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## Strengthening Teachers' Attitude Towards Inclusive Education: A Case Study

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### Abstract:

*All children are born equal but the physical, mental, intellectual and social variations are considered to be as deviations for many. This is the origin for the differences a child faces in the society. The situation worsens when a child is differently abled and calls for special needs. The research paper is a small*

*step towards knowing the present status of teachers' attitude towards Inclusive education in Badmal, Balangir District of Odisha, India. It is a Pilot Study being conducted for the research study to be taken up in the near future and the findings will help the investigator for further detailed study on 500 respondents. In the paper the investigator has also suggested few ways to develop positive attitude among teachers. The ways, if followed, will be a positive step towards making education process more approachable and universal for differently abled children. The investigator conducted Normative study about teachers' attitude towards Inclusive education in Badmal, Balangir District of Odisha, India, through the standardised tool: 'Teachers Attitude Towards Inclusive Education' standardized and validated by Dr Vishal Sood and Dr (Mrs) Arti Anand. A sample of 57 school teachers (22 teachers from Government school, 17 teachers from Private school and 18 teachers from Aided school) were taken from Badmal, Balangir District of Odisha, India. Statistical method of percentage and percentage analysis was applied to get the results. The findings of the study revealed that Government school teachers of Badmal, Balangir District of Odisha, India, showed relatively better positive attitude towards Inclusive education, followed by Aided school teachers as compared to the Private school teachers.*

**Key Words:** *Differently abled children, Inclusive education, Integration, Positive Attitude towards Inclusive education*

### 1. Introduction:

The International community defines a child as "any human being below the age of eighteen years, unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier." (CRC, 1989)<sup>1</sup>. Children's rights includes their right to association with both parents, human identity as well as the basic needs for physical protection, food, universal state-paid education, health care, and criminal laws appropriate for the children, equal protection of the child's civil rights, and freedom from discrimination on the basis of the child's race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, disability, colour, ethnicity, or other characteristics.

<sup>1</sup> Convention on the Rights of the Child, Nov. 20, 1989, 1577 U.N.T.S. 3

Special needs are mainly defined by—milestones unmet, activities avoided, or experiences denied. The problem these children faces in everyday life mount up when those needs are not taken duly care in school setup and also when the attitude of teachers is not positive towards the cause. The study aims to highlight the issue and suggests the ways to develop positive attitude of teachers towards Inclusive Education. This Article is based on the data revealed from the Pilot Study being conducted prior to conducting Final Study, taking only 10% of total Sample (500) planned for the Final Study. It is planned that the proposed Sample design of the Final Study is as follows.

| Rural |        | Urban |        | Total |
|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| Male  | Female | Male  | Female |       |
| 50    | 50     | 50    | 50     | 500   |

## 2. Objectives of the Study:

The study was conducted keeping in mind the following objectives:

- 1) To study the Government school teachers' attitude towards Inclusive education in Badmal, Balangir District of Odisha.
- 2) To study the Private school teachers' attitude towards Inclusive education in Badmal, Balangir District of Odisha.
- 3) To study the Aided school teachers' attitude towards Inclusive education in Badmal, Balangir District of Odisha

## 3. Literature Review:

Avramadis, E., Bayliss, P., and Burden, R. (2004)<sup>2</sup> conducted a survey study the attitudes of student teachers toward the concept of inclusion of children with special needs in the normal school. The sample was comprised of 135 students who were about to complete their teacher training courses at a university School of Education. The study revealed that the respondents held positive attitudes toward the idea of inclusion but their perceived competence dropped significantly according to the severity of children's needs as identified by the UK "Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs". Moreover, children with behavioural and emotional difficulties were seen as potentially causing more concern and stress than those with other types of special needs. Finally, the survey raised issues about the breadth and quality of initial teacher training in the UK. Avramidis, E., & Norwich, B. (2002)<sup>3</sup> in their paper reviewed teachers' attitudes towards the integration and, more recently, the inclusion of children with special educational needs in the mainstream school, in so doing, explores a host of factors that

<sup>2</sup> Avramadis, E., Bayliss, P., and Burden, R. (2004). *Student teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of children with special educational needs in the ordinary school*. Teaching and Teacher Education, 16(2), 277–293.

