

Research Article

Public *versus* private: A comparative evaluation of Ghanaian teachers' perspectives of implementing inclusive education

Joseph Baidoo

Department of Basic Education, School of Education and Lifelong Learning, University of Education, Winneba, Ghana (ORCID: [0009-0001-7660-4009](https://orcid.org/0009-0001-7660-4009))

This study compared the perspectives of public and private preschool teachers in Ghana regarding inclusive education ten years after its policy implementation. Inclusive education, defined as a teaching approach that integrates students with special needs into general education classrooms, is central to this study. A descriptive survey design was used, and data were collected from 89 public and 39 private preschool teachers sampled from inclusive schools, where students with special needs are integrated into mainstream classrooms. The structured questionnaires focused on teachers' attitudes, experiences, and perceptions of inclusive practices. Data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations, and an independent samples *t*-test. Findings revealed that while both public and private preschool teachers recognized challenges in implementing inclusive education, particularly in terms of curriculum adjustments, teacher workload, and inadequate resources, they differed in their views of its academic outcomes for learners with special needs. However, no statistically significant difference was found between the two groups regarding these perceptions. The study concludes that the challenges in implementing inclusive education are shared across both public and private schools. It is recommended that the Ministry of Education and the Effutu Municipal Education Directorate provide additional resources, infrastructure, and training to ensure that both public and private preschools can effectively support inclusive education. Future research should explore the academic and social outcomes for learners with special needs in inclusive settings.

Keywords: Inclusive education, Preschool teachers' perceptions, Public and private schools, Special needs learners

Article History: Submitted 6 October 2024; Revised 29 July 2025; Published online 26 November 2025

1. Introduction

Ghana adopted the Inclusive Education Policy in 2015, alongside the Disability Act (Republic of Ghana, 2006). This policy aligns with global commitments such as the Salamanca Statement and the Sustainable Development Goals, which emphasize inclusive and equitable quality education for all (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2015). Nyaaba et al. (2021) opined that the implication of this policy is that unlike before where there were special schools for special educational needs children, the narrative is different now. The policy entreats all schools to accommodate special educational needs children in the regular school settings except in cases where placement is deemed not ideal by the Ministries responsible for Education, Health and Social. Ghana's commitment to this policy has made it implemented several policies including free and compulsory education, the Capitation Grant, the abolition of school fees, nutrition and school feeding programs, and the establishment of pilot inclusive schools across the country.

Address of Corresponding Author

Joseph Baidoo, Department of Basic Education, School of Education and Lifelong Learning (SELL), University of Education, Winneba, P.O. Box 25, Winneba, Ghana.

✉ algyasare5@yahoo.com

How to cite: Baidoo, J. (2026). Public *versus* private: A comparative evaluation of Ghanaian teachers' perspectives of implementing inclusive education. *International Journal of Didactical Studies*, 7(1), 36684. <https://doi.org/10.33902/ijods.202636684>

To promote inclusive education in Ghana, the government, through the Ghana Education Service [GES], designated several basic schools across various districts as pilot inclusive schools. The Effutu Municipality in the Central Region was among the districts selected for this initiative and emerged as a key pilot site. According to Yeboah (2023), Effutu accounted for 23 of the pilot inclusive basic schools established in the region. These schools were equipped with trained personnel and essential resources to implement and model inclusive education practices that could inform national expansion. As part of the initiative, learners with diverse educational needs were integrated into mainstream classrooms to learn alongside their peers without special educational needs, fostering an inclusive learning environment for all.

The policy aims at ensuring that all learners feel welcome, supported, and able to participate meaningfully (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2018). However, UNESCO (2017) has refined the definition of inclusion to include the idea of ensuring equal access to high-quality learning opportunities for all learners. Hence, Ikhwanudin and Suryadi (2018) describes inclusive education as a system that allows children with special needs to learn alongside their peers in regular schools. Their goal is to provide as many children as possible with access to quality education, catering to individual learner needs without discrimination. Billingsley and Bettini (2019) further explain that inclusive education is often framed as “a systematic strategy to address students' various needs, increase active participation, and eliminate exclusion both within and outside educational contexts”. These definitions suggest that the aim of inclusion is to eliminate marginalization and foster diversity in learning.

Despite these initiatives to cushion the implementation of the policy in Ghana, many preschool classrooms in Ghana fail to achieve true inclusion. Teachers in both public and private preschools report insufficient preparation, lack of materials, and minimal curricular adaptation. Various reports have confirmed barriers in training and resources (Ocansey & Gyimah, 2021) and negative perceptions about inclusion (Osero, 2015). Opoku et al. (2022) reported that private preschool teachers feel confident in their abilities but often lack training and materials for inclusive practices. Yet Wolf et al. (2021) found that private school teachers face limited materials and insufficient training to implement inclusive education. Naami and Mort (2023) also found that many Ghanaian public school teachers feel unprepared by their training programs to support learners with disabilities. This implies that public and private school teachers are noted to differ in many contexts and school conditions. They vary in access to resources, level of professional training, demonstrative support and institutional policies, which could impact their attitude and knowledge concerning inclusive education. With these teachers as key implementers and influential factors in the success of the policy, their perspective of the policy remains critical (Senoo et al., 2024). Mprah et al. (2023) argued that a major concern about the success of inclusive education in Ghana depends on the quality of teachers, which is reflected in their perception of the policy. Nyaaba et al. (2021) supports this claim by calling on teachers to adopt a positive perspective. To achieve this, it is key for teachers' current views to be evaluated and needed supports and training be given to help them develop the right perspectives towards inclusion (Mitchell & Sutherland, 2020).

