



ATTITUDES OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN UTTAR DINAJPUR DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Teachers play a pivotal role in the education of all children. Favourable and positive attitude of teachers towards children with disabilities is a major aspect of the teaching-learning process and also for the growth and development of children with disabilities in the inclusive classroom. Hence the aim of this paper is to examine the attitudes of primary school teachers towards inclusive education. A sample of 120 primary school teachers was used for this purpose. The sample was chosen from the district of Uttar Dinajpur, using the mixed method technique. The researcher conducted a descriptive survey study.

KEYWORDS: Primary school teacher, attitude, inclusive education.

INTRODUCTION

In the teaching-learning process, the teacher has a duty and obligation to guide, motivate and facilitate the students in studying. The teacher has a responsibility and right to manage the class. Whether good or not and conducive or not the class depends on the teacher on how they control or manage their class. Teachers' attitude refers to their mindset, behaviour and approach toward their students and teaching, which can have a significant impact on students learning. Teachers' attitude refers to their psychological tendency or disposition to respond favourably or unfavourably towards their profession of teaching. Teachers play a pivotal role in creating an environment where every student feels welcome, respected and valued. This means using inclusive language, promoting empathy, and fostering a culture of acceptance. Inclusion in education refers to all students being able to access and gain equal opportunities to education and learning. Inclusive education is the most effective way to give all children a fair chance to go to school, learn and develop the skills they need to thrive. The effectiveness of inclusive education depends on the teachers' role. Their positive attitudes are important for successful inclusion and particularly for students' outcomes.

Teachers has a positive attitude towards inclusive education. They agreed that inclusive education enhances social interaction and inclusion among the students and thus it minimizes negative stereotypes on special needs students. They play an important role in identifying their students properly. The teacher identifies their special students' social, emotional, behavioural, physical and academic strengths.

Many countries around the world have passed laws and instituted policies implementing inclusion. Inclusive education has been also mandated by international and non-governmental organizations. For example, the Salamanca statement of the United Nations (1994) and the UNESCO Dakar "World Declaration on Education for All" (2000) note the importance of inclusive schooling, both as a means of ensuring access to educational opportunities for all children and as a way to combat discriminatory attitudes and to socialize rising

generations to be more accepting of all kinds of diversity. In inclusive classrooms, teachers continually work to understand their students' unique backgrounds and perspectives and also provide opportunities for students to safely share their life stories and perspectives with their peers.

REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

Review Study on Inclusive Education

Zyoudi (2006), studied on "Teachers' attitude towards inclusive education in Jordanian schools." The aim of this study was to investigate teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in Jordan, and the factors that influenced such attitudes. Qualitative research was used to gather information from all general education and special education teachers. The sample consisted of 90 teachers at 7 schools. The findings of this study showed that teachers' attitudes were found to be strongly influenced by the nature and severity of the disabling condition presented to them, the length of teaching experience, and training.

Emam & Mohamed (2011), conducted "Preschool and primary school teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in Egypt: The role of experience and self-efficacy." The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and teacher attitudes towards the inclusive classroom. Results showed that scores on the ORI could predict scores on the TES for both preschool and primary school teachers. Teachers with more experience had more positive attitudes than teachers with less experience whereas experience had no effect on teachers' sense of self-efficacy in teaching pupils with special educational needs.

Unianu (2011), studied "Teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education." The aim of this study was to identify the major obstacles in implementing inclusive principles in mainstream schools and to analyse different aspects of the teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. The results revealed the fact that there are significant differences only regarding the implementation of inclusive activities, taking into consideration the individual characteristics of the students in the evaluation process and the class management.

Ahmed, et al. (2012), studied "Variables affecting teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in Bangladesh." This study was conducted in the context of primary education in Bangladesh aiming to examine variables influencing teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of students with disabilities in regular classrooms. The results indicated that perceived school support for inclusive teaching practices and a range of demographic variables including previous success in teaching students with disability were associated with more positive attitudes of the teachers towards inclusive education.

