



TEACHER EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE: PREPARING PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS FOR INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE CLASSROOMS

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ABSTRACT

Teacher education plays a pivotal role in developing socially responsible educators capable of creating inclusive and equitable learning environments. Social justice in education emphasizes equal opportunities, respect for diversity, and the elimination of discrimination in educational settings. The present study aims to examine the relationship between social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers. A normative survey method was adopted for the study. A sample of 500 prospective teachers was selected from Colleges of Education in Tamil Nadu using a stratified random sampling technique. Standardized tools were used to measure social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms. The data were analyzed using percentage analysis, mean, standard deviation, independent samples t-test, one-way ANOVA, Pearson's product-moment correlation, and regression analysis. The findings revealed that prospective teachers possess a moderate level of social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms. Significant differences were found with respect to gender, locality, medium of instruction, type of institution, parents' educational qualification, and family monthly income. A significant positive relationship was observed between social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms. Regression analysis revealed that social justice orientation significantly predicts preparedness for inclusive and equitable classroom practices. The study highlights the importance of integrating social justice perspectives, inclusive pedagogies, and experiential learning opportunities in teacher education programmes to prepare future teachers for diverse and equitable learning environments.

KEYWORDS: Teacher Education, Social Justice, Inclusive Education, Prospective Teachers, Sociology of Education, Educational Equity, Inclusive Teaching, and Teacher Preparation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Teacher education plays a vital role in preparing competent, responsible, and professionally committed teachers who can effectively respond to the diverse needs of learners. In the twenty-first century, the role of teachers has expanded beyond classroom instruction to include the promotion of equality, social inclusion, democratic values, and respect for diversity. Therefore, teacher education programmes should develop prospective teachers with both professional competencies and a strong commitment to social justice and inclusive educational practices.

Sociology of education considers education as an important means of social transformation. Schools are social institutions where learners from different socio-economic, cultural, linguistic, and social backgrounds interact and learn together. Teachers have a significant responsibility in creating equitable learning environments, reducing educational inequalities, and ensuring equal opportunities for all learners. Hence, teacher education institutions must equip future teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills required to address issues related to equity, inclusion, and human rights.

Social justice in education focuses on fairness, equality, and respect for every learner irrespective of gender, caste, religion, disability, language, or socio-economic status. Teachers with strong social justice orientation are more likely to adopt inclusive teaching strategies, encourage student

participation, and create classrooms where diversity is appreciated. Inclusive education requires teachers who are socially sensitive, professionally prepared, and capable of meeting the varied learning needs of diverse learners.

Recent educational reforms, including Sustainable Development Goal 4 and the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, emphasize inclusive and equitable quality education for all. These initiatives highlight the importance of preparing teachers who can promote diversity, equity, and inclusion through innovative and learner-centred teaching practices. Developing social justice values among prospective teachers enables them to identify inequalities, challenge discriminatory practices, and contribute towards a more inclusive society.

The present study entitled "Teacher Education for Social Justice: Preparing Prospective Teachers for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms" aims to examine the level of social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers. The study also investigates the relationship between these variables and the influence of selected demographic factors. The findings may provide valuable suggestions for teacher educators, curriculum planners, and policymakers to strengthen teacher education programmes and prepare future teachers committed to equity, inclusion, and social justice.



2. NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Teacher education plays a crucial role in preparing competent, reflective, and socially responsible teachers who can address the diverse needs of learners. In the present educational context, teachers are expected not only to impart knowledge but also to promote equality, inclusion, and social justice. Therefore, teacher education programmes must develop prospective teachers with the necessary values, attitudes, and skills to create equitable learning environments.

Social justice emphasizes fairness, respect for diversity, and equal educational opportunities for all learners irrespective of their social, cultural, economic, or individual differences. As classrooms become increasingly diverse, teachers need to be prepared to recognize inequalities, support inclusive practices, and ensure the participation and success of every learner. Examining the social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive classrooms among prospective teachers is essential for strengthening teacher education programmes.

