

A Comparative Study of Attitude of Government and Private School Teachers towards Inclusive Education

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Inclusive education is the education for all kinds of children in the same classroom setup irrespective of their social and economic background and type of disability. The success of this concept entirely depends on teachers, their commitment and attitude towards different categories of children in the inclusive settings. Inclusive education is in its nascent stage in India. The present study aims to find the attitude of government school and private school teachers towards inclusive education. The study was conducted on a sample of 200 primary and upper-primary school teachers (100 Government school teachers and 100 Private school teachers) of different cities of Uttar Pradesh, a North Indian state. The sample was selected through multistage stratified random sampling. Two tools were used for collection of data; 'Background Information Proforma', prepared by the researcher herself and a standardized tool; 'Teacher Attitude Scale Towards Inclusive Education' by Dr. Vishal Sood and Dr. Arti Anand. Four different aspects of attitude towards inclusive

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education were studied using the scale; Psychological/Behavioural, Social and Parent related, Curricular and Co-curricular and Administrative aspect. The data collected was analyzed using percentage, mean and correlation. Majority of the teachers were found to be female in both Government (63%) and Primary (71%) schools. A greater percentage of government and private school teachers (52% and 98% respectively) were found to be B.Ed qualified as compared to having B.T.C./D.El.Ed. (48% and 2% respectively) as the qualification for teaching.

On comparing the attitude of government and private school teachers, no significant difference was found between the mean score of attitude of government and private school teachers towards any aspect of inclusive education. However, the Government school teachers were found to have 'most favourable attitude' in greater percentage (38%) towards Inclusive Education as compared to the Private school teachers (31%). Significant correlation(0.56) were found between the level of attitude of teachers in different aspects with different background variables namely 'Curricular and Co-curricular aspect' with teaching experience ($r=0.19$), 'Psychological/Behavioural aspect' of inclusive education with educational qualification of teachers ($r=0.15$) and 'total attitude score' with gender ($r =0.22$). The study suggests the need for more feasible programmes and practical trainings for Inclusive education of both Government and Private school teachers.

[**Keywords** : Inclusive education, Government school teachers, Private school teachers]

1. Introduction

Inclusive Education is a system of education which covers a broader approach of education for all and is more humanitarian in nature. It involves removing all barriers in the environment, teaching, socialization and assessment at all levels. Although the concept of inclusive education is not new to the western countries but it is still in its infantile stage in India. It expands vision and outlook to see the world. It fulfils the goals of education in true manner by developing the capabilities to fight against injustice and lots of different unhealthy practices likes marginalisation within the society. By providing inclusive education, discrimination can be removed and each and every person can give the contribution to develop the country in his/ her own way.

India has been advocating the right to education for all children from diverse background and needs since the conception of Indian constitution. The article 45 of constitution provided right to education of all children upto 6 years of age. The 86th amendment to the constitution of India in 2002, inserted Article 21A which made Right

to Education as a fundamental right for children between 6-14 years. The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protections of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 was formulated which stresses the need to provide free of cost education to all children in an appropriate environment till they are 18 years old.

At the global level in order to ensure equal educational opportunities for all without discrimination or exclusion, UNESCO promotes a human rights-based approach to education. UNESCO is advocating for the inclusive dimensions of the right to education, notably through the implementation of the 1960 UNESCO Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education, which provide an international legal framework for the protection of the right to education and prohibit any form of discrimination, including any distinction, exclusion, limitation or preference.

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (1994) emerged as a result of deliberations held by more than 300 participants representing 92 governments and 25 international organizations in June 1994. For furthering the objectives of Education for all, it considered the fundamental policy-shifts required to promote inclusive education. It emphasizes that schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions.

National Curriculum Framework, 2005 provided a policy of inclusion to be implemented in all schools and throughout Indian education system. To develop curriculum for special education and its inclusion in general teacher preparation programmes, Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) made a historic collaboration with National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) on January 19, 2005. Schools were expected to become centers that prepare children for life and ensure that all children, especially the differently abled children, children from marginalized sections, and children in difficult circumstances get the maximum benefit of this critical area of education.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was launched by the Government of India to achieve the goal of Universalization of Elementary Education. Three important aspect of UEE are access, enrolment and retention of all children in 6-14 years of age. A zero rejection policy has been adopted under SSA, which ensures that every Child with Special

Needs (CWSN), irrespective of the kind, category and degree of disability, is provided meaningful and quality education. It covers the following components under education for children with special needs:-Early detection and identification, functional and formal assessment, Educational Placement, Aids and appliances, Support services, Teacher training, Resource support, Individual Educational Plan (IEP), Parental training and community mobilization, Planning and management, Strengthening of special schools, Removal of Architectural barriers, Research, Monitoring and evaluation, Girls with disabilities.

