



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Nilu Rani, Research Scholar (Department of Education) Pt. Sundarlal Sharma (Open) University, Chhattisgarh

Dr. Anita Singh, Assistant Professor (Department of Education) Pt. Sundarlal Sharma (Open) University, Chhattisgarh

Abstract: The teacher's self efficacy is the teacher's belief regarding their capabilities to teach in an inclusive classroom (Sharma et al. 2012), while their attitude typically refer to their feelings, beliefs, and perceptions about the inclusion of children with diverse educational needs in mainstream classrooms. The aim of this study was to explore the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and attitude towards inclusive education. Using Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practices (TEIP) scale and Teachers Attitude Toward Inclusive Education (TASTIE) scale, the data were drawn from 480 government school teachers, which were randomly selected from four districts of Bilaspur Division namely Jangir- Champa, Mungeli, Bilaspur and Raigarh. The findings of the study highlighted that majority of government upper primary and secondary school teachers possesses average to above-average level of self-efficacy and they have a moderate level of attitude towards inclusive education. The study further revealed a significant positive correlation between teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes towards inclusive education.

Keywords: Inclusive Education, Self-Efficacy, Attitude

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education is a philosophy based on human rights and it aims to offer equitable quality education for all; while respecting diversity, differential needs and abilities; eliminating all forms of discrimination (UNESCO, 2009). It is an concept of including students with special educational needs into regular schools and classrooms (Yada & Savolainen, 2017), modifying instruction and assessment to meet students' needs, managing disruptive behavior and collaborating with students' parents while involving them in school activities (Engelbrecht et al., 2013); with an overall aim to accommodate Children with Special Needs (CWSN) within the mainstream education (Booth & Ainscow, 2011). This constructive approach seeks to minimize barriers to learning that may affect an individual's ability to achieve their full potential (C.B.S.E., 2020) and involves restructuring the cultures, policies, and practices within schools to meet the needs of every student and is part of a broader strategy to foster an inclusive society (Julka, 2007). Inclusive education is thus an umbrella term that encompasses considerations and strategies designed to support the diverse needs of learners in a given context.

The Goal 4 of the 2030 Global Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by India in 2015 - seeks to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" by 2030. Further the introduction of National Education Policy (NEP 2020) added much more to the scope of

Inclusive Education, as the policy recommends inclusion and equal participation of CWSN across all stages of school education and talks about Equitable and Inclusive Education and *Learning for All*.

Studies suggest that the success of inclusive education largely depends upon the teachers, as their ability to embrace and implement inclusive practices directly influences the effectiveness of inclusive education. Further studies also reflect that teacher's self efficacy, which is teacher's belief regarding their capabilities to teach in an inclusive classroom (Sharma et al. 2012) and their attitude, which typically refer to their feelings, beliefs and perceptions about the inclusion of children with diverse educational needs in mainstream classrooms, are the most crucial factor to successfully implement inclusive education. The present study thus aims to explore teachers' self efficacy and attitude towards inclusive education and also to understand the relationship between these two variables.

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

The present study is grounded in a social justice belief that all students with disabilities have the right to access to quality education. However studies reveal that one source of resistance to the inclusive education has been the teacher's attitudes and their self efficacy toward inclusion (Connor & Ferri, 2007). Studies have reported that teachers' higher self-efficacy (Sharma & Jacobs, 2016) and positive attitude influences the success of inclusive education (Boyle et al. 2023; Sharma et al. 2008; Kurniawati et al., 2012); while their negative attitude could result into a significant barrier towards the successful implementation of inclusive education (Avramidis, & Taulia 2000). Further studies also highlighted a strong correlation between these two constructs (Savolainen et al., 2012; Yada & Savolainen, 2017). As teachers' self efficacy and attitude towards inclusion are the crucial factors towards the successful implementation of inclusive education, thus the focus of this study was to explore teachers' self efficacy and attitude towards inclusive education and also to understand the relationship between these two variables, as it could also offer valuable insights into transitioning the inclusion paradigm from theoretical policies to effective classroom practices.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the relationship between self-efficacy and attitude of upper primary and secondary school teachers towards Inclusive Education.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

- H₀₁** There exists no significant relationship between the self efficacy and attitude of upper primary and secondary school teachers towards Inclusive Education.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design: The study adopted Descriptive Research Design

Population: The population for the present study constituted all the Government Upper Primary and Secondary School Teachers of four districts of Bilaspur division namely, Janjgir-Champa Mungeli, Bilaspur and Raigarh.

