



ASSESSING PHYSICAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES FOR SUCCESSFUL INCLUSION IN SCHOOLS

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Abstract

The overall goal of inclusive- and child friendly education is developing educational settings where all learners are welcome, participating and treated equally. Inclusive Education lays the foundation to an inclusive society accepting, respecting and celebrating diversity. The coverage of this study is English and Marathi medium, urban and rural schools in Pune district. The survey is regarding physical and Human resources for inclusion of differently abled students. Interview with the principals of different schools was one of the important aspects of the research. Principals' interviews focused on the barriers as well as the requirements (physical and human resources) for successful inclusion of all in the classroom. It also highlights the need of training of teachers regarding inclusion of all.



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Introduction:

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 defined as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners and of reducing exclusion within education system, while focusing on enrolment, effectiveness, diversity (including gender), health, and active involvement of parents and communities. 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.

Need and Importance:

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 is, in dealing with inclusion, and making it successful.

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-

To assess Physical and Human Resources in urban and rural schools in Pune with respect to--

- i. Modification in infrastructure for inclusion of differently abled students.
- ii. Material essential for inclusion of differently abled students.
- iii. Technological support required for inclusion of differently abled students.
- iv. Availability of Human Resources for inclusion of differently abled students.
- v. Knowledge, Acceptance and attitude of teachers in urban and rural schools in Pune with respect to inclusion of differently abled students.

Research questions :

- i. Are the physical resources in school catering for inclusion of differently abled students?
- ii. What sort of technological support is available in the school for inclusion of differently abled students?
- iii. How adequate are the available learning and teaching materials in the school for inclusion of differently abled students?
- iv. What sort of human resources are available in the schools to cater the needs of differently abled students?
- vi. What is the current status of training of the school teachers with respect to inclusion of differently abled students?

Scope of Research:

The coverage of this study is English and Marathi medium, urban and rural schools in Pune district. The survey is regarding physical and human resources for inclusion of differently abled students.

Delimitations:

- i. The study was delimited to Urban and Rural English and Marathi Medium Schools in Pune District.
- ii. The study was delimited to Interviews of the principals of Urban and Rural English and Marathi Medium Schools in Pune District.

- iii. The study was delimited to assess the existing status of physical and human resources regarding inclusion of all children.

Limitations:

- i. Results of the study was dependant on honest responses of respondents
- ii. Age, IQ, attitude interest has not been considered.

Methodology:

Survey method was used for assessing physical and human resources for successful Inclusion.

Population:All the schools in urban and rural Pune were the population for studying Inclusive Practices.

Sample:

A sample of 50 principals was selected to assess the existing inclusive practices and to identify the barriers in implementing Inclusive Education. The method of sampling was random sampling. It was selected on the lottery basis.

Tools and technique:

Interview:

Interview is a widely used tool to assess people's experiences, opinions, perceptions, attitudes etc. A Semi-structured interview was used as one of the tool of present survey. A set of questions was constructed to identify the current inclusive practices and to find out the barriers. Construction of the semi-structured interview involves;

- reviewing the literature
- Construction of the first set of interview questions
- Validation by experts
- Pilot testing
- developing the final set of interview questions

Final set of interview Questions:

The final set of questions to be given for the Principals of the selected schools consists of five main aspects of Inclusive Practices and 20 questions.

- Concept of Inclusion----- -3 questions
- Infastructural Facilities----- -5 questions
- Human Resources----- 6 questions
- Curriculum----- 2 questions
- Overall opinion----- 4 questions

Above framework was supported by more open ended questions promoting flexibility of the responses to obtain qualitative information.

Data Collection

The interview sessions were conducted as per the convenience of researcher and principals. It was followed by a telephonic conversation wherever necessary. The sessions were conducted in comfortable, informal environment.

Data Analysis:

The responses were categorized and a quantitative analysis by percentage as a tool and qualitative analysis by analyzing the responses were done. **Criteria wise Analysis**

Criteria –1 Concept and Importance of Inclusion

According to the Principals of urban and rural schools there is no possibility of having a clear knowledge about all the aspects of inclusion of differently abled students as far as the general teachers are concerned.