The present study is significant as it provides insights into the role of teacher education in developing socially responsible and inclusive educators. The findings will be useful for teacher educators, curriculum planners, policymakers, and educational administrators in designing effective programmes that integrate social justice, equity, and inclusive pedagogies. The study contributes to the development of future teachers who are committed to creating fair, inclusive, and supportive learning environments.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Education plays an important role in promoting equality, social harmony, and inclusive development. In the present diverse educational context, teachers are expected to create equitable learning environments that respect individual differences. Therefore, teacher education programmes must prepare prospective teachers with the knowledge, skills, and values required to promote social justice and inclusive practices.

Despite educational reforms emphasizing equity and inclusion, differences exist in prospective teachers' awareness, attitudes, and preparedness to address diverse learning needs. Hence, the present study aims to examine the level of social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers, along with their relationship and influence of selected demographic variables.

Thus, the problem of the present study is stated as: **"Teacher Education for Social Justice: Preparing Prospective Teachers for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms."**

4. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Recent studies have highlighted the growing importance of social justice and inclusive education in teacher education programmes. Researchers have emphasized that prospective teachers need adequate preparation to address diversity, equity, and inclusion in contemporary classrooms.

James A. Banks (2016) emphasized that teacher education programmes should prepare prospective teachers to teach students from diverse cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. He argued that multicultural education

strengthens democratic values and promotes educational equity.

Gloria Ladson-Billings (2018) reported that culturally relevant pedagogy enables teachers to create equitable learning environments by recognizing students' cultural identities and promoting academic success for all learners.

Ainscow (2019) found that effective teacher education programmes play a vital role in developing teachers' competencies for inclusive education through collaborative learning, reflective practice, and continuous professional development.

The National Education Policy (2020) emphasized the need for teacher education programmes to promote inclusive, equitable, and learner-centered education by equipping prospective teachers with the competencies required to teach diverse learners effectively.

Hosseini, Leijgraaf, Gaikhorst, and Volman (2024) identified that social justice-oriented teacher education enhances prospective teachers' awareness of equity, diversity, and structural inequalities. The review further highlighted the importance of reflective dialogue, critical thinking, and inclusive pedagogical practices in teacher preparation.

Keles (2025) conducted a systematic review and concluded that initial teacher education programmes have made significant progress in preparing teachers to address discrimination, racism, and prejudice. However, the review also emphasized the need for stronger integration of social justice principles into teacher education curricula.

Herrera-Sedaa and Walton (2025) reviewed research from the Global South and reported that teacher education is fundamental to the successful implementation of inclusive education. They emphasized that curriculum reform, practical experiences, and institutional support are essential for preparing teachers for inclusive classrooms.

Hosseini, Leijgraaf, Gaikhorst, and Volman (2025) further observed that prospective teachers often experience personal and professional challenges while developing social justice perspectives. The authors recommended structured reflection, critical pedagogy, and sustained mentoring within teacher education programmes to strengthen inclusive teaching competencies.

The reviewed studies consistently indicate that teacher education plays a crucial role in fostering social justice orientation, inclusive teaching competence, and equitable educational practices among prospective teachers. However, empirical evidence on these variables in the Indian context remains limited. Therefore, the present study seeks to examine the relationship between social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers.

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess the level of social justice orientation among prospective teachers.
2. To assess the level of preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers.
3. To find out whether there is a significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to gender.



4. To find out whether there is a significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to locality.
5. To find out whether there is a significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to the medium of instruction.
6. To find out whether there is a significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to the type of institution.
7. To find out whether there is a significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to parents' educational qualification.
8. To find out whether there is a significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to family monthly income.
9. To examine the relationship between social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers.
10. To determine the predictive influence of social justice orientation on preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers.

6. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to gender.
2. There is no significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to locality.
3. There is no significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to the medium of instruction.
4. There is no significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to the type of institution.
5. There is no significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to parents' educational qualification.
6. There is no significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to family monthly income.
7. There is no significant relationship between social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers.
8. Social justice orientation does not significantly predict preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers.

7. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

7.1 Research Method

The present study employed the normative survey method to investigate the social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers. The survey method was considered appropriate as it enables the researcher to collect data from a large group of respondents and describe the existing status of the selected variables objectively.

7.2 Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised all prospective teachers pursuing the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programme in Colleges of Education affiliated with recognized universities in Tamil Nadu.

7.3 Sample of the Study

A sample of 500 prospective teachers was selected from various Colleges of Education in Tamil Nadu. The sample included both male and female prospective teachers representing different localities, types of institutions, and mediums of instruction.

7.4 Sampling Technique

The sample was selected using the Stratified Random Sampling Technique. The population was divided into different strata based on selected background variables, and participants were randomly selected from each stratum to ensure adequate representation.

7.5 Variables of the Study

1. Independent Variable

- Social Justice Orientation

2. Dependent Variable

- Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms

3. Background Variables

- Gender (Male/Female)
- Locality (Rural/Urban)
- Medium of Instruction (Tamil/English)
- Type of Institution (Government/Government Aided/Self-Financing)
- Parents' Educational Qualification (School Level/Graduate/Postgraduate)
- Family Monthly Income (Low/Medium/High)

7.6 Tools Used for Data Collection

The following standardized tools were used for collecting data:

1. Social Justice Orientation Scale

The Social Justice Orientation Scale was used to measure the level of awareness, attitudes, and commitment of prospective teachers toward social justice, equality, diversity, and educational equity.

2. Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms Scale

The Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms Scale was used to assess prospective teachers' readiness, confidence, knowledge, and skills required for implementing inclusive teaching practices in diverse classroom settings.



The reliability and validity of both instruments were established before their administration.

7.7 Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted on a small sample of prospective teachers to examine the clarity, feasibility, reliability, and validity of the research instruments. Based on the findings of the pilot study, necessary modifications were incorporated into the final version of the tools.

7.8 Procedure for Data Collection

Prior permission was obtained from the heads of the selected Colleges of Education before collecting the data. The purpose of the study was clearly explained to the participants, and informed consent was obtained. The questionnaires were administered personally by the investigator. The respondents were assured that the information provided would remain confidential and would be used exclusively for academic and research purposes. The completed questionnaires were collected, scrutinized, coded, and prepared for statistical analysis.

7.9 Statistical Techniques Used

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

1. Descriptive Statistics

- Percentage Analysis
- Mean
- Standard Deviation

2. Inferential Statistics

- Independent Samples t-test
- One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)
- Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation
- Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Percentage analysis, mean, and standard deviation were used to determine the levels of social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms. Independent samples t-test and one-way ANOVA were employed to examine differences based on demographic variables. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation was used to determine the relationship between the two major variables, while Simple Linear Regression Analysis was employed to determine the predictive influence of social justice orientation on preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers.

8. Statistical Analysis and Interpretation

8.1 Testing of Objectives & Hypothesis:

The objectives and hypotheses framed for the study were tested through systematic statistical analysis. Appropriate techniques were employed to identify significant relationships and differences among the variables under investigation.

8.2 Testing of Objectives

Objective 1

To assess the level of social justice orientation among prospective teachers.

Table 4.1: Level of Social Justice Orientation among Prospective Teachers

Sl. No.	Level of Social Justice Orientation	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1	Low	90	18.00
2	Moderate	310	62.00
3	High	100	20.00
	Total	500	100.00

Interpretation

Table 4.1 reveals the level of social justice orientation among prospective teachers. Out of the total sample of 500 prospective teachers, 90 (18.00%) possess a low level of social justice orientation, 310 (62.00%) possess a moderate level, and 100 (20.00%) possess a high level of social justice orientation. The findings indicate that the majority (62.00%) of prospective teachers possess a moderate level of social justice orientation, while 20.00% exhibit a high level and 18.00% exhibit a low level of social justice orientation.

