

## Factors Affecting the Quality of Primary Special Education Program in Punjab

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### Abstract

People with special needs have long required additional support to lead healthy, independent lives as integral members of society. The research investigates internal factors influencing the quality of primary special education programs in Punjab by analyzing the perspectives of special education teachers. Utilizing a quantitative descriptive methodology, the study surveyed public schools and centers across fourteen districts in four geographical zones of Punjab, Pakistan, through a multistage random sampling procedure. Data were collected using a self-developed, validated questionnaire ( $\alpha = 0.80$ ) and analyzed through parametric statistical methods. The findings highlight significant internal factors such as disability severity, classroom management, instructional adaptability, school infrastructure, and teacher competency. Teachers' perceptions varied based on their professional backgrounds and areas of expertise. The study underscores the importance of addressing learner health, administrative coordination, and professional development to enhance special education quality.

**Keywords:** Quality education, primary special education program, internal factors.

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## Introduction

Education is a powerful tool for socio-economic, cultural, and political empowerment, enabling individuals and societies to achieve progress and improve their quality of life (Chukwuemeka, 2013). Education is responsible for fostering the whole development of individuals to improve the economic, social, political and cultural, elements of society (Memon, 2007). Education is a vital civil right necessary for socioeconomic development (Muthanje, 2015).

Basic education, public awareness about equity, and training are essential for transforming all aspects of societies into a sustainable, high-quality society that meets the demands of the present without sacrificing the requirements of the future (McKeown et al., 2002). The MDGs, with its objectives addressing poverty, hunger, and education, laid the groundwork for the SDGs, which emphasize inclusive and equitable quality education as a cornerstone for sustainable development (Sachs, 2012; Fukuda-Parr, 2016).

Collaboration among stakeholders, systemic involvement, and innovations in teaching-learning practices are crucial for achieving quality education that supports sustainable development (Breiting, & Mayer, 2015).

Due to poor management by educational authorities, including ineffective administration at both school and district levels, political interference, poor oversight, curricula that are often described as outdated or misaligned with current educational needs and international benchmarks, ineffective evaluation techniques, a lack of professional development, and weak accountability mechanisms, the Pakistani education system is being heavily criticized, particularly at the primary school level, for its lack of quality outcomes (Ahmad et al., 2013; Imtiaz, 2014). For a prosperous future, significant investments and a diversified focus are required to improve the quality and outcomes of primary education. Primary school education that is of high quality serves as the foundational input for substantial outcomes (Ghazi et al., 2014).

Describing quality continues to evolve as new benchmarks are established to address contemporary educational challenges (OECD, 2021; UNESCO, 2023). The characteristics of the word "quality" are altering owing to the passing of time, as numerous stakeholders with different viewpoints debate the topic (Blevins, 2009; Parri, 2006). It is difficult to quantify the aspects of education quality in a single framework. Education with quality characteristics has the greatest impact on students' education in terms of what, why, how, and when they will benefit

(UNESCO, 2004). Quality in education refers to the clear standards or degree of differentiation required to attain predetermined objectives (Chukwuemeka, 2013).

Pakistan is committed to achieving quality as one of the MDGs, SDGs, and EFA's most important objectives. The EFA (2000) Global Monitoring report defines two benchmarks of quality education connected to developmental domains: cognitive development and attention on the standards and attitudes development of a quality citizen. Dakar Framework for Action, 2000 emphasizes that the targeted objectives of numeracy, literacy, and skills & attitudes for everyone may be attained by enhancing all aspects of quality education (Article 7).

Education systems are shaped by historical, cultural, and societal influences, evolving to meet the changing needs of communities. Continuous attempts are made by nations and countries to revolutionize their educational frameworks. Currently, the globe is focused on the right to education in consideration of the needs of those with and without disabilities (Chukwuemeka, 2013).

Special education refers to tailored instructional programs designed to meet the unique needs of individuals with disabilities, ensuring equitable access to education through specialized methods, resources, and support systems. The world's perspective on special education has shifted from categorization and segregation to a universal service addressing heterogeneity and uniqueness in relation to students' learning requirements, the least restrictive environment, and the inclusion of increasingly severe degrees of disability (Baer, 2016).

In order for fairness and access to education to be acknowledged as terms, a collaborative commitment from all educational stakeholders is required to create the qualities and criteria of quality education (Anekeya 2015). The greatest way to comprehend the quality of special education is to have well defined standards for learner characteristics, teaching-learning processes, curriculum, administration, and resources. All of these issues should be addressed in terms of fairness and equality policies (EFA, 2000).

