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School Environment Impact on CWSN Enrolment, Attendance and Learning Achievement

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(TLMs).

ABSTRACT

School environment is one the most important factor, in promoting learning at every stage of school life. If environment is conducive, learning accelates with time and age, that is true for CWSN too. School environment for 'Children with special need' consist of infrastructural design of school, physical resources available at school, academic resource available at classrooms and school, behaviour of peers, seniors, school staff and teachers. It has been found that infrastructural facility like pathways, boundary wall, classrooms, toilets, drinking water improves CWSN enrolment as well as attendance. Analysis of data also demonstrate that beautification of school, cleanliness, behaviour of peers/teachers/support staff improves students engagement in school and learning. Teaching learning aid of every kind support CWSN in engaging themselves in learning.

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Introduction

School environment is one the most important factor, in promoting learning at every stage of schooling. Every human being in this world learns maximum while interacting with their environment. If environment is conducive, learning accelates in the area of interests with time and grades. School environment for 'Children with special need' consist of infrastructural design of school, physical resources available at school, academic resource available at classrooms or school, behaviour of peers, seniors, school staff and teachers. Children with special need differ in many ways from their normal peers. Some walk differently, some communicate differently, some experience the world differently and some understand content differently. Due to these diversities, differently abled child become easy victim of negligence, teasing and abuse at public places. These are the some reasons that they don't find school environment conducive to share their experiences or play with their peers.

It is very difficult for a principal/teacher with limited abilities and experiences, limited physical/financial resources to build a conducive school/classroom environment for learning for students coming from diverse background, diverse physical/mental/sensory capacities/abilities and diverse experiences. In the case of 'children with special need' every child has diverse physical strength, diverse sensory abilities, diverse mental capacities, different experiences and different resource requirement to construct learning experiences. It is very difficult for a teacher to create a learning process or learning environment, which suits all.

In present era, humanity and realization have opened new avenues of education for disabled children. It is now realized that a disabled child is not a different kind of person. He is a

'child with special needs' like all other members of society. The disabled children too have the same right to education, work and participation. Those with mild disability can be educated along with the non-disabled peers in general schools with provision for extra help and support. Moreover education of 'children with special need' (CWSN) has been found to be economical in terms of expense and coverage.

'Children with special needs' have much in common with other children of their age. They have many common aspects of child's development like: personality, the ability to communicate, resilience and strength, the ability to appreciate and enjoy life and the desire to learn. Each child has individual strengths, personality and experiences so particular physical/sensory differences will impact differently to individual CWSN. They have all right to be the whole child, develop physically, socially, spiritually and mentally. They have right to education and dignified life. They have educational need, which sometimes may differ from non-disabled peers. Special educational needs may arise from primary four different types of physical/sensory differences i.e. Physical, Sensory, Mental health, and Learning disability. They are not mentally diseased, they do have physical, visual or hearing differences, but they are otherwise like any other child.

For this study the common operational definition of disability has been used, i.e. "The persons with disabilities in India as defined by PWD Act, 1995- Ministry of law, justice and company affairs".

Significance of the study

Children are assessed usually as differently abled after, we assess that they have different physical strength, understand differently, communicate differently, and receive

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instructions differently in their day-to-day life. A variety of tests are administered to ascertain special need of such children. These test are not only to ascertain, how the child is differently abled than his/her peer but to ascertain which kind or type of academic support he/she needs to adjust in their working, living and learning environment. What kind of process, physical infrastructure and learning resources/intervention are needed for his/her unhindered learning, so that he/she may live a dignified life and may contribute to the society.

In this study significant effort have been made to establish school environment related factors affecting education of differently abled children. School environment is one of the basic need to attract students into schools. It has two part one is physical infrastructure and another human behaviour. Most important part is inter-personal relationship between students, teachers, and cooks. They all form an environment which impacts on students' enrolment, regular attendance and in general on academic performance. It also have impacts on students' engagement in sports, arts, music. School environment is one of the basic elements to support students in school. School environment may be divided into four part:

- Infrastructural design of school, physical infrastructure of school
- Inter-personal relationship between students.
- Inter-personal relationship between teacher-student-cooks.
- Inter-personal relationship between student, parents and trained teachers (special teachers).