While these previous studies have explored teachers' attitudes and challenges related to inclusive education in Ghana (Ametepee & Anastasiou, 2015; Baidoo et al., 2023, 2025) they largely focus on basic or primary school levels, and few have specifically targeted preschool educators, who are crucial to early childhood development and inclusion. Moreover, studies that compare how Ghanaian public and private school teachers perceive inclusive education policy currently remains even more limited. Accordingly, this study sought to compare the perspectives of public and private preschool teachers in Ghana regarding inclusive education after years of policy implementation. In this study, perspectives were operationalized as teachers' beliefs and attitudes about the appropriateness, challenges, and implications of inclusive education at the preschool level. These items focused on views regarding curriculum suitability, placement of children with special needs, teacher burden, systemic support, and the perceived effects of inclusion on all learners. These indicators reflect key themes widely discussed in the literature on teacher attitudes toward inclusive education, including acceptance, perceived competence, and systematic readiness (Ametepee & Anastasiou, 2015; Baidoo et al., 2023, 2025). Understanding these perspectives is crucial for informing context-specific policy guidelines, teacher training programs, and support systems tailored to the realities of both public and private educational settings. Without such insight, interventions risk being disconnected from actual classroom conditions and teacher readiness. In line with this objective, the following research questions were formulated:

RQ 1) What are the perspectives of public and private school teachers on inclusive education, ten years after its implementation in Ghana?

RQ 2) What are the similarities and differences in the perspectives of public and private school teachers regarding inclusive education after ten years of its implementation in Ghana?

RQ 3) Is there a statistically significant difference between the perspectives of public and private school teachers regarding inclusive education after ten years of its implementation in Ghana?

2. Literature Review

The theoretical underpinning of this study was This study is based on Ghana's Inclusive Education Policy (MoE, 2015) and Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory (2003). Ghana's policy defines inclusive education as welcoming all children into schools, no matter their physical, mental, social, emotional, language, or other differences. It focuses on including children with disabilities, as well as those who are gifted, street children, or from minority groups such as different ethnicities, languages, or cultures. The policy supports Ghana's commitment to international goals like the Sustainable Development Goals [SDG 4] and highlights the importance of fairness, accessibility, and participation in education. It aims to improve school systems, teacher training, teaching methods, and community involvement so that all children can learn in a supportive environment.

Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory explains how new ideas spread through groups over time. According to Rogers, people accept new ideas in stages: innovators are the first to try new things, early adopters quickly follow, the early majority joins in before most people, the late majority is more cautious, and laggards resist change the most. In this study, preschool teachers' opinions about inclusive education are very important because their attitudes affect how willing they are to apply inclusive teaching methods. Teachers who see inclusive education positively, like innovators or early adopters, are more likely to use it in their classrooms. Those who feel unprepared or lack support may be slower or unwilling to adopt inclusive practices.

The Inclusive Education Policy of Ghana provides a clear framework for understanding the expectations and goals of inclusion in schools, which directly relates to exploring how public school teachers perceive and respond to inclusive education after ten years of its implementation. Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory complements this by explaining the varying levels of acceptance and adoption of inclusive practices among teachers, highlighting why some may embrace the policy enthusiastically while others remain hesitant. Together, these theories support the investigation into public school teachers' perspectives over time and offer a useful basis for comparing similarities and differences between public and private school teachers, as both groups may be at different stages in adopting inclusive education due to differences in resources, training, and institutional support.

Some empirical studies are discussed as follows: In a related study, Ocansey and Gyimah (2021) examined the availability and relevance of guidance and counselling services for pupils with special educational needs in three special schools in Accra, Ghana. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, involving 88 pupils and 3 staff members. Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews and analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. The findings revealed that guidance and counselling services helped improve pupils' academic, social, and personal development. However, the study also found that these services were limited in scope due to inadequate resources and personnel. The authors recommended strengthening inclusive education through expanded support systems and collaboration among stakeholders.

Also, Osero (2015) examined the challenges teachers face in implementing inclusive education in public primary schools in Nyamira County, Kenya. The study employed a quantitative research design, using structured questionnaires to collect data from a sample of teachers and education officers. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages. The findings showed that teachers encountered several barriers to effective inclusion, including limited knowledge about special needs education, negative attitudes toward learners with disabilities, high pupil-to-teacher ratios, and lack of adequate facilities and resources. The study recommended targeted teacher training, better infrastructural support, and sensitization programs to improve the implementation of inclusive education in Kenyan primary schools.

