

Attitude of heads of schools and regular teachers towards inclusive education programme for children with hearing impairment at secondary level in coastal area of Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to understand the attitude of heads of schools and regular teachers towards inclusive education programme for children with hearing impairment at secondary level. The sample was included of 50 heads of schools and 100 regular teachers consisting male and female from rural and urban areas. The study was a survey method and the sample were selected purposively. The participants were assessed by 1) Attitude scale on Inclusive Education programme for Heads of Schools and 2) Attitude scale on Inclusive Education programme for Regular teachers. Percentage analysis and Independent t-test were applied for analyzing the data. The average of percentage of favorable and unfavorable Attitude showed that in all dimensions (sex, locality and experience) favorable attitude is more than that of unfavorable attitude. The Heads of schools and Regular teachers in the Secondary schools have different levels of Attitude (i.e., favorable and unfavorable) towards Inclusive Education Programme for Children with Hearing Impairment.

Keywords: heads of schools, regular teachers, inclusive education, children with hearing impairment, secondary level

Introduction

Education as a human right has been recognized and affirmed in various national and international conferences including Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 26), Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 28), World Conference on Education for All (1990), the Salamanca Conference (1994)^[17] and World Education Forum (2000) where UNESCO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank, etc. and agencies and representatives from all over the world gathered to review and analyze their efforts towards the goal of —Education for All. Consequently, Inclusive education is regarded as the only means to achieve the goal of —Education for All. All children are unique and their needs are also different. Education for all children includes children with special needs too. The children with special needs require special educational services. But the educational provision for the disabled children became a priority as a result of the National Policy of Education NPE (1986)^[14] and its Programme of Action (1992)^[3] also lay emphasis on the removal of disparities, equalization of educational opportunity, while the emphasis in others is on certain aspects of the content and process that have a bearing on education of children with special needs. Children with special needs must be educated to become the useful members of the society; they should be trained so as to earn their livelihood without much dependence.

In Inclusive Education programme hearing impaired children are educated along with non-disabled peer groups in general schools in the assistance of special teachers. The Inclusive Education for the Disabled Children (IEDC) scheme, started in 1974, to cater children with disabilities under the regular system of education in India. However DPEP, SSA and RMSA schemes also supported community mobilization and

early detection, in service teacher training and provision of resource support, provision of educational aids and appliances, removal of architectural barriers etc. has extended to identified regular schools in India including Andhra Pradesh (MHRD, 2012). All these activities are now visualizes through above said schemes providing quality elementary and secondary education to all children including children with special needs. The key objective of the above mentioned programmes is inclusion of the children with special needs. This goal has further been facilitated by the Constitutional (86th Amendment) Act, making free and compulsory elementary education a Fundamental Right, for all the children in the age group of 6-14 years. This Amendment has given a new thrust to the education of Children with Special Needs (CWSN), as without their inclusion, the objective of UEE cannot be achieved. Hence, education of CWSN is an important component of SSA and RMSA. But being educators of the typically developed children heads of schools and regular teachers have their own attitude towards the education of children with hearing impairment in inclusive schools.

Need and Significance of the study

The ultimate goal of the Inclusive Education for Children with special needs are to provide access to inclusive education and the opportunity to become accepted and productive members of society. Clearly, children with special needs are becoming more accepted as a result of their inclusion in local regular schools. Teachers, parents, and officials reported that they have more positive attitudes towards children with special needs. Many parents and communes began to see the value of sending these children to school. We encountered a number of children who were placed in school only after their parents were inspired by the positive spirit of inclusive education.

Overall there was a great deal of enthusiasm for the program, and a great desire to see its benefits continue and be built upon. The investigator being a teacher, from his own experience has felt that it is the need of the hour to investigate the attitude of Heads of Schools and regular teachers at Secondary schools in the teaching-learning situations in inclusive education programme.

