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Explore Areas of Needed Support, Competencies, Attitudes, and Concerns of Elementary School Teachers for Inclusion of CWDS in Elementary Schools of Punjab

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Abstract: Punjab has 310 special education centers with 7% CWPDS. CWPDS are primarily considered for inclusion. In Punjab, 3549 Male Elementary schools have 12 44,137 students in SED. The study aimed to explore areas of needed support, competencies, attitudes, and concerns of ESTs for inclusion in elementary schools. A qualitative approach with exploratory research was used. 36 ESTs teaching CWPDS in the mainstream from 12 districts of Punjab selected by purposive sampling, interviewed with semi-structured interview protocol. Through thematic analysis, it found that teachers teaching CWPDS in the mainstream have a concept of IE. They believe inclusion will be successful while parties are involved; otherwise, inclusion will be just an unrealistic idea because few teachers can't change the whole setup. Govt. should take action to make it possible as this is an international voice. This study will be helpful in developing teacher support programs for successful inclusion and explore visions of universities for up-gradation of the content of professional degrees.

Key Words: IE (Inclusive Education), CWPDS (Children with physical disabilities), ESTs (Elementary School Teachers), SED (School Education Department), PHC (Physically handicapped children), MCC (mentally challenged children)

Introduction

Allah has created human beings as the best of Creatures, but the most interesting thing is that Allah has blessed around about 1,24,000 prophets for the education and training of this creation. So within the creation of human beings, the concept of teaching and training has been started, and still, it's going on. Now in the modern world, every field of study has its specific teacher and trainer. Within the concept of the mosque, school, college, and university, there are specifically qualified teachers for each class and subject. Teachers are thought of as social change agents. It's why for the last decade, experts and policymakers have focused on boosting teacher education. Reforms in education and policy have increased the importance of teacher education programs. Quality education would arise from educating

quality instructors (Tasdemir, Asghar, et al. 2020). In all aspects of human growth, the world is progressing. This creation is focused on facets of culture and technology. In a wider sense, this growth reflects not only on physical well-being but also on ensuring quality living with cultural, moral, economic, and social facts. A new sense of awareness can be accomplished by all protests and world programs that advocate for the provision of human rights, gender equality, children's rights, the rule of law, social integration, and justice. Through education, this awareness can be awakened among the masses (Caugh, 2004; Durdhawale, 2005). The teaching and teacher' are fundamental factors in all educational endeavours and knowledge-seeking activities. A teacher seems as a role model to children who idolize and

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emulate him. Therefore, a teacher must observe high moral values and social norms along with professional ethics. It is a technical mission that involves many skilled abilities and skills. These professional skills can be developed through teacher training programs, including pre-service as well as in-service and ongoing training. Successful teacher training programs produce competent teachers who, according to Duffee & Aikenhead, (1992), create constructive minds. Education is the key to a country's social and economic growth. It creates knowledgeable and productive citizens. Education helps marginalized and poor populations escape poverty. A prosperous and peaceful community is educated. National and worldwide educational goals must be set and worked upon so that young people can contribute socially and economically to the nation's well-being.

Overall, Pakistan's educational system has improved over time. Education reinforces social fragmentation based on ideology (mostly religious and political), socio-economic class, and cultural distinctions between urban and tribal-influenced rural areas. These situations necessitate major legislative and structural adjustments to make education accessible to all and a vehicle for social progress (Chang 2014). Similarly, education is the right of everyone, whether that is an able child or disabled child; in every country, all have equal right of especially get education. In the same way, we can find a new way to give education that is known as inclusive education. In general, inclusive education means that all students are welcomed and supported to study, pay attention, and participate in all aspects of school life. It is not possible for all CWPDs to have access to specialized educational institutions, so why not also teach them with normal students in general education institutions. In general education, where many factors are considered a guarantee of success, the role of the teacher is a top priority. The practical role of the teacher in the boundary of the classroom can successfully accompany every student sitting in the class. In such cases, the teacher is the first and last role to teach CWPDs with normal students. Overall, for the successful adoption of the paradigm of inclusive education, teachers are considered as the key elements to make change and implementation of inclusive education in elementary schools. The policy is here, physical infrastructure is available, and

thousands of public schools are in Punjab, just need to explore areas of needed support and competencies, attitudes and concerns of Elementary School teachers for inclusion of CWPDs in elementary schools of Punjab, so that the areas of needed support, competencies, attitudes and concerns can be tackled out and solved out with the help of experts and researches.