In the past, special education was extensively criticized across all areas, including intervention procedures, assessment techniques, curriculum creation through implementation, teacher education, teaching strategies, and resource supply (Khan, 2010). It was reported that schools often fail to adequately address the needs of key stakeholders, including students, parents, and teachers, particularly in terms of resource provision, effective teaching strategies, and parental engagement (Kanwal et al., 2022).

Learners, learning environments, inputs, processes, and outputs are critical characteristics of quality education, assessed through regular educational evaluations for both special and general student populations. According to UNICEF (2000), intrinsic elements of educational institutions—whether specialized or general—significantly influence the quality of education. These elements include:

- **Learners' attributes** such as strengths, persistence, learning preparedness, and obstacles to effective learning.
- **Enabling inputs** like school assets, curricula, classroom configuration, class size, physical infrastructure, facilities, services, school staff, school authorities, and professional personnel.
- **Processes** including teaching-learning methods.
- **Outputs** such as information acquisition, numeracy, basic life skills, creativity, and vocational abilities.

Quality education should encompass supportive and inclusive environments with adequate supplies and amenities, child-centered programs with appropriate instructional materials, teaching methods tailored to students' interests, realistic evaluation frameworks, and outcomes aligned with national objectives in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (UNICEF, 2000).

Teachers are a primary factor influencing the quality of education, particularly in special education settings where their qualifications, retention, and use of research-based practices significantly affect student outcomes. Addressing the challenges through professional development and improved working conditions can enhance education quality (Billingsley, 2004).

Teachers are essential to the effective teaching and learning of students with special needs. The majority of public special education school educators were dissatisfied with the institution's facilities and resources (Zafarulla et al., 2022). Another research indicated that instructors' attitudes had many implications on the achievement of their pupils. Instructors with positive attitudes were more likely than those with negative attitudes to implement innovations in the classroom, as well as to adapt classroom management strategies and appropriate teaching techniques that promoted student autonomy (Di Maggio, 2020).

Teachers engage in activities that enhance the instructional quality and outcomes within primary special education programs. These activities include daily lesson planning, assigning homework, conducting weekly and monthly tests, implementing activity-based instruction, using formative assessment, and providing immediate feedback to students.

However, several critical practices are still implemented passively, such as classroom management, training in assistive technologies, parent-teacher collaboration, teacher professional development programs, and the integration of audio-visual aids. These practices were observed across public schools in Punjab, Pakistan (Kanwal et al., 2022).

Special education remains a multifaceted field, grappling with numerous unresolved challenges. For example, questions regarding the effective integration of assistive technologies, the adequacy of teacher training programs, and the inclusion of parental collaboration in special education practices are still debated. In Pakistan, these issues are particularly pressing, with inconsistencies in resource allocation and implementation of inclusive education policies observed across various regions, such as urban and rural districts in Punjab.

Despite ongoing efforts by Punjab's Directorate of Special Education, as outlined in the Punjab School Education Sector Plan (2013–2017), the quality of special education remains in its developmental phase. Pakistan continues to face challenges in meeting international and national legislative commitments, particularly in ensuring equitable and high-quality education for children with disabilities.

This research aims to identify factors influencing the quality of special education, providing new insights and actionable recommendations to address these challenges.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the research were as follows:

1. To investigate the internal contributory factors (learner, class, and school related) influencing the quality of primary special education program in Punjab.
2. To identify the positive and adverse factors within the program those influence the quality of primary special education in Punjab.
3. To compare the perceptions of special educators about the factors determining the quality of primary special education program in Punjab in relation to their demographic characteristics.

### **Questions of the Study**

The questions addressed in order to conduct the research were:

1. How do internal variables influence the quality of special education?
2. What factors positively improve the quality of special education?
3. What factors adversely influence the quality of special education?

4. What is the perception of special education teachers about the quality of special education on the basis of their demographics?