Objectives of the study

1. To estimate the levels of Attitude towards Inclusive education programme of the following samples: Regular teachers, Heads of schools
2. To find out the interaction effect of the criterion variables, locality, experience and sex of Heads of schools separately on Attitude of Heads of schools towards Inclusive education programme for the Hearing impaired children.
3. To find out the interaction effect of the criterion variables, locality, experience and sex of Regular teachers on Attitude of teachers towards Inclusive Education programme for the Hearing impaired children.

Hypotheses of the study

1. There will be different levels of Attitude (i.e. favorable, moderately favorable, and unfavorable) towards the

Inclusive education programme for the following samples: Regular teachers, Heads of schools.

2. There will be significant difference between the mean scores of the Attitude of Heads of schools towards Inclusive education programme in the Secondary level schools for the samples based on sex of heads, locality and experience of heads of schools category of the inclusive schools.
3. There will be significant difference between the mean scores of the Attitude of Regular teachers towards Inclusive education programme in the Secondary level schools for the samples based on sex of teachers, locality and experience of teacher’s category of the inclusive schools.

Methodology

Selection of Sample

Purposive sampling method under non-probability technique was used for the selection of the sample for the present study. 50 Heads of Schools and 100 Regular teachers and from Coastal Area of Andhra Pradesh state from various inclusive schools were selected as sample. In this study, the investigator used the survey method under descriptive research.

Table 1: Selected Sample details for the study

S. No	Particulars	Sex		Locale		Experience		Total
		Male	Female	Rural	Urban	> 5 yrs	< 5 yrs	
1	Heads of schools	33	17	27	23	15	35	50
2	Regular teachers	48	52	43	57	34	66	100

Tools employed in the study

1. Attitude scale on Inclusive Education programme for Heads of Schools - 50 Items.
2. Attitude scale on Inclusive Education programme for Regular teachers - 45 Items.

Both the tools were constructed by the researcher with the consultation of the experts in the field of special education. Reliability was obtained through test-retest method and in validity content and face validity was obtained for both the tools. The investigator administered the tools to the samples.

Statistical techniques used for the study and Analysis

In the preliminary statistical analysis percentage was estimated to get the attitude of the both heads of schools and regular teachers. The statistical constants such as Mean, Standard Deviations are estimated with Independent t-test.

Levels of Attitude of Heads of schools towards Inclusive Education Programme for Hearing impaired children

One of the main objective of the present study is to find out the level of Attitude of Heads of schools towards Inclusive Education Programme on the basis of the dimensions in the tool. The Attitude scale to Heads of schools was prepared in such a way as to respond by any of the three ways viz., agree, undecided and disagree to each statement. The investigator analysed the opinion to know how far the Heads of schools agree or disagree with the statements regarding Inclusive Education Programme. For this, the investigator computed the percentage of Heads of schools expressed favourable and unfavourable Attitude towards Inclusive Education Programme.

Table 2: Levels of Attitude of Heads of schools towards Inclusive Education Programme for Hearing impaired children

S. No.	Dimensions in the tool	Average of percentage of Heads with	
		Favourable Attitude	Unfavourable Attitude
1	Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive education programme	71.83	16.21
2	Curriculum, Evaluation and Co-curricular activities for the Hearing impaired in the Inclusive education programme	73.35	15.22
3	Difficulties faced by Heads of schools in the Inclusive education programme	81.82	10.56
4	Difficulties faced by teachers regarding the teaching-learning strategies applied for the Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive education programme	75.62	10.29
5	Difficulties faced by Resource / IERT teachers in the Inclusive education programme for the Hearing impaired	48.34	27.62
6	Attitude of Normal children towards Hearing impaired in the Inclusive education programme	72.12	15.71

Discussion

The average of percentage of heads of schools having favourable and unfavourable Attitude on the basis of various dimensions revealed that the percentage of heads having favourable Attitude are 71.83, 73.35, 81.82, 75.62, 48.34 and 72.12 for first, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth dimensions respectively. From this, it can be seen that in all dimensions, percentage of heads having favourable Attitude is more than that of unfavourable Attitude. It shows that even though the Heads of schools faced some difficulties regarding the implementation of the Inclusive Education Programme, they believe that the difficulties can be tackled and the results of first, second and sixth dimension revealed that most of them have favourable Attitude towards the Inclusive Education program for the Hearing impaired. So, it can be concluded that

most of the Heads of the Secondary schools of Coastal Area of Andhra Pradesh have a favorable Attitude towards Inclusive Education Programme for the Hearing impaired children.

