



INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN REGULAR SCHOOLS: GENERAL EDUCATORS' VIEW POINT IN BIJNOR DISTRICT, U.P

Fr. Baiju Thomas

M.Ed. (MR), 2nd year, Dept. of MR, Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Educational and Research Institute, Faculty of Disability Management and Special Education, IHRDC Campus, SRKV Post, Coimbatore – 20

Dr. Saumya Chandra*

Asst. Professor, Dept. of MR, Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Educational and Research Institute, Faculty of Disability Management and Special Education, IHRDC Campus, SRKV Post, Coimbatore – 20 *Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT

The present study is entitled as "Inclusion of Children with Intellectual Disabilities in Regular Schools: General Educators' view point in Bijnor district-U.P". This study was conducted on regular school teachers. It includes both rural and urban, male and female, government and private school teachers. A total of 170 general educators were selected for sample of the particular study. The study uses descriptive survey method to investigate general educators' viewpoint on inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities in regular schools. To include children with intellectual disabilities in regular schools it is necessary to determine the status of awareness about inclusion among general educators in regular schools. This study on awareness will update and provide appropriate support towards promoting practices of inclusion in regular schools. Attitude is the basic and general aspects for shaping the success of inclusive education. The attitude of general educators plays a vital role in the life of children with intellectual disabilities in regular schools. General educators play an important role in handling the situation efficiently and it depends on the emotional maturity of the educators also. The major findings of the study suggest that the general educators in Bijnor district of Uttar Pradesh have positive attitudes towards the inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities. The study indicated positive awareness towards the inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities. The general educators have felt some difficulties in handling the children with intellectual disabilities in the inclusive classroom. It is also further suggests that the general educators had good knowledge about the curriculum adaptation for children with intellectual disabilities in inclusive classroom. This study provides a comprehensive level of goals in inclusive education and vital role of general educators in teaching children with intellectual disabilities in regular schools.

KEYWORDS : Students with intellectual disability, Inclusive education, General educators.

Introduction

In many countries throughout the world today, education is seen as a major developmental agenda. It has become necessary for governments, districts, teachers and parents to ensure that school children have a right to education to the highest extent possible. As a result, education has become a basic requirement as a fundamental human right. It has become clear that to be able to provide quality education to school children, everyone is bound to contribute (Gratz, 2010; National Education Association, 2011).

Education is a lifelong process linking many planned and unplanned experiences that enable children and adults alike to advance and learn through collaboration with the society and culture in which they live. One of the important goal of education is to support the holistic and over all development. According to **Swami Vivekananda**: "Education is the manifestation of the divine perfection, already existing in man".

Inclusion seeks to completely remove the distinction between special and regular education, and to provide an appropriate education for all students, despite their level of disability, in their local school. It involves a complete restructuring of the educational system so that all schools would have the responsibility of providing the facilities, resources, and an appropriate curriculum for all students irrespective of disability. (Forlin 1997). Inclusive education programme is flexible in its implementation. "It works in overcrowded classrooms; it works in single teacher schools; it works in well-equipped schools; and it works in hilly regions too". In the regular schools teachers have to do their best to accommodate the needs and interests of all the students. The attitudes and willingness of teachers will encourage including learners with intellectual disabilities in their classes in regular schools.

Statement of problem

"Inclusion of Children with Intellectual Disabilities in Regular Schools: General Educators' view point in Bijnor district, U.P".

Operational definitions of the important terms

Inclusion

"Inclusion is a fundamental right and it is in relation with the concept of 'belonging'. People with or without disabilities can interact as peers. An inclusive education allows the ordinary school to improve its quality: a school in which all children are welcomed, where they can learn according to their own pace and, most importantly where they can participate, a school where children manage to understand all diversities and that these diversities and that these diversities are enriching. Thus, diversity becomes normal. The same for the work place, for transportation, for social and cultural life. The purpose of inclusion is to allow everyone to access 'normal' life to grow and develop as a complete human being (Canevaro, 2007:12)

Children with intellectual disability

The current 2010 definition of American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: "Intellectual disability is a disability characterized by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior, which covers many everyday conceptual social and practical skills. This disability originates before the age of 18." (AAIDD, 2010)

Intellectual disability is a term used when a person has certain limitations in cognitive functioning that affect attention, memory, and the ability to think abstractly and make generalizations from one setting to another. These limitations will cause a student to learn more slowly than others and to have difficulty with adaptive behaviors such as grooming, dressing, and safety, school rules, understanding social rules, and seeing the consequences of their actions.

General teachers

- General education teachers who teach and educate pupils according to the educational needs, abilities and achievement

of progress in life.

