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## Bridging Values And Belonging: The Interrelationship Between Secondary School Teachers' Awareness Of Value Education And Inclusive Education, And Its Demographic Differentials In Ahmedabad, India

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### Abstract

Value education and inclusive education occupy a shared, if rarely jointly examined, place in the policy architecture of Indian school reform, yet evidence on whether teachers' grasp of one construct is empirically tied to their grasp of the other remains scarce, particularly outside the metropolitan centres that dominate the existing literature. This study addresses that gap by examining the awareness of secondary school teachers in Ahmedabad District, Gujarat, regarding value education and inclusive education, the strength of association between the two constructs, and the extent to which gender and school management type differentiate awareness. A descriptive survey design was employed with a multistage sample of 500 secondary and higher secondary teachers (240 male, 260 female; 250 government, 250 private) drawn from fifty schools spanning four administrative zones of the district. Two researcher-developed instruments, the Value Education Awareness Scale and the Inclusive Education Awareness Scale, each comprising forty Likert-type items across four conceptually distinct subscales, were administered following expert content validation and pilot testing that yielded excellent internal consistency ( $\alpha = .93$  and  $.94$ , respectively). Teachers reported moderate awareness of value education ( $M = 134.50$ ,  $SD = 21.80$ ,  $67.25\%$ ) and inclusive education ( $M = 125.30$ ,  $SD = 24.50$ ,  $62.65\%$ ). A strong, statistically significant positive correlation emerged between the two constructs,  $r(498) = .68$ ,  $p < .001$ , indicating that approximately 46% of the variance in inclusive education awareness was shared with value education awareness. Independent samples t-tests revealed that female teachers reported significantly higher awareness than male teachers on both scales, and that the influence of school management type was construct-specific: private school teachers reported higher value education awareness, whereas government school teachers reported higher inclusive education awareness. These findings position teacher awareness of value and inclusive education as overlapping rather than independent professional competencies and suggest that integrated, management-type-sensitive professional development may be more efficient than parallel, single-construct training programmes.

Implications for teacher education, school leadership, and policy implementation under the National Education Policy 2020 are discussed.

## Keywords

teacher awareness; value education; inclusive education; secondary school teachers; National Education Policy 2020; Ahmedabad; gender differences; school management type

## 1. Introduction

Schools are rarely asked to do only one thing. Alongside the transmission of disciplinary knowledge, secondary classrooms across the world are now expected to cultivate ethical sensibility and to accommodate the full range of learners who walk through their doors. These two expectations, commonly labelled value education and inclusive education, are typically studied as separate fields of inquiry, each with its own measurement tradition, policy lineage, and professional development infrastructure. Yet both rest on a common premise: that teachers cannot enact what they have not first come to understand. Awareness, in this sense, functions as the cognitive antechamber to practice. The present study asks a question that the literature has largely left unasked, namely whether teachers' awareness of these two domains is empirically independent, as the separateness of their respective bodies of scholarship would imply, or whether the two are bound together by a shared foundation of professional knowledge.

Internationally, the normative case for treating values and inclusion as intertwined commitments has been building for three decades. The Salamanca Statement first articulated inclusive schooling as a vehicle for building a more accepting society rather than a narrow administrative accommodation (UNESCO, 1994), and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities subsequently entrenched inclusion as a legal entitlement rather than a pedagogical preference (United Nations, 2006). The Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Target 4.5 on eliminating disparities in access and Target 4.7 on education for global citizenship, fold equity and ethical formation into a single developmental agenda, suggesting that the international community already treats values and inclusion as mutually reinforcing rather than parallel concerns (UNESCO, 2020).

India's own policy trajectory mirrors this convergence. The National Education Policy 2020 devotes substantial attention to both domains within the same document, calling for the integration of "human, ethical, constitutional, and scientific values" across the curriculum while simultaneously declaring that inclusive education "shall be the norm" rather than the exception (Ministry of Education, 2020). The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 widened the legal definition of disability to twenty-one categories and obligated schools to provide reasonable accommodation (Government of India, 2016), while the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 anchored inclusive access as a foundational entitlement of Indian schooling (Government of India, 2009). The Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, the umbrella scheme that now funds both inclusive education infrastructure and value education activities under a single administrative roof, is itself a quiet acknowledgement that these two priorities are operationally entangled (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2018).

Gujarat, and Ahmedabad District in particular, presents a setting where this entanglement can be examined with unusual clarity. The district hosts an unusually wide spread of school management types, from municipal and grant-in-aid government institutions to GSHSEB-affiliated and CBSE-affiliated private schools, operating within a single administrative and labour market. This diversity allows management type to function as a meaningful, naturally occurring comparison rather than an artefact of cross-state policy

variation. Despite this analytic opportunity, the empirical record from Ahmedabad has so far treated value education and inclusive education awareness as separate research programmes: studies such as Mehta (2023) and Trivedi (2023) examined value education awareness in isolation, while Patel and Desai (2024), Vyas (2024), and Shah (2022) examined inclusive education awareness without reference to teachers' value-related knowledge. No published study from the district, to the researcher's knowledge, has measured both constructs in the same teacher sample and tested whether they covary.

