

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AND MEDIATED LEARNING IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Beliefs and attitudes of educators about inclusion

Why we should take it into account?

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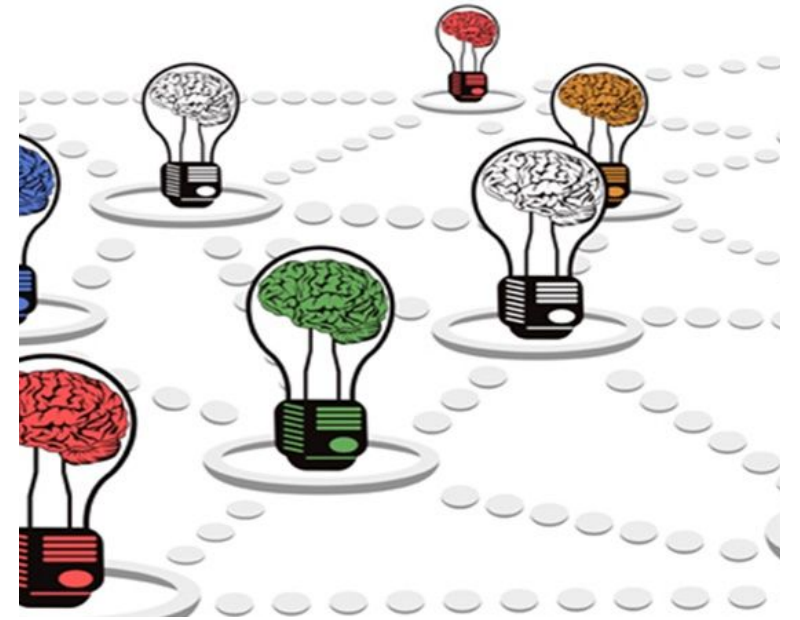


CURRENT SUPPORT SYSTEMS IN PORTUGAL

- Portuguese constitution
- Portuguese law of Educative System
- Decreto-Lei 54/2018 (Inclusive schools)
- Subscription of International agreement
 - - The convention on the rights of persons with disabilities
 - - Salamanca declaration

Organization of support system in Portugal

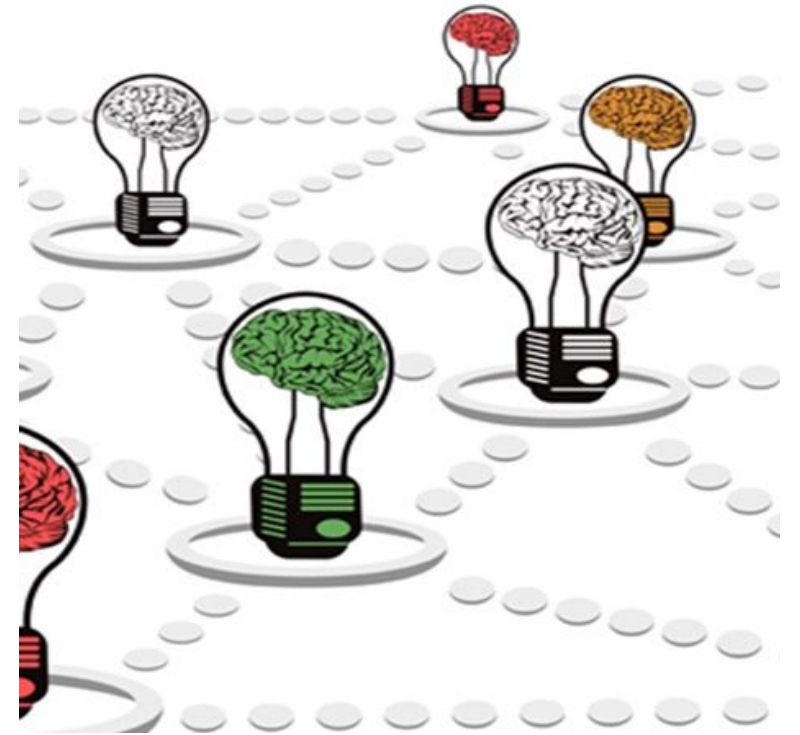
- Early intervention
(between 0 and 6 years)
- School intervention
(between 6 and 18
years)
- Pos-school intervention
(after 18 years)



Organization of support system in Portugal

- **Pre-school support systems**

Concerning pre-school support systems in Portugal, there is the National System of Early Intervention (SNIEP), being in the front line of children care with developmental issues in Portugal. It is a community-based model and covers the entire territory. The aim is to respond to children's needs, up to 6 years of age, with developmental disorders (disability or developmental delay) or living high-risk situations.



