

TEACHING EFFICACY OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS IN RELATION TO ATTITUDE TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Dr. Balwinder Kaur* & Ms. Poonam Devi**

Abstract

Inclusive education means the act of ensuring that all children of society despite their differences receive the opportunity of being the part of the same classroom as other children of their age. It is based on a system of values and beliefs centred on the best interests of the students which promotes social cohesion, belonging and active participation in learning, a complete school experience and positive interactions with peers and others in the school community. So the present study focussed on the inclusive education. The paper aimed to study the relationship of pre-service teacher's attitude and teaching efficacy towards inclusive education and to compare the attitude and teaching efficacy of pre service teachers towards inclusive education in terms of Government and private colleges of education. Descriptive survey method was employed by selecting 100 pre service teachers 50 from Government and 50 from private education colleges of Panjab university situated in urban area of Chandigarh, UT. No significant correlation was found between attitude and teaching efficacy of pre service teachers towards inclusive education and no significant difference was found in the teaching efficacy and attitude of pre- service teachers towards inclusive education in Government and private educational colleges.

Key Words: Attitude, Teaching Efficacy, Pre Service Teachers, Inclusive Education

Introduction

The term 'inclusive education' was formally introduced at the UNESCO World Conference on special needs in education held in Spain in 1994. Inclusion means enabling all children to participate fully in the life and work of mainstream settings in fulfilling their needs, seen as a continuing process of breaking down barriers to learning. Any child may experience a special need during the course of educational years (UNESCO). Making the school system flexible and adopting an inclusive approach leads to reforming the school system as an inclusive child-

*Associate Professor, Government College of Education, Chandigarh

**Research Scholar, P.U. Chandigarh

oriented approach. The main objective of inclusive education is to give many possible opportunities to students to physical, mental and social disabilities as well as talented students to receive quality education that is suitable to their needs or a system which appreciates diversity and principle of non-discrimination. The National Curriculum Framework on school education , 2005 provides guidelines for making the curriculum flexible and appropriate to accommodate the diversity of school children including those with disability in both cognitive and non-cognitive areas. Given that regular teachers are the key service providers in teaching students with special needs in the inclusive classroom, their attitude towards inclusion is a contributing factor to its success or failure. Teachers who are ill prepared or uncomfortable with the concept of inclusion may pass that discontent on to the students, which in turn can undermine the confidence and success of those students. Conversely, teachers who support and believe in the concept of inclusion can provide special education students with confidence and a comfortable learning environment. There is evidence to suggest that many teachers do not feel equipped to teach children with disabilities and complain that they need more time to instruct these students. Teacher education programs play an important role in improving the self-efficacy of prospective teachers (Pendergast, Garvis & Keogh, 2011). Prospective teachers need to gain both theoretical and practical knowledge about how to teach at school level (Forlin, 2010). Training is an important element in shaping self-efficacy of prospective teachers. Thus, there is a need to measure the personal and teaching efficacy beliefs of pre-service teachers before and after the teaching profession. Teacher education programs play an important role in improving the self- efficacy of prospective teachers (Pendergast, Garvis & Keogh, 2011).

Teacher Attitude towards Inclusive Education

According to Skinner (2004) attitude has been defined as an idea with emotional content, important beliefs, prejudices, biases, predispositions, appreciations and as states of readiness or set. It is formed by direct experience as well as by implicit learning and may reflect personality (Zimbardo and Lieppe, 1991) .

One of the most significant stipulations that allow for successful inclusion of special education students is the attitude of the general education teacher regarding the inclusion of special education students into their classroom. Classrooms are now becoming more diverse with respect to students' abilities, therefore sensitivity and awareness on the part of general education teacher is essential to promote successful inclusion. The empirical evidences in the area of inclusive education clearly indicate that teachers' attitudes are the key factor for making inclusive education a real success. Ferris (1996) compared the attitudes of general and special secondary educators towards inclusion practices. Results showed that special educators were significantly more positive about including students with disabilities in general classes. Costello and Boyle (2013) found that pre-service secondary teachers held positive attitude towards inclusive education. There was a significant decline in positive

attitude through the years of study. Pre- service secondary teachers enrolled in postgraduate programs were more inclusive than those

enrolled in undergraduate courses. Attitude towards training and perceived competence were less positive than other attitude scales for all participants, suggesting a concern regarding training effectiveness. Replication of the study is recommended across additional Australian and international universities to determine differences in training content and experiences which may have impact on attitude towards training and perceived competence. Mangope, Mannathoko and Kuyini (2013) investigated pre-service physical education teachers and inclusive education: attitude, concern and perceived skill needs. The results of the study have shown that physical education (PE) pre-service student teachers have moderately positive attitude towards inclusion. Participants were also more concerned about the lack of knowledge and skills required for inclusion and that resources and pedagogical knowledge on inclusion were perceived as the required skills for the success of inclusion in Botswana.

