

Leadership Practices in Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment for Special Education: A Systematic Literature Review

Siti Norfatin Abdullah¹, Bity Salwana Alias^{2*}, Mohd Norazmi Nordin³,

Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

*Corresponding Author

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100400185>

Received: 08 April 2026; Accepted: 13 April 2026; Published: 01 May 2026

ABSTRACT

Inclusive education has become a fundamental priority within contemporary education systems, particularly in responding to the varied learning requirements of students with special educational needs (SEN). Although inclusive education is strongly supported through international and national policy frameworks, many schools continue to encounter challenges in converting inclusive ideals into effective day-to-day practices. Research consistently identifies leadership as a decisive element shaping the success or failure of inclusive initiatives. This systematic literature review brings together recent empirical studies examining leadership practices that support the creation of inclusive learning environments for students with special educational needs (SEN), with a focus on leadership strategies, implementation barriers, and organisational responsibilities. Following the PRISMA guidelines, 48 peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2022 and 2026 were sourced from the Scopus and Web of Science databases and examined through qualitative content analysis. Two primary themes emerged from the analysis: the role of leadership in promoting inclusive environments and the challenges involved in implementing inclusive practices for SEN students. The results indicate that inclusive practices are strengthened by visionary leadership, sustained organisational commitment, and collaborative engagement, whereas cultural, socioeconomic, and systemic limitations continue to hinder effective implementation. This review highlights the importance of school leaders adopting context-sensitive, resource-aware, and culturally responsive leadership approaches to achieve sustainable inclusive education. The findings provide valuable insights for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers aiming to enhance leadership capacity within inclusive education contexts.

Keywords: Inclusive Education, Leadership Practices, Special Education, Systematic Literature Review, School Leadership

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education has increasingly been positioned as a core priority within modern educational systems, reflecting a broader commitment to ensuring fair access, meaningful participation, and equal learning opportunities for all students. Rooted in principles of social justice, equity, and human rights, inclusive education seeks to dismantle structural and systemic barriers that exclude or marginalise learners with disabilities and other diverse learning needs (Toson et al., 2013; Volosnikova, 2023). Global policy instruments, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, have further reinforced the responsibility of education systems to provide learning environments that recognise and respond to learner diversity in inclusive and equitable ways.

Notwithstanding the strong emphasis placed on inclusive education within policy discourse, the effective enactment of inclusive principles at the school level remains a persistent challenge. A growing body of research indicates that the extent to which inclusive policies are translated into authentic practices is largely influenced by leadership within schools. School leaders play a pivotal role in shaping inclusive school cultures, setting institutional priorities, and ensuring that inclusion is embedded in everyday practices rather than treated as a peripheral initiative (Mbua, 2023; Adams et al., 2023). Beyond instructional leadership, school leaders are tasked

with managing the physical, social, and attitudinal dimensions of the school environment, all of which have a direct impact on the learning experiences of students with special educational needs (SEN).

Within the Malaysian educational context, the Special Education Integration Programme (SEIP) represents a significant policy initiative designed to support SEN students in mainstream school settings. The successful implementation of SEIP requires learning environments that are accessible, safe, and adaptable to diverse learner needs, in accordance with statutory guidelines such as the Code of Practice on Access for Disabled Persons to Public Buildings (2002). However, empirical evidence suggests that many special education classrooms continue to face limitations in terms of facilities and resources, thereby constraining their capacity to support effective teaching and meaningful learning experiences for SEN students (Hannah Amran et al., 2019; Emerick, 2022).

The effectiveness of inclusive education is strongly shaped by environmental factors, which can be broadly classified into physical, social, and attitudinal components. The physical environment encompasses aspects such as school building design, classroom configuration, and accessibility provisions, including ramps, adaptive furniture, and sensory-friendly spaces that support diverse learning needs (Akbar et al., 2023). The social environment involves patterns of interaction and relationships among students, teachers, and the wider school community, which are essential for fostering a sense of belonging, participation, and social inclusion. Meanwhile, the attitudinal environment refers to the beliefs, perceptions, and values held by educators, students, and parents toward disability and inclusion. Negative or deficit-oriented attitudes within this domain are frequently identified as some of the most enduring obstacles to the effective implementation of inclusive practices (Alkharraz, 2022).

In alignment with global agendas such as the Sustainable Development Goals and national frameworks including the Malaysian Education Development Plan 2013–2025, school leaders are increasingly expected to create learning environments that are inclusive, safe, and supportive of the holistic development of SEN students. Despite these expectations, leadership practices related to environmental management and the practical enactment of inclusion remain insufficiently examined in the literature. In response to this gap, the present systematic literature review seeks to explore leadership practices that support inclusive learning environments and to examine the challenges faced by school leaders in implementing inclusive education, as reflected in the following research questions:

1. What leadership practices are most effective in ensuring accessible and supportive school facilities for students with SEN?
2. What challenges Encountered by School Leaders in Implementing Inclusive Practices for Students with Special Educational Needs?