Literature Review

In a fast changing and technologically advanced world, it is critical to provide future generations with the abilities, experience, and other attributes required to deal with constant change. As the essence of education, teachers play vital roles in increasing student learning and achievement in a community. (Lasley, Siedentop et al. 2006). Menon stated that "Teacher education institutions should have a clear vision and mission statement that reflects the goals and objectives of teacher education and is compatible with regional, national, and global expectations. This provides direction for the institution's effective functioning and aids in maintaining appropriate linkages among different components" (Menon, 2007).

Pakistani education policies place high importance on teacher education. The National Education Policy (1979) highlighted the responsibility of teachers in implementing educational policies. The teacher was said to be the center of the educational system. Pre-service teacher education in Pakistan has long been criticized for its poor quality, but it was never really considered until 2009. The relevance of pre-service teacher education in improving educational quality. For the first time in history, organized efforts and programs have been initiated to strengthen pre-service teacher education in Pakistan (Ministry of Education Pakistan, 2009). The National Educational Policy continually updates curriculum content, methodology, assessment tools, teaching materials, and teacher resources (1998-2010). It necessitates adequate teacher training facilities.

As stated in the National Educational Policy (2017), teaching requires content knowledge, specific skills, and dispositions that are best mastered in person. Thus, early teacher education programmes would be delivered primarily in person, with field-based and practical learning opportunities. A combination of face-to-face teaching-learning, coaching, and monitoring will

be used in other modes (distance and virtual). Each nation's educational system is based on its social, cultural, political, and economic principles, reflecting the norms and expectations of their respective societies.

History of Inclusive Education

The right of disabled children to receive education sparked the community living movement in the 1950s. At the time, many people thought disabled children couldn't study. So the state took no responsibility for their education. Parents of children with disabilities recognize their children's potential to learn and thrive by setting up schools in venues like churches and homes. The theory of IE is drawn from the idea of education as a human right so that it can be developed as the fundamental right of every person to be incorporated into the mainstream of education. According to UNESCO (2005), IE is a method of dealing with and adapting favourably to the divergence in requirements of all students by enhancing inclusion in literacy, civilizations, and populations and decreasing the level of segregation inside and from caste awareness, colour, religion, and community. It requires improvements and changes in the content, methods, systems, and strategies; so that it is possible to incorporate all children beyond their special needs as it is the state's responsibility to teach all children. The policy of IE is derived from the Salamanca Statement on the basics of special needs education that was signed by 92 governments and 25 international organizations in 1994 (UNESCO, 1994). The Salamanca statement was further strengthened by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was approved by 187 countries. As a result, governments were required to reshape their policies. They must reflect an inclusive approach in practice and make special provisions for CWPDs to be completely included in all facets of life. Children worldwide are disqualified from schools where they belong to impairment, ethnicity, Beliefs, context, and deprivation. But in the initial periods, the child has a right to be motivated to grow, learn, create, and go to school as they reach school age by their parents and society, and to be welcomed and included by instructors and peer group too. When all learners, regardless of ability, are trained equally, this is the cornerstone of inclusive education, which helps

everyone. IE makes sure the separate and varied students learn side by side in the same classroom. IE promotes individuality and the individual achievements that each student makes in the classroom. Every child has a sense of identity and stability in a fully inclusive society. Students and their guardians actively shape learning goals. And school employees are trained to cultivate, encourage, and adapt to the needs of all students through their training, encouragement, flexibility, and services.