Organization of support system in Portugal

•School support systems

Every public school has Therapist, with specialized training (post-graduate, masters, PhD) in fields related to diverse problematics. Across the country, there are around 6.500 Therapist to support 68.608 children with Special Needs Education (IGEC, 2016).

Teacher's support to those students may be done in a direct or indirect way (working only with the student's teachers), in an individual way, in small group or in the mainstream class.

Besides the diverse educational measures to adapt the teaching and learning process, it **exists in a few schools specific modalities of education that aim to address the students' problems such as: deafness, blindness or low vision, autism spectrum disorders or multiple disabilities.** (Decree Law nº3/2008, 7 of January (Diário da República, 2008);

Therefore, where **there is a concentration of students with deafness, reference schools arise to provide bilingual education to deaf students** (inside mainstream schools). Here, in addition to Therapist in the field of deafness, there are also Portuguese Sign Language (PSL) teachers, interpreters of PSL and Speech Therapists. There are 17 of these reference schools spread across different regions of the country.

In the case of students with autism spectrum disorder, the response is given through Structured Teaching Units that can be grouped with 3 to 6 children with that disorder, and they are organized according to TEACCH model (Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication handicapped Children). There are already, in Portugal, 337 units that support students with autism spectrum disorder. These units are not one more class from school, that is to say, students attending them have a reference class. The Units are specialized teaching resources that the school provides. The time that a child will spend in this Unit will depend on the level of his/her functionality.



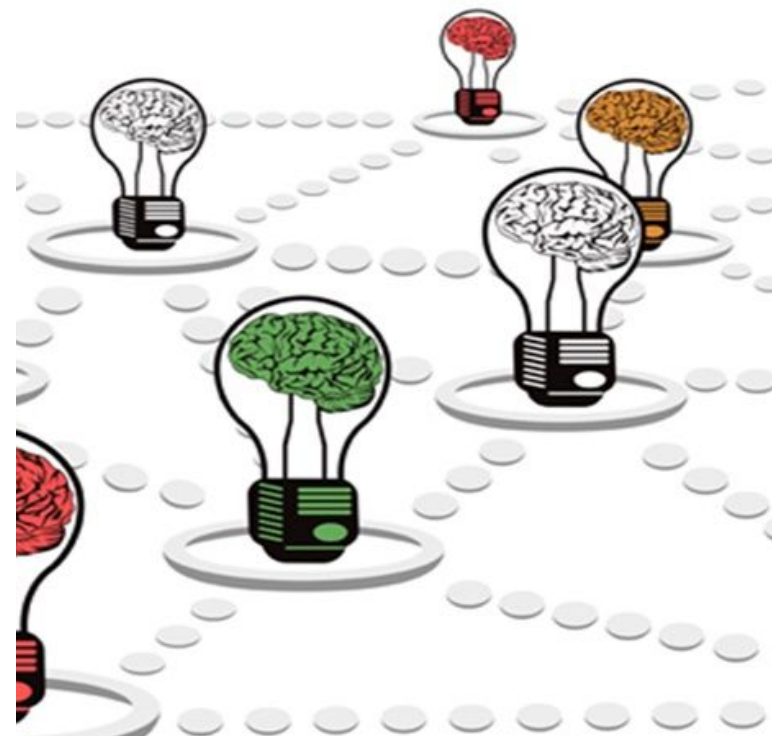
Organization of support system in Portugal

•School support systems

Until 2018 the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health was the chosen document to guide all the referencing, assessment, and intervention process with children with SEN. Since it addresses a biopsychosocial approach of the individual, it is considered appropriate to identify the functioning profile of the student and, consequently, to define strategies and intervention resources (Saragoça, Candeias & Rosário, 2013).

With the decrew law 54/2018, the previous model of school for all was transformed in a model of INCLUSIVE SCHOOL that operationalize crucial rules as:

- **Determining the need for measures to support learning and inclusion.**
- **Identification of needs of support to each children as early as possible** and by any of the stakeholders in the educational process, which is presented to the school principal.
- A learning support evaluation process is proposed that considers the student's academic, behavioral, social and emotional aspects, but also environmental factors. This process results in all the **sequencing and dynamics of the intervention.**
- Preparation of **technical and pedagogical report** (selective and / or additional measures)
- Identification of the need to attend specific curricular areas (eg, vision training, the braille system, guidance and mobility, specific information and communication technologies and activities of daily living)
- **Individual educational program**
- **Individual transition plan**



Organization of support system in Portugal

•After-school inclusive support measures

Leaving school constitutes an issue for every student and naturally it is an even bigger issue for students with any kind of disability. What future and life project awaits this young people?

