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THE IMPACT OF GROWTH MINDSET ON TEACHING PRACTICES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history:</p> <p>Received: 2 Sept 2024 Revised: 30 Sept 2024 Accepted: 18 Oct 2024 Published: 15 Nov 2024</p>	<p>The educational landscape is continually evolving, particularly in the realm of special education, where teachers face unique challenges in meeting the diverse needs of their students. A growth mindset, defined as the belief that abilities and intelligence can be developed through dedication and hard work, has emerged as a pivotal concept in enhancing teaching practices and fostering resilience among educators. This systematic literature review aims to explore the impact of adopting a growth mindset on special education teachers, focusing on its influence on instructional strategies, self-efficacy, and professional development. It suggests how embracing a growth mindset, which stresses that intellect and abilities can be acquired through effort, promotes resilient teaching practices, successful teaching tactics, and differentiated instruction in inclusive learning environments. A thorough analysis of research conducted between 2020 and 2024 was performed using databases such as Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), and ERIC. The review identifies three key themes: (1) the effect of growth mindset on differentiated instruction, (2) its influence on teacher self-efficacy, and (3) the significance of professional development programs in fostering growth mindset principles. The findings reveal that teachers who adopt a growth mindset are more adaptable, resilient, and effective in meeting the diverse needs of students with disabilities. Additionally, professional development initiatives that emphasize growth mindset principles greatly improve both teaching practices and student outcomes in special education. This review highlights the necessity for further research into growth mindset interventions and their effects on the professional development of special education teachers.</p>
<p>Keywords:</p> <p>Growth Mindset Special Education Teachers Students With Special Needs</p> <p></p>	

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INTRODUCTION

In the subject of special education, teachers must handle a variety of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral difficulties while meeting the requirements of students with varied learning styles. A growth mindset, the belief that abilities can be developed through effort, has gained traction as a valuable approach in this context. Growth mindset special education teachers are more likely to employ creative teaching techniques, remain flexible, and have a positive view on both their own personal growth and the potential of their students (Braun & Youngs, 2020; Chin & Yap, 2024).

Although the benefits of a growth mindset in the classroom are well known, little is known about how specifically this mentality affects special education teaching methods. Special educators face unique problems that call for adaptable teaching practices in addition to a mentality that promotes problem-solving and continual development. In order to better meet the different needs of each of their students, teachers who have a growth mindset are more likely to use individualized learning strategies, formative assessments, and differentiated instruction (Hadar et al., 2020). These approaches are particularly beneficial in special education because of the variety of needs and talents of students, which calls for adaptable and student-centered teaching strategies. Moreover, teachers who have faith in their own ability to develop and in the potential for growth in their students are more likely to create welcoming, encouraging, and stimulating learning environments in the classroom (Gadaire et al., 2021).

Investigating how a growth mindset influences effective teaching strategies and encourages inclusive learning environments in special education is the goal of this comprehensive literature review. This paper attempts to shed light on how a growth mindset affects special education teachers' instructional practices, advances their professional development, and ultimately improves student learning outcomes by examining and summarizing pertinent literature. In order to effectively address the different needs of students in special education, a growth mindset promotes more innovative and inclusive teaching strategies (Davis et al., 2024).

In conclusion, the relationship between growth mindset and successful instruction in special education will be examined in this research. Through this approach, the goal is to provide valuable insights for the creation of professional development plans that assist special education teachers in embracing growth-oriented approaches and cultivating more efficient, inclusive, and flexible teaching strategies that eventually improve student achievements (Oh & Song, 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review about the growth mindset and teacher resilience in special education and positive effects of a growth mindset for teachers in special education.

GROWTH MINDSET AND TEACHER RESILIENCE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

The ability of teachers to maintain a growth mindset in the face of adversity is crucially linked to their resilience, especially within the context of special education. Teachers in this field encounter unique challenges, such as addressing the emotional and psychological barriers that students with special needs face, managing diverse learner requirements, and navigating behavioral concerns. These challenges can be daunting; however, teachers who adopt a growth mindset are more likely to view these obstacles as opportunities for growth rather than insurmountable barriers. This perspective is essential for fostering resilience, which is the capacity to overcome difficulties and adapt positively to stressors (Zhang et al., 2020).