IE in Punjab

Following the 18th amendment to Pakistan's constitution, the provinces are responsible for providing legislation and funding for educational facilities and for supplying the provinces with opportunities for smooth execution of Pakistan's education policy. As of the 2017 census, In Pakistan, total disabled population is 3.28663 million (Rural 2.174 Million+Urban 1.113 Million) ,8.1% are Visually Impaired, 7.43% are Deaf, 18.93% are crippled/PHC, 6.39% are Insane, 7.60% are MCC, 8.23% are having Multiple disability and 43.37% considered as others. In Punjab, total disabled population is 1,826,623 (Rural 1,338,410+Urban 488,213) ,8.48% are blind, 8.17% are Deaf/Mute, 20.83% are crippled/PHC, 6.75% are Insane, 7.87% are MCC, 8.07% are having Multiple disability and 39.84% considered as others. The percentage of the disabled population in Punjab is 55.78%. In Punjab, according to the school census, 2018, there are 3549 Male Elementary schools, within enrolment of 1244137 boy students under the umbrella of SED (School Education Department). Special Education Department Punjab, 36 centers specifically in service for SLC (slow learner children) 310 centres specifically in service at each tehsil/town level for CWDs of all categories. Only five centres are specifically in service for the education and training of PHC, and in 310 centres, the lowest number of CWDs is PHC. PHC suffer due to the restricted movement of their body as compared to VIC, HIC, MCC, and slow learner students.

If viewed in the context of learning and acquiring knowledge, it is easiest to teach the CWPDs and achieve the desired results. Physical disability does not affect their mental capacity and sense of learning as much as it does in other disabilities. Curriculum modifications have also been made for all other students with disabilities.

The curriculum is kept short for hearing-impaired students. Braille is used for visually impaired students. There are some steps for mentally handicapped students in which there are daily practical tasks. While for physically handicapped students, the same curriculum and the same examination method is adopted for normal children in general education. Then the question is why there are no arrangements to equip the disabled students for whom all the procedures have been adopted as normal children along with normal children?

The teacher education institutions, on the whole, are insensitive toward the issue of adding inclusive education in teacher training programs. In this regard, the response from Universities is, however, very encouraging. The Department of Special Education in universities, for example, has revised its scheme of studies to introduce new courses on inclusive education such as Exceptional Children in Regular Schools, Adapting Curriculum and Instruction, Teaching Reading and Writing, etc. universities are now conducting seminars on the annual day of special persons on 3 December. It has also provided professional support to NGOs and Govt. Departments and NGOs for the introduction of inclusive education. The government of Punjab has passed a comprehensive bill in this regard in 2016, and now it is compulsory in Public and Private Universities and institutions to make physical infrastructure special persons friendly, and a seat is reserved in all programs offered by the universities and financially all types of dues off for special persons. After doing this, special persons still don't feel free psychologically to join normal institutions due to teacher's attitudes and response. The main reason of this is the lack of teachers' training regarding inclusive education. This material they are teaching in classes will work as a weapon, and lack of appropriate weaponry will result in the failure of teacher, which could be fatal for inclusive education. Unfortunately, there are no experts who have the capacity to adapt curriculum and instruction according to the special needs of the students. No effort has surfaced so far to make up this shortage. Concerted efforts would be required to make inclusive education a national agenda of the Ministry of Education in Pakistan. Just a number of teachers who are engaged in inclusive education unwillingly and accidentally are appreciable, and

due to their positive attitude towards special persons, now a number of special persons look engaged in getting an education in normal institutions with normal children.

Teachers are the actual agents for implementing inclusive education successfully in regular schools. This study aims to explore the areas of needed support for teachers while including CWPDs in the regular classroom and teachers' competencies, attitudes, and concerns about the inclusion of CWPDs.

Objectives of the Research

The objectives of the present study will be as follows:

- i. Explore the areas of needed support for teachers while including CWPDs in the regular classroom.
- ii. Explore the teachers' competencies, attitudes, and concerns about the inclusion of CWPDs in their classrooms in general education.