LITERATURE REVIEW

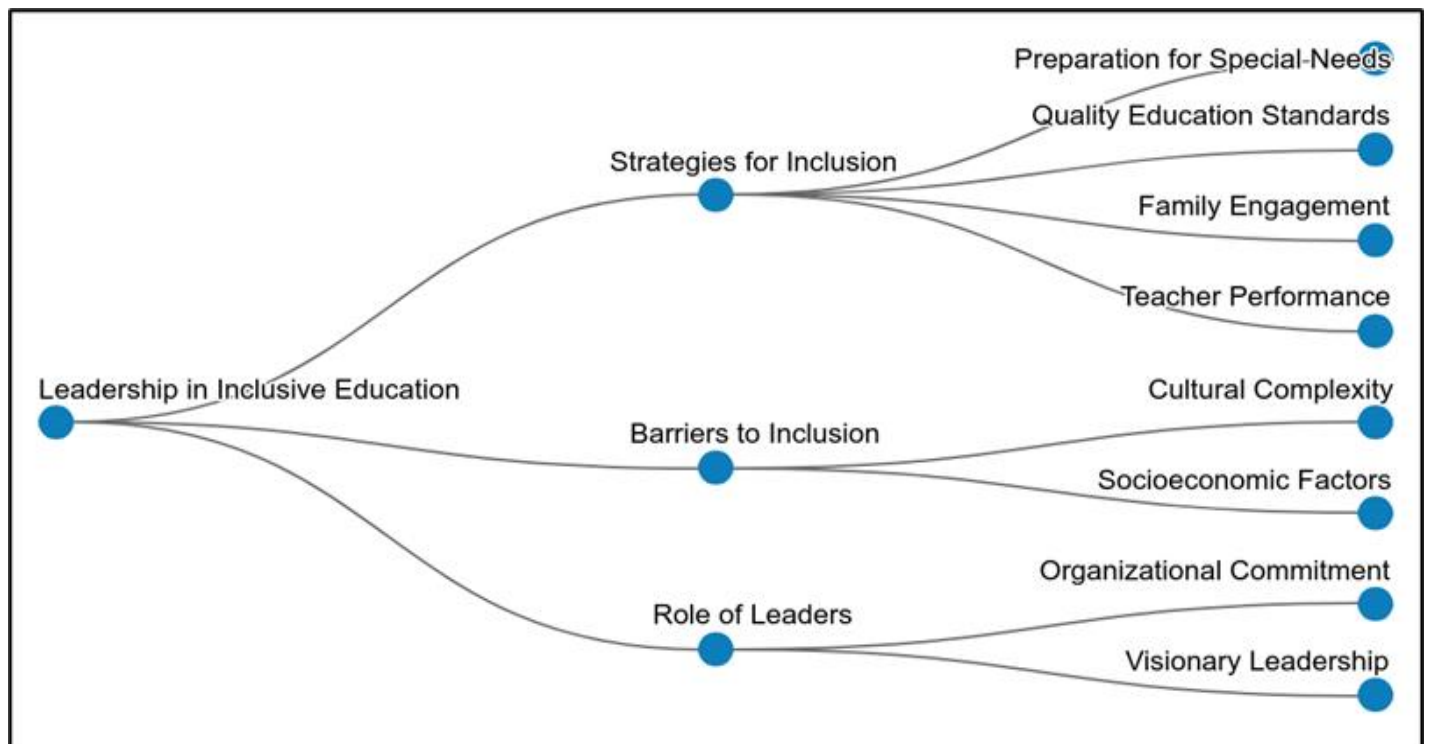
In order to provide an inclusive learning environment for special education, school leadership is essential. Integrating children with impairments into regular classrooms requires effective leadership techniques. Building collaborative structures, exhibiting a basic understanding of special education, and exhibiting favourable attitudes towards special education are all important practices (Alkaabi et al., 2022; Ramakrishnan et al., 2020). By addressing a range of unique educational needs and reducing obstacles to learning, intentional leadership may bring educators together and give them the tools they need to work towards a shared objective of inclusivity (Moloney & McCarthy, 2018). In order to develop a culture of equity and guide school reform initiatives to increase staff capacity and promote collaboration, principals in inclusive schools frequently demonstrate an innate awareness of inclusivity (Abdallah et al., 2023).

The role of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) is crucial in secondary schools, particularly in Ireland, where formal recognition and development of SENCOs' leadership capacity are advocated (Wong & Fitzgerald, 2024). Leadership training programs should promote socially just leaders who can create appropriate learning spaces for all children, emphasizing the moral responsibility of providing equal opportunities (Katsarou et al., 2023). District-level special education leaders also play a significant role by engaging assertively to further inclusivity, challenging noninclusive practices, and cultivating a culture for inclusive reform (Yazrina YahYa et

al., 2020). These leaders use strategic actions to advocate for all learners, demonstrating the importance of a critical equity lens in leadership (Tracy-Bronson, 2020).

Principals and senior leadership teams oversee implementing an inclusive leadership strategy that transforms the entire school. School culture and focus are shaped by principals, who have a big influence on how instruction is delivered to children with disabilities (Adams et al., 2023). Developing a positive disability identity through a social model viewpoint and providing teachers with sufficient resources and professional development are examples of effective inclusive leadership strategies (D. E. DeMatthews & Mueller, 2022). (Faragher et al., 2021). The complexity of running inclusive schools is highlighted by issues including shifting dynamics and the requirement for ongoing professional development (Adams et al., 2023). All things considered, inclusive leadership is essential to the effective execution of inclusive education, which benefits all kids with varying skill levels.