### Methodology

This descriptive quantitative study examines the internal factors which affect the quality of special education at the primary level in Punjab, Pakistan. The population of the research consisted of special education teachers in Punjab's public sectors. Using a simple random selection approach, a sample of 398 special education instructors (F=281, M=117) from 3145, or total population's 13%, was chosen. The sample was conducted in stages: in the first phase, different zones were chosen, in the second phase, districts were chosen, in the third phase, centers and schools of special education, and in the fourth phase, teachers were approached. These 14 districts; (Jhelum, Rawalpindi, Attock, Lahore, Kasur, Gujrat, Vehari, Okara, Bahawalpur, Dera Ghazi Khan, Khushab, Multan, Layyah, and Bhakar), on average 3 districts from each of the four zones of Punjab i.e. Northern, Southern, Central, and Western, were decided to pick that adequately reflected the geographical area and population of each.

**Table 1**  
*Zone Wise Sampling*

Zone	Districts	Centers	Schools	Teachers (M)	Teachers (F)	Total Teachers
Zone 1	Rawalpindi, Attock, Jhelum	17	8	47	60	107
	Kasur, Vehari,					148
Zone 2	Gujrat, Okara, Lahore	19	17	34	114	
Zone 3	Bahawalpur, Multan, DGK	16	13	12	62	74
	Bhakar,					69
Zone 4	Layyah, Khushab	9	4	24	45	
Total		61	42	117	281	398

**Table 2**  
*Demographics of the Sampling*

Gender		Professional Qualification			Area of Specialization				
Male	Female	B.Ed.	M.Ed.	None	ID D	PHC	VIC	HI C	Other
117 (29.4%)	281 (70.6%)	83 (20.9%)	126 (31.6%)	189 (47.5%)	59 (15%)	60 (15%)	51 (13%)	175 (44%)	53 (13%)

## Instrumentation

**Table 3**

*Instrument of the Study*

Instruments	Reliability Evidence	Demographic Items	Statement Items
<b>Questionnaire for Teachers</b>	The score of the reliability of the instrument was $\alpha = 0.80$ . Within and/or across factors, the inter-item correlation ranged from 0.81 to 0.99. Learner-related factors had a reliability of $=.77$ , class-related variables had a reliability of $=.73$ , and school-related factors had a reliability of $=.69$ .	1-14	15-112
<b>Content validity</b>	A panel of experts was convened to assess the validity of the content of instrument. Each component of the instrument was reviewed with specialists in the area, and the application of each component was debated, revised, and approved with their input.		

## Data Collection

After obtaining permission from the administration of special education facilities, data were acquired from respondents by personal visits, emails, telephone calls, and postal mail.

## Data Analysis

This section presents the standard deviation and mean scores of special education instructors' judgements of internal elements and their sub factors that influence the effectiveness of special education.

**Table 4**

*Core Internal Factors and Their Subcategories*

	Factors	Special Education Teachers	
		Mean	SD
<b>1</b>	<b>Learner-Specific Factors</b>	68.36	10.12
	Health	11.63	2.18
	Attitude towards learning	14.71	2.90
	Disability	21.99	4.30
	Student drive to learn	20.02	3.82
<b>2</b>	<b>Class-Specific Factors</b>	130.9	22.15
	Friendly environment	16.10	2.84
	Arrangement of learning spaces	12.07	2.44
	Learning materials	11.61	2.24
	Learning support services	16.17	2.90
	Instructional adaptation	19.74	4.49
	Classroom management	23.40	4.86

	Class size balance	4.05	.977
	Motivation and reinforcement	12.22	2.27
	Collaborative learning among students	7.72	1.85
	Students' Performance Evaluation	7.80	2.06
<b>3</b>	<b>School-Specific Factors</b>	186.7	28.9
	School setting	12.10	2.46
	Institutional Infrastructure	23.69	4.55
	Curriculum	19.45	3.57
	Principals	32.67	6.60
	Educators	25.22	4.95
	Teacher qualification	8.31	1.75
	Teacher placement	12.06	2.39
	Non instructional teacher roles	11.14	2.22
	Professional development	11.76	2.48
	Enrollment/Dropout	14.96	2.90
	Accountability	11.38	2.23
	Equality	3.93	.942

Table 4 displays the standard deviation and mean scores of teachers of special education views about major internal variables and sub factors impacting the special education quality in Punjab's primary schools. Some factors exhibit a greater influence on special education quality, as indicated by their higher mean scores and standard deviations. While others have a comparatively lower impact:

School related factor (186.7) was the most influencing internal factor from major categories of factors. Sub factors from school were reported regarding their influence sequentially highest to lowest as; heads (32.67), teachers (25.22), infrastructure (23.69), curriculum (19.45), enrollment/dropout (14.96), school environment (12.10), teachers' placement (12.06), teachers' trainings (11.76), teachers' additional duties (11.14), accountability (11.38), teachers' qualification (8.31), and equality (3.93).