Primary Research Questions

1. What are the areas of needed support for teachers while including CWPDs in a regular classroom?
2. What are the teachers' competencies, attitudes, and concerns about the inclusion of CWPDs in their classrooms of general education?

Research Design and Procedures

In this exploratory design, the researcher used a qualitative strategy for identifying the key variables that underpin a phenomenon of interest. For these 36 (T₁, T₂, T₃,.....T₃₆) elementary teachers teaching CWPDs in their classes from any 12 districts of Punjab interviewed to explore the areas of needed support for teachers while including CWPDs in regular classroom, competencies, attitudes, and concerns of all regular teachers teaching CWPDs in their classes in elementary schools of Punjab.

The Population for the study will be all regular teachers teaching CWPDs in their classes in elementary schools of Punjab. The appropriateness of technique and instruments, as well as the adequacy of the sampling approach that has been used, determine the quality of a piece of study (see also Morrison 1993: 112-17, cited

in Cohen, 2007). For the qualitative research, 36 teachers (T1, T2, T3,.....T36) were selected from any 12 districts of Punjab selected for interviews. The Sample for the experiment had been selected through the purposive sampling technique.

For this study semi-structured interviews designed. This protocol was validated by experts from the field. To answer the research questions, a semi-structure interview protocol was designed. After developing the interview protocol, it was dispersed among a number of Educational experts, two heads of institutions (Ph.D. Doctors, BPS-17 & BPS-18), five assistant, and three associate professors of Universities with the purpose of extracting their suggestions and opinions for the improvement interview protocol. They were invited to add their thoughts or views on the interview protocol. Each respondent was contacted by official email by the researcher. On the basis of the experts' comments, the interview protocol was revised. The interview procedure statements for which respondents requested clarification or took longer to comprehend were altered. To make the logic obvious, the tough words that respondents requested clarification were replaced with familiar and straight forward words. By reading to individuals and analysing their replies, researchers can confirm their predictions about what level of vocabulary is appropriate and what people will report (Nassar-McMillan & Borders, 2002).

Interview protocol was finalized after corrections and amendments suggested by the experts.

The interviews conducted by the researcher personally; interviews were transcribed, and themes were extracted to explore competencies, attitudes, and concerns of Elementary School teachers for inclusion of CWPDs in elementary schools of Punjab.

The interviews were conducted by the researcher personally. Interviews were recorded

after getting consent from all of the participants. Most of the interviews were held at the places

preferred by the interviewees. Interviews were started by asking questions to make the interviewees at ease. At no point was the identity of the interviewees revealed, and pseudonyms were used to maintain anonymity. The respondent teachers pseudonymised as T1, T2, and T3,.....T36.

The thematic analysis method was used to assess the data qualitatively. This entailed going over the teachers' responses and creating a code list. The full data was then coded using this list. The coding list aided in the identification of themes and sub topics, which were then used to respond to the study's questions. For example, four main themes were identified in the study: supported areas of need support for successful inclusion, competencies, attitudes and concerns. Teachers' replies to each theme were then posted beneath it, revealing the theme's comprehensive results. The first theme was used to answer the first question of the interview within 14 sub questions. In detailed answers of the respondents recorded to find the supported areas of need support for successful inclusion and the rest of three themes were used to answer the second question of the research with 5 sub-questions in competencies, 7 sub-questions in attitudes, and 7 sub-questions for concerns. When presenting the results to answer each research question, the overall theme was presented, and snippets from the teachers' comments were provided to support the entire results for each research question.

Results and Discussion

First Question: What are the areas of needed support for teachers while including CWPDs in regular classroom?

To answer this question with the help of 14 sub questions, the following areas of needed support for teachers while including CWPDs in regular classroom were found.

Table 1.