Lastly, Opoku et al. (2022) explored the self-efficacy of private school teachers toward the implementation of inclusive education in Ghana. Using a two-phase mixed-methods design, the researchers first collected quantitative data from 82 teachers in six private schools using the Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practice [TEIP] scale. This was followed by qualitative interviews with 10 participants, including principals, heads of departments, and teachers. Quantitative data were analyzed through confirmatory factor analysis, *t*-tests, ANOVA, and regression, while qualitative data were thematically analyzed using TEIP components. The

findings showed that although private school teachers often teach students with disabilities, many lack confidence in their ability to do so effectively. Differences in self-efficacy were linked to teachers' qualifications, training, and professional development experiences. The study concluded that increased access to inclusive education training is critical to building teacher confidence and effective inclusive practices in private schools.

3. Methods

3.1. Research Design

This study used a descriptive survey design. It aimed to investigate how public and private preschool teachers perceive inclusive education after ten years of its implementation in Ghana. The descriptive survey was considered appropriate because it allowed the researcher to collect data on participants' views, experiences, and attitudes in a natural setting without manipulation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3.2. Participants

The study included teachers working in private and public pre-schools in the Effutu Municipality. Effutu Municipality is one of the districts located in the Central Region of Ghana, with Winneba as its capital. A total of 128 teachers took part in the study. These included 89 public school teachers and 39 private school teachers. These teachers were sampled using stratified random sampling to ensure adequate representation from both school types. The public school teachers were drawn from government-designated pilot inclusive schools, which are basic schools officially selected by the Ghana Education Service to implement inclusive education practices. These schools are characterized by their deliberate integration of learners with special educational needs [SEN] into mainstream classrooms, supported by trained staff, specialized teaching strategies, and adapted resources. In addition to the public schools, private school teachers were included from schools that, while not formally designated as inclusive by the government, actively enrolled and supported learners with special needs, thereby demonstrating varying degrees of inclusive practices. The demographic data of the teachers included school type (public/private) and training received on inclusive education. The results are presented on Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic Background of Teachers

<i>Demographic Variables and Category</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
School Type		
Public	89	69.5
Private	39	30.5
Training on Inclusive Education		
Public	64	50.0
Private	39	30.0

As shown in Table 1, the majority of respondents were public school teachers, with 89 teachers representing 69.5% of the total sample, while 39 teachers (30.5%) were from private schools. This indicates that the study was dominated by participants from public schools. Regarding training on inclusive education, a significant majority of the teachers (103 out of 128, representing 80.5%) reported having received some form of training, while 25 teachers (19.5%) had not. Among those trained, 64 were from public schools and 39 from private schools, indicating that both groups have had considerable exposure to inclusive education. Notably, the proportion of trained private school teachers was high relative to their total number. These results suggest a general awareness and engagement with inclusive education policies among preschool teachers.

3.3. Instruments and Procedures

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire focusing on teachers' attitudes, experiences, and perceptions of inclusive practices. The questionnaire had two parts. Section A asked for personal details like school type and training on inclusive education. Section B had 8 items on teachers' opinions about the benefits, challenges, and practice of inclusive education. These items were rated on a 4-point scale (from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree).

3.3.1. Administration of the Questionnaire Survey

The survey questionnaire was administered face-to-face to the teachers over a period of two weeks. In doing this, the researcher visited these pilot inclusive schools on different days, spoke with the teachers handling the preschool classes and gave the questionnaires out to be filled and returned. Some teachers completed the questionnaire on the spot while others offered to return them a day or two after.

3.3.2. Validity and reliability of the instrument

Before the main data collection, the questionnaire was pretested with 13 preschool teachers to check for clarity and consistency. The instrument demonstrated high reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.881, which meets the acceptable standard as suggested by Taber (2018). This confirmed the internal consistency of the items used in the questionnaire.

3.4. Data Organization and Analyses

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. The mean score was interpreted as follows: $M < 2.5$ indicated disagreement, and $M > 2.5$ indicated agreement. Standard deviations were interpreted as $SD < 1.0$ (indicating similar views) and $SD > 1.0$ (indicating varied opinions). In addition, an independent samples t -test was conducted to compare the views of public and private preschool teachers on inclusive education. Before performing the t -test, tests of normality were conducted using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk statistics, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Test of Normality

	Type of School	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Overall View on	Public	.309	89	.073	.747	89	.106
Inclusive Education for	Private	.307	39	.081	.759	39	.293
Preschools							

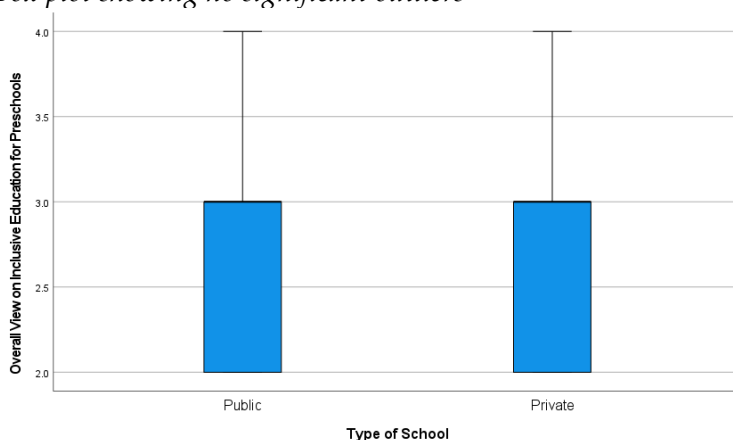
Note. a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results in Table 2 showed that the distribution of scores for public school teachers ($D = 0.309$, $p = .073$) and private school teachers ($D = 0.307$, $p = .081$) were not significantly different from a normal distribution. Similarly, the Shapiro-Wilk test also showed non-significant results for both public ($W = 0.747$, $p = .106$) and private school teachers ($W = 0.759$, $p = .293$). These results indicate that the assumption of normality was met for both groups.