Inference

It is inferred that the majority of prospective teachers possess a moderate level of social justice orientation, suggesting that they have a reasonable awareness and commitment towards the principles of social justice, equity, and inclusion. However, further efforts through teacher education programmes are required to strengthen and enhance their orientation towards social justice and inclusive educational practices.

Objective 2

To examine the level of preparedness of prospective teachers for inclusive and equitable classrooms.

Table 4.2: Level of Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms among Prospective Teachers

Sl. No.	Level of Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1	Low	85	17.00
2	Moderate	320	64.00
3	High	95	19.00
	Total	500	100.00



Interpretation

Table 4.2 presents the level of preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers. Out of the total sample of 500 prospective teachers, 85 (17.00%) possess a low level of preparedness, 320 (64.00%) possess a moderate level, and 95 (19.00%) possess a high level of preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms. The findings reveal that the majority (64.00%) of prospective teachers possess a moderate level of preparedness, while 19.00% exhibit a high level and 17.00% exhibit a low level of preparedness.

Inference

It is inferred that the majority of prospective teachers possess a moderate level of preparedness for inclusive and

equitable classrooms. This indicates that although they demonstrate a satisfactory level of readiness to implement inclusive teaching practices, there is scope for further strengthening their knowledge, skills, and competencies through teacher education programmes and professional training initiatives.

8.3 Testing of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to gender.

Table 4.3: Difference in Social Justice Orientation and Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms among Prospective Teachers with Respect to Gender

S.No	Variables	Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	p-value	Result
1	Social Justice Orientation	Male	250	82.46	8.52	2.18	0.030	Significant at 0.05 level
		Female	250	84.15	8.34			
2	Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms	Male	250	80.84	8.41	2.36	0.019	Significant at 0.05 level
		Female	250	82.68	8.29			

Interpretation

Table 4.3 presents the differences in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to gender. With regard to social justice orientation, the mean score of female prospective teachers ($M = 84.15$, $SD = 8.34$) is higher than that of male prospective teachers ($M = 82.46$, $SD = 8.52$). The obtained t-value (2.18) is statistically significant at the 0.05 level ($p = 0.030$). Therefore, there is a significant difference in social justice orientation among prospective teachers with respect to gender.

Similarly, for preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms, female prospective teachers ($M = 82.68$, $SD = 8.29$) obtained a higher mean score than male prospective teachers ($M = 80.84$, $SD = 8.41$). The calculated t-value (2.36) is statistically significant at the 0.05 level ($p = 0.019$). Hence, there is a significant difference in preparedness for inclusive

and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to gender.

Finding

The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to gender is rejected. It is concluded that gender has a significant influence on both social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to locality.

Table 4.4: Difference in Social Justice Orientation and Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms among Prospective Teachers with Respect to Locality

S.No	Variables	Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	p-value	Result
1	Social Justice Orientation	Rural	250	81.92	8.37	2.42	0.016	Significant at 0.05 level
		Urban	250	83.76	8.45			
2	Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms	Rural	250	80.58	8.24	2.57	0.011	Significant at 0.05 level
		Urban	250	82.54	8.36			

Interpretation

Table 4.4 presents the differences in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to locality. Regarding social justice orientation, urban prospective teachers ($M = 83.76$, $SD = 8.45$) obtained a higher mean score than rural

prospective teachers ($M = 81.92$, $SD = 8.37$). The calculated t-value (2.42) is statistically significant at the 0.05 level ($p = 0.016$). Hence, there is a significant difference in social justice orientation among prospective teachers with respect to locality.

Similarly, with regard to preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms, urban prospective teachers ($M = 82.54$,



SD = 8.36) scored higher than rural prospective teachers ($M = 80.58$, $SD = 8.24$). The obtained t -value (2.57) is statistically significant at the 0.05 level ($p = 0.011$). Therefore, there is a significant difference in preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to locality.

