



## Attitude And Suggestive Measures of Regular School Teachers on Inclusive Education of Children With Learning Disabilities

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### ABSTRACT

*Mainstreaming or inclusion is the most accepted method of education for children with disabilities in India now. Inclusion can help to reduce stigma towards disabled children. Regular schooling gives more opportunities for interaction and hence there have possibilities for social development.*

*Finding teachers' attitude towards teaching disabled children under inclusive system is very relevant. Successful inclusion of a child in to the normal education pattern is strongly depends up on the attitude and interest of teachers and also the implementation of their suggestions on inclusion.*

*The study was conducted under qualitative design. Sample was 24 school teachers. Responses based analysis was used to derive findings.*

*It is found that:*

- Teachers have favourable attitude towards inclusive education of children with learning disabilities.*
- There have slight gender difference in the attitude of teachers towards inclusive education of children with learning disabilities. Female teachers have more favourable attitude than that of male teachers.*
- The type of management of schools has no role on determining teachers' attitude towards inclusive education of children with learning disabilities.*

*Teachers have put forwarded fourteen creative suggestions for smooth functioning of inclusive education approach. The suggestions lights to school arrangements, special training to teachers, optimum attention to L D children and relationship with other children. Since they are suggestions from teachers' own experience, they are worthy and acceptable.*

**KEYWORDS : Mainstreaming, Inclusion, Verbal Learning Disabilities, Non-verbal Learning Disabilities, Attitude, Suggestive measures.**

Inclusive education of the children with different learning disabilities (verbal or nonverbal learning disorders) and children with special needs is the most accepted system of educational operation of the present time in India. Everybody in the field says that inclusive education works better than that of the special schooling in the case of disabled children. The cases of children with severe disabilities are different. Particularly the cases of children with Non-Verbal Learning Disorders need special school to provide optimal care and considerations.

There are several advantages to the child by the method of mainstreaming or inclusion. One can recognize some of or all of the following advantages from the mode of regular schooling;

- Mainstreaming a disabled child can help to expand group of friends. Another thing is that regular curriculum and activities may provide normalized academic and social experience to them (many feel that this is the single-best benefit of inclusion) (Schleickorn Jay, 1993)
- Mainstreaming can help to reduce the stigma towards disabled individuals.
- Inclusion may even lessen the occurrences of harassment and marginalisation from others.
- Mainstreaming help the child to recognise as a normal child and so parents can save themselves from regular questions those may raise from different sources about the disabilities of the child. It helps them to stress free.
- Regular schooling gives more opportunities for interaction and hence there are possibilities for social development.

Schleickorn Jay (1993) points that the success of inclusive approach or mainstreaming is depending up on high positive attitude on the part of regular teachers and the presence of assistants to help the regular teacher to modify the methods and procedures.

Teachers' attitude is very significant in the case of inclusion of disabled children. They are the people to handle the children during the

whole working time. Government policies may not work in the class room as it is suggested by policymakers.

Regular school teachers are facing many problems in providing education to disabled children while they are in regular classrooms. The whole of the emotional balance of the class room may vitiate due to the one or two disabled children. It is the teachers' attitude that determines the fruitful end of education of such children. At this context it is very relevant to find the attitude of regular school teachers towards inclusive education of disabled children. Investigators assumed that it will be very relevant and useful to find the suggestions of the teachers in this aspect. They are the apt persons to do so than any other policy makers.

### Nature and Scope of the Study

Finding the attitude towards teaching disabled children under the inclusive system is very relevant. The finding may help the implementation of new ways and methods in this stream of education. According to Hurkman H L (1999) many children mildly or moderately having disability enjoy success in a normal school education and curriculum, even adaptive physical education programme. Mainstreaming the child, while it is a decision up to the teacher, is strongly depends up on the attitude and interest of teachers and also the implementation of their suggestions. A child who has age appropriate cognitive and communicative abilities, or the abilities at least up to near to normal child and who will not need special medical or parental care can be included in regular school system. Inclusion may fail to others who need special care and regular medical attention. Not every child will benefit from inclusion in a regular curriculum, and if the parents feel that this is the case with their child, they can choose him or her to a special education school. Then it became worthy by the attitude and interpretations of the teachers

### Limitations of the study

One of the limitations of the study is that the sample for the present study is small sample though the numbers of teachers who are working in regular schools are very huge. It is the qualitative approach was

selected as the method of study.

Though there are many types of disabilities that one can find among school children, it is only Verbal and Non Verbal Learning Disabilities that were considered as the disabilities in the present study. Hence data collected from teachers only on their attitude and suggestions towards inclusion of children with Verbal and Non Verbal Learning Disabilities.

The investigation was conducted in Palakkad and Malappuram District of Kerala state, India only.

### Statement of the Problem

Present study is titled as 'Attitude and Suggestive Measures of Regular School Teachers on Inclusive Education of Disabled Children'. The problem is zeroed in on the attitude of teachers and their suggestive measures towards the variable selected for study that is inclusive education of children with learning disabilities.

### Objectives of the study

- To find the attitude of regular school teachers towards inclusive education of children with Verbal and Non-Verbal Learning Disabilities.
- To analyse the attitude of regular school teachers towards inclusive education of children with Learning Disabilities with respect to their gender and type of management of school.
- To gather suggestions of regular school teachers to improve the quality and efficacy of educating Children with Learning Disabilities under inclusive education system.

