



Effect Of Determinants of Enrolment for CWSN in Government Primary and Special Schools

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Abstract- *This research examines the influence of various factors on the enrolment of children with special needs (CWSN) in government primary and special schools, emphasizing the effect of teacher-related factors such as age, gender, educational and professional qualifications, years of experience, and the availability of special education teachers in schools. Furthermore, it investigates other factors such as type of disability, type of school administration, type of locality and total number of students enrolled and total number of CWSNs enrolled in school. The study aims to determine how these factors affect enrolment rates and accessibility to education for CWSN. The research employs a sequential exploratory design with a QUANT-QUAL mixed research paradigm, and the research method used is a survey approach with descriptive research. Data was gathered using a researcher made test, termed the "Enrolment Impact Analyzer for Special Needs Education (EIA-SNE)." By examining the connections between these variables and enrolment trends, the study aims to reveal gaps and challenges within the existing education system for children with disabilities. The results will provide crucial insights for enhancing policies and practices that foster inclusive education, ultimately improving the educational experiences and outcomes for Children with Special Need.*

Keywords: *Determinants, Enrolment, Children with Special Need, Government Primary Schools, Special Schools*

INTRODUCTION

The process of learning for a human being commences right from the moment of their birth, marking the beginning of a lifelong journey filled with discoveries and growth. This journey unfolds predominantly within the familiar setting of one's home, where a young child keenly observes and mimics the behaviours and actions of the older individuals around them. While the foundational skills necessary for daily living are acquired within the confines of the home environment, further education becomes indispensable to equip individuals with the tools and knowledge required to confront the myriad challenges that life presents. Among the various facets of education, formal schooling emerges as a pivotal component in shaping a child's holistic development, offering a structured platform where essential competencies are honed and nurtured. Nevertheless, when it comes to children with special needs (CWSNs), the journey of acquiring crucial skills is not as straightforward for them due to a myriad of obstacles that impede their learning process. These obstacles encompass a spectrum of difficulties ranging from physical limitations to communication barriers, cognitive disparities, sensory sensitivities, challenges in social interactions, and emotional hurdles, which collectively hinder their capacity to effectively emulate and learn from others. Children who have special needs experience a wide array of emotional hurdles, such as frustration, isolation, low self-worth, anxiety, and depressive thoughts. These emotional obstacles they face often result in a sense of incompetence, diminished self-esteem, and a heightened susceptibility to depression, particularly in social settings where mimicry holds considerable importance. It is very important to provide extra support and understanding to these

children to help them navigate through these complex emotional challenges and develop a strong sense of self-worth and resilience.

Education is very important for shaping the future of society. It is the foundation for growth and development. A nation's success is closely linked to the quality and availability of education. Children with special needs, known as CWSNs, are essential for any community's future. This highlights the need to provide them with a well-rounded education that not only gives them knowledge and skills but also supports their overall well-being and potential to contribute to society. It is crucial to enrol them in schools that can meet their specific needs and offer a nurturing environment for their growth. To achieve this goal, many programs and initiatives have been launched by both government and non-government organizations. These include policies, laws, educational facilities, and incentives aimed at improving the education of CWSNs. Support mechanisms such as mid-day meals, free uniforms and textbooks, scholarships, and specialized teacher training are part of these efforts. In countries like India, a significant part of the government budget is dedicated to improving education, showing a strong commitment to creating a more inclusive and fair learning environment for everyone.

Primary Education

In the Indian context, the primary education system is specifically structured to cater to children between the ages of 6 and 14, ensuring that they receive the necessary knowledge and skills during their formative years. This system is divided into two main sections - primary education covering Class I to V, and upper primary education spanning Class VI to VIII, each focusing on different aspects of a child's learning and development. Through these early educational

experiences, students are equipped with essential skills in reading, writing, and mathematics, which are fundamental for their future academic achievements and personal growth.

As highlighted by UNICEF, providing children with access to education yields a multitude of benefits that extend beyond the individual to society as a whole. These advantages include the reduction of poverty levels, the lowering of child mortality rates, the promotion of gender equality by empowering both boys and girls through education, and the cultivation of a heightened environmental awareness among the younger generation. By investing in primary education, communities and nations can create a more equitable and sustainable future for all, where every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential and contribute positively to society.

Role of International Initiatives in Primary Education:

UNICEF has identified that a significant number of children who belong to marginalized communities in low- and middle-income countries struggle to comprehend basic texts or passages, highlighting a concerning educational challenge. It has been observed that approximately 70% of 10-year-olds from these marginalized groups are confronted with such difficulties, indicating a widespread issue that needs urgent attention. These children often end up discontinuing their primary education, thus being denied the opportunity to develop essential literacy and numeracy skills, which are fundamental for their future success.