Levels of Attitude of Regular teachers towards Inclusive Education Programme for Hearing impaired children

The investigator analysed the opinion to know how far the Regular teachers agree or disagree with the statements regarding Inclusive Education Programme. For this, the investigator computed the percentage of Regular teachers expressed favourable and unfavourable Attitude towards Inclusive Education Programme based on their response to the statements either to Agree or Disagree. The responses Undecided is not considered for this purpose.

Table 3: Levels of Attitude of Regular teachers towards Inclusive Education Programme for Hearing impaired children

S. No	Dimensions in the tool	Average of percentage of Regular Teachers with	
		Favourable Attitude	Unfavourable Attitude
1	Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive education programme	55.24	23.24
2	Difficulties faced by teachers regarding the teaching-learning strategies applied for the Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive education programme	80.21	11.14
3	Difficulties faced by teachers regarding the implementation of the normal curriculum to the Hearing impaired in the Inclusive education programme	66.28	15.46
4	The role of Parent teachers association in the Inclusive education programme	84.42	10.13

Discussion

The average of percentage of Regular teachers having favourable and unfavourable Attitude on the basis of various dimensions revealed that the percentage of Regular teachers having favourable Attitude are 55.24, 80.21, 66.28 and 84.42 for first, second, third and fourth dimensions respectively. From this, it can be seen that in all dimensions, Percentage of regular teachers having favourable Attitude is more than that of unfavourable Attitude. It shows that, even though Regular teachers faced some difficulties regarding teaching learning strategies in the Inclusive setting and the implementation of normal curriculum for the Hearing impaired in the Inclusive Education Programme, they believe that the difficulties can be tackled with some efforts. The results of first and fourth dimension revealed that most of them have favourable

Attitude towards the Inclusive Education programme for the Hearing impaired. Therefore, it can be concluded that most of the Regular teachers in the Secondary schools in Coastal Area of Andhra Pradesh have a favourable Attitude towards Inclusive Education Programme for the Hearing impaired children.

Comparison of Mean Attitude of Heads of schools towards Inclusive Education Programme with respect to criterion variables such as gender, locality and experience

Gender groups

To compare the mean scores of Attitude of Heads of schools between male and female, two tailed test of significance was used.

Table 4: Comparison of Mean Attitude of Heads of schools Towards Inclusive Education Programme for gender groups

Dimensions in the tool	Male			Female			t - value
	Mean	S.D.	N	Mean	S.D.	N	
Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive education programme	24.0	2.45	33	24.6	2.85	17	0.840
Curriculum, Evaluation and Co-curricular activities for the Hearing impaired in the Inclusive education programme	22.2	3.78	33	21.4	3.67	17	0.680
Difficulties faced by Heads of schools in the Inclusive education programme	12.21	1.74	33	12.22	1.86	17	0.209
Difficulties faced by teachers regarding the teaching-learning strategies applied for the Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive education programme	12.9	1.95	33	12.92	1.09	17	1.404
Difficulties faced by Resource / IERT teachers in the Inclusive education programme for the Hearing impaired	8.1	1.77	33	7.10	1.67	17	1.014
Attitude of Normal children towards Hearing impaired in the Inclusive education programme	12.57	1.29	33	12.65	1.53	17	0.400

The t-value obtained for each dimension was 0.840, 0.680, 0.209, 1.404, 1.014 and 0.400 respectively. All calculated t-values are less than that of the Tabled value and is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. The result revealed that there is no significant difference between the Attitude of male and female Heads of schools towards Inclusive

Education Programme for the Hearing impaired children.

Rural and Urban groups

In order to compare the mean scores of Attitude of Heads of schools of rural and urban area, two tailed test of significance was used.