The effect of class related factors (130.9) on second number and the influence of sub factors of class was reported as; classroom management (23.40), instructional adaptation (19.74), learning support (16.17), least restrictive environment (16.10), motivation and reinforcement (12.22), sitting arrangement (12.07), learning resources (11.61), assessment (7.80), peer learning (7.72), and student teacher ratio (4.05).

Learner related factor was reported as lowest influencing factor and its sub factors were reported as; disability (21.99), motivation (20.02), learning attitudes (14.71), and health (11.63).



**Table 5***Influence of Learner Related Factors on Special Education Quality*

Sr. No.	Factors	Teachers	
		Mean	SD
1	Students in good health demonstrate higher confidence in academic tasks and classroom participation.	4.01	1.065
2	Students who are well-nourished accomplish at a better level of academic outcomes.	3.98	.876
3	Children with significant impairments have low academic performance.	3.65	1.160
4	A child with a disability is ready to learn.	3.43	.958
5	Learning readiness assists a youngster in learning quickly.	3.73	.969
6	Providing conceptual understanding improves children's learning.	3.86	1.039
7	Homeschooled children do better in the classroom.	3.70	1.434
8	The nature of the disability affects the educational attainment of the kid.	3.93	1.108
9	The degree of impairment affects the academic success of the kid.	3.99	.919
10	Self-efficacy is affected by a child's disability.	3.82	1.091
11	Disability diminishes a child's motivation to study.	3.46	.892
12	Children look irritated owing to the severities of their impairment.	3.65	1.091
13	Students with special needs experience fright of failure.	3.14	1.168
14	Self-motivation encourages learner to perform actively.	4.03	.971
15	The motivated instructor improves the classroom performance of the pupils.	4.14	.993
16	Motivated parents concentrate on their child's lingering capabilities.	4.00	1.062
17	A disability-friendly atmosphere is a motivator for disabled children.	3.78	1.004
18	Increasing engagement of students in classroom will sharp the learning environment	4.07	.806

The mean scores and standard deviation of special education instructors' opinions of learner-related internal variables impacting the quality of special education are shown in Table 5. According to the perceptions of teachers, the most influential factors were student confidence (4.01), self-ambition that encourages active learning (4.03), inspiration that improves student performance (4.14), parental motivation that improves residual strengths of student (4.00), last but not the least

encouraged participation that sharpens the learning environment (4.07). Fear of failing accounted for a lesser contribution (3.14).

**Table 6**

*Influence of Class Related Factors on Special Education Quality*

Sr. No.	Factors	Teachers	
		Mean	SD
1	Friendly ambiance makes learning feasible.	4.13	.866
2	Least restrictive environment (LRE) serves as a guideline to direct the curriculum for a kid with special needs.	4.03	.895
3	The self-assurance of students is bolstered by the instructor's awe-inspiring Children-related classroom ideas.	3.80	1.009
4	Well-Equipped environment enhance unique pupils' learning.	4.15	.878
5	Environmental modifications improve educational prospects for special needs students.	4.08	.955
6	The optimal seating postures for students with impairments are semi-circle or U-shaped.	3.97	1.029
7	Seating arrangements in the classroom enhance the learning of kids with disabilities.	4.03	.885
8	Trained people and material resources boost the likelihood of student success.	3.90	.909
9	Students who have access to a whiteboard, cabinet, or teacher table have less fear about learning.	3.83	.868
10	Students with special needs are more likely to remain in school if learning materials are displayed on walls.	3.89	.981
11	Positive teacher attitudes regarding disability enhance student learning.	4.04	.895
12	Participation in opportunities or classroom activities improve students' learning attitudes.	4.02	.821
13	Concept-based learning exercises help in better understanding.	4.00	.884
14	The easy-to-difficulty learning guideline expedites the learning of children with impairments.	4.12	.892
15	Adaptive teaching suited to the demands of students' disability and age enhances their learning.	4.07	.912
16	Direct teaching is the most permissible method for educating children with impairments.	3.80	1.215
17	Using models, dioramas, and demonstrative materials simplifies complicated concepts for students with special needs.	3.94	1.129
18	The use of whiteboards and charts increases student concentration on learning.	3.94	1.239

