

MEASURING PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AT PRIMARY SCHOOL LEVEL

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Abstract

Inclusive education is becoming priority in overall universe, where all children get equal education regardless of their abilities or disabilities. Disable and normal students are studying in the same classes. This is successful only when teacher's attitudes are positive and they are performing their duties well. Primary school teacher must apply different strategies in inclusive education, involve all students in classroom activities. Education plays a vital role in developing students academically and socially. This study measures pre-service teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education at primary school.

The study uses quantitative research by using a developed tool, which measures cognitive, affective and behavioral dimensions. Content Validity Ratio and Content Validity Index are confirmed through expert opinion and reliability is measured by using Cronbach's Alpha. Data is collected from pre-service school teachers by using a questionnaire. The findings shows that pre-service teacher attitudes are positive towards inclusive education, but the problem most of them are facing is lack of training to teachers, not providing enough facilities or not getting support from their institutions.

The study shows that the only things teachers need is positive attitudes, support from institutions, providing them with latest technology and giving them training. This provides us the reliable and valid tool for measuring pre-service teachers attitudes towards inclusive education in the future.

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education is that type of learning system or educational system in which all students can get knowledge or study at the same place regardless of individual physical appearance, ability, disability or any other problematic condition of student. It an early age for an individual where his/her learning starts and this beginning goes for long-life and set the next goals for an individual, that is the time where the student feel less confidence or shy and can not lead in the future due to low

importance faced in the beginning. A teacher has to remove all the hurdles and give equal time to all the students. A pre-service teacher is passionate to teach to all students but there must be that kind of activities in the class in which disable students can also participate and their confidence builds up. A teacher gives time to all students but the institution must provide training to teachers for teaching inclusive education, provide them with pedagogies, concrete or other material for activities.

The primary school age is the most important age for student where the students learn and it rooted in them, the basics they learn in early stage never leads them to wrong way. Their learning abilities build, they socially interact with their fellows and confidence build, their learning abilities improve if a teacher works on it, they know how to communicate by interacting with peers and teacher. By focusing on all the points in the next life student patience level increases, anger, stress and anxiety level decreases, they know how to react socially just by doing these practices at early age.

The role of teacher is most important because teacher is the one who can insert all these in a student. Teacher is a representative, he/she shapes an educational system. He/ She have to adopt new teaching style/methods for teaching, apply more creativity in class, give special time to student that needs more attention, time management/class management should be strong. Teacher should be active he/she should not discriminate between students. Teacher must use positive words and positive language for all students. By adopting all these strategies student confidence increases and get better result.

A teacher has to adopt all the three attitudes of learning for teaching an inclusive class. He/she has to accept mentally and is anxious to support, give equal time to all students there should be no discrimination among the student's just because of their mental stress. Also, he/she should be relaxed and less stressed while teaching disable students because they take more time that reduces teacher patience level and leads towards aggressive environment. Behavior should be positive and same for all the students. Teacher must apply that kind of strategies in which all students can participate not the activities that only normal students can perform that leads students with special needs towards low importance and low confidence.

Therefore, the study measures the pre-service school teachers attitude find out the problems teacher is facing in inclusive education and suggesting them with guidance that a teacher need for inclusive education.

Objectives

- To measure pre-service teacher attitude towards inclusive education using standardized tool
- To analyze attitude of teacher towards inclusive education
- To find out the preparedness level and attitudes of teachers for inclusive education
- To give recommendations for adopting or changing style for inclusive education

Research Questions

- What are the attitudes of pre-service school teachers towards inclusive education at primary level in school?
- How much they are prepared for teaching an inclusive education class at primary school level?
- What problems teacher faces while teaching an inclusive education class at primary school level?
- What they think they need from institutions for inclusive education class at primary level?

Literature Review

Inclusive education has been becoming priority globally in most of the educational institutions. It is seen mostly that all the students are getting education by sitting in same classes and all are providing with same and equal knowledge and time. The teachers are playing the most important and strongest role in all this situation. The institutions should also facilitate them with all the needs.