Costello & Boyle (2013), studied "Pre-service Secondary Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusive Education." The aim of this study is that the attitudes held by pre-service teachers have been shown to affect their willingness and ability to implement an inclusive approach to education. Results indicated that pre-service secondary teachers held positive attitudes towards inclusive education; however, there was a significant decline in positive attitudes through the years of study.

Kalita (2017), studied "A study on attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education." The aim of this paper is to study the attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education. For this, the Teacher Attitude Scale towards Inclusive Education was used as a tool for the collection of necessary data. Results found from the study that most of the teachers have a moderate attitude toward inclusive education. Male teachers' attitude toward inclusive education is higher than that of female teachers, and experienced teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education are slightly higher than less experience towards inclusive education.

Srivastava & et al. (2017), conducted "Preparing for the inclusive classroom: changing teachers' attitudes and knowledge." This survey study had two aims. Firstly, researchers aimed at finding or constructing a reliable instrument to measure three aspects: the attitudes, knowledge about disability and inclusive teaching methods or regular school teachers. Secondly, aimed to describe the outcomes of the three aspects. Results revealed that teachers hold neutral attitudes towards inclusive education. Their knowledge about disabilities was low but knowledge about inclusive teaching methods was acceptable, which was a significant finding.

Supriyanto (2019), studied “Teachers’ Attitudes Towards Inclusive Education: A Literature Review.” The purpose of this study is to investigate the teachers’ attitudes towards inclusive education and what variables are influenced to their attitudes. Qualitative methodology was used for this study. A systematic literature review (SLR) was set up in order to present a complete and recent overview of empirical studies published in the last 15 years. Some studies also report negative and neutral attitudes. The variables that found influence to the attitudes include are found on teachers’ educational degrees and backgrounds, teacher training, and the type of disability.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was undertaken to achieve the following objectives-

1. To investigate the attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education.
2. To study the difference in the attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education as per their Gender.
3. To study the difference in the attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education with respect to their Stream of Study.
4. To determine the attitude of primary school teachers toward inclusive education concerning their Gender and Study Stream in different perspectives.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The hypotheses were formulated concerning the mentioned objectives-

H₁: There is significant difference in the attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education as per male and female.

H₂: There exists significant difference in the attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education with respect to arts and science.

H₀₃: There exists no significant difference between Male and Female Primary school teachers in the Arts stream background towards attitude of inclusive education.

H₀₄: There exists no significant difference between Male and Female Primary school teachers in the Science stream background towards the attitude of inclusive education.

DELIMITATION OF THE PROBLEM

1. The current study is limited to the district of Uttar Dinajpur in West Bengal.
2. Only 120 primary school teachers (male and female, arts and science) were chosen from the whole population for data collection.
3. The researcher used a closed-ended questionnaire and
4. The research work is limited to descriptive statistics, especially in Mean and SD as well as inferential statistics, especially t-test and F-test. statistics used only for this study.