•Many young people with a disability or an impairment don't meet the conditions to proceed their studies and when compulsory schooling is completed, in an articulation between the School (Team from CRI and teachers), family and themselves, they can be referred to the different responses that are suited to their needs, interests, and expectations, in a way that, together, they can outline his life project.

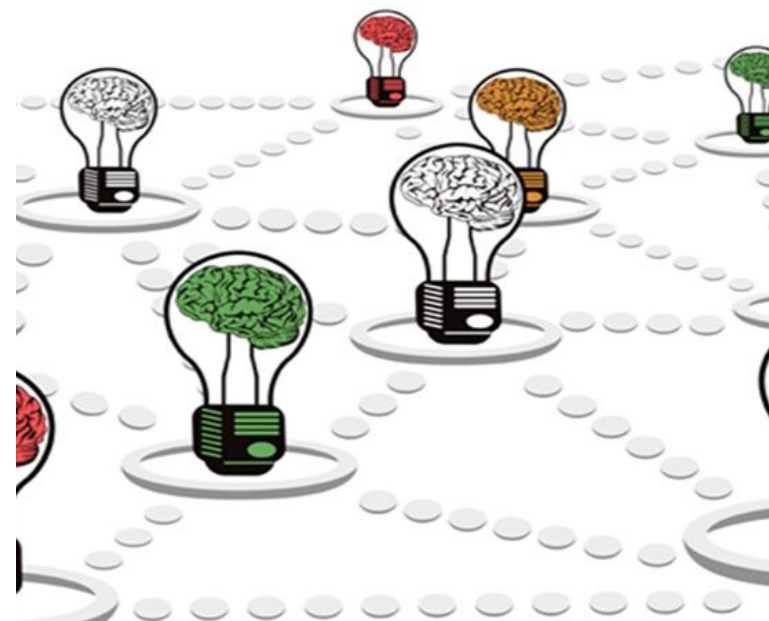
•There are many possible ways given the potentialities from youth with a disability: Occupational Activities Centres (OAC), Resource Centres for Employment (RCE), where we find measures such as IAQQE (Information, Assessment and Orientation for Qualification and Employment), SP (Support for Placement) and VT (Vocational Training).

•-Occupational Activities Centres (Decree Law nº 18/1989) – It is a response from Rehabilitation Entities where activities Strictly Occupational are develop, on fields such as autonomy, adaptive behaviour, recreational therapeutic process, and Socially Useful activities, enabling for a progressive autonomy and personal and familial self-worth, developing socio-professional skills and behaviours in several fields. Also, activities as OAC Business are developed, representing an alternative way to socio-professional integration for people with disabilities or impairments.

•-Resource Centres for Employment (decree nº9251/2016) – It is a supportive framework for the Institute of Employment and Professional Training (IEPF), presenting two measures as after-school response.

•-IAQQE (Information, Assessment and Orientation for Qualification and Employment) notifies young people of possible professional paths considering their work capacity, their potentialities, and impairments in participating in activities, providing them some job experience that reinforce their life course decision making.

•- SA (Support for Placement) allows young people to experience different working activities in entities or businesses, enhancing their employability skills, culminating with a process of mediation to integrate professionally on the job market.



Organization of support system in Portugal

- **After-school inclusive support measures**

Vocational Training (Decree Law nº 290/2009) developed by training institutions on the context of the Operational Programs of Funding by the European Social Fund, aiming to qualify and include on the job market the youth with diverse impairments, namely, intellectual disability, motor and hearing impairment, mental illness, among other things.

- The vocational paths are flexible and individualized, adapting to the learning ability of young people and their needs, improving their employability skills beside the acquisition/strengthening of personal and social skills.

- One of the components of the training course, the practical training in work context, allows the acquisition and/or consolidation of the acquired skills, potentiating the development of a work practice and sense of responsibility, key factors for professional inclusion. The key factor of this process is finding the right worker for the right place, a workplace where the impairments are not constraining and where the professional performance can be the highest.