### Hypotheses

- Inclusive education of children with Learning Disabilities is only a moderate success.
- Teachers of regular schools have no favourable attitude towards inclusive education of LD children.
- Attitude of regular school teachers towards Inclusive Education of Children with Learning Disabilities is not differing with respect to their Gender or Type of management of school.
- Teachers of regular schools can suggest measures to develop the inclusive education system for the learning of LD children.

### Sample

Teachers from government and government aided schools were selected as sample under the method of purposive random sampling. Small sample was used for collecting data. Total number of sample was 24. Only the teachers from those schools that are accommodated students with Learning Disabilities in regular classes selected as sample. Out of the total sample 16 are female teachers and 8 are male teachers. A detail of sample selection is given in table 1. The selection of schools made after discussing with head of the school that is Head Master or Principal.

**Table 1**  
**Details of Sample Selection**

Sl No.	Type of school	Number of female teachers	Number of male teachers	Total
1	Government schools	9	4	13
2	Government Aided School	7	4	11
<b>Total</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>24</b>

### Tools Used

Tools used were i) a data collection sheet to identify the personal and professional details of the teacher and ii) a standardized scheduled interview used for collecting information regarding their attitude and suggestions towards inclusive education of learning disabled. The interview schedule has two facets, first part is regarding teachers' attitude and second part is regarding their suggestions or opinions.

### Research design

The research was conducted in qualitative design. No statistical techniques were used. Qualitative assessment was used to analyze the data of the respondents.

### Analysis, Results and Findings

The responses of teachers from selected schools were gathered directly at the school time. The teachers who are handling the classes in which children with Learning Disabilities are studying were only selected to respond. Their oral expressions on attitude were written briefly at same time. The responses to the questions were recorded with their permission to use for further clarifications of analysis. Seven teachers out of 24 were not allowed to record their responses. Hence the written script of the interview is used as basis for analysis. Before leaving the teachers the written script of their reply was read for their hearing and ensured that their opinions were written as they are.

After collecting information via interview schedule on their attitude towards inclusive education for children with LD, a separate interview with the same tool regarding their suggestions towards inclusive education was conducted. The responses were properly noted down and after the interview their opinions were given to them in written form. It is ensured in this case also that the opinions and suggestions are factual as they said. This part also recorded with respect to their permission.

All except two of the teachers who answered the questions are favourable towards inclusive education of children with LD. They have opined that inclusive education is a right form and effective system. As 22 out of 24 have very favourable attitude towards inclusive education, it can be firmly stated that teachers have favourable attitude towards inclusive education of children with learning disabilities.

There is slight gender difference in the attitude of teachers towards inclusive education of children with LD. All the 16 female teachers were expressed strong favourable attitude towards inclusive education of Children with LD. 2 out of 8 male teachers have expressed unfavourable attitude towards inclusive education. The two male teachers have noted their unfavourable attitude by expressing that the method of inclusion lessens the ability of learning of children with LD. They also expressed their view that inclusive education of children with LD adversely affects teachers' outlook on teaching for normal children. The other major point expressed as evidence to their unfavourable attitude is that the normal students of the class do not get sufficient attention from teachers since the teachers have to pay more time for the welfare of children with LD. As the unfavourable attitude is only of 2 out of 8 teachers, broadly it can be considered that male teachers are favourable towards inclusive education of children with LD. Hence the finding can be concluded thus: both male and female teachers have favourable attitude towards inclusive education of children with Learning Disabilities. It can also be found that female teachers have more favourable attitude towards inclusive education of children with LD than that of male teachers.

There is no government school and aided school difference in formation of teachers' attitude towards inclusive education of children with LD. Both government and aided school teachers have same opinion on inclusive education of children with LD. The two male respondents who expressed unfavourable attitude belong to both type of management. Out of the 2 teachers who expressed unfavourable attitude, 1 teacher belongs to Government school and 1 belongs to aided school. Hence the result can be concluded that type of school has no role in framing attitude towards inclusive education of children with LD.

### Suggestive measures of Teachers regarding Inclusive Education of Children with Learning Disabilities

Teachers have put forward different suggestions to improve the ways and means of inclusive education of children with LD. The essence of these suggestions are provided here as the findings of the study;

- Class rooms should be well equipped with sufficient furniture that can be easily occupied by LD children
- The classrooms should have racks, shelves and etc. to keep LD children's belongings and also there should have nearby toilet facility.
- LD children should be shuffled to different divisions. They should not be centralised to same division.
- The LD children should feel that they are not different in schools.
- Teachers must be given opportunity to deal with such students.

As a part of it, it can think of reducing their work load.

- f. Proper training must be provided to regular teachers to handle with such students.
- g. Technologically well-equipped class rooms must be arranged for their education.
- h. Provisions should be provided to teachers to visit home of such children regularly.
- i. Regular contacts between teachers and parents of children with LD are a must.
- j. The teachers must be given separate financial assistance to collect or buy suitable devices and aids for such children
- k. Classes by experts should be provided in schools.
- l. Availability of therapists must be ensured in schools at least two days in a week.
- m. Continuity in teaching and continuous repetition of the same content should be followed in teaching.
- n. All teachers, though they may not take the class to such children, should consider these pupils with more humanitarian consideration.

### **A Conclusion**

The research findings reveal that teachers are favorable towards inclusion of disabled children. But facility in school may be limited. The pedagogic transaction for such children always needs a separate type of approach. The favourable attitude of teachers is a positive symptom in this regard. Governments and policy makers must provide sufficient support to these teachers to perform their duty well.

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