S. No	Themes	Detailed Of themes
1	Infrastructure	Accessible Classrooms, ramps for wheelchair, railing along stairs, attached bath, specified baths.
2	Helping A/V aids	Wheelchair, crutches, walker, washroom chair, easy chair,
3	Parents cooperation	Pick and drop by parents, provision of basic aids as per need if can afford.

S. No	Themes	Detailed Of themes
4	Headteacher support	Financial support from NSB (Non-Salary Budget), Prizes and appreciation in shape of certificates.
5	Professional training	Professional training of Inclusive Education philosophy
6	Moral support from colleagues	Share academic and professional experiences, teaching ideas,

The above results convey a very clear picture of the theme of areas of needed support for teachers while including CWPDs in regular classrooms.

Infrastructure.

Almost all respondents highlight infrastructure theme, T 17 said,

“How we can accommodate a CWD without ensuring a washroom for him. This is basic need of this type of child. We have handsome budget in shape of NSB (Non-Salary Budget), just need to accommodate this budget within collaboration and fruitful discussion.” T 19 said,

“I personally build ramps everywhere in the school within collaboration of SMC (school management council). I nominated 1 washroom for special persons. No other one is allowed to use this washroom”.

Helping A/V aids.

Helping aids act like soul for CWPDs. No CWD can be accommodating at any place, even in-home, without the provision of helping aids. T 23 said,

“I managed two wheelchairs by the support of head from NSB (Non-Salary Budget), manage washroom chair and built up 2 comboid toilets in attached baths of the block”. T 16 said,

“Most of the parents of CWPDs are not financially strong, so we have to manage this issue within personal interest and have to do it as moral duty too because we have funds and we can manage such type of aids on our behalf. Once I managed crutches of a boy that was broken by a class fellow. Sometimes such type of students far away from education because of lack of these helping devices”. T 29 said,

“Helping aids are as essential as books and bag. This must be ensured by parents or by school without having debate in front of such child. No need to debate on these issues in front of child. Just to make its provision either by parents or school head/teacher”.

Parents Cooperation

Parents are the first and most important factor that influence on the education of CWPDs.

Without the willing and positive response of parents, education of CWPDs cannot be promised. During interviews, every teacher was in complaint mood regarding parent’s cooperation. T 16 said,

“No doubt parents are the actual agents for starting education of CWPDs. But almost parents complaints about attitudes of class fellows that were wrong. The most important duty of the parents is to pick and drop but after some days of admission, this duty performed by class fellows and parents do complaints about these fellows that was not a good step. Moreover parents always look for aids for helping aids. They wish someone else meet the demands of their CWD or Government took the responsibility. This is wrong approach, we managed a lot but why parents cannot do this whereas they fulfil all requirements of their normal ones”. T 30 Said,

“I was happy to see the parent's attention for their CWD. This is the genuine right of their child. Sometimes siblings, especially brother feel shy to do the duty of pick and drop. This is often very painful for me”.

Head Teacher Support

Heads are the controlling authority of schools. Nothing can be done within the boundary of school without the permission and positive interest of headteachers. Teacher while teaching CWPDs in mainstream class were with very positive thoughts about their heads. T 10 said,

“Once I request to headmaster for the provision of wheelchair for a boy who was not yet admitted. Head, on spot called class-4 boy and called the student to school. Within a couple of days, he managed a wheelchair and award admission to that boy and welcomed him in assembly. I was really happy and shocked too”. T 20 said,

"Our head was very polite and have kind heart regarding such cases. Once a boy of one crutch user recite a NAAT in assembly session. He was much impressed and awarded 500 as prize to him. At annual results, we were advised by the heads to manage prizes for special students beyond their positions in the class as they are always winner and position holders".

Professional Training

Professional training is created or undertaken to equip instructors for more adaptive, knowledge-based practice while also addressing school and teaching redesign. All respondents were of the view about the need of continues professional training sessions from time to time. T 24 said,

"I learned about education of special persons in my M.Ed course workshops. Moreover I learned about Inclusive Education too. I think there must be regular sessions of such type of training sessions during AEOs visits". T 35 said,

"The philosophy of Inclusive education is now International Voice for special persons. So, there must be comprehensive training sessions for that concept".