Research has shown that a growth mindset significantly enhances teachers' resilience. For instance, found that growth mindset interventions positively impacted students' motivation, resilience, and academic achievement, suggesting that similar benefits may extend to teachers (Mohamoud, 2024). Additionally, a study by Yeager et al. (2022) emphasized that fostering a growth mindset among teachers can lead to improved teaching practices and a more supportive learning environment, which is particularly beneficial in special education settings.

However, the specific correlation between growth mindset and resilience in teachers, particularly in special education, requires further investigation.

The emotional demands placed on special education teachers can be significant, as they often deal with students exhibiting challenging behaviors and varying emotional needs. Research by indicates that resilience is a critical factor in the mental health of special education teachers, emphasizing the need for strategies that promote a growth mindset to help educators cope with stress (Zhang et al., 2020). Teachers who cultivate a growth mindset are better equipped to handle these emotional demands, viewing their experiences as opportunities for learning and growth rather than as failures. This is particularly important in special education, where the ability to adapt and respond to the special needs of students is paramount (Akbar & Mauna, 2021).

In conclusion, the relationship between growth mindset and resilience is essential for teachers in special education. By developing a growth mindset, teachers can transform challenges into opportunities for personal and professional development therefore improve their resilience and effectiveness in serving students with special needs. This not only benefits the teachers themselves but also provides a more helpful and flexible learning environment for their students.

POSITIVE EFFECTS OF A GROWTH MINDSET FOR TEACHERS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

Adopting a growth mindset by special education teachers has numerous benefits for both student learning and teaching. The idea that teachers and students may both improve their skills and talents through work and education is supported by a growth mindset. This idea has a significant effect on the classroom environment as a whole, student involvement, and the teaching process (Ao et al., 2023). According to research, teachers who adopt a growth mindset are more likely to use innovative instructional methods and maintain their flexibility when faced with difficulties (Graham et al., 2024). This flexibility is essential in special education because the demands of students with special needs differ greatly from one another. Teachers who believe that their students can learn new skills are more likely to try formative assessment, personalized learning, and differentiated instruction in order to meet the needs of each student's individual learning profile (Wen & Cai, 2024). This approach creates a more inclusive and encouraging learning environment by encouraging students to push past their current limitations and realize that effort leads to development (Fronozo et al., 2022).

The advantages of a growth mindset also apply to teacher personal professional development. Teachers who think they can improve are more likely to look for new opportunities to learn, take part in professional development activities, and use reflective methods to improve their instruction (Kaya & Yuksel, 2022) Teachers become better educators over time as a result of this continuous search for improvement, which ultimately benefits the entire learning community (Yeager et al., 2022).

In summary, the benefits of growth mindsets for special education teachers are demonstrated by their resilience, commitment to the personal and academic development of their students, and effective teaching strategies. Fostering a growth mindset in teachers can result in more creative, inclusive, and successful teaching methods, which will benefit students with a range of needs (Jorif & Burleigh, 2022).

METHODOLOGY

Using the PRISMA Framework, the Systematic Literature Review process involves a thorough examination through three key steps that are outlined in subsections 2.1 Identification, 2.2 Screening, and 2.3 Eligibility. 2.4 Data Abstraction and Analysis, which follows the data formation, explains the PRISMA Framework-based review.

Identification

The systematic review takes three main phases in order to obtain pertinent research on this subject. Finding terms that are synonymous or similar to them in thesauri, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and previous academic articles is the first step in the process. Search strings were created to query the Scopus, WoS, and ERIC databases after

any relevant keywords had been determined, as Table 1 illustrates. 26 scholarly publications that were selected from three databases for this first stage of the systematic review were successfully gathered.