In line with the Sustainable Development Goals, there is a global commitment to ensuring that each and every child has access to a comprehensive, equitable, and high-quality primary education without any financial burden, with the ambitious target of achieving significant educational advancements by the year 2030.

According to Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), every individual has the right to receive an education, highlighting the importance of ensuring that each child has access to a quality educational system. It is crucial that elementary and basic education be readily available without cost, with primary schooling being obligatory for all. Despite the passage of 70 years since the implementation of the UDHR, a staggering 58 million children worldwide are still deprived of educational opportunities, and over 100 million students drop out before finishing their primary schooling.

As stated in Article 24 of the UNCRPD, persons with disabilities have the right to an inclusive education that guarantees equal learning opportunities for all. Consequently, all participating parties are obliged to ensure the provision of reasonable adjustments for individuals with disabilities at all levels of education, including primary, secondary, tertiary, academic, and lifelong learning, within both public and private educational sectors.

Role of Government of India in Primary Education

Singal (2006) examined two Government reports that were released nearly twenty years apart. The initial report, Sargent Report, was crafted in 1944 pre-independence (Central Advisory Board of Education, 1944). The second report, Kothari Commission, was issued in 1966 (Education Commission, 1966). The study looked into the government's strategy regarding the education of children with disabilities. Both reports advocated for a "dual approach" to cater to the educational requirements of these children. Instead of isolating them from typical children, the reports proposed the adoption of integrated education. Nonetheless, the Kothari Commission recognized that some disabled children might face psychological challenges in regular schools (Education Commission, 1966). In such instances, they proposed sending these children to specialized schools. The Sargent Report also endorsed these suggestions. As a result, both

reports stressed the significance of broadening special and integrated facilities.

This dual approach persisted over the following two decades and was endorsed in the National Policy of Education (MHRD, 1986). Section IV of the National Policy on Education, labelled "Education for Equality," outlines that children with minor disabilities will be educated alongside typical children in regular schools, while severely disabled children will be accommodated in specialized residential schools (MHRD, 1986). A comparable focus is evident in the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 (Ministry of Law and Justice, 1996), which seeks to promote the integration of students with disabilities in regular schools and the establishment of specialized schools nationwide in both public and private sectors. India endorsed the Salamanca Statement in 1994, which popularized the term 'inclusive education' in official records and publications by organizations like NCERT and the media during the 1990s.

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan was established following the 86th Amendment to the Constitution, highlighting the importance of enrolling children with special needs (CWSN) in education to achieve the goals of UEE. Educating CWSN has become a vital component of SSA. It aims to cater to all children with special needs, irrespective of their disability type, category, or severity. Moreover, it enforces a 'zero rejection' policy to prevent any child from being excluded from the education system (SSA, 2007). SSA broadens the educational opportunities for children with disabilities by incorporating Education Guarantee Scheme/Alternative and Innovative Education (EGS/AIE) and Home-Based Education (HBE) in addition to special and mainstream schools.

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) emphasizes on children with special needs (CWSN) through 8 key areas:

- 1) Conducting surveys to identify CWSN
- 2) Assessing the needs of CWSN
- 3) Providing assistive devices
- 4) Collaborating with NGOs/Government programs
- 5) Ensuring barrier-free access
- 6) Training teachers in Inclusive Education
- 7) Hiring resource teachers
- 8) Adapting curricula, textbooks, and using appropriate teaching and learning materials.

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) was implemented in 2005 to create a well-structured educational curriculum in schools nationwide. It provides direction on curriculum development, student assessment, and is influenced by the government's education policies, focusing on "Learning Without Burden" and advocating for the use of mother tongue as the medium of instruction.

In 2018, the Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat (PBBB) initiative was launched to enhance the reading, writing, and arithmetic skills of students in classes 3 to 5. This program includes teacher training, development of reading materials, and fostering a reading culture in schools.

The National Education Policy (NEP) of 2020 has introduced specialized short-term courses to cater to children with special needs within the current educational framework. Teachers are given the autonomy to select appropriate teaching methods based on the individual needs of the students. The National Assessment Centre, PARAKH, is striving to create inclusive and accessible assessment guidelines for students with learning disabilities ("NEP 2020: Making education more inclusive").

Status of enrolment of Children with Special Needs in Schools.

India's Ministry of Education Department of School Education & Literacy is presently implementing the Samagra Shiksha program, an integrated initiative for the education of children with special needs from Pre-Primary to Class XII, aligning with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act of 2016. According to the Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE) report for 2021-22, the enrolment of Children with Special Needs (CWSN) from Class 1 to 12 is recorded at 0.88% of the total enrolled children. Specifically, in Uttar Pradesh, the enrolment status of Children with Special Needs (CWSN) from Class 1 to 12 is indicated to be 0.70% (Press Information Bureau Government of India, Percentage of children with Special Needs studying in schools [States and UT wise]).

