



ATTITUDES OF TEACHERS TOWARDS EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN MALDA

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Abstract

The Present study was conducted to determine attitude of teachers towards education of children with special needs in Malda district of West Bengal. An attitude refers to a set of emotions, beliefs, and behaviours toward a particular object, person, thing, or event. Attitudes are often the result of experience or upbringing, and they can have a powerful influence over behaviour. A special needs child is a youth who has been determined to require special attention and specific necessities that other children do not. The study aims to examine attitude of teachers towards education of children with special needs of both genders. For this study, the descriptive survey method of educational research was followed. The population comprises all school teachers in the district of Malda in West Bengal. Here fifty school teachers were taken as samples for the study. The purposive random sampling technique was followed to select the present study sample. In this study, an attitude scale was conducted. The researchers have prepared and standardised the tools. After scoring and tabulation of data, Analysis was done with the help of a Quantitative approach. Results indicated that the null hypothesis is accepted and it can be interpreted that there is no significant difference between attitudes of male and female school teachers towards children with special needs.

Keywords: *Attitude, Teacher, Children with Special Needs*

Introduction

Children are the motherland's flowers, the nation's future, and a population group that has received much attention from all walks of life. However, due to their physical defects, disabled children belong to one of the most vulnerable groups in society and receive far less attention. The number of disabled children is huge. They are the basic members of the society. They also have the rights and obligations to advance human society. But they are plagued by various problems. But there is a proverb "Nothing is permanent in this world" to society as well as the education system. So currently the changing needs of our Society have changed how it educates its children. The recent trend, which has gained popularity in regular or general education with special education; is known as inclusion. Inclusion as we know is an educational practice based on a notion of social justice that advocates access to equal educational opportunities for all students irrespective of any disability or special needs. It represents the belief that children with special needs should be integrated completely into general classrooms and their instruction should be based on their abilities, never on disabilities (Al Zyoudi, 2006). The term CWSN refers to all those children whose

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needs arise out of their specific abilities or learning difficulties. Therefore it is imperative to ensure that the school teachers are competent enough to cater to the needs of an increasing range of diverse learners. While preparing such teachers for an inclusive school, their attitudes, beliefs, expectations and acceptance matter the most. Moreover, they desire interpersonal communication and the ability to realise self-worth. To realise their self-worth and yearn for a better life, disabled children should participate in social life and integrate into social development.

Review of Related Studies

The review of related literature is an important aspect of research, just like any other it involves the identification, location, and careful examination of documents containing information related to the research problem in a systematic way. Being familiar with previous research also facilitates interpretation of the results of studies. These reviews give information that can either support or challenge the conclusions of the investigators' research and therefore provide clues for later research. The earlier research reports have been reviewed in detail to get a clear picture of the present study. All of the reviews of this work that the researchers have done are discussed below.

Parasuram, K. (2006): The study was conducted on Variables that affect teachers' attitudes towards disability and inclusive education in Mumbai, India. *Disability & Society*. The study investigated whether variable background characteristics such as age, gender, income level, education levels, years of teaching experience, acquaintance with a person with a disability, having a family member with a disability, frequency of contact, and closeness to a person with a disability affect the attitudes of teachers towards people with disabilities and the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular schools. The analyses revealed that while some of the variables of interest did affect teachers' attitudes towards disabilities, the only variable that affected teachers' attitudes towards inclusion was prior acquaintance with a person with a disability.

Thasleem Sulthana, S. A. (2007): The study was conducted on the attitude of parent's teachers, and students towards children with special needs in normal and integrated schools. The study aims to examine whether knowledge about the nature of the disability has any influence on the individual in forming attitudes towards children with special needs and to make comparisons among the target groups in their attitudes toward the acceptance level of children with special needs. The sample for the investigation consists of 600 persons (200 parents, 200 teachers, and 200 teachers). The data were analyzed using relevant statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics such as mean, mode, SD, etc., were used to describe the distribution of scores. Inferential statistical techniques such as 't-tests and ANOVA were employed to test different hypotheses

Hasan, F. (2017): The study was conducted on the attitude of parents and teachers towards differently abled children of upper primary schools. The study aims to examine the Attitude of Male and female parents toward their differently-abled children. the investigator selected a purposive sampling technique for the selection of the sample for the present study. The sample is confined to 105 students suffering from different types of disabilities. Rampur district is divided into 06 educational blocks. There is a total of 40 items in the final Questionnaire for Parents. There is a total of 40 items in the final Questionnaire for Teachers. Findings of the study, it can be concluded that 67% of Male parents think that their differently abled child is low on confidence and hesitates in socializing with others.

Research Gap: An appropriate environment helps in the holistic development of children. Therefore, in the era of science and technology, a suitable environment is being created for children with special needs to bring them back into the mainstream of people in society. At present, they are also becoming experts in various fields in tandem with the general students. However, I reviewed and saw that there was no such research on the attitude of male and female school teachers towards children with special needs in an inclusive school. so I did this research to know their attitude. Research is more important in this regard.

Definition of Important Terms

Attitude

The term attitude has been derived from the Latin word “Aptus” which means fitness or adeptness on the one hand and subjective or mental state of preparation on the other hand. The conceptual definition of the term attitude has been given in many ways by different authors. The term attitude was first used to denote „the total of a man“ 's inclination and feelings, prejudice or bias, preconceived notions, ideas, fears, threats and convictions about any specific topic, object or person. Attitude can be defined as a learned disposition to behave in a consistent evaluative manner towards a person, an object or a group of objects.

