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Promoting Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities in Pakistan

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Abstract: *As part of the study, researchers asked both teachers of general education and teachers of special education what they thought about inclusive education. The main goal of this study was to learn more about how Pakistani educators feel about education for all. There were a total of 39 questions in the poll. The validity and reliability of the instrument were determined by trying it with pilot groups and talking to experts in the field. We found the Cronbach alpha, which is a measure of internal stability, by using SPSS. The correlation value was 0.80 as a whole. A t-test and mean values were used to look at the data. A meticulous analysis of the data shows that all teachers are right about how effective inclusive education is and that all teachers support the method. It was also shown that both regular and special-needs teachers feel the same way about inclusive education.*

Key Words: Inclusive Education, Children, Disabilities, Teachers, Education

Introduction

Education is very important for a country to make social and economic growth. Human capital goes up when more smart, hard-working people are born. With the help of educational opportunities, people from poor families can get out of their economic ruts. People who are learned live in peace and do well. It is important for countries to set and work toward national and international education goals so that all of their young people, no matter their gender or socioeconomic background, can get the education they need to achieve in life. Inclusion is about a lot more than just making room in the classroom for kids with special needs. Inclusion is really about fairness in society. What kinds of requests would we like to make to make the world more inclusive? What skills and actions are needed to be successful in different social situations? As a model of social justice, inclusion can help us make our society better for everyone (Sapon-Shevin, 2003). A school shouldn't be seen as having a choice about how much it cares about including everyone. Due to the school's goals, justifications, driving principles, routines, and practices, this is a given. If a school wants to be truly inclusive, it can't just have one person who is included. Instead, it must have inclusion built into its very structure (Segal, 2007). To be open is to recognize that even though people are different, they all have something in common: they are human. In the

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context of education, Inclusive Education is described as "the process of caring for and responding to the different needs of all learners in order to improve training" (Sandkull, 2007). Ballard (2003) characterized inclusive education as "non-prejudicial regarding handicap, society and sexual orientation. It is a term which enables fighting against the curse of inclusion which further gives rise to discrimination among persons with disabilities and their non-disabled peers. In order to ensure inclusion it is important to assure that there is a system of support and it is the social responsibility of the individuals in the society to work for inclusion.

The essential standard of the inclusive educationist is that all youngsters ought tolearn together, wherever conceivable, paying little respect to any troubles, or other contrasts they may have. Inclusive education must perceive and react to the assorted needs of their special needs students, pleasing both distinctive styles and rates of learning and guaranteeing quality instruction to all through proper curricula, hierarchical plans, showing methodologies, asset utilization and associations with their groups. There ought to be a continuum of help and administrations to match the continuum of exceptional needs experienced in every school (Wang, 2009).

There is a need to identify the themes which are the cooperation of the teachers, a culture which is collaborative, love, care, interest and participation of children and also the interest of the parents and the community as a whole. These particular themes are much beyond the concepts of inclusion which are very limited at present. On the other hand, an effort should be made to make inclusion extendable to a domain which is democratic leadership. Leadership cannot be carried out by one person rather it's an endeavour of the entire team of the institution (Jorgensen, 2007). When there are discriminatory negative attitudes which imply prejudice on the basis of class, gender, class, religion and disability further act as barriers when they aim at the students. Language along with communication can also act as a barrier when the medium of instruction is not effective and appropriate to the students being imparted the knowledge (Finke et al., 2009).

According to early researchers (Wehmeyer & Agran, 2006), the general trainingclassroom is the best location for students to acquire the general education instructional module. Students with

scholarly and other formative disabilities who are taught in all instruction classrooms show better performance in readingand math (McGhie et al., 2013) and higher gains in flexible conduct when compared to students with sense and other formative inclusion who are taught in specific settings. To illustrate the concept of Inclusive Education and the challenges being faced in taking the steps in order to implement it within the South African context. It is important to consider the complex influences that have given rise to the transformation in education, which includes the shift from conceptualizing special needs within an individualistic approach which deals with the deficits in needs, towards the human rights approach within the social context (Mortweet et al., 1999). Classrooms in general instruction provided more guidance, and more whole-class direction, and tended to focus on academic content more than specialized curriculum classrooms. Non-disabled associates were used more frequently while grown-ups were utilized less (Helmstetter et al., 1998). Students' social and interpersonal skills improve when they are taught in inclusive classrooms (Fisher & Meyer, 2002).

The standard educational system in Pakistan works freely for general educational systems. Such isolation is additionally apparent in the private sector. The showing-learning paradigm fails to take into account the unique learning needs of children. The population of Pakistan with a disability was 3286630 in1998, accounting for 2.54 per cent of the total population, according to the national census. 2.85 per cent of people with disabilities are men, while 2.21 per cent are women. In 1998, (Statistics). The figure is wildly exaggerated, as itis likely that moderate and mild special needs pupils were not included in the definition of incapacity. According to the most logical explanation, the registration staff was ill-prepared to recognize and classify children with disabilities. In 2002, Pakistan's government approved a national policy for people with disabilities on the recommendations of the Ministry of Women's Development, Social Work, and Special Education. In addition to mainstreaming, this strategy included sections on inclusive education andtraining, and it also laid out the standards for its implementation (Ishfaq & Rana, 2015).

