A STUDY OF ATTITUDE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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Abstract

The present study aims to investigate the attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education. Inclusive classroom is a scheme for social improvement, centering on the improvement of schools. The goals have variously been to create happier learning environments for all students and to include special needs students in all aspects of school-life. Inclusion is about school change to improve the educational system for all students. It means changes in the curriculum, changes in how teachers teach and how students learn, as well as changes in how students with and without special needs interact with and relate to one another. The basic need of inclusive education is when we recognizing that traditional strategies result in a lack of learning outcomes for students with special needs, relative to outcomes of comparable peers without special education. The present study is a descriptive survey which aims at analyzing the study of attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education of Faridabad district. Survey was conducted on a sample of 80 teachers of primary schools with equal numbers of rural and urban. The data was collected during the academic year 2012-13. The findings revealed that attitude of male teachers towards inclusive education is more positive as compare to female teachers. Urban primary teacher’s attitude towards inclusive education is more positive as compare to rural teachers. In fact attitude of private teachers towards inclusive education is more positive as compare to Govt. teachers.

Keys words: Inclusion, Inclusive Education, Primary teachers, Attitude, Students

1 INTRODUCTION

Inclusion in education is an approach to educating students with special educational needs. Under the inclusion model, students with special needs spend most or all of their time with non-disabled students. Implementation of these practices varies. Schools most frequently use them for selected students with mild to severe special needs. Inclusive education differs from previously held notions of integration and mainstreaming, which tended to be concerned principally with disability and ‘special educational needs’ and implied learners changing or becoming ‘ready for’ or deserving of accommodation by the mainstream. Inclusion gives students with disabilities skill they can use in and out of the classroom. Fully inclusive schools, which are rare, no longer distinguish between "general education" and "special education" programs; instead, the school is restructured so that all students learn together.

1.1 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The dictionary meaning of ‘Inclusion’ is to take in or consider as part or member of or to embrace. Inclusion is about membership or belonging to a community. In context to education, it is restructuring schools as communities where old children can learn. Teachers provide for more options for children as ways to learn. But there is no standardized procedure or recipe to make teachers and schools inclusive.

Inclusive education provides the places and the catalyst through which general and special educators, students and parents come together to create quality democratic schools. Inclusive schools are those
designed to meet the educational needs of all their members with common yet fluid environments and activities (Sapon- Shevin,1996). It means that special education is no longer defined as a placement but as a system of support provided to help and address the needs of a subset of students (Stainback and Stainback, 1996).

A successful inclusive learning community fosters collaboration, problem solving, self directed and critical discourse, it also allows (a) students with extra-ordinary gifts and talents to move at their natural learning rate (b) students who progress slower than the average to move at the best of their ability and (c) students with specific learning challenges to receive creative and effective support to maximize the success.

Inclusion is about school change to improve the educational system for all students. It means changes in the curriculum, changes in how teachers teach and how students learn, as well as changes in how students with and without special needs interact with and relate to one another. Inclusive education practices reflect the changing culture of contemporary schools with emphasis on active learning, authentic assessment practices, applied curriculum, multi-level instructional approaches, and increased attention to diverse student needs and individualization. The claim is that schools, centers of learning and educational systems must change so that they become caring, nurturing, and supportive educational communities where the needs of all students and teachers are truly met. Inclusive schools no longer provide "regular education" and "special education

1.2 NATURE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

A successful inclusive learning community fosters collaboration, problem solving, self directed and critical discourse, it also allows (a) students with extra-ordinary gifts and talents to move at their natural learning rate (b) students who progress slower than the average to move at the best of their ability and (c) students with specific learning challenges to receive creative and effective support to maximize the success.

UNESCO (1994) in Salamanca statement states that regular schools with inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all, moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost effectiveness of the entire education system.

Loreman and Deppeler (2001) state that inclusion means full inclusion of children with diverse abilities (i.e. both giftedness and disability) in all aspects of schooling that other children are able to access and enjoy. It involves 'regular' schools and classrooms genuinely adopting and changing to meet the need of all children as well as celebrating and valuing differences.

