



**Pre-Service Teachers' Perceptions of Learning Disabilities and Their Implications for Inclusive Development: Evidence from a Teacher Education Institution in India**

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**Abstract**

Understanding teacher perceptions of learning disabilities (LDs) is critical for fostering inclusive education. This study examines the perceptions of pre-service Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) trainees regarding LDs, focusing on their awareness, confidence, and challenges in addressing the needs of students with LDs. Conducted at The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, (2022-2024), the study employs a quantitative approach, analyzing responses from 95 trainees using a structured perception scale. Findings indicate that 82.1% of trainees recognize the importance of early identification, while 61.1% express confidence in working with students with LDs. However, concerns persist, as 70.5% highlight risks of misdiagnosis or non-detection, and 67.4% believe educators often underestimate the impact of LDs on academic performance. Encouragingly, 81.1% affirm that students with LDs can succeed with proper support, and 87.4% acknowledge the teacher's role in improving education quality. Trainees also emphasize the need for differentiated instruction, with 73.7% supporting specialized reading strategies, 83.1% recognizing writing support needs, and 77.9% advocating for tailored math instruction. Additionally, 85.3% believe adequate support improves social outcomes, while 84.2% stress the importance of multidisciplinary collaboration. However, 55.8% cite resource limitations as a barrier, and 60% struggle with time allocation for students with LDs. These findings underscore the necessity for enhanced training, practical exposure, and continuous professional development to equip future educators with evidence-based strategies for supporting diverse learners. Addressing these gaps through curriculum enhancements and hands-on experiences can bridge the divide between perception and practice, fostering a truly inclusive educational system



## Keywords:

**Learning disability:** Learning disability in this study has referred to a group of students having academic difficulties like Reading, Writing and Maths difficulty.

**Pre-Service B.Ed. Trainee:** Pre-Service B.Ed. trainees for the present study are the students who are enrolled in the second year of B.Ed. programme

**Perception:** Perception under this study is the individual perspectives of the B.Ed. trainees about learning disabilities.

**Students with Learning Disabilities:** Under this study, students with learning disabilities refer to school learners experiencing difficulties in reading, writing, and mathematics.

**Inclusive Education:** In the present study, inclusive education refers to the practice of educating students with difficulties in reading, writing, and mathematics within regular classrooms through adapted teaching strategies.

**Introduction** Learning is essential for gaining awareness, and teachers play a pivotal role in shaping meaningful educational experiences. However, learning disabilities (LDs) pose significant challenges, as they are often unnoticed or unaddressed, hindering the goals of universal education and equal opportunity. The National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities defines LDs as a heterogeneous group of disorders involving significant difficulties in listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematical abilities, presumed to stem from central nervous system dysfunction (Choolakal, 2019).

In India, approximately 5–10% of school-going children are affected by LDs, with higher rates (up to 15%) reported in southern regions due to multilingualism and socioeconomic factors (Mishra & Pahwa, 2018; Karande, 2018). Despite legislative support through the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016) and National Education Policy (2020), awareness among educators remains limited, leading to under-identification, school dropout, and mental health issues (Sharma, 2014; Sharma et al., 2018).

Inclusive education, as advocated by UNESCO (2017) and India's policy framework, shifts the paradigm toward equity by removing barriers and providing tailored support. For students with LDs, this includes differentiated instruction, assistive technology, and individualized education plans (IEPs). Pre-service B.Ed. trainees, as future frontline educators, hold perceptions and



attitudes that directly influence early identification, intervention, and stigma reduction (Bhattacharya & Sood, 2019).

Theories such as Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), Attribution Theory (Heider, 1958), and the Contact Hypothesis (Allport, 1954) explain how observation, causal attributions, and intergroup contact shape these perceptions. This study therefore investigates the perceptions of pre-service B.Ed. trainees at The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda to identify gaps and inform teacher preparation for inclusive classrooms.

**Types of Learning Disabilities** This study focuses on three core academic LDs:

- **Dyslexia** (reading): Difficulties with word recognition, spelling, decoding, and comprehension, often involving letter reversals and slow reading (Oberoi, 2018).
- **Dysgraphia** (writing): Challenges in handwriting, spelling, organizing thoughts, and fine motor skills (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2018).
- **Dyscalculia** (mathematics): Problems with number concepts, place value, calculations, time, money, and spatial reasoning (Oberoi, 2018).

Early detection and support in these areas are essential for academic and social success.