Table 5: Comparison of Mean Attitude of Heads of schools towards Inclusive Education Programme for Rural and Urban groups

Dimensions in the tool	Rural			Urban			t-value
	Mean	S.D.	N	Mean	S.D.	N	
Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive education programme	24.79	2.47	23	24.58	3.08	27	0.309
Curriculum, Evaluation and Co-curricular activities for the Hearing impaired in the Inclusive education programme	21.58	3.92	23	22.05	3.39	27	0.465
Difficulties faced by Heads of schools in the Inclusive education programme	12.29	1.78	23	12.02	1.77	27	0.772
Difficulties faced by teachers regarding the teaching-learning strategies applied for the Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive education programme	13.39	1.15	23	12.92	1.27	27	2.059*
Difficulties faced by Resource / IERT teachers in the Inclusive education programme for the Hearing impaired	7.57	1.81	23	7.10	1.75	27	0.969
Attitude of Normal children towards Hearing impaired in the Inclusive education programme	12.82	1.22	23	12.41	1.64	27	0.975

(* Indicates significant difference at 0.05 level)

The t-value obtained for each dimension was 0.309, 0.465, 0.772, 2.059, 0.969 and 0.975 respectively. The obtained t value for the comparison of mean scores of the rural and urban Heads of schools towards Inclusive Education Programme is less than that of the Tabled value and is not significant at 0.05 level of significance except in the case of 4th dimension. In the case of 4th dimension i.e., teachers and methods of teaching for the Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive Education Programme. The results revealed that there is no significant difference between the Attitude of rural and urban Heads of

schools in Inclusive Education Programme for the Hearing impaired and there exists a significant difference in the Attitude of rural and urban Heads of schools in the role of teachers and approach towards methods of teaching for the hearing impaired in the Inclusive Education Programme.

Experience (<5 Years & >5 Years) groups

To compare the mean scores of Attitude of Heads of schools experience is <5 Years & >5 Years, two tailed test of significance was used.

Table 6: Comparison of Mean Attitude of Heads of schools towards Inclusive Education Programme for experience <5 Years & >5 Years group

Dimensions in the tool	<5 Years			>5 Years			t-value
	Mean	S.D.	N	Mean	S.D.	N	
Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive education programme	24.89	3.21	35	24.53	2.10	15	0.635
Curriculum, Evaluation and Co-curricular activities for the Hearing impaired in the Inclusive education programme	22.33	3.50	35	21.27	3.95	15	1.219
Difficulties faced by Heads of schools in the Inclusive education programme	12.21	1.75	35	12.11	1.77	15	0.251
Difficulties faced by teachers regarding the teaching-learning strategies applied for the Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive education programme	13.11	1.25	35	13.18	1.22	15	0.269
Difficulties faced by Resource / IERT teachers in the Inclusive education programme for the Hearing impaired	7.61	1.55	35	7.10	2.04	15	1.371
Attitude of Normal children towards Hearing impaired in the Inclusive education programme	12.54	1.45	35	12.89	1.45	15	0.897

The t-value obtained for each dimension was 0.635, 1.219, 0.251, 0.269, 1.371 and 0.897 respectively. All calculated t-values are less than that of the Tabled value and is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. The result revealed that there is no significant difference between the Mean Attitude of Heads of schools having experience of <5 Years and >5 Years, towards Inclusive Education Programme for the Hearing impaired children.

The obtained t-value for the comparison of Mean Attitude scores of male and female Heads of schools towards Inclusive Education programme based on various dimensions is not significant. The t-value obtained for Heads of schools with reference to their experience is not significant. However, in the comparison of rural and urban groups, there is no significant difference in the Attitude of Heads of schools towards Inclusive Education programme in five dimensions. But in the 4th dimension, i.e., the difficulties faced by teachers

regarding the teaching-learning strategies applied for the Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive Education programme, there exists a significant difference. This shows that the Mean Attitude of Heads of rural schools have more favourable attitude than Heads of urban schools towards the teaching-learning strategies applied for the Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive Education programme. The results regarding the experience of the Heads of schools that there is no significant difference.