Criteria- 2 Barriers faced in implementing, and overcoming challenges

Various aspects are discussed in detail by almost all principals. Principals of both the types of schools (Urban & Rural schools) gave stress on many common factors that they feel are the important barriers or challenges in the path of successful inclusion of differently abled students. These responses are categorized as

- a)Teacher –pupil ratio (class strength)
- b) Training of teachers
- c) Support from society
- d) Availability of special teachers
- e) Time management
- f) Detection of child with special needs
- g) Red- tapism
- h) Workload of school teachers
- i) Teachers' attitude
- j) Developmental aspects of differently abled students
- k) Parental support

No	Barrier in implementing inclusion	% of responses given by Principals	
		Urban School	Rural School
a	Teacher–pupil ratio(class strength)	90%	75%

Table 1 - Teacher –pupil ratio

Teacher-pupil ratio – According to most of the principals, in present situation the strength of the classroom is actually a big issue for the teachers. Conducting curricular, co-curricular activities, implementing CCE, and other tasks made teachers overburdened. In such cases it might not be possible to give justice to all the students equally and to modify teaching according to needs of each and every student. Some of differently abled students can be accommodated but not all. Specially some of the Marathi medium schools are having classes with maximum strength. (Even greater than 75).Specially urban schools are facing the problem of class strength.

B-Training of teachers –

No	Barrier in implementing inclusion	% of responses given by Principals	
		Urban School	Rural School
b	Training of teachers	95%	80%

Table:2 Training of teachers

According to the views of both the types of principals, teachers are not well trained or sufficiently experienced to handle differently abled students. They are not trained to handle children in inclusive settings. According to most of the participants at least they should know theoretically about all the different abilities, how to identify, and what special efforts can be made for their inclusion. All of them pointed out the fact that in teacher education courses such as D. Ed. and B.Ed., education of differently abled students comes across as a fleeting reference, so their training is the important matter. No any special training is given as far as Inclusive Education is concerned. It becomes the task of the schools and according to the principals it is just very difficult. In case of inclusive schools (the schools where special efforts are taken for successful inclusion of differently abled students), it becomes the school’s responsibility to teachers special inputs and training.

c- Support from society-

No	Barrier in implementing inclusion	% of responses given by Principals	
		Urban School	Rural School
c	Support from society	50%	60%

Table 3: Support from society

According to 50% principals from urban schools, getting support from society members is a barrier in implementing inclusion, while 66% of the principals from rural schools feel the same.

d- Availability of resources:

No	Barrier in implementing inclusion	% of responses given by Principals	
		Urban School	Rural School
d	Availability of resources	45%	55%

Table 4: Availability of resources

According to 45% principals from urban schools, availability of resources is one of the important barriers in implementing inclusion while 55% of the principals from rural schools feel the same.

e- Availability of special teachers –

No	Barrier in implementing inclusion	% of responses given by Principals	
		Urban School	Rural School
e	Availability of Special Teachers	45%	70%

Table 5: Availability of special teachers

According to the principals of various urban schools there is no any provision of special teacher in their schools. There are lot many things regarding inclusion of differently abled students, where special guidance is needed and it is not possible for the schools to provide such facilities today.

f- Time-management

No	Barrier in implementing inclusion	% of responses given by Principals	
		Urban School	Rural School
f	Time-management	85%	90%

Table 6: Time management

g- Detection of child with special needs –

No	Barrier in implementing inclusion	% of responses given by Principals	
		Urban School	Rural School
g	Detection of child with special needs	65%	55%

Table 7: Detection of child with special needs

h- Red-tapism –

Early detection is essential in any case of different ability, and the schools are not sufficiently equipped as far as human and physical resources are concerned. It is more or less the same opinion of the principals of urban and rural schools.

No	Barrier in implementing inclusion	% of responses given by Principals	
		Urban School	Rural School
H	Red tapism	30%	25%

Table 8: Red-tapism

i- Workload of teachers –

No	Barrier in implementing inclusion	% of responses given by Principals	
		Urban School	Rural School
I	Workload of school teachers	60%	75%

Table 9: Workload of teachers

As already discussed, according to the principals of urban and rural schools, teachers are already overburdened with the activities, in such case it becomes difficult for them to pay individual attention to each and every student.

j- Teachers' attitude–

No	Barrier in implementing inclusion	% of responses given by Principals	
		Urban School	Rural School
J	Teachers' attitude	25%	20%

