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An Examination To Ascertain The Educator's Perspective On Inclusive Education

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Abstract

Aim: The objective of the research was to evaluate the educators' perspectives on Inclusive Education. **Method:** The sample comprised 503 educators employed in various institutions within Patna District. They were selected through a cross-sectional survey methodology. The participants were asked to complete the Teacher Attitude Towards Inclusive Scale (TATIS), which includes 14 questionnaires. Subsequently, the responses were collected from the participants. **Result:** The information gathered was organized and analyzed utilizing the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Statistics. The findings of this research indicate that the Teacher Attitude Towards Inclusion Scale (TATIS) score of the school educators is not significantly high. **Conclusion:** The study disclosed that the attitudes towards students with disabilities in inclusive environments (POS), beliefs regarding the efficacy of inclusion (BEI), and beliefs concerning professional roles and responsibilities (PRF) among the school educators are relatively low.

KEYWORDS: Inclusive Education, School Educators, TATIS

I. INTRODUCTION

Teacher's Perspectives: The achievement of every student in educational settings, with or without specialized assistance, relies on the extent of academic training provided. (Young, Wright & Laster, 2005). Numerous educational institutions and educators express apprehension regarding inclusion programs due to the behavioral or societal challenges presented by students with special needs. (Downing, 2004). General educators are often reluctant to accommodate students with special needs in compliance with the legislation governing special education. (Campbell, Gilmore & Cuskelly, 2003). Nevertheless, recent research reveals that educators exhibit varying perspectives on inclusive education. (Burke & Sutherland, 2004). The findings suggest that the backing from well-educated educators towards students with special needs proves most effective, with minimal complaints regarding inclusive practices. Consequently, researchers advocate for comprehensive and thorough training for teachers within mainstream classrooms to initiate the inclusion process. (Burke & Sutherland, 2004). Educational programs should incorporate suitable and efficient adult learning techniques, including personalized educational support alongside instructional and subsequent activity follow-ups. Additionally, it is essential to implement measures to ascertain whether trained individuals meet the criteria of mandated experts in their field. (Carnine & Granzin, 2001).

Beliefs in Inclusion: The phrase "inclusive education" is frequently employed when referring to the instruction of students with or without special educational needs (SEN) in secondary schools. (Rafferty, Boettcher, & Griffin, 2001). Educators' beliefs regarding the education of children with disabilities, as well as their views on inclusivity, can significantly influence their interactions and pedagogical approaches towards children with special needs. (Lieber et al., 1998; Stoiber, Gettinger, & Goetz, 1998). Researchers have developed instructional strategies grounded in their understanding of child learning processes, making their engagement with students closely contingent upon their capacity to formulate

theories regarding cognitive functioning. (Olson & Bruner, 1996). Consequently, an educator's confidence in supporting children requiring special assistance and their attitude towards learning can greatly sway the circumstances of a child in challenging environments. (Bailey & Winton, 1987; Odom & McEvoy, 1990).

Classroom Inclusion: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 (IDEA) permits students with disabilities to be educated within mainstream classrooms. (Hallahan & Kaufmann, 2003). Under this law, students with disabilities should not be confined to exclusive educational establishments. Thanks to IDEA, both students with and without disabilities are encouraged to be educated together in the same learning environment, thus allowing students to acquire knowledge similar to what their peers are experiencing.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Educators' Perspectives on Inclusion: Rorie Ross-Hill (2009) conducts a study examining the diverse attitudes of mainstream education instructors regarding the implementation of inclusion in elementary and secondary school settings. The study involved seventy-three instructors from three public elementary and secondary schools situated in rural, southeastern USA who completed the Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusive Classrooms (STATIC) assessment.

The findings indicated that a majority of instructors express support for the practice of inclusion in general education classrooms or hold a neutral stance towards its implementation as it relates to their teaching assignments.

Factors affecting inclusion: Kala Parasuram et al. (2006) The perspective of teachers is one of the most crucial determinants in the education of children with disabilities. Attitudes of mainstream educators in Mumbai, India, concerning disabilities and the integration of students with disabilities into regular schools were examined using two attitude scales. The research explored whether various background characteristics such as age, gender, income level, educational attainment, years of teaching experience, familiarity with an individual with a disability, having a relative with a disability, frequency of contact, and closeness to someone with a disability impact teachers' attitudes towards individuals with disabilities and towards the inclusion of students with disabilities into mainstream schools. The analyses revealed that while some of the variables of interest did influence teachers' attitudes towards disabilities, the only variable that affected teachers' attitudes towards inclusion was prior familiarity with someone with a disability.