Comparison of Mean Attitude of Regular teachers towards Inclusive Education Programme Gender groups

In order to compare the mean scores of Attitude of Regular teachers towards Inclusive Education Programme for Hearing impaired children in schools among male and female, two tailed t-test of significance was used.

Table 7: Comparison of Mean Attitude of Regular teachers towards Inclusive Education Programme for Sex groups

Dimensions in the tool	Male			Female			t- value
	Mean	S.D.	N	Mean	S.D.	N	
Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive education programme	14.78	1.61	48	14.00	2.61	52	2.068*
Difficulties faced by teachers regarding the teaching-learning strategies applied for the Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive education programme	22.98	2.60	48	21.55	2.58	52	2.984**
Difficulties faced by teachers regarding the implementation of the normal curriculum to the Hearing impaired in the Inclusive education programme	27.10	5.15	48	26.14	4.68	52	1.049
The role of Parent teachers association in the Inclusive education programme	8.91	1.08	48	8.96	1.22	52	0.110

The obtained t-value for the comparison of mean scores of male and female Regular teachers towards Inclusive Education Programme was 2.068, 2.984, 1.049 and 0.110 respectively. The first two t-values are greater than that of Tabled value. From this, the investigator concluded that there exists a significant difference between the Attitude of male and female Regular teachers towards Inclusive Education programme and the difficulties of teachers regarding the teaching-learning strategies applied for the Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive Education programme. There is no significant

difference between male and female regular teachers in the case of curriculum and the role of Parent Teacher Association in the Inclusive setting.

Rural – Urban groups

In order to compare the mean scores of Attitude of Regular teachers towards Inclusive Education Programme for Hearing impaired children in schools among Regular teachers of rural and urban schools, two tailed test of significance was used.

Table 8: Comparison of Mean Attitude of Regular teachers towards Inclusive Education Programme for rural – urban groups

Dimensions in the tool	Rural			Urban			t- value
	Mean	S.D.	N	Mean	S.D.	N	
Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive education programme	14.47	2.26	43	14.39	2.17	57	0.305
Difficulties faced by teachers regarding the teaching-learning strategies applied for the Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive education programme	22.22	2.56	43	22.15	2.82	57	0.185
Difficulties faced by teachers regarding the implementation of the normal curriculum to the Hearing impaired in the Inclusive education programme	27.14	4.56	43	25.81	5.25	57	1.521
The role of Parent teachers association in the Inclusive education programme	10.01	1.09	43	8.81	1.17	57	0.810

The obtained t value for the comparison of mean scores of the Regular teachers of rural and urban schools towards Inclusive Education Programme was 0.305, 0.185, 1.521 and 0.810 respectively. The t-values were less than that of the Tabled value and is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. The results revealed that there is no significant difference between the Mean Attitude of Regular teachers of rural and urban schools in Inclusive Education Programme for the children

with Hearing impaired.

Experience (<5 Years & >5 Years) groups

To compare the mean scores of Attitude of Regular teachers towards Inclusive Education Programme for Hearing impaired children in experience of <5 years and >5 years, two tailed test was used.

Table 8: Comparison of Mean Attitude of Regular teachers towards Inclusive Education Programme with respect to the their experience

Dimensions in the tool	<5 Years			>5 Years			t- value
	Mean	S.D.	N	Mean	S.D.	N	
Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive education programme	14.85	2.21	34	13.98	2.06	66	2.089*
Difficulties faced by teachers regarding the teaching-learning strategies applied for the Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive education programme	22.50	2.34	34	21.91	2.94	66	1.225
Difficulties faced by teachers regarding the implementation of the normal curriculum to the Hearing impaired in the Inclusive education programme	26.51	4.86	34	56.59	5.05	66	0.049
The role of Parent teachers association in the Inclusive education programme	9.05	1.10	34	8.79	1.11	66	1.542

(*Indicates significant difference at 0.05 level)

The t-value obtained for each dimensions were 2.089, 1.225, 0.049 and 1.542 respectively. The obtained t-value for Regular teachers experience in Inclusive Education Programme for Hearing impaired children based on various dimensions, the t-value of first dimension is greater than the Tabled value. From this, it can be seen that the difference in mean scores of Attitude of Regular teachers in Inclusive Education Programme for the children with Hearing impaired with respect to experience is not significant in the case of role of teachers, involvement of parent teacher association and curriculum. But there exists a significant difference with

respect to experience in the Mean Attitude of Inclusive Education Programme for Hearing impaired children.

