



DEVELOPING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR SCHOOL TEACHERS

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Abstract:

Survey of various studies conducted on inclusive education in India & abroad helps to understand more about inclusion & its importance today. Present Research focuses on developing a program in Inclusive Education. Objective of the research is to design, develop and test the effectiveness of a Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) for school teachers. KBPIE has been developed and administered to the sample of teachers. Single group interrupted time series design was used to test the effectiveness of the program. Stastical analysis i.e. the t value from pre-test (O2) and post-test-2, retention test (O4) indicates that the Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) for Teachers teaching at higher primary level is significantly effective. It will definitely help teachers, teacher educators in guiding the teacher trainees about inclusion of differently abled students. It can be one of the effective programs for schools to plan for training of their teachers about inclusive education.

Introduction:

"All children and young people of the world, with their individual strengths and weaknesses, with their hopes and expectations, have the right to education. It is not our education systems that have a right to certain types of children. Therefore, it is the school system of a country that must be adjusted to meet the needs of all children".

(B. Lindqvist, UN-Rapporteur, 1994)

The overall goal of inclusive- and child friendly education is developing educational settings where all learners are welcome, participating and treated equally. Inclusive- and child friendly education is concerned with providing appropriate responses to the broad spectrum of learning needs in both formal and non-formal educational settings. It advocates for changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures, policies and strategies. At the heart of inclusive- and child friendly education is the vision to transform the education system so it can provide responsive quality education for all learners. Thus we as teachers, parents, teacher-educators, have to facilitate the implementation of inclusive education not only as a program but also as an ideology.

The major support for inclusive education came from 1994 World Conference on Special Needs Education held in Salamanca, Spain. It was concluded in the conference that – “**Schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions.**”(Puri, Madhumita , Abraham George)

3 Importance of the Research

Survey of various studies conducted on inclusive education in India & abroad helps to understand more about inclusion & its importance today. It clearly emphasizes how important the role of school and teacher is, in dealing with inclusion, and making it successful. Preparing teachers to teach in inclusive settings is essential, if our schools are to truly teach all students in inclusive, collaborative and diverse settings.

Present Research focuses on present situation of the schools regarding inclusion of differently abled students. It also gives clear-cut idea about barriers faced by teachers in implementation of strategies necessary for successful inclusion.

Objective of the Study:

To design, develop and test the effectiveness of a Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) for school teachers.

Operational Definitions:

Inclusive Education:

“Inclusive education means that all students in a school, regardless of their strengths or weaknesses in any area, become part of the school community.”

Assumptions:

- It is assumed that all the experimental subjects have accurately and honestly responded to the pretests and posttests.
- Inclusive practices can be improved through Knowledge and proper training

Hypothesis:

The hypothesis to be tested for experimentation will be as follows-

1-There will be no significant difference in knowledge and acceptance level of teachers about Inclusive Education before and after the implementation of Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education.

Delimitations of the Research:

1. The study will be delimited to schools situated in Pune District.
2. The implementation of the Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) will be delimited to the schools where technological support is available.
3. The development and implementation of the Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) is delimited to six important aspects – Hearing Impaired, Visually Impaired, Learning Disabilities, Orthopedically Impaired, Mentally Challenged, and Gifted.
4. The present research is delimited to school teachers teaching for Higher Primary Schools.

Limitations of the Research

1. The impact of school teachers IQ, Interest in learning, age, experience of teaching has not been considered.
2. The effectiveness of Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) is based on the responses given by school teachers of Higher Primary Schools.

Theoretical Base of the Study:

This research gives an idea about how constructivist, especially social constructivist approach(Vygotsky 1962, 1978) will help the teachers to create an inclusive classroom environment for differently abled students. It shows effective application of the principles of social constructivism, cooperative learning and collaborative learning. It makes use of innovative techniques of ICT.

Population: All the teachers teaching higher primary students are the population for Inclusive Education Program.