<sup>3</sup> Avramidis, E., & Norwich, B. (2002). Teachers' attitudes towards integration/inclusion: a review of the literature. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 17(2), 129–147.

might impact on teacher acceptance of the principle of inclusion. The analyses showed evidence of positive attitudes, but no evidence of acceptance of a total inclusion or 'zero reject' approach to special educational provision. Teachers' attitudes were found to be strongly influenced by the nature and severity of the disabling condition presented to them (child-related variables) and less by teacher-related variables. Further, educational environment-related variables, such as the availability of physical and human support, were consistently found to be associated with attitudes to inclusion.

Soni, R.B.L. (2003)<sup>4</sup> conducted the study in the state of Andhra Pradesh in India to identify the extent of accessibility of education to the CWSNs in normal schools, The study covered a sample of CWSNs (300), teachers (90), parents (150), heads of the schools (30), home based teachers (30) and tried to identify the problems of the CWSNs in accessing the education, problems of the teachers in tackling with the children, parents' opinions towards the efforts of the schools in making education to be accessible to their CSWN.

Burke, K., and Sutherland, C. (2004)<sup>5</sup> conducted a study to determine whether or not the relationship exists between pre-service and in-service teachers' experiences with disabled students and also their attitude towards inclusion. The result indicated a statistically significant relationship between prior experience and knowledge of the disabled and attitude towards inclusion.

#### 4. Methodology:

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher undertook Normative Survey Method. The researcher visited various schools of Badmal in Balangir District of Odisha. To collect the data for the present study, the researcher took help of the following standardized tool: 'Teachers Attitude Towards Inclusive Education' developed by Dr Vishal Sood and Dr (Mrs) Arti Anand. Questionnaire was distributed and data collected through Purposive Sampling on a sample of 57 respondents (School Teachers)– 22 teachers from Government school, 17 teachers from Private school and 18 teachers from Aided school of Badmal, District Balangir, Odisha. Statistical Technique used were- Percentage and Percentage Analysis.

##### 4.1 Sample: Sampling procedures - Purposive Sampling:

Purposive sampling technique was used to select respondents (school teachers in the case). The researcher selected a sample of 57 school teachers– 22 teachers from Government school, 17

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<sup>4</sup> Soni, R.B.L. (2003). *Perceptions of parents, teachers and students about education of disabled children*. New Delhi: NCERT

<sup>5</sup> Burke, K., and Sutherland, C. (2004). *Attitudes toward inclusion: Knowledge vs. Experience*. *Education*, 125(2), 163-172.

teachers from Private school and 18 teachers from Aided school of Badmal, District Balangir, Odisha, in June 2019.

**Table 1: Distribution of Sample of 57 school teachers**

| Name of the School          | Nature of School | Number of Teachers |
|-----------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Jag Mata School          | Private          | 17                 |
| 2. Kendriya Vidyalaya       | Government       | 22                 |
| 3. Ordnance Factory School, | Aided            | 18                 |
| <b>Total</b>                |                  | <b>57</b>          |

#### 4.2 Tools & Techniques :

To collect the data for the present study, the researcher took help of the following standardized tool: 'Teachers Attitude Towards Inclusive Education' developed by Dr Vishal Sood and Dr (Mrs) Arti Anand. Statistical Technique of Percentage & Percentage Analysis was being used to analyze the results.

#### 5. Analysis and Interpretation:

Data was analyzed by dividing the scores into two Groups and Percentage of the scores was calculated and analyzed to reach to the conclusion

- i) Less Favorable Attitude Group = Scores in the range 80-109;
- ii) More Favorable Attitude Group = Scores in the range 110-139.