The results obtained for the comparison of mean Attitude of male and female Regular teachers towards Inclusive Education programme based on various dimensions is significant in the first and second dimensions, i.e., Inclusive Education Programme for the Hearing impaired and the difficulties of teachers regarding the teaching-learning strategies applied for the Hearing impaired children in the Inclusive Education programme. But, There is no significant difference in the remaining two dimensions i.e., in the case of curriculum and

the involvement of parent teacher association in the Inclusive setting. This shows that the male teachers have more favourable Attitude than female teachers towards Inclusive Education programme for the hearing impaired children, the results of this study supports by (Cornoldi *et al.* 1998) ^[4]. (*et al.*, 2000) ^[1]. (Kuester, 2000) ^[12]. (Schmelkin, 1981) ^[15]. Van Reusen *et al.* 2001 ^[18]). The comparison of mean Attitude of Regular teachers of rural and urban schools towards Inclusive Education programme based on various dimensions is not significant. The comparison of mean Attitude of experience of Regular teachers towards Inclusive Education Programme for the Hearing impaired is not significant in three dimensions. i.e., Attitude of teachers towards Hearing impaired children, involvement of parent teacher association and curriculum, results of this study supported by (Baron-Cohen, 2003) ^[2] and Zambelli and Bonni (2004) ^[22]. But, in the major dimension, i.e., Attitude of Regular teachers towards Inclusive Education programme for children Hearing impairment, there exists a significant difference. From this, it can be seen that teachers having more than 5 years' experience have more favorable Attitude than that less than 5 years' experience of teachers towards the Inclusive Education programme for the Hearing impaired children, it is also supported by the studies (Kuester, 2000) ^[12]. Van Reusen *et al.* 2001) ^[18].

7. Findings of the study

1. The Regular teachers and Heads of schools in the Secondary schools have different levels of Attitude (i.e., favorable and unfavorable) towards Inclusive Education Programme for Children with Hearing Impairment. The average percentage of favorable and unfavorable Attitude showed that in all dimensions, favorable attitude is more than that of unfavorable attitude.
2. There is a difference in the attitude of the Secondary schools Regular teachers towards Inclusive Education Programme for Children with Hearing Impairment with respect to the gender, locality and experience in various dimensions. Which implies some of the teachers are favorable and others are unfavorable towards Inclusive Education Programme for Children with Hearing Impairment
3. There is no difference in the attitude of the Heads of schools towards Inclusive Education Programme for Children with Hearing Impairment with respect to the gender, locality and experience in various dimensions. Which implies Heads of schools are favorable towards Inclusive Education Programme for Children with Hearing Impairment

8. Educational Implications

1. The study will help to understand the Attitude of Heads of schools and Regular teachers towards Inclusive Education Programme.
2. Based on the findings of the study, practical suggestions will be helpful to the Heads of schools and Regular teachers and curriculum makers to understand the importance of the Inclusive Education Programme for hearing impaired.
3. The importance of relation among the Heads of schools, Regular teachers and Resource teachers about the teaching learning strategies which support inclusion of the hearing impaired will be understood.

4. This study provided a snapshot of the experiences of children with hearing impairment in Inclusive school settings. Based on this study, it can be recommended that government should continue their efforts to enforce their civil rights laws and provide resources to meet them. Heads of schools need to ensure that their schools are fully inclusive and take a lead role in modeling inclusive Attitudes and behaviors. Teachers need to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills to adapt their teaching to include all children and the willingness to learn about the experiences of children with hearing impairment.

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