Sr. No.	Sample	Size of sample	Objective	Method of sampling
1	School teachers teaching for higher primary students(Two English And two Marathi schools)	80	Implementation and testing the effectiveness of the program in Inclusive Education.	Purposive

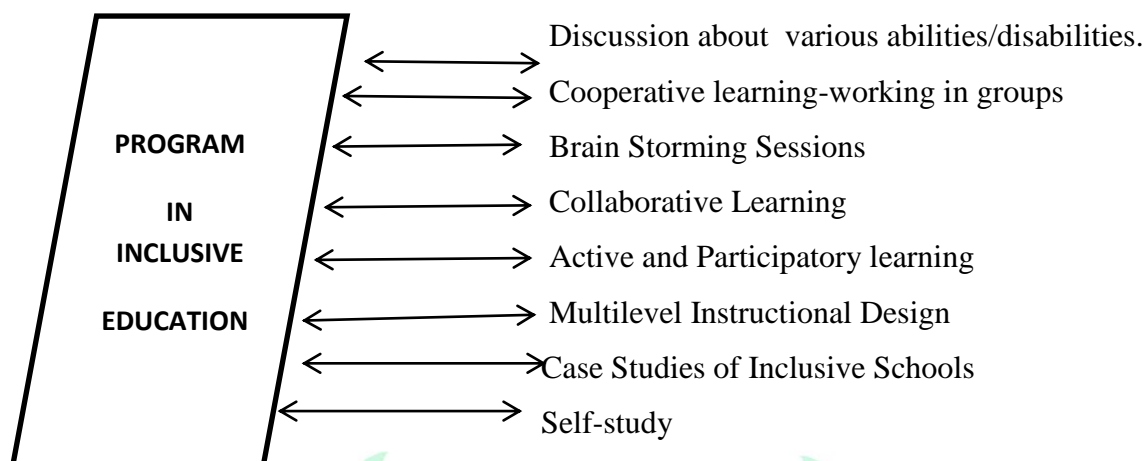
Methodology and Procedure of the Research:

a- Development of A Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE)

Method of research is product development research. A Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) was developed for School teacher teaching for 5th to 8th standard. A careful review was done regarding various models of instructional design. The model selected for designing instructions was Kemp's Model of Instructional Design. The immediate feel of being inclusive and particularly the fact that the central focus is the learner needs and goals are the strengths of this model.

A Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) was prepared by following the nine steps given as per Kemp's model.

1. Identify instructional problems, and specify goals for designing an instructional program.
2. Examine learner characteristics that should receive attention during planning.
3. Identify subject content, and analyze task components related to stated goals and purposes.
4. State instructional objectives for the learner.
5. Sequence content within each instructional unit for logical learning.
6. Design instructional strategies so that each learner can master the objectives.
7. Plan the instructional message and delivery.
8. Develop evaluation instruments to assess objectives.
9. Select resources to support instruction and learning activities.



The program developed is translated in Marathi using standardized procedures with the help of experts in Marathi.

Master Validation of the Program in Inclusive Education:

Step -1 the Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) developed was implemented on five English medium school teachers and five Marathi medium school teachers, teaching for higher primary. Feedback is taken from the teachers. Pre-test and post tests were conducted and effectiveness is tested. Necessary changes were made.

Step-2 the Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) for school teachers teaching for higher primary was administered to sample of school teachers selected as per the schedule planned.

b- **Experimental Research**-Experimental method was used to study the effectiveness of the program in Inclusive Education for School Teachers. Elaborated version of One Group Pre-test Post-test Design was used.

Single group interrupted time series design: O₁-O₂-X-O₃-O₄

Variables in research:

Independent Variables: Program in Inclusive Education developed for school teachers was the independent variable of the research.

