

An Analysis of the Stake Holders' Opinion Towards Inclusive Education

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ABSTRACT

AIM: This paper aimed to explore the perception of teachers, principals, and staff working in Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) schools towards inclusive education.

METHOD: A sample of 60 teachers teaching from 10 (MCD) schools in New Delhi was selected randomly. Data was collected with the help of a self-constructed attitude scale. The scale includes 4 broad components i) categorization of Classes ii) categorization of the roles of teachers iii). Categorization of Students as per their gender and iv) Categorization as per medium of instruction. Under each component, 5 items were included. Each item was rated at a 5-point scale ranging from strongly agree to disagree strongly. The study findings were synthesized according to the aspects of teachers' perception and knowledge towards inclusive education.

FINDINGS: The study revealed that students with disabilities are benefitted with inclusive education. It is also found that MCD schools are changing rapidly to meet the learning needs of all the children seeking to improve students' learning outcomes in academic achievements, social skills, and personal development. Also, many factors still hinder the effective implementation of inclusive education in MCD Schools in Delhi.

Keywords: Children with Special Needs (CWSN), Inclusive Education, Stakeholders.

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PROLOGUE

The Indian government is constitutionally committed to safeguarding the right of basic education of every child. Therefore, it has shaped several policies around inclusive education since India's independence in 1947. Most of the prescribed wits have been commenced by the Govt. of India. The Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC) scheme of 1974 (NCERT, 2011) was launched a long time back. It has also been emphasized by the Kothari Commission (1966) about the importance of educating children with disabilities during the post-independence period (Pandey 2006). In 1980s it was realized by the welfare ministry the crucial need of an institution to monitor and regulate the HRD programs in the field of disability rehabilitation. As per UNESCO, nearly 7.8 million children aged under 19 live with a disability. The National Policy on Education, 1986 (NPE, 1986), and the Programme of Action (1992) stressed the need to integrate children with special needs with other students. The Government of India has also successfully implemented the District Primary Education Project (DPEP) in 1994–95 to overhaul and improve inclusive children's situations through their active participation in education. In late 1997 the philosophy of inclusive education was added in District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) to achieve the universalization of Elementary Education. Global experience and research have proved that a universal and standardized assessment system across all schools is vital. A "right" to education isn't reachable without a mechanism to the quantity that students can attain meaningful learning outcomes through their schooling. Board exams come too late – around 80% of schools do not reach the board level, ending at Grade 5 or 8. NEP's current provision around assessments for all students at key stages – like grades 3, 5, and 8 – can allow two critical things. First, it can be used to publicize school-level results, giving parents information. This will thrust private and government schools to up their game. Second, it will give the government

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system detailed information to target and review school support mechanisms. The RTE is the right place to ensure the presence of such fundamental infrastructure.

An inclusive setting refers to the education in which all the students are included in one regular classroom. It means including specially-abled students in the mainstream classes in school. Regardless of their abilities and disabilities, all the students' strength and weakness are included in the mainstream classes. Right to education act 2009 mandates free and compulsory education to all the students between the age group of 6 to 14 years. Its concept and understanding became more expansive and broad when it brought the inclusion of every child, free and compulsory education should be provided to all the students, either normal or specially-abled child or the one who belongs to Children with Special Needs (CWSN) category. Education should be provided to all the students between the age group of 6 to 14 years. It is a fundamental right of every child to receive education in a general education school. Children between the age group of 6 to 14 years are entitled to receive free and compulsory education. Further amendments were made in which children with severe or multiple disabilities have the right to receive education from a home-based educational system. It is essential to change the old norms and cultures that were followed in the schools. Change in the culture and the norms of the contemporary schools will emphasize and increase active learning,

increasing attention to different students. Special schools and education is for the students with medical problems and disability that looks at the child as a problem. They believe in looking for the child's problem, diagnosing the problem, and then taking various measures for their betterment.

Education is the basic right of every human being, and every human has the right to be educated and treated equally despite physical, mental, or any other disability. Inclusive education focuses on various groups that are usually not given educational opportunities. Inclusive education supports and helps students with disabilities. Poor children, children from different linguistic backgrounds, and children from weaker societies, especially abled students, are included in inclusive education. Every child, person, the student has the right to be educated in the same environment where a normal child is educated.

The active involvement and support of the schools' administrators in implementing the inclusive education program are critical. Schools with administrative support for inclusive education demonstrate a significant increase in awareness regarding the concept of inclusion. A study (Salisbury & McGregor, 2002) suggests that the school principals have an essential role in improving the school environment and implementing educational policy. The researchers demonstrate the complex relationships between the school staff and the school climate and emphasize the importance of the principal's awareness of the staff's role in successfully implementing inclusion. When most teachers share in an open, dynamic discussion group regarding their beliefs, difficulties, different aspects of teaching, and ways of coping with dilemmas, this encourages them to find better-coping solutions and support in their difficulties with the inclusion process. In addition, when the school principal shares the decision-making process with the school staff, this contributes to more educational accountability and responsibility.

In the past few years, many students have gone through and experienced exclusion from the class or schools. Some students with special needs were excluded from classes, schools, and education of any kind. When a teacher discriminates between normal and physically challenged children, it hinders their achievements, expectations, hope, and self-concept, further demotivates them towards their career and educational goals.

Therefore, there was a felt need to conduct a perceptual study of teachers on inclusive education provisions.