- General education teachers have a responsibility for the education of all students including those with disabilities.
- General education teachers have an accountability to plan, prepare and deliver lessons to all students in the classroom.
- General education teachers provide guidance and advice to students in educational and social matters and on their further education and future careers.
- General education teachers promote the general progress and well-being of individual groups of students or class entrusted to him or her.

Regular schools

- Regular schools refer to the educational basis of skills, knowledge, habits of mind, and values that prepares pupils for success in their life.
- Regular school education is the foundational education with experience of all round learning and it incorporates the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that are needed for further education, career and life.
- General education advances the cognitive process of reasoning important for actual functioning and self-directed learning which helps an individual in the society and at work place.

Review of literature

The review of literature is as important as any other components of research procedure. The major purpose of reviewing the literature is to regulate what has already been done that relate to one's problem. It involves the systematic identification, location and analysis of documents containing information related to the research problem.

Bansal (2012) conducted a study of Attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education. The present study aims to investigate the attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education. Inclusive education is a scheme for social improvement, centering on the improvement of schools. A sample consists of 80 teachers of primary schools with equal numbers of rural and urban of Faridabad district of Haryana. The findings revealed that attitude of male teachers towards inclusive education are more positive as compare to female teachers. Urban primary teacher's attitude towards inclusive education is more positive as compare to rural teachers. In fact, attitude of private teachers towards inclusive education is more positive as compare to Govt. teachers.

Cornelius and Balakrishnan (2012) made an attempt to trace the evolution of Inclusive Education for students with special education needs in their study on Inclusive Education for Students with ID and discussed some significant challenges in its implementation and offered the outline of a curriculum that may be derived from the mainstream and suggests a model that emphasizes the replacement of age\grade placement, as is the present practice, with experience and maturity underpinning learning in persons with ID.

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the attitude of general educators towards Inclusion.
2. To find out the awareness level of general educators about children with intellectual disabilities.
3. To find out the difficulties faced by general educators having children with intellectual disabilities in their classrooms.
4. To find out the knowledge about general educators regarding curriculum adaptations.

Research Questions

1. What is the attitude of general educators towards inclusion?
2. What is the awareness level of general educators about children with intellectual disabilities?
3. What are the difficulties faced by general educators having children with intellectual disabilities in their classrooms?

4. What is the level of knowledge of general educators regarding curriculum adaptations?

Methodology

Research Design

The present study is a descriptive research study. The primary purpose of descriptive research study is to provide an accurate description or picture of the status / characteristics of a situation / phenomenon. Survey method of data collection is commonly used in descriptive research. Therefore, in present study also survey method was used for collecting the data.

Sampling procedure

The researcher will select the sample through convenient sampling procedure. The total sample taken for the study will be 170. The study will be conducted on teachers of regular schools in Bijnor District of Uttar Pradesh.

Procedure for Sample selections

- The sample for the study will be drawn from the regular schools located within Bijnor district of Uttar Pradesh.
- The sample will be selected from 26 regular schools of Bijnor district of Uttar Pradesh.
- 170 General Educators will be randomly selected from regular schools in Bijnor district of Uttar Pradesh, as the sample of the study.

Tools

The researcher will prepare a tool in the form of a Rating Scale for Regular Teachers working in Inclusive Set Up (RTIS) to assess the regular educators' views on the inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities in regular schools in the following domains:

- Attitude level
- Knowledge level
- Awareness level
- Difficulties level

Procedure for data collection

- The regular schools in Bijnor district of Uttar Pradesh will be identified where general educators are involved in the inclusion of PWID in regular schools.
- The questionnaire will be given to the concern authority of the schools to be distributed to the general educators.

Variables of study

Variables such as age, gender, experience, locality, types of service, qualification and salary will be taken into consideration in the study.

Scope of study

- The study will help to find out the attitudes of general educator toward Inclusive education.
- The study will help to find out the awareness level of general educators toward Intellectual Disability.
- The study will help the teacher to know the importance of curriculum adaptations in the classroom set up.
- The study will help to find out the factors (age, gender, qualification, experience, types of service and locality) which effects teachers' viewpoint toward Inclusive Education.

Data analysis

- The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 20.0) will be used to facilitate appropriate data analysis.

The Major findings of the Study

1. What is the attitude of general educators towards inclusion?

The study result revealed that the awareness level of general educators on inclusion of intellectual disabilities in regular school was higher. N=170, Mean is 13.90. So it concludes that the level of attitude of general educators towards Inclusion is 66.19% (score lies in the interval 50 to 75% which is good or medium).

The Mean, Standard deviation and z value for level of attitude of general educators towards Inclusion

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean % score	CV	z	p value
Attitude	170	13.90	2.37	66.19	17.03	-10.188	<0.001

2. What is the awareness level of general educators about children with intellectual disabilities?

The overall analysis revealed that the attitude level of general educators on inclusion of intellectual disabilities in regular school is higher. N=170, Mean is 15.04. So it concludes that the awareness level of general educators about children with intellectual disabilities is 71.62% (score lies in the interval 50 to 75% which is good or medium).