This gap is not merely an oversight of convenience. If awareness of value education and awareness of inclusive education are statistically independent, then schools and teacher educators are right to treat them as separate training problems requiring separate curricula, separate budgets, and separate monitoring indicators. If, however, the two are substantially correlated, the policy implication reverses: investment in one domain may yield collateral gains in the other, and an integrated professional development architecture would be the more efficient design. The choice between these two models cannot be settled by appeal to policy intention or curricular rhetoric alone; it requires direct empirical testing, which the present study supplies.

The problem addressed in this paper may therefore be stated as follows: despite the rhetorical and statutory convergence of value education and inclusive education in Indian policy, no empirical study conducted in Ahmedabad District has examined whether secondary teachers' awareness of these two domains is related, nor has any such study established whether the demographic patterning of awareness, specifically by gender and by school management type, is consistent or divergent across the two constructs. This study addresses that problem directly, contributing what is, to the researcher's knowledge, the first jointly measured, psychometrically validated assessment of value education and inclusive education awareness among secondary teachers in Gujarat. Its significance lies in offering teacher educators, school administrators, and state policy architects an evidence base for deciding whether integrated or parallel professional development pathways are the more defensible investment, at a moment when the post-NEP 2020 training infrastructure in Gujarat is still being designed.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Conceptualising Awareness, Value Education, and Inclusive Education

Awareness, as employed in this study, denotes a cognitive state encompassing knowledge, comprehension, and conceptual familiarity with a domain, distinguished from attitude (an evaluative orientation) and from self-efficacy (a belief about one's capacity to act). This distinction matters because much of the available Indian literature conflates awareness with attitude, producing instruments that measure favourability rather than knowledge. The present study restricts itself to the cognitive dimension, consistent with the four-dimensional operationalisation of value education awareness proposed by Deshmukh and Kulkarni (2021), comprising conceptual understanding, pedagogical approaches, curricular integration, and assessment literacy, and with the legal-pedagogical operationalisation of inclusive education awareness reflected in the work of Singh (2023) and Patel and Desai (2024), spanning statutory knowledge, disability identification, instructional differentiation, and accommodation practice.

Two theoretical frameworks anchor the interpretation of awareness adopted here. Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour positions knowledge as a precondition for the attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control that jointly determine intention and, ultimately, classroom practice; awareness in this framing is the cognitive substrate without which favourable intention cannot reliably form. Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory complements this individual-level account by emphasising that such knowledge

is rarely acquired in isolation but is constructed through interaction with more knowledgeable colleagues, mentors, and institutional structures, a proposition with direct bearing on why awareness might cluster by school management type, given that government and private institutions offer markedly different opportunities for collegial and state-sponsored learning.

## 2.2 Empirical Evidence on Value Education Awareness

Sharma (2022) surveyed 500 secondary teachers in Delhi and reported average awareness and moderately favourable attitudes towards value education, with female teachers and private school teachers scoring significantly higher than their male and government-school counterparts respectively. Mehta (2023), working with 275 teachers from Ahmedabad's government-aided and private unaided schools, similarly found moderate overall awareness of NEP 2020's value education provisions, with teachers more confident about conceptual content than about pedagogical strategies for cross-curricular integration. Deshmukh and Kulkarni's (2021) curriculum analysis offers a structural explanation for this conceptual-pedagogical gap, showing that while value objectives are explicitly stated in national curriculum documents, their translation into textbook content and teacher guidance remains inconsistent, leaving value education to default into isolated moral science periods. Trivedi (2023), surveying ninety-five Ahmedabad teachers, corroborated this pattern empirically: three-quarters of sampled schools allocated a weekly period for moral science, yet only three in ten teachers reported integrating values across subject teaching. Kothari (2022) extended the analysis across examination boards, finding that CBSE-affiliated schools, which are predominantly private in Ahmedabad, possessed more elaborated value education frameworks than GSEB-affiliated schools, a finding that anticipates the school-type differential tested in the present study.

## 2.3 Empirical Evidence on Inclusive Education Awareness

The inclusive education literature from Ahmedabad consistently documents an awareness deficit larger than that observed for value education. Patel and Desai (2024) found that only 35% of teachers in their sample of 150 demonstrated comprehensive knowledge of inclusive provisions under the RTE and RPWD Acts, despite 65% of sampled schools having nominally established resource rooms. Vyas (2024), examining 200 teachers' familiarity with NEP 2020's inclusive provisions, reported an overall awareness score of only 55 out of 100, with government school teachers (62/100) outperforming private school teachers (48/100), a pattern the author attributed to state-organised orientation sessions that reached government institutions disproportionately. Shah (2022) reported a comparable government advantage in policy awareness (68% versus 42%) despite finding that private schools scored higher on physical infrastructure indicators such as ramps and accessible washrooms, illustrating that awareness and resourcing do not necessarily move together. Bhatt (2021) and Singh (2023) both documented a similar two-tier pattern in which teachers possess reasonable awareness of general access provisions but weak awareness of the specific pedagogical accommodations, such as individualised education plans and assessment modification, that translate legal entitlement into classroom practice.

## 2.4 Demographic Patterning of Awareness

Gender emerges as a remarkably consistent correlate of awareness across this literature. Sharma (2022) and Makwana (2023) both report a female advantage in value education awareness, while Joshi (2022) and Mistry and Skutil (2025) report a parallel female advantage in attitudes and aptitude for inclusive education among Gujarat teachers and pre-service trainees respectively. The explanations advanced for this pattern, typically invoking gendered socialisation towards empathy and caregiving roles, are theoretically plausible but have rarely been tested simultaneously across both constructs within a single sample, leaving open the

question of whether the same teachers who show higher value education awareness are also the ones showing higher inclusive education awareness, or whether the female advantage operates through partially distinct mechanisms in each domain.