According to Manzoor Ahmed and R. Govinda (2012), approximately one-fourth of the world's population resides in South Asia, where a similar proportion of children are not enrolled in primary schools. It is possible that South Asia may not achieve the second Education for All (EFA) goal by 2015, which is to provide universal access to and completion of primary education. What steps can be taken to improve the chances of attaining this goal shortly after 2015 and to establish a strong foundation for future progress. Research has shown that lower-income families face significant obstacles in accessing education for their children with special needs.

In his analysis, Somerset (2009) points out that Kenya has successfully rolled out a total of three distinct Free Primary Education initiatives since the nation achieved its independence in the year 1963, demonstrating a commitment to educational access.

A study by Lindsay (2007) found that the lack of accessible infrastructure is a major deterrent for parents considering enrollment in mainstream schools. The availability of special education resources, such as trained teachers and assistive technologies, is critical.

The nation of India is actively striving towards achieving universal enrolment up to the secondary level within schools. To scrutinize the data related to the enrolment of CWSNs in educational institutions, this paper delves into the information sourced from the Unified District Information System of Education (UDISE). As per the planning documents, the net enrolment ratio (NER) is documented.

Historical studies conducted by Goffman in 1963, along with more contemporary research by Mungai in 2002, illustrate that the persistent societal stigma associated with disabilities represents a formidable barrier that hinders the enrolment of affected children. Conversely, when societal acceptance of disabilities is elevated, it correlates positively with enhanced rates of both enrolment and successful integration into mainstream educational settings. Bhattacharya and Das (2015) focused their study on the accessibility issues that include transportation to and from school, which emerged as pivotal determinants influencing the enrollment of children with special needs. Their research demonstrated that the provision of safe and reliable transportation options significantly enhances the likelihood of enrollment in schools for children with special needs, thus underscoring the need for comprehensive strategies to address transportation barriers in educational access.

Das, Kuyini, and Desai (2013) presented a research paper that illustrated a significant relationship between positive teacher attitudes towards inclusive education and the subsequent enrollment and classroom participation of children with special needs, thereby reinforcing the notion that the mindset and beliefs of educators play a pivotal role in shaping the educational experiences of these children.

A study conducted by Sony (2013) found that communities that exhibit a supportive attitude and possess active community groups tend to experience higher enrollment rates for children with special needs, while conversely, negative social attitudes and stigma

associated with disabilities within certain communities serve as significant deterrents, discouraging parents from enrolling their children in educational institutions.

A study carried out by Mukhopadhyay and Sharma (2012) provided compelling evidence that teachers who possess specialized training in special education or inclusive teaching practices demonstrate a greater effectiveness in integrating children with disabilities into mainstream

Jha and Singh (2010) asserted that the efficacy of government initiatives, such as the Right to Education (RTE) Act and the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, is critical in promoting inclusive education within schools, which in turn is vital for enhancing enrolment rates. This study revealed that states characterized by proactive and well-executed policies tend to experience a remarkable increase in the enrollment of children with special needs, thus highlighting the importance of effective governance in educational access.

Objectives of the study-

1. To compare the effects of determinants affecting the enrolment of Children with Special Needs in Government Primary schools and Special schools on the basis of gender, age of the respondents.
2. To test the objectives and comparisons of the determinants researcher framed some Null Hypothesis.

Delimitations of the Study-

The present study will be conducted in the Government Primary School and Government Special Schools of the four districts of Uttar Pradesh only for the saving the time and ease in handling of data.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design & method:

The research design for the study was sequential exploratory design with QUANT-QUAL, mixed research paradigm. The research method adopted for the study was Survey method with Descriptive research. The method was considered appropriate for this research because it could gather extensive baseline data regarding the elements influencing enrolment. In the present study all the State Government run Primary Schools under Department of Basic Education, Government of Uttar Pradesh and Government run Special Schools under Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities treated as population. The total number of samples that best fit the current Government Primary Schools will be around 350 (with confidence level 95%, the margin mean of error is 5%).

However, due to time and space constraints, a minimum of 10 government primary schools and 5 government special schools will be considered as a sample for this study.