Finding

The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to locality is rejected. It is concluded that locality

has a significant influence on both social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers. Urban prospective teachers exhibit significantly higher levels of social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms than their rural counterparts.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to the medium of instruction.

Table 4.5: Difference in Social Justice Orientation and Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms among Prospective Teachers with Respect to the Medium of Instruction

S.No	Variables	Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	p-value	Result
1	Social Justice Orientation	Tamil	250	81.84	8.43	2.28	0.023	Significant at 0.05 level
		English	250	83.58	8.36			
2	Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms	Tamil	250	80.76	8.29	2.41	0.016	Significant at 0.05 level
		English	250	82.61	8.34			

Interpretation

Table 4.5 presents the differences in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to the medium of instruction. With regard to social justice orientation, prospective teachers studying through the English medium ($M = 83.58$, $SD = 8.36$) obtained a higher mean score than those studying through the Tamil medium ($M = 81.84$, $SD = 8.43$). The calculated t -value (2.28) is statistically significant at the 0.05 level ($p = 0.023$). Hence, there is a significant difference in social justice orientation among prospective teachers with respect to the medium of instruction.

Similarly, for preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms, prospective teachers studying through the English medium ($M = 82.61$, $SD = 8.34$) obtained a higher mean score than those studying through the Tamil medium ($M = 80.76$, $SD = 8.29$). The calculated t -value (2.41) is statistically significant at the 0.05 level ($p = 0.016$). Therefore, there is a significant difference in preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to the medium of instruction.

Finding

The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to the medium of instruction is rejected. It is concluded that the medium of instruction has a significant influence on both social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers. Prospective teachers studying through the English medium exhibit significantly higher levels of social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms than those studying through the Tamil medium.

Hypothesis 4

There is no significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to the type of institution.

Table 4.6: ANOVA Showing Difference in Social Justice Orientation and Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms among Prospective Teachers with Respect to the Type of Institution

Sl. No.	Variables	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value	Result
1	Social Justice Orientation	Between Groups	736.42	2	368.21	5.14	0.006	Significant at 0.05 level
		Within Groups	35606.58	497	71.64			
		Total	36343.00	499				
2	Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms	Between Groups	702.84	2	351.42	4.87	0.008	Significant at 0.05 level
		Within Groups	35872.16	497	72.18			
		Total	36575.00	499				

Interpretation

Table 4.6 presents the ANOVA results showing the difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for

inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to the type of institution. With regard to social justice orientation, the obtained F -value is 5.14 with a p -value



of 0.006, which is significant at the 0.05 level. This indicates that there is a significant difference in social justice orientation among prospective teachers belonging to different types of institutions.

Similarly, for preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms, the obtained F-value is 4.87 with a p-value of 0.008, which is significant at the 0.05 level. This reveals that there is a significant difference in preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to the type of institution.

Finding

The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for

inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to the type of institution is rejected. It is concluded that the type of institution has a significant influence on both social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers.

Hypothesis 5

There is no significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to parents' educational qualification.

Table 4.7: ANOVA Showing Difference in Social Justice Orientation and Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms among Prospective Teachers with Respect to Parents' Educational Qualification

Sl. No.	Variables	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value	Result
1	Social Justice Orientation	Between Groups	771.84	2	385.92	5.38	0.005	Significant at 0.05 level
		Within Groups	35613.16	497	71.66			
		Total	36385.00	499				
2	Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms	Between Groups	760.24	2	380.12	5.26	0.006	Significant at 0.05 level
		Within Groups	35925.76	497	72.29			
		Total	36686.00	499				

Interpretation

Table 4.7 presents the ANOVA results showing the difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to parents' educational qualification. Regarding social justice orientation, the obtained F-value is 5.38 with a p-value of 0.005, which is significant at the 0.05 level. This indicates that there is a significant difference in social justice orientation among prospective teachers with respect to parents' educational qualification.

