

## A Study on Perspective of Educational Professionals Towards Inclusive Education

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### Abstract:

Early attempts at integration essentially attempted to place children with special need in the regular system, with supports going to the student, but little change in the structure of education. Later on Declaration of Salamanca helped to re-conceptualize the participation of students with special need in regular education from "integration" to "inclusion". In general classroom, inclusive education makes provision for learning of all children in a same classroom irrespective of their caste, creed, religion and disability, and the general teacher becomes the facilitator. Inclusive education is not only limited to mainstreaming the learners with special needs but also concerned with identifying and overcoming all barriers to effective, continuous and quality participation in education. The educational professionals are the important part of teaching-learning situation, as it is the educators who make learning possible. Thus the success of inclusion depends on various factors which includes the attitudes of educational professionals i.e. teachers and administrators as well, the quality of instruction given by the educational professionals. More specifically, teachers' attitudes about inclusion have been found to be a crucial factor that impacts the implementation of inclusion for children with disabilities. An attempt has been made in this paper to justify the problems in implementation of inclusive education due to the attitudinal barriers of educational professionals.

**Keywords:** Inclusive Education, Attitude, Educational Professionals.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education is the outcome of inclusive movement which ensures equalization of educational opportunities irrespective of individual's social, mental, emotional and the physical differences, it rests on the principles of formulation of a society where individuals of all type live in harmony. Inclusion refers to "the practice of educating students with moderate to severe disabilities alongside their chronological age peers without disabilities in general classrooms within their home neighborhood schools" (Alper, 2003). Moreover, the nature and severity of the disability appears to be related to the teacher's willingness to accommodate students with disabilities in general education classrooms (Rainforth, 2000). The educational professionals play a vital in the inclusion of children with special need In order to implement inclusion school administrators need to understand not only that regular education teachers, their attitudes or perceptions and acknowledge the various factors affecting inclusion. This information is helpful in understanding basically three problem areas i.e. what are the inclusion practices should be done in the classroom; prejudices of teachers towards inclusion; and what are the support services to be given in the regular classroom to provide an effective educational program for children with special need.

The number of researches has shown that inclusive education results in improved social development and academic outcomes of all learners and. Successful Inclusion can be explained by the ability of teachers to expand the borders of the circle of tolerance and make a broader range of behaviours ordinary in their classrooms (McLeskey & Waldron, 2002). It leads to development of social skills and

better social interactions because learners are exposed to real environment in which they have to interact with other learners having unique characteristic, interest and abilities.

Teachers' abilities and attitudes can be major limitations for inclusive education. Nowadays there are various problem coming at both levels i.e. the training of staff at all levels is often inadequate. Where there is training it often tends to be fragmented, uncoordinated and inadequate. Successful implementation of inclusive education is not only limited to mainstreaming the children with special needs but also concerned with identifying and overcoming all barriers to effective attitudes, continuous and quality participation in education. In order to achieve inclusion first we have to abolish the negative aspects of the educational professionals towards inclusion.

### II. KEY TERMS USED IN THE PRESENT STUDY

- **Inclusive Education:** Inclusive Education means inclusion of all types of individual regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional, linguistic, or other conditions in general setting with normal peer group.
- **Educational Professionals :** Educational Professionals refers to teachers and administrators those who facilitate learning in the school.

### III. OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

1. To study attitudes of educational professionals towards inclusive education.

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2. To study attitudes of male and female educational professionals towards inclusive education.
3. To study attitudes of teachers and administrators towards inclusive education.

**IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The present study enlightens challenges in successful implementation of inclusive education. The descriptive survey method has been used in this study to obtain the information of inclusion in school system, as a survey aims at collecting detailed description of existing phenomenon with positive intent of employing the data to justify present condition and practices to make intelligent, plan for future.

**V. SAMPLE**

The sample of the study consists of 60 teachers and 20 principal of the schools. The samples are selected from the schools of Varanasi City only, which comes under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Project started by government of India. During the sampling 50 male and 30 female educational professionals were selected by the researcher herself due to short availability of female teachers in the schools of primary and upper primary school levels (demographic data shown in Table 1).

**Table:1**  
**Demographic data**

Characteristics of Participants		Number of Participants(N=80)
Gender	Male	50
	Female	30
Age	Below 30	16
	30-40	35
	40-50	18
	50-60	11
Academic Background	Bachelor's Degree	49
	Master's Degree	31
Years of Teaching Experience	3-10 years	30
	10-20 years	23
	20-30 years	20
	30-40 years	07

**VI. TOOL**

In the present study two self made tools Questionnaire and a checklist were used. Questionnaire is based on the various themes and subthemes as follows:

**Table : 2**

Areas considered for the Preparation of the questionnaire

S.No	Themes	Subthemes
1.	Teacher's knowledge of inclusive education (conceptualization of inclusive education)	a. Inclusive education as a system of education for all b. Inclusive education as integration of special educational needs children c. nclusive education as a way of reducing social discrimination
2.	Practical barriers towards inclusive education	a. Insufficient knowledge of inclusive education b. Lack of training c. Lack of teaching materials d. Infrastructural Barriers

The items were general in nature, but related to both positive and negative perspectives of teachers and principal towards inclusion of children with special needs. The items were developed from literature reviewed that identified common attitudes of inclusion, and factors behind positive and negative attitude. Initially a pool of 45 items were developed and after the researchers' review, the number of items was reduced to 30. These items were reviewed by experts in the field of inclusion and as a result they were reduced to 20 items. In the scoring of the questionnaire, there were three response options were given i.e. "yes", "No" and "Can't Say". For each response of "yes", "No" and "Can't Say" Score of 2,0and 1 will be provided respectively. The most commonly used method to split the test into two is using the odd-even strategy which is used in this study. Since longer tests tend to be more reliable, and since split-half reliability represents the reliability of a test only half as long as the actual test, a correction formula must be applied to the coefficient. So the Spearman-Brown prophecy formula is used for the correction.