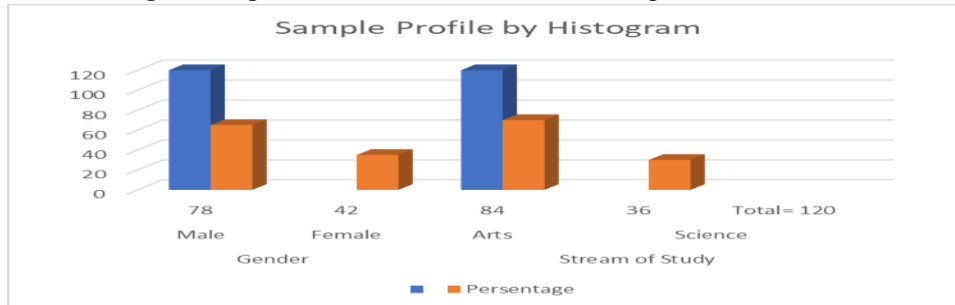
METHODOLOGY

- ❖ **Research Method:** In this present study, a descriptive survey method and quantitative approach have been used for the research work. “Survey research designs are procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviours or characteristics of the population (Creswell,2012)”.
- ❖ **Population:** The population of the study was composed of all primary school teachers in the district of Uttar Dinajpur in West Bengal, India
- ❖ **Sample and Sampling:** Sample is the part of a selected population. The researcher used a mixed-method sampling technique. The researcher selected all primary school teachers as a population in the district of Uttar Dinajpur in West Bengal. In Uttar Dinajpur district, there are two sub-divisions, Raiganj and Uttar Dinajpur. At first, the researcher selected the Raiganj sub-division as a sample area by using a simple random (lottery method) technique. Then the researcher purposively selected various primary schools in the Raiganj sub-division under the district of Uttar Dinajpur. Finally, A sample of 120 primary school teachers was taken from Uttar Dinajpur district of the targeted population.

Table No.-1: Sample Profile Distribution

Independent Variables		N		Percentage
Gender	Male	78	120	65
	Female	42		35
Stream of Study	Arts	84	120	70
	Science	36		30
		Total= 120		

Fig -1: Graphical Presentation of Various Independent Variables



- Item analysis:** The questionnaire was administered to 120 primary school teachers (both male/female) for item analysis. Then t-tests were computed for each item by forming two extreme groups in the top 27% and bottom 27%. Out of the 50 items only 43 items were retained and 7 items were rejected as per both levels of significance formula. Below the 'table' the researcher found that the critical value of t with 82 degrees of freedom(df) at a 5% level of significance is 1.99 and the 1% level of significance is 2.65.

Table No.-2: Critical value of t with degrees of freedom(df)

Total Sample	64	(U+L= 84)
Degrees of Freedom(df)	62	(df-2)
Confidence Level	0.05	0.01
Critical Values(cv)	1.99897152	2.65747856

- Statistical techniques used:** In this research work the appropriate statistics followed as per the collection of data. The study used the following statistical techniques-
 - Descriptive Statistics- (Mean & SD)
 - Inferential Statistics- ('t' test & F- test)

DATA ANALYSIS INTERPRETATION

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education as per male and female.

Table No.-3: Attitudes of Inclusive Education between Male and Female teachers

Group	N	Mean	SD	Mean Difference	SE _D	df	t- value
Male	78	172.77	10.95	2.84	2.415	118	1.18 ^{NS}
Female	42	169.93	15.27				

N.S.= Not Significant

- Analysis:** From the 't-table' the researcher found that the critical value of t with 118 df at a 5% level of significance is 1.98 and the 1% level is 2.62. Our computed value of 't' i.e., 1.18 is less than both the critical values (1.18 < 1.98 & 2.62), the difference between the two groups is not significant at both levels.

- **Interpretation:** Hence, is not significant to indicate that our null hypothesis is accepted. It means that There is no significant difference in the attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education as per their gender.

H02: There exists no significant difference in the attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education with respect to arts and science.

Table No.-4: Attitudes of inclusive education between Arts and Science teachers

Group	N	Mean	SD	Mean Difference	SE _D	df	t- value
Arts	84	171.05	13.57	-2.42	2.518	118	0.96 ^{NS}
Science	36	173.47	10.10				

N.S.= Not Significant

- **Analysis:** From the 't-table' the researcher found that the critical value of t with 118 df at a 5% level of significance is 1.98 and the 1% level is 2.62. Our computed value of 't' i.e., 0.96 is less than both the critical values ($0.96 < 1.98$ & 2.62), the difference between the two groups is not significant at both levels.

- **Interpretation:** Hence, is not significant to indicate that our null hypothesis is accepted. It means that There is no significant difference in the attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education with respect to the stream of study.

H03: There exists no significant difference between Male and Female Primary school teachers in the Arts stream background towards attitude of inclusive education.