They all form an environment, which impacts, on student's enrolment, regular attendance and in general on academic performance of students. It also have impacts on students' participation in sports, arts, music.

Data and Method

In order to know the teaching learning environment and the academic achievement of the children with special needs, visits were organized to see many bridge courses run by department of basic education of Uttar Pradesh. Schools were also visited, where children with special needs were studying in inclusive way. Some special schools run by non-government organizations were also visited to get a feeling of problems faced by 'children with special need' in adjusting with routine daily personal work and education.

Teachers and warden of bridge courses, inclusive schools and special schools were consulted before making any research design. Their interaction was helpful in figuring out areas, which have greater impact on elementary education of children with special needs. On the basis of that research objectives and hypotheses were constructed.

Research Design

The research design followed in the study is descriptive (survey) and evaluative. In this research the focus of the study is to test certain hypotheses (school environment) regarding elementary education of CWSN at present. The descriptive survey method has been adopted primarily due to the fact that it facilitate in collecting general information and its one of the most commonly used method of investigation that attempts to describe and interpret what exists in the present conditions.

Selection of Survey Area:- For the selection of survey area the criterion followed was easy access to data, convenience in conducting survey, social structure and level of literacy. As per guidelines of Ministry of Human resource development all 20 blocks of district Prayagraj are educationally backward, and being diverse in the sense of culture and education, it was

selected for the purpose of study. Literacy rate of district Prayagraj is 68%. It has homogeneous population of all section of society and finally because it was convenient to conduct and give enough time to conduct survey activities in this area.

Sample

According to Karlinger "A sample is taking any portion of the population which is representative of whole population". Sample has been taken carefully, so that results obtained from study of sample may be faithfully applied to the whole population. Following things are considered while selecting the sample.

- There should be no partiality while selecting the sample.
- All major sub group of population should be sufficiently represented.
- It should be manageable for completion of study.

In order to collect valid and reliable data about education status of CWSN a sample size of 500 (approximately 5% of CWSN population of the area) was set for the purpose. Size of sample for four different types of specially is Orthopaedic – 171, Visually Impaired – 103, Hearing Impaired – 114, Mentally Retarded – 107, and multiple problems-15. In sample both the gender are adequately represented, Male-252, Female – 258. In sample all social categories are sufficiently represented as- Scheduled caste- 187, Other backward classes-199, General- 115, and others-9. For this almost proportionate number of children were selected randomly from each kind of specialty and population, to see effect of different kind of specialty.

Sampling:- As there are 13-14 different types of disability in children. Children with some disability are very few in number as chances or probability of such disability is very rare or difficult to dignose. During visit of special schools, inclusive schools and bridge courses run by Government of Uttar Pradesh, we came to know, that majority of CWSN falls in category of Orthopaedic, Visually Impaired, Hearing impaired, and Mentally retarded. So for the purpose of study only these four types of CWSN have been taken in sample.

In this study school environment has been classified as- Ramps, supportive equipments, TLMs, road to school, classroom condition, beautification of school, toilets, drinking water, teachers/supportive staff/peers behaviour.

Tools used for the study

A format was developed for collecting data and information from different sources, Format has following elements for different kind of information.

- Interview Schedule with child (CWSN).
- Interview Schedule for the members of family.
- Interview Schedule for the teachers of school (for students' academic engagements).
- School Information with head Teacher or teacher (about infrastructure at school).

The Structured Information Schedule for all was developed in order to assess the school environment issues with respect to different types of CWSN. Observation of residential bridge course, primary schools, kasturba gandhi balika vidhyalaya, and special school for disabled children was done.