The Mean, Standard deviation and z value for awareness level of general educators about children with intellectual disabilities

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean % score	CV	z	p value
----------	---	------	----------------	--------------	----	---	---------

The regression Coefficients - Difficulty faced by general educators

Factors/ Latent Variables (Dependent Variable)	Construct (Independent Variable)	Regression Coefficient	C.R.	P	Variance explained (%)
Difficulty	Statement (1) Inclusive school is not practical for severe and profound categories of children with intellectual disabilities.	0.814	14.716	<0.001	66.2
Difficulty	Statement (2) Inclusion means simply putting the children with intellectual disabilities in the regular classroom.	0.025	0.323	0.747	0.1
Difficulty	Statement (3) Inclusion means no extra support is needed for the children with intellectual disabilities.	0.178	2.325	0.021	3.2
Difficulty	Statement (4) In inclusive set up adaptive teaching material is required for teaching children with intellectual disabilities.	0.120	1.558	0.121	1.4
Difficulty	Statement (5) Following the new adapted curriculum for children with intellectual disabilities negatively impacts the teaching process.	0.563	8.235	<0.001	31.7
Difficulty	Statement (6) Inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities in regular school paves way for an inclusive society.	-0.043	-0.556	0.579	0.2
Difficulty	Statement (7) Inclusion promotes the participation of children with intellectual disabilities in physical education.	0.076	0.984	0.326	0.6

1. What is the level of knowledge of general educators regarding curriculum adaptations?

The study attempted to find out the level of knowledge of general educators on inclusion of intellectual disabilities in regular school is higher. N=170, Mean is 14.72. So it concludes that the level of knowledge about general educators regarding curriculum adaptation is 70.11% (score lies in the interval 50 to 75% which is good or medium).

The Mean, Standard deviation and z value for the level of knowledge about general educators regarding curriculum adaptations

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean % score	CV	z	p value
Knowledge	170	14.72	1.89	70.11	12.86	-7.068	<0.001

Educational implications

The findings of the present study have different educational implications in the learning process of CWID in the inclusive set up.

Educational implication on General Educators

Present stage of development is known as inclusion everywhere. The general educators face different set of difficulties to cater to the needs of diverse group in the classroom. To facilitate the CWID, it is needed to modify the curriculum and adapt according to the requirements of the children. General educators also will be able to cope up with the classroom by knowing the sign factors of the problems behavior of CWID and modify their curriculum based needs in the classroom set up.

Awareness	170	15.04	2.17	71.62	14.45	-4.251	<0.001
-----------	-----	-------	------	-------	-------	--------	--------

3. What are the difficulties faced by general educators having children with intellectual disabilities in their class rooms?

Based on the result analysis revealed that most of the general educators faced difficulties in inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities in regular classrooms. The statement 1. which has direct effect of this construct on Difficulty is 0.814, statement 5. which has direct effect of this construct on Difficulty is 0.563 which is more than the recommended value of 0.4. So it concludes that statements 1 & 5 are a difficulty faced by general educators having children with intellectual disabilities in their class rooms. The statement 2. which has direct effect of this construct on Difficulty is 0.025, statement 3. which has direct effect of this construct on Difficulty is 0.178, statement 4. which has direct effect of this construct on Difficulty is 0.120, statement 6. which has direct effect of this construct on Difficulty is -0.043 and direct effect of this construct on Difficulty is 0.076. This is less than the recommended value of 0.4. So it concludes that statements 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7 are not a difficulty faced by general educators having children with intellectual disabilities in their class rooms.

Recommendations

1. The study recommends that more awareness need to be created among the general educators regarding inclusion of CWID in regular schools.
2. The study also recommends that general educators should develop other involvement means on how to handle CWID to make sure successful inclusion.
3. The researcher emphasizes that positive attitude is essential for general educators to enhance inclusion of CWID in regular schools.
4. The study recommends that the general educators need more hands on training on curriculum adaptations which allow and enrich them to be more effective teachers in an inclusive setup.
5. The study recommended that all pre-service teacher education programs should contain a section on CWID.
6. The study recommended that in order to give quality academic services to the CWID in inclusive education, monthly or weekly in-service training programs on issues related to disability may be organized for general educators in the school.
7. The study recommended that there should a common understanding regarding the adaptation of curriculum and well-documented to be helpful in teaching and learning of all students in the classroom.
8. The study recommended that general educators should know, understand and work collaboratively with their students in inclusive set up.
9. The study recommended that inclusion as policy should be taken up all divisions of society as a priority issue.
10. The study recommends that policy makes should put a

monitoring mechanism which is tasked with assessing the effectiveness of inclusive education strategies supplemented and possible improvements.