Sample: The sample constituted 480 government teachers, randomly drawn from four districts of the Bilaspur Division namely Janjgir-Champa Mungeli, Bilaspur and Raigarh. The total sample constituted 480 government teachers drawn from 30 Government Schools (contributing 15 upper primary and 15 secondary government schools) from each district, By selecting equal number of schools from each stratum and then

randomly selecting 4 teachers from each school, ensured a comprehensive and balanced representation across both educational stage (upper primary and secondary) and across the four districts.

Tools for Data Collection

Two standardized tools were employed in the study: Teachers' Efficacy for Inclusive Practices (TEIP) scale developed by Umesh Sharma, Tim Loreman and Chris Forlin (2012) and the Teachers Attitude Towards Inclusive Education (TASTIE) scale developed by Vishal Sood and Arti Anand (2011)

Statistical Technique

For the analysis of the data, descriptive and inferential statistical technique had been utilized. Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentage were used to understand the distribution of scores of teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes towards inclusive education. For the hypothesis testing Pearson correlation coefficient was used to assess the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes towards inclusive education.

FINDINGS

Table 1: Overall Self-Efficacy of Upper Primary and Secondary School Teachers towards Inclusive Education

Range of Scores	Level of Efficacy	Upper Primary School Teachers		Secondary School Teachers	
		N	%	N	%
Above 90	High	04	1.7	02	0.8
71-90	Above Average	129	53.8	137	57.1
51-70	Average	104	43.3	101	42.1
31-50	Below Average	03	1.2	00	00
Less or Equal to 30	Low	00	00	00	00
Total		240	100.0	240	100.0

Table 1 reveals that among upper primary teachers, only 1.7% teachers have a high level of self-efficacy towards inclusive education, while 53.8% upper primary teachers showed above average self-efficacy towards inclusive education and 43.3% upper primary teachers exhibited an average level of self-efficacy towards inclusive education. A small percentage (1.2%) of upper primary teachers had below-average self-efficacy towards inclusive education and none were in the low self-efficacy category towards inclusive education.

Table 1 also reveals that among secondary school teachers, only 0.8% teachers have a high level of self-efficacy towards inclusive education, while 57.1% secondary teachers showed above average self-efficacy towards inclusive education and 42.1% secondary school teachers exhibited an average level of self-efficacy towards inclusive education. None of the secondary school teachers had a below-average or low level of self-efficacy towards inclusive education.

Hence, it can be concluded that majority of upper primary and secondary school teachers possesses average to above-average level of self-efficacy towards inclusive education and neither has a low level of self-efficacy towards inclusive education.

Table 2 Overall Attitude of Upper Primary and Secondary School Teachers towards Inclusive Education

Range of Scores	Level of Attitude	Upper Primary School Teachers		Secondary School Teachers	
		N	%	N	%
127 and above	Extremely Favourable	00	00	00	00
116-126	Most Favourable	02	0.8	00	00
105-115	Above Average Favourable	36	15.0	30	12.5
90-104	Moderate Attitude	154	64.2	163	67.9
80-89	Below Average Unfavourable	41	17.1	43	17.9
69-79	Most Unfavourable	06	2.5	04	1.7
68 and below	Extremely Unfavourable	01	0.4	00	00
Total		240	100.0	240	100.0

Table 2 depicts that among upper primary teachers, none had an extremely favourable attitude towards inclusive education, while only 0.8% upper primary teachers were in the most favourable range. 15% of upper primary teachers had scores in an above average favourable range. The majority of the teachers (64.2%) exhibited a moderate attitude towards inclusive education. 17.1% upper primary teachers were placed in the below average unfavourable range, 2.5% in most unfavourable range and only one upper primary teacher (0.4%) exhibited an extremely unfavourable attitude towards inclusive education.

