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RESEARCH ARTICLE

TEACHERS ATTITUDE TOWARDS TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

Background: Success in teaching depends upon two prime factors -attitude towards profession and job satisfaction. Thus, if the teachers are well-informed, motivated, with a positive attitude and committed to their profession, learning will be enhanced. Teachers' attitudes towards education of children are often based on practical concerns about how educational policies can be implemented, rather than be grounded in any particular ideology. **Objectives:** The present piece of research aimed to investigate the attitudes of primary school teachers towards certain strategies implemented under inclusive schools in the State of Telangana. Specifically, it probes into the levels of attitudes towards certain strategies viz, peer-tutoring; Self-instruction; Co-teaching and Direct instruction with special reference to gender, qualifications and experience. **Methodology:** A sample of 199 (63+136) Regular Teachers as well as Resource Teachers were selected under Inclusive settings in Rangareddy and Hyderabad districts of the State of Telangana, employing simple random sampling technique. A standardized tool related to teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, developed by Galis and Tanner (1995), was used as a test tool. It lays emphasis on three areas – effective strategies for meeting the needs of all students, the support in their district for educational change, and inclusive education. The test tool consists of 24 statements. **Results:** It was revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between the levels of attitude of Teachers at primary level in using various strategies in Hyderabad and Rangareddy districts of Telangana State with special reference to gender and qualifications. On the other hand, a significant difference was found with regard to experience. **Conclusion:** Strategies used in the inclusive settings not only equipped all Teachers to achieve the international cherished goal of 'Education For All (EFA). Educational implications along with suggestions for future research was also proposed.

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INTRODUCTION

Success in teaching depends upon two prime factors viz., attitude towards profession and job satisfaction. Teachers' attitudes are gateways to understand their beliefs, vision, knowledge and their likely behavior towards desired goal. In the words of Bojana R. Mastilo, Ivana S. Zečević (2018) "Attitudes are defined as a learned and enduring predisposition to behave stereotypically and consistently towards a particular object / person / social group. "Binder and Niederle (2007) defined attitude as one's positive or negative judgment about a concrete subject. Thus, attitude is everything in teaching-learning process. Eagly and Chaiken (2007) combined the evaluative space (through which a certain attitude is formed) and affective space (where an attitude is expressed) to envision an individual's likely behavior in certain situations. Broadly, cognition describes our understanding of the attitude object; affect shares the emotional connections with the object, while both affect and behavior express the attitude through responses. In the words of L.L.

Thurston (1928) the concept attitude is used to denote the sum total of a man's inclinations and feelings, prejudice or bias, preconceived notions, ideas, fears, threats, and convictions about any specified topic. Having a fair attitude toward one's fields of study leads to the development of compatibility between demands and expectations on the one hand and future career on the other hand. Moreover, attitudes are conceptualized as relatively stable constructs comprising cognitive, affective and behavioural components (Bizer GY, Barden JC, 2003). Teachers' attitudes towards education of children are often based on practical concerns about how educational policies can be implemented, rather than be grounded in any particular ideology. Several researches documented that if teachers have positive attitude towards children with special needs, then these

children can boost up their scholastic performance. Research has clearly demonstrated a link between the awareness and attitudes of teachers and the academic success of learners with special educational needs.

Significance of the Study: Historically education of the children with special educational needs (SEN) has evolved through five stages:

- Treatment through segregation and restriction of resources for survival appropriate for people called different or disabled;
- Caring for people regarded as different by providing resources required for their physical existence.
- Instructing such people so that they may be incorporated into existing dominant social systems.
- It was felt to integrate the Special Needs Children (SNC) with normal children in general schools.
- The concept of special needs emerged with the thesis that most of the students face special needs and hence inclusive education (Mohanthy 1994).

Globally, in the field of special education there was a paradigm shift to promote the inclusion for children with special needs in academic, vocational and social aspects. The idea of Inclusive Education was given impetus by two conferences set up under the support of United Nations. The first of these, held in Jomtein, Thailand in 1990, promoted the idea of 'education for all', this was followed in 1994 by a UNESCO conference in Salamanca, Spain, which led to a Statement that is being used in many countries to review their education policies. The Salamanca Statement proposes that the development of schools with an 'inclusive' orientation is the most effective means of improving the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system. Instructional practices, in turn, depend on what teachers bring to the classroom. Professional competence is believed to be a crucial factor in classroom and school practices (Shulman, 1987, Campbell et al., 2004; Baumert and Kunter, 2006). Teaching strategies are best practices in education that work in a range of classroom environments. Most teachers use multiple strategies to keep their students engaged throughout the school year and test their knowledge more comprehensively. Others may use only one or two strategies to guide their lesson plans and ensure that each student understands the information provided. What works well for one class may not be best for the next class. The best approach to teaching strategies is to customize them to meet students' needs. For the present study teaching strategies include viz, peer-tutoring; co-teaching; self-instruction and direct instruction.