The Indian Education system has to cover a long distance to achieve the UN Sustainable development goals of Inclusive Education till 2030. UN has given 17 goals for sustainable development which are to be achieved by the year 2030. The goal number 4 is about Quality Education for all. The goal number 4 ensures inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities. Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, nonviolent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

The new National Education Policy 2020 which is to be implemented in a year or two is a ray of hope to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal of universal quality education and lifelong learning. The National Education Policy, 2020 has conveyed the structural change in the education system which aims to make India the global knowledge superpower ensuring equity and inclusion. NEP aims to ensure equity and inclusion in and through education by addressing all forms of exclusion and marginalization, disparity, vulnerability and inequality in education access, participation, retention and completion and in learning outcomes. Universal provisioning of quality early childhood development, care, and education must thus be achieved as soon as possible, and no later than 2030. During this transitional phase, the education system of India is facing several challenges and hurdles in the implementation of inclusive education.

1.1 Challenges to Implement Inclusive Education in India

The historical background of education of Children with Special Needs reveals that there were two important movements which made revolutionary changes in this field :

1. Segregation (Special Education) to Integration.
2. Integration (Integrated Education) to Inclusion (Inclusive Education).

The concept of segregation focussed on institutionalisation of exceptional children. Further the concept of integrated education came into being which laid emphasis on integration of mildly disabled children into regular classroom setup. The latest approach of education for all is based on a more humanitarian approach.

Inclusive education is a more broader and wider concept than integrated education as it includes not only the disabled children but children from diverse social and economic background.

India has started preparing itself for the implementation of inclusive education system in various cities. The teacher training courses like B.Ed. and D.El.Ed. have already incorporated the subject of inclusive education. Yet, due to certain misconceptions, blind beliefs, backwardness, lack of awareness among general population, year old discrimination towards certain cadre of society, the concept of inclusive education is not being understood and accepted by people in every nook and corner of various cities. The major challenges faced in the acceptance and implementation of inclusive education are :

- Dropout rates are very high in villages and socially disadvantaged sections of society like economically weaker sections and certain backward castes.
- Parents of economically weaker sections prefer to send their children for earning money working as a labourer rather than sending the child to school for education. They do not understand the importance of education due to their generation old sufferings.
- Families do not have enough information about their child's particular disability, its effects and its impact on their child's capacity.
- Due to various prejudices attached with learning disabilities & autism these children are unable to get admission in schools. Many private schools deny the admission to autistic children.
- Majority of schools in India are poorly designed and few are equipped to satisfy the unique needs of children with disabilities.

- Many old and even new teachers have lack of skills, lack of necessary attitude and lack of competencies to deal effectively with children with special educational needs.
- Architectural barrier are also a crucial obstacles as school buildings don't have facilities of ramps, accessible toilets, etc.
- During a regular school it is difficult to provide special material and method within the instructional setting.

The attitude of teachers is utmost important in the Inclusive Education system. The right attitude towards education for all in a common classroom setup will definitely lead to right practices of including all kind of children in the classrooms no matter what pains and efforts are required. Inclusive education is about how we develop and design our schools, classrooms, programs and activities so that all students learn and participate together.

The present study was conducted with the objective to study the attitude of teachers towards inclusive education in the present scenario. The acceptability of Inclusive Education system by both government teachers and private teachers was studied.

2. Methodology

2.1 Sample Characteristics and Sampling Design

The present study was conducted in Uttar Pradesh, a North Indian state. There are 75 districts in Uttar Pradesh out of which the researcher has selected 6 districts randomly from Eastern and Western Uttar Pradesh. The sample comprised about 200 primary and upper primary teachers of government and private schools (100 private school teachers and 100 government school teachers) of Uttar Pradesh state. The sample of 200 primary and upper primary teachers of government and private schools were selected using multistage stratified random sampling method. In first stage, out of the 75 districts of Uttar Pradesh the researcher selected 6 districts from eastern & western randomly. In the second stage, schools were selected randomly out of the list of different Government schools and Private schools obtained from Nagar Nigam office and online sites. In the third stage, 100 teachers from government schools and 100 teachers from private schools were selected randomly from the list of teachers obtained from the selected schools.

2·2 Tools Used in the Study

Mainly two types of data was collected in the present study using different tools :

2·2·1 Background Information

A proforma prepared by the researcher herself was used for collecting related information. There were two section in this proforma :

- a. Personal data of teachers :** The teachers were enquired about the level of teaching, teaching experience, educational qualification etc.
- b. Information regarding inclusive education setting :** The teachers were asked whether they had any special need students in their classroom.