Figure 1: Concept maps of Leadership in Inclusive Education



The concept map titled “Leadership in Inclusive Education” illustrates three main domains strategies for inclusion, barriers to inclusion, and the role of leaders each of which plays a critical role in shaping effective inclusive education practices. Firstly, strategies for inclusion emphasize the need for well-prepared systems and stakeholders to address the needs of students with disabilities. This involves adequate preparation for special-needs education, adherence to quality education standards, active family engagement, and enhancing teacher performance. These factors highlight that successful inclusion depends not only on pedagogical adjustments but also on systemic support and collaboration among educators, families, and communities.

Secondly, the barriers to inclusion section reflects the challenges that leaders face in promoting equitable education. Cultural complexity often creates misunderstandings or resistance, while socioeconomic factors can limit access to resources and opportunities. These barriers suggest that inclusion cannot be achieved without addressing broader structural and social inequalities that affect both schools and learners. Lastly, the role of leaders underscores leadership’s central function in fostering inclusive education. Effective leaders must demonstrate organizational commitment to inclusivity and adopt a visionary approach that anticipates challenges while driving systemic change. Visionary leadership is particularly important as it inspires stakeholders and ensures that inclusivity becomes embedded in the school’s mission and culture.

In conclusion, the concept map indicates that leadership in inclusive education is multifaceted, requiring a balance between proactive strategies, the removal of systemic barriers, and strong leadership commitment.

Sustainable inclusive practices can only be realized when leaders integrate preparation, collaboration, and vision into their educational policies and practices, ensuring equal opportunities for all learners.

METHODOLOGY

This research used a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design to integrate and synthesise empirical research on leadership practices in inclusive education. The review followed the PRISMA guidelines to ensure transparency and methodological rigour (Moher et al., 2010). A qualitative content analysis approach was used to enable systematic interpretation of findings across studies employing diverse research designs.

Step 1: Identification

Relevant studies were identified through comprehensive searches of the Scopus and Web of Science databases. Search terms were developed based on prior literature and refined using related keywords and synonyms. The initial search yielded 594 records published between 2022 and 2026.

Table 1: The search string

Databased	Search equation
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY ((leadership) AND (environment) AND (inclusive education)) Date of Access : 28 Desember 2025
Web of science	(leadership) AND (environment) AND (inclusive education) (All Fields) Date of Access : 28 Desember 2025

Step 2: Screening

Duplicate records were removed prior to screening. Subsequently, titles and abstracts were screened based on predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. The review was limited to peer-reviewed journal articles published in English within the social sciences field. Conference papers, books, review articles, and non-final publications were excluded. Following this stage, 85 articles remained.

Table 2: The selection criterion is searching

Databased	Inclusion	Exclusion
Language	English	Non-English
Timeline	2022 – 2026	< 2022
Literature type	Journal (Article)	Conference, Book, Review
Publication Stage	Final	In Press
Subject	Social science	Besides Social science