19	Indoor extracurricular activities improve the engagement of students with special needs.	3.99	.963
20	Children with severe conditions should be seated at the front desk.	3.90	1.053
21	Wheelchair-bound students should be seated near the classroom's departure door.	3.77	1.079
22	Students must be permitted to engage in classroom activities.	3.77	1.228
23	Classroom management allows for the participation of all students.	3.91	1.040
24	Classroom lighting has a favorable effect on the morale of children with special needs while they are studying.	4.10	.976
25	Airy and ventilated classrooms help students with special needs refreshed throughout the day.	3.97	1.023
26	Classes with too many pupils are frequently disruptive to the learning process.	4.05	.977
27	Positive reinforcement reinforces desirable conduct.	4.08	.887
28	A child with a handicap develops a feeling of value via reinforcement and motivation.	4.14	.903
29	Children with unique disabilities benefit from reinforcement since it increases their self-worth.	4.02	.876
30	Peer assistance decreases the difficulty of learning.	3.96	.921
31	Peer teaching is the most effective method for boosting self-confidence.	3.77	1.145
32	Alternative methods of evaluation are crucial for achieving desired results.	3.82	1.100
33	Students' academic success motivates them to achieve more	3.99	1.091

The mean scores and standard deviation of special education instructors' opinions of internal variables – class-related elements impacting the quality of special education are shown in Table 6. Some elements are negative contributors, while others are favorable. The most influencing factors were determined to be a welcoming domain (4.13), the minimum restricting environment (4.03), a highly furnished environment (4.15), transformed instructions (4.03), seating placements (4.04), the students compliance in classroom activities (4.02), construct learning tasks (4.00), simple to complex (4.12), classroom lighting that imparts a positive impact (4.10), and classes with too many students (4.). (4.14). Peer tutoring was a minor factor (3.77).

**Table 7**  
*Influence of School Related Factors on Special Education Quality*

Sr. No.	Factors	Teachers	
		Mean	SD
1	A school's hygienic atmosphere improves the academic achievement of pupils with special needs.	4.07	.980
2	The accessibility of schools for kids with special needs facilitates improved performance.	4.13	.923
3	A secure school atmosphere promotes a suitable learning environment.	3.90	.914
4	The availability of fresh drinking water has an impact on the health of pupils with special needs.	4.01	.884
5	Clean restrooms promote the health of kids with special requirements.	4.04	.879
6	Bushes on playgrounds prevent students from playing on the playgrounds.	3.99	1.025
7	The time spent on playgrounds fosters the growth of children with special needs.	3.86	1.028
8	The arrangement of classroom lighting impacts the learning dispositions of kids with special needs.	3.92	1.089
9	The availability of suitable furniture decreases the handicap issues of children with special needs and facilitates their classroom participation.	3.88	.994
10	Curriculum rigidity negatively impacts special education.	3.99	.976
11	Adaptive curriculum designed to meet the needs of pupils accelerates student development.	3.87	1.054
12	Reduced or watered-down curriculum is the poorest kind of curriculum.	3.74	1.078
13	Child-centered curriculum is the most effective means of achieving desired outcomes.	3.74	1.111
14	A curriculum centered on skills delivers lifelong advantages.	4.11	.940
15	A style of administration based on participation makes the school climate healthier and more conducive to learning for everyone.	4.14	.930
16	Principals play a crucial role in creating a professional community of teachers who collaborate to improve education.	4.23	.970
17	Heads' interactions with subordinates boost instructors' commitment to their responsibilities.	4.12	1.041
18	Interactions between principals and students with special needs enhance students' learning confidence.	4.15	1.070
19	The head's propensity for partiality threatens to destroy the educational climate.	3.89	1.048