UNESCO (2001), inclusive education is concerned with all learners with a focus on those who have traditionally been excluded from educational opportunities such as learner with special needs and disabilities, children from ethnic and linguistic minorities.

1.3 PRACTICES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN INDIA

In India, the ideal system of inclusive education is that the general education system should assume responsibility for the education and children with disabilities but the reality is different in India. These practices are fully yet not followed for future implications. The general education system is yet to be fully sensitized to the educational needs of children with disabilities and therefore the general system needs the assistance of specialist teachers for occasional help to make inclusive education work. According to inclusive education the plan of teaching is “Multi skills teacher plan”. Mani (2000) reported approximately 80,000 children with disability are educates in the 18,000 general schools of country but a greater arrangement is needed for disables children especially girls need more awareness so that disabled girls can receive education in general schools. In India 20 million children in the age range of 6-14 years require special needs education, while national average of gross enrolment in initial grades of Primary Education has crossed 90% mark, less than5% of children with disabilities have reached the
school system. The gross enrolment ratio (GER) at the primary stage has exceeded 100 percent. Access to schools is no longer a major problem. At the primary stage, 94% of the country's rural population has schooling facilities within one kilometer and the upper primary stage, it is 84 percent. This indicates that our country has made impressive achievement in providing access to elementary education but the flip side is that out of the 200 million children in the age group of 6-14 years 59 million children are not attending schools. Of this 35 millions are girls and 24 millions are boys. These figures include the population of disadvantages, tribal and the disabling children. Experience and research shows that education in special and segregated schools does not provide support for the all rooms development of the individual (Uppal and Dey, 2001.)

Thus in India education for the disabled has been a priority area and a great amount of thinking and inputs have gone in to ensuring that this section of population is not marginalized when it comes to facilitating development and accessing the resources for human resource development. It is presently estimated that 12.5 million children with disabilities are to be provided education in the school system. The educational needs of such children are met through a variety of institutions working at various levels, which include special schools, integrated school, vocational centers and polytechnics besides the opportunities in the mainstream of education. A review of the historical development of the policy framework reveals that the education of the disabled has received adequate weightage from time to time. But the implementation the policy and the progress made in this regard has been very encouraging. There still exist, more then 3000 residential special schools to address to the special needs of 1,00,000 children with disabilities. The efforts are mainly made by the NGO's and they believe that it is easier to generate funds for special schools rather than for inclusive schools. The contributions of NCERT with launching of Integrated education of the disabled under the UNESCO “Project integrated education of the disabled (PIED, 1987) led to the realization that integrating education was a cost effective approach and with this the enrollment rate for children went up to 91 percent. The retention rate of such children was higher than their non-disabled counterparts. The achievement of the children with disabilities went at par with the non-disabled children. Since then, the general education system has standing according children with disabilities in the general schools. So far, approximately 90,000 children with disabilities have benefited from this approach through 18,000 general schools across the country. Further impetus has been provided by the District Primary Education Programme (DEEP). Inclusive education in the general schools is a forward looking and an explicit approach. It has been observed that children with mild and moderate disabilities are more in numbers than those with severe and profound disabilities. Thus, their inclusion in the general stream would reduce the risk of school dropout.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

**Mayseless (2010)** This study, a first in its field, examined the interplay between the two developmental domains. It addressed a central conceptual question: If these developmental domains are related, how do they converge and mutually interact? For example, is a certain level of emotional maturity required before an individual develops to be highly spiritual? What might be the ramifications of having transcendental experiences when an individual is not emotionally mature? A sample group of 215 college students aged 19-30 revealed that the two developmental domains (psychological maturity and spiritual development) were moderately correlated, yet that each seemed to have different antecedents. eg, social support and having firm ethnic identity was especially significant for achieving spiritual developments.