Significant outliers were also assessed using box plot as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Box plot showing no significant outliers



The box plot in Figure 1 revealed no significant outliers, supporting the suitability of the data for parametric testing. Based on these assumptions being met, the t -test could be validly applied to compare the two groups.

3.5. Ethical Considerations

All ethical guidelines were strictly followed. Participation in the study was voluntary, and respondents were informed that the study was for academic purposes. Confidentiality was ensured, and verbal consent was obtained before distributing the questionnaires. Participants were assured of the anonymity of their responses, and no harm was caused to any individual involved in the study.

4. Results

4.1. Perspectives of Public and Private School Teachers on Inclusive Education

This section examined the perspectives of public and private school teachers on inclusive education, ten years after its implementation in Ghana. The results on public school teachers' perspectives are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Public School Teachers Perspective of Inclusive Education (N = 89)

Statements	Frequency (%)		Mean/SD	
	DG	AG	M	SD
The current curriculum does not adequately meet the needs of children with special needs.	39 (44)	50 (56)	2.53	0.95
Inclusive education gives limited academic benefits to children with special needs.	59 (66)	30 (34)	2.07	0.96
Children with special needs are better supported in special schools than in regular schools.	36 (40)	53 (60)	2.64	0.95
There are not enough resources to support inclusive education.	12 (13)	77 (87)	3.21	0.92
Inclusive education increases teachers' workload.	46 (60)	43 (40)	2.62	0.91
Inclusive education slows down the progress of learners without special needs.	50 (56)	39 (44)	2.47	1.07
Inclusive education should start at the primary level, not at preschool.	54 (61)	35 (39)	2.17	1.05
The current model of inclusive education needs to be improved to fit Ghana's education system.	79 (89)	10 (11)	1.55	0.87

Note. Key: Agree (AG), Disagree (DG), Mean (M), Standard deviation (SD).

Table 3 reveals that public school teachers generally agreed that the current curriculum does not adequately meet the needs of children with special needs (56% agreed; $M = 2.53$, $SD = 0.95$), although the standard deviation suggests a moderate range of opinions. They also disagreed with the notion that inclusive education provides limited academic benefits for learners with special needs (66% disagreed; $M = 2.07$, $SD = 0.96$). This indicates cautious optimism about the value of inclusive practices, though some variation in views was observed. In addition, a majority (60%) agreed that children with special needs are better supported in special schools than in regular schools ($M = 2.64$, $SD = 0.95$). This shows concerns about the preparedness of mainstream classrooms to accommodate diverse learning needs. A strong consensus emerged on the lack of resources for inclusive education, with 87% agreeing ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 0.92$). This reveals systemic challenges such as inadequate teaching materials, support personnel, and training. Similarly, 60% of teachers agreed that inclusive education increases their workload ($M = 2.62$, $SD = 0.91$). This may be attributed to the additional planning and classroom management demands associated with teaching diverse learners.

However, responses were more divided on whether inclusive education slows the academic progress of learners without special needs. Although 56% disagreed ($M = 2.47$), the high standard deviation ($SD = 1.07$) indicates that experiences and perceptions on this issue vary widely among teachers, possibly due to differences in classroom size, support systems, or teacher preparedness. Responses to the appropriate starting level for inclusive education also showed disagreement with the idea that it should begin only at the primary level, with 61% disagreeing ($M = 2.17$, $SD = 1.05$). This suggests that while many teachers support early inclusion, others may feel that preschool settings lack the capacity to do so effectively. Finally, there was strong disagreement on the need to improve the current model of inclusive education to better align with Ghana's context as 89% of teachers disagreed ($M = 1.55$, $SD = 0.87$). Rather than rejecting the current

model of inclusion, this reflects a widely shared call for better implementation strategies, increased support, and alignment with local school realities.

These findings suggest that even after a decade of implementing inclusive education in Ghana, public school teachers are generally supportive of the idea of inclusive education but feel that its current implementation in Ghana is inadequate and burdensome, due largely to lack of resources, curriculum mismatch, and unclear policy support. These views further suggest that public school teachers appear spread across different adoption stages. Many are in the persuasion or early implementation stages, where they are aware of inclusive education but constrained by limited resources and high workload. The variability in views on academic outcomes and starting level suggests that some teachers remain undecided or skeptical, while others have embraced the approach more fully. Their perspectives reflect cautious acceptance coupled with calls for reform.

The perspectives of private school teachers on inclusive education after a decade of policy implementation in Ghana are presented on Table 4.