METHODOLOGY

A sample of 60 teachers teaching in 10 Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) schools in New Delhi was selected randomly. Data was collected with the help of a self-constructed attitude scale. The scale includes 4 broad components

- Perception on the categorization of Classes as per disability
 - Perception on the categorization of the roles of teachers
 - Perception on Categorization of Students as per gender and
 - Perception of Categorization as per medium of instruction.
- Under each components 5 items were included. Each item was rated at 5-point scale ranging from strongly agree to disagree strongly.

- **H0₁:** There is no significant difference in the opinion of teachers on the categorization of students as per types of disability

Table 1 indicates that the mean score of the responses of male teachers and female teachers are 43.94 and 40.76, respectively. The calculated T value is 3.24, which is more than the table value at 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in teachers' opinions on students' categorization of disability types is rejected. Henceforth, it can be concluded that the opinion of the male and female teachers differs significantly.

- **H0₂:** There is no significant difference between teachers' perception on the categorization of the roles of teachers

Table 2 indicates that the mean score of male and female teacher's is 42.77 and 43.94, respectively. Calculated T value is 0.94, which is less than the table value 2.71 at 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant difference between teachers' perception of the roles' categorization is accepted. Henceforth, it can be said that there is no significant difference in the opinion of the male and female teachers based on the roles of teachers

- **H0₃:** There is no significant difference between teachers' perception of the categorization of students as per gender

Table 3 reveals that the mean score on the perception of male and female teachers on class categorization as per gender is 42.77 and 40.76, respectively. The calculated T value is 1.82, less than the 0.01 and 0.05 level of significance table value. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no significant difference between teachers' perception of the categorization of students as per gender is accepted. Henceforth, there is no significant difference between teachers' perceptions on the categorization of students as per gender.

- **H0₄:** There is no significant difference between teachers' perceptions on the categorization of students as per medium of instruction.

It can be seen from Table 4 that the mean score on the perception of male and female teachers on the categorization of classes as per medium of instruction is 41.56 and 44.17, respectively. The calculated T value is 0.692, which is less than the 0.01 and 0.05 level of significance table value. Therefore, the hypothesis saying no significant difference between teachers in the perception on categorization as per instruction medium is accepted. Henceforth it can be said that there is no significant difference in the opinion

Table 1: Perception of Teachers on Categorization of students as per types of disability

Variable	Compared Groups	N	MEAN	SD	df	't'	Significance
Perception on Categorization of students as per types of Disability	Male teachers	30	43.94	8.14	58	3.24	Significant
	Female teachers	30	40.76	11.44			

Table 2: Perception of Teachers on the categorization of the roles of teachers

Factor	Compared Groups	N	Mean	SD	df	T	Significance
Perception on the categorization of the roles of teachers	Male teachers	30	42.77	10.67	58	0.94	Not significant
	Female teachers	30	43.94	8.14			



Table 3: Perception on Categorization of Students as per gender

Factor	Compared Groups	N	Mean	SD	df	T	Significance
Perception on Categorization of Students as per gender	Male teachers	30	42.77	10.67	58	1.82	Not significant
	Female teachers	30	40.76	11.44			

Table 4: Perception of Categorization as per medium of instruction

Factor	Compared Groups	N	Mean	D	df	T	Significance
Perception of Categorization as per medium of instruction	Male teachers	30	41.56	7.98	58	0.692	Not significant
	Female teachers	30	44.17	9.89			

Table 5: Opinion of Teachers in Regards to Inclusive Education.

Items	Yes (%)	No	Cannot Say (%)
Effectively Implementation of Inclusive Education	70	20	10
Implementation of Inclusive Education Helped Disabled Children	77	17	6
Inclusive education has improved the learning outcomes of the learners	66	20	14
Inclusive education gave a chance to the children to participate in Extra-curricular Activities	81	17	2
Inclusive education helped in interaction among learners	78	12	10
Competency in teachers helped to understand the students	91	7	2
Inclusive education gave the opportunity to teachers to enhance their skills of handling the teachers.	89	10	1

of the male and female teachers in regards to the categorization of students as per medium of instruction.

FINDING OF THE STUDY

It can be seen from Table 5 that inclusive education has been implemented in the MCD schools of Delhi and it is effective for learners having any types of disability. It has been found that students with disabilities are benefitted because of inclusive education. It is also found that MCD schools are changing for the better to meet the learning needs of all the children seeking to improve the learning outcomes of students in academic achievements, social skills and personal development.

There were several successes and strengths of inclusive education in MCD schools in Delhi. Students with disabilities were allowed to participate in both curricular and extra-curricular activities.

It has also been investigated that regular teachers lack the skills to handle students with disabilities. Skills that are required to cater the need of every child in the classroom, regular teachers lack those skills. This study found that the inclusive education program could be successfully implemented if the teachers' competency increases by providing them in-service teacher training. Thus, opportunities to attend courses related to the inclusive education program have to be created, especially for those who lack exposure and training in special education. Adjustments towards the pedagogical aspects can be trained internally by experienced teachers to the new teachers. The effort towards collaborative teaching between mainstream and special education teachers should be put in place. Indirectly, this effort could help to reinforce a cooperative spirit in implementing inclusive education.

EPILOGUE

It has been observed that there is a lack of awareness among society regarding children's education with disabilities. It has also been found that teachers were not aware of various teaching skills and strategies required to cater to all the children in the classroom. Though inclusive education has been successfully implemented in MCD schools, there are still some challenges to address for the successful and effective implementation of inclusive education in MCD schools.

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