**Policy Perspective and Role of Teachers** India's National Policy on Education (1986), Persons with Disabilities Act (1995), National Policy for Persons with Disabilities (2006), RPWD Act (2016), and NEP 2020 emphasize inclusive education, early identification, teacher training, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), assistive technology, multisensory approaches, and IEPs. Teachers are central: they identify red flags, provide individualized instruction, create supportive environments, and advocate through collaboration with parents and specialists (Sharma et al., 2018; Rao et al., 2017).

Pre-service trainees' perceptions determine their willingness for professional development and inclusive practices. Positive perceptions foster early intervention, reduce stigma, and improve outcomes, making their training critical (McCray & McHatton, 2011; Garg & Kumar, 2020).

**Rationale of the Study** Despite policy advances, learning disabilities (LDs) remain under-identified in India due to limited awareness among teachers. Pre-service B.Ed. trainees' perceptions directly influence their future effectiveness in inclusive settings. As future classroom practitioners, they will be responsible for early identification, instructional adaptation, and creating supportive learning environments. Their level of preparedness



determines whether inclusive policies are implemented effectively at the classroom level. Examining their perceptions helps identify areas requiring stronger theoretical grounding and practical exposure within teacher education programmes, thereby informing curriculum enhancement and promoting meaningful inclusive practices.

**Research Question:** What is the level of perception of pre-service B.Ed. trainees regarding learning disabilities?

**Objective:** To measure the perception of pre-service B.Ed. trainees on learning disabilities.

### Research Methodology

#### Research Design

This study employed a descriptive survey research design.

**Population:** The target population comprised 105 pre-service B.Ed. trainees enrolled in the B.Ed. programme at the Faculty of Education, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, during the academic year 2022–2024.

**Sampling Technique:** The study employed a convenience sampling technique.

**Sample:** The sample for the present study comprised 95 pre-service B.Ed. trainees'

**Tool:** The tool used for the study was as follows:

A self-developed 20-item Likert-type perception scale was used to assess pre-service B.Ed. trainees' perceptions toward learning disabilities. The scale included 15 positive and 5 negative statements with five response options ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree."

**Scoring Procedure:** Positive items were scored from 5 (Strongly Agree) to 1 (Strongly Disagree). Negative items were reverse-scored. Higher scores indicated more positive perceptions toward learning disabilities.

**Administration:** The tool was administered online through Google Forms to facilitate efficient data collection.



### Procedure of Data Collection

- Necessary permission was obtained from the Department of Education, Faculty of Education and Psychology, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda.
- Informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection.
- The perception scale was administered to selected pre-service B.Ed. trainees.
- Responses were analyzed quantitatively to calculate percentages and Intensity Index values to identify patterns related to awareness, confidence, challenges, and support needs.

### Interpretation, Result and Discussion:

The data were analyzed with the help of percentage analysis and the Intensity Index.

**Table 1: Item-wise Distribution of Responses and Intensity Index of Pre-Service B.Ed. Trainees' Perceptions Regarding Students with Learning Disabilities**

Sr No	Items	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Intensity Index
							$= \frac{\sum(f \times w)}{N \times W} \times 100$
1	I believe that early identification of learning disabilities is important for effective intervention.	45.3	37.9	5.3	5.3	6.3	4.11(High)
2	I feel confident in my ability to work with students who have learning disabilities.	15.8	45.3	30.5	4.2	4.2	3.64 (High)
3	I believe that students with learning disabilities can achieve academic success with appropriate support	40	41.1	14.7	3.2	1.1	4.16 (High)
4	I think that teachers' perceptions of students with learning disabilities can impact their academic progress.	37.9	47.4	9.5	3.2	2.1	4.16 (High)



5	I believe that teachers play a crucial role in improving the quality of education for students with learning disabilities.	51.6	35.8	6.3	3.2	3.2	4.30 (Very High)
6	I believe that learning disabilities are often misdiagnosed or go undetected in the education system.	24.2	46.3	21.1	7.4	1.1	3.85 (High)
7	I believe that educators often underestimate the impact of learning disabilities on students' overall academic performance	23.2	44.2	24.2	7.4	1.1	3.81 (High)