**Table 2 Showing responses by Private, Government & Aided school Teachers**

| Nature of School | Number of Respondents | Scores Obtained<br>(On scoring scale ranging from 47 to 139) |             |               |                         |               |               |
|------------------|-----------------------|--|-------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|
|                  |                       | Less Favorable Attitude                                      |             |               | More Favorable Attitude |               |               |
|                  |                       | Score 80- 89   | Score 90-99 | Score 100-109 | Score 110-119           | Score 120-129 | Score 130-139 |
| Government       | 22                    | 0  | 10          | 1             | 4                       | 6             | 1             |
| Aided            | 18                    | 4  | 3           | 6             | 4                       | 1             | 0             |
| Private          | 17                    | 0  | 10          | 3             | 4                       | 0             | 0             |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>57</b>             |  |             |               |                         |               |               |

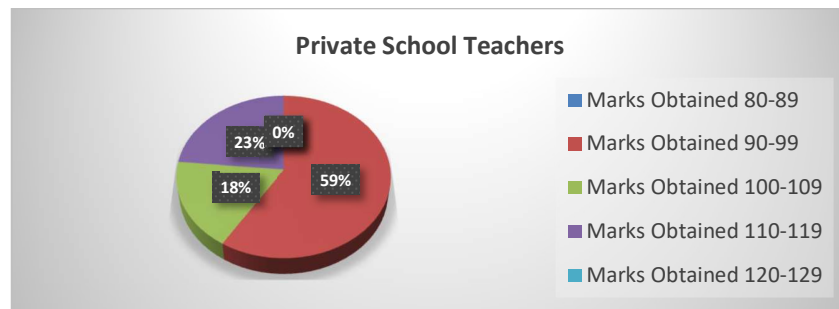


Fig 1: Attitude of Private School Teachers from the District

**Discussion:** If we analyze the Fig 1, 59% of whole sample of 17 respondents have scored between 90-99 marks showing less positive attitude towards Inclusive education. 23% are falling in the range of 110-119 marks score showing relatively better attitude towards Inclusive education.

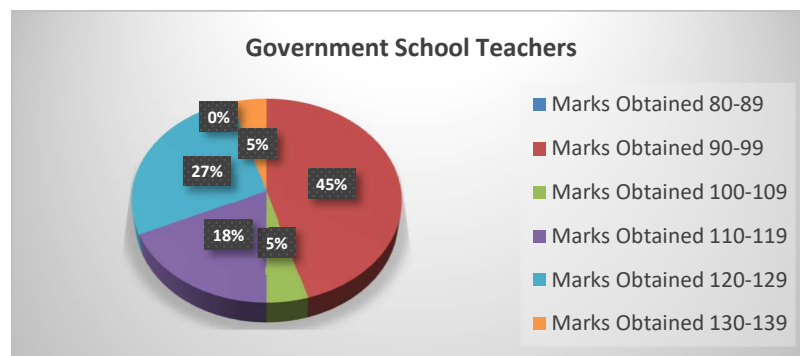


Fig 2: Attitude of Government School Teachers from the District

**Discussion:** If we analyze the Fig 2, 45% of whole sample of 22 respondents have scored between 90-99 marks showing weak attitude towards Inclusive education. Whereas 50% of the respondents (5% in 130-139, 27% in 120-129 and 18% in 110-119 marks score) have showed positive attitude (above score of 110 marks) towards Inclusive education.

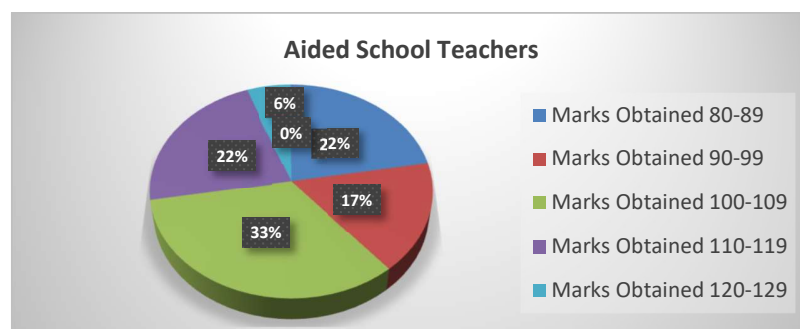
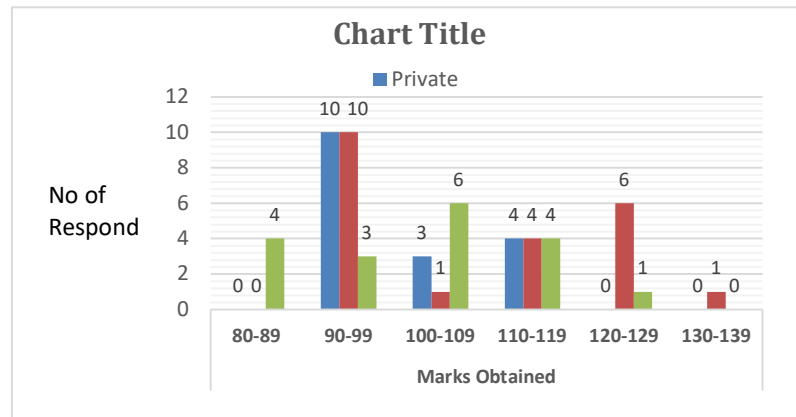


