



Knowledge and attitude about Inclusive Education of school teachers: A study

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Abstract:

Success of Inclusive Education depends on various factors, of which teacher is the most important factor. For becoming a competent and successful Inclusive teacher, it is necessary to have required knowledge, skills, democratic attitude, positive attitude and an attitude of collaboration and networking.

The present study examined knowledge and attitude of school teachers in urban and rural Pune about school teachers. 300 school teachers were selected from various schools from urban and rural Pune, Maharashtra. The tools used are Attitude scale for inclusion and knowledge test on Inclusion.

The results indicate overall positive attitude of school teachers towards inclusive education and the knowledge level of school teachers about inclusive education are significantly low. Their concept of inclusive education is unclear. They are not clear about Government policies and planning, how to identify different abilities in children, and what remedial treatment can be given to them.

Key Words: Knowledge, Attitude, Inclusive Education,

Introduction:

Inclusive education, which has its origins in special education, originally set out to meet the needs of learners who were being traditionally excluded from the school or were otherwise marginalized within the classroom. Today inclusive education or 'inclusion in education' is a conceptual approach aimed at achieving quality education by making changes to accommodate all learners regardless of their physical, social or psychological differences.

Inclusive education: - "It is an approach that seeks to address the learning needs of all children, youth and adults with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion. It implies all learners, young people with or without disabilities being able to learn together through access to common pre-school provisions, schools and community educational setting with an appropriate network of support services."

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. Research is done about concept & differentiation between segregation & inclusion. Methods techniques are developed to give Special education for specific disabilities in special schools but for inclusive education few efforts about program & curricula can be listed out especially in India. Providing access to education is only the first stage in overcoming exclusion or discrimination. There is a need for a shift in perspectives and values so that diversity is

appreciated and even welcomed, while teachers are given skills to provide all children, including those with different learning needs, with quality education. In the present scenario, it is seen that the previous system of education-general schools and special schools is now changing as inclusive schools. In this respect it becomes essential to assess the existing inclusive practices in the schools. Assessing the attitude and knowledge level of teachers in the schools is thus needed. Attitude of the teachers towards inclusion is of much importance. We also need to develop awareness about inclusion in the teachers.

Objectives of the study:

The study had been undertaken with reference to the following objectives

- To assess the attitudes of teachers about inclusion in urban and rural schools in Pune.
- To assess the knowledge level of teachers with respect to inclusive education in urban and rural schools in Pune.

Methodology:

Survey method has been used for the research. School survey was done.

Sample: The study was conducted on a sample of 300 school teachers belonging to various schools from rural and urban Pune, Maharashtra. The sample was drawn by incidental purposive sampling technique.

Tools used: The following tools had been used for the study.

STATIC: Standardized attitude scale by H. Keith Cochran's STATIC (Scale of Teachers' Attitude towards Inclusive Classrooms)

Knowledge and acceptance test on inclusion: this test was developed and standardized by the researcher.

Statistical Techniques: In the present study percentage was used to interpret the results.

Procedure:

The following procedure was adopted for the present study.

An orientation session about the importance of inclusion, introductory information about different abilities brief information about new policies about the education of differently abled etc. was conducted before administering the tests.

- STATIC-Attitude scale was administered to 150 school teachers from urban area and 150 teachers from rural area of Pune district in Maharashtra.
- Knowledge and acceptance test was administered to 150 school teachers from urban area and 150 teachers from rural area of Pune district in Maharashtra.

Sr. No.	Percentage scores (positive)	Neutral (undecided)
A	59	15
B	55	12
C	39	19
D	35	21

- Interview (open ended) sessions were conducted with the selected principals and teachers.

- The results obtained were scored tabulated and analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques.

Results and Discussion:

The researchers collected the relevant data and subjected it to statistical analysis.

Attitudes of teachers about inclusion in urban and rural schools in Pune.

The responses were categorized and percentage scores of each category were found out by calculating average of the scores to various questions of each category.

A-Attitude towards responsibility and commitment towards inclusion

B- Attitude towards special needs of students in inclusive set up.

C- Attitude towards training and curriculum in teacher education.

D- Opinion about Government policies, assistance of role of special education teachers, infrastructural facilities.

Table-1

2-Knowledge of teachers with respect to inclusive education in urban and rural schools in Pune.

The responses were categorized and percentage scores of each category were found out by calculating average of the scores to various questions of each category.

- A- Government policies about inclusion of all the students in general schools.
- B- Knowledge of disabilities
- C- Concept of inclusive education
- D- Requirements of inclusive education.

Table-2

Sr. No.	Percentage of correct responses
A	20
B	40
C	33
D	30

Findings:1- Attitude of teachers

- The overall attitude about inclusive education of school teachers is positive.
- Categorical analysis implies the awareness of school teachers about their responsibilities
- The teachers are aware about the needs of students with different abilities.

- The school teachers both rural and urban have a slight negative attitude about training and curriculum in teacher education with respect to inclusive education. They pointed out this as one of the most important challenges in the path of inclusive education.
- They are not satisfied about the policies of government, infrastructural facilities available and cooperation of co-teachers in special education.

Knowledge about inclusive education:

- The school teachers are not clear about Government policies and planning of inclusive education
- The school teachers are not up to the mark regarding the knowledge of various disabilities.
- The school teachers are not clear about the concept of inclusive education.
- They are not aware about the requirements of inclusive education.

Interpretation:

Though the results are indicating the positive attitude about inclusive education of school teachers, they are not satisfied with many things such as infrastructural facilities, excess work, lack of proper training etc.

Knowledge not only about the concept but about the implementation of various techniques and methods is also essential.

Conclusion:

Although the study reported a positive attitude of school teachers, one cannot deny the fact that it is a slight positive attitude. The knowledge level regarding inclusion is also significantly low.

The interviews and discussions with the principals and school teachers indicate the necessity of knowledge and application based program on inclusion. It clearly gives the idea about various issues and challenges about inclusive education such as human resource deficit, lack of collaboration between special co-teachers and regular teachers, and the most important is inappropriate training program in inclusive education.

The goal of achieving universalization of education is incomplete without inclusive and integrated education of the challenged group of students.

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