Table 1
Search String

Database	Search String
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY (("growth mindset" OR "mindset theory") AND ("special education teacher" OR "special educators" OR "teachers of special education" OR "inclusive education" OR "special needs education" OR "disability education"))
WoS	TI=("growth mindset" OR "mindset theory") AND AB=("growth mindset" OR "mindset theory") AND AK=("growth mindset" OR "mindset theory") AND TI=("special education teacher" OR "special educators" OR "teachers of special education" OR "inclusive education" OR "special needs education" OR "disability education") AND AB=("special education teacher" OR "special educators" OR "teachers of special education" OR "inclusive education" OR "special needs education" OR "disability education") AND AK=("special education teacher" OR "special educators" OR "teachers of special education" OR "inclusive education" OR "special needs education" OR "disability education")
ERIC	("growth mindset" OR "mindset theory") AND ("special education teacher" OR "special educators" OR "teachers of special education" OR "inclusive education" OR "special needs education" OR "disability education")

Screening

6 articles were left out of the first screening round due to the elimination of duplicate papers. Consequently, during the second screening stage, 16 publications were assessed based on a set of inclusion and exclusion criteria that scholars had created. The fundamental criterion was the content of the literature, with research papers serving as the main source of insightful information. In addition, books, book series, reviews, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, meta-syntheses, and book chapters that did not align with the most recent research were excluded. Additionally, this selection process focused on the preceding five years, from 2020 to 2024, and was limited to works published in the English language. These particular standards led to the elimination of 10 publications.

Eligibility

Ten articles were acquired for the eligibility assessment phase, which is the third step. A comprehensive analysis of the titles and main contents of these papers was carried out to make sure they met the inclusion criteria and complemented the objectives of the current study. Therefore, two publications failed to meet the evaluation requirements, such as being not entirely unrelated to the topic matter. To sum up, Table 2 provides a list of 8 papers that can be reviewed.

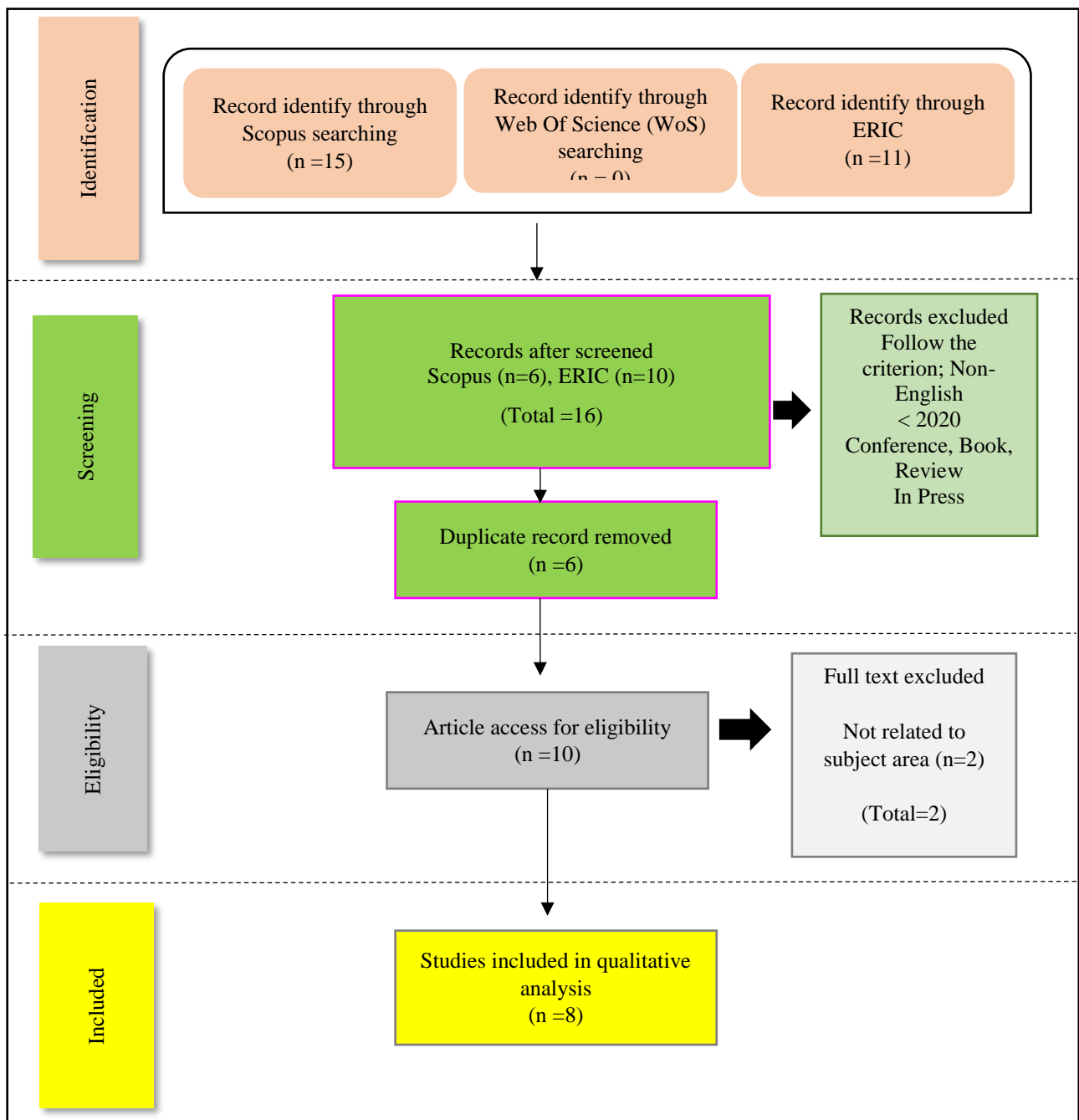
Table 2
The selection criterion of searching