- Rehabilitation Entities dispose of a Specialized Team (transversal to all the responses), with specialized training, in different fields namely: psychology, social work, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, physical education, and mediation for professional inclusion.

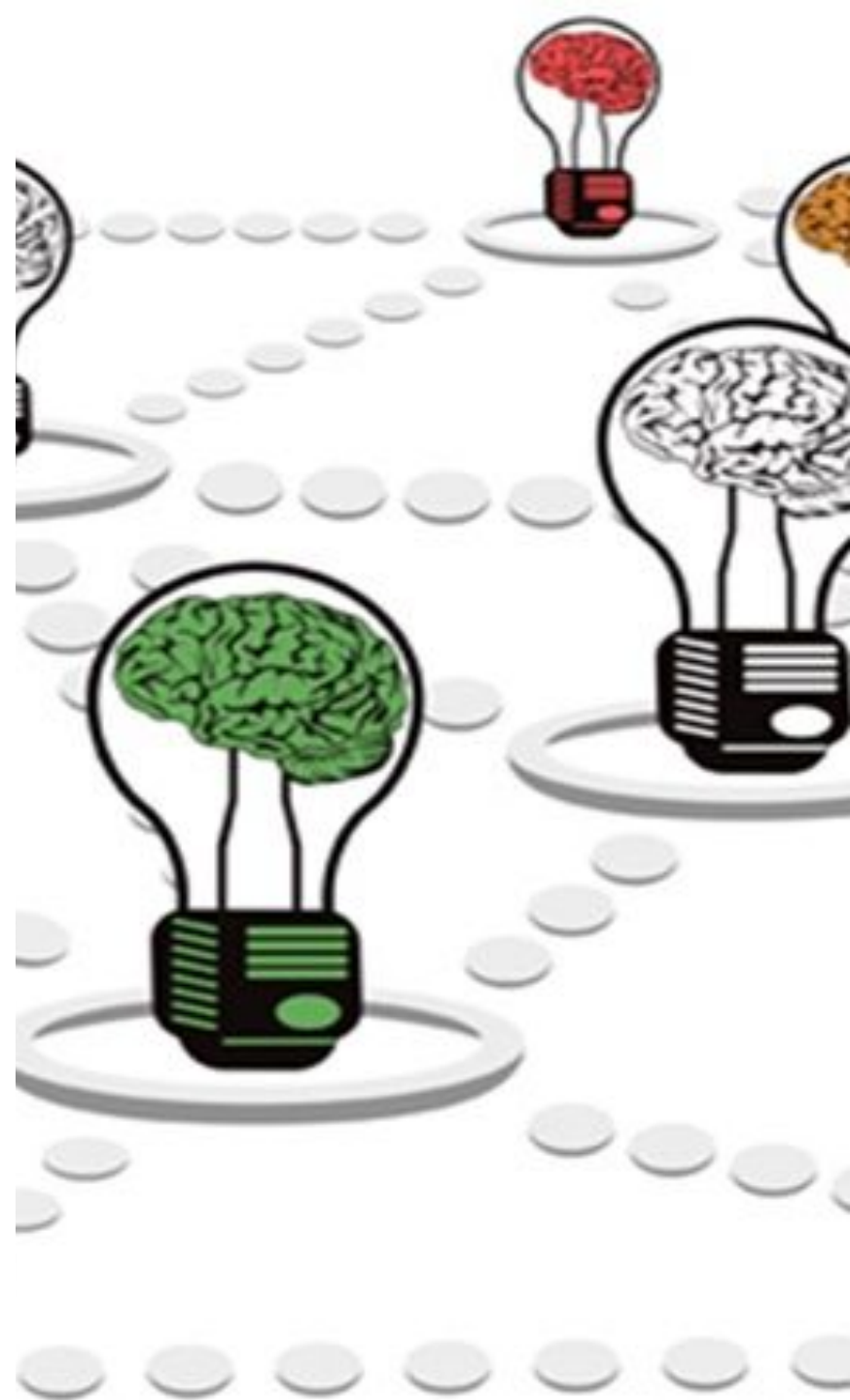


Table of Contents

- Theoretical framework
- Empirical study
- Sample
- Results
- Key Findings
- Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research



Theoretical Framework

Salamanca Statement

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

• **Inclusion** is “A dynamic and positive approach to student diversity of students and to looking at individual differences not as problems, but as opportunities to enrich learning.” Unesco (2005)

• **Inclusive education** “... is a process that aims to respond to the diverse needs of all students by promoting participation and learning”. Unesco (2009)

- *Ethics, Implementing educational policy, Educational practices*

• **Inclusive Schools** - An inclusive school is characterized by the relevance given to the teaching, learning, achievements and attitudes of well-being of each student (Hick, Kershner & Farrel, 2009).