Sr No.	Items	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Intensity Index = $\frac{\sum(f \times w)}{N \times W} \times 100$
8	I think that adequate support for students with learning disabilities can lead to better social outcomes.	35.8	49.5	12.6	0	2.1	<b>Intensity Index</b>
9	I believe that collaboration with other professionals is important in providing effective support for students with learning disabilities.	35.5	48.4	2.1	2.1	1.1	3.83 (High)
10	I am open to implementing differentiated reading strategies to accommodate students with reading disabilities.	24.2	49.5	22.1	3.2	1.1	3.93 (High)
11	I recognize the importance of providing appropriate support to students struggling with writing difficulties.	28.4	54.7	12.6	2.1	1.1	4.04 (High)
12	I recognize the importance of teaching foundational math concepts differently to students with math disabilities.	30.5	47.4	18.9	1.1	2.1	4.03 (High)
13	I am aware of self-esteem and self-confidence's impact	33.7	47.4	16.8	0	2.1	4.11 (High)



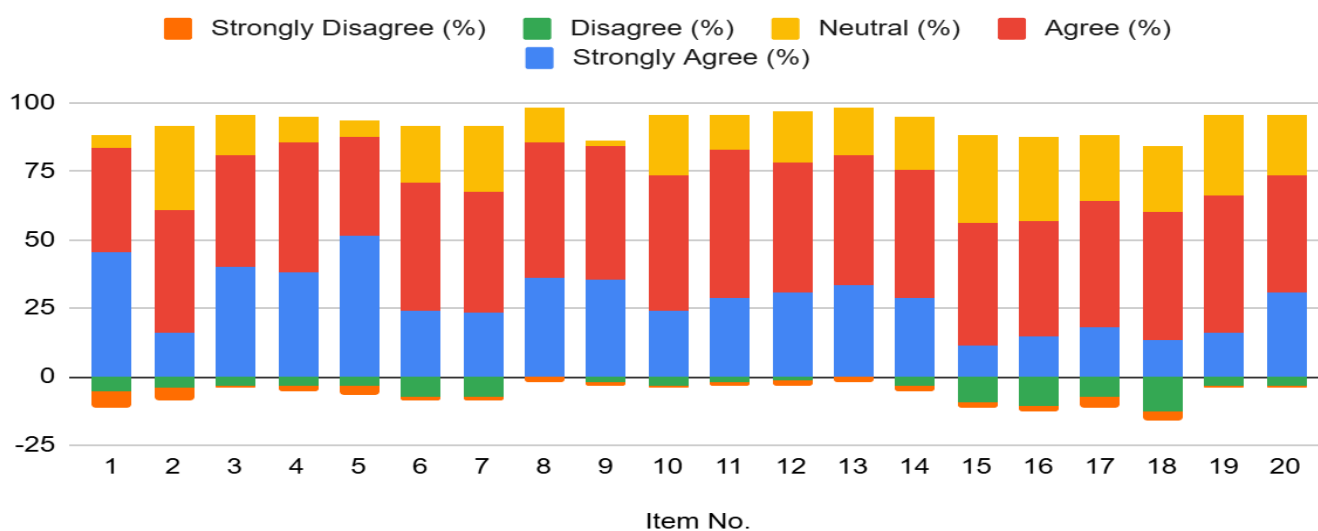
	on students with learning disabilities.						
14	I believe that addressing learning disabilities can contribute to reducing the achievement gap in education.	28.4	47.4	18.9	3.2	2.1	3.97 (High)
15	Concerns about resources and support for students with learning disabilities sometimes hinder my efforts.	11.6	44.2	32.6	9.5	2.1	2.46 (Low)
16	I am uncertain about how to address the unique challenges that students with learning disabilities encounter.	14.7	42.1	30.5	10.5	2.1	2.43 (Low)
17	Balancing the needs of students with and without learning disabilities can be difficult.	17.9	46.3	24.2	7.4	4.2	2.34 (Low)
18	I find it challenging to allocate adequate time for addressing the needs of students with learning disabilities.	13.7	46.3	24.2	12.6	3.2	2.45 (Low)
19	The complexity of teaching students with learning disabilities can be overwhelming	15.8	50.5	29.5	3.2	1.1	2.24 (Low)