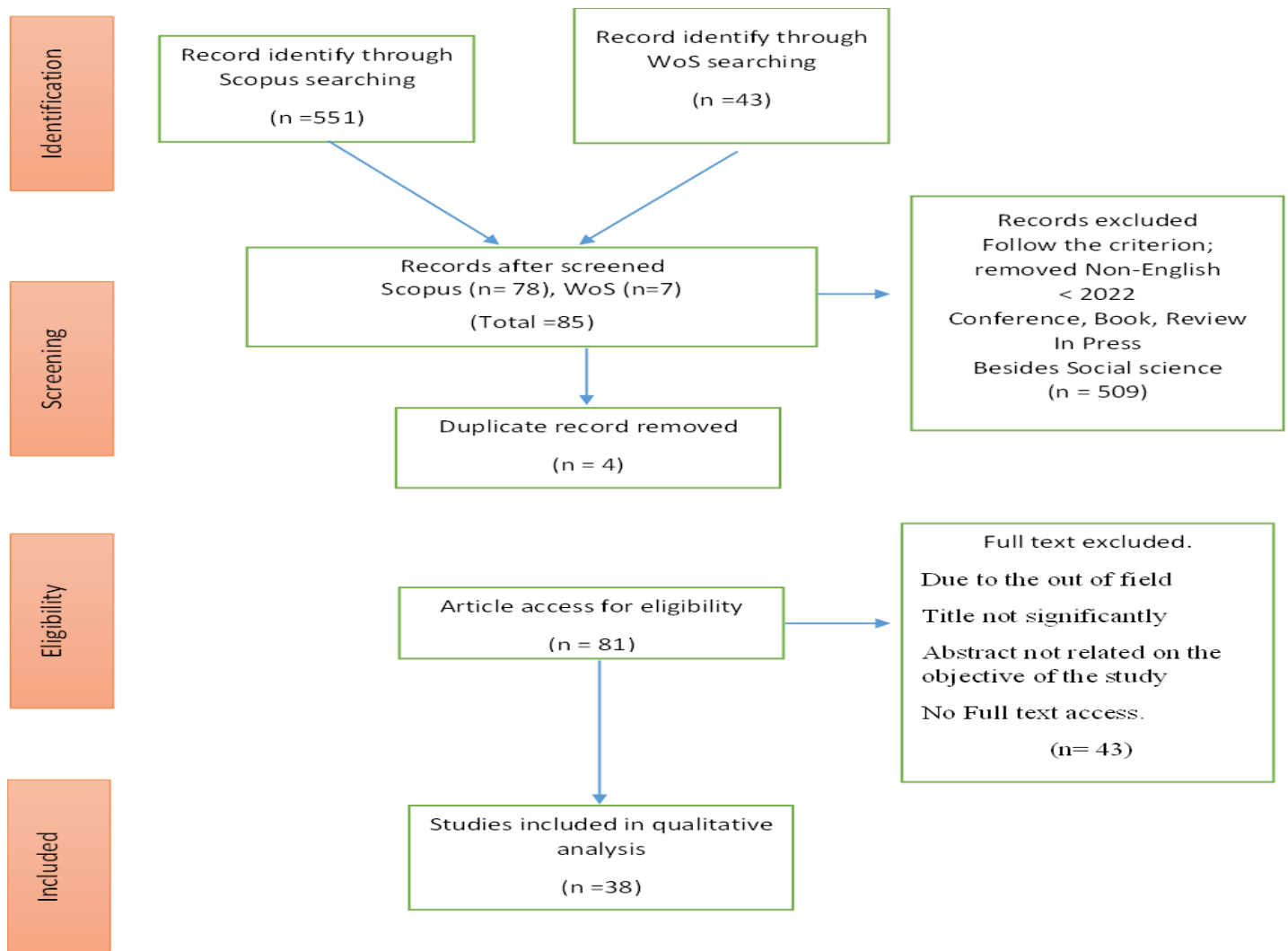
Step 3: Eligibility

Full-text screening was conducted to assess relevance to the research objectives. Articles that did not explicitly address leadership, inclusive environments, or SEN contexts were excluded. As a result, 38 articles met all eligibility criteria and were included in the final synthesis.

Step 4: Data Abstraction And Analysis

An integrative analysis was conducted to synthesise findings from qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods studies. Data extraction focused on leadership roles, strategies, challenges, and outcomes related to inclusive education. Themes were developed iteratively through collaborative analysis among the authors. Expert validation by specialists in special education and educational administration enhanced the credibility and relevance of the thematic framework. The suggested searching study's flow diagram is displayed in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Flow diagram of the proposed searching study ((PRISMA flow graphic illustrating the screening and selection procedure for articles in this systematic review (n = number of articles)



FINDINGS

In this section, it is explained the results of research that was divided into the research questions.

RQ 1:What leadership practise most effective in ensuring that school facilities are accessible and supportive for students with special educational needs (SEN)?

The reviewed literature consistently positions school leaders as the primary catalysts in enhancing inclusive educational practices for students with special educational needs (SEN). Across diverse educational contexts, leadership practices were found to significantly shape school vision, organisational culture, and strategic priorities related to accessibility, environmental design, and inclusive support systems. Leaders who explicitly embedded inclusion within their school mission were more likely to influence collective beliefs, align institutional practices, and sustain long-term inclusive initiatives. Prior studies indicate that leadership commitment plays a more decisive role in inclusive success than the mere availability of material resources, suggesting that inclusive environments are fundamentally shaped by leadership orientation rather than infrastructure alone (DeMatthews, 2021; Adams et al., 2023; Underwood et al., 2025).

A dominant theme emerging from the literature is the centrality of professional learning as a leadership-driven strategy for inclusion. Principals who actively prioritised continuous professional development demonstrated greater capacity to enhance teachers' knowledge, confidence, and instructional competence in addressing diverse learner needs. Such leaders fostered collaborative cultures by encouraging interdisciplinary teamwork, facilitating regular dialogue among teachers, parents, and specialists, and promoting shared responsibility for

SEN students’ learning and well-being. Rather than relying on top-down compliance mechanisms, effective leaders adopted capacity-building approaches that empowered educators to engage meaningfully with inclusive practices. This emphasis on professional learning highlights leadership as a developmental and relational process rather than an administrative function (Al-Rashaida & Moustafa, 2023; Murray et al., 2023).

Leadership practices were also instrumental in shaping the accessibility and functionality of school environments. The literature underscores the importance of leaders in coordinating resource allocation, prioritising inclusive infrastructure, and ensuring that physical spaces respond to the diverse needs of SEN students. Studies demonstrate that when leaders actively involve users including teachers, parents, and students in decision-making processes, improvements in physical accessibility and environmental suitability are more likely to occur. Such participatory leadership approaches enable schools to move beyond standardised solutions toward context-sensitive adaptations that better support inclusive learning (Sugawara, 2022). In policy-driven educational systems, leadership effectiveness was closely linked to leaders’ capacity to interpret inclusive education policies and translate them into practical, school-level actions. This adaptive function of leadership was particularly evident in contexts where policy frameworks were well established but implementation required contextual negotiation and innovation (Massouti et al., 2023).

Beyond structural and instructional dimensions, leadership practices were found to exert a substantial influence on SEN students’ social inclusion and emotional well-being. Inclusive leadership contributed to the creation of school climates that emphasised belonging, mutual respect, and positive identity development. By modelling inclusive values and fostering supportive relationships, leaders helped reduce social marginalisation and promote meaningful participation among SEN students. Empirical evidence suggests that such leadership practices enhance not only academic engagement but also students’ psychosocial outcomes, reinforcing the holistic impact of inclusive leadership on learner development (Trivedi & Singh, 2025; DeMatthews & Mueller, 2022).

Collectively, these findings highlight that leadership practices supporting inclusive environments operate across multiple dimensions visionary, instructional, organisational, and relational. Effective inclusive leadership is characterised by sustained commitment, strategic professional learning, participatory decision-making, and an explicit focus on students’ holistic well-being. These interconnected practices underscore the central role of school leaders in translating inclusive education ideals into lived realities for students with special educational needs.

