



APPLICATION OF CURRICULUM ADAPTATION METHODS BY THE GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHERS TOWARDS FACILITATING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the present study was to investigate the application of curriculum adaptation methods by general education teachers towards facilitating inclusive education for children with intellectual disabilities at regular schools. The researcher has selected two hundred and ten (N=210) participants from two districts of Andhra Pradesh state. The researcher adopted purposive sampling techniques for selecting participants from who are working at regular schools. The data was collected from participants through a questionnaire developed by the researcher, and the data was analyzed and interpreted using non parametric statistical techniques. The results indicated that the general education teachers do not applying of curriculum adaptation methods to facilitate inclusive education for children with intellectual disabilities at regular schools. The researcher found big barrier of general education teachers that they does not have adequate knowledge on curriculum adaptation methods to pay much attention in facilitating inclusive education for children with intellectual disabilities. It is evident from the result that the government should provide necessary in-service training and professional support on curriculum adaptation methods to the general education teachers who are handling children with intellectual disabilities in regular classrooms.

KEYWORDS : Children with Intellectual Disabilities, General Education Teachers, Curriculum Adaptation Methods.

Introduction

The term inclusive education refers to education of all children without discrimination of attainment, gender or disability into the regular school. It is minimizing exclusion and fostering participation for all children in the culture within a wider framework of support to children in ordinary schools. It is our unending set of processes in which children and adults with disabilities have equal opportunity to participate in activities. It is based on the principle of equalization of educational opportunity (Sharma Y., K., & Sharma, M. (2014).

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan also focused on providing inclusive education where children with disabilities and children without disabilities learn together in general schools. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan have major activities for children with disabilities such as identification and assessments, placing appropriate class, preparation of Individualized Education Plan, providing aids and appliances with free of cost, providing transport allowance to children as well as escort allowance, appointment of resource teachers and professionals for providing education, therapeutical services and support and providing accessibility facilities in school building (SSA 2011).

Children with Intellectual Disabilities

Child with intellectual disability is slow or lacking in the development of mental functions when compared to those children of his or her age level. Therefore a ten year old child with intellectual disability may exhibit behaviour like that of a three or four year old child depending on his or her intellectual level.

American Association in Intellectual Disability and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) previously known as American Association on Mental Retardation (AAMR) in the year 2007 changed the term of Mental Retardation as Intellectual Disability (Schalock, R. L., et. al 2010)

Need and importance of Curriculum Adaptations methods

Creating an inclusive culture in classroom will involve attending to the curriculum, which includes the components of

a course of study. These consist of the syllabus, textbooks and needed teaching learning materials, teaching strategies/processes and assessment and evaluation processes.

The teachers in inclusive school have to teach all children together in a class. It is the responsibility of the school to provide a flexible curriculum that can be accessed by all students including children with intellectual disabilities. It is important that the school should provide enabling experiences so that children experience success in learning and achievement up to their potential. This is only possible if the teachers respond to the diversities present in an inclusive classroom through curriculum adaptations.

Need and rationale of the study

Children with intellectual disabilities are lack in understanding concepts, comprehension, in good communication, academic, social and occupational skills. In order to provide education in regular classrooms, it is very big challenge to general education teachers in facilitating or handling of children with intellectual disabilities. The general education teachers must have knowledge on curriculum adaptation methods to educate children with intellectual disabilities in regular schools. The government has initiated admission into regular schools for all type of children with disabilities and the general education teachers have to handle such children along with non-disabled children. Hence, it is very essential to check the role and responsibilities of teachers in planning and implementation of inclusive education especially for children with intellectual disabilities in regular classrooms.

Presently, the inclusive education concept is implementing by SSA at Andhra Pradesh state through providing higher budget, establishment of Bhavita Centres at block level and appointing professionals (Inclusive Education Resource Teachers) from the field special education/inclusive education. The block level professionals are identifying children with intellectual disabilities, giving admission into Bhavita Centres and providing basic skills and education,

thereafter enrolling into regular schools.

After enrollment of children with intellectual disabilities at regular schools, the general education teachers will play very important role in facilitating inclusive education through assessment and identifying educational needs like curriculum flexibility and application of suitable curriculum adaptation methods for children with intellectual disabilities at regular schools.

Review of related literature

The researcher reviewed the following literature reviews to get an idea to study on importance of application status of curriculum adaptation methods in inclusive settings.

Toyin M. Adewumi (2017) conducted a qualitative research study on best practices in the adaptation of the curriculum for the inclusion of learners with special education needs in selected primary schools in the fort Beaufort District. The researcher selected the participants through purposive sampling technique and applied a case study design in which the researcher had interviewed the participants of 8 teachers and 10 principals from 10 selected primary schools as well as 4 district education officials and 1 regional official for collection of data. The researcher analyzed the data thematically, which had collected from semi-structured interviews of participants. The researcher had explained the findings of his study that the teachers are good in use teaching methods, individual work, group work and extra work; however there is need in training for teachers in curriculum adaptation in order to work learners with special educational needs.