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Language	English	Non-English
Timeline	2020-2024	< 2020
Literature type	Journal (Article)	Conference Proceedings, Book chapters, Book Series, Review
Publication Stage	Final	In Press

Data Abstraction and Analysis

This study included different research procedures, including mixed, qualitative, and quantitative methods, using an integrative analysis style. The primary objective was to locate relevant issues and subtopics on special education teacher growth mentality. Eight papers had to be thoroughly examined in order to extract important details for the study's themes in order to collect data. Three main themes emerged from the authors' joint work: "The Interplay Between Growth Mindset and Teacher Self-Efficacy," "Professional Development for Growth Mindset: Enhancing Special Education Teacher Competence," and "Growth Mindset as a Catalyst for Effective Teaching Practices in Special Education." Along with related topics and ideas, these subjects were further developed. A comprehensive record was kept on file at all times during the data analysis process to capture analyses, conclusions, queries, and other pertinent data. The writers also discussed any differences that surfaced throughout the topic development phase in order to ensure the coherence of the concepts. The study was reviewed by experts in psychology and special education to guarantee domain validity. These experts also confirmed that each sub-theme was relevant, distinct, and appropriate. By incorporating expert opinions and suggestions, the analysis was improved throughout the expert review process, enhancing the study's validity and reliability. Figure 1 describes the process used to implement the PRISMA Framework:

Figure 1 : Adapt from Moher et al. (2009)



RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Growth Mindset as a Catalyst for Effective Teaching Practices in Special Education

Growing awareness of the importance of incorporating a growth mindset into instruction has led to the adoption of this strategy as an essential component for promoting inclusive and successful learning, especially in special education settings. Teachers who adopt a growth mindset believing that students may progress with effort have been found to be a strong indicator of effective teaching practices, particularly when it comes to implementing differentiated instruction (DI).

Wen & Cai (2024) investigated how teacher views affect differentiated instruction in physical education through a structural equation modeling study. The study, which included 527 preservice teachers as a sample, found that the best indicator of successful DI is a growth mindset. Flexible grouping and curriculum differentiation were found to be two crucial techniques that mediate the relationship between DI and growth mindset. Curriculum diversification adapts the subject to each student's unique ability, while flexible grouping enables teachers to rearrange student groups according to their changing requirements. These results underline the necessity for teacher education programs to concentrate on the development of growth mindsets and practical skills in differentiation, as growth mindsets are crucial in promoting adaptive teaching methods. Promoting inclusive education that meets the many learning requirements of student with special needs requires the use of this strategy.