20	Employees are motivated to perform diligently when their leaders have faith in them.	3.84	1.080
21	Heads' awareness of the needs of exceptional students fosters a constructive interaction between both parties.	4.19	1.02
22	Through communication, leaders may encourage the development of their employees.	4.11	.963
23	The most influential school-based element in predicting learning outcomes is the teaching staff.	4.16	1.10
24	The attitudes of teachers toward students with special needs have a significant impact on the lives of students having special needs.	4.26	.997
25	A teacher's confidence and perspective on disabilities contribute to their creativity as a special education professional.	4.17	1.10
26	The manner in which teachers interact with kids with special needs affects student behavior.	4.15	.944
27	The teacher's mastery of the subject matter makes him or her a successful special educator.	4.26	.992
28	Communication with other teachers and staff is vital to sustained success in teaching.	4.22	.858
29	Communication with other teachers and staff is vital for continuous teaching effectiveness.	4.24	.888
30	A teacher's inability to comprehend and break down the material for their pupils is hampered by a lack of qualifications or topic expertise.	4.07	1.01
31	Teachers with higher academic degrees are able to work more creatively with special needs kids.	4.08	.913
32	The placement of a teacher outside of his/her specialty or region impacts his/her teaching skills.	3.95	1.00
33	Teachers who are posted outside of their city may not be as happy at work.	4.02	.985
34	Educators who reside distant from their hometowns are less committed.	3.96	1.07
35	Teachers' additional responsibilities inhibit classroom participation.	3.70	1.06
36	Those pupils who are ignored the most are those whose teachers have excessive responsibilities.	3.47	1.13
37	Teachers are satisfied with their additional responsibilities.	3.86	1.14
38	Pre-service training is required for teachers to comprehend the public-school setting.	3.91	1.01
39	During in-service training, educators learn more new ideas.	3.99	1.03
40	Every teacher who participates in once-every-three-months in-service training feels better knowledgeable about the education of children with exceptional needs.	3.85	.95

41	Special education centers that provide opportunities for kids with special needs encourage parents to enroll their children in school.	3.79	.91
42	Increasing enrolment increases educational possibilities for all students.	3.76	1.06
43	The classroom performance of other students is diminished by the presence of severely/profoundly impaired classmates.	3.55	.99
44	There is no other method to instruct children with emotional and behavioral issues than to have them drop out of school.	3.87	.87
45	Staff accountability facilitates a favorable learning environment.	3.76	.87
46	Teachers become more engaged in schools when they anticipate evaluations from visiting officials or special teams.	3.74	.96
47	When principals evaluate instructors' performance, it encourages teachers to strive for excellence.	3.76	.87

Table 7 illustrates the mean scores and standard deviation of special education teachers' assessments of internal school-related elements impacting special education quality. Some elements are negative contributors, while others are favorable. According to teachers, the most important things were a healthy place (4.07), easy access to schools (4.13), clean potable water (4.00), hygienic bathrooms (4.04), a mastery-emphasized syllabus (4.11), a participatory mode of management (4.14), executive societal development among teachers (4.23), synergy between heads and subordinates (4.12), synergy between heads and children (4.16), and cognizance of heads having special needs (4.17). The dropout rate of students (3.55) didn't have as much of an effect.

**Table 8**

*ANOVA Results for Professional Qualifications of Teachers in Special Education*

Scores	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Scores	F
Between-Group Variations	71945.97	2	35972.98	5.731*
Intra-Group Variability	2491966.11	395	6276.99	
Overall Sum	2563912.08	397		

\*P < .005

Table illustrates that an ANOVA test was undertaken to investigate the variables impacting the special education quality as perceived by teachers of special education based on their professional qualifications. 1: None, 2: B.Ed., and 3: M.Ed. were the categories for Professional Qualification. There was a statistically significant difference between how teachers with different credentials felt about special education:  $p = 0.004$ ,  $F(2, 395) = 5.73$ . Even if the difference between the groups' mean scores was statistically significant, the difference was not very big. Using eta squared (a measure of effect size), the effect size was found to be  $\eta^2 = 0.02$ .

**Table 9**

*ANOVA Results for Score Variation across Special Education Teachers' Areas of Specialization*

Scores	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Scores	F
Between-Group Variations	118842.23	4	29710.56	4.78*
Intra-Group Variability	2440312.55	393	6209.45	
Overall Sum	2559154.77	397		

\* $P < .005$

An ANOVA test was undertaken to investigate the variables influencing the quality of special education in the perspectives of teachers of special education based on the teaching classifications, as shown in Table 9. These areas of specializations were 1: IDD, 2: PHC, 3: VIC, 4: HIC, 5: and other. There was a precisely significant difference in the replies of teachers of special education from various teaching classifications.  $p = 0.001$ ,  $F(4, 393) = 4.78$ . Neglecting the precise significance, the actual difference between the mean scores of groups was quite small to moderate. Calculated using eta squared, the effect size was  $\eta^2 = 0.04$ .

## Findings

The classification of factors as positive or negative is based on their impact on student learning outcomes, as indicated by their mean scores and their role in improving or hindering educational quality.