Results and Discussion

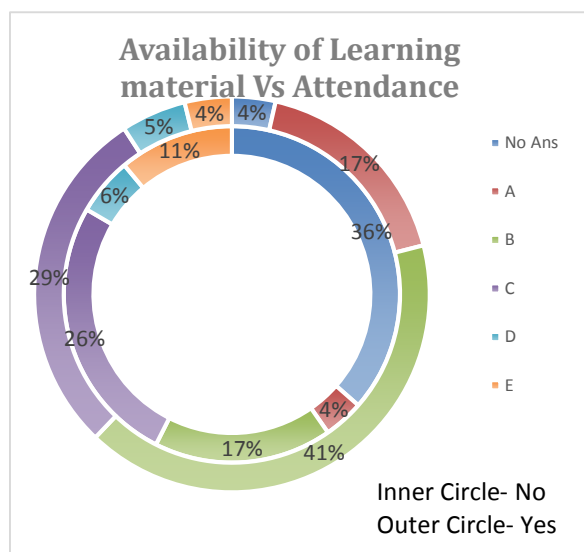
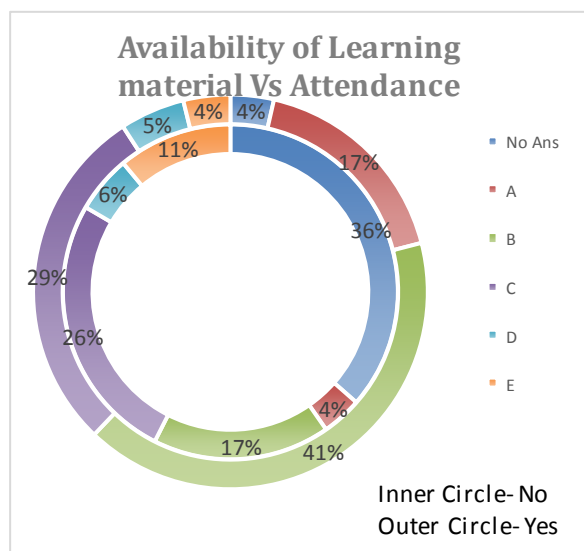
The present study examines the impact of school environment on elementary education of children with special needs on the basis of the responses of the children, parents, teachers, Head teacher on various issues. Frequencies of the

responses of the different stake holder was grouped, 'SQL database' was used for analysis.

Attendance: Regular attendance in school reflects students' interest in learning and whether school is fulfilling their interest in learning and areas of learning. It also shows, whether CWSN are comfortably adjusted in school system or not. Attendance of students is classified into 5 categories. 'A' for more than 80 percent attendance, 'B' for 60-80 percent attendance, 'C' for 40-60 percent attendance, 'D' for 20-40 percent attendance, 'E' for less than 20 percent attendance, and some of the schools and students didn't responded.

Physical infrastructure (Teaching Learning Material (TLM), Special Books, Audio/Visual Impact) for learning:

School infrastructure facilitates students in achieving their learning goals. There are many infrastructure which influence students' enrolment and regular attendance. Let's see, how these are impacting.



Graph shows a positive correlation between availability of TLM and enrollment/attendance of CWSN at school. Schools with TLM, educational material/Toys, Audio/Visual learning material and special books show significantly higher attendance of CWSN.

1. School with TLM have higher enrolment ratio of disabled children. Materials show that school system and teachers are concerned about teaching-learning environment. Teachers are trying to make learning process, children friendly. TLM,

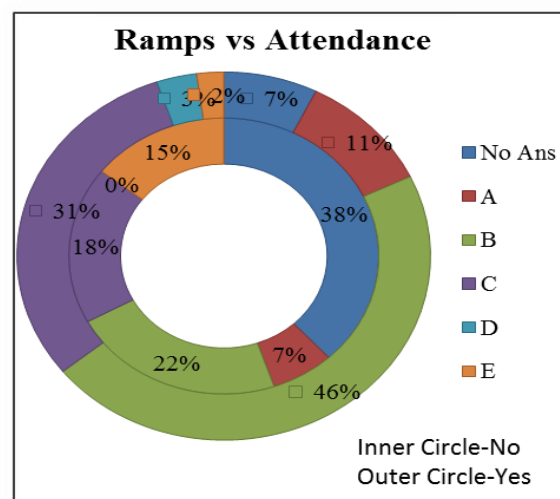
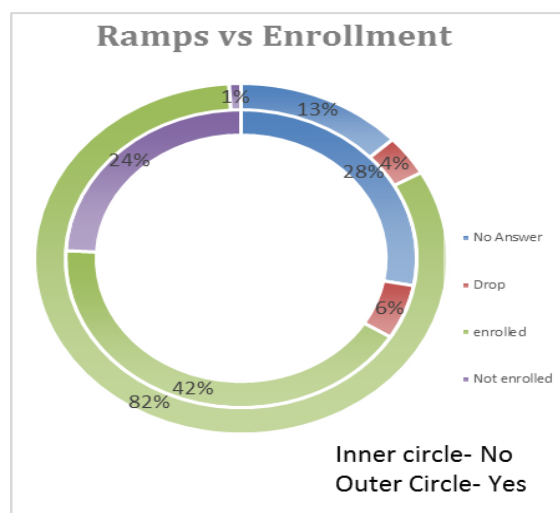
makes things easy to understand and interesting for children. It also improves class and school environment.