In the same direction, Roose et al. (2024) investigated how teachers' views about diversity and their use of differentiated instruction are mediated by their professional vision. According to their findings, teachers who possess an expert professional vision directly connect their diversity beliefs to their practice, whereas teachers who lack such a vision depend more on reflection and trial and error to shape their differentiated instruction (DI) methods. The complicated correlation between beliefs and practices highlights the complex nature of implementing DI, suggesting that relying solely on growth mindset may not be adequate. To effectively put their principles into practice, teachers must also cultivate a strong professional vision and reflective abilities. These findings imply that growth mindset development and opportunities for teachers to build reflective and experimental skills in applying DI should be included in teacher training programs.

To summarize, the studies under review indicate that cultivating a development mindset is essential for teachers to implement differentiated instruction, especially in the special education setting where a range of learner requirements necessitate flexible teaching methods. It is impossible to ignore the contribution that reflective practice and professional vision make to fostering the relationship between teaching methods and beliefs. To effectively prepare teachers for inclusive teaching, teacher preparation programs must thus take a comprehensive approach, addressing both the psychological (mindset) and practical (vision and reflection) components. Table 3 shows the summary of article in theme 1.

Table 3

Theme 1: Growth Mindset as a Catalyst for Effective Teaching Practices in Special Education

Authors	Title	Finding
Wen Q.; Cai J.	Applying structural equation modeling to examine the role of teacher beliefs and practices in differentiated instruction in physical education: Multiple mediation analyses	The study found that growth mindset is the strongest predictor of successful differentiated instruction (DI) in physical education among 527 preservice teachers. Flexible grouping and curriculum differentiation were key practices mediating this relationship. These findings suggest teacher education programs should focus on fostering growth mindsets and practical training to support inclusive and effective instruction.
Roose I.; Vantieghem W.; Vanderlinde R.; Van Avermaet P.	Professional vision as a mediator for inclusive education? Unravelling the interplay between teachers' beliefs, professional vision and reported practice of differentiated instruction	The study found that teachers' beliefs about diversity and their use of differentiated instruction (DI) are mediated by professional vision. Expert teachers link beliefs directly to practice, while less expert teachers rely on reflection and experimentation. This suggests teacher training should focus on developing reflective and experimental skills for effective DI.

The Interplay Between Growth Mindset and Teacher Self-Efficacy

Research on the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and growth mindset is essential, especially in special education where teachers deal with different difficulties. The idea that skills may be acquired via effort is known as a growth mindset. It is strongly associated with self-efficacy, which is a teacher's confidence in their capacity to carry out teaching strategies. The dynamic interplay between these two conceptions has been studied in research, particularly as it relates to inclusive teaching methods.

The effects of growth mindset on general education and special education teacher methods of instruction, particularly with regard to writing instruction, were studied by Graham et al. (2024). According to their research, teachers who had a growth mindset believing that intelligence and writing are malleable that showed greater involvement in their students' writing lessons. This way of thinking affected not just how often students wrote, but also how frequently teachers imparted writing skills. Remarkably, while having comparable growth mindset views, general education teachers were found to teach writing skills more frequently than their special education counterparts. According to these results, growth mindset influences teaching practices in a significant way, although special education teachers might need more help and techniques to make the most of it in the classroom. These findings highlight the need for focused professional development to improve writing instruction for students with special needs so that all teachers can effectively use growth mindset no matter what their situation.

In the framework of inclusive education, the relationship between growth mindset and self-efficacy has been studied by Ismailos et al. (2022). Their research compared the attitudes and self-efficacy beliefs of preservice and in-service teachers. The findings showed that, in comparison to their secondary and male colleagues, preservice primary and female teachers had stronger inclusive growth mindsets and showed more confidence in helping families of children with disabilities. On the other hand, male preservice teachers showed more self-efficacy in controlling classroom behavior. Additionally, preservice teachers generally preferred differentiated instruction and student-centered classrooms over in-service teachers, which may have been influenced by their limited professional experience. These results imply that although growth mindset boosts teachers' confidence in fostering inclusive classrooms, real-world experience may be a more important factor in forming self-efficacy especially when it comes to handling student with special needs.