School management type shows a more theoretically interesting pattern: where it has been examined separately, private schools tend to outperform government schools on value education awareness (Sharma, 2022; Mehta, 2023; Kothari, 2022), while government schools tend to outperform private schools on inclusive education awareness (Vyas, 2024; Shah, 2022). This crossover is consistent with differential institutional exposure: government schools are bound by statutory inclusion mandates and benefit from Samagra Shiksha training infrastructure, whereas private schools enjoy greater curricular and budgetary autonomy that may be more readily channelled into branded value education initiatives. However, because no prior Ahmedabad study has measured both constructs in the same respondents, this crossover pattern has only ever been inferred by comparing separate studies with different samples, instruments, and time frames, a methodologically fragile basis for policy inference.

## 2.5 The Case for a Joint Awareness Construct

A small number of international studies gesture towards the theoretical plausibility of a shared awareness foundation. Döring, Daniel, Neuman, and Oeschger (2023), synthesising research on value development in schools, argue that values such as respect for diversity and universalism are not merely compatible with inclusive practice but constitute its ethical precondition, suggesting that teachers who have internalised a values-oriented professional identity may be predisposed to greater receptivity to inclusive pedagogy. Chen, Evans, Luu, and Li (2026) found that teachers' general attitudes towards inclusive education significantly predicted their orientation towards Universal Design for Learning in both Australian and Chinese samples, indicating that broader professional dispositions transfer across what might appear to be distinct pedagogical domains. Taken together, this body of work motivates, without directly testing, the hypothesis examined empirically in the present study.

## 3. Research Gap

Three specific gaps in the literature converge to justify the present investigation. First, no study located in Ahmedabad District, or in Gujarat more broadly, has measured secondary teachers' awareness of value education and inclusive education concurrently using psychometrically validated instruments administered to the same respondents, leaving the empirical relationship between the two constructs untested rather than merely under-discussed. Second, the demographic patterning of awareness, particularly the apparently divergent influence of school management type across the two domains, has only been inferred indirectly by juxtaposing separate single-construct studies, a comparison vulnerable to confounding by sampling, instrumentation, and period effects. Third, the existing evidence base substantially predates the operational rollout of NEP 2020-aligned training infrastructure in Gujarat, leaving a need for contemporary post-policy data against which future intervention effects can be benchmarked. The present study addresses all three gaps within a single, adequately powered, multistage-sampled investigation.

## 4. Objectives of the Study

The study pursued the following objectives: (1) to determine the level of awareness of value education among secondary school teachers in Ahmedabad District; (2) to determine the level of awareness of inclusive education among secondary school teachers in Ahmedabad District; (3) to examine the



relationship between awareness of value education and awareness of inclusive education among secondary school teachers; (4) to compare awareness of value education between male and female secondary school teachers; (5) to compare awareness of inclusive education between male and female secondary school teachers; (6) to compare awareness of value education between government and private secondary school teachers; and (7) to compare awareness of inclusive education between government and private secondary school teachers.

## 5. Hypotheses

Five null hypotheses, each tested at  $\alpha = .05$ , guided the inferential analysis:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between awareness of value education and awareness of inclusive education among secondary school teachers.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant difference in awareness of value education between male and female secondary school teachers.

H<sub>03</sub>: There is no significant difference in awareness of inclusive education between male and female secondary school teachers.

H<sub>04</sub>: There is no significant difference in awareness of value education between government and private secondary school teachers.

H<sub>05</sub>: There is no significant difference in awareness of inclusive education between government and private secondary school teachers.

## 6. Methodology

### 6.1 Research Design

A descriptive survey design was adopted, appropriate for establishing the current level of teacher awareness and for testing group differences without experimental manipulation. The design was cross-sectional, with all data collected within a single academic year (2025–2026), and was predominantly quantitative, supplemented at the planning stage by qualitative input from expert reviewers during instrument development.

### 6.2 Population

The population comprised all full-time secondary and higher secondary school teachers employed in recognised Government, Grant-in-Aid, and Private Unaided schools across Ahmedabad District during 2025–2026, affiliated with the Gujarat Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board, the Central Board of Secondary Education, or other recognised boards. Ahmedabad District was selected for its unusual diversity of school management types operating within a single administrative jurisdiction, which provided a naturally occurring basis for comparing awareness across government and private institutions without the confound of cross-state policy variation.

### 6.3 Sample and Sampling Procedure

A multistage sampling design was employed, combining cluster sampling, stratified sampling, and simple random sampling. At the first stage, four administrative clusters of Ahmedabad District, broadly corresponding to its North, South, East, and West educational zones, served as primary sampling units to secure geographic representation. At the second stage, schools within each cluster were stratified by management type into Government and Private categories, the latter inclusive of grant-in-aid and unaided institutions. At the third stage, fifty schools in total were drawn through simple random sampling within each stratum, comprising twenty-five Government schools and twenty-five Private schools distributed proportionately across the four zones. At the fourth stage, eligible teachers instructing Grades IX through XII within each sampled school were identified, and approximately eight to twelve teachers were selected from each school through simple random sampling. This procedure yielded a final achieved sample of 500 teachers (250 Government, 250 Private; 240 male, 260 female), drawn from the fifty sampled schools. A sample of this magnitude was judged adequate for independent samples t-tests and correlational analysis; following Cohen's (1988) guidance, samples exceeding 200 per comparison provide sufficient statistical power to detect moderate effect sizes, and the present subgroup sizes, each exceeding 240 respondents, comfortably exceed this threshold.

**Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Sample (N = 500)**

| Characteristic  | Category   | Frequency (n) | Percentage |
|-----------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Gender          | Male       | 240           | 48.0%      |
|                 | Female     | 260           | 52.0%      |
| School Type     | Government | 250           | 50.0%      |
|                 | Private    | 250           | 50.0%      |
| Geographic Zone | North      | 120           | 24.0%      |
|                 | South      | 120           | 24.0%      |
|                 | East       | 130           | 26.0%      |
|                 | West       | 130           | 26.0%      |

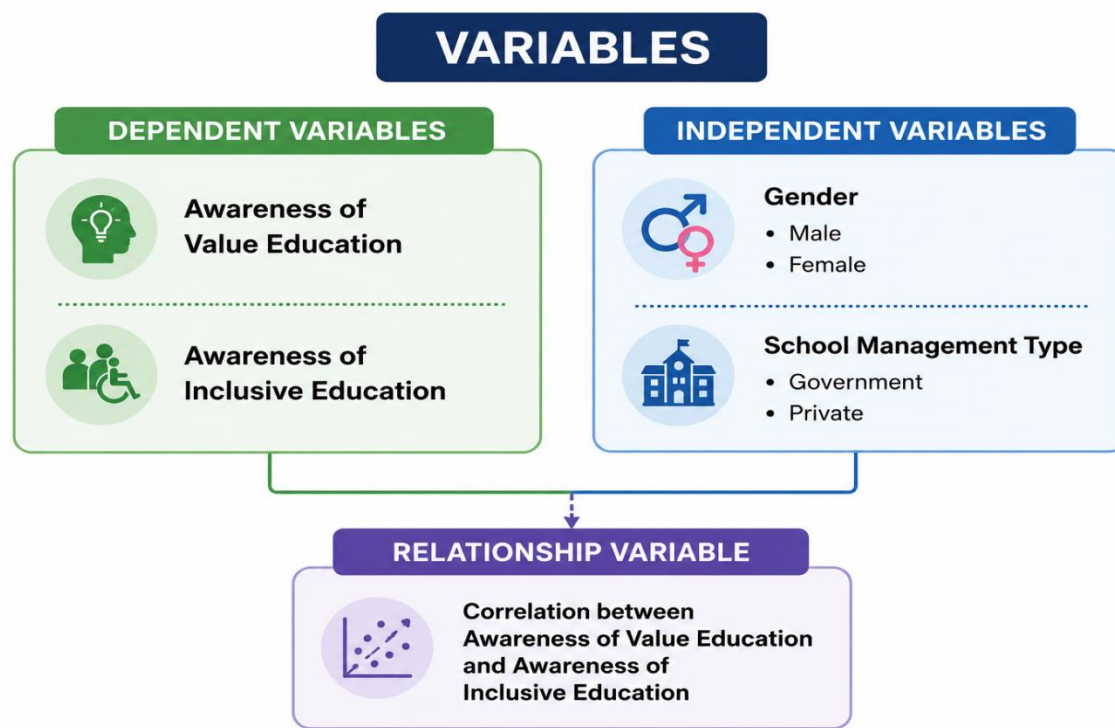
### 6.4 Variables

Dependent Variables: Awareness of Value Education Awareness of Inclusive Education

Independent Variables: Gender (Male and Female)

School Management Type (Government and Private)

Relationship Variable: Correlation between Awareness of Value Education and Awareness of Inclusive Education



## 6.5 Research Instruments

Two researcher-developed instruments, along with a demographic information sheet, were used for data collection. The instruments were the **Value Education Awareness Scale (VEAS)** and the **Inclusive Education Awareness Scale (IEAS)**. Both scales were specially developed for this study based on previous research and relevant literature. The VEAS was designed using the framework suggested by **Deshmukh and Kulkarni (2021)**, while the IEAS was developed with reference to the concepts presented by **Singh (2023)** and **Patel and Desai (2024)** on inclusive education. Both instruments consisted of **40 statements** rated on a **five-point Likert scale**, ranging from **1 (Strongly Disagree)** to **5 (Strongly Agree)**. The total score ranged from **40 to 200**. The obtained scores were converted into percentages and classified into three levels of awareness: **Low Awareness (below 50%)**, **Moderate Awareness (50–75%)**, and **High Awareness (above 75%)**.

The **Value Education Awareness Scale (VEAS)** included four dimensions with **10 items in each dimension**: conceptual understanding of value education, teaching approaches for value education, integration of values into the curriculum, and assessment of value education outcomes. Similarly, the **Inclusive Education Awareness Scale (IEAS)** consisted of four dimensions covering knowledge of educational policies and legal provisions (such as **RTE Act 2009**, **RPWD Act 2016**, and **NEP 2020**), understanding of different disability categories, inclusive teaching strategies and assistive technology, and assessment accommodations with collaborative practices. To improve the accuracy of responses and reduce response bias, both scales also included a few **reverse-worded statements**.

