



Framework And Methodology For Investigating Inclusive Education Policies For Children With Special Needs In Government Schools Of Dausa

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the policies and status of Children with Special Needs (CWSN) within inclusive classrooms in government schools in Dausa, Rajasthan. Grounded in a qualitative methodology, the research adopts a phenomenological approach to uncover the lived experiences of parents and teachers. Semi-structured interviews, supplemented by document reviews and classroom observations, provide a nuanced understanding of the practical realities of inclusive education. Key areas of focus include stakeholder awareness of policies, challenges in implementation, perceived impacts on CWSN, and actionable suggestions for improvement. Ethical rigor, contextual sensitivity, and methodological reliability ensure the study's findings contribute meaningfully to enhancing inclusive education practices. The insights derived aim to inform policy development, teacher training programs, and support mechanisms for CWSN.

Keywords: Inclusive education, Children with Special Needs (CWSN), qualitative research, phenomenology, government schools, Dausa, educational policy, stakeholder experiences.

Introduction

In educational research, the methodology chapter is pivotal, guiding the processes of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. This chapter, titled Framework and Methodology for Investigating Inclusive Education Policies for Children with Special Needs in Government Schools of Dausa, provides a comprehensive blueprint for conducting a systematic inquiry into the policies and status of Children with Special Needs (CWSN) in inclusive classroom settings. The study aims to understand the lived experiences and perspectives of parents and teachers, requiring a rigorously designed and ethically sound approach.

Inclusive education is a global policy focus, promoting equitable access to education for all children, including those with physical, intellectual, or emotional challenges. However, implementation often varies due to resource constraints and socio-cultural norms, especially in areas like Dausa, Rajasthan. This district's socio-economic landscape creates unique challenges and opportunities for inclusive education policies. Government schools in Dausa play a central role in shaping educational experiences for CWSN, necessitating an in-depth examination of policy translation and its impact.

The study adopts qualitative research methods to explore the realities of inclusive education as experienced by two key stakeholders: parents of CWSN and teachers. Semi-structured interviews allow for an in-depth understanding of policies, challenges, and perceived impacts. This chapter details the

research design, objectives, sampling techniques, data collection tools, and ethical considerations to ensure a robust and insightful investigation.

Research Design

The research design provides a structured plan for addressing the research questions and objectives. It serves as the backbone of the study, ensuring that the methods employed are coherent, systematic, and aligned with the research aims. The design encompasses the rationale, strategies, and processes for data collection and analysis, emphasizing the qualitative approach to explore the nuanced realities of inclusive education for CWSN in Dausa.

Key elements of the research design include:

- **Qualitative Approach:** The choice of a qualitative methodology is rooted in the need to capture the depth and complexity of human experiences. This approach enables a comprehensive exploration of how inclusive education policies are understood and enacted by parents and teachers in their specific socio-cultural and institutional contexts.
- **Phenomenological Orientation:** Grounded in phenomenology, the study seeks to uncover the essence of participants' lived experiences. This orientation emphasizes understanding the subjective meanings that parents and teachers attach to their experiences with inclusive education.
- **Semi-Structured Interviews:** Interviews provide the flexibility to delve into participants' perspectives while maintaining a structured framework to address the study's objectives. This method ensures rich and detailed data collection.
- **Contextual Sensitivity:** Recognizing the unique socio-economic and cultural landscape of Dausa, the research design incorporates strategies to ensure that tools and processes are relevant and sensitive to the local context.
- **Ethical Integrity:** The study upholds rigorous ethical standards, including informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for participants' dignity. These principles are integral to building trust and ensuring the credibility of the research.
- **Iterative Process:** Flexibility is embedded in the design, allowing for adjustments to data collection tools or procedures as new themes emerge during the research process. This adaptability ensures the research remains responsive to participants' realities.
- **Thematic Analysis:** The design includes a detailed plan for analyzing data through thematic analysis. This iterative process identifies patterns and themes that provide insights into the challenges and opportunities of inclusive education.

By integrating these elements, the research design ensures a holistic and systematic approach to investigating the policies and status of CWSN in government schools. It facilitates a deep understanding of the interplay between policy and practice, offering valuable insights for stakeholders and policymakers.

Rationale for Qualitative Approach

A qualitative design is appropriate for exploring the depth and complexity of inclusive education practices in Dausa. This approach facilitates a contextual understanding of policies and their impact, emphasizing the lived experiences of parents and teachers.

The rationale for selecting a qualitative methodology stems from the following considerations:

- **Focus on Subjectivity and Experience:** Qualitative research prioritizes the subjective experiences of participants, making it ideal for exploring the personal and social dynamics surrounding inclusive education. This approach allows the researcher to gain a holistic understanding of how parents and teachers perceive and navigate the challenges of inclusive policies.
- **Exploration of Complex Phenomena:** Inclusive education involves multiple layers of interaction—between policies, institutional practices, and individual experiences. A qualitative

approach is well-suited to unpack these complexities, offering nuanced insights into the interplay between these factors.