Table 4

Private School Teachers Perspective of Inclusive Education (N = 39)

Statements	Frequency (%)		Mean/SD	
	DG	AG	M	SD
The current curriculum does not adequately meet the needs of children with special needs.	3 (8)	36 (92)	3.62	0.63
Inclusive education gives limited academic benefits to children with special needs.	18 (46)	21 (54)	2.54	1.11
Children with special needs are better supported in special schools than in regular schools.	24 (62)	15 (38)	2.33	1.14
There are not enough resources to support inclusive education.	30 (77)	9 (23)	3.46	0.51
Inclusive education increases teachers' workload.	9 (23)	30 (77)	3.00	0.69
Inclusive education slows down the progress of learners without special needs.	21 (54)	18 (46)	2.15	1.18
Inclusive education should start at the primary level, not at preschool.	10 (26)	29 (74)	2.38	1.09
The current model of inclusive education needs to be improved to fit Ghana's education system.	30 (77)	9 (23)	1.85	0.98

Table 4 shows that the majority of private school teachers (92%) agreed that the current curriculum does not adequately meet the needs of children with special needs, reflected in a high mean score ($M = 3.62$) and low standard deviation ($SD = 0.63$), indicating shared concerns about curriculum limitations. Similarly, the perception that inclusive education increases teacher workload (77% agreed; $M = 3.00$, $SD = 0.69$) and that there are insufficient resources to support its implementation (23% agreed, 77% disagreed; $M = 3.46$, $SD = 0.51$) also showed general agreement with consistent views. However, teachers expressed mixed opinions on whether inclusive education offers limited academic benefits to children with special needs. While 54% agreed and 46% disagreed, the mean score ($M = 2.54$) suggests a near-neutral position, and the high standard deviation ($SD = 1.11$) highlights considerable variation in experience and interpretation. This implies that while some teachers perceive limited benefits, others may observe more positive outcomes, pointing to differences in context or individual learner needs.

Responses were also varied regarding whether special schools better serve children with special needs as 62% disagreed and 38% agreed ($M = 2.33$, $SD = 1.14$) and whether inclusive education slows down the progress of learners without special needs as 54% disagreed and 46% agreed ($M = 2.15$, $SD = 1.18$). These high standard deviations suggest that teachers hold diverse and possibly conflicting views on the practical effects of inclusion within mainstream classrooms. On the statement about the appropriate starting point for inclusive education, most respondents (74%) agreed that it should begin at the primary level, but the overall mean ($M = 2.38$) and variation ($SD = 1.09$) reflect uncertainty and suggest that not all teachers are aligned in their views on early inclusion. Finally, while many teachers (77%) disagreed that the current model of inclusive education requires reform, the mean ($M = 1.85$) and SD just below the variability threshold ($SD = 0.98$) point to moderately shared satisfaction with the model's fit within Ghana's education system.

The findings suggest that ten years after the implementation of inclusive education in Ghana, private school teachers expressed mixed but generally supportive views. Most teachers agreed that the current

curriculum does not meet the needs of children with special needs. They also lamented about the resource shortages and increased workload as key barriers to effective implementation. These concerns suggest a shared awareness of systemic challenges. Despite these challenges, many teachers acknowledged the value of inclusive education. Their responses indicate that they may fall within the early majority or early adopters of the policy. However, views on its academic benefits varied. Some teachers believed inclusion supports learning, while others were unsure. Similarly, there were differing opinions on whether special schools serve children with special needs better than mainstream schools. This variation shows that some teachers are still in the persuasion or decision stages of adopting inclusive practices. While there is growing support for inclusion, not all teachers are fully convinced it fits their classroom realities. These findings echo both a common understanding of structural barriers and differing beliefs shaped by individual experiences

4.2. Similarities and Differences in the Perspectives of Public and Private School Teachers Regarding Inclusive Education

This section compared the similarities and differences in the perspectives of public and private school teachers regarding inclusive education after ten years of its implementation in Ghana. The analysis was done by first identifying areas of similarity in their perspectives, followed by the key differences as shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Differences and Similarities in Perspective of Inclusive Education

<i>Perspective/Theme</i>	<i>Public School Teachers</i>	<i>Private School Teachers</i>
Need for Special Curriculum	Agreed – Special needs children require a different curriculum	Agreed – Special needs children require a different curriculum
Resources Constraints	Agreed – Policy implemented without adequate resources	Agreed – Policy implemented without sufficient resources
Increased Teachers' Burden	Agreed – Policy increases teachers' workload	Agreed – Policy increases teachers' workload
Placement in Special Schools	Agreed – Prefer special schools for children with special needs	Disagreed – Prefer mainstream schools for children with special needs
Limited Academic Benefits for Special Needs Children	Disagreed – inclusion offers adequate academic benefits for special needs learners	Agreed – inclusion offers limited academic benefits for special needs learners
Inclusive Education Causes Other Children to Fall Behind	Disagreed – Do not believe inclusion hampers the progress of 'normal' learners	Disagreed – Do not believe inclusion hampers the progress of 'normal' learners
Starting Point of Inclusive Education	Disagreed – Prefer it starts at primary level	Disagreed – Prefer it starts at primary level
Adjustment of Current Inclusion Model for Ghana	Disagreed – Believes current model does not need contextual adjustment.	Disagreed – Believes current model does not need contextual adjustment.