The present researches shows that inclusive education has becoming common in most of the institutions. Teachers are focusing on inclusive education also they are managing their classrooms and curriculum according to the needs of inclusive education in which all students can learn equally. Teachers are the most important part of that education and his/her working is most effective for the students. (Khamzina et al. 2024) For making an inclusive education successful the role of teacher is important. If teacher behavior is positive and she/he accepts the student with disabilities, this is easier for teacher to be a part of inclusive education. Inclusive education needs that kind of teachers who are willing, comfortable and less anxious to perform and make learning successful. (Boyle et al. 2023)

(Jacob and Pillay 2022) researches tell us that pre-service school teacher attitudes are positive towards inclusive education but there must be training of pre-service school teachers at primary level. The curriculum should be of that kind that fulfill or is helpful for both disable and non-disable students. Although teachers need training to teach students with special needs. That will help them to improve and enhance their teaching skills more positively.

(UNESCO Nations, 2006) tells that education is the basic need of every human being. They talked on the rights of education for those people who are disable and are not getting education just because of their special needs. They highlighted that inclusive education is important at all levels. They supported inclusive education and suggested to train teachers and work on it.

A study in Pakistan revealed that the teachers face a lot of problems while teaching inclusive education. They have positive attitudes towards inclusive education but they have many difficulties, they are facing problems due to lack of resources provided to them, lack of training and not having educational support from institutions. (Parveen et al. 2022)

A study in China was conducted and the result shows that the inclusive education is expanding in China but there are still many obstacles that effects the positive and strong implementation of inclusive education but they are working positively on it and leads to better implementation. (Zeng & Low 2024) (Rajak & Gupta 2024) recent study indicates that those pre-service teachers who feel more competent and think their interest in inclusive education. They must try to take their path towards inclusive education and they must be given training, teach them curricula that study about special needs students and provide them with facilities, so they can perform competently and show good results.

(Bandura 1997) indicates that the pre-service teachers that show positive attitudes and actively participating in diverse learning educational system must be given chance to teach inclusive education. Their performance is better when they are given chance although their must be some kind of training to those teachers. Some hurdles may

influence their teaching that is lack of facilities not providing them with special needs curriculum and many other problems related to them.

So inclusive education must be promoted and vast its branches all over the world. Pre-service teachers must be trained according to inclusive education and taught how to deal students with special need.

Methodology

Research Design

The study uses a quantitative research with survey design to measure pre-service teachers attitudes towards inclusive education at primary school level. An adapted and validated tool was used to measure teachers attitudes.

Population

The population of the study consists of pre-service teachers which are the future educators of our society and are getting training according to their interest. The pre-service teachers are enrolled bachelor of education programs. The population consists of both public and private pre-service teachers.

Sampling

A random sampling was done to collect data from different institutions of Gujrat region there were both public and private institutions. The sampling consists of 80 teachers, there were 62 females and 18 males.

Tool Used

An adapted tool (ATIES) was used and change it according to our culture.

- Total items = 35
 - 5 Likert scale was used
- 1=Strongly Disagree
2=Disagree
3=Neutral
4=Agree
5=Strongly Agree

Ensuring Validity and Reliability

To make sure that the instrument we are using is valid and reliable we took following steps:

Validity

The accuracy of instrument was checked by experts. There were 10 experts for validation of instrument. Most of the items were rated as essential by the experts.

- No of experts = 10
- CVR = 0.77
- CVI = 0.8

Reliability

The reliability of the instrument was checked by using Cronbach Alpha. The value is 0.83. The value of Cronbach Alpha shows that the instrument we are using is consistent.

Data Collection Method

- Questionnaire were distributed among pre-service teachers of different institutions
- Pre-service teachers completed their survey on given time
- Participants were informed about consent
- Volunteer participation of individuals
- Data was confidential

Data Analysis

- Data was entered on SPSS software
- Each item was given a code while entering data
- Descriptive statistics were used to measure level of attitudes
- Mean, Standard deviation, Percentages etc.

Findings

The findings shows that overall attitude of pre-service teachers is positive but that's not on extreme level. The findings show an average positive result towards inclusive education. Female teachers are more willing to take training and teach inclusive education. Participants remarks showed that inclusive education benefits all students and its compulsory for our society to explore and make wider that concept of education. Those who are taking training in special education showed higher positive response. They are getting training according to the needs of special students. Training improves the positive behavior of teachers. The barriers teachers are facing is the lack of resources, training, large class size, limited

time etc. So we have to overcome all these barriers and trained pre-service teachers because the are more passionate about their field and handle the situation easily.

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