RQ2: What challenges Encountered by School Leaders in Implementing Inclusive Practices for Students with Special Educational Needs?

Table 3: Challenges in implementing inclusive

Challenges	Description	Author Name & Year
Lack of Resources and Infrastructure	Insufficient funding, specialized equipment, accessible facilities, and trained support staff.	(Al Siyabi et al., 2024; Pampana et al., 2022)
Need for Professional Development	Inadequate training for teachers in inclusive education strategies, leading to negative attitudes and low self-efficacy.	(Ali et al., 2024; Beamish et al., 2024; Kaur & Salian, 2025)
Systemic and Structural Barriers	Inconsistent policy guidelines, lack of stakeholder engagement, and insufficient collaboration.	(Ionescu & Vršmaš, 2023; Vorlíček & Kollerová, 2024)

The integrated analysis of the selected studies indicates that school leaders face a wide range of interconnected challenges when seeking to implement inclusive practices for students with special educational needs (SEN). These challenges are not confined to isolated managerial or operational issues; rather, they reflect deeper professional, structural, and systemic constraints that shape the effectiveness of leadership in inclusive education contexts. Although inclusive education policies receive broad endorsement, their translation into effective

school-level practices is frequently constrained by limitations related to resources, workforce capacity, and organisational alignment.

A recurrent challenge highlighted in the literature concerns shortages in resources and infrastructural provision. Many schools function within restrictive financial environments, which limit leaders' capacity to invest in essential inclusive provisions such as assistive technologies, specialised instructional materials, and physically accessible facilities. As a result, learning spaces often lack the necessary adaptations to support diverse learner profiles, reducing the overall effectiveness of inclusive pedagogical approaches (Al Siyabi et al., 2024; Pampana et al., 2022). Compounding these material limitations is the insufficient availability of trained special education professionals and support staff. The absence of specialised expertise places additional demands on school leaders, who must address the varied academic, behavioural, and socio-emotional needs of SEN students with minimal professional support (Beamish et al., 2024; Almache et al., 2025; Sharma & Kaur, 2024).

Intertwined with resource-related constraints is the challenge of inadequate professional development opportunities for teachers and school personnel. The reviewed studies suggest that many educators lack sufficient preparation to implement inclusive education strategies effectively, largely due to limited access to structured training programmes and sustained professional learning initiatives. This deficit often manifests in reduced confidence, uncertainty, and resistance toward inclusive practices, which can negatively affect classroom implementation (Ali et al., 2024; Beamish et al., 2024; Kaur & Salian, 2025). In such circumstances, school leaders are expected not only to oversee instructional quality but also to actively shape teacher beliefs, attitudes, and professional confidence. However, in the absence of coherent professional development frameworks and systemic support, leaders frequently encounter difficulties in maintaining long-term capacity-building efforts (Ionescu & Vrasmaş, 2023).

In addition to challenges within schools, broader systemic and structural factors further complicate the implementation of inclusive education. Inconsistencies in policy guidance, fragmented administrative structures, and ambiguous accountability arrangements often lead to discrepancies between inclusive education policies and their enactment in practice. Although inclusion may be formally endorsed at policy levels, variations in interpretation and execution across education systems contribute to uneven implementation and uncertainty at the school level (Vorlicek & Kollerova, 2024; Rolfe et al., 2022). Moreover, insufficient collaboration among key stakeholders including parents, community groups, and external service providers undermines the comprehensive support networks required for effective inclusion. Weak partnerships limit opportunities for shared responsibility and coordinated responses, thereby increasing the burden on school leaders to manage inclusive initiatives largely on their own (Dhakal, 2024).

Taken together, these findings highlight that the obstacles confronting school leaders in advancing inclusive practices are multifaceted and mutually reinforcing. Constraints related to resources, professional learning, and systemic coherence interact in ways that intensify leadership challenges and slow inclusive progress. Addressing these issues necessitates a holistic and coordinated strategy that extends beyond individual schools. Effective support for school leaders must include adequate financial investment, well-structured professional learning systems, and coherent policy frameworks that encourage collaboration across educational and community sectors. Strengthening these enabling conditions is essential for empowering school leaders to cultivate inclusive learning environments that promote the academic achievement, social participation, and emotional well-being of students with special educational needs.

DISCUSSION

This systematic literature review provides robust evidence that leadership practices are central to the

establishment and sustainability of inclusive learning environments for students with special educational needs (SEN). In line with the underlying assumptions of this review, the findings demonstrate that successful inclusive education is not driven solely by formal policies or the availability of physical infrastructure. Instead, outcomes are largely shaped by the calibre of leadership, including leaders' commitment, strategic orientation, and capacity to enact inclusive principles in everyday school operations. These findings are consistent with previous studies

that identify leadership as the primary conduit through which inclusive values are embedded into routine school practices (DeMatthews, 2021; Adams et al., 2023).

Viewed through the lens of earlier scholarship, the results reaffirm that inclusive leadership encompasses both instructional and organisational dimensions. While prior research has highlighted visionary and ethical leadership as essential foundations for inclusive education (Toson et al., 2013; Volosnikova, 2023), this review advances existing knowledge by illustrating how leaders translate vision into action. Specifically, effective leaders were shown to operationalise inclusive goals through purposeful strategies such as structured professional learning, the development of collaborative organisational arrangements, and intentional resource deployment to enhance accessibility and SEN-responsive environments. These findings are aligned with the proposition that leadership practices exert an indirect yet powerful influence on student outcomes by strengthening teacher competence and cultivating positive dispositions toward inclusion (DeMatthews & Mueller, 2022).