- *Basic principles for inclusive schools :*
 - *Changes in educational policies*
 - *Transformations in Teaching attitudes and practice within the school community*
 - *School management and organization*
 - *Family Participation*



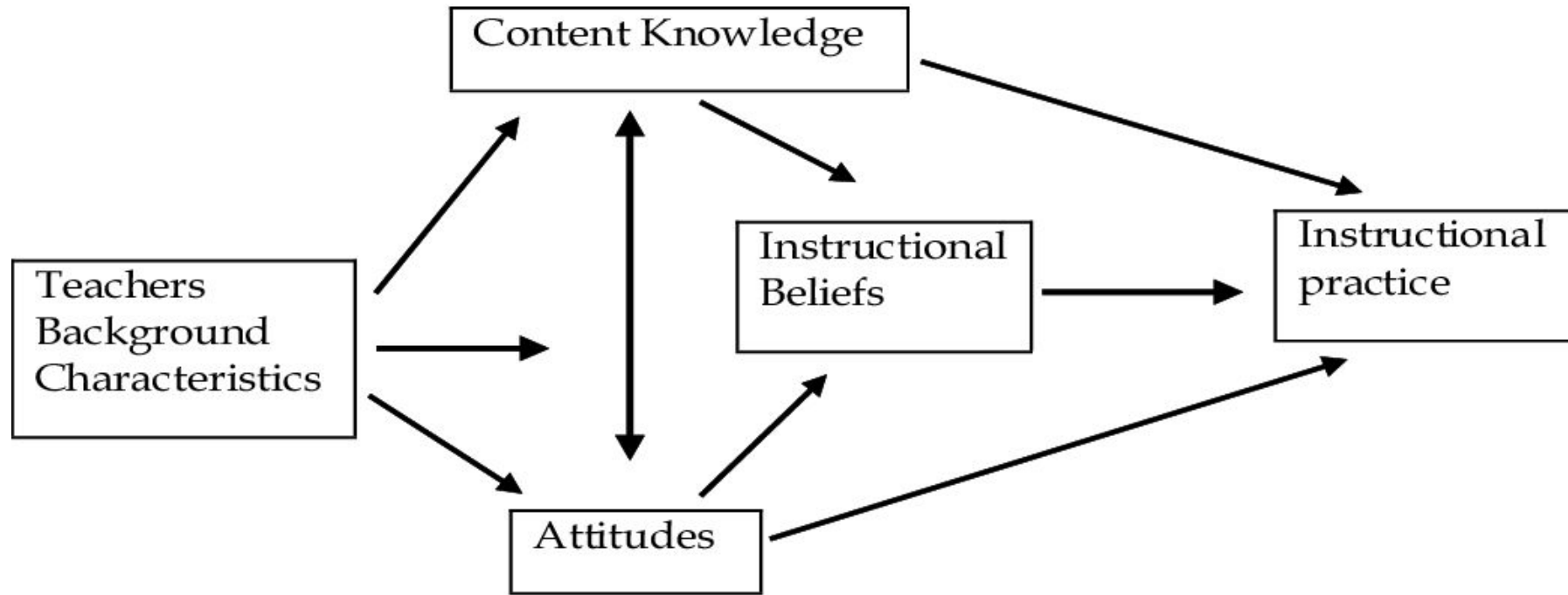
Theoretical Framework

Educators' attitudes and practices have a strong impact on the successful implementation of inclusive education.

Attitudes contributes:

1. To improve the whole classroom team by ENRICHING THE SKILLS of support professionals
2. To enhance the SELF-EFFICACY in (cognitive – social – emotional) inclusive learning in those children experiencing barriers to learning
3. To develop materials that improve a good understanding of the bridge between transversal COGNITIVE COMPETENCIES and KEY COMPETENCIES for learning





Source: Wilkins (2008)



Theoretical framework

Inclusive Attitudes

Attitude as a concept




The role of attitudes in inclusive education

Inclusive Practices

- Strategies to encourage the presence, active participation, and achievement of all students in the local community
- Support for students at-risk for failure or exclusion
- Continual education by the teachers and support team will enrich their professional careers and aid in the planning and implementation of equitable inclusive practices
- The support team and teachers are trained to respond to student diversity during their initial training (Unesco, 2017)



Inclusive pedagogical practices: UDL
(Universal Design for Learning)



Close relationship between attitudes and practices in inclusive education, (Damianidou & Phtiaka, 2017).