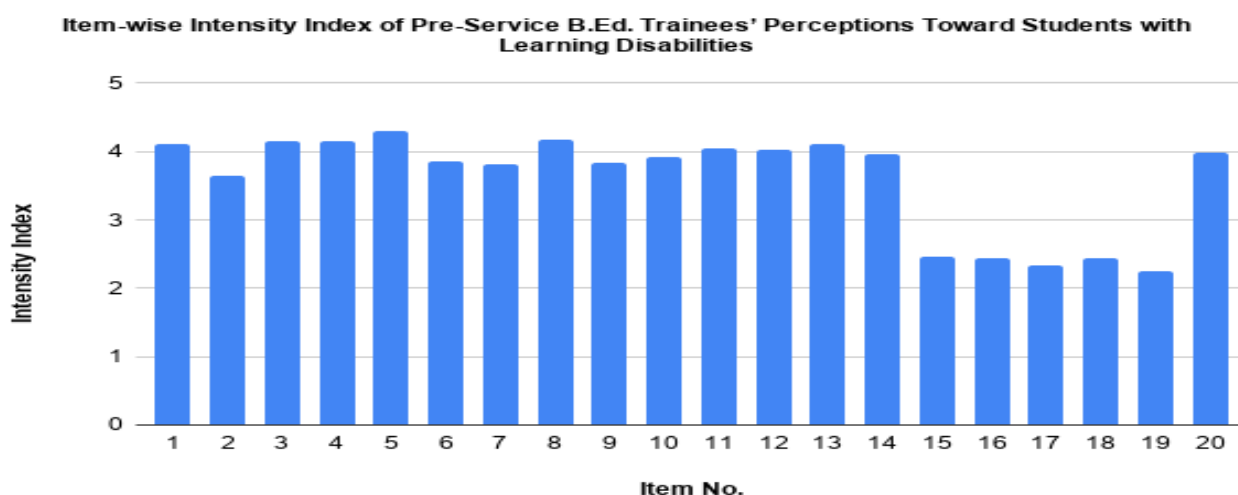
20	I perceive learning disabilities as a multifaceted challenge that demands continuous professional development to effectively support diverse learners.	30.5	43.2	22.1	3.2	1.1	3.99 (High)
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**Figure 1: Item-wise Distribution of Responses of Pre-Service B.Ed. Trainees on the Perception Scale for Learning Disabilities**

### Item-wise Distribution of Responses of Pre-Service B.Ed. Trainees on the Perception Scale for Learning Disabilities



**Figure 2: Item-wise Intensity Index of Pre-Service B.Ed. Trainees' Perceptions Toward Students with Learning Disabilities**



To quantify the magnitude of perception toward learning disabilities, a **Weighted Mean Intensity Index (WMII)** was computed for each item of the five-point Likert-scale instrument. This method was employed to capture both the direction and strength of respondents' perceptions.

Each response category was assigned a numerical weight as follows:

- Strongly Agree (SA) = 5
- Agree (A) = 4
- Neutral (N) = 3
- Disagree (D) = 2
- Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1

For negatively worded statements (Items 15–19), reverse coding was applied prior to computation to maintain uniform interpretative direction.

The Weighted Mean Intensity Index for each item was calculated using the following formula:

$$WMII = \frac{\sum(P_i \times W_i)}{100}$$

Where:

- $P_i$  = Percentage of respondents in the  $i^{th}$  response category
- $W_i$  = Assigned weight of the  $i^{th}$  response category



- 100 = Total percentage of responses

Since the response distribution was expressed in percentage form, dividing by 100 standardized the index value on a scale ranging from 1 to 5.

The overall perception intensity was computed by averaging the item-wise intensity scores using the following formula:

$$\text{Overall WMII} = \frac{\sum WMII_i}{N}$$

Where:

- $WMII_i$  = Intensity index of each item
- $N$  = Total number of items ( $N = 20$ )

### Overall Perception Intensity Index

The composite Weighted Mean Intensity Index (WMII) was obtained by averaging the intensity scores of all 20 items. After applying reverse coding to negatively framed statements, the overall WMII was calculated as follows:

$$\text{Overall WMII} = \frac{72.02}{20} = 3.60$$

The overall WMII score of **3.60** indicates a **high level of positive perception** among pre-service B.Ed. trainees toward the **identification, support, and inclusion** of students with learning disabilities. However, relatively lower intensity values observed for constraint-related items indicate perceived practical challenges in classroom implementation. The following item-wise interpretation is presented with logical connections to show the progression of perceptions from awareness to practice and challenges.

### Item-wise Interpretation

#### Item 1:

The data indicates a strong positive response, with 82.1% of respondents selecting Agree or Strongly Agree, while 5.3% remained neutral and 11.6% disagreed. This reflects a clear recognition among pre-service B.Ed. trainees of the importance of early identification of learning disabilities. The Intensity Index value of 4.11 (High) further indicates a strong consensus regarding the significance of timely intervention.