Moral Support from Colleagues

Colleagues are the best friends of teachers. The collaboration between teachers supports the positive results of the students. Collaboration in shape of moral support from colleagues is very helpful for CWPDs during their learning process in mainstream classrooms. T 33 said,

"My colleagues are very helping and supporting in my step to manage CWPDs in mainstream class. Once my CWD is doing a class test and my colleague during visit my class notice his handwriting and appreciate him by giving 50 rupees". T 25 said,

"We should manage maximum special children in mainstream schools. Special education schools acts like daycare centre. We have not any successful child in special education centres".

Second Question: What are the teachers' competencies, attitudes, and concerns about the inclusion of CWPDs in their classrooms of general education?

To answer the second question of the research with 5 sub questions in competencies, 7 sub questions in attitudes and 7 sub questions for concerns included an interview protocol.

Following themes with detailed were found:

Table 2.

S. No	Themes	Detailed Of themes
1	Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom and Behaviour management. • Professional Knowledge • Collaboration. • Teacher attitude must be polite.
2	Attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendly behaviour by class fellows. • No abusive language or wrong name due to disability. • Lack of assistive devices. • Overcrowded schools.
3	Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irrelevant parents intervention. • Lack of training material. • Officer's response.

The above results convey a very clear picture of the theme of teachers' competencies, attitudes, and concerns about inclusion of CWPDs in their classrooms of general education.

Competencies

Competencies include Classroom and Behaviour management, Professional Knowledge and

collaboration between Parents, Administration and teacher.

Classroom and Behaviour Management

Almost 34 out of 36 respondents (94%) respond that competency of teachers in classroom and behaviour management is fundamental for inclusion of CWPDs in elementary schools of

Punjab education. It was thought to help them maintain child-friendly instructional environments. A crucial competency for teachers in inclusive education is identifying factors that lead to the appearance of behavioural problems among students with and at risk of impairments. This was thought to help them provide more tailored therapies to individual youngsters. It was thought to make their diagnostic and prescriptive management of children's behaviour easier, as well as the eventual deployment of proactive rather than reactive behaviour management measures. T 18 said,

"Sometimes a CWD shows aggressive behaviour towards fellows due to extra or low performance. He tries to harm his fellows but I understand this behaviour is also a part of normal student. I do not think so that this is due to his physical condition, but it is just a psychological condition. On the basis of this situation I can't reject the inclusion". T 22 said,

"Normal ones are not ready to accept the upper position of CWD in the assessment. But I try to clear that this is the result of hard-working work and competency of the child at home. Disability is not a matter in this regard that I give favour to him because of his condition".

Professional knowledge

Professional knowledge considered as the soul of professionalism behaviour. An educated person while having teaching profession must be equipped with professional training and knowledge. For the successful inclusion of CWDs in mainstream classes, a teacher must have special training of Inclusion philosophy. T 16 said,

"In M.Ed workshop sessions, I learned about the theme of special education and types of disabilities. While introducing inclusion education, the instructor elaborates about possibility of inclusion only for CWDs. Thus I know and learn about this philosophy. In our training sessions only slow learners discussed". T 13 said,

"While doing BS.ED I taught a course of Inclusive education in detail. This is very necessary to add these concepts in all professional courses of teachers so that they can learn these modern philosophies".

Collaboration

Almost 32 teachers among 36 teachers (89%) reported that collaboration is an essential competency for teachers for inclusion of CWDs in their classes in elementary schools of Punjab. This was considered as making it easier for them to collaborate with and via other stakeholders to pool resources and support in order to address the unique needs of all children. A critical ability for teachers in inclusive education was identified as consulting and collaborating with parents. Teachers were thought to be able to synchronise home and school interventions in order to successfully manage children's behaviour by collaborating with parents. T 6 said,

"I addressed a monthly meeting about the issues of their child so that the precautionary steps can be taken. Sometimes there is no need of such type of meetings, but for being active in achieving objectives, it is necessary to be in touch with parents". T 5 said,

"To know the behaviour improvement level of the student, it is mandatory to be in connection with parents".