Need for the Study: One of the main features of inclusive education maintains Mani MNG (2000) is development of capacity of the general education system to meet the educational services for children with disabilities. Moreover, inclusive education enhances the communication between children with disabilities and non-disabled children. Lipsky and Gartner (1997) felt that inclusive education is not a reform of special education. It is the convergence of the need to restructure the public education system to meet the needs of a changing society.

Das, Kuyini and Desai (2013) examined the current skill levels of regular primary and secondary school teachers in Delhi, India in order to teach students with disabilities in inclusive education settings. They reported that nearly 70% of the regular school teachers had neither received training in special education nor had any experience teaching students with disabilities. Further, 87% of the teachers did not have access to support services in their classrooms. Most of school personnel in India are not trained to design and implement educational programs for students with disabilities in regular schools. Most teacher training programs in India do not have a unit on disability studies (Myreddi & Narayan, 2000). The reason was that there is no provision for sensitization and involvement of general teachers. Bharati (2015) remarked that most of the regular teachers presently employed require training in inclusive education at the level of capacity building and not only at the level of sensitization and awareness creation. Another significant contributing factor is the attitudes of regular teachers, parents, administrators as well as policy makers. Mainstream teacher attitudes may be a contributory barrier to successful inclusive practices (Avramadis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2000; Bender, Vail, & Scott, 1995; De Boer, Pijl, & Minnaert, 2010). Teachers tend to be broadly positive about the principle of inclusion while at the same time viewing its practical implementation as problematic (e.g., Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). However it has been argued that neutral, even negative, attitudes toward inclusion may better characterize teacher viewpoints (De Boer et al., 2010; Soodak, Podell & Lehman, 1998). Indeed teachers in inclusive schools were less positive about the potential of children with learning disabilities than special school teachers. The inclusion of children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties has consistently been reported as a particularly problematic for teachers, and is accompanied by negative teaching attitudes (Cook, 2001; Cook, Cameron & Tankersley, 2007; Hastings & Oakford, 2003; Shapiro, Miller, Sawka, Gardill, & Handler, 1999). In spite of the progress made by the Indian inclusive education system, Yashpal Singh and Anju Agarwal (2015) identified the major problem of Inclusive education in India as attitudes towards inclusion and disability among teachers, administrators, parents, peers and policy planners.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Review of Literature (RoL) for the present study is based on extensive survey of books, journals, web sources, unpublished thesis and international indices. An extensive review of literature relevant to the study was undertaken, which helped the investigator to develop deeper insight into the problem and gain information on what has been on the past in order to build the foundation of the study. Rakap, S., & Kaczmarek, L. (2010) investigated the opinions of general education teachers on inclusion; Smitha and Acharya (2010) studied the overall attitude of the teachers towards inclusive education; Smitha and Acharya (2010) studied the attitude of teachers towards inclusive education; KisEszter (2010) analyzed at the various different perceptions and attitudes teachers have towards special needs students; Das, A., & Kattumuri, R. (2011) analyzed the case of children with disabilities studying in private inclusive schools; Shanthi.S.Prakash (2012) compared teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion; Gupta, M., & Pasrija, P. (2012) identified the fundamental competencies for special and general educators; Sushma, S., & Smriti, B. (2012) investigated the attitudes of in-service primary school teachers towards Inclusion; Khochen, M., & Radford, J. (2012) explored the attitudes of teachers and head teachers towards people with a disability in mainstream schools; David, R., & Kuyini, A. B. (2012) examined the impact of classroom teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education; Costello and Boyle (2013) made an attempt to study Pre-service Secondary Teachers' Attitudes towards Inclusive Education; Nisha Bhatnagar and Ajay Das (2013) studied attitudes of secondary regular schoolteachers towards the inclusion of students with disabilities; Ajay Das and Rina Shah (2014) discussed the implementation of inclusive system; Kiriungi, L. et al. (2014) assessed Teachers' attitude towards Inclusion of Children; Kamal Parhoon et al (2014) explores the attitudes of regular and itinerant teachers about inclusion; Mohammad Mobark AlShahrani (2014) explored Saudi educators teachers', and administrators' perceptions of and attitudes on inclusion; Bhatnagar, N., & Das, A. (2014) examined attitudes of secondary regular schoolteachers towards the inclusion; Jalal H. Hussien & Ibrahim Al-Qaryouti (2014) investigated regular education teachers' attitudes towards inclusion; Mukhopadhyay, S. (2014) investigated the perception of primary teachers towards inclusive education; Hanan Abo El-Gamelen Ebrahim Essa, and Amaal Mohamed Ahmed El-Zeftawy (2015) investigated teachers' knowledge, attitudes and reported strategies to assess and support the students with learning difficulties; Maheshwari, P. and Shapurkar, M. (2015) studied the awareness and attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education; Alka Arora, Pradeep Kumar Sahu (2015) highlighted the existing educational setting for the differently abled children;