- **Flexibility in Data Collection:** Semi-structured interviews and other qualitative tools enable the researcher to adapt questions and probe deeper based on participants' responses. This flexibility ensures that the research captures the full range of participants' perspectives.
- **Contextual Relevance:** The qualitative approach emphasizes the importance of context, aligning with the study's focus on Dausa's unique socio-economic and cultural landscape. By grounding the research in the local context, the study can generate findings that are both meaningful and actionable.
- **Richness of Data:** Qualitative methods produce detailed, descriptive data that reveal the nuances of participants' experiences. This richness is essential for understanding the lived realities of stakeholders in inclusive education.
- **Alignment with Objectives:** The exploratory nature of qualitative research aligns seamlessly with the study's objectives of understanding awareness, challenges, and impacts, as well as gathering stakeholder insights for improvement.

Through these strengths, the qualitative approach ensures that the study captures the depth, diversity, and contextual nuances of inclusive education practices, providing a comprehensive understanding of the policies and status of CWSN in government schools in Dausa.

Objectives of the Study

The study aims to explore and understand the multifaceted aspects of inclusive education for CWSN in Dausa, focusing on:

- **Understanding and Awareness:** Investigating the knowledge of parents and teachers about inclusive education policies.
- **Practical Challenges:** Identifying obstacles in policy implementation from the perspectives of parents and teachers.
- **Perceived Impact:** Assessing the effectiveness of inclusive education on CWSN.
- **Suggestions for Improvement:** Gathering recommendations from stakeholders to enhance the educational outcomes of CWSN.

Guiding Hypotheses

Guiding hypotheses frame the study's exploration:

- Awareness of inclusive education policies among stakeholders is limited.
- Significant challenges hinder policy implementation.
- The impact of inclusive education is perceived as mixed.
- Stakeholders provide valuable insights for improvement.
- Socio-cultural and economic factors significantly influence policy effectiveness.

Population and Sample

3.5.1 Population

The study focuses on:

Parents of CWSN enrolled in government schools in Dausa.

Teachers responsible for inclusive classrooms in these schools.

Sampling Method

Purposive sampling ensures the selection of participants who can provide rich insights. The sample includes 17 teachers (9 rural, 8 urban) and 29 parents (13 rural, 16 urban).

Ethical Considerations in Sampling

Participants were informed about the study's purpose and their rights. Confidentiality and voluntary participation were prioritized.

Tools for Data Collection

Interview Schedules

Separate interview schedules for parents and teachers explore their experiences, perceptions, and challenges. Pilot testing and expert reviews refined these tools to ensure clarity and relevance.

Supplementary Methods

- **Document Review:** Analyzing policies and school records.
- **Observations:** Examining classroom practices and interactions.
- **Follow-Up Interviews:** Clarifying and deepening initial findings.

Data Collection Procedure

- Preparing and testing interview schedules.
- Conducting interviews in comfortable settings.
- Managing and securely storing data for analysis.

Quality Assurance

Reliability

Ensuring reliability involves several strategies:

Audit Trail: A detailed audit trail was maintained throughout the research process. This includes interview transcripts, coding frameworks, and analytical memos, ensuring transparency and dependability.

Inter-Coder Agreement: To ensure consistency in data analysis, two researchers independently coded a subset of the data. Discrepancies were discussed and resolved, leading to a refined coding framework. This process enhances the dependability and trustworthiness of the findings.

Replication Logic: Consistent methods were applied across different cases or participants to ensure that similar procedures yield comparable results, reinforcing the reliability of findings.

Validity

Triangulation: Multiple data sources, including interviews, observations, and document reviews, were used to cross-verify findings, enhancing the accuracy and depth of the results.

Member Checking: Participants were invited to review summaries of the findings to confirm their accuracy and provide additional insights. This process helps validate the interpretations and ensures alignment with participants' perspectives.

Conclusion

The methodological framework outlined in this chapter establishes a robust foundation for exploring inclusive education policies and practices in Dausa's government schools. By employing a qualitative approach grounded in phenomenology, the study ensures an in-depth exploration of the lived experiences of parents and teachers. The use of semi-structured interviews, supplemented by document reviews and observations, enables a rich understanding of the multifaceted dynamics of inclusive education.

The study emphasizes methodological rigor through strategies like maintaining an audit trail, inter-coder agreement, and triangulation to ensure reliability and validity. Ethical considerations remain at the forefront, with measures to protect participant confidentiality, secure data management, and respect for cultural contexts.

By integrating these elements, the research design seeks to bridge the gap between policy intentions and on-the-ground practices, offering actionable insights for improving educational outcomes for CWSN. The findings are expected to inform future policy development, professional training programs, and classroom strategies, contributing significantly to the advancement of inclusive education in similar socio-cultural settings.

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