The act of Inclusive Education is becoming

step by step in Pakistan. Training arrangements are likewise concentrating on the idea of Inclusive Education in Pakistan. In the field of examination in Education, specialists and researchers are advancing their proposals for Inclusive Education, as it unquestionably gives chances to the uncommon special needs students to exceed expectations in their field of scholastics alongside typical special needs students at standard. However, still, the idea of Inclusive Education needs to be elucidated. The impression of inclusive instruction stakeholders is not yet clear. There is an unusually assorted quality in the thoughts and observations about Inclusive Education. Such a gap in reasonable understanding of InclusiveEducation has incited the inclusion of the specialist to lead a study in this field of learning and comprehension. The primary proposition of the researchers is toget the understanding and perceptions of teachers in general education and special education about Inclusive Education.

Objectives of this Study

- To explore the perceptions of General Education Teachers about inclusive education in Pakistan.

- To know the perceptions of Special Education Teachers about inclusive education in Pakistan.

- To find out the difference between the perceptions of General educationteachers and Special Education Teachers about inclusive education in Pakistan.

The Hypothesis of the Study

Ho1: There is no significant difference between the perceptions of General education teachers and Special Education Teachers about inclusive education inPakistan.

Significance of the Study

The lack of access to education for both children and adults with disabilities is a major issue in the disability area, and it affects both children and adults. This is a very significant issue because education is a fundamental right for all people, as entrenched in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and protected by a number of international conventions. Across the vast majority of countries, there is a significant disparity between the educational possibilities available to impaired children and those available to non-disabled children. Creating inclusive schools should not concentrate just on the requirements of the students with disabilities but should be made a part of a broader context of difference and similarity. When social responses are being recognized and as a result, cultures of difference are also considered among the schools, equity and the inclusion of students with disabilities could be further promoted (Lindqvist, 1999). The practice of Inclusive Education is growing day by day in Pakistan. Education policies are also focusing on the concept of Inclusive Education in Pakistan. In the field of research in Education, researchers and scholars are putting forward their recommendations in favour of Inclusive Education, as it surely provides opportunities for special students to excel in their field of academics along with normal students at the mainstream. But still, the concept of Inclusive Education needs to be clarified.

The study will surely play a significant role in the field of knowledge and understanding about inclusive education and adds to the literature related to inclusive education. Moreover, the findings of the study will be helpful to the policymakers to modify their policies according to the mindset of stakeholdersof inclusive education.

Methodology and Procedure

This study was conducted in Lahore, Punjab The study was descriptive in nature, further it was survey research. A sample of50 General Education Teachers and 50 Special Education teachers was taken byusing a convenient sampling technique. A self-developed Questionnaire was designed to obtain the perceptions of various stakeholders. The questionnairecovered the following areas of Inclusive Education.

- Aims, goals and Objectives of Inclusive Education
- Vision and Mission of Inclusive Education
- Learning Experiences in inclusive education
- The learning environment of inclusive education
- Family and community role in inclusive education

- Leadership and human resource management practices for Inclusive Education
- Quality assurance in inclusive education
- Teachers' professional development for inclusive education
- Instructional material and instructional strategies in inclusive education
- Classroom management in inclusive education
- Social Cohesion in inclusive education
- Assessment, measurement and Evaluation Procedures in inclusiveeducation
- Role of inclusive education for the social development of Students
- Problems and issues in inclusive education

Internal consistency reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha, which was determined by examining how all items in a test relate to other test times and to the whole scale. This indicates that the items on the questionnaire are internally consistent and reliable, as indicated by the value of Cronbach's Alphaof the questionnaire for the understanding of inclusion, which was 0.80. The

data acquired through a questionnaire of stakeholders were analysed in order to determine the percentage of respondents who had varied perceptions of the situation. It was calculated by determining how all items in a test related to each other as well as to the total test scores that the Cronbach's Alpha could be used to evaluate internal consistency reliability. The questionnaire's reliability statistics were calculated in order to confirm the high quality of the instrumentsused. On the mean score of the respondents, one sample t-test was performed, with 75 per cent of the maximum score serving as a cut score or test value, in order to assess the following questions of the study,

One Sample T-Test between Cut Score and Mean Score of The Responses ofStakeholders of Inclusive Education.

One sample t-test was applied to the mean score of the respondents byconsidering 75% of the maximum score as a cut score or test value to analyze.

Table 1

One sample t-test between the cut score and the mean score of the responses of general teachers about perceptions of inclusive education

N	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff	Mean	SD
50	-2.186	49	.034	-2.980	114.02	9.637
Test Value =117						

The mean score of 50 respondents was 114.02. One Sample t-test was used by applying test value = 117 (75% or cut score = 117), the t value was -2.186 and the þ value i.e. level of significance (two-tailed) is .034 which is less than 0.05. The mean value is 114.02 which is less than the test

value. It revealed that there is a significant difference between the mean value and test value. It indicates that perceptions of general educators are significantly less than the test value i.e. 75% of the total score.