Similarly, Trice et al. (2023) looked at the connection between Texas special education teachers' growth mindset and self-efficacy. The study's findings, which were unexpected, showed no connection at all between self-

efficacy and growth mindset, especially when it came to topics like classroom management, instructional tactics, and student engagement. The study did find, however, that self-efficacy and growth mindset therapies tended to go in the same direction, suggesting that they still improve student results. Although the direct correlation between growth mindset and self-efficacy may not be supported by these findings, they do emphasize the significance of ongoing professional development and mindset interventions in special education classrooms. These findings suggest that, in order to improve instructional methods in special education, teacher preparation programs should place equal emphasis on growth mindset and self-efficacy development.

The analyzed research conclude that there is a hidden relationship between self-efficacy and growth mindset, with implications for both general and special education settings. Growth mindset has a favorable impact on teaching methods, especially in inclusive contexts, although self-efficacy seems to be influenced by both professional experience and mindset. These results highlight the necessity of all-encompassing teacher preparation programs that support growth mindsets and boost teachers' confidence in leading diverse and demanding classes. The article summary for theme 2 is displayed in Table 4.

Table 4
 Theme 2: The Interplay Between Growth Mindset and Teacher Self-Efficacy

Authors	Title	Finding
Graham S.; Ciullo S.; Collins A.	Do Special and General Education Teachers' Mindset Theories About the Malleability of Writing and Intelligence Predict Their Writing Practices?	The study found that both general and special education teachers held a growth mindset, positively influencing student writing frequency and teaching practices. General education teachers taught writing skills more frequently than special education teachers. These findings highlight the need for targeted strategies to improve writing instruction for students with learning disabilities.
Ismailos L.; Gallagher T.; Bennett S.; Li X.	Pre-service and in-service teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy beliefs with regards to inclusive education	The study found that elementary and female pre-service teachers had a stronger inclusive growth mindset and more confidence in supporting families of students with disabilities, while male pre-service teachers had higher self-efficacy in managing classroom behavior. Pre-service teachers overall favored student-centered approaches and differentiated instruction more than in-service teachers.
Jennifer Trice, Linda Chaloo, Kelly Hall, Patricia Huskin	Relationship Between Mindset and Self-Efficacy Among Special Education Teachers	The study found no significant correlation between growth mindset and self-efficacy among special education teachers in Texas. However, interventions targeting mindset and self-efficacy showed alignment, suggesting they still contribute to improving student outcomes. These findings offer guidance for developing strategies to better support special education teachers and enhance student learning.

Professional Development for Fostering Growth Mindset in Special Education

By giving special education teachers the skills and resources they need to support a varied student body, professional development plays a crucial part in helping them develop a growth mindset. The literature review highlights the effectiveness of professional development programs that prioritize growth mindset principles in

improving the attitudes and practices of teachers. These kinds of training help teachers become more adaptable in their teaching style and better equipped to deal with the challenges of inclusive classrooms.

According to Massey and Muhammad's (2024) research, preservice teachers' confidence in their capacity to manage diverse classrooms was dramatically increased by growth mindset-focused professional development programs. Teachers who took part in these programs showed improved self-efficacy in handling classroom behavior and delivering differentiated instruction—two essential skills in special education. These educators were able to implement more adaptable, student-centered teaching strategies because they had developed a growth mindset. These strategies are crucial when working with students who have a variety of learning needs and disabilities.

Griful-Freixenet et al. (2021) investigated how growth mindset and the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach could complement and improve professional development programs focused on inclusive teaching. An empirical study that tested the UDL conceptual model among preservice teachers found that three key constructs—growth attitude toward learning, self-efficacy for adopting inclusion, and self-regulation/motivation for teaching. It predict how preservice teachers participate in UDL activities. These interconnected characteristics suggest that a growth mindset is a crucial element in helping teachers successfully apply UDL concepts in the classroom. It was discovered that preservice teachers viewed UDL which emphasizes engagement, representation, action, and expression as a cohesive framework rather than as discrete principles, underscoring its potential to advance inclusivity through adaptable teaching strategies. The study highlights that preservice teachers are more likely to use successful, inclusive teaching techniques when they understand the interconnectedness of UDL principles and have faith in their own and their students' capacity for improvement.