Fig 3: Attitude of Aided School Teachers from the District

**Discussion:** If we analyze the Fig 3, 22% of whole sample of 18 respondents have scored between 80-89 marks showing very less positive attitude towards Inclusive education. Whereas 28% of the respondents (6% in 120-129 and 22% in 110-119 marks score) showed positive attitude towards Inclusive education.



**Fig 4: Comparative Study of Private, Government & Aided School Teachers from the District**

## 6. Findings of the Study:

After analyzing the data based on the scores obtained from the respondents, the investigator summed up the following findings-

- Scores of Government school teachers- 11 teachers scoring up to 119 marks and 7 teachers in the range of 120-139 marks. Remaining 11 teachers are scoring less than 110 marks. As Government school teachers of Badmal, Balangir District, Odisha, India is falling in the higher score bracket, they show relatively better positive attitude towards Inclusive education.
- Scores of Aided school teachers- 4 teachers scoring up to 119 marks and 1 in the range of 120-139 marks. Remaining 13 teachers are scoring less than 110 marks. Thus, Aided school teachers of Badmal, Balangir District, Odisha, India are faring better than Private school teachers but poor as compared to Government school teachers of Badmal, Balangir District, Odisha, thus they need to improve their attitude towards Inclusive education.
- Scores of Private school teachers- 4 teachers scoring up to 119 marks and 0 in the range of 120-139 marks. Remaining 13 teachers are scoring less than 110 marks, showing poor attitude towards Inclusive education and thus they need to drastically improve their attitude towards Inclusive education.

## 7. Delimitations:

The present study has the following delimitations-

- The study was delimited to the school teachers only.

- ii) The study was delimited to the schools of Badmal in Balangir District of Odisha, India.
- iii) The study was delimited to 57 respondents only.

## 8. Recommendations:

Inclusion involves a change in the existing school systems in terms of resources, curriculum aspects, teaching expectations and styles and leadership roles. Inclusive schools are the most effective means of combating discriminating attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society, and achieving the goal of education for all. As per the vision in Salamanca Statement after 'WORLD CONFERENCE ON SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION: ACCESS AND QUALITY', the main objective was to mobilize funds through the creation within its next Medium-Term Plan (1996-2002) of an expanded programme for inclusive schools and community support Programmes, which would enable the launching of pilot projects that showcase new approaches for dissemination, and to develop indicators concerning the need for and provision of special needs education. (UNESCO, 1994, p. xi)<sup>6</sup>

It includes changes in physical set up, curriculum aspects, teaching styles, leadership roles etc. Foremost, before making any rapid change in pedagogical styles, teaching methods, institutional setups, what is required at the helm is the positive attitude of teachers towards Inclusive education, rest other things can be assured for being rightly placed.

An attitude is "a relatively enduring organization of beliefs, feelings and behavioral tendencies towards socially significant objects, groups, events or symbols" (Hogg & Vaughan, 2005)<sup>7</sup>. The notions and beliefs a teacher carry to the classroom determine to a great extent the quality of instruction delivered by him/her, and assume pivotal role in the instructional success and also the success of inclusive education programme.

Seeing the result from the study, one must ponder over the ways to develop the positive attitude of teachers towards Inclusive education. The requisite training can be imparted but what about the attitude? Each member of the community especially teachers must realize the condition 'what if a differently abled child is there in my house?' Thus, the investigator proposes few recommendations to strengthen the teacher's attitude towards inclusive education in the society.