Table 2 depicts that among secondary school teachers; none had an extremely favourable or most favourable attitude towards inclusive education, while only 12.5% secondary school teachers were in the above-average favourable range. The majority of the teachers (67.9%) exhibited a moderate attitude towards inclusive education. 17.9% secondary school teachers were placed in the below average unfavourable range and 1.7% exhibited the most unfavourable attitude towards inclusive education while none of the teacher possessed an extremely unfavourable attitude towards inclusive education.

Hence, it can be concluded that the majority of the upper primary and secondary school teachers have a moderate level of attitude towards inclusive education.

In order to examine the relationship between the self-efficacy and attitude of upper primary and secondary school teachers towards inclusive education Pearson Correlation Coefficient was calculated. The result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Computation of the Correlation Coefficient between the Self-efficacy and Attitude of upper primary and secondary school teachers Towards Inclusive Education (N=480)

	Self-Efficacy Towards Inclusive Education	Attitude Towards Inclusive Education
Self-Efficacy Towards Inclusive Education	1	0.136*
Attitude Towards Inclusive Education	0.136*	1

* $p < 0.05$

Table 3 shows that the correlation coefficient between self efficacy and attitude towards inclusive

education was 0.136 which fulfils the significance criteria statistically with $p < 0.05$. The positive and significant correlation shows that upper primary and secondary school teachers with higher level of self efficacy i.e. confidence in their ability to effectively implement inclusive education practices, also possesses more favourable attitude towards inclusive education.

In view of this finding, Hypothesis H_{01} , "There exists no significant relationship between the self-efficacy and attitude of upper primary and secondary school teachers towards inclusive education", is **rejected**.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Result highlighted that majority of upper primary and secondary school teachers possesses average to above-average level of self-efficacy and have a moderate level of attitude towards inclusive education towards inclusive education.

Results also revealed a positive and significant correlation ($r=0.136$, $p < 0.05$) between self efficacy and attitude of teachers towards inclusive education. Thus it can be concluded that upper primary and secondary school teachers with higher level of self efficacy i.e. confidence in their ability to effectively implement inclusive education practices, also possesses more favourable attitude towards inclusive education.

REFERENCES

- [1] Ainscow, M. (2007). Taking an inclusive turn. *Journal of research in special educational needs*, 7(1), 3-7.
- [2] Almalky, H. A., & Alrabiah, A. H. (2024). Predictors of teachers' intention to implement inclusive education. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 158, 107457.
- [3] Avramidis, E., & Norwich, B. (2002). Teachers' attitudes towards integration/inclusion: a review of the literature. *European journal of special needs education*, 17(2), 129-147.
- [4] Avramidis, E., & Toulia, A. (2020). Attitudes and inclusion of students with special educational needs in regular schools. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*.
- [5] Avramidis, E., & Toulia, A. (2020). Attitudes and inclusion of students with special educational needs in regular schools. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*.
- [6] Booth, T. and Ainscow, M. (2011) Index for Inclusion: Developing Learning and Participation in Schools. Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education, Bristol.
- [7] Boyle, C., Anderson, J., & Allen, K. A. (2020). The importance of teacher attitudes to inclusive education. In *Inclusive education: Global issues and controversies* (pp. 127-146). Brill.
- [8] Boyle, C., Barrell, C., Allen, K. A., & She, L. (2023). Primary and secondary pre-service teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. *Heliyon*, 9(11).
- [9] Boyle, C., Scriven, B., Durnin, S. A & Downes, C. (2011) Facilitating the learning of all students: the 'professional positive' of inclusive practice in Australian primary schools. *Support for Learning*, 26, 2, 72–78.
- [10] Boyle, C., Topping, K., & Jindal-Snape, D. (2013). Teachers' attitudes towards inclusion in high schools. *Teachers and teaching*, 19(5), 527-542.
- [11] Burke, K., & Sutherland, C. (2004). Attitudes toward inclusion: Knowledge vs. experience. *Education*, 125(2). 163–172
- [12] C.B.S.E. (2020) Handbook of Inclusive education. Retrieved from https://cbseacademic.nic.in/web_material/Manuals/handbook-inclusive-education.pdf