The value of reliability coefficient of the half test was found 0.67. On substituting value in Spearman-Brown prophecy formula the reliability of the whole test was found 0.76 .Face validity and content validity was decided on the basis of expert advice.

**VII. COLLECTION OF DATA**

Having the above mentioned tool, the investigator visited various schools which were taken as sample and administered Questionnaire to study attitudes related barriers of educational professionals toward inclusive education. Almost every school personnel were cooperative enough and supported investigator thoroughly to collect the data.

**VIII. ANALYSIS OF DATA**

For the statistical treatment of the data obtained Mean (M), Standard deviation (S.D.) and t-test were used. The statistical treatments of the parametric tests were used on the assumption that the scores on attitude related inclusive education were expected to be normally distributed over the whole population .

The proposed null hypothesis were tested by the students' t-Test. The significance of difference was tested at the 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance using students' t- test. And the hypothesis were accepted as if the calculated t value is less than tabulated 't' value i.e.  $t_{tab} > t_{cal}$  .

- **Ho1** There is no significant difference between male and female teachers attitude towards inclusive education.

**Table: - 3**  
**Male Vs Female**

Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Degree of freedom	Level of Significance (0.05)
Male	50	24.74	4.094	0.096829	78	Significant at both 0.05 and 0.01 level
Female	30	23.03	4.537			

\*Table value (at the Df 78) = 2.00

### IX. INTERPRETATION

**Table 4.1:** reveals that the mean difference between male and female teacher significant at 0.05 level. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted.

### X. DISCUSSION

Finding clearly shows that attitude of male teacher and female teacher is almost same towards inclusive education of children with special need, i.e. there is no significant difference between male and female teachers attitude towards inclusive education, although mean of the data shows that female teacher is supporting more strongly to inclusive education than male teacher. ie our hypothesis was accepted. In support to this several studies can be quoted. For an instance Smith (1995) studied the attitudes of 200 general and special educators (both male and female teachers) toward inclusion of all students, regardless of the disability. Participants in her study were given a 12-item attitude survey before and after their participation in professional development. The results indicated that both groups of teachers exhibited more positive attitudes toward inclusion after the in-service.

- **Ho2** There is no significant difference between attitude of principal and teacher towards inclusive education.

**Table: - 4**

Teacher Vs. Administrator

Educational professionals	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Df	Level of significance At (0.05)
Teacher	60	23.15	4.062	0.001	78	Significant at both 0.05 and 0.01 level
Principal	20	26.95	3.859			

\*Table value (at the Df 78) = 2.00

### XI. INTERPRETATION

Table 4.2 reveals that the mean difference between male and female teacher significant at 0.05 and 0.01 level as  $t_{tab} < t_{cal}$ . Thus our null hypothesis is accepted.

### XII. DISCUSSION

Finding clearly shows that attitude of teachers and principals is almost same towards inclusive education of children with special need ,i.e. there is no significant difference on the attitude of principles and teachers towards inclusive education. Although mean of the data shows that principal is supporting more strongly to inclusive education than teacher.

### XIII. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Finding in both the aspects i.e. male vs. female attitudes towards inclusion and teachers vs. principals attitudes are almost same towards inclusive of children with special need ,i.e. there is no significant difference on the attitude of principles and teachers towards inclusive education. Although mean of the data shows that principal is supporting more strongly to inclusive education than teacher. but still there is an emergent need to work upon this area.

### XIV. CONCLUSION

The conclusions obtained from the results reported in chapter fourth are the following:

- The result show that current scenario of education is highly supportive for children with special needs, all male teachers and female teacher are supporting inclusive education in almost same manner.
- There is no significant difference in principal's and teacher's attitude towards inclusive educational setting, although principal view is supporting the inclusion strongly. School environment directly affects the cognitive development of a child, positive attitude of school environment boost up the efficiency of a children with special need but still there is an emergent need to enhance the inclusive education.

### XV. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The professional ethics of researcher on any field of research is to give suggestions for further research for advancing the study. Some suggestions for study are as follows:

- More broad and intensive study should be conducted using large sample
- Randomized sampling technique may be used in the sample collection to eliminate the errors.
- The above mentioned suggestions obviously highlight that much more could be done on availability of time. However, this study has added a useful dimension in the field of Inclusive Education. Also a few directions have been identified for further research in the hope that they will supplement, enrich and provide continuity in the present investigation.
- Furthermore policies can be made in the education of pre-service teachers as suggested by Andrews and Clementson (1997) sought to determine if active learning strategies and the use of literature regarding disabilities in a compulsory introduction to education and special education course had an effect upon prospective teachers' attitudes toward inclusion.

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