#### Item 2:



A majority of respondents (61.1%) expressed confidence in working with students with learning disabilities, though 30.5% remained neutral. The Intensity Index value of 3.64 (High) indicates a generally positive level of confidence among pre-service B.Ed. trainees.

**Item 3:**

A majority of respondents (81.1%) believe that students with learning disabilities can achieve academic success with appropriate support, while 14.7% remain neutral and 4.3% disagree. The Intensity Index value of 4.16 (High) indicates a strong belief among pre-service B.Ed. trainees in the academic potential of students with learning disabilities when adequate support is provided.

**Item 4:**

A large majority of respondents (85.3%) acknowledge that teachers' perceptions influence the academic progress of students with learning disabilities, while 9.5% remain neutral and 5.3% disagree. The Intensity Index value of 4.16 (High) indicates strong awareness among pre-service B.Ed. trainees regarding the impact of teachers' perceptions on students' academic progress.

**Item 5:**

A substantial majority of respondents (87.4%) agree that teachers play a crucial role in improving the quality of education for students with learning disabilities, while 6.3% remain neutral and 6.4% disagree. The Intensity Index value of 4.30 (Very High) reflects a very strong belief among pre-service B.Ed. trainees in the pivotal role of teachers in supporting students with learning disabilities.

**Item 6:**

A majority of respondents (70.5%) agree that learning disabilities are often misdiagnosed or remain undetected in the education system, while 21.1% remain neutral and 8.5% disagree. The Intensity Index value of 3.85 (High) indicates that pre-service B.Ed. trainees express substantial concern regarding the possible misdiagnosis or under-identification of learning disabilities.

**Item 7:**

A majority of respondents (67.5%) agree that the impact of learning disabilities is often underestimated in educational settings, while 24.2% remain neutral and 8.5% disagree. The



Intensity Index value of 3.81 (High) indicates that pre-service B.Ed. trainees recognize that the academic impact of learning disabilities may sometimes be undervalued in classrooms.

**Item 8:**

A majority of respondents (85.3%) agree that adequate support improves the social outcomes of students with learning disabilities, while 12.6% remain neutral and 2.1% disagree. The Intensity Index value of 4.17 (High) indicates a strong belief among pre-service B.Ed. trainees that appropriate support positively influences both academic and social development.

**Item 9:**

A majority of respondents (83.9%) recognize the importance of collaboration with other professionals in supporting students with learning disabilities, while 12.6% remain neutral and 2.1% disagree. The Intensity Index value of 3.83 (High) indicates that pre-service B.Ed. trainees acknowledge the significance of multidisciplinary collaboration in inclusive education.

**Item 10:**

A majority of respondents (73.7%) show openness to implementing differentiated reading strategies for students with reading disabilities, while 22.1% remain neutral and 4.3% disagree. The Intensity Index value of 3.93 (High) indicates a strong willingness among pre-service B.Ed. trainees to adapt their instructional strategies to support students with learning disabilities.

**Item 11:**

A majority of respondents (83.1%) recognize the importance of providing support to students with writing difficulties, while 12.6% remain neutral and 2.1% disagree. The Intensity Index value of 4.04 (High) indicates a strong acknowledgment among pre-service B.Ed. trainees regarding the need for targeted support for students facing writing challenges.

**Item 12:**

A majority of respondents (77.9%) acknowledge the need to teach foundational mathematics differently for students with learning disabilities, while 18.9% remain neutral and 2.1% disagree. The Intensity Index value of 4.03 (High) indicates strong awareness among pre-service B.Ed. trainees regarding the unique learning needs of students with learning disabilities.



**Item 13:**

A majority of respondents (81.1%) acknowledge the importance of self-esteem and self-confidence in students with learning disabilities, while 16.8% remain neutral and 2.1% disagree. The Intensity Index value of 4.11 (High) indicates strong recognition among pre-service B.Ed. trainees of the role of psychological factors in students' learning experiences.

**Item 14:**

A majority of respondents (75.8%) believe that addressing learning disabilities can help reduce the achievement gap, while 18.9% remain neutral and 5.3% disagree. The Intensity Index value of 3.97 (High) indicates that pre-service B.Ed. trainees recognize the importance of targeted interventions in promoting educational equity.