Project goals

Empirical study

General objective: Understand the attitudes and practices of mainstream Teachers and Therapist's about inclusive education.

Specific objectives:

- Analyse the relationship between inclusive attitudes in general and their affective, cognitive and behavioural dimensions with the age, postgraduate and academic qualifications of teachers and educational specialists.
- Analyse any significant differences in the Total Index of the Inclusive Attitudes Scale (ITAI) and the three sub-scales by profession (mainstream Teachers or Therapist), gender, or belonging (or not) to the Multidisciplinary Support Team for Inclusive Education.

Empirical study

Instrument Design

- State of the art consultation,
- Expert jury
- Questionnaire distributed to a convenience sample

- Scale of Inclusive Attitudes and Practices.

- Socio-demographic questionnaire
- Inclusive Attitudes
- Inclusive Practices

Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = agree; = 4 strongly agree)

Procedures:

- Request for project approval by the UE Ethics Committee;
- Request for Authorization from the General Directorate of Education, Monitoring of School Surveys (MIME);
- Online publication of the questionnaire via the Google Forms platform;
- Data analysis performed by IBM® SPSS® Statistics 19 software;
- Guarantees of data anonymity and confidentiality .



Instrument

Inclusive Attitudes Scale Index (ITAI)

- **Inclusive Attitudes - cognitive dimension**
- **Inclusive Attitudes - behavioural dimension**
- **Inclusive Attitudes - affective dimension**
- **Inclusive Practices – specific practices (pedagogic/technical)**

Inclusive Attitudes Scale Index (ITAI)

- **Inclusive Attitudes - cognitive dimension**
- Inclusive Attitudes - behavioural dimension
- Inclusive Attitudes - affective dimension
- Inclusive Practices – specific practices (pedagogic/technical)

I believe that knowledge about inclusive education exists at my school.

I believe that the school is for everyone.

I think that the family and the community take part in students' education.

I believe that all students have learning potential.

I think that all students should be included in mainstream education.

I think that the multidisciplinary team in support of inclusive education is fundamental to promoting inclusive education.

Students who lack educational support must have complementary support by the special education teacher in a dedicated space (outside the classroom).

The school has to adapt to the needs and characteristics of all students.

Collaboration between mainstream and Therapist is an asset for promoting inclusive education.

Schools must adapt their human and material resources to each student in order to meet their academic needs.

Inclusive Attitudes Scale Index (ITAI)

- **Inclusive Attitudes - cognitive dimension**
- **Inclusive Attitudes - behavioural dimension**
- **Inclusive Attitudes - affective dimension**
- **Inclusive Practices – specific practices (pedagogic/technical)**

I PLAN EVALUATIONS AND ACTIVITIES, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT EACH STUDENT'S WEAKNESSES AND POTENTIAL.

I participate in the collective construction of the pedagogical project with knowledge of the curriculum guidelines.

I talk to students about their academic tastes and difficulties.

I articulate knowledge and practices with other teachers and educational specialists.

The family and the community are integral to students' learning processes.

Inclusive Attitudes Scale Index (ITAI)

- Inclusive Attitudes - cognitive dimension
- Inclusive Attitudes - behavioural dimension
- **Inclusive Attitudes - affective dimension**
- Inclusive Practices – specific practices (pedagogic/technical)

I enjoy talking to students about inclusive education.

I like to prepare classes and activities to meet different students' capacities so as to promote inclusive education.

I enjoy sharing ideas with other colleagues about inclusive education.

I like working together with families and the community to carry out various activities.

I enjoy participating in inclusive education initiatives.

Carrying out student group activities is satisfying.

I feel comfortable working with all students.

I believe in my skills to develop strategies to promote inclusive education.

I feel that the tools and activities I create respond to the uniqueness of each student.

I like students to carry out activities with their peers.

Inclusive Attitudes Scale Index (ITAI)

- Inclusive Attitudes - cognitive dimension
- Inclusive Attitudes - behavioural dimension
- Inclusive Attitudes - affective dimension
- **Inclusive Practices – specific practices (pedagogic/technical)**

I collaborate with other mainstream and Therapist.