Table 10: Teachers' attitude

Attitude of teachers play an important role in including differently abled students in general schools. —Academic and emotional training of teachers also needs working on so that no child is detrimentally affected. —Teachers and professional feel that their school is for normal children only, so their attitude is the main barrier.

k- Developmental aspects of differently abled students-

No	Barrier in implementing inclusion	% of responses given by Principals	
		Urban School	Rural School
K	Developmental aspects of differently abled students	40%	45%

Table 11: Developmental aspects of differently abled students

According to 40% urban and 46% rural school principals ,the main challenge is if a child is lagging behind in age mentally then it becomes slightly difficult for the teachers to handle that child along with children of the same chronological age in that class. If it is a physical deformity it can be overcome but if it is a serious mental deformity then one has to identify if the child needs to be segregated.

l- Parental support:

No	Barrier in implementing inclusion	% of responses given by Principals	
		Urban School	Rural School
L	Parental support	40%	60%

Table 12: Parental support

—At times, parents have misconceptions about their children. Continuous communication and interaction with the parents helps in dispelling these myths and aids in the children's educational performance. Moreover students are also aware that they cannot simply tell stories and take their parents for a ride. —

Criteria-3 Category easier to accommodate Questions were asked regarding various forms of disabilities and the responses were tabulated as-

Nature of Disability	Urban Schools	Rural Schools
Gifted	60%	65%
Mentally Challenged		
Visually Impaired		
Hearing Impaired		
Orthopedic Impairments	55%	45%
Learning Disabilities	15%	10%

Conclusion: According to the principals of both the categories, urban and rural, gifted and orthopedically impaired students are easier to include than any other differently abled student

Criteria -5 Teacher training and selection:

Descriptive Analysis – According to all the principals of urban schools i.e. (100%) there is no any provision made in pre- service training of teachers regarding teachinglearning of differently abled students. Same fact has been raised by the principals of rural schools. All the participants lamented the poor state of teacher training and education when it came to working in an inclusive setup and handling students with special needs. They felt that the current state of affairs in this regard is highly insufficient, discouraging. Even selection procedures of teachers are severely hit due to this lack of training. —The interviewees were in agreement that lack of training is also one of the reasons why at the time of selecting teachers, the inclusive schools are left with no option but to test and focus a lot on teacher attitude rather than training. In teacher education courses such as B.Ed. and D.Ed., education of special needs children comes across as only a fleeting reference and so the teachers are not welltrained or sufficiently experienced to handle children in inclusive settings. Due to this it becomes the school’s onus to give teachers special inputs and training and this is not always feasible. Talking about in-service training of teachers about inclusive education.

Conclusion: All the principals mentioned that at least training about how to identify the differently abled students, what modifications can be done in the existing situation, and what the various remedial measures are, will be definitely helpful.

Involvement of parents in schooling of differently abled students

Parent Involvement	Urban Schools	Rural Schools
Satisfactory	25%	15%
Moderate	30%	20%
Unsatisfactory	45%	65%

Conclusion: parents of the differently abled students of students studying in urban schools are more involved in their schooling than parents of students studying in rural schools.

Teachers' attitude about Inclusion. Out of all the barriers that inclusive education faces, Teacher attitude is the most tenacious and tricky obstacle to overcome in inclusive education.

Teachers Attitude regarding Inclusion	Urban Schools	Rural Schools
Positive	55%	50%
Average	25%	20%
Negative	20%	30%

Conclusion: There is very minute difference in urban and rural schools as far as the teachers' attitude about inclusion of differently abled students is concerned.

Conclusion:

- 1- Both the type of school buildings are not designed according to the plan necessary for an Inclusive School.
- 2- Modifications and infrastructural facilities provided in school are in unsatisfactory to moderate range.
- 3- Material essential for inclusion of differently abled student is not adequate in both Urban and Rural schools.
- 4- As far as successful inclusion of differently abled students is concerned, both the schools have very less technological modifications done.
- 5- Maximum numbers of schools do not have any provision of special teachers or paraeducators.
- 6- Rural categories are having provision of Para educators but their number is less as No. of schools in particular block is concerned. Frequency of visits of Para-educators to schools is very less.
- 7- There is no any provision made in pre- service training of teachers regarding teaching-learning of differently abled students.

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