**Item 15:**

A little over half of the respondents (55.8%) agree that resource limitations can hinder their efforts in supporting students with learning disabilities, while 32.6% remain neutral and 11.6% disagree. The Intensity Index value of 2.46 (Low) indicates that although some trainees acknowledge resource-related concerns, these are not perceived as major barriers overall.

**Item 16:**

A majority of respondents (56.8%) agree that they are uncertain about addressing the unique challenges faced by students with learning disabilities, while 30.5% remain neutral and 12.6% disagree. The Intensity Index value of 2.43 (Low) suggests that although some trainees experience uncertainty, it is not perceived as a strong barrier overall.

**Item 17:**

A majority of respondents (64.2%) agree that balancing the needs of students with and without learning disabilities can be difficult, while 24.2% remain neutral and 11.6% disagree. The Intensity Index value of 2.34 (Low) indicates that although this challenge is acknowledged, it is not perceived as an overwhelming difficulty by most pre-service B.Ed. trainees.

**Item 18:**

A majority of respondents (60%) agree that allocating adequate time for students with learning disabilities can be challenging, while 24.2% remain neutral and 15.8% disagree. The Intensity Index value of 2.45 (Low) suggests that although time allocation is recognized as a challenge, it is not perceived as a severe obstacle by most pre-service B.Ed. trainees.



**Item 19:**

The chart reveals that 66.3% of the respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement, indicating a majority view that teaching students with learning disabilities presents significant complexities. Conversely, 3.2% disagree, and a sizable portion, 29.5%, remain neutral. The data reflects an acknowledgement among the majority of respondents of the challenges involved in teaching students with learning disabilities, possibly highlighting the emotional and pedagogical demands of such roles. The value 2.24 (Low) indicates that while teaching students with learning disabilities is seen as complex, it is not generally experienced as excessively overwhelming by the trainees.

**Item 20:**

A majority of respondents (73.7%) recognize the need for continuous professional development to effectively support students with learning disabilities, while 22.1% remain neutral and 3.2% disagree. The Intensity Index value of 3.99 (High) indicates strong awareness among pre-service B.Ed. trainees of the importance of ongoing learning in addressing learning disabilities.

**MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

- **Early Identification of Learning Disabilities:** A significant majority (82.1% combined, with 45.3% strongly agreeing and 36.8% agreeing) believe that early identification of learning disabilities is crucial for effective intervention. The Intensity Index of 4.11 (High) indicates strong consensus among pre-service trainees regarding the importance of timely intervention.
- **Confidence in Working with Students:** 61.1% (45.3% agree, 15.8% strongly agree) of respondents feel confident in their ability to work with students with learning disabilities, though a considerable portion (30.5%) remains neutral. The Intensity Index value of 3.64 (High) indicates a generally positive and reasonably strong level of confidence among pre-service B.Ed. trainees, though it also suggests scope for further skill development and practical exposure to strengthen their preparedness.
- **Belief in Academic Success with Support:** 81.1% (40% strongly agree, 41.1% agree) of the participants believe students with learning disabilities can achieve academic success with appropriate support. **Impact of Teachers' Perceptions:** 85.3% (47.4%



agree, 37.9% strongly agree) acknowledge that teachers' perceptions can significantly influence the academic progress of students with learning disabilities. The Index of 4.16 (High) confirms strong belief in the effectiveness of supportive measures.

- **Role of Teachers in Enhancing Education Quality:** 87.4% (51.6% strongly agree, 35.8% agree) believe teachers play a crucial role in improving education quality for students with learning disabilities. The Intensity Index of 4.30 (Very High) reflects exceptionally strong professional commitment.
- **Concerns on Misdiagnosis or Non-Detection:** 70.5% (46.3% agree, 24.2% strongly agree) express concerns about the misdiagnosis or non-detection of learning disabilities in the education system. The Intensity Index of 3.85 (High) indicates substantial concern about identification gaps.
- **Underestimation of Impact by Educators:** 67.4% (44.2% agree, 23.2% strongly agree) feel that educators often underestimate the impact of learning disabilities on academic performance. The Intensity Index value of 3.81 (High) further indicates a strong recognition among pre-service B.Ed. trainees that learning disabilities may not receive adequate attention within academic contexts.
- **Support for Better Social Outcomes:** 85.3% (49.5% agree, 35.8% strongly agree) agree that adequate support can lead to better social outcomes for students with learning disabilities. The Intensity Index value of 4.17 (High) reflects a strong and consistent consensus among pre-service B.Ed. trainees regarding the broader social benefits of inclusive support practices.
- **Importance of Multidisciplinary Collaboration:** 84.2% (48.4% agree, 35.8% strongly agree) recognize the importance of collaboration with other professionals in providing effective support. The Intensity Index value of 3.83 (High) confirms strong endorsement among pre-service B.Ed. trainees of collaborative and multidisciplinary approaches in inclusive education.
- **Openness to Differentiated Reading Strategies:** 73.7% (49.5% agree, 24.2% strongly agree) are open to implementing differentiated reading strategies for students with reading disabilities. The Intensity Index value of 3.93 (High) indicates a strong willingness among pre-service B.Ed. trainees to adapt and modify reading instruction



to accommodate diverse learning needs.