Teachers teaching efficacy towards inclusive education

According to Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk and Hoy (1998) a teacher's belief in his or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context, is called teaching efficacy.

Hoy (2000) says that personal teaching efficacy, relates to a teacher's own feeling of confidence in regard to teaching abilities. The second, often called general teaching efficacy, "appears to reflect a general belief about the power of teaching to reach difficult children.

According to Eggen and Kauchak (2010) teaching efficacy is a teacher's belief that he or she can cause all students to learn regardless of their prior knowledge or ability. In a study about the environmental factors influencing the development of teaching efficacy, Moran & Hoy (2002) reported that efficacy was related to perceived support (e.g. resources and interpersonal support from colleagues and school administrators) for novice teachers (less than five years' experience) but not for experienced teachers (more than five years' experience). The authors underscored that promoting teacher efficacy may be most critical during the first few years of teaching. It is equally imperative to foster high teaching self-efficacy in pre-service teachers, particularly from within the context of positive inclusive practices.

Ahsan, Sharma, Deppeler and Joanne (2012) in their study 'Exploring Pre-Service Teachers Perceived Teaching-Efficacy, Attitude and Concern about inclusive education in Bangladesh' found that variables such as length of training, gender, interaction with persons with disabilities, knowledge about local legislation, and level of training involved had significant relationship with participants' perceived teaching-efficacy, attitude and concern. In addition, it

was also found that pre-service teachers' perceived teaching-efficacy is correlated to their attitude towards inclusive

education. This study also revealed that pre-service teachers having higher perceived teaching-efficacy showed lower level of concern towards inclusive education. Ahsan, Deppeler and Sharma (2013) conducted a research study predicting Pre-Service Teachers preparedness for inclusive education: Bangladeshi Pre-Service teachers attitude and perceived teaching-efficacy for inclusive education. Phase 1 employed two standardized scales that were used with 1623 pre-service teachers from 16 teacher education institutions to measure their attitude and perceived teaching-efficacy for inclusive education. The findings of Phase 1 indicated that the level and length of training, along with gender, influenced both teacher attitude and teaching-efficacy. In Phase 2, semi-structured interviews with six administrative heads of the pre-service teacher education institutions were conducted in order to better understand these findings. Outcomes of Phase 2 indicated that curriculum, teacher-related variables and a number of contextual variables may explain the differences in the findings of this study that were in sharp contrast to those from previous international researches

Statement of the problem

Teaching Efficacy of Pre-service Teachers in relation to Attitude towards Inclusive Education

Objectives

1. To compare the attitude and teaching efficacy of pre service teachers towards inclusive education of Government and private colleges of education.
2. To study the relationship between attitude and teaching efficacy of pre service teachers towards inclusive education

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated in light of available literature:

1. There is no significant correlation between attitude and teaching efficacy of pre service teachers towards inclusive education
2. There is no significant difference in the attitude of pre service teachers towards inclusive education of Government and private college of education.
3. There is no significant difference in the teaching efficacy of pre service teachers towards inclusive education of Government and private college of education.

Delimitation

The present study was delimited to educational colleges of Chandigarh.

Tools used

The following tools were constructed by the investigator and used in the present

study Pre-service Teachers Teaching efficacy scale towards Inclusive Education

Pre-service Teachers Attitude towards Inclusive Education (adapted from attitude towards inclusive education by Vishal Sood and Arti Anand) (2011).

Pre-service Teachers Teaching efficacy scale towards Inclusive Education

First draft and try out

A performa was developed to identify the pre-service teacher's beliefs and expectation indicating their teaching efficacy towards inclusive education and was administered to the initial sample (60 pre-service teachers). However, after contemplation of preliminary results, 13 items were excluded.