The findings presented in Table 5 shows a clear convergence of views between public and private school teachers on several key themes. Both groups agreed that children with special needs require a specially tailored curriculum different from the regular one currently being used. This suggests a shared recognition that the existing curriculum does not adequately address the diverse learning needs of children with disabilities. Similarly, teachers from both school types agreed that the inclusive education policy was implemented without adequate resources. This includes a lack of teaching and learning materials, infrastructural support, and specialized personnel. The agreement on this point reflects a widespread concern that the government has not created the necessary enabling conditions for successful inclusion. Another major point of consensus was the perception that inclusive education increases teachers' workload. Both public and private school teachers believed that the policy has added to their responsibilities, possibly due to the need for differentiated instruction and additional classroom management efforts when teaching learners with varied needs. Teachers from both sectors also disagreed with the notion that inclusive education causes other (non-disabled) children to fall behind academically. This suggests that despite their concerns about the challenges of inclusion, they do not perceive it as detrimental to the academic progress of the majority of students. Furthermore, both groups disagreed with the idea of introducing inclusive

education at the early childhood level, preferring that it be introduced from the primary level instead. This signifies their concerns about the readiness of both schools and children to manage diversity at such an early stage. Additionally, both public and private school teachers rejected the need for adjustment to the current inclusion model to fully suit the Ghanaian context, signalling an acceptance of the working model in addressing local conditions and constraints.

Despite these similarities, the analysis reveals two major areas of difference in perspective. The first concerns the placement of children with special needs. Public school teachers agreed that such children should be placed in special schools, indicating a preference for segregation in specialized settings. In contrast, private school teachers disagreed, expressing support for integrating these learners into mainstream schools. This suggests that private school teachers may be more open to inclusive practices or perceive their schools as more capable of supporting learners with special needs. The second area of divergence relates to the academic benefits of inclusive education for special needs learners. Public school teachers disagreed with the idea that inclusion provides limited academic benefits, indicating their belief that inclusion supports the academic development of children with disabilities. Conversely, private school teachers agreed that the academic benefits are limited, perhaps due to perceived gaps in instructional quality, classroom support, or teacher preparedness in inclusive settings.

The analysis shows that both public and private school teachers acknowledge the systemic challenges facing inclusive education in Ghana, especially in terms of curriculum limitations, increased workload, and resource constraints. However, their views differ on the effectiveness of inclusive education in meeting the specific academic needs of learners with special needs and on the appropriate setting for their education. These differences may be influenced by school-level factors such as class size, access to support services, and training opportunities.

4.3. Quantitative Comparison of Public and Private Teachers' Perspectives on Inclusive Education

This section examined whether private and public school teachers differed significantly in terms of their perspective of the implementation of inclusive education in Ghana after ten years of policy enactment. An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to assess this difference. The rationale for using this statistical test lies in its suitability for comparing the means of two independent groups, who in this case, were the public school teachers and private school teachers on a continuous dependent variable, which in this study is their perspectives on inclusive education as measured by Likert-scale questionnaire items. The type of school (public or private) was the independent variable and the dependent variable was the composite score on teachers' perspectives on inclusive education, derived from multiple items assessing opinions about the benefits, challenges, and practice of inclusive education. The descriptive statistics are also provided in Table 6.

Table 6
Descriptive Statistics

	Type of School	N	Mean	SD
Overall View on Inclusive Education for Preschools	Public	89	2.60	.635
	Private	39	2.69	.614

The data in Table 6 show that the mean differences in teachers' overall perspectives on inclusive education between public and private school teachers was minimal ($M = 0.09$). Specifically, Public school teachers recorded a mean score of 2.60 ($SD = 0.635$), while private school teachers had a slightly higher mean score of 2.69 ($SD = 0.614$).

Although the difference appears minimal, it was statistically tested to determine its significance using independent samples *t*-test. First, the Levene's Test for Equality of Variances yielded $F = 0.682$, $p = .410$, indicating that the assumption of equal variances was met. Thus, the independent samples *t*-test assuming equal variances was appropriate. The test revealed no statistically significant difference in the mean scores between public and private school teachers, $t(126) = -0.802$, $p = .424$ (two-tailed). The small mean difference of -0.097 , with a standard error of 0.121 and a 95% confidence interval ranging from -0.336 to 0.142 (which includes zero), further supports the conclusion that the groups did not differ meaningfully in their perspectives. This result supports the null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant difference between public and private school teachers' perspectives on inclusive education implementation in Ghana ten years after the policy's introduction.

While the statistical outcome confirms the absence of a significant difference, its substantive meaning is more revealing. The similarity in perspectives across both public and private schools suggests that teachers,

regardless of school type, face common systemic barriers, including inadequate resources, lack of specialized training, and increased workload as shared by other research reports. These shared constraints indicate that the challenges surrounding inclusive education are not isolated to specific institutions, but mirror a wider problem with the policy's diffusion and implementation process. In line with the Diffusion of Innovations Theory, the finding may suggest that most teachers in both public and private schools fall within the late majority or laggards category of adopters. These groups tend to adopt innovations like inclusive education only after structural support systems are well established and the benefits are clear and observable. The persistent limitations reported by teachers may hinder their willingness or ability to move into earlier stages of adoption, such as early adopters or early majority.