Thomas V. Sabella (2015) investigated teachers' attitudes toward inclusion; Yadav, M., Das, A., Sharma, Shah, R., Das, A., Desai, I., & Tiwari, A. (2016) undertaken to determine the concerns of primary school teachers about the inclusion; Singh, D. (2016) presented challenges experienced by teachers while practicing early education inclusion; NarendranathGuria and Ritwij Tiwari (2016) conducted a study on attitude of upper primary school teachers regarding inclusive education; Kumar, A. (2016) in an article explores the attitudes of university and school teachers towards inclusive education;

Sneh Bansal (2016) study the relationship of teachers attitude towards inclusive education and commitment towards teaching profession; Utpal Kalita (2017) study the attitude of primary school teachers' towards inclusive education; Himanshu Verma Janaki B. Aparna Ravichandran (2017) explored the awareness, knowledge and attitude of regular school teachers about hearing impairment; Offor, D. I., & Akinlosotu, N. T. (2017) studied the teachers' attitudes on inclusion; Iflah Sultan (2017) examined the challenges faced by children with disabilities in inclusive schools; Mrityunjoy Jana and Bishnupada Nanda (2017) studied teacher's attitude towards inclusion; Priyadarshini, S.S., and Thangarajathi S (2017) made an attempt to study regular school teachers attitude towards inclusive education;; Arun K. Gupta and Bharti Tandon (2018) explored the views of teacher trainees on inclusion; Paramanik, Nepal and Barman Pranab (2018) studied the attitude of secondary school teachers towards Inclusive education; Hettiaarachi, S., et al (2018) in a study uncovered perceptions of 'inclusive education; Alasim, K. N. (2018) identified a variety of strategies that facilitate the participation and interaction of students in general classrooms; Amit Sharma et al (2018) conducted a survey of middle school teachers on inclusion; Chanda, Piyali, and Santosh Kumar Behera (2018) made a comparative study on Attitude of Regular and Special Primary School Teachers towards Inclusive Education; Silvia Zanazzi (2018) presents the best practices of teachers under inclusion; Kriti Mishra et al Yash, J., Purohit, S., Padhy, S., &Hota, S. (2019) examined the attitude of prospective teacher educators' towards inclusive education; Malsawmtluanga, H. T. (2019) conducted to find out the attitude difference towards inclusive education among secondary school teachers; RuniNakro.K (2019) studied the attitude of student teachers on inclusion; Elizabeth K. Thomas and Seema P. Uthaman (2020) conducted a study on the knowledge and attitude of primary school teachers towards inclusive education; Azorin, C., & Ainscow, M. (2020) focused on how schools can be helped to review progress on their journey to becoming more inclusive;Chandra, Satish (2021) compared general and special teachers attitudes towards inclusive education; Charitaki, G., Kourtis, I., Gregory, J.L. et al. (2022) proposed a model for four factor solution of attitudes towards inclusive education.

Margaret , Sears et al (2021) conducted a comparative study on academic achievement of SWD in co-taught classes; Teresa Iacono et al (2021) conducted a systematic research of studies addressing models of co-teaching; Michelle R. Murphy and Christine A. Christle (2022) describes efficacy of co-teaching. Lee Masonc and Maria Otero (2021) attempted to clarify the importance of Direct Instruction; Vidovic, J.L., Cornell, M.C., Frampton, S.E. et al.(2021) focused how ASD students were given direct instruction; Manal Yousef Alsheef (2022) investigated effects of combining direct instruction and precision teaching. Pratima Kaushik and S.P.K. Jena (2021) evaluated the efficacy of self-monitoring; Sulu, M.D., Martella, R.C., Grimmer, K. et al. (2022) assessed the research analyzing the effects of self-management; Zhu, M., Doo, M.Y.(2022) investigated the relationship among motivation and self-monitoring. Aldabas, Rashed (2020) reviewed the effectiveness of peer-mediated interventions; Michael Nyavor (2020) sought to investigate how teachers promote peer support; Johana Manubey, John RafafyBatlolona, MarlenyLeasa (2021) analysed peer tutoring in inclusive classes; Bond, R., &Castagnera, E. (2021) examined the role that peers; Uta Papen & Julia Gillen (2022) discussed insights from peer teaching. From the above, it is explicitly evident that research studies conducted in India in respect of attitude of teachers towards inclusion found to be in an embryonic stage. Therefore, there is a dire need to probe into the attitude of teachers working under inclusion using certain strategies. Hence, the present study is taken up for investigation.