The challenges identified in this review including constrained resources, inadequate infrastructure, limited professional development opportunities, and inconsistencies in policy implementation mirror those reported in earlier studies (Rolfe et al., 2022; Vorlicek & Kollerova, 2024). However, the present review offers a more integrative interpretation by demonstrating that these barriers rarely occur in isolation. Instead, they interact in ways that intensify leadership complexity. For example, financial limitations are frequently accompanied by fragmented inter-agency collaboration and ambiguous policy directives, requiring school leaders to engage in continuous negotiation, advocacy, and adaptive decision-making. This perspective supports arguments that inclusive leadership should be analysed within broader institutional and socio-political frameworks rather than being reduced to individual leadership characteristics (Tracy-Bronson, 2020).

From a policy standpoint, the findings reveal a persistent disconnect between inclusive education ambitions and their practical enactment at the school level. Although inclusive education is strongly promoted within national and international policy agendas, comparatively little emphasis is placed on preparing and supporting leaders to manage inclusive environments effectively. This review therefore underscores the importance of policy frameworks that explicitly embed inclusive leadership competencies particularly those related to environmental management, professional learning leadership, and stakeholder collaboration within principal standards and leadership development programmes. Such coherence is essential to ensure that inclusive education policies are implemented in a consistent and sustainable manner.

Within the wider educational landscape, the findings suggest that inclusive education should be conceptualised as an ongoing systemic transformation rather than a discrete programme or initiative. Leaders who are most effective in advancing inclusion are those who integrate inclusive principles into school culture, strategic planning, and evaluative processes, thereby promoting long-term institutional change. This interpretation resonates with global priorities such as the Sustainable Development Goals and national education reforms that emphasise equity, accessibility, and learner well-being.

Future research should build on the insights of this review by investigating the long-term effects of inclusive leadership practices on the academic, social, and emotional development of SEN students using longitudinal research designs. Cross-national comparative studies would further enhance understanding of how cultural, policy, and governance contexts shape leadership effectiveness in inclusive education. Moreover, empirical investigations into leadership preparation and professional development models are needed to identify effective approaches for equipping school leaders with the competencies required to lead inclusive learning environments. Incorporating the perspectives of teachers, parents, and SEN students would also provide a more comprehensive understanding of how inclusive leadership is experienced and enacted at the school level.

In summary, this review reinforces the conclusion that inclusive education for students with special educational needs cannot be maintained without leadership that is responsive to context, aligned with policy, and committed to inclusive values. School leaders continue to play a pivotal role in narrowing the gap between inclusive aspirations and the realities of school practice within contemporary education systems.

CONCLUSION

This article demonstrates that the successful implementation of inclusive education for students with special educational needs is highly dependent on effective and purposeful leadership. However, school leaders continue to encounter a range of interconnected challenges that complicate inclusive implementation. Persistent constraints related to limited funding and insufficient infrastructure remain major barriers, as many schools do not have adequate access to specialised equipment, accessible facilities, or appropriately trained support personnel. These limitations restrict leaders' ability to establish learning environments that fully support inclusive teaching and learning.

In addition to infrastructural constraints, the lack of continuous professional development presents a critical challenge. Many teachers and school staff report feeling inadequately prepared to implement inclusive practices due to limited training opportunities. This lack of preparation often results in reduced confidence and unfavourable attitudes toward inclusion, which undermine effective classroom implementation. At a broader systemic level, school leaders must also contend with policy inconsistencies, limited stakeholder involvement, and weak coordination between educational authorities and local communities. Such systemic shortcomings contribute to misalignments between inclusive education policies and their enactment in everyday school practice.

Despite these obstacles, the findings reaffirm that leadership remains a decisive factor in advancing inclusive education. Effective leaders play a central role in shaping inclusive school cultures, optimising the use of available resources, strengthening staff capacity, and fostering meaningful engagement with families and communities to promote equitable learning opportunities. Ultimately, addressing the challenges of inclusive education requires an integrated and strategic approach in which school leaders are supported to secure adequate resources, prioritise sustained professional learning, and collaborate across institutional boundaries. Through such efforts, inclusive practices can be strengthened in ways that support both the academic achievement and social-emotional development of all learners.

This study also highlights that inclusive leadership cannot be implemented through a one-size-fits-all approach, as leadership practices vary significantly across regional, cultural, and systemic contexts. Therefore, school leaders must adopt context-sensitive strategies that respond to local constraints and opportunities. The inclusion of practical, evidence-based strategies in this review further strengthens its applicability, providing actionable guidance for practitioners to translate inclusive leadership principles into effective school-level practices across diverse educational settings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like to express their sincere appreciation to Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) for the academic support provided throughout the preparation of this manuscript. Special gratitude is extended to the supervisor and co-supervisor for their invaluable guidance, continuous support, and constructive feedback throughout the research and writing process. Their expertise in educational leadership and special education has greatly contributed to strengthening the conceptual clarity and scholarly rigor of this systematic literature review. The authors also acknowledge the scholars whose published works formed the foundation of this study, as well as the experts in special education and educational leadership who provided insights during the validation and refinement of the review themes.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

REFERENCES

1. Abdallah, A. K., Kaabi, A. M. A., & Ramadan, R. S. (2023). The critical role of principals in leading effective inclusive schools. In *Inclusive Phygital Learning Approaches and Strategies for Students With Special Needs* (pp. 256–281). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-6684-8504-0.ch012>