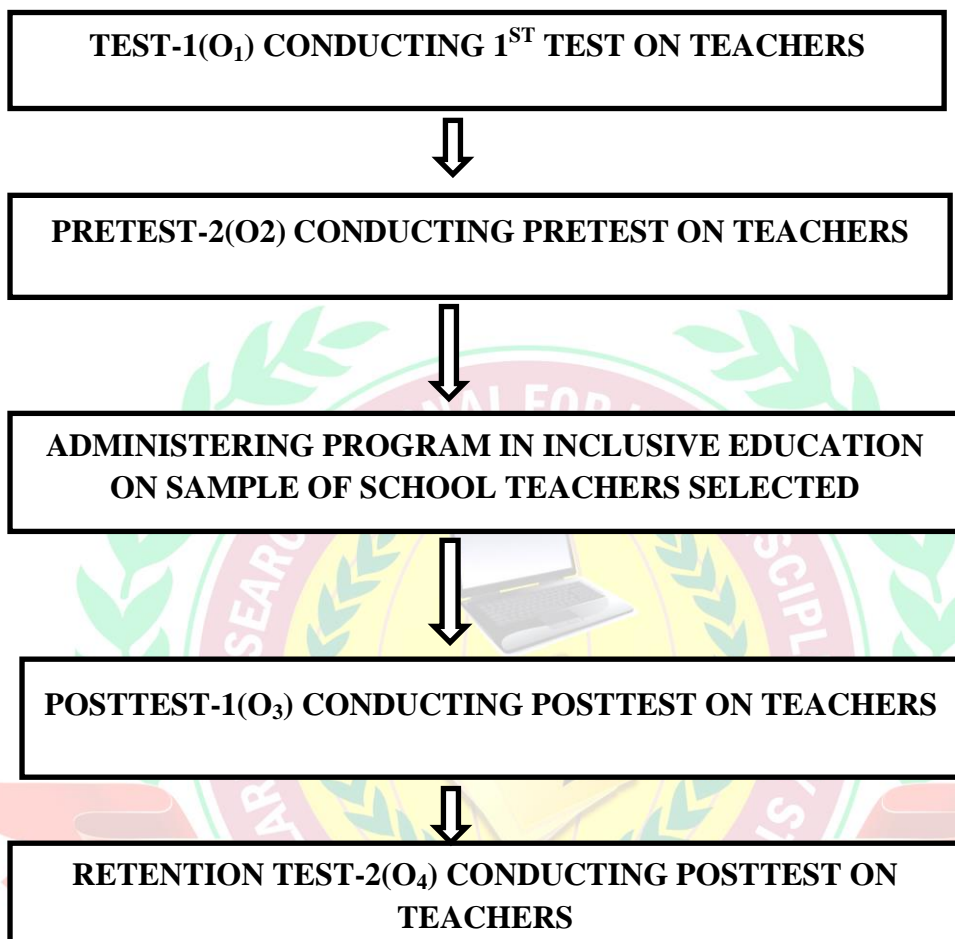
Dependent Variables: Achievement of school teacher's knowledge and application of Inclusion, School teacher's feedback about the program were the dependent variables of the research.

Tools for Data Collection

Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) was prepared to enrich the content regarding various different abilities, laws about Inclusion, strategies and techniques,

etc. To test the effectiveness of Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE), knowledge tests were developed and used.

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1-Preparation- Following areas were selected for content test.

- History and various laws made about Inclusion of all the students in general schooling.
- Knowledge about Giftedness, mentally challenged, Hearing impairment, Visual Impairment, Orthopedical impairment, Cerebral palsy, and various Learning Disabilities.
- Knowledge of application of various strategies and techniques for the differently abled students
- Knowledge about evaluation of differently abled students

Blue print was prepared and questions were constructed. Validity has been tested using expert opinion and pilot study. Reliability of the tests was tested using test retest method.

Administering the test developed – Pretest prepared was administered to the selected group of school teachers under examination conditions. The checking of answer sheets was done and scores were tabulated.

Pretest-1: (O₂) – Pre-test was prepared following the same procedure used for test one. The second version of the test prepared from the same construct domain was administered to the same group of teachers. Results were tabulated. Difference between the means was calculated. Correlation between two tests had been found out.