Suggestions for further research

1. The study has been fixated only on 170 samples. More effort can be made to conduct on large samples.
2. The study had been focused only in Bijnor district of Uttar Pradesh. Initiatives can be taken up in other districts of the state.
3. The study had been conducted among the general educators. Initiative can be take up into other categories of teachers and paraprofessionals.
4. Further studies can be conducted on the teachers' new concepts and perspective towards inclusive education in curriculum adaptations, independent living and vocational usefulness among the children with intellectual disabilities.
5. Same kind of studies can be conducted in across the country to know viewpoints of general educators regarding the inclusion of intellectual disabilities in regular schools.
6. A comparative study can be conducted on inclusion of CwID in regular schools in viewpoint of general educators in urban area verses rural area.
7. Further studies should be carried out about the factors that affect the attitude, awareness, knowledge and difficulty of general educators, such as the type of disability, lack of training, adapted curriculum, accessibility of support, materials and equipment and class size.
8. Similar qualitative researches can be conducted in diverse areas of disabilities.
9. Similar studies can be conducted on more samples\ larger area.
10. Similar studies can be replaced in other areas of disability.

Delimitations of the study

- The research will be restricted only to Bijnor district of Uttar Pradesh.
- Time availability to take up the study was limited.
- The study was carried out only on 170 general educators.

Conclusion

The research through this survey study has attempted to find out the level of awareness, attitude, difficulty and knowledge among general educators towards the education of children with intellectual disabilities in the inclusive settings of Bijnor district of Uttar Pradesh. Awareness about the inclusive education and provisions for children with intellectual disabilities should be set aside in all sections of the society in order to change the negative attitudes about person with intellectual disabilities. The study indicates a need to bring more positive attitudes among general educators for the successful of inclusion of children with Intellectual disabilities in regular schools. The findings of study also suggest that attitudes of general educators working in regular schools in Bijnor district of Uttar Pradesh differs with variables of age, gender, qualification, experience, locality, types of service and salary. A good inclusive education allows all students with & without disabilities to participate in all classroom activities in equity. So therefore, inclusive education point out as a good solution to the question that how to educate the children with intellectual disabilities in more effectively. It is very important to give proper training programs for general educators in teaching methods that includes students of all capacities levels, as well as spreading awareness to teachers about the need of inclusive education, is one of the most important parts of fulfilling a system of inclusive education, because the general educators are the person who are going to accommodate the children with intellectual disabilities in the classroom. Creating accessibility is totally vigorous for students with intellectual disabilities to be included as an equal member in the inclusive school. As the whole world is moving ahead towards inclusion, the nations' goal is inclusion in all work of life. Let all together work for the inclusion of All. It is also proposed that the present study will be the sordid for sound future researches in the area of inclusive education for students with intellectual disabilities in Indian context.

REFERENCES

1. Avramidis E, Bayliss P. and Burden R, [2000]. A survey into mainstream teacher's attitude towards the inclusion of children with special needs in the ordinary school in one local education authority, *educational psychology* vol. 20 (2) 191-211
2. Bansal, A. (2012). Profitable models for financial inclusion. *Global Journal of Management and Research* October–December, 1.
3. Canevaro, A. (Ed.). (2007). *L'integrazione scolastica degli alunni con disabilità. Trent'anni di inclusione nella scuola italiana*. Edizioni Erickson.
4. Cornelius, D. J. K., & Balakrishnan, J. (2012). Inclusive education for students with intellectual disability. *Disability, CBR & Inclusive Development*, 23(2), 81-93.
5. Forlin, C. (1997). *Re-Designing Pre-Service Teacher Education Courses: An Inclusive Curriculum in New Times*.
6. Gratz, K. L., & Tull, M. T. (2010). Emotion regulation as a mechanism of change in acceptance-and mindfulness-based treatments. *Assessing mindfulness and acceptance processes in clients: Illuminating the theory and practice of change*, 107-133.
7. Puri, M. and Abraham, G., (2004), *Handbook of Inclusive Education for Educators, Administrators, and Planners, Unit- 1 Inclusive Education- An overview*, {17-25}, Sage Publications India Pvt Ltd, B-42, Panchsteel Enclave- New Delhi.
8. Schalock, R. L., Borthwick-Duffy, S. A., Bradley, V. J., Buntinx, W. H., Coulter, D. L., Craig, E. M., & Shogren, K. A. (2010). *Intellectual disability: Definition, classification, and systems of supports*. American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, 444 North Capitol Street NW Suite 846, Washington, DC 20001.
9. Subban, P. and Sharma, U., {2006}, "Primary School teachers' perceptions of inclusive education", *International Journal of special Education*, Vol. {21}, N{1}, {42-52}