**Smitha and Acharya (2010)** found that teachers have unfavorable attitude towards inclusive education. The aforesaid empirical evidences clearly signify the vitality of teachers' role in inclusive education. It is only through an open-hearted, open-minded, committed and true teacher that special children can be included in regular or normal classrooms with other general children. Only such teachers can bring disabled students in mainstream of the society so that they can contribute their optimum for betterment of society and nation as a whole. Conclusively, it can be said that teachers’ attitude towards disabled students, in particular and inclusive education, in general is the main pivot for making the concept of 'inclusion', a successful venture. Keeping this in view, the investigators decided to develop a scale for measuring Teachers' Attitude towards Inclusive Education as no standardized scale on this theme is presently available.
3. NEED OF THE STUDY

Today it is widely accepted that inclusion maximizes the potential of the vast majority of students, ensures their rights, and is the preferred educational approach for the 21st century. Unfortunately, the philosophy has not always been widely held. Our thinking and acceptance has evolved rapidly over the last century, and continues to evolve, in response to federal and state law, along with our changing social and political beliefs. When compulsory public education began near the turn of the century, no public school programs existed for students with disabilities. Schools were expected to be efficient assembly lines, with each class of students moving from grade to grade and, eventually, graduating from high school as productive citizens prepared to enter the workforce. At a fundamental level, inclusion is really about fairness. Responding to each student based on need is the meaning of fairness. In the past schools could hide achievement results by excluding students with special needs. This is no longer possible. As general education classrooms include more and more diverse students, teachers realize the value of accepting each student as unique. Special educators understand that effective general education practices really are appropriate for students with special needs, and general educators often turn to special educators for additional ways to teach their increasingly diverse groups of students. Inclusive education is a process of enabling all children to learn and participate effectively within mainstream school systems. It does not segregate children who have different abilities or needs. This, in other words, is to indicate the shift of thinking from an unnatural segregated setting toward inclusive education must be given the due attention it deserves if inclusive education is to be favored and practiced as educational modality. In general Teachers’ attitudes were found to be influenced by the nature and severity of the disabling condition, training of the teacher, experience, gender and availability of support. Implications from this review suggest the need to the availability of training, adapted curriculum, positive attitudes and utmost responsibility of the teachers. One of the most significant stipulations that allow for successful inclusion of special education students is the attitudes or attitudes of the general education teacher regarding the inclusion of special education students into their classroom. So the researcher wants to study the attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education.

4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A study under investigation is entitled as “A STUDY OF ATTITUDE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION”.

5. OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

INCLUSIVE SCHOOL: For the present study, Inclusive school is a place where both children with disability and regular children are put together.

PRIMARY TEACHERS: Primary teachers in this present study means all the Teachers working in Primary Schools of Faridabad District of Haryana state.

6. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education.
- To study the difference between male and female primary school teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education.
- To study the difference between rural and urban primary school teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education.
- To study the difference between the attitude of primary school teachers having more than 10 years and less than 10 years of experience towards inclusive education.
- To study the difference between the attitude of government and private primary school teachers towards inclusive education.

7. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY
• There is no significant difference between male and female primary school teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education.
• There is no significant difference between rural and urban school teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education.
• There is no significant difference between the attitude of teachers having more than 10 years and less than 10 years of experience towards inclusive education.
• There is no significant difference between the attitude of government and private primary school teachers towards inclusive education.

8. DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study was delimited to only schools of Faridabad district.
2. The study was delimited to Primary teachers only.
3. The study was delimited to rural & urban primary school teachers only.

9. DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The present investigation is done with the help of questionnaire survey. The present study is a descriptive survey which aims at analyzing the study of attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education of Faridabad district only.

10. POPULATION OF THE STUDY

Population for the present study comprises of students studying in primary school teachers of District Faridabad of Haryana. The sample for the present study comprises of 80 teachers from different primary schools of Faridabad district selected randomly.

11. SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

The sample for the present study consisted of 80 teachers of primary schools with equal numbers of rural and urban. In the present study, the investigator has adopted stratified randomization technique. The sample consisted of 80 teachers of four schools of Faridabad district at primary level.

12. TOOL USED IN THE STUDY

Teacher’s attitude scale towards inclusive education, standardized and validated by Vishal Sood and Arti Anand.

13. HYPOTHESES WISE INTERPRETATION

13.1 T-RATIO BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS’ ATTITUDE TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

There is no significant difference between male and female primary school teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education. To verify the hypothesis t-ratio was computed between the mean scores of attitude of male and female primary school teachers’ towards inclusive education.

Table 1: t-Ratio was calculated for comparison between Attitude of male and female primary school teachers’
Table 1 shows that t-value between mean scores of attitude of male and female primary school teachers’ towards inclusive education is 4.39. The t-value at 38 df in order to be significant at 0.05 & 0.01 level should be 1.96 & 2.58 respectively. Obtained value is greater than this, hence it is significant. This shows attitude of male & female teachers towards inclusive education differ. Calculated mean shows that mean scores of male teachers is more than that of female teachers. So, it can be interpreted that the male teachers’ attitude is more positive towards inclusive education as compared to their counterparts. It might be due to the reason that the male teachers are more aware about the inclusive education rather than their female counterparts. 

**Hence hypothesis -I, “There is no significant difference between male and female primary school teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education” is rejected.**

### 13.2 T-RATIO BETWEEN RURAL AND URBAN PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS’ ATTITUDE TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

There is no significant difference between rural and urban primary school teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education. To verify the hypothesis t-ratio was computed between the mean scores of attitude of rural and urban primary school teachers’ towards inclusive education.

Table 2:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Sd</th>
<th>SE₀</th>
<th>Mean Diff.</th>
<th>t-ratio</th>
<th>Level of Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Male teachers</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>122.53</td>
<td>25.13</td>
<td>5.46</td>
<td>24.01</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Female teachers</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>98.52</td>
<td>23.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that t-value between mean scores of attitude of rural and urban primary school teachers’ towards inclusive education is 4.39. The t-value at 38 df in order to be significant at 0.05 & 0.01 level should be 1.96 & 2.58 respectively. Obtained value is greater than this, hence it is significant. This shows attitude of rural and urban teachers towards inclusive education differ. Calculated mean shows that mean scores of urban primary teachers is greater than that of rural primary teachers. So, it can be interpreted that the urban teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education is more positive in comparison to rural teachers. This might be due to the fact that the urban teachers’ are more aware about inclusive education.
because in urban schools there are more facilities for inclusive education and all the teachers using internet and media are more aware than rural teachers.

Hence hypothesis -II, “There is no significant difference between rural and urban primary school teachers’ attitude towards inclusive education” is rejected.

13.3 T-RATIO BETWEEN ATTITUDE OF TEACHERS HAVING MORE THAN 10 YEARS AND LESS THAN 10 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

There is no significant difference the attitude of teachers having more than 10 years and less than 10 years of experience towards inclusive education. To verify the hypothesis t-ratio was computed between the mean scores of attitude of teachers having more than 10 years and less than 10 years of experience towards inclusive education.

Table 3: t-Ratio was calculated for comparison between attitude of teachers having more than 10 years and less than 10 years of experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Sd</th>
<th>SE_D</th>
<th>Mean Diff.</th>
<th>t-ratio</th>
<th>Level of Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>More than 10 Years</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>127.90</td>
<td>28.10</td>
<td>6.56</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Less than 10 Years</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>121.34</td>
<td>25.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that t-value between mean scores of attitude of teachers having more than 10 years and less than 10 years of experience towards inclusive education 1.14. The t-value at 38 df in order to be significant at 0.05 & 0.01 level should be 1.96 & 2.58 respectively. Obtained value is less than this, hence it is not significant. This shows attitude of more experience teachers & less experienced teachers don’t differ. It is clear from the above table that there exists no significant difference between teacher’s attitude having more than 10 years and less than 10 years of experience towards inclusive education. This might be due to the reason that both more experienced teachers and less experienced teachers have more knowledge about the children-learning environment because of the present day practice of inclusion of special need children.