The final draft of the performa was developed in a manner to bring about a comprehensive and accurate picture of the pre-service teachers teaching efficacy towards inclusive education by utilizing minimum time and effort. After collecting general information like teacher name age and name of institution, 50 items were related to general teaching efficacy and self efficacy towards inclusive education.

Teacher Attitude Scale towards Inclusive Education by Sood , Vishal and Anand, Arti (2011).

The teacher attitudes towards inclusive education scale (TAIES) was chosen as an appropriate measure of attitudes towards inclusive education. Developed by **Sood , Vishal and Anand**, Arti (2011) to measure the attitude of qualified teachers towards inclusive education. This resulted in questions that were fundamentally unchanged except for the conditions appropriate to a pre- service teacher rather than a qualified teacher. Similar to the original survey, a three point Likert scale was used for all scale questions, with answers ranging from 1 (agree) to 3 (disagree). An advantage of a three point scale was that participants have option to choose middle (or undecided) score, and in effect are required to agree undecided or disagree with each statement. After adjustment of the reversed questions, the scores for each individual question were summed and averaged for each participant, resulting in a Total Inclusion Score (TIS). Higher scores are indicative of more positive attitudes, which was also consistent with the TAIS.

Sample

The sample comprised of 100 pupil teachers from Government and Private education college of Chandigarh. The study was confined to only urban areas of Chandigarh and teachers of government and private college of education were considered for the study. Out of these 100 teachers, 50 were taken from private college and 50 from the Government college.

The investigator used cluster sampling technique for selecting the sample from Chandigarh, urban area.

Analysis and Interpretation

Hypothesis-I There is no significant correlation between attitude and teaching efficacy of pre service teachers towards inclusive education

Table 1.1 : Table showing coefficient of correlation between attitude and teaching efficacy of pre service teaching towards inclusive education

VARIABLES	N	MEAN	MEDIAN	S.D.	r	level of significance
Teaching Efficacy	100	130.93	131.5	15.2	.19	Not Significant
Attitude towards Teaching Profession	100	114.77	116	10.9		

Interpretation

Table 1.1 shows the value of calculated coefficient of correlation between attitude and teaching efficacy of pre service teachers towards inclusive education and that is .19 which is lower than the table value of 0.195 at 0.05 level of significance. It shows that the value of calculated coefficient of correlation is not significant. So it can be said that there is no significant correlation between attitude and teaching efficacy of pre service teachers towards inclusive education is accepted

Hypothesis II-There is no significant difference in the attitude of pre service teachers towards inclusive education of Government and private college of education.

Table 1.2 mean, S.D. and t-value of attitude of pre service teachers towards inclusive education

VARIABLES	N	MEAN	S.D.	t-value	level of significance
Government Colleges	50	132.6	16.8	.25	Not Significant
Private College Schools	50	129.2	13.4		

Table 1.2 reveals difference in the attitude of pre service teachers towards inclusive education of Government and private college of education. Calculated t-value, which is (0.25) lower than

1.98 as well as 2.63, the critical values required to reach at 0.05 and 0.01 levels of significance, respectively. Thus, we can simply imply that there is no significant difference in the attitude of pre service teachers towards inclusive education of Government and private college of education. Hence, the hypothesis- II that **there is no significant difference in the attitude of pre service teachers towards inclusive education in terms of Government and private college of education** is accepted.

Table 1.3 mean, S.D. and t-valute of teaching efficacy of pre service teachers towards inclusive education

VARIABLES	N	MEAN	S.D.	t-value	level of significance
Government College	50	112.9	12.5	0.09	Not Significant
Private College	50	116.6	8.8		

Table 1.3 reveals difference in the teaching efficacy of pre service teachers towards inclusive education of Government and private college of education. Calculated t-value, which is (0.09) lower than 1.98 as well as 2.63, the critical values required to reach at 0.05 and 0.01 levels of significance, respectively. Thus, we can simply infer that there is no significant difference in the teaching efficacy of pre service teachers towards inclusive education of Government and private college of education. Hence, the hypothesis- III that there is no significant difference in the teaching efficacy of pre service teachers towards inclusive education of Government and private college of education is accepted.

Conclusion

From the above analysis, it is concluded that teaching efficacy has no relationship with attitude of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education. Moreover no difference was found in the attitude and teaching efficacy of pre service teachers towards inclusive education of Government and private colleges of education. So it can be said that attitude and teaching efficacy of Government and private educational college pupil teachers is same.

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