2.5	3.35
8.	Pupils with special educational needs display disturbing behaviours when included in regular classes	1	1.3	7	8.8	-	-	70	87.5	2	2.5	3.81
9.	Pupils with special educational needs always learn slow compared to other pupils in inclusive classes	-	-	5	6.3	6	7.5	58	72.5	11	13.8	3.94
10.	Pupils who use sign language or communication boards should not be in regular classes	14	17.5	66	82.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.18
Average Mean												**3.49**

Source: Field Data, (2022) Key: 5=SD- Strongly Disagree, 4=D- Disagree, 3=U- Undecided, 2=A-Agree, 1=SA -Strongly Agree.

Data in table 1 indicates that great majority (71.3%) of teachers agreed and strongly agreed that, pupils with special needs should belong in the classroom alongside their typically developing peers and the mean score for this statement was 3.88 This suggests that teachers have understood the value and philosophy inclusive education in Dodoma public primary schools. It further implies that the traditional model of educating pupils with disability in special schools is slowing down in the region. Educating pupils with specials needs on their own environment is referred as medical model of disability. This further implies that teachers to some extent are prepared for inclusive practices since a teacher who is prepared understands the basic principle of inclusive education of accommodating all learners in regular classes irrespective of individual differences. This research finding is in concurrence with Nyaaba et al. (2021) who stated that teachers'attitudes were positive towards accommodating learners with disability in inclusive classroom. Responding on the same statement during interview, Head Teacher 1 said that:

> Teachers in my school are positive in the implementation of inclusive although most of them lack training in special needs education. Yet they love all pupils and take into attention the needs of every learner. Teachers, who lack knowledge, experience and training in special needs education, are likely to have negative attitude in the inclusion of pupils with learning disabilities in regular classrooms, but in my school, this has not been a case (HT1, Personal communication, September 09, 2022).

In interviewing Head Teacher 6 mentioned:

> Teachers attitude are good and the school climate is calm, the issues is coping with pupils with multiple disabilities. Some pupils have physical and hearing impairment at once. Teachers have to be very technical to handle such cases in classroom to facilitate learning process (HT6, Personal communication, September 09, 2022).

In the views of head teachers, primary school teachers are prepared to accommodate learners with special needs in their classes, however they face some challenges and complications to pupils who have multiple disabilities and lack of special needs education Teachers' attitudes are considered one of the major factors guaranteeing the success of integration of pupils with special educational needs in regular classroom. This finding suggests that training is essential element for both pre-service and in-service teachers during implementation of inclusive education. this finding is in line with Vanderpuye et al. (2020) and Nyaabal et al. (2021) who found that teachers had positive attitude in including pupils with special needs in regular classroom. These findings are in line with NSIE (2017) which call attention to all teachers to develop positive mind in including learners with special needs education in regular classes. The findings further concur with Nyaaba et al. (2021) who asserts that, positive attitudes are essential in the success of educating pupils with disabilities in regular education classrooms Teachers with a positive attitude toward inclusion provided all of their students with significantly more practice attempts, at a higher level of success.

Data in table 1 indicates that slightly majority (53%) of teachers agreed and strongly agreed that inclusive education makes difficult to manage the class during teaching and the mean score for this statement was 3.08. This suggest that, when you have a class of pupils with different abilities it takes time to manage the lesson and in some cases a teacher is required to use two different lesson plans as those pupils with disabilities may need additional time to complete their task.

Hence the use of individualized education program (IEP) in inclusive classes becomes vital. The use of IEP is time consuming the interview with Head Teacher 2, the respondent said: *"In some situation teachers use IEP to facilitate lesson to meet the needs of every learner. The use of IEP is time consuming activity and yet useful one in inclusive classroom* (HT2, Personal communication, September 08, 2022).

This view implies that, classroom management is somehow challenging issue in inclusive classroom and particularly in the classes with pupils with physical disability. This indicates that, some pupils with physical disability may feel inadequate taught next to their non-disabled pupils hence lowering their self-esteem which would make it hard for them to concentrate. Pupils who require special education attention may require additional accommodations to get through the classroom routine. This finding agrees with Dombrowski et al. (2020) who found that, teachers explained the challenge of double work when working with inclusive classes in terms of preparation of lesson plan. This finding suggests that teachers'attitudes were slightly negative in teaching inclusive classes. The study reasoned that this could probably be due to limited or non-existent training to acquire integration competencies, the limited opportunities for integration with pupils with special needs education. To some extent most teachers tend to spend very little time when teaching and since there are many pupils in class the teacher will continue with the able children and leaves behind the slow learner.