- **Recognition of Writing Support Needs:** 83.1% (54.7% agree, 28.4% strongly agree) recognize the importance of providing appropriate support for students struggling with writing difficulties. The Intensity Index value of 4.04 (High) reflects a strong level of recognition among pre-service B.Ed. trainees regarding the need for targeted writing interventions.
- **Differentiated Math Instruction Needs:** 77.9% (47.4% agree, 30.5% strongly agree) acknowledge the importance of teaching foundational math concepts differently to students with math disabilities. The Intensity Index of 4.03 (High), demonstrates strong recognition of instructional adaptability in mathematics.
- **Awareness of Self-Esteem and Confidence Impact:** 81.1% (47.4% agree, 33.7% strongly agree) are aware of the impact of self-esteem and self-confidence on students with learning disabilities. The Intensity Index of 4.11 (High) confirms strong awareness of psychological dimensions in learning.
- **Addressing Learning Disabilities to Reduce Achievement Gap:** 75.8% (47.4% agree, 28.4% strongly agree) believe that addressing learning disabilities can help reduce the achievement gap. The Intensity Index of 3.97 (High) reflects a strong belief in inclusive interventions.
- **Concerns About Resources and Support:** 55.8% (44.2% agree, 11.6% strongly agree) indicate that concerns about resources and support sometimes hinder their efforts in supporting students with learning disabilities. However, the Intensity Index value of 2.46 (Low) indicates that, overall, these constraints are not perceived as highly restrictive or severe barriers by pre-service B.Ed. trainees.
- **Confidence in Addressing Challenges:** A majority (56.8% combined, with 42.1% agreeing and 14.7% strongly agreeing) feel somewhat confident in addressing the unique challenges faced by students with learning disabilities, despite 30.5% expressing neutrality. The Intensity Index of 2.43 (Low) indicates comparatively lower intensity in perceived uncertainty.
- **Balancing Educational Needs:** 64.2% (46.3% agree, 17.9% strongly agree) acknowledge the difficulty in balancing the needs of students with and without



learning disabilities. The Intensity Index of 2.34 (Low) suggests the challenge is not intensely perceived.

- **Time Allocation Challenges:** 60% (46.3% agree, 13.7% strongly agree) find allocating adequate time for addressing the needs of students with learning disabilities challenging. The Intensity Index of 2.45 (Low) reflects moderate concern rather than severe constraint.
- **Perceived Complexity of Teaching:** 66.3% (50.5% agree, 15.8% strongly agree) feel the complexity of teaching students with learning disabilities can be overwhelming. The Intensity Index of 2.24 (Low) indicates relatively lower perceived intensity.
- **Continuous Professional Development:** 73.7% (43.2% agree, 30.5% strongly agree) see learning disabilities as a multifaceted challenge that demands continuous professional development. The intensity Index of 3.99 (High) confirms strong recognition of the need for ongoing professional learning.

## DISCUSSION

- The findings of the present study reveal a strong positive perception among pre-service B.Ed. trainees toward learning disabilities within the framework of inclusive education. The overall Weighted Mean Intensity Index (WMII) score of **3.60** indicates a high level of attitudinal acceptance and conceptual clarity regarding inclusive practices. Trainees demonstrated substantial agreement on the importance of early identification and intervention, differentiated instruction, collaborative support systems, and the significant influence of teacher attitudes on student outcomes.
- Notably, the highest intensity score (4.30) was observed for the statement emphasizing the teacher's crucial role in improving educational quality for students with learning disabilities. This reflects a strong sense of professional responsibility and ethical commitment toward inclusive education. Similarly, high intensity values for early identification (4.11) and the belief that students with learning disabilities can achieve academic success with appropriate support (4.16) align with established research highlighting the importance of early intervention and specialized pedagogical preparation (Jayalalitha, 2013; Roy, 2013).