Attitudes

It is clear that the attitude of teachers toward inclusion is a critical aspect in successful inclusion. Teachers who have a favourable attitude toward CWDs are more likely to foster an inclusive learning environment that meets the different needs of their pupils ([Brophy & Whittingham, 2013](#); [Campbell & Cuskelly, 2003](#); [Stella, Forlin & Mei Lan, 2007](#); [Razali, et al., 2013](#); [Shadreck, 2012](#)).

Participants were asked a series of questions to measure their feelings regarding enrolling children with special needs in regular education. Mostly teachers were of the view that class teacher is a key element to make successful inclusion. Normally teachers have positive and welcome attitude because they are an active part of this integration. Moreover, class fellow's attitude matter a lot in this regard. At starting days, some complaints regarding abusive language, wrong names for disability or about style of walking reported. Within a month this issue resolved. T 33 said,

"Once a stick user complaints about a boy who was calling him with a bad name. He wishes to complain to the headmaster. I personally call to

that boy, politely deal the matter. After some days they were friends". T 36 said,

"A wheelchair user complains that some boys kick from backside to his wheelchair when he was alone in the class during break time. After investigation of monitor of the class, I tackle this issue within ethical approach. No complain again registered in this regard".

Concerns

Participants clarified a number of concerns during their practice of teaching CWPDs in their classrooms of general education. They believed that inclusive education could only be achieved if a number of requirements were met.

Following concern noted from respondents:

Lack of Assistive Devices

As stated above, assistive devices act like soul for CWPDs. Without promising this, we can't manage even the movement of CWPDs then the education process can be promised. Mostly teachers are tension free regarding this issue, but a couple of teachers show serious concerns about this. T 12 said,

"It is the duty of parents to provide basic aids as per need of their CWD. We are here to deal in educational matter. We have no special or nominated budget for this. Our head allows this inclusion just for the education of that boy. He is not ready to manage assistive devices." T 17 said,

"Parents firstly force us to manage their baby in school. After some time, they starting complain about devices, that it is the duty of government to manage devices. In this situation, not only the CWPD suffer but we also face embarrassing a lot. Our positive attitude being a matter of insult later".

Overcrowded Schools

Three respondents show their concern about overcrowded schools, especially in urban areas. In some schools primary classes have more than 150 students with a single teacher. In big cities, some schools are in a double story building with no ground and open areas. T 22 said,

"I have 152 students in my class. Almost 90 % is attendance average. Including this I managed 2

CWPDs. One is two crutches user and one is on wheelchair. I can't allow wheelchair to him due to shortage of place. His parents do pick and drop up to his seat. This is very miserable condition and situation for me". T 31 said,

"I managed a boy, two crutches user up to class 4. I class five I was shifted on second floor. Thus this boy was migrated to private school. I do nothing for him but only do pray for his success".

Irrelevant Parents Intervention

Parents are the first who accept the disability of their child. Their willingness and cooperation is key element regarding the education of their CWPDs. Three teachers during the inclusion process reported some concerns about parents too. T 28 said,

"During abusive behaviour by fellows, parents do complain and we solved it too but later on the approach to that boy's home and show their aggression in negative too. When we solved this issue then why parents do this. In that case, the CWD suffer a lot as nobody can guard him the whole time. Parents should do patience in that situation". T 26 said,

"In inclusion we managed CWD as normal one. But parents do visits again and again and request for special attention. Thus normal ones suffer psychologically and our mind of inclusion may be changed".