Furthermore, the absence of statistically significant differences between the two groups aligns with the theory's idea that adoption is heavily influenced by contextual factors, not just individual attitudes. In this case, the lack of institutional incentives, inadequate infrastructure, and insufficient policy support likely constrain both groups equally, stalling diffusion and slowing teacher buy-in across the system. Therefore, the findings suggest that promoting inclusive education in Ghana requires more than teacher-level awareness, it demands system-level innovations that reduce adoption risks. It is when these structural barriers are addressed that a larger proportion of teachers can be propelled toward the early majority category, ultimately accelerating the diffusion process and improving the policy's impact.

5. Discussion

This study has brought to light three key issues about the inclusive education policy after 10 years of implementing it in their preschool classrooms.

The findings show that most public school teachers support inclusive education in principle. However, they are unhappy with how it is being implemented. Their concerns include lack of resources, curriculum mismatch, and unclear policy. This reflects Naami and Mort's (2023) finding that many teachers feel unprepared by their training. Many teachers fall within the persuasion or early implementation stages of Rogers' theory. They know inclusive education is important but face barriers like heavy workload and limited support. Ocansey and Gyimah (2021) also reported poor training and inadequate teaching materials as key challenges in Ghana. Teachers had mixed views on when inclusion should start and its impact on learning. Some were still undecided or skeptical. Others had embraced it more fully. This pattern is similar to Osero's (2015) findings in Kenya, where teachers struggled with large class sizes and poor infrastructure. UNESCO (2017) and Ainscow (2020) promote inclusive education as a path to equity. But in Ghana, practical challenges make this difficult to achieve. The gap between policy and practice remains wide. As Senoo et al. (2024) and Mprah et al. (2023) note, teachers' attitudes matter but when working conditions are poor, even good policies can fail. There is a clear need for better training, resources, and policy support to make inclusion work in practice.

In contrast, private school teachers had mixed but generally supportive views on inclusive education. This suggests growing awareness but with some hesitation. Opoku et al. (2022) found that private teachers often lack confidence due to limited training. This may explain their cautious attitudes. Most teachers said the curriculum does not meet the needs of children with special needs. They also pointed to resource shortages and increased workload. These issues match what Wolf et al. (2021) found that private teachers face limited materials and little exposure to inclusive methods. Some teachers believed inclusion helps learning. Others were unsure. Views also differed on whether special schools are better than regular schools. This suggests that many are still in the persuasion or decision stages of adoption. Billingsley and Bettini (2019) argue that true inclusion means learning together, not separating learners. The desire for a separate curriculum shows a gap between theory and practice. Ikhwanudin and Suryadi (2018) emphasize that inclusive education should adapt the general curriculum to serve all learners. Both public and private school teachers mentioned lack of preparation and high workload. This shows that the challenges are system-wide. Nyaaba et al. (2021) stress that teacher attitudes can only improve with proper training and institutional support.

The lack of statistically significant difference between public and private school teachers' views on inclusive education implies that both groups face similar barriers. These include lack of resources, limited training, and increased workload. This convergence supports findings by Mprah et al. (2023) and Senoo et al. (2024), who argue that teacher perceptions are shaped less by school type and more by training, resources, and institutional policies. In other words, it is not where teachers work, but the support they receive that shapes their views. Opoku et al. (2022) and Wolf et al. (2021) also confirm that both public and private teachers face similar challenges. This suggests a broader policy and implementation issue, not isolated

school problems. According to Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory, most teachers may fall within the late majority or laggards group. These teachers adopt change only when strong support systems are in place. Without clear training and resources, many remain hesitant. The lack of a significant difference aligns with Rogers' view that adoption is context-driven. Poor infrastructure and weak policy affect all schools. As a result, teacher buy-in is slow across the system. When these concerns are addressed, more teachers can shift into the early majority group. This would speed up the adoption of inclusive education and improve the policy's overall impact.

6. Conclusion

This study concludes that although both public and private preschool teachers in Ghana generally acknowledge the importance of inclusive education, many perceive the policy as a government initiative rolled out without adequate preparation, resources, or training. Both groups believe that inclusive education places an extra burden on teachers and that children with special needs often require a separate curriculum or placement in special schools. Despite these shared concerns, the study found no statistically significant difference in perspectives between public and private school teachers. This suggests a systemic issue that cuts across school types.

7. Recommendation and Implications

It is therefore recommended for the Ministry of Education and the Effutu Municipal Education Directorate to strengthen support systems for implementing inclusive education in the schools. This could be done by providing targeted and continuous professional development, and ensuring that all preschools, public and private alike, are resourced with appropriate infrastructure and teaching materials. A major limitation of the study is the reliance on teachers' self-reported data through the structured questionnaire, which limited the depth of understanding of teachers' actual experiences of inclusive education. Further studies could investigate how inclusive education impact the academic performance of learners with and without special education needs in inclusive classrooms. A study could also explore the academic and social outcomes for learners with special needs in inclusive settings.