Instrument used: Timo Saloviita et al. (2015) The Teachers' Attitudes towards Inclusive Education (TATIS) scale was developed to assess pre-service teachers' attitudes towards inclusion as articulated in the Salamanca Districtment by UNESCO. The 10-item scale was formulated using a sample of 185 final-year pre-service subject teachers. It has been validated in four subsequent studies involving various samples of teachers and pre-service teachers. The unidimensionality of the scale was established across all samples except for the initial students, and its validity was confirmed through psychometric analyses. The scale is generally recommended for use in intervention studies aimed at fostering positive attitudes towards inclusion among teachers and pre-service teachers.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research design: Cross-sectional study

Sampling: Five hundred and three (N=503) school teachers were selected through non-probability convenience sampling from Patna.

Instrument used: "TATIS - Teacher attitudes towards inclusion scale" questionnaire

TATIS The reliability of TATIS was validated using the Cronbach alpha correlation technique, evaluating the reliability of the instrument, with an overall correlation coefficient found to be 0.821. The Cronbach alphas for the components of POS, BEI, and PRF are . 803, . 863, and . 680, respectively. A confidence coefficient affirms its robustness as a tool for measuring teacher attitudes to support students with mild to

moderate disabilities (Joseph P. Cullen, 2010). Construct validity was demonstrated through factor analysis, revealing three factors that accounted for over 58% of the total variance.

Data collection procedure: School teachers (government, non-government, private) were selected based on screening criteria. The purpose of the study was explained, and a written consent form duly signed was obtained from each teacher. Demographic data were collected, followed by the issuance of the TATIS form to assess the levels of attitude.

Information analysis: It was analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 23.0.

IV. RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Significant differences in total scale scores of the Teacher Attitude toward Inclusion Scale (TATIS) for variables with two sub-samples.

Variable	Subsample	N	Mean	SD	Mode	t-value	Df.	LevelofSig.
Gender	Male	217	44.24	7.92	1.25	1.70	501	NS*
	Female	286	42.99	8.41				

NS-NotSignificantat0. 05level Interpretation: It is determined that the male and female educators do not exhibit a significant difference in their overall scores on the Teacher's Attitudes Towards Inclusion Scale (TATIS).

Table 2 Significant difference in overall scores of Teacher Attitude toward Inclusion Scale (TATIS) for variables with two sub-samples.

Variable	Subsample	N	Mean	SD	Mode	t-value	Df.	LevelofSig.
Gender	<5yrs	234	42.79	8.50	1.39	1.89	501	NS*
	≥5yrs	269	44.17	7.93				

NS-NotSignificantat0. 05level

Interpretation: The years of Experience do not differ meaningfully in their Full-Scale score of Teacher Attitude towards Inclusion Scale (TATIS).

V. DISCUSSION

The research was conducted among educators working in Patna District to ascertain their attitudes towards Inclusive Education. The utilized scale, TATIS, encompasses 14 items, which consist of three components: 1. Attitude toward Students with Disabilities in inclusive environments (POS) 2. Beliefs regarding the Effectiveness of inclusion (BEI) 3. Beliefs concerning Professional Roles and Responsibilities (PRF) of the School. This was administered to assess the teachers' attitudes. The ultimate statistical findings were interpreted. Upon employing the TATIS scale, it is apparent from the figures in Tables 1 and 2 that, regardless of gender or experience, the Teachers' Attitude towards Inclusive Education is significantly not elevated.

Implication of the study: The effectiveness of any course of action is contingent upon the perceptions of the individuals involved. Educators play a crucial role in translating educational provisions into practice through the demonstration of the learning process. Classroom practices must take into account how individual students learn most effectively. The lack of training and opportunities for professional development are disincentives to engagement.

Limitations: Similar to other studies, this research also encountered its own limitations, which are left for future studies to address. This includes the following:

- Not all participants exhibited active interest towards the study
- Challenges in accessing schools and obtaining permission to conduct this study
- Numerous schools declined permission to carry out this study

- The sample size was considerable
- Difficulties in recruiting an adequate number of teachers from both genders.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to determine the teachers' attitudes towards Inclusive Education. A total of 503 participants' attitudes were evaluated using the Teacher's Attitude towards Inclusion Scale (TATIS). The findings of this study indicated that the teachers did not possess a significant positive attitude towards Inclusive Education. Consequently, the results could be utilized to raise awareness about inclusion among school teachers, as it is acknowledged that a positive attitude from them contributes to the successful implementation of inclusive education.

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