## 6.6 Validity

Content validity of both instruments was established through expert review. A panel of **10 experts**, including professors of education, specialists in value and inclusive education, experienced secondary school teachers, and curriculum experts familiar with the Gujarat education system, evaluated each item for its **relevance, clarity, and appropriateness**. Their feedback was used to improve the instruments. The **Content Validity**



**Ratio (CVR)** was calculated for each item using **Lawshe's (1975)** method. Items that did not meet the required CVR value were revised or removed. After the revisions, **face validity** was assessed by **10 secondary school teachers** who were not part of the main study. They confirmed that the language of the instruments was clear, easy to understand, and could be completed within **30–35 minutes**.

## 6.7 Reliability

A pilot study with forty secondary teachers, drawn equally from government and private schools not included in the main sample, established internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha. Both total scales demonstrated excellent reliability, with the VEAS yielding  $\alpha = .93$  and the IEAS yielding  $\alpha = .94$ ; subscale alphas ranged from .83 to .88, comfortably exceeding the conventional .70 threshold for research instruments (George & Mallery, 2003). Test-retest reliability, assessed with twenty pilot participants over a two-week interval, yielded correlations of .88 (VEAS) and .86 (IEAS), indicating satisfactory temporal stability.

**Table 2. Internal Consistency Reliability of VEAS and IEAS**

| Scale | Subscale                   | Items | Cronbach's $\alpha$ |
|-------|----------------------------|-------|---------------------|
| VEAS  | Conceptual Understanding   | 10    | 0.87                |
| VEAS  | Pedagogical Approaches     | 10    | 0.84                |
| VEAS  | Curricular Integration     | 10    | 0.86                |
| VEAS  | Assessment Practices       | 10    | 0.83                |
| VEAS  | Total Scale                | 40    | 0.93                |
| IEAS  | Legal and Policy Framework | 10    | 0.88                |
| IEAS  | Disability Categories      | 10    | 0.85                |
| IEAS  | Differentiated Instruction | 10    | 0.87                |
| IEAS  | Assessment Accommodations  | 10    | 0.84                |
| IEAS  | Total Scale                | 40    | 0.94                |

## 6.8 Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected by the researcher over approximately eight weeks during October and November 2025. School principals were approached for written permission prior to any contact with teachers, and participating teachers were briefed on the purpose of the study, the structure of the questionnaire, and the confidentiality of their responses before completing a hard-copy instrument under self-administered conditions, with a researcher or trained assistant available to clarify procedural queries without influencing substantive responses. Completed questionnaires were collected in sealed envelopes. Of 550 questionnaires distributed, 500 met completeness criteria (less than 10% missing data) and were retained for analysis, an effective response and usability rate of 90.9%.

## 6.9 Statistical Techniques

Data were analysed in IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 26.0) and MS Excel. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages) addressed the first two objectives. Prior to inferential testing, the Shapiro-Wilk test was used to assess normality within each comparison subgroup, and Levene's test was used to assess homogeneity of variance. Although the Shapiro-Wilk statistic indicated minor deviations from normality in several subgroups, skewness and kurtosis values remained within  $\pm 0.5$ , well inside the conventional  $\pm 2.0$  threshold, and visual inspection of quantile-quantile plots showed no substantial departure from normality; parametric procedures were therefore retained, consistent with the established robustness of the independent samples t-test to minor non-normality at the present subgroup

sizes (each  $n > 240$ ). Pearson product-moment correlation was used to test the association between VEAS and IEAS total scores, and independent samples t-tests, accompanied by Cohen's  $d$  as a measure of effect size, were used to test the four group-comparison hypotheses. The significance threshold was set at  $\alpha = .05$  for all tests.

## 6.10 Ethical Considerations

In this study the researcher followed the ethical guidelines for educational research. Before collecting the data, **informed consent** was obtained from all participants. They were informed that participation in the study was **voluntary**, they could **withdraw at any stage without any consequences**, and the information collected would be used **only for research purposes**. To maintain confidentiality, no personal details such as names or contact information were collected. Each questionnaire was assigned a code based only on the **school zone and school type**. All data were stored securely in password-protected files, and only the researcher had access to them. Prior permission to conduct the study was obtained from the **District Education Office**, the **principals of the selected schools**, and the **Research Ethics Committee** of the concerned institution

## 7. Results

### 7.1 Overall Levels of Awareness

Teachers reported a mean Value Education Awareness Scale score of 134.50 ( $SD = 21.80$ ), equivalent to 67.25% of the maximum attainable score and falling within the Moderate Awareness band. The mean Inclusive Education Awareness Scale score was 125.30 ( $SD = 24.50$ ), equivalent to 62.65%, also within the Moderate band but appreciably lower than the value education figure, a difference of 4.60 percentage points.

**Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for Overall Awareness Scores (N = 500)**

| Variable                      | Mean   | SD    | Mean % | Category |
|-------------------------------|--------|-------|--------|----------|
| Value Education Awareness     | 134.50 | 21.80 | 67.25% | Moderate |
| Inclusive Education Awareness | 125.30 | 24.50 | 62.65% | Moderate |

**Table 4. Distribution of Teachers across Awareness Categories**

| Awareness Category | Value Education (%) | Inclusive Education (%) |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Low (< 50%)        | 15%                 | 22%                     |
| Moderate (50–75%)  | 58%                 | 55%                     |
| High (> 75%)       | 27%                 | 23%                     |

The category distribution in Table 4 sharpens the interpretation of the mean difference: while the proportion of teachers in the Moderate band was similar across the two constructs, a markedly larger share of teachers fell into the Low Awareness category for inclusive education (22%) than for value education (15%), and a correspondingly smaller share reached the High Awareness category for inclusive education (23%) than for value education (27%). The two constructs are therefore not merely shifted by a small constant; the inclusive education distribution carries a heavier lower tail, consistent with the broader literature documenting a persistent inclusive education awareness deficit in Ahmedabad (Patel & Desai, 2024; Vyas, 2024).