Data in table 1 indicates that great majority (83.8%) of teachers agreed and strongly agreed that inclusion of pupils with special needs education into regular classes creates tension in schools and the mean score for this statement was 3.9. This suggests that, teachers are not well prepared to include pupils with disabilities in regular classes. This implies that, schools were at tension taking care of pupils with disabilities especially those with autism, intellectual impairment and albinism.

In interview with District Education Officer 3, here he commented:

> Stigmatization and discrimination have resulted into tension to learners with disabilities in inclusive schools, some pupils drop out early at school because of this tension. Special attention is needed in schools where pupils with albinism intellectual impairment, autistic and behaviour disorders are enrolled(DEO 3, Personal communication, September 13, 2022).

The views of district educational officer indicate that, there some pupils in schools who need extra care because of their disabilities. Primary school teachers find it difficult to hold pupils with intellectual impairment because of their inconsistence in decision making which creates challenges in staying with them in classroom. Tension becomes bigger in schools were schools accommodate learners with Albinism. Schools built fences to increase the security of pupils with albinism. In some parts of Tanzania people believe if you get an organ of person with albinism is associated with wealth, this poor belief has threatened the lives of pupils with albinism. This finding concurs with (African Initiative, 2018) who found that, Poor belief and stigmatization has created tension for people with disabilities in Tanzania.

This could also indicate that, inclusion creates tension for pupils with disabilities and for teachers to be kept awake to make sure they take care of pupils with disabilities in their schools. However, the finding contradicts with the Theory of Social Justice (Rawls, 1971) which states

that, the notion of social justice could therefore be interpreted as ensuring that all members of a society have equal and fair access to opportunities of livelihood, regardless of their background. This could mean that teachers were not prepared in terms of attitudes and perception to include learners with special needs in inclusive classes. The results suggest that most of the respondents hold a perception that pupils with disabilities such as "Intellectual impairment", "Multiple Handicap" and "Autism disorder" should not be included in the regular or general education setting for most or all of the day. The results also indicated that teachers are more willing to deal with pupils with less severe disabilities.

Data in table 1 indicates that majority (65%) of teachers agreed and strongly agreed that inclusion creates too much additional work to teachers. and the mean score for this statement was 3.35. This suggests that teachers in inclusive schools they have more work to perform compared to peers who are teaching in regular classroom. Teachers in inclusive classes are more concerned about increased workload and most concerned about providing appropriate attention to diverse group of children in general education classrooms. Increase in teachers work also affects pupil's academic performance. In interview Head Teacher 4 claimed that: *"In our school teachers are complaining of double work. Teachers who teachers the inclusive classes have to prepare teaching materials for regular pupils and for those with disabilities"* (HT4, Personal communication, September 22, 2022). Further the finding from head teacher indicated that, teachers who works in inclusive classes complain about additional work compared to teachers who attends only regular classes. This complains are true in a sense that, inclusive education involves multiple professional stakeholders such as social worker, psychologist, medical doctors, parents and assistant teachers.

Data in table 1 indicate that the average mean under this item was 3.49 overall this implies that teachers have positive attitude and prepared to implement inclusive education in Dodoma primary schools. This could be due to the implementation of Tanzania Development Vision 2025 which calls for a well-educated and learning society, it further calls for sustainability, and inclusive growth. The positive attitude could also be part of implementation of education and training policy of 2014 which calls attention for the government to implement inclusive education in all levels of education. Ministry of Education Science and Technology has responded by preparing first NSIE 2009-2017 and its successor 2018-2021 and current there is a third version of NSIE 2022-2026. This government effort could partly be attributed to the positivity in teachers' preparation in implementation of inclusive education.

6. Conclusion

The study concluded that regular and special education teachers had positive attitudes in including learners with disabilities in regular classrooms. The positive attitude of teachers is resulted from the implementation of education and training policy of 2014 which calls attention for the schools to implement national strategy for inclusive education in all levels of education.

Recommendation

The study recommends that district education officers should strengthen continuous professional development for teachers on inclusive education in order to foster positive attitudes in inclusive education philosophy.

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