2·2·2 Attitude of Teachers towards Inclusive Education

To study the attitude of teachers firstly, the teachers were asked about their attitudes towards inclusion of students with general non-acceptable behaviours like children who are shy, children who have language difficulties etc. in regular classrooms. Secondly, a standardized tool “Teacher Attitude Scale Towards Inclusive Education” (TASTIE) by Dr. Vishal Sood and Dr. Arti Anand (2011) was used to study the attitude towards 4 aspects of Inclusive Education; 1) Psychological/Behavioural aspects, 2) Social & Parents related aspects of inclusive education, 3) Curricular & Co-curricular aspects of inclusive education, 4) Administrative aspects of inclusive education.

It is an Indian tool and number of the items in this tool are 47. Each of the areas had 10- 13 items. It is a self-administering and self-reporting scale. The scale had statements requiring information on either of the options on a continuum as; Agree , Undecided , Disagree.

2·3 Procedure of Data Collection

To achieve the research objective, the data were collected using survey method. The addresses of the households and the contact number, email addresses and whatsapp number of teachers in various cities were collected from online sources. Firstly researcher had established a rapport with the teachers and explained the

purpose of the study and the consent regarding participation in the survey was obtained. The researcher collected the data with the help of online sources, the link for Google form were sent through email and whatsapp. The teachers responded by filling and submitting the google forms through online mode only.

3. Results and Discussion:

3-1 Background Information of Respondents

- a. **Personal Details :** Majority of the teachers were found to be female in both government (63%) and private (71%) schools. A greater percentage of government and private school teachers were found to be B.Ed. qualified as compared to having B.T.C./ D.El.Ed. as the qualification for teaching.

Table-3.1a : Personal details of the Respondents/Teachers

Personal details of teachers	Government school teachers (n=100)		Private school teachers (n=100)		Total (n=200)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Gender	37	63	29	71	66(33%)	134(67%)
Educational qualifications	B.Ed	B.T.C	B.Ed	B.T.C	B.Ed	B.T.C
	52	48	98	2	150(75%)	50(25%)
Level of teaching	Primary level	Upper P.L.	Primary level	Upper P.L.	Primary level	Upper P.L.
	61	39	43	57	104(52%)	96(48%)

- b. **Information regarding inclusive education setting :** The teachers were also enquired about whether they had any experience of teaching children from diverse background and needs by asking them if they had any slow learners, physically disabled, sensory disabled, emotionally disabled or hyperactive children in their classes. Majority of the teachers reported to have slow learners in their classroom followed by physically disabled, hyperactive and sensory disabled children as shown in the table-3.1b. Thus, almost all the teachers reported to have the experience of teaching children in an inclusive education setting.

Table-3.1b : Different categories of Special Children in the classrooms of Government and Private School Teachers

Category of Special Children in Classroom	Government School Teachers (n=100)	Private School Teachers (n=100)
Slow learners	83	97
Physically disabled	67	38
Sensory disabled	7	1
Emotionally disturbed	4	2
Hyperactive children	1	14

Note : Multiple responses included; percentage may exceed 100.

3.2a Attitude of government & private school teachers towards Inclusive Education

On asking the teachers about inclusion of students with general non-acceptable behaviours like children who are shy, children who have language difficulties etc. in regular classrooms, it was found that mainly the inclusion of the children with anti-social behaviours like children who are verbally aggressive, who do not follow school rules, who are frequently absent, who physically harm others was not acceptable by the teachers of both government and private schools (Table-3.2a).

Table-3.2a : Attitude of teachers towards Inclusion of children according to their behaviour in regular classrooms

Category of Children to be included in regular classroom according to their behaviour	Government School Teachers (n=100)	Private School Teachers (n=100)
Who fail in exams	88	96
Who are shy	97	95
Who have language difficulties	49	52
Who are verbally aggressive in class	5	2
Who do not follow school rules	0	0
Who are frequently absent	0	0
Who are inattentive in class	70	56
Who physically harm others	0	0

Note : Multiple responses included; percentage may exceed 100.

3.2b : Comparison of mean scores of government and private school teachers on TASTIE Scale

Aspects of Inclusive Education	Govt. school teachers		Pvt. school teachers		Z-score	S/NS
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Psychological/ Behavioural aspect	26.67	3.38	27.44	2.69	-1.56	NS
Social and parents related aspects	27.78	4.47	27.43	2.97	1.19	NS
Curricular and Co-Curricular aspects	27.71	4.24	27.23	3.05	1.19	NS
Administrative aspects	27.18	4.45	26.74	3.6	0.75	NS
Total attitude score	109.34	10.07	108.84	0.29	0.25	NS

The attitude of teachers towards four aspects of Inclusive Education : 1) Psychological/Behavioural aspects, 2) Social and Parents related aspects of inclusive education, 3) Curricular and Co-curricular aspects of inclusive education, 4) Administrative was studied using the standardized scale. No significant difference was found between the mean scores of government and private school teachers in all the four aspects of inclusive education as shown in the table-3.2b.