- 1) **Sensitization of Teachers towards pertinent issue** – The inclusive education is of paramount importance in today's era. Teachers should be sensitized not only towards the need of the normal children, but most importantly towards the children with special needs. Their needs, special requirements, learning capability and methodologies required must be well known in

<sup>6</sup> The UNESCO Salamanca Statement. (2016, January 26). Retrieved August 21, 2021, from [The UNESCO Salamanca Statement](#)

<sup>7</sup> Hogg, M. and Vaughan, G., 2005. *Social psychology*. New York: Prentice Hall, 150

advance by the teacher, so that she/he can plan out their pedagogical styles accordingly. The physical structural changes, barrier free set up is of high importance for the successful conduct of the programme.

- 2) **Cooperative Teaching** – No person is perfect. Similarly, teachers need to develop the perfection in their area of specialization. Handling children with special needs, can thus be discussed and collaborated among teachers, leading to developing best strategies, teaching methods within the inclusive setup.
- 3) **Collaborative working model**- Inclusive education can be a success only when all the stakeholders in the system shoulder equal responsibility towards the cause. Parents should be informed from time to time regarding the advancements in the sector. Parents should be aware about the activities involved in imparting of instructions for the children having special needs. Any form of challenges from parent's side must be detected and rectified. Mobilize community resources to support inclusion. Collaboration between school, community and parents is a complex process but the results are fruitful.
- 4) **Developing Positive Approach**- Teachers must be psychologically prepared and trained to support the children with special needs in a classroom. They should be equipped not only to teach but to understand the need of the learners with special needs. The researchers argue that the negative attitude held by teachers may be a significant barrier to the effective implementation of inclusive education. (Glazzard et al., 2015)<sup>8</sup>
- 5) **Role of Policy Makers: CBSE Initiatives**- Central Board of Secondary Education has worked relentlessly towards bringing inclusion in education system through various schemes and Programmes. Apart from other steps, Advisory to schools as per the Guidelines of Inclusive Education of Children with Disabilities (IECD) (CBSE, 2008)<sup>9</sup> to make education system more supportive, has following objectives-
  - i) Ensuring that no child with special needs is denied admission in Mainstream Education.
  - ii) To monitor enrolment of disabled children in schools.
  - iii) Ensuring that schools provide support through assistive devices and the availability of trained teachers.
  - iv) To modify the existing physical infrastructure and teaching methodologies to meet the needs of all children including Children with Special Needs.
  - v) To ensure that the school premises are made disabled friendly by 2020 and all educational institutions including hostels, libraries, laboratories and buildings have barrier free access for the disabled.

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<sup>8</sup> Glazzard, J., Stokoe, J., Hughes, A., Netherwood, A. and Neve, L., 2015. *Teaching & supporting children with special educational needs & disabilities in primary schools*. 2nd ed. London: Learning Matters

<sup>9</sup> CBSE. (2008). *Inclusive Practices in CBSE schools*. India: CBSE.



- vi) To ensure availability of study material for the disabled and Talking Text Books, Reading Machines and computers with speech software.
- vii) To ensure adequate number of sign language interpreters, transcription services and a loop induction system for the students with Speech Language disability.
- viii) To revisit classroom organization required for the education of Children With Special Needs.
- ix) To ensure regular in-service training of teachers in inclusive education at the elementary and secondary level.

CBSE, being sensitive to the needs of disabled students, is extending several exemptions/concessions to candidates with disabilities as defined in The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act- 2016 and Guidelines for conducting written examination for persons with benchmark disabilities 2018 issued by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

## 9. Conclusion:

Inclusive education is a worldwide movement which is transforming the educational system. There are lots of difficulties when one tries to bring any change or reform, but it is necessary to conceptualize and develop an educational system which can properly respond to all the varied needs, characteristics and individual differences of all the children in the school. The teachers trained through Special Education course have the acquired skill set and knowledge in dealing with the special children. The knowledge and skills to implement regular education along with special education influence and affect the style of the role of teachers in leading implementation of inclusive education. Hence, teachers need training for both in-service and pre-service inclusive education to develop positive attitude towards Inclusive Education.

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