2. Abdul Razak Kassim, Bity Salwana Alias, & Rosafizah Mohamed Idrus. (2022). Kepimpinan maya guru besar dan kesediaan guru terhadap perubahan di sekolah program TS25. *Akademika*, 92(Khas), 45–58. <https://doi.org/10.17576/akad-2022-92IK1-04>
3. Adams, D., Hussain, S., & Tan, K. L. (2023). Inclusive leadership for schools: Practices, challenges, and future directions. In *Educational Leadership: Contemporary Theories, Principles, and Practices* (pp. 85–99). Springer Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/9789819984947_6
4. Akbar, K. F., Damanik, F. H. S., Juliana, J., Akib, A., & Wibowo, F. I. S. (2023). Inclusive Education Practices: Fostering an Accessible Learning Environment for Diverse Learners. *Global International Journal of Innovative Research*. <https://doi.org/10.59613/global.v1i3.35>
5. Al-Rashaida, M., & Moustafa, A. (2023). Empowering leaders in early childhood special education. In *Restructuring Leadership for School Improvement and Reform* (pp. 42–58). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-6684-7818-9.ch003>
6. Al Siyabi, J., Tuzlukova, V., Al Kaabi, K., & Almaawali, A. (2024). INCLUSION IN THE CONTEXT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM: TEACHERS' CURRENT BELIEFS AND PRACTICES. *Journal of Teaching English for Specific and Academic Purposes*, 12(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.22190/JTESAP230223001A>
7. Ali, M. F., Alam, M., Kumar, A., & Ali, N. (2024). Investigation of primary school teachers' attitude towards inclusive education in Western Division in Fiji. *Cogent Education*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2024.2419704>
8. Alkaabi, A. M., Abdallah, A. K., Badwy, H. R. I., Badawy, H. R. I., & Almammari, S. A. (2022). Rethinking School Principals' Leadership Practices for an Effective and Inclusive Education. In *Rethinking Inclusion and Transformation in Special Education* (pp. 53–70). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-6684-4680-5.ch004>
9. ALKHARRAZ, R. A. A.-R. (2022). INCLUSION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND SPECIAL EDUCATION. *RIMAK International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.47832/2717-8293.18.4>
10. Almache, R., Guzmán, P., Regatto, R., & Alvarado, S. (2025). Education and Equity: Challenges of Special Educational Needs (SEN) in Rural Ecuador. *Seminars in Medical Writing and Education*, 4. <https://doi.org/10.56294/mw2025467>
11. Azzahra, I. M., Diana, R. R., Nirwana, E. S., Wiranata, R. R. S., & Andriani, K. M. (2022). Learning facilities and infrastructure based on the characteristics of Children with Special Needs in inclusive education. *Al-Athfaal*. <https://doi.org/10.24042/ajjipaud.v5i2.14432>
12. Beamish, W., Hay, S., & Yuen, M. (2024). Moving inclusion forward for students with special educational needs in the Asia-Pacific region. *Frontiers in Education*, 9. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2024.1327516>
13. DeMatthews, D. (2021). Undoing systems of exclusion: exploring inclusive leadership and systems thinking in two inclusive elementary schools. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 59(1), 5–21. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-02-2020-0044>
14. DeMatthews, D. E., & Mueller, C. (2022). Principal Leadership for Inclusion: Supporting Positive Student Identity Development for Students with Disabilities. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*, 17(4), 315 – 332. <https://doi.org/10.1177/19427751211015420>
15. Dhakal, S. (2024). Promoting equity and inclusivity: Exploring equitable leadership practices in diverse Nepali schools. *Research in Educational Administration and Leadership*, 9(2), 268–307. <https://doi.org/10.30828/real.1427917>
16. Emerick, M. R. (2022). Diversity Ideology and School Leadership: Obscuring Inequities for Emergent Bilingual Students in Career and Technical Education. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 58(2), 223–257. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X211052510>
17. Faragher, R., Chen, M., Miranda, L., Poon, K., Chang, F.-R., & Chen, H. (2021). Inclusive Education in Asia: Insights From Some Country Case Studies. *Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities*, 18(1), 23–35. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jppi.12369>
18. Hannah Amran, Rosadah Abd Majid, & Manisah Mohd Ali. (2019). Cabaran Guru Pendidikan Khas Pada Abad Ke-21 Challenges for Special Education Teachers in 21 Th Century. *International Journal of Education, Psychology and Counseling*, 4(26), 113–122. www.ijepc.com
19. Herman, K. C., Sebastian, J., Eddy, C. L., & Reinke, W. M. (2023). School Leadership, Climate, and