I collaborate with community members to include them in students' learning processes

I carry out my professional role in a manner aligned with inclusive educational practice.

The idea that I have of my professional role makes inclusive educational practices difficult.

The material and human resources at hand influence my inclusive practices.

I promote quality education for all children.

I collaborate with family and community members to enhance students' academic success.

I articulate with the family and, whenever possible with students themselves to develop measures to support learning and inclusion.

I participate in inclusive education training sessions.

I create materials that correspond to the uniqueness of each student.

Empirical study

Target population – Mainstream Teachers, Therapists

411 teachers
59 therapists

Range of teacher age: 25 to 66 years

Age range of the therapists:
22-56 years

470 respondents:

Years of teaching service:
Average age 25.16 years

Years of service as a special education teacher
Average 12.17 years

Teacher participation in EMAEI : 82,7%
Membership of Therapist in EMAEI: 15.3%

[22-39]; [40-49] and [50-65]
Teachers: 40 to 65 years
Therapist

Postgraduate education qualification:
Teachers: 34.5%
Therapist:

Educational qualifications
Teachers: Graduation degree 65.7%
Therapist: Garduation degree 55.9%

Educational level taught (academic year 2019/2020)
3rd cycle (25.5%)
Secondary education (26.5%)



Teachers by gender:
Male-20.0%
Female- 79.6%

Therapist by gender :
Male-3.4%
Female



The background of the slide is a dense, overlapping field of white, three-dimensional wooden letters in various fonts and sizes, creating a textured, abstract pattern.

Empirical study

Hypotesis

- There is an association between inclusive attitudes in general and their affective, cognitive and behavioural subscales and age, postgraduate and educational qualifications.
- Significant differences exist in the Total Index of the Inclusive Attitudes Scale (ITAI) and the three sub-scales according to profession (mainstream or Therapist), gender, and belonging (or not) to the Multidisciplinary Support Team for Inclusive Education.

Results



- Post-graduate qualification: Positive and significant correlation between the post-graduate qualifications for both ITAI and sub-scales.**
- Gender: Significant differences, with women having stronger inclusive attitudes than men (N = 467, T = -3.042, $p \geq 0.01$).**
- Multidisciplinary Support Team for Inclusive Education (EMAEI): Mainstream and Therapist who are part of the teams score higher on the Total Attitude Index (N = 423, t = 4.609, $p \leq 0.01$).**
- Job: Therapist reported significantly more positive inclusive attitudes (in ITAI and in the Affective and Cognitive Attitude subscales) than Teachers** In the ITAI (N = 470, T = 3.367, $p \geq 0.01$), in the Cognitive Attitude subscale (N = 470, T = 3.122, $p \geq 0.01$) and in the Attitude subscale Affective (N = 470, T = 5.823 $p \leq 0.01$).
- On the Behavioural Attitude subscale, Therapist recorded higher, but not statistically significantly higher, scores.
- The Affective Attitude subscale scores were relatively higher than the other subscales, reflecting the feelings and values of mainstream and Therapist regarding inclusion.



Key Findings

- Therapist generally score more positively than Teachers.
- Professionals with post graduate qualifications score higher on the inclusive attitude index.
- Women report higher levels of inclusive attitudes than men.
- EMAEl members report more inclusive attitudes than non-members .



Limitations

- Sample and groups of professionals
- Lack of preexisting studies

Future research

Future research

Inclusive Education
Training.

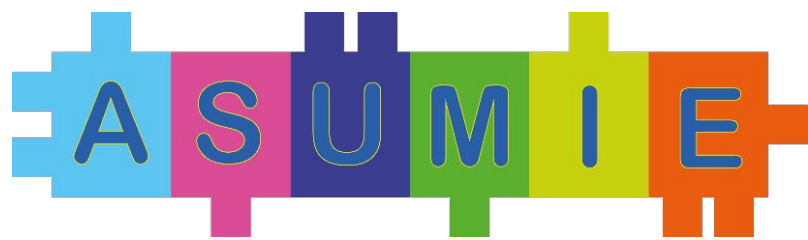
Reinforce teamwork
between mainstream
and Therapist.

Training programmes
on how to foster
attitudes and values
in teaching.

Development of
assessment tools to
support practices and
change attitudes

Enhancing
community
engagement

Teaching supervision.



References

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