## 7.2 Relationship between Value Education and Inclusive Education Awareness

A Pearson product-moment correlation was computed to test Hypothesis  $H_{01}$ . The analysis revealed a strong, positive, and statistically significant association between the two constructs,  $r(498) = .68$ ,  $p < .001$ . The coefficient of determination indicates that value education awareness accounts for approximately 46% of the variance in inclusive education awareness ( $r^2 = .46$ ). The practical magnitude of this association is illustrated by a quartile comparison: teachers scoring in the top quartile of the VEAS (above 155 of 200 points) recorded a mean IEAS score of 148.5, while teachers in the bottom VEAS quartile (below 115 points) recorded a mean IEAS score of only 102.3, a gap exceeding forty-six points on the inclusive education scale. The null hypothesis  $H_{01}$  was therefore rejected.

### Hypothesis 1

**Table 5. Correlation between VEAS and IEAS Total Scores (N = 500)**

|                  | VEAS | IEAS |
|------------------|------|------|
| VEAS — Pearson r | 1    | —    |
| IEAS — Pearson r | .68  | 1    |

Correlation is significant at  $p < .001$  (two-tailed).

## 7.3 Gender Differences in Awareness

### Hypothesis 2

**Table 6. Gender Differences in Value Education Awareness (VEAS)**

| Gender | n   | M      | SD    | t     | df  | p      | Cohen's d |
|--------|-----|--------|-------|-------|-----|--------|-----------|
| Male   | 240 | 128.50 | 20.10 | -4.52 | 498 | < .001 | 0.41      |
| Female | 260 | 140.05 | 22.30 |       |     |        |           |

Female teachers reported significantly higher value education awareness ( $M = 140.05$ , 70.03%) than male teachers ( $M = 128.50$ , 64.25%),  $t(498) = -4.52$ ,  $p < .001$ , a moderate effect ( $d = 0.41$ ).  $H_{02}$  was rejected.

### Hypothesis 3

**Table 7. Gender Differences in Inclusive Education Awareness (IEAS)**

| Gender | n   | M      | SD    | t     | df  | p      | Cohen's d |
|--------|-----|--------|-------|-------|-----|--------|-----------|
| Male   | 240 | 120.10 | 23.80 | -3.89 | 498 | < .001 | 0.35      |
| Female | 260 | 130.10 | 24.70 |       |     |        |           |

A parallel female advantage emerged for inclusive education awareness ( $M = 130.10$  versus  $M = 120.10$ ),  $t(498) = -3.89$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = 0.35$ .  $H_{03}$  was rejected. The consistency of direction and moderate magnitude across both scales is itself an empirical confirmation of the correlational finding reported above: whatever underlies the gender effect operates similarly across both constructs.

## 7.4 School Management Type Differences in Awareness

### Hypothesis 4

**Table 8. School Type Differences in Value Education Awareness (VEAS)**

| School Type | n   | M      | SD    | t     | df  | p    | Cohen's d |
|-------------|-----|--------|-------|-------|-----|------|-----------|
| Government  | 250 | 130.20 | 20.50 | -3.21 | 498 | .001 | 0.29      |
| Private     | 250 | 138.80 | 22.50 |       |     |      |           |

Private school teachers reported significantly higher value education awareness ( $M = 138.80, 69.40\%$ ) than government school teachers ( $M = 130.20, 65.10\%$ ),  $t(498) = -3.21, p = .001$ , a small-to-moderate effect ( $d = 0.29$ ).  $H_{04}$  was rejected.

## Hypothesis 5

**Table 9. School Type Differences in Inclusive Education Awareness (IEAS)**

| School Type | n   | M      | SD    | t    | df  | p      | Cohen's d |
|-------------|-----|--------|-------|------|-----|--------|-----------|
| Government  | 250 | 132.40 | 25.10 | 4.31 | 498 | < .001 | 0.39      |
| Private     | 250 | 118.20 | 22.30 |      |     |        |           |

The pattern reversed for inclusive education: government school teachers reported significantly higher awareness ( $M = 132.40, 66.20\%$ ) than private school teachers ( $M = 118.20, 59.10\%$ ),  $t(498) = 4.31, p < .001$ , a moderate effect ( $d = 0.39$ ).  $H_{05}$  was rejected. This crossover, a private advantage on one construct and a government advantage on the other within the same 500 teachers, is the most analytically distinctive finding of the study and is examined in detail in the Discussion.