- Professional Isolation as Predictors of Special Education Teachers' Stress and Coping Profiles. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 31(2), 120–131. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10634266221148974>
20. Ionescu, D., & Vršmaş, E. (2023). A LITERATURE REVIEW RELATED TO TEACHERS' ATTITUDES AND SELF-EFFICACY TOWARDS INCLUSION. In R. I., B. M., H. C., C. A.C., C. C., S. M., N. F., & R. C. (Eds.), *eLearning and Software for Education Conference (Vol. 1, pp. 221–235)*. National Defence University - Carol I Printing House. <https://doi.org/10.12753/2066-026X-23-020>
 21. Juhji, J., Rahmatullah, M., Noor, W., Zuhri, S., Mansur, M., & Nuangchalerm, P. (2025). Exploring the Relationship between Prophetic Leadership and Job Satisfaction of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Teachers in Indonesia. *Munaddhomah*, 6(1), 13–28. <https://doi.org/10.31538/munaddhomah.v6i1.1462>
 22. Katsarou, D., Zerva, I. K., Mantsos, E., & Stamatis, P. J. (2023). The role of the school unit leader in the inclusion of students with disabilities. In *Inclusive Phygital Learning Approaches and Strategies for Students With Special Needs (pp. 282–295)*. IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-6684-8504-0.ch013>
 23. Kaur, R., & Salian, R. H. (2025). Teacher perspectives and barriers in implementing inclusive education for Indian children with special needs: A pilot study. *British Journal of Special Education*, 52(1), 4–17. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8578.12558>
 24. Massouti, A., Shaya, N., & Abukhait, R. (2023). Revisiting Leadership in Schools: Investigating the Adoption of the Dubai Inclusive Education Policy Framework. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 15(5). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su15054274>
 25. Mbua, E. M. (2023). Principal Leadership: Raising the Achievement of All Learners in Inclusive Education. *American Journal of Education and Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.47672/ajep.1313>
 26. Moloney, M., & McCarthy, E. (2018). INTENTIONAL LEADERSHIP FOR EFFECTIVE INCLUSION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE: Exploring Core Themes and Strategies. In *Intentional Leadership for Effective Inclusion in Early Childhood Education and Care: Exploring Core Themes and Strategies*. Taylor and Francis. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315107219>
 27. Murray, T. A., Benz, M. R., Cole, B., Jackson, J., Llamas, D., Marquard, S., Moore, K., Reeves, N., Stallings, D., & Taylor, C. L. (2023). The Journey Toward Inclusive Excellence. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 62(4), 225–232. <https://doi.org/10.3928/01484834-20230208-05>
 28. Narot, P., & Kiettikunwong, N. (2024). A Strategy to Reorient Parental Perceptions to Create Conditions for Successful Inclusive Education: A Case Study in A Small-Sized School. *Education Sciences*, 14(4). <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14040358>
 29. Pampana, A. K., Jeon, J. H., Yoon, S., Weidner, T. J., & Hastak, M. (2022). Data-Driven Analysis for Facility Management in Higher Education Institution. *Buildings*. <https://doi.org/10.3390/buildings12122094>
 30. Ramakrishnan, R., Mohamad Salleh, N., & Alias, A. (2020). Impact of Language Learning Software on Hearing-Impaired Students' Language Skills (Impak Perisian Pembelajaran Bahasa terhadap Kemahiran Bahasa Murid Pendidikan Khas Pendengaran). *Akademika*, 90(3), 103–114. <http://ejournal.ukm.my/akademika/article/view/42141>
 31. Rolfe, A., Franz, J., & Bridge, A. (2022). The combined impact of school design and procurement on student wellbeing and educational outcomes. *Facilities*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/F-08-2021-0071>
 32. Sharma, R. K., & Kaur, S. (2024). Analysing the mediating role of organisational citizenship behaviour between transformational leadership and education 4.0 using PLS-SEM approach. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 38(2), 391–412. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-07-2023-0322>
 33. Sugawara, M. (2022). Accessibility Improvement of Public Schools Through User Involvement in JAPAN. In G. I., B. G., & A. A. (Eds.), *Studies in Health Technology and Informatics (Vol. 297, pp. 589–596)*. IOS Press BV. <https://doi.org/10.3233/SHTI220891>
 34. Toson, A. L. M., Burrello, L. C., & Knollman, G. (2013). Educational justice for all: The capability approach and inclusive education leadership. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2012.687015>
 35. Tracy-Bronson, C. P. (2020). District-level inclusive special education leaders demonstrate social justice strategies. *Journal of Special Education Leadership*, 33(2), 59–77. <https://www.scopus.com/inward/record.uri?eid=2-s2.0-85099986100&partnerID=40&md5=55ea1ac6ece4fa0fbf687deabae9ef30>
 36. Trivedi, V., & Singh, R. (2025). Leadership and the Sociocultural Evolution of Special Education.

- History and Sociology of South Asia, 19(2), 244–262. <https://doi.org/10.1177/22308075251321876>
37. Underwood, C., Sullivan, D., & Ware, J. (2025). An exploration of the factors that influence admission, inclusion and support for learners with special educational needs in international schools. *Journal of Research in International Education*, 24(1), 3–20. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14752409251331193>
 38. Volosnikova, L. M. (2023). Leadership in inclusive education: contemporary discourse. *Bulletin of Nizhnevartovsk State University*. <https://doi.org/10.36906/2311-4444/23-2/02>
 39. Vorlíček, R., & Kollerová, L. (2024). Non-inclusive teaching of students with special educational needs in a socioeconomically disadvantaged neighbourhood. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2024.2398635>
 40. Wong, C.-Y., & Fitzgerald, J. C. (2024). Lessons learned from educators of English as a second language in the U.S. during covid-19: providing inclusive space for all educators. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 28(10), 2157–2171. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2022.2077462>
 41. Yazrina YahYa et al. (2020). Global Mobility In ASEAN: Promoting Multi Cultural Diversity and Inclusivity Through AIMS (Global Mobiliti Di ASEAN: Menggalakkan Kepelbagaian Budaya dan Inclusiviti Melalui AIMS). *Akademika*, 90(2), 93–104.