Lack of Training Material

According to a couple of participants, the main problem in implementing inclusive education on a large scale is a lack of appropriate information on children with various needs and inclusive education in the existing pre-service teacher education programme. For example, T 33 said:

"In the professional degrees like B.Ed and M.Ed, comprehensive knowledge about special needs and inclusive education not included. There must be at least one complete course regarding these topics. Moreover, our books were published more than 10 years ago and were shared from teacher to teacher. Thus, modern knowledge is not available for majority of teachers even in their pre-service training". T 24 said,

"We have regular training sessions during visits of AEO. But not even a single time we got the training to tackle the issues of slow learners and needs of CWPDs. This is the most burning issue regarding inclusion as we have no specific training for this. The current inclusion is only due to our willingness and research".

Officer's Response

Two participants identified non-cooperation of visiting officers and negative remarks from them. They often identify this inclusion as disturbance to normal ones. They are of the view that when there are special education schools, then why do you allow these CWPDs in mainstream. T 21 said,

"Once AEO do insulting remarks to a stick user boy, when he was close to the seat of that CWD. He strictly ordered to head, do forward this boy to special school. This boy was among top five students in the". T 14 said,

"Dy. DEO complains to DEO about my inclusion of two boys in mainstream. I submitted in written my justification about this step with copies of notebooks and results of these CWPDs. Then, DEO was satisfied. Is it burning issue? Question by that teacher to me".

Conclusion and Discussion

Punjab's government has taken significant steps toward integrating CWPDs into mainstream classrooms. However, the educational system's readiness, as a whole, for inclusion has been questioned. According to a research done by ([Amjad and Manzar-Abbas 2020](#)) awareness about the importance of implementing IE was at a higher level, but their awareness about policies and projects related to IE was at lower level whereas the current study's objective is to attain a better understanding of inclusion from the perspective of teachers who are already working with CWPDs in mainstream classes. Teachers are known as agents of the educational system; their knowledge, attitudes, and experiences are all important variables in the educational process' efficacy in schools. According to the research, teachers are responsible for the inclusion of CWPDs in mainstream since they possess the necessary knowledge and attitudes to work with CWPDs in mainstream. As a result, the current study aimed

to investigate areas of needed assistance and competencies, as well as the attitudes and concerns of elementary school teachers towards the inclusion of CWPDs in elementary schools of Punjab.

The study's findings revealed that teachers had serious reservations regarding inclusiveness. Teachers expressed their knowledge about inclusion and CWPDs, owing that to be positive in this process as number of areas of need support fulfilled by relevant authorities whether they are parents or heads and colleagues. The finding themes of areas of need support almost tackle in a positive way, only a number of complains noted regarding this theme. Regarding competencies and attitudes, teachers are mostly satisfied with their performance and response from others. Teachers discussed different sets of concerns, including the lack of assistive devices, overcrowded schools, irrelevant parent's intervention, lack of training material, and officer's response. These concerns arose from a couple of teachers, so these concerns can also be solvable within a little bit more planning.

All of the above findings are consistent with the research on the inclusion of CWPDs in elementary schools of Punjab. Furthermore, in this study, teachers laid out the specific attitude that they believed was important in the existing system and how it affected them and their students. Finally, inclusion will not be successful until all parties involved in the educational process, including students, instructors, schools, families, and society, change their attitudes. To make inclusion successful, all of these stakeholders must participate and provide assistance, otherwise inclusion will be just an unrealistic idea because a number of teachers with practising inclusion on their own behalf can't change the whole set up. Govt. should take actions to make it possible as this is now an international voice and promising of state.

Future Research

This study provided an overall picture of areas of needed support and competencies, attitudes and concerns of Elementary School teachers for inclusion of CWPDs in elementary schools of Punjab. Future studies, on the other hand, might

look at including teachers from other parts of the country, where other hurdles may exist than in Punjab. Also, future research could be helpful in developing a comprehensive teacher support program for the inclusion of CWPDs in mainstream classes so that the inclusion can be prevailed as policy as well as law by force. As this

study deals with teachers who are already in the practice of inclusion, so the continuation of this study could also explore visions of universities so that the content of professional degrees for teachers also upgraded with the philosophy of inclusion.

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