Teacher

This study discusses both male and female teachers in inclusive classroom environments. Beyond the classroom, a teacher may have extra professional duties. Teachers can supervise study halls, participate in field trips with students, help with planning school events, and act as extracurricular activity supervisors in addition to their regular teaching duties. Besides that, they are required by law to shield pupils from harm caused by intolerance harassment, taunting, and other forms of abuse. Teachers may be in charge of student discipline in some educational institutions.

Children with Special Needs

In this study, the researchers will mention that the children with special needs are young people who have been assigned special attention and specific needs that other children do not have. The state may declare this status to provide benefits and assistance for the welfare and growth of the child. Special needs can also be a legal term, especially in the adoption and foster care communities, where children and parents receive assistance to help them both lead productive lives.

Objectives of the Study

The researchers formulated a few objectives for this present study, which are as follows:

- To find out the attitudes of male school teachers towards children with special needs in an inclusive school.
- To examine the attitudes of female school teachers towards children with special needs in an inclusive school.

Hypotheses of the Study

Keeping in mind the above-mentioned objectives, the researcher formulated the following research hypotheses for the study.

H_{0.1}: There will be no significant relationship between the attitude of male and female school teachers towards children with special needs in an inclusive school.

Delimitations of the Study: The present study was delimited into the following areas.

- The district of Malda in West Bengal was considered for the present study.
- In this study, data were collected from male and female school teachers
- Teachers of inclusive schools were considered as a sample of the study.
- In this study, only the attitude of male and female school teachers towards physically and visually impaired children with special needs was searched.

Methodology of the Study

Methodology: Given the objectives, hypothesis and the nature of data, the Descriptive Survey Method of educational research was followed for the present study. Necessary information was collected with the help of an attitude scale. Analysis was done with the help of the Quantitative approach.

Variables of the Study: The present research comprised of the sample groups selected from the children with special needs which includes the following variables:

- **Independent variable:** The attitude of school teachers towards children with special needs.
- **Categorical / Demographic variables:** Gender of the school teachers towards children with special needs.

Population and Sample: The population comprises all categories of teachers in the district of Malda in West Bengal. Here fifty school teachers were taken as samples for the present study. The purposive random sampling technique was followed to select the sample.

Tools of the Study: The following tools were used for the collection of data:

Attitude scale - An attitude scale for the attitude of male and female school teachers towards children with special needs in an inclusive school. The tool was prepared and standardised by the present researchers.

Analysis and Interpretation

In this study, based on the analysis of the t-test, the relationship between the attitude of male and female school teachers towards children with special needs in an inclusive school was determined.

H_{0.1}: There will be no significant relationship between the attitude of male and female school teachers towards children with special needs in an inclusive school.

Table: Attitude of male and female school teachers towards special children

Variable	Groups (Gender)	No.	Mean	SD	df	t-value	Inference
The attitude of teachers towards children with special needs.	Male	28	72.14	9.575	48	-.975	Not significant
	Female	22	74.31	4.725			

Interpretation

The above table reveals that the attitude of school teachers towards children with special needs by gender, mean and S.D. were calculated and an independent t-test was used. As for gender differences, the mean of the attitude of male participants was 72.14 (SD = 9.575) and of female participants was 74.31 (SD = 4.725), with a t-value of -.975 which is less than the table value of 2.01 at 0.05 significant level with the df 50 (near about 48) and hence the t-value is not significant at 0.05 level. So, the null hypothesis is accepted and it can be interpreted that there is no significant difference between the attitudes of male and female school teachers towards children with special needs.

Educational Implication of the Study

Based on the principles of providing equal educational opportunities to all students without discrimination, inclusive education is an emerging trend and a widely desirable innovation for all mainstream institutions. The "Education for All" mission is right now being emphasised by all states through a variety of initiatives, including RTE, Basic Education, DPEP, and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The outcomes of this study will be useful for finding beneficial indicators and in establishing the basis for further development of inclusive education, particularly in a most recently developed state such as West Bengal. The effectiveness of inclusive education in terms of success indicators for its implementation will lead the way for this innovation's further development. In addition, the study's findings may serve as initial data for subsequent efforts to promote inclusive education for children with special needs when they are planned, carried out, and evaluated. The findings of this study will establish priorities and provide efficient strategies for solving difficulties and developing inclusion. Understanding how every relevant factor thinks about the framework will also be useful in the context of inclusive education, and

this study will provide a means of understanding the specific determination for the belief in inclusive education.

Conclusion

Based upon the previously mentioned, the researchers conclude that in an inclusive school, the ultimate objective of "Education for All" necessitates teachers to be a little more supportive. In this sense, it is impossible to pick out teachers or pupils as solely responsible for inclusiveness's present condition of failures. It will be relatively simple for children with special needs to adapt to an inclusive school if peers and teachers show an openness to accept them with their condition. Whenever the opinions of teachers and pupils are evaluated by one another, it becomes evident that many of the teachers' statements are not supported by the other. Educators and learners must adopt a more accommodating mindset to include children with special needs in the overall educational programme.

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