Posttest-1 (O₃) - Posttest was prepared following the same procedure used for pretest one. After administration of Program in Inclusive Education to the sample of teachers selected, 3rd version of the test prepared from the same construct domain. It was administered to the same group of teachers immediately after completion of the program. Results were tabulated.

Posttest-2 (O₄) (Retention test) – Posttest-2 was prepared following the same procedure used for pretest one. After administration of Program in Inclusive Education to the sample of teachers selected, 4th version of the test prepared from the same construct domain. It was administered to the same group of teachers after a gap of one month. Results were tabulated.

Significance of difference of overall mean of pre and post-test scores:

Mean of the scores of Pre-test (O₂) and Post-test (O₃) were calculated followed by calculation of Standard deviation. Then t- value is calculated.

Test	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	df	t-value	Level of significance (0.01)	Remarks
Pre-test	80	19.18	3.4236	79	16.6	2.64	H ₀ accepted
Post-test	80	24.12	3.2739				H ₂ rejected

Major findings of the Research:

1-Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) for teachers teaching for higher primary level is effective with respect to, Concept & Nature of Inclusive Education, Historical/Legal Background of Inclusive Education.

2-Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) for teachers teaching for higher primary level is effective with respect to, Identifying differently abled students.

3-Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) for teachers teaching for higher primary level is effective with respect to, dealing with differently abled students.

4-Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) for teachers teaching for higher primary level is effective with respect to, Inclusion of differently abled students.

5-The t value from pre-test (O2) and post-test-1(O3) indicates that the Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) for Teachers teaching at higher primary level is significantly effective.

6-The t value from pre-test (O2) and post-test-2, retention test (O4) indicates that the Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) for Teachers teaching at higher primary level is significantly effective.

Recommendations

The Knowledge Based program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) for teachers teaching for higher primary can be used by schools to help their teachers in dealing with differently abled students in the classrooms.

The Knowledge Based program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) for teachers teaching for higher primary can be used by B.Ed. teachers in their colleges to raise the knowledge of teacher trainees with respect to differently abled students.

The Knowledge Based program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) for teachers teaching for higher primary can be used by schools to help their teachers in preparing an individualized educational plan for differently abled students.

Contributions to Knowledge in the Field

Self-learning material prepared for the research program has been definitely used as a basis while implementing inclusion in the classrooms. It will definitely help teachers, teacher educators in guiding the teacher trainees about inclusion of differently abled students. It can be one of the effective programs for schools to plan for training of their teachers about

inclusive education. It has provided all the necessary tools and techniques of identifying the differently abled students. The program will guide the teachers about preparing IEP of specific students. Considering the present scenario of Continuous comprehensive remedial evaluation the program will definitely become the guideline of teaching learning process.

Discussions:

Using results and information found out from the above two objectives program was developed and effectiveness was tested. The results show the obtained 't' value is 16.6 and 11.29 at 0.01 level of significance which is greater than the table value, 2.64. 't' value is significant means research hypothesis is accepted and null hypothesis is rejected. It means that Knowledge Based Program in Inclusive Education (KBPIE) for teachers teaching for higher primary level is effective with respect to, Inclusion of differently abled students. The same findings are there regarding the effectiveness of program (Preparing General Education Teachers for Inclusive Settings: A Constructivist Teacher Education Program, Sharon Lesar, and Susan M. Benner, Laurence Coleman, from University of Tennessee-Knoxville, & John Habel, Western Carolina University). Effectiveness of the support program for general teachers was also reported by Hasbrouck, Jan E.; Christen, Margaret H, in article, Providing Peer Coaching in Inclusive Classrooms: A Tool for Consulting Teachers.).

Findings of the study have various implications in Indian context. It indicates how such a training program is essential for teachers with respect to successful inclusion of differently abled students. This study also indicates the importance of knowledge of laws and rules regarding inclusion of differently abled students, prior training on differently abled students. Less research is carried out on higher primary teachers and their preparedness regarding inclusion of differently abled students. Thus practical implications of the present study will definitely be able to prepare teachers for successful inclusion of differently abled students. It will definitely be a step forward towards development of an inclusive society.

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