- The results further indicate a considerable interest among trainees in professional development and innovative teaching strategies, suggesting readiness to adopt inclusive educational practices. This aligns with the broader discourse on inclusive teacher preparation, which emphasizes the need for equipping future educators with both theoretical knowledge and adaptive instructional competencies.
- However, comparatively lower intensity scores were observed for constraint-oriented items such as perceived instructional complexity (2.24) and managing diverse classroom needs (2.34), even after reverse coding. These findings suggest that while attitudinal acceptance and cognitive readiness are strong, trainees anticipate practical challenges in implementation.
- When compared with studies conducted among in-service teachers (Vakkil, 2012; Dapudong, 2013), a perceptual–practical gap becomes evident. Pre-service trainees exhibit strong theoretical understanding and positive dispositions toward inclusive education, whereas in-service teachers often report challenges related to classroom management, resource constraints, and lack of sustained professional development. This comparison underscores the necessity of continuous professional support beyond initial teacher education.

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE PRESENT STUDY

### Implications for Curriculum Development

**Integration of Specialised Training:** Teacher education programs should integrate comprehensive training on learning disabilities into their curricula. This includes theoretical knowledge, early identification strategies, and intervention techniques, ensuring trainees are well-prepared from the outset.

**Incorporation of Innovative Teaching Strategies:** Curriculum developers need to emphasize innovative teaching strategies that cater to diverse learners. Exposure to and practice with these strategies during training can boost trainees' confidence and competence.

**Emphasis on Continuous Professional Development:** Curricula should instil the importance of lifelong learning and professional growth, encouraging trainees to stay abreast of the latest research, tools, and practices in special education.

### Professional Training and Support

**Practical Application:** Teacher training programs must provide ample opportunities for practical application of inclusive strategies in classroom settings. Simulations, case studies,



and teaching practicums in diverse environments can bridge the gap between theory and practice.

**Professional Development Opportunities:** Institutions should establish partnerships with special education centres, research institutions, and professional bodies to offer ongoing professional development opportunities, workshops, and seminars on learning disabilities.

**Mentorship and Support Networks:** Establish mentorship programs pairing trainees with experienced educators in inclusive education. Support networks can offer guidance, share resources, and foster discussions on challenges and best practices.

### **Policy Formulation and Advocacy**

**Policy Advocacy for Inclusive Education:** Stakeholders should advocate for policies that support inclusive education, ensuring adequate resources, training, and support for educators. This includes advocating for reduced class sizes, access to specialist support, and inclusive teaching materials.

**Research and Development:** Encourage and fund research on effective teaching strategies for students with learning disabilities, the impact of teacher perceptions on student outcomes, and the efficacy of teacher education programs in preparing educators for inclusive classrooms.

### **Fostering an Inclusive Education Culture**

**Community Engagement: Programs** should encourage trainees to engage with the community, including families of students with learning disabilities, to understand their perspectives and needs, fostering a holistic approach to inclusive education.

**Promotion of Positive Attitudes:** Through seminars, workshops, and discussions, teacher education programs can play a crucial role in promoting positive attitudes towards students with learning disabilities, challenging stereotypes, and fostering empathy among future educators.

**Advocacy for Students with Learning Disabilities:** Train educators to be advocates for their students, ensuring they have the knowledge and skills to support students' rights, and access to appropriate resources and accommodations in educational settings.

### **CONCLUSION**

From the perspective of the global inclusive development agenda—particularly the principle of “Leaving No One Behind” advocated by the United Nations under the Sustainable



Development Goals framework—the findings of this study suggest a favorable attitudinal and conceptual orientation toward inclusive education among pre-service B.Ed. trainees. The results indicate that future teachers possess the foundational cognitive understanding and positive professional dispositions necessary for fostering inclusive classroom environments. However, the realization of inclusive education extends beyond perceptual readiness. The effective translation of inclusive principles into classroom practice requires strengthened structural preparedness, institutional support mechanisms, and sustained practice-oriented training. Teacher education programs must therefore systematically embed experiential components such as classroom simulations, case-based pedagogical engagement, collaborative problem-solving exercises, and structured exposure to inclusive resource frameworks. Bridging the gap between perception and implementation is essential to ensure that inclusive education progresses from theoretical endorsement to sustained and meaningful pedagogical practice. Such alignment between teacher preparation and inclusive development goals is critical for advancing equitable and quality education for all learners.

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