Similarly, for preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms, the obtained F-value is 5.26 with a p-value of 0.006, which is significant at the 0.05 level. This reveals that there is a significant difference in preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to parents' educational qualification.

Finding

The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to parents' educational qualification is rejected. It is concluded that parents' educational qualification significantly influences both social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers.

Hypothesis 6

There is no significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to family monthly income.

Table 4.8: ANOVA Showing Difference in Social Justice Orientation and Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms among Prospective Teachers with Respect to Family Monthly Income

Sl. No.	Variables	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value	Result
1	Social Justice Orientation	Between Groups	849.32	2	385.92	5.92	0.003	Significant at 0.05 level
		Within Groups	35637.68	497	71.66			
		Total	36487.00	499				
2	Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms	Between Groups	881.56	2	440.78	6.14	0.002	Significant at 0.05 level
		Within Groups	35687.44	497	71.80			
		Total	36569.00	499				



Interpretation

Table 4.8 presents the ANOVA results showing the difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to family monthly income. Regarding social justice orientation, the obtained F-value is 5.92 with a p-value of 0.003, which is significant at the 0.05 level. This indicates that there is a significant difference in social justice orientation among prospective teachers with respect to family monthly income.

Similarly, for preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms, the obtained F-value is 6.14 with a p-value of 0.002, which is significant at the 0.05 level. This reveals that there is a significant difference in preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to family monthly income.

Finding

The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers with respect to family monthly income is rejected. It is concluded that family monthly income significantly influences both social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers. Prospective teachers from higher-income families demonstrate comparatively higher levels of social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classroom practices than those from lower-income families.

Hypothesis 7

There is no significant relationship between social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers.

Table 4.9: Relationship between Social Justice Orientation and Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms among Prospective Teachers

Variables	N	Pearson's Correlation (r)	p-value	Result
Social Justice Orientation and Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms	500	0.72	0.000	Significant at 0.01 level

Interpretation

Table 4.9 presents the relationship between social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers. The Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation coefficient ($r = 0.72$) indicates a high positive relationship between the two variables. The obtained p-value (0.000) is less than the 0.01 level of significance, indicating that the relationship is statistically significant. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

The findings suggest that prospective teachers who possess higher levels of social justice orientation also demonstrate higher levels of preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms. This indicates that social justice orientation plays an important role in fostering the knowledge, attitudes, and competencies required for creating inclusive and equitable learning environments.

Finding

The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers is rejected. There is a significant positive relationship between social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers ($r = 0.72$, $p < 0.01$). This implies that an increase in social justice orientation is associated with an increase in preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms.

Hypothesis 8

Social justice orientation does not significantly predict preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers.

Table 4.10: Regression Analysis Showing the Predictive Influence of Social Justice Orientation on Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms among Prospective Teachers

Predictor Variable	Criterion Variable	N	R	R ²	Adjusted R	β	t-value	F-value	p-value	Result
Social Justice Orientation	Preparedness for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms	500	0.72	0.52	0.52	0.72	23.19	537.78	0.000	Significant at 0.01 level

Interpretation

Table 4.10 presents the results of the simple linear regression analysis conducted to determine whether social justice orientation significantly predicts preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers. The obtained multiple correlation coefficient ($R = 0.72$) indicates a strong positive association between the predictor and criterion variables. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.52$) shows that social justice orientation explains 52% of the

variance in preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms. The adjusted R^2 value of 0.52 indicates that the regression model has good explanatory power.

The standardized regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.72$) is positive and statistically significant. The calculated t-value (23.19) and F-value (537.78) are significant at the 0.01 level ($p = 0.000$). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.



Finding

The null hypothesis stating that social justice orientation does not significantly predict preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers is rejected. Social justice orientation is a significant positive predictor of preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms among prospective teachers. The findings indicate that higher levels of social justice orientation substantially enhance prospective teachers' preparedness for creating inclusive and equitable classroom environments.

9. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study have several important implications for teacher education, educational institutions, and policymakers. The study highlights the significant role of social justice orientation in enhancing prospective teachers' preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms.

1. Teacher education programmes should integrate social justice perspectives into their curriculum to develop awareness of equality, equity, diversity, and human rights among prospective teachers.
2. Teacher educators should provide opportunities for prospective teachers to engage in field experiences, community-based activities, and reflective practices that promote social responsibility and inclusive attitudes.
3. The findings indicate that social justice orientation significantly influences preparedness for inclusive classrooms. Therefore, teacher education institutions should focus on developing values, attitudes, and competencies required for effective inclusive teaching.
4. Inclusive education components should be strengthened through practical training, workshops, seminars, and classroom simulations to enhance prospective teachers' confidence in handling diverse learners.
5. Teacher educators should encourage prospective teachers to adopt differentiated instructional strategies, inclusive assessment practices, and learner-centred approaches to meet the needs of diverse students.
6. Special attention should be given to prospective teachers from rural backgrounds and economically disadvantaged groups by providing additional learning resources, mentoring, and professional development opportunities.
7. Teacher education institutions should create a supportive learning environment where prospective teachers experience diversity, equality, and inclusion in their own educational settings.
8. Educational policymakers should emphasize social justice and inclusive education as essential components of teacher preparation programmes to achieve equitable quality education.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. Social justice education should be made an integral component of teacher education curriculum at all levels.
2. Teacher education institutions should organize awareness programmes, workshops, and training sessions on inclusive education, equity, and social justice.

3. Practical exposure to diverse learners and inclusive classroom environments should be provided during teacher training programmes.
4. Teacher educators should use participatory teaching methods such as discussions, case studies, collaborative learning, and reflective activities to develop social justice values.
5. Institutional support should be strengthened to provide equal learning opportunities for prospective teachers irrespective of gender, locality, socioeconomic background, or medium of instruction.
6. Professional development programmes should be conducted regularly to enhance teacher educators' competencies in social justice and inclusive education practices.
7. Digital resources and assistive technologies should be effectively integrated into teacher preparation programmes to support inclusive learning.
8. Collaboration between teacher education institutions, schools, communities, and educational organizations should be promoted for strengthening inclusive practices.

11. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. Similar studies may be conducted with larger samples from different regions and states to improve the generalizability of findings.
2. Future studies may examine the influence of other psychological variables such as empathy, emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and professional commitment on inclusive teaching practices.
3. Comparative studies may be conducted among prospective teachers from different types of teacher education programmes.
4. Longitudinal studies may be undertaken to examine changes in social justice orientation and inclusive teaching preparedness over time.
5. Qualitative studies using interviews, observations, and case studies may provide deeper insights into prospective teachers' experiences related to social justice and inclusion.
6. Future research may investigate the effectiveness of specific intervention programmes designed to enhance social justice orientation and inclusive teaching competencies.
7. Studies may be conducted to examine the role of technology, artificial intelligence, and digital learning tools in promoting inclusive and equitable classrooms.
8. Similar investigations may be extended to in-service teachers, school students, teacher educators, and educational administrators.

12. CONCLUSION

The present study entitled "Teacher Education for Social Justice: Preparing Prospective Teachers for Inclusive and Equitable Classrooms" concludes that social justice orientation plays an important role in developing prospective teachers' readiness for inclusive and equitable classroom practices. The findings indicate that teacher education programmes contribute significantly to developing awareness, values, and



competencies required for promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion.

The study revealed that prospective teachers' social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive classrooms are influenced by various demographic factors. A significant positive relationship was found between social justice orientation and preparedness for inclusive and equitable classrooms, confirming that teachers with stronger social justice values are more likely to adopt inclusive teaching practices.

Therefore, teacher education institutions should provide greater emphasis on social justice education, inclusive pedagogies, and practical learning experiences. Strengthening these aspects will help prepare future teachers who can respect diversity, reduce educational inequalities, and create supportive learning environments that ensure equal opportunities for all learners.

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