- [13] Engelbrecht, P., Savolainen, H., Nel, M., & Malinen, O. P. (2013). How cultural histories shape South African and Finnish teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education: a comparative analysis. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 28(3), 305-318.
- [14] Ernst, C. and Rogers, M.R. (2009) Development of the Inclusion Attitude Scale for High School Teachers. *Journal of Applied School Psychology*, 25, 305-322.
- [15] Julka, A. (2007). Meeting Special Needs in Schools A Manual. NCERT, New Delhi.
- [16] Kraska, J., & Boyle, C. (2014). Attitudes of preschool and primary school pre-service teachers towards inclusive education. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 42(3), 228-246.
- [17] Kurniawati, F., Minnaert, A., Mangunsong, F., & Ahmed, W. (2012). Empirical study on primary school teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in Jakarta, Indonesia. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 69, 1430-1436.
- [18] Leyser, Y. & Tappendorf, K. (2001). Are attitudes and practices regarding mainstreaming changing? A case of teachers in two rural school districts. *Education*, 121(4), 751-760.
- [19] Mahony, C. (2016). Assessing teacher's Attitudes towards Inclusive Education within an Urban School District in Ireland. Dissertation submitted at Dublin Business School, School of Arts, Dublin
- [20] Mallory, H. J. (2021). General Education Teachers' Self-Efficacy Perceptions of Teaching Students with Disabilities (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University)
- [21] Meidrina, T., Mawaddah, S. N., Siahaan, F. M. M., & Widyasari, P. (2017). The relationship between teacher efficacy and attitude towards inclusive education in private elementary school: A study based on teaching experiences. *Journal of Advances in Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(3), 124-134.
- [22] Opertti, R., Walker, Z., & Zhang, Y. (2014). Inclusive education: From targeting groups and schools to achieving quality education as the core of EFA. *The SAGE handbook of special education*, 2, 149-169.
- [23] Ross-Hill, R. (2009). Teacher attitude towards inclusion practices and special needs students. *Journal of research in special educational needs*, 9(3), 188-198.
- [24] Savolainen, H., Engelbrecht, P., Nel, M., & Malinen, O. P. (2012). Understanding teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy in inclusive education: Implications for pre-service and in-service teacher education. *European journal of special needs education*, 27(1), 51-68.
- [25] Sharma, U., & Jacobs, D. K. (2016). Predicting in-service educators' intentions to teach in inclusive classrooms in India and Australia. *Teaching and teacher education*, 55, 13-23.
- [26] Sharma, U., & Nuttal, A. (2016). The impact of training on pre-service teacher attitudes, concerns, and efficacy towards inclusion. *Asia-Pacific Journal of teacher education*, 44(2), 142-155.
- [27] Sharma, U., Forlin, C., & Loreman, T. (2008). Impact of training on pre-service teachers' attitudes and concerns about inclusive education and sentiments about persons with disabilities. *Disability & Society*, 23(7), 773-785.
- [28] Sharma, U., Loreman, T., & Forlin, C. (2012). Measuring teacher efficacy to implement inclusive practices. *Journal of research in special educational needs*, 12(1), 12-21.
- [29] UNESCO (2009). Policy guidelines on inclusion in education. Retrieved from <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000177849>
- [30] Yada, A., & Savolainen, H. (2017). Japanese in-service teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education and self-efficacy for inclusive practices. *Teaching and teacher education*, 64, 222-229.