Acknowledgements: I am grateful to all the participants used for the study.

Data availability: The corresponding author has access to the data supporting the findings of this study upon request.

Declaration of interest: The author has no conflict of interest to declare regarding the content of this article.

Ethics declaration: This research was conducted in compliance with ethical guidelines, ensuring voluntary participation, informed consent, and the confidentiality and anonymity of all data.

Funding: No funding source is reported for this study.

References

- Ainscow, M. (2020). Inclusion and equity in education: Making sense of global challenges. *Prospects*, 49, 123–134. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-020-09506-w>
- Ametepee, L. K., & Anastasiou, D. (2015). Special and inclusive education in Ghana: Status and progress, challenges and implications. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 41, 143–152. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2015.02.007>
- Baidoo, J. K., Owusu, M. K., Fofie, D., Anokyewaa, J., & Gaisie, L. O. (2023). Early grade educators' perception and its influential factors in implementing inclusive education in the Akuapem south district, Ghana. *Archives of Current Research International*, 23(4), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.9734/acri/2023/v23i4565>
- Baidoo, J., Bondzie, K., Darko, R., Laryea, E.E., & Amoaben, A. (2025). Approaches and challenges in teaching fractions: the voices of primary school mathematics teachers in inclusive classrooms. *International Multidisciplinary Journal of Research and Education*, 3(1), 125–139. <https://doi.org/10.64712/imjre.v3i1.584>
- Billingsley, B., & Bettini, E. (2019). Special education teacher attrition and retention: A review of the literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 89(5), 697–744. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654319862495>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage.

- European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education. (2018). *Inclusion in education: A framework*. <https://www.european-agency.org/>
- Ikhwanudin, T., & Suryadi, D. (2018). How students with mathematics learning disabilities understands fraction: a case from the Indonesian inclusive school. *International Journal of Instruction*, 11(3), 309-326. <https://doi.org/10.12973/iji.2018.11322a>
- Ministry of Education. (2015). *Inclusive education policy*. <https://moe.gov.gh/>
- Mitchell, D., & Sutherland, D. (2020). *What really works in special and inclusive education: Using evidence-based teaching strategies*. Routledge.
- Mprah, W. K., Issaka, Z., Wunduo, M., Atta-Osei, G., Tawiah, R., & Mensah, T. I. (2023). Perceptions and attitudes of teachers on the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream classrooms in the East Mamprusi Municipality of the northeast region of Ghana. *International Journal of Whole Schooling*, 19(1), 144-166.
- Naami, A., & Mort, K. S. T. (2023, February). Inclusive education in Ghana: How prepared are the teachers?. *Frontiers in Education*, 8, 1056630. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2023.1056630>
- Nyaaba, M., Aboyinga, J., & Akanzire, B. N. (2021). Pre-service parents teachers' attitude and perceived challenges about inclusive education in Ghana: The Ghanaian Inclusive Education Policy. *American Journal of Educational Research*, 9(6), 341-346.
- Ocansey, S. K., & Gyimah, E. K. (2021). Guidance and counselling for pupils with special educational needs in Accra, Ghana: Implications for inclusive education. *TETFLE: Teaching and Teacher Education for Learning and Equity*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.35293/tetfle.v1i1.67>
- Opoku, M. P., Nketsia, W., & Mohamed, A. H. (2022, September). The self-efficacy of private school teachers toward the implementation of inclusive education in Ghana: A mixed-methods study. *Frontiers in Education*, 7, 985123. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2022.985123>
- Osero, P. O. (2015). Challenges teachers encounter in implementing inclusive education in public primary schools in Nyamira County, Kenya. *International Journal for Innovation Education and Research*, 3(3), 217-230. <https://doi.org/10.31686/ijer.vol3.iss3.341>
- Republic of Ghana. (2006). *Persons with disability act*. [https://ir.parliament.gh/bitstream/handle/123456789/1910/PERSONS%20WITH%20DISABILITY%20ACT,%202006%20\(ACT%20715\).pdf](https://ir.parliament.gh/bitstream/handle/123456789/1910/PERSONS%20WITH%20DISABILITY%20ACT,%202006%20(ACT%20715).pdf)
- Rogers, E.M. (2003). *Diffusion of innovations*. Free Press.
- Senoo, E. J., Oti-Boadi, M., Senoo-Dogbey, E. V., Bampoe, O. J., & Laari, L. (2024). Barriers to inclusive education of children with autism: Ghanaian teachers' perspective. *Discover Education*, 3(1), 146. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44217-024-00242-3>
- Taber, K. S. (2018). The use of Cronbach's alpha when developing and reporting research instruments in science education. *Research in Science Education*, 48, 1273-1296. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11165-016-9602-2>
- UNESCO. (2017). *A guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education*. <https://doi.org/10.54675/MHHZ2237>
- Wolf, S., González Canché, M. S., & Coe, K. (2021). A complex systems network approach to quantifying peer effects: Evidence from Ghanaian pre-primary classrooms. *Child Development*, 92(1), 144-160. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13608>
- Yeboah, A. (2023). Teachers' roles in inclusive education practices in Ghana. *London Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences*, 23(8), 1-12.