2. Schools, which are child friendly, attract more CWSN to attend school.

3. Schools with TLM have higher attendance percentage of CWSN.

Ramp in school & attendance for OH Students:

Orthopedically disabled children need physical access to school building. School building is approachable to CWSN? or they have difficulty in accessing it?, makes difference. So there is a need to make school building, and every facility in school to be accessible to physically challenged children to make school campus inclusive in nature. These facilities affects physically handicapped children enrolment as well as their attendance in school. We tried to test this phenomenon, with the empirical data we got in field survey.



Above Graphs shows a positive correlation between availability of ramps with enrolment and attendance of orthopedically challenged child at school.

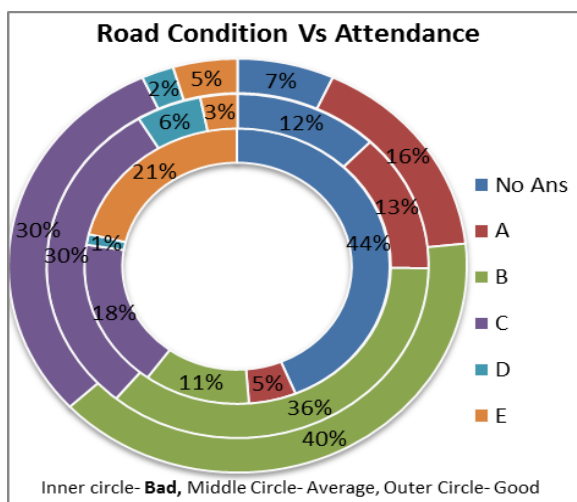
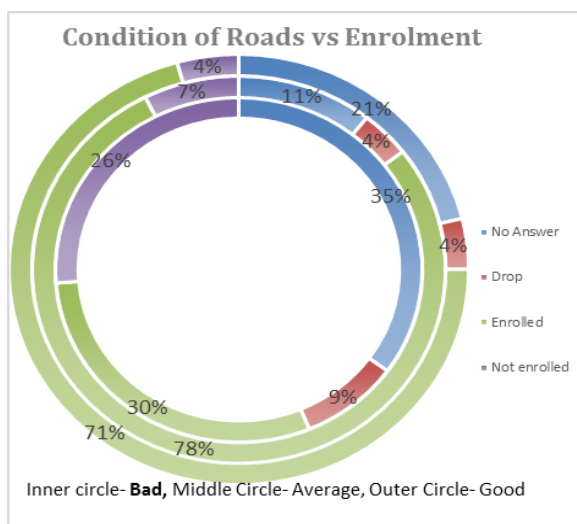
- Ramp in school motivate parents of physically challenged child to enrol him/her.
- Ramp in school reduces dropout from schools.
- Ramps in school improves attendance of CWSN in school.

So ramp facilitates children with special need in attending schools, it makes them feel that school is also for them. If student feel that there is some part in school where they cannot go because of their disability, school becomes for them a foreign body.