Majority of the government and private school teachers had 'moderate' or favourable attitude towards inclusive education system. The B.Ed and D.El.Ed all kinds of teacher training courses cover the theoretical concept of Inclusive Education in detail. The teachers of both government and private school teachers in large number are becoming aware about this new concept of Inclusive Education since its inclusion in the curriculum of B.Ed and D.El.Ed/ B.T.C. Only 4% of parents had unfavourable attitude towards inclusive education system. However, the 'most favourable' attitude was found to be in maximum percentage among all the levels of attitude. The government school teachers were found to have 'most favourable' attitude towards inclusive education in greater percentage as compared to the private school teachers as shown in Table-3.2c on next page.

A large number of training programmes being organized by the government sector for the government school teachers from time to time could be the reason behind greater percentage of government

school teachers having ‘most favourable’ attitude in greater percentage towards Inclusive Education as compared to the private school teachers . Especially during Covid-19 period many short term training programmes were organized online.

Table-3·2c : Percentage distribution according to level of Teacher’s attitude towards Inclusive Education

Level of teacher’s attitude	Govt. school teachers (n=100)		Pvt. school teachers (n=100)		Total (n=200)	
	N	%age	N	%age	N	%age
Extremely favourable	-	-	-	-	-	-
Most favourable	38	38%	31	31%	69	34.5%
Above average favourable	25	25%	35	35%	60	30.0%
Moderate attitude	33	33%	30	30%	63	31.5%
Below average unfavourable	4	4%	4	4%	8	4%

3·3 Need for more feasible and practical Training Programmes

As per the quantitative analysis, all teachers were having a favourable or moderate attitude in our study towards Inclusive Education. Only 4% teachers were below average. The teachers were found to be very much aware about the concept of Inclusive Education. They are having a positive attitude towards including children of different behaviours like slow learners, children who are shy, children who are inattentive in class, children with language difficulties.

However, as per some qualitative observation of the researcher it was found that the teachers of both government and private school were quite apprehensive about Inclusion of children with disabilities like visual, hearing and children showing anti-social behaviour in their classrooms. According to them due to lack of proper facilities and specially trained teachers such category of children could be difficult for them to handle along with other children.

As per the observations of the study and as reported by the teachers, following aspects were noted regarding in-service training of the primary and upper primary teachers :

1. The online short term trainings were provided mainly to the government school teachers during COVID-19.

2. These training were more target oriented i.e., a certain cut-off/ minimum score was expected from teachers in greater number.
3. These training during COVID-19 covered mainly the theoretical aspects of inclusive education and regular classroom teaching. The practical aspect and general problems of inclusive education were reported to be lacking in these online trainings.

3.4 Factors affecting Attitude of Teachers

To study the effect of various background variables on different types of scores towards inclusive education, the correlation between various attitude scores and various background variables of the respondents was calculated.

Table-3.3 : Correlation of Government school teachers and private school teachers TASTIE scores with background variables

Teacher's attitude towards Inclusive Education	Gender	Educational qualification	Level of Teaching	Teaching experience
Psychological/ Behavioural	-0.05	+0.15*	-0.04	-0.05
Social and Parental related	-0.024	+0.03	-0.08	+0.07
Curricular and co-curricular	+0.01	+0.12	-0.06	+0.19*
Administrative	+0.06	-0.01	-0.09	+0.12
Total attitude score	+0.22*	+0.09	-0.09	+0.13

S* stands for significant; Level of significance=0.05

As shown in the table-3.3, a significant correlation was found between the level of attitude of teachers in different aspects with different background variables namely 'Curricular and Co-curricular' aspect with 'teaching experience' ($r=0.19$, Level of significance=0.05), 'Psychological/Behavioural' aspect of inclusive education with 'educational qualification' of teachers ($r=0.15$, Level of significance=0.05) and 'total attitude score' with 'gender' ($r=0.22$, Level of significance=0.05). Female teachers were found to have a more positive attitude towards Inclusive Education as compared to the male teachers.

4. Conclusion

The present study has been helpful to analyze the attitude of government and private school teachers towards inclusive education. This study was helpful in understanding the inclusive education practices, the nature and barriers to learning. This study highlights the importance of practical competencies which require teachers to develop the skills to perform the action of creating a learning environment, developing teaching strategies, developing resources to support learning for children from diverse background and needs and developing the skills required among teachers to treat all students as individuals. The study suggests the need for more feasible programs, practical trainings and more facilities related to inclusive education for both government and private schools to make this new education approach successful.

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