

## Attitudinal perspectives of practising and trainee teachers toward educational inclusion

### Perspectivas actitudinales de docentes en ejercicio y en formación hacia la educación inclusiva

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#### Background

Teaching attitudes are core elements for professional activity in the current inclusive education system. We have not found any studies that compare the attitudes of the analyzed groups: practicing teachers and trainee teachers.

#### Aims

In this sense, a study was carried out in the cities with campuses of the University of Granada (Spain) to measure the attitudinal components towards that educational model in the teaching community composed of trainee and practicing teachers. We have started from the compositional model of the attitude by Stahlberg and Frey (1990), which distinguishes the cognitive dimension (perception towards the phenomenon of educational inclusion), affective dimension (feelings towards different people with disabilities and disorders), and behavioral dimension (behavioral predisposition towards inclusion).

#### Method & procedures

A quantitative method was employed with a descriptive and contrastive transversal design to elaborate profiles and patterns around inclusion. These data were collected in two consolidated and validated scales, completed online by 328 participants (206 students and 122 teachers).

#### Results & discussion

The data obtained in the Exploratory Factorial Analysis were organized regarding the different factors from the two scales applied. The first is "The Sentiments, Attitudes and Concerns about Inclusive Education Revised scale for measuring pre-service teachers' perceptions about inclusion" (SACIE-R), translated and validated by Rodríguez et al. (2019). The three factors from this scale are perception about inclusive teaching, feelings towards people with disabilities and disorders, and concerns about the inclusive requirements. The average scores were high, except for the last factor. The results were higher for trainee teachers than for practicing teachers, except for this latter factor too. Multiple investigations corroborate this.

The second scale is the "questionnaire to measure attitudes towards inclusive education" (ASIE) by De Boer et al. (2012), translated and validated by Álvarez and Buenestado (2015) and comprises two factors: behavioral predisposition towards inclusion and beliefs as a teacher in a diverse classroom. The scores obtained in this instance were generally high. Other studies displayed high attitudinal levels in educational agents.

From the global analysis by scales, we infer that for students and teachers (although for this last group with less forcefulness), values rise when questions refer to specific students, indicating their name and difficulty (as is the case of the second scale: ASIE) when compared to questions without these specifics (first scale: SACIE-R). From the global analysis, we deduce that there are differences between both groups. Trainee students show more positive attitudes than practicing teachers. These differences are significant, and their effect size is moderate to high.

### Conclusion

After the analysis with statistical data, an acceptable attitude, with potential for improvement, was inflicted on the teachers since they have considerable power to influence students at the beginning of their professional careers. Only those who specialize in fields related to Special Education show attitudes that are thoroughly positive. There is, therefore, an urge for attitudinal optimization through teaching practice as a previous step to enhance inclusive education.

**Keywords:** inclusive education, special education, teaching attitude, teaching training

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