Government Primary School	Number of Government Primary Schools	Government Special Schools	Number of Special Schools
Lucknow	02	Lucknow	03
Kanpur	02	Kanpur/Bithoor	01
Farukhbad	02	Bareilly	01
Bareilly	02	Agra	01
Agra	02		
TOTAL	10	TOTAL	05

Research instrument:

In the case of non-availability of appropriate tool for this study, the researcher made test is used for data collection. This tool named as "Enrolment Impact Analyzer for Special Needs Education (EIASNE)". This name reflects the focus on analysing the

determinants affecting enrolment in both government primary and special schools for children with special needs. The tool was tested for the reliability and was found the cronbach's alpha value as 0.892.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The collected data was analysed with the help of Mean, SD, SEM and t-test, to find out the results which have been summarized as below -

Table 1- The determinants affecting enrolments of Children with Special Needs in Government Primary and Special schools on the basis of age.

	Age of the Respondents	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)
Total Score Obtained on the scale items	23-40 yrs age group	29	143.52	17.457	3.198	109	.002
	41 yrs and above age group	82	131.79	16.800			
Personal Determinants	23-40 yrs age group	29	19.07	4.920	.927	109	.356
	41 yrs and above age group	82	19.94	4.129			
Social Determinants	23-40 yrs age group	29	17.21	4.880	.377	109	.707
	41 yrs and above age group	82	17.57	4.363			
Family Related Determinants	23-40 yrs age group	29	22.97	5.003	1.338	109	.184
	41 yrs and above age group	82	24.37	4.788			
Financial Determinants	23-40 yrs age group	29	17.86	3.971	.542	109	.589
	41 yrs and above age group	82	18.28	3.429			
Environmental Determinants	23-40 yrs age group	29	29.34	6.382	.698	109	.487
	41 yrs and above age group	82	30.24	5.811			
Administrative Determinants	23-40 yrs age group	29	25.34	4.134	.230	109	.819
	41 yrs and above age group	82	25.54	3.765			

From the above table, the study found a significant difference in the effect of determinants of enrolment for children with special needs in government primary and special schools based on age while comparing the means of the scores as for the age of the 23-40 years, Mean was found 143.52 (N: 29, SD: 17.457) and for the age group of 41 years and above mean was found 131.79 (N: 82, SD: 16.800). Independent samples t-value revealed a significant difference between the two groups: 3.198 (df = 109, p = .002). Since the t value is higher than the significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 2- There will be no significant difference in the determinants of enrolments of Children with Special Needs in Government Primary and Special schools on the basis of gender.

	Gender of the Teacher	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)
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Total Score Obtained on the scale items	Male	57	135.74	18.024	.538	109	.592
	Female	54	133.93	17.405			
Personal Determinants	Male	57	19.86	4.426	.367	109	.714
	Female	54	19.56	4.290			
Social Determinants	Male	57	17.53	4.500	.117	109	.907
	Female	54	17.43	4.508			
Family Related Determinants	Male	57	23.81	5.256	.428	109	.669
	Female	54	24.20	4.448			
Financial Determinants	Male	57	17.74	3.282	1.323	109	.188
	Female	54	18.63	3.818			
Environmental Determinants	Male	57	29.95	6.578	.112	109	.911
	Female	54	30.07	5.266			
Administrative Determinants	Male	57	24.51	4.388	2.838	109	.005
	Female	54	26.52	2.873			

From the above table, the study found a significant difference in the effect of determinants of enrolment for children with special needs in government primary and special schools based on gender while comparing the means of the scores as for the gender of the male, Mean was found 135.74 (N: 57, SD: 18.024) and for the female was found 133.93 (N: 54, SD: 17.405). Independent samples t-value revealed a significant difference between the two groups: .538 (df = 109, p = .592). Since the t value is higher than the significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Conclusions

The findings of the study challenge the initial hypothesis, demonstrating that gender significantly affects the enrolment of children with special needs in government primary and special schools. Male teachers have been shown to have a greater impact on enrolment determinants compared to female teachers due to several cultural and societal factors. In many regions, male teachers are often perceived as figures of authority and professionalism, which can inspire confidence among parents and community members, particularly in patriarchal societies. Additionally, male teachers may have better access to decision-makers, who are often men, and serve as role models for male students, further influencing enrolment. These dynamics highlight how societal norms and gender biases can shape the role of educators in determining school enrolment. Additionally, the results indicate that teachers aged 23 to 40 years have been shown to have a greater impact on enrolment determinants compared to those aged 41 and above due to their typically higher energy levels, adaptability, and closer generational alignment with students and their parents. Younger teachers may be more relatable, open to new teaching methods, and better equipped to engage with modern educational practices and technologies, making them more effective in encouraging enrolment. Additionally, they may be seen as more dynamic and approachable, which can foster stronger relationships with students and parents, positively influencing enrolment decisions. This younger cohort also seems more receptive to inclusive education

policies due to their familiarity with modern educational approaches. These insights highlight the importance of teacher demographics, such as age and gender, in shaping enrolment outcomes and the effectiveness of inclusive education strategies.

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