Nandini, N. & Taj, H. (2014) have published an article on "Inclusive Education: Key Role of Teachers for its success". The authors explained in article that the school teachers need preparation for inclusion of children with sensorial impairment, the inclusion requires skill and motivated teachers who are competent enough to deal with difficult situations in classroom. The authors mentioned in article that conducting in-service training programmes is not adequate to maintain quality education to sensory impaired children in mainstream schools; it is also need to concentrate of curriculum of pre service teachers to meet the special education needs of sensory impaired children in inclusive settings. So that, the teachers themselves demands the thorough training is needed on inclusive education.

Madan, A. & Sharma, N. (2013) published an article on preparing schools to meet inclusive education for children with disabilities. The authors explained in their article that the concept of inclusive education policies and principles are accepted for children with disabilities. Through this article, the authors provide guidelines from empirical study which involved common practices for inclusive education in regular schools and they suggested that schools can follow the inclusive education programmes if they have adequate facilities. As per the guidelines for inclusion, the schools should develop curriculum adaptation, teaching strategies and evaluation procedures for children with individual needs as well as teacher's role and support from parents and peers are also needed.

Objective

To find out the application of curriculum adaptation methods by general education teachers for facilitating inclusive education to children with intellectual disabilities at regular schools.

Research Question: The researcher will attempted to answer the following research question

Do the general education teachers using suitable curriculum adaptation methods for facilitating inclusive education to children with intellectual disabilities in regular schools?

Methodology

Research Design

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the status of application of curriculum adaptation methods by general education teachers for facilitating inclusive education for children with intellectual disabilities at regular schools. The researcher adopted the descriptive survey type design to study the status of general education teachers in using curriculum adaptation methods for children with intellectual disabilities at primary to high school level.

Sample and sampling technique

Two hundred and ten (N=210) general education teachers who are handling children with intellectual disabilities along with non-disabled children in regular schools at government and government aided schools in Andhra Pradesh state were selected as participants for this study. The researcher adopted purposive sampling method under non-probability sampling technique to select the general education teachers as participants from regular schools.

Inclusive criteria

| Sl. No. | Variables | No. of Samples | |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----|
| 1 | Gender | Male | 138 |
| | | Female | 72 |
| 2 | Age | 20 yrs. – 30 yrs. | 14 |
| | | 31 yrs. – 40 yrs. | 62 |
| | | 41 yrs. – 50 yrs. | 97 |
| | | 51 yrs. – 60 yrs. | 37 |
| 3 | Academic qualifications | Intermediate/Higher secondary | 10 |
| | | Graduation | 87 |
| | | Post graduation | 111 |
| | | M.Phil/Ph.D | 2 |
| 4 | Professional qualifications | TTC/D.Ed., | 19 |
| | | B.Ed., | 180 |
| | | M.Ed. | 11 |
| 5 | Teaching experience in handling children with intellectual disabilities | 1 yr. – 5 yrs. | 56 |
| | | 6 yrs. – 10 yrs. | 35 |
| | | 11 yrs. – 15 yrs. | 15 |
| | | above 15 yrs. | 0 |

Development of Questionnaire

The researcher developed following research questionnaires/tools:

Personal Data Sheet – (Part-1)

The researcher developed a personal data sheet to collect the background information of selected participants. It includes name, age, gender, educational qualification, professional qualification, teaching experience in handling children with intellectual disabilities.

Questionnaire on role of general education teachers in facilitating inclusive education for children with intellectual disabilities – (Part-2)

The researcher developed questionnaire consisting of 11 items which includes 'Yes' or 'No' type closed ended questions and Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ) and adopted the responsive system described in below table 1 to answer the research question.

Table 1

| Response | Score |
|----------------|-------|
| Yes | 1 |
| No | 0 |
| Correct Answer | 1 |
| Wrong Answer | 0 |

Data collection procedure

The researcher visited to block level education officers of each district for permission to collect data from general educational teachers who are working at government and aided schools in inclusive settings. On receipt of prior approval from block level education officers, the researcher visited to school to school in person and explained the purpose of this study and received teacher's consent through distribution of informed consent and research questionnaire/tool. Thereafter, the researcher has been received 210 responses from the selected participants with complete information as per questionnaires.

Results and Discussion

Research Question

Do the general education teachers using suitable curriculum adaptation methods for facilitating inclusive education to children with intellectual disabilities?

The researcher has gathered data from 210 general education teachers through distributing a questionnaire consisting of 11 items related to curriculum adaptation; simplification of curriculum, methods of curriculum adaptation, and types of curriculum adaptation was analyzed to answer the research question.

Results

After collection of data, the researcher calculated frequencies of each item and converted into percentage to know the percentage of general education teachers in using methods of curriculum adaptations for children with intellectual disabilities in regular schools, as shown in the below table 2.