Objectives of the Study

- To appraise the attitude of Teachers in using certain teaching strategies at Primary level in Hyderabad and Rangareddy districts of Telangana State.
- To explore the levels of attitude of Teachers at primary level in Hyderabad and Rangareddy districts of Telangana State using strategies viz., peer tutoring, direct instruction, self-monitoring and co-teaching.
- To study the levels of attitude of Teachers at primary level in using various strategies at primary level in Hyderabad and Rangareddy districts of Telangana State with special reference to *gender*.
- To examine the levels of attitude of Teachers at primary level in using various strategies at primary levels in Hyderabad and Rangareddy districts of Telangana State with special reference to *qualification*.
- To delineate the levelsof attitude of Teachers at primary level in using various strategies at primary level in Hyderabad and Rangareddy districts of Telangana State with special reference to *experience*.

Delimitations of the Study

- This study is confined to inclusive schools located in *Rangareddy and Hyderabad districts* in the State of Telangana.
- The investigation takes into its ambit the attitude of regular and resource teachers towards using certain strategies under Inclusive schools in the selected districts of Telangana State with special reference to strategies like *peer-tutoring; co-teaching; self-monitoring; and direct instruction*.
- The study is restricted to probe the attitude of regular and resource teachers towards using certain strategies under Inclusive settings in the selected districts of Telangana State with regard to *gender, qualification, and management of school*.

METHODOLOGY

The fundamental purpose of this investigation, as already pointed out to investigate into the *attitude of Regular and Resource Teachers using Teaching Strategies in Hyderabad and Rangareddy Districts in Telangana State*. Hence, this study falls under non-experimental designs and a *normative survey* is employed to elicit appropriate information from the respondents. The universe of the present study consists of State of Telangana. The sample constitutes One hundred and ninety nine(199) teachers working in Inclusive schools located in Rangareddy and Hyderabad Districts of Telangana State. Simple random sampling technique was employed to elicit information from the selected sample. A standardized tool related to teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, developed by Galis and Tanner (1995), was used as a test tool. It lays emphasis on three areas – effective strategies for meeting the needs of all students, the support in their district for educational change, and inclusive education. The test tool consists of 24 statements. Respondents indicate whether they agree or disagree with the statement using a Likert scale, which ranges from strongly agree (5 points) to strongly disagree (1 point), measuring the following three domains:Effective strategies for meeting the needs of all students, the support for educational change and inclusive education. The same was administered after testing its validity

and reliability on the sample selected. Suitable statistical techniques like Chi-square, along with SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) 16.0 was used for analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

HO₁ There is no statistically significant difference between the levels of **attitude** of Regular and Resource Teachers at primary level in using various strategies at primary level in Hyderabad and Rangareddy districts of Telangana State with special reference to gender. It can be inferred from the chi-square test, the calculated p-value is insignificant at 5.% level of significance (.335), with regard to the levels of attitude of Teachers at primary level in using various strategies at primary level. It was found that a good majority of the sample (66.7%) of female teachers and (63.0%) of male teachers were found to be with average levels. Hence, the hypothesis formulated is accepted.

Table Showing awareness levels of respondents

Crosstab							
			Attitude level				Total
			Average	High	Low	Very High	
Gender	Male	Count	46	20	1	6	73
		% within Gender	63.0%	27.4%	1.4%	8.2%	100.0%
	Female	Count	84	37	0	5	126
		% within Gender	66.7%	29.4%	0.0%	4.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	130	57	1	11	199
		% within Gender	65.3%	28.6%	0.5%	5.5%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.394 ^a	3	.335
Likelihood Ratio	3.610	3	.307
N of Valid Cases	199		

a. 3 cells (37.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .37.

HO₂ There is no statistically significant difference between the levels of attitude of Regular and Resource Teachers at primary level in using various strategies at primary level in Hyderabad and Rangareddy districts of Telangana State with special reference to qualification.