The importance of interpersonal skills and a mindset of growth in professional development programs for special education teachers was also emphasized by Rebecca & Evan (2021) They contend that instruction in growth mindset fosters more inclusive and sympathetic teaching methods for instructors of students with a range of cultural backgrounds and academic needs. Teachers are better prepared to handle the particular difficulties of teaching in inclusive classrooms, where students' demands can differ significantly based on both cognitive and cultural variables, thanks to this combined focus on growth mindset and cultural competency. Table 5 shows the article overview for theme 3.

Table 5
Theme 3: Professional Development for Fostering Growth Mindset in Special Education

Authors	Title	Finding
D. Daigneault Rebecca, D. Borisinkoff Evan	From the Golden Rule to the Platinum Rule: Strategies for Advancing Toward Cultural Proficiency for Special Educators	The article emphasizes that special educators must continuously develop cultural proficiency through self-awareness, empathy, and behavioral adjustments to create inclusive environments. It suggests strategies at individual, group, and school-wide levels, advocating for a growth mindset and the Platinum Rule to promote inclusion, equity, and effective bias management.

Massey C.C.; Muhammad E.A.	Preservice Special Education Teachers' Experience of a Math Methods Course: Examining the Development of Personal and Pedagogical Efficacy	This study found that three preservice special education teachers significantly improved their confidence and pedagogical knowledge after completing a Math Methods course designed to foster a growth mindset. Key factors contributing to this growth included Socratic conversations, a focus student project, and hands-on practice in a flipped classroom. These findings highlight the importance of such approaches in teacher education programs to better prepare future educators for teaching mathematics to students with disabilities.
Griful-Freixenet J.; Struyven K.; Vantieghem W.	Toward More Inclusive Education: An Empirical Test of the Universal Design for Learning Conceptual Model Among Preservice Teachers	The study demonstrated that growth mindset, self-efficacy, and self-regulation predict preservice teachers' UDL practices, validating the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) concept. The four pillars of UDL—engagement, representation, action, and expression—are seen by preservice teachers as indivisible rather than distinct. In order to improve inclusive teaching, these findings emphasize how crucial it is to incorporate these components into teacher education programs.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This systematic literature review emphasizes the crucial importance of a growth mindset in enhancing the effectiveness, resilience, and adaptability of special education teachers. Educators who embrace a growth mindset are more inclined to adopt flexible and student-centered teaching methods, such as differentiated instruction and personalized learning, which are essential in inclusive classroom settings. The review further illustrates that a growth mindset is closely linked to increased levels of teacher self-efficacy, which positively affects how teachers tackle classroom challenges and adjust to the varied needs of students with disabilities. Those who cultivate this mindset are more likely to perceive challenges as opportunities for growth, thereby improving both their professional development and the educational outcomes for their students.

This review further highlights the connection between growth mindset and teacher self-efficacy, illustrating that educators who have faith in their ability to improve are more adept at effectively handling classroom challenges. These insights emphasize the necessity of incorporating growth mindset principles into teacher training and continuous professional development. Nevertheless, the literature indicates a need for additional research on how to consistently cultivate a growth mindset within special education environments and how professional development initiatives can promote sustained growth and adaptability among special education teachers.

Based on the findings, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the development of a growth mindset among special education teachers. First, it is essential to integrate growth mindset principles thoroughly into teacher education programs, particularly for those preparing to work in special education. These training programs should emphasize the cultivation of adaptability, resilience, and problem-solving abilities, which are crucial for addressing the varied needs of students with disabilities. Second, educational institutions should prioritize ongoing professional development that reinforces a growth mindset through reflective practices, peer

collaboration, and collective problem-solving. Such continuous training can empower teachers to remain flexible and motivated when facing challenges.

Furthermore, additional research into the specific advantages of cultivating a growth mindset in special education is crucial. Such studies could provide deeper insights into how this mindset fosters more innovative, inclusive, and effective teaching practices. Additionally, this research would highlight the wider benefits of promoting a growth mindset, including enhanced collaboration among teachers and an improved overall learning environment for students. By emphasizing the need for further research and investing in the professional development of special education teachers, educational systems can better prepare these teachers to address the special needs of their students, ultimately resulting in improved educational outcomes.

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