## Internal Positive Factors

Students' better health and nutrition ( $M = 4.01$ ), orientation with the concept aids in quick learning ( $M = 3.86$ ), and education at home yields

better classroom results ( $M = 3.70$ ). Internal motivation ( $M = 4.02$ ) and external motivation contribute to improved classroom execution ( $M = 4.14$ ), least restricting environment ( $M = 4.03$ ), transformed instruction ( $M = 4.07$ ), use of models, dioramas, demonstration material ( $M = 3.94$ ), and indoor curricular activities Increased engagement as a consequence of a well-managed classroom ( $M = 3.91$ ), use of positive reinforcement ( $M = 4.14$ ), excellent results motivating future accomplishments ( $M = 3.99$ ), and accessibility inside school grounds ( $M = 4.13$ ), steady atmosphere of school ( $M = 3.90$ ), child-centered curriculum ( $M = 3.74$ ), skill-based curriculum ( $M = 4.11$ ), synergy of heads with students, teachers, and parents ( $M = 4.12$ ), teachers' attitudes and confidence towards disabled students ( $M = 4.17$ ), teachers' firm grip on content ( $M = 4.26$ ), high educational qualification of teachers of special education in Punjab Govt. special education schools and centers ( $M = 4.07$ ) and serving teachers' training programs by Punjab's Directorate of Special Education, (  $M = 3.91$ ), possibilities attract enrolment, which results in educational opportunities for everyone ( $M = 3.85$ ), and liability of employees by upper authorities ( $M = 3.87$ ).

### **Internal Negative Factors**

Acute level of disabilities influence the students' performance ( $M = 3.65$ ), poor learning preparedness in disabled students ( $M = 3.73$ ), the effects of type ( $M = 3.93$ ) and level of disability ( $M = 3.99$ ), minimal stamina in special-needing children ( $M = 3.46$ ), disability annoyance in children with special needs ( $M = 3.65$ ), and fear of failure ( $M = 3.14$ ), poorly equipped classrooms ( $M = 4.15$ ), mismanaged seating arrangements for children with impairments in the classroom ( $M = 4.03$ ), and inadequate student access to classroom equipment such as the whiteboard, teacher table, and closet ( $M = 3.83$ ), inadequate seating plans for high levels of severity ( $M = 3.90$ ), inappropriate ventilation and lighting distorts the learning attention of students with special needs ( $M = 3.97$ ), a disruptive student-teacher ratio ( $M = 4.05$ ), and a decrease in the use of alternate assessment techniques ( $M = 3.82$ ), unavailability of clean drinking water, sufficient furniture, hygienic washrooms, and bush-free play grounds ( $M = 4.07$ ), a difficult school environment affecting the quality of special education ( $M = 4.01$ ), a rigid curriculum ( $M = 3.99$ ), and an authoritative style of administration ( $M = 4.14$ ), heads' favoritism destroys the school's environment ( $M = 3.89$ ), heads' lack of awareness of the demands of all types of disabilities in centers of special education ( $M = 4.19$ ), teachers' placement in areas rather than their specialization ( $M =$



4.08), and far-away postings of teachers ( $M = 3.95$ ), teachers' extra responsibilities ( $M = 3.96$ ), inadequate administration of courses of teacher training by the Directorate of special education ( $M = 3.99$ ), dropping out of students with behavioral and severities problems ( $M = 3.55$ ), and low expectations from everyone are undermining the idea of equality ( $M = 3.76$ ).

### **Conclusion**

Internal variables, both good and negative in character, influence the quality of special education in Punjab. Current research assessed the elements influencing the perspectives of special education instructors at special education institutions. The present study affirmed that the quality of special education is affected by several sub factors, such as the health of special needs students, the severity and type of their disabilities, the teaching space organization and accommodations, the enlightening means and assistance supplied by special education educators and peers, classroom organization and assessment procedures, poor school infrastructure and lack of rudimentary amenities, teachers' superfluous responsibilities and lack of training, and so on.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations have been drawn from the study's findings:

- It is recommended that teacher training programs should focus on equipping special educators with adaptive teaching strategies and effective classroom management skills.
- Policymakers implement measures to maintain smaller class sizes in special education to enhance individual student attention.
- Schools should ensure proper infrastructure, availability of assistive technology, and resource allocation to address these issues.
- Schools should incorporate psychological support services, such as counseling and positive reinforcement strategies, to enhance student engagement.
- Continuous professional development programs should be introduced to enhance teachers' competencies in special education.

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