It can be inferred from the chi-square test, the calculated p-value is significant at 5.% level of significance (.000), with regard to the levels of attitude of Teachers at primary level in using various strategies at primary level with regard to qualifications. It was found that a good majority of the sample (83.3 %) with Intermediate and diploma qualifications and (63.3%) with degree and B.Ed, qualification; (56.7%) with PG and B.Ed, qualifications were with average levels; whereas, (40.0 %) with PG and M.Ed were found to be at high attitude levels, Hence, the hypothesis formulated is rejected.

Table showing attitude level – Qualification

Crosstab							
			Attitude level				Total
			Average	High	Low	Very High	
Qualification	PG & M.Ed	Count	0	2	0	3	5
		% within Qualification	0.0%	40.0%	0.0%	60.0%	100.0%
	PG & B.Ed	Count	34	19	0	7	60
		% within Qualification	56.7%	31.7%	0.0%	11.7%	100.0%
	Degree & B.Ed	Count	71	31	1	1	104
		% within Qualification	68.3%	29.8%	1.0%	1.0%	100.0%
	Inter & Diploma	Count	25	5	0	0	30
		% within Qualification	83.3%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	130	57	1	11	199
		% within Qualification	65.3%	28.6%	0.5%	5.5%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	44.975 ^a	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	33.528	9	.000
N of Valid Cases	199		

a. 9 cells (56.2%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .03.

HO₃ There is no statistically significant difference between attitude levels of Regular and Resource Teachers at primary level in using various strategies at primary level in Hyderabad and Rangareddy districts of Telangana State with special reference to experience.

Table showing attitude level – experience. It can be inferred from the chi-square test, the calculated p-value is significant at 5.% level of significance (.000), with regard to the levels of attitude of Teachers at primary level in using various strategies at primary level with regard to experience. It was found that a good majority of the sample (76.0 %) with 1-5 years of experience and (66.9%) with 5-10 years could possess high levels of awareness. On the other hand, (38.1%) with 15 years and above and (25.0%) with 10-15 years has average levels. Hence, the hypothesis formulated is rejected.

Crosstab							
			Attitude level				Total
			Average	High	Low	Very High	
Experience	15 years and above	Count	8	7	0	6	21
		%within Experience	38.1%	33.3%	0.0%	28.6%	100.0%
	10 to 15 years	Count	1	1	1	1	4
		%within Experience	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	25.0%	100.0%
	5 to 10 years	Count	83	38	0	3	124
		%within Experience	66.9%	30.6%	0.0%	2.4%	100.0%
	1 to 5 years	Count	38	11	0	1	50
		%within Experience	76.0%	22.0%	0.0%	2.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	130	57	1	11	199	
	%within Experience	65.3%	28.6%	0.5%	5.5%	100.0%	

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	80.385 ^a	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	29.723	9	.000
N of Valid Cases	199		

a. 9 cells (56.2%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .02.

Major Findings

- The results of the study indicated there exists no statistically significant difference between the levels of attitude of Regular and Resource Teachers at primary level in using various strategies in Hyderabad and Rangareddy districts of Telangana State with special reference to gender.
- The results of the study indicated there exists no statistically significant difference between the levels of attitude of Regular and Resource Teachers at primary level in using various strategies in Hyderabad and Rangareddy districts of Telangana State with special reference qualifications.
- Conversely, it was found that there exists statistically significant difference between the levels of attitude of at primary level in using various strategies in Hyderabad and Rangareddy districts of Telangana State with special reference to experience.

Educational Implications: The educational implications from the results of this study cannot be understated. The findings of the present study are of practical as well as theoretical importance to teachers, as well as to the policy makers. The findings of this research provide insight to teachers seeking to develop attitude among Teachers using certain teaching strategies at primary level. As it was clear from the investigation there exists a significant difference between levels of attitude of Teachers in using various strategies like peer-tutoring; self-instruction; co-teaching and direct instruction with regard to experience, are to be equipped through orientation programmes in using various strategies which benefit all students under inclusion. The results holds some implications even for students. They should be able to perceive the benefits of specific strategies taught to them and it is the teachers responsibility to make those strategies adaptable and achievable. The policy makers should also take into consideration of teachers needs and prepare curricular adaptations which are viable under inclusive settings.

Suggestions for further Research

- A similar study can be conducted with a *larger group of respondents* to have in- depth knowledge on the attitude of Teacher using teaching strategies in the State of Telangana.
- There is a need to explore the *utility of various teaching strategies other than the investigated strategies in inclusive settings.*
- An explorative study can be taken up on the *attitudes of Heads of Institutions and other Officials responsible for implementation of inclusive education in the State.*

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