Table No.-5: Between Male and Female Primary school teachers in the Arts stream background

Group	N	Mean	SD	Mean Difference	SED	df	t- value
Arts Male	61	172.97	10.58	7.01	3.250	82	2.16*
Arts Female	23	165.96	18.77				

*Significant at 0.05 level

- **Analysis:** From the 't-table' the researcher found that the critical value of t with 82 df at a 5% level of significance is 1.99 and the 1% level is 2.64. Our computed value of 't' i.e., 2.16 is greater than greater than 5% critical value and less than 1% critical value ($2.16 > 1.99$ & $2.16 < 2.64$) and hence is significant at 0.05 level.

- **Interpretation:** Hence, is significant to indicate that our null hypothesis is rejected. It means that There is significant difference in the attitude of Male and Female primary school teachers towards inclusive education with respect to the Arts stream of study.

H04: There exists no significant difference between Male and Female Primary school teachers in the Science stream background towards the attitude of inclusive education.

Table No.-6: Between Male and Female Primary school teachers in the Science stream background

Group	N	Mean	SD	Mean Difference	SED	df	t- value
Science Male	17	172.06	12.52	-2.68	3.391	34	0.79 ^{NS}
Science Female	19	174.74	7.46				

N.S.= Not Significant

- **Analysis:** From the 't-table' the researcher found that the critical value of t with 34 df at a 5% level of significance is 2.03 and the 1% level is 2.73. Our computed value of 't' i.e., 0.79 is less than both the critical values ($0.79 < 1.98$ & 2.62), the difference between the two groups is not significant at both levels.
- **Interpretation:** Hence, is not significant indicated that our null hypothesis is accepted. It means that There is no significant difference in attitude of Male and Female primary school teachers towards inclusive education respect to Science stream of study.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The following findings are given below obtained from the above research hypotheses, statistical analysis and interpretation.

1. From the null hypothesis H_{01} , the result indicated that there is no significant difference in the attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education as per male and female.
2. From the null hypothesis H_{02} , the result indicated that there exist no significant differences in attitudes of primary school teachers towards inclusive education with respect to arts and science.
3. From the null hypothesis H_{03} , the result indicated that there is significant difference in the attitude of Male and Female primary school teachers towards inclusive education with respect to the Arts stream of study. The findings concluded that Male primary school teachers in Arts stream background have greater Attitudes toward Inclusive Education than Females.
4. From the null hypothesis H_{04} , the result indicated that there is no significant difference in the attitude of Male and Female primary school teachers towards inclusive education with respect to the Science stream of study.

CONCLUSION

Inclusive education means all children in the same classrooms, in the same schools. This discussion is essential because inclusive education is the most important topic in today's education system. The effectiveness of inclusive education mostly depends' on teachers' attitudes. The teacher identifies and enrolls children with disabilities in regular schools, provides students effective academic support and provides them with the knowledge on how to face the challenges in and around the society they are a part of.

The first findings concluded that there is no significant difference in the attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education as their Gender. The second findings conclude that there exist no significant differences in attitudes of primary school teachers towards inclusive education with respect to their Study Stream background. The third findings conclude that there is significant difference in the attitude of Male and Female primary school teachers towards inclusive education with respect to the Arts stream of study. The findings concluded that Male primary school teachers with a background in the Arts stream have greater Attitudes toward Inclusive Education than Females. This research work also found that Female primary school teachers with a background in the Arts stream have fewer attitudes towards inclusive education. Therefore, effort should be made through various seminars, workshops and other programs about the topic of Inclusive Education to enhance the positive attitude of Female primary school teachers with a background in Arts stream towards inclusive education. The last finding concluded that there is no significant difference in the attitude of Male and Female primary school teachers towards inclusive education with respect to the Science stream of study. Hence, depending on the findings, we may conclude that primary school teachers have a positive attitude towards inclusive education.

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