## 7.5 Summary of Hypothesis Testing

**Table 10. Summary of Hypothesis Testing Outcomes**

| Hypothesis | Comparison            | Test      | Decision | Key Statistic        |
|------------|-----------------------|-----------|----------|----------------------|
| $H_{01}$   | VEAS–IEAS correlation | Pearson r | Rejected | $r = .68, p < .001$  |
| $H_{02}$   | VEAS by gender        | t-test    | Rejected | $p < .001, d = 0.41$ |
| $H_{03}$   | IEAS by gender        | t-test    | Rejected | $p < .001, d = 0.35$ |
| $H_{04}$   | VEAS by school type   | t-test    | Rejected | $p = .001, d = 0.29$ |
| $H_{05}$   | IEAS by school type   | t-test    | Rejected | $p < .001, d = 0.39$ |

All five null hypotheses were rejected at  $\alpha = .05$ . Taken together, the results establish that value education and inclusive education awareness, while conceptually and instrumentally distinct, are empirically entangled constructs that share both a substantial common variance and a consistent gender differential, while diverging sharply in their relationship to school management type.

## 8. Discussion

### 8.1 Moderate but Uneven Awareness

The finding that Ahmedabad's secondary teachers possess moderate, rather than high, awareness of both value education (67.25%) and inclusive education (62.65%) situates this sample within an established regional pattern. Sharma's (2022) Delhi sample and Mehta's (2023) Ahmedabad sample both reported comparably moderate value education awareness, while Singh's (2023) Uttar Pradesh sample reported similarly moderate inclusive education preparedness. The persistence of this ceiling across geographically and temporally distinct samples suggests that moderate awareness is not a local anomaly but a structural feature of how value and inclusion content is currently delivered through Indian teacher education and in-service training. The lower relative standing of inclusive education is consistent with its comparatively recent ascent to policy prominence: value education has circulated in Indian curricular discourse since the Kothari Commission of the mid-1960s, whereas the legal architecture for inclusion, particularly the twenty-one-category disability framework of the RPWD Act, is barely a decade old (Government of India, 2016) and the explicit NEP 2020 mandate for full inclusion is more recent still (Ministry of Education, 2020). Familiarity, in other words, tracks institutional age.

Read through Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour, moderate awareness signals an incomplete cognitive foundation for the favourable attitudes, perceived social support, and perceived behavioural control that jointly determine whether a teacher will actually attempt inclusive or values-integrated practice. A teacher who is only moderately aware of assistive technology options or differentiated assessment is unlikely to develop strong perceived behavioural control over inclusive pedagogy, regardless of how favourably disposed she may feel towards the principle of inclusion in the abstract. This theoretical reading cautions against interpreting the present awareness gap as a simple training-hours problem; it is, more precisely, a problem of insufficient cognitive scaffolding for behavioural confidence.

## 8.2 A Shared Knowledge Base: Interpreting the Correlation

The central empirical contribution of this study is the strong positive correlation between value education awareness and inclusive education awareness,  $r(498) = .68$ ,  $p < .001$ . A coefficient of this magnitude, accounting for nearly half the variance in inclusive education awareness, is too substantial to dismiss as a measurement artefact, particularly given that the two scales were independently developed, target conceptually distinct content domains, and were validated separately against different expert panels. The more parsimonious interpretation is that the two awareness constructs draw on a common underlying reservoir of professional knowledge, plausibly comprising general pedagogical sophistication, familiarity with policy literacy as a genre, and exposure to in-service training culture, rather than on two unrelated bodies of specialised content.

This interpretation resonates with Döring, Daniel, Neuman, and Oeschger's (2023) theoretical argument that values such as respect for diversity function as the ethical precondition for inclusive practice rather than as a separate professional competency running in parallel to it: a teacher who has internalised the value of universalism is, on this account, already disposed towards the perceptual and behavioural openness that inclusive teaching demands. It also parallels Chen, Evans, Luu, and Li's (2026) cross-national finding that general attitudes towards inclusion predicted orientation towards Universal Design for Learning in both an Australian and a Chinese sample, suggesting that broad professional dispositions transfer across what appear, on the surface, to be distinct pedagogical domains. The present study extends this line of argument from the attitudinal to the cognitive level, and from international comparison to a single, jointly measured Indian sample, providing the first direct evidence that awareness, not merely attitude, of these two domains travels together within the same teachers.

## 8.3 Gender: A Consistent but Theoretically Underdetermined Effect

The female advantage observed on both scales ( $d = 0.41$  for value education,  $d = 0.35$  for inclusive education) replicates the direction, though not always the exact magnitude, of effects reported by Sharma (2022) for value education and by Joshi (2022) and Mistry and Skutil (2025) for inclusive-related constructs in Gujarat. What the present design adds is evidence that the female advantage is not domain-specific: it appears with comparable moderate effect size on both the values-oriented and the inclusion-oriented scale within the same sample, a pattern more consistent with a general professional-disposition account (for instance, differential uptake of caregiving-adjacent professional identities) than with a domain-specific mechanism unique to either value education or inclusive education considered alone. This study cannot adjudicate between socialisation, self-selection into teaching as a caregiving profession, or differential exposure to relevant training as the underlying mechanism, and notes this as a clear avenue for future, more explanatory research.



## 8.4 School Management Type: A Genuine Crossover, Not a Uniform Advantage

The most theoretically consequential finding is the crossover interaction between awareness construct and school management type. Private school teachers held the advantage in value education awareness ( $d = 0.29$ ), while government school teachers held the advantage, of larger magnitude, in inclusive education awareness ( $d = 0.39$ ). Because both comparisons were drawn from the same 500 teachers using instruments validated within the same study, this crossover can be interpreted with a confidence that the earlier literature, which inferred the same pattern by comparing entirely separate samples (Sharma, 2022; Mehta, 2023 for value education; Vyas, 2024; Shah, 2022 for inclusive education), could not claim.