Every part of the school should be designed in such a way that even orthopedically disabled and visually impaired

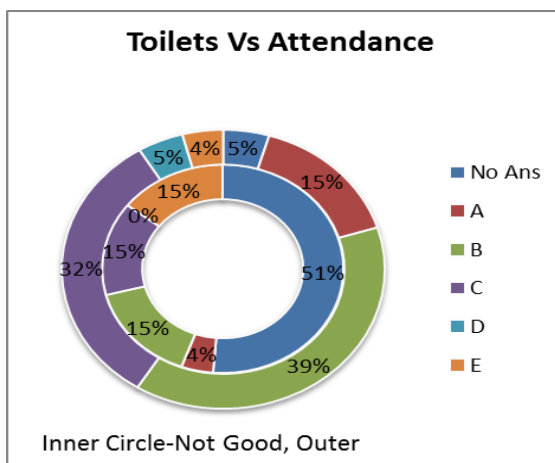
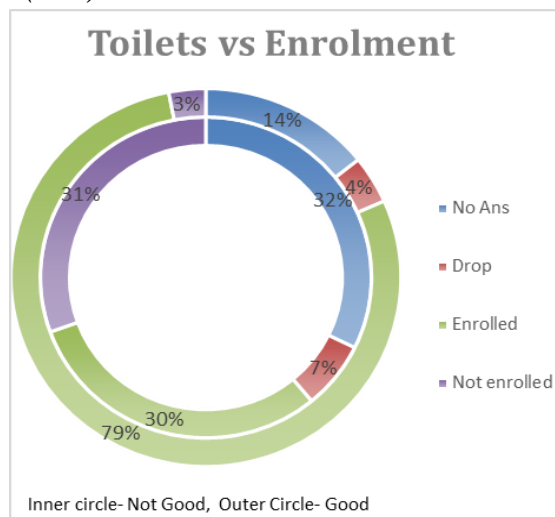
child may feel comfortable, when moving around, Means school building should be inclusive.

Conditions of path way to school have an impact on disabled children education: It is well accepted that if path way is not good then children with physical disability and visually impaired children will have difficulty in attending schools. We all have experience that most of the rural roads connecting to school are mud ways, there condition in rainy seasons is very bad, which affect attendance of even normal child at school, what to say about disabled children. So in this section we tried to study impact of road condition with enrolment and attendance.



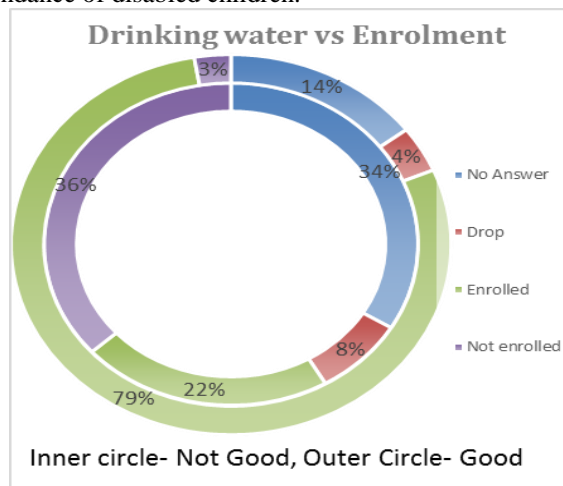
Above graphs show a positive correlation between road condition to school and enrolment and attendance of disabled children at school. Enrolment of CWSN is better in schools connected with average or good pathways. Attendance of CWSN is better in schools connected with good pathways. Schools should be connected with all weather good roads so that even disabled children may attend school regularly with the help of baishakhi, wheel chair or cane.

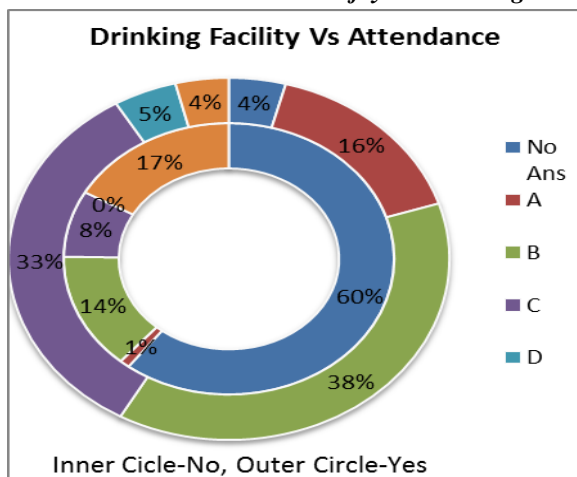
Impact of toilet in disabled