Hence hypothesis -III, “There is no significant difference the attitude of teachers having more than 10 years and less than 10 years of experience towards inclusive education” is accepted.

13.4 T-RATIO BETWEEN THE ATTITUDE OF GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

There is no significant difference between the attitude of government and private primary school teachers towards inclusive education. To verify the hypothesis t-ratio was computed between the mean scores of the attitude of government and private primary school teachers towards inclusive education.

Table 4: t-Ratio was calculated for comparison the attitude of government and private primary school teachers towards inclusive education
### Table 4: Comparison of Mean Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Sd</th>
<th>SE_d</th>
<th>Mean Diff.</th>
<th>t-ratio</th>
<th>Level of Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Govt. school teachers</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>110.70</td>
<td>23.36</td>
<td>5.63</td>
<td>14.72</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Private school teachers</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>125.42</td>
<td>26.87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows that t-value between mean scores of attitude of Govt. & private primary school teachers’ towards inclusive education is 2.61. The t-value at 38 df in order to be significant at 0.05 & 0.01 level should be 1.96 & 2.58 respectively. Obtained value is greater than this, hence it is significant. This shows attitude of Govt. & private primary school teachers towards inclusive education differ. Calculated mean shows that mean scores of private primary teachers is greater than that of Govt. primary teachers. So it can be interpreted that the teachers who are from private schools, their attitude is more positive towards inclusive education as compared to their counterparts. It might be due to the reason that the private teachers know more about the inclusive education. **Hence hypothesis -IV, “There is no significant difference between the attitude of government and private primary school teachers towards inclusive education.” is rejected.**

### 14. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the study that have emerged from the analysis and interpretation of data may have the following educational implication

- The present study has its implications for teachers, parents, administrators or policy makers and government, since the present study is conducted on the attitude of the teachers toward inclusive education. The study has some practical implication for teachers.
- There is also need to develop awareness about inclusive education among female teachers as they revealed less positive attitude towards inclusive education than the male teachers.
- The present study bears implications for the parents as well as the community members. Disabled are no more considered differently able. The parents of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) children should exhibit positive attitude for the education of their children in the regular classroom along with normal children, rather than placing them in segregated setting exclusively meant for a particular disability.
- The parents should also discuss the problem of their children openly instead of trying to hide their disability so that the teacher can take effective measures to bring the children to mainstream.
- Again the present study essentially has some implications for the government also. Administrators simply can form the policies, but it is the government who executes and implements those in actual sense. Government should allocate more funds to implement the policies that are framed on behalf of disabled.
- Educational consultants, curriculum specialists, school psychologist and other personnel should pool their expertise in order to develop academic learning activities that impact upon behavior.

### 15. CONCLUSION

To conclude it can be said that inclusive education is a mandate today. In-fact, inclusive education is the need of the hour. It becomes a crucial issue in the field of education, which attracts all concerned. It is a matter of immense pleasure that inclusive education is in a progressive way all over the world, but still there is room for improvement. To remove the gap between inclusion and exclusion, teachers, parents,
society, administrators and government should collectively work to implement the policies of inclusive education.

16. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

- The study may be taken from large sample group and conducted various sorts of schools like run by NGOs, Private, Public & Govt. Schools.
- For better generalization, study may be taken from other areas or states.
- A comparative study of primary & secondary school teachers towards inclusive education may also be taken.
- The study may be used to improve the adjustment of teachers in inclusive schools.
- General teachers should also be trained because they kind to be the first to refer a student for special educational needs in inclusive schools.
- Special educators should be employed in every and each school either Govt. Schools or private schools.
- Not only the study needs to be replicated on a wider sample, it should also give adequate representation to senior secondary school students in various cities.

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