The private advantage in value education awareness is plausibly linked to institutional autonomy and resourcing: private schools, and CBSE-affiliated private schools in particular, have historically possessed more elaborated explicit value education frameworks, complete with dedicated teacher guides, than GSEB-affiliated government schools (Kothari, 2022), and private institutions face fewer bureaucratic constraints in mounting branded character-education or values programming that doubles as a marketing asset for fee-paying parents. The government advantage in inclusive education awareness, conversely, is consistent with the differential reach of state-mandated training: government schools are the primary beneficiaries of Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan's inclusion-focused components, including resource room establishment and special educator placement (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2018; Patel & Desai, 2024), and are additionally bound by RTE-mandated inclusive admission, which generates direct, sustained classroom contact with disabled and otherwise diverse learners that private schools, with their comparatively low documented enrolment of children with disabilities, rarely accumulate at the same scale (Vyas, 2024).

The practical implication of this crossover is that a single, undifferentiated professional development strategy applied uniformly across school management types would systematically under-serve the construct in which each sector already lags: government schools would benefit disproportionately from value education-focused training, and private schools from inclusive education-focused training, an inference that a study examining either construct alone could not have generated with comparable confidence.

## 9. Implications

### 9.1 Educational Implications

Because awareness of value and inclusive education shares nearly half its variance, professional development designed around an integrated competency framework, rather than as two parallel single-topic workshops, is likely to be a more efficient use of limited in-service training time. Training that strengthens teachers' general pedagogical and policy literacy, the apparent common factor underlying the observed correlation, may produce spillover gains in both domains simultaneously.

### 9.2 Policy Implications

State and district authorities implementing NEP 2020 should treat value education and inclusive education as components of a single professional standard rather than as separately monitored compliance indicators. The crossover finding further suggests that uniform statewide training targets are unlikely to be efficient: government schools warrant intensified value education input, while private schools, particularly those outside the CBSE value-education ecosystem, warrant intensified, possibly regulator-incentivised, inclusive education input.

### 9.3 Administrative Implications

School leaders should resist treating moderate awareness scores as evidence of adequate readiness; the present data indicate that a substantial minority of teachers, particularly regarding inclusive education, fall in the Low Awareness band. Needs assessments at the school level should disaggregate by management type and gender, given the demonstrated heterogeneity of awareness gaps across these groups, rather than applying generic, undifferentiated training calendars.

### 9.4 Implications for Teacher Education

Pre-service teacher education institutions should consider integrated coursework that addresses value education and inclusive education within a shared pedagogical framework rather than as discrete electives, consistent with the empirical entanglement documented here. Practicum placements that deliberately expose trainees to inclusive classroom settings, of the kind government schools already provide their in-service staff through statutory admission policy, may be a particularly efficient mechanism for building the inclusive education awareness that pre-service curricula alone have struggled to instill.

## 10. Conclusion

This study set out to determine whether secondary school teachers' awareness of value education and inclusive education, two constructs that Indian policy treats as conceptually adjacent but that prior Ahmedabad research has measured only in isolation, are in fact empirically related. Drawing on a multistage probability sample of 500 teachers from fifty schools across Ahmedabad District, the study found that awareness of both constructs is moderate, that the two constructs are strongly and positively correlated ( $r = .68$ ), that female teachers report higher awareness on both scales, and that school management type exerts a divergent influence, favouring private schools for value education awareness and government schools for inclusive education awareness. These findings reposition value education and inclusive education awareness not as parallel professional competencies requiring independent development pathways, but as substantially overlapping dimensions of a single underlying construct of values-and-inclusion literacy, while simultaneously revealing that the institutional levers capable of closing the awareness gap differ sharply by school management type. The combination of these two findings, shared variance alongside divergent institutional patterning, offers a more actionable evidence base for designing teacher professional development under NEP 2020 than either finding could provide alone.

## 11. Limitations

Several limitations qualify these conclusions. The cross-sectional design precludes causal inference regarding the direction of the observed correlation or the mechanisms underlying the gender and school-type differentials. Awareness was assessed through self-report, which is susceptible to social desirability bias, particularly for the more recently valorised construct of inclusive education. The sample, although geographically distributed across four zones of Ahmedabad District, was drawn through a multistage design constrained by school accessibility rather than full random sampling, which may limit generalisability beyond comparable urban and semi-urban Gujarat contexts. The binary classification of school type as government versus private collapses meaningful internal heterogeneity, particularly within the private category, which spans grant-in-aid institutions and elite unaided CBSE schools with very different resourcing profiles. Finally, the study measured awareness only, leaving the translation of awareness into observed classroom practice, the ultimate outcome of policy interest, for future research.

## 12. Forthcoming Research

Three directions follow most directly from the present findings. First, a mixed-methods or observational extension is needed to establish whether the moderate-to-strong awareness documented here translates into corresponding classroom practice, since awareness, while necessary, is unlikely to be sufficient for behaviour change. Second, longitudinal designs tracking awareness before and after the rollout of NEP 2020-aligned training infrastructure in Gujarat would allow the present moderate baseline to function as a genuine pre-intervention benchmark. Third, given the magnitude of the documented correlation, an experimental test of integrated versus parallel professional development models, randomising schools to receive either a combined values-and-inclusion training module or two separate single-topic modules of equivalent duration, would directly test the efficiency hypothesis that this study's correlational findings only suggest.

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