Table 2

One sample t-test between the cut score and the mean score of the responses of Special Education teachers' perceptions about inclusive education

N	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Diff	Mean	SD
50	.961	49	.342	-1.440	118.44	10.601
Test Value =117						

The mean score of 50 respondents was 118.44 One Sample t-test was used by applying test value = 117 (75% or cut score = 117), the t value was .961 theþ value i.e. level of significance (two-tailed) is .342 which is greater than 0.05. It

revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean value and testvalue. It indicates that perceptions of special education teachers are accurate andabout 75% of the total score.

Table 3

Independent Sample T-test Between the GENERAL and SPECIAL Education teacher's Perceptions about Inclusive Education.

Group Statistics				
	Designation	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Total	Gen Teachers	50	114.02	9.637
	Spl.EduTeacher	50	118.44	10.601
Independent Samples Test						
		F	**Sig.**	**t**	**df**	**Sig.(2-tailed)**	**Mean Difference**
Total	Equal variances assumed	.024	.877	2.182	98	.032	4.420

Since the mean score of General education teachers is 114.02 and special education teachers is 118.44 and the þ value i.e. level of significance (two-tailed) is .032 which is less than 0.05. It indicated that there is a significant difference between general and special education teachers ' perceptions o f inclusive education. As the mean score of special education teachers is more than that of general education teachers, therefore the perception of special education teachers is more positive than general education teachers.

Discussion

All children should have equal access to education, but those who are most vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion should be given special attention. It is the goal of inclusive education to remove the barriers that keep people from participating in the educational process. Rather than focusing just on the individual kid, an inclusive education system promotes and encourages flexibility in the system, the curricula and the techniques, so that all children's learning needs can be satisfied (Burns, 2003). To be effective, it is necessary to adapt the process to the specifics of the scenario at hand. It is a methodical strategy meant to ensure that all children have equal access to educational opportunities. A major problem which is in the field of disability is the lack of access to education for students with disabilities. Education is a fundamental right of all which has been documented in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and is protected by many international conventions and is quite a serious issue. In a number of countries, there is a considerable difference in the educational opportunities which are being provided to students with disabilities and those who are non-

disabled. It is not possible to work on the goal of Education for All if we are not able to bring a change in the present situation (Marzano, 2007). In the words of Ashraf et al. (2017), stated in their study, it was revealed that all teachers supported the inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education classroom, and there was no significant difference in the attitudes of stakeholders in both the general and special education sectors. Special needs students must be accommodated in the general education classroom. According to the findings of this study, the majority of teachers are in favour of implementing an inclusive classroom environment. This problem cannot be handled by the special education system. The majority of those who took the survey agreed that having an inclusive setup is critical. It is necessary to provide special equipment for out-of-school children with impairments in their nearby schools. Every district and tehsil has a special school for children with special needs, however, many people live far from these facilities, making it difficult for them to attend. The only way to help these students is to hide them in EFA, which helps all children regardless of their background. Clearly, the concept of inclusion is not only complicated but also multi-dimensional. Multifaceted and contradictory beliefs and practices form their core. However, it is important to remember that inclusion is not just an issue of 'legal rights'. Considerations such as "who" is also included, as well as 'how, when, and where" students are being educated. Important rules, strategies, and support systems must also be put in place to help teachers and other staff members create a setting and way of working that makes everyone feel welcome. Because of their disabilities, a lot of kids with disabilities can't go to kindergarten or middle

school. Being left out, being poor, and not being able to work are all connected. Most people think that investing in students' academic growth can help the economy and improve people's lives. People who don't go to school have been shown to have less personal freedom and less economic output.

Conclusion

This study shows how important it is for children with disabilities in Pakistan to get an education that includes them. After looking at the data, the researcher came to the conclusion that special educators are right about what they think. This information shows that most people have a pretty good idea of what a general education teacher is like. Findings show that inclusive education programs like the idea of including kids with disabilities. Management and teachers could take steps to make sure that everyone, in both rural and urban areas, has access to a good education. If schools don't do anything to include kids with disabilities, they won't be able to join the regular classroom. To roll out inclusive schooling, you also need the right facilities. If kids with disabilities can't get around campus, we won't be able to meet their needs. Until management does something to fix the problem, these students won't be able to follow the normal school curriculum. This could be done in a number of ways, depending on the person's position and the kind of disability they have. The salaries of the administration and teachers should also be taken into account since this will urge them to work hard for all of the students.

Recommendations

It was decided that the following steps will help regular schools make the changes that are needed for kids with special needs:

- Teachers at all levels need more training while they are working so they can be more open to having kids with disabilities in their classes.
- Policies and methods in education must be changed to help students with disabilities. Curriculum, pedagogical pattern, admission policies, accessibility of infrastructure, review and assessment methods, and other things can all be better in schools, administration, infrastructure, and support services.
- It's important that more money goes to education and that special care is taken to make the environment welcoming and accepting of all children. • An inclusive approach to education is one way to help students with special needs get a better education. • An inclusive approach to education takes more time, money, and effort from school administrators and teachers.

Parents of people with disabilities should be able to get help from a service that gives them guidance and advice.

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