Table 2 Item wise frequency and percentages of participant's response

| Sl. No. | Items | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| 1 | Do you know about curriculum adaptation? | 94 | 44.76 |
| 2 | If yes, curriculum adaptation is done on? | 19 | 9.04 |
| 3 | Do you feel curriculum adaptation / modification is required for student with intellectual disabilities in your inclusive class room? | 139 | 66.19 |
| 4 | If yes, what type of content modification you adapt in teaching students with intellectual disabilities in your class? | 75 | 35.71 |
| 5 | Do you use curriculum adaptation for students with intellectual disabilities in your class? | 39 | 18.57 |
| 6 | If yes, which type of curriculum, do you prefer to teach in your class room to students with intellectual disabilities? | 22 | 10.47 |

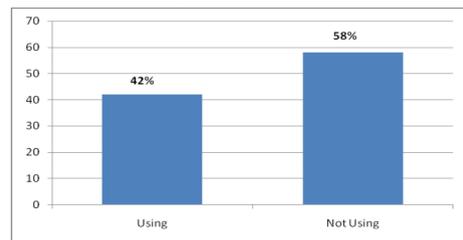
| | | | |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------|
| 7 | Do you feel curriculum adaptation is beneficial for students with intellectual disabilities? | 135 | 64.28 |
| 8 | If yes, what is the benefit of curriculum adaptation in inclusive schools? | 138 | 65.71 |
| 9 | Why curriculum adaptation is required in inclusive schools? | 157 | 74.76 |
| 10 | What type of curriculum adaptation is needed for students with intellectual disabilities? | 57 | 27.14 |
| 11 | How are you delivering the content through adapted instructions in the inclusive class room? | 99 | 47.14 |

The researcher drawn mean value and percentage of participants in usage of curriculum adaptation methods, as showed in the below table 3 and figure 1

Table 3 Participant's response towards usage of methods of curriculum adaptations in regular schools

| N | Mean | Participant's response in percentage (%) | |
|-----|------|------------------------------------------|---------------|
| | | Using (%) | Not Using (%) |
| 210 | 4.63 | 42.16 | 57.84 |

Figure 1 Percentages of participants using methods of curriculum adaptations in regular schools



Discussion and findings

From the table (3), the researcher revealed that that only 42% of general education teachers were using methods of curriculum adaptations in regular schools for educating children with intellectual disabilities along with non-disabled students, such as simplification of content, preparing charts with pictures, using audio visual instead of direct teaching of lesson etc.,

Whereas, 58% of general education teachers were not using any methods of curriculum adaptations in the regular classrooms for teaching children with intellectual disabilities along with non-disabled students, due lack of knowledge on curriculum adaptation methods, principles, types and lack of time and lack of support from related professionals.

Recommendations

- The role of teachers and school administrators are key factor to promote inclusive education, thus the government must given proper orientation and in-service trainings on curriculum adaptation methods for inclusive education.
- During in-service training programme, the professional in special/inclusive education and para professionals like physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, guidance & counseling practitioners and psychologists must be involved to develop needed skills to general education teachers.
- The local NGOs must work for mainstreaming of children with intellectual disabilities into regular schools through

providing preparatory skills, orientation on curriculum adaptations to teachers working in inclusive settings.

- The government must take initiation to appoint trained special education professionals in every school to assist general education teachers in curriculum adaptation methods for children with intellectual disabilities.
- The government or concerned departments must arrange in-service training programmes on curriculum adaptations methods for general education teachers.
- During teacher training programme, the NCTE must include field experience under internship programme to visit different special schools and inclusive schools to get awareness and acquiring skills to handle children with intellectual disabilities.
- The curriculum developers must design a curriculum in a flexible way which will enable to teachers to adapt in easier manner to meet children with disabilities.

Suggestions:

- A comparative study may be undertaken to understand the facilitating inclusive education for children with intellectual disabilities at regular schools in Andhra Pradesh state and other states in our Country.
- Similar studies may be conducted in future on which the school administrators may also be included as participants in addition to the teachers.
- Conduct a study on experiences of general education teachers towards handling children with intellectual disabilities in inclusive settings
- Conduct a study through interview method or case study method to find out role of teachers in educating children with intellectual disabilities instead of collecting data through distributing questionnaire.
- This study only restricted to government and aided schools. A study may be undertaken on role of teachers who are working in private schools.

Limitations:

- This study has not covered private schools, gurukul schools and tribal welfare schools of Andhra Pradesh state.
- The researcher expected to collect data from 250 samples. But, only 210 participants were responded fully.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the researcher suggested to conduct a comparative study between Andhra Pradesh state with any other state with regard to using of curriculum adaptation methods by the general education teachers for children with intellectual disabilities in regular schools. In this present study the researcher revealed that the most of the general education teachers were not using curriculum adaptation methods, due to lack of in-service training, lack of time to learn, lack of support from related professionals. This will lead to poor academic performance, not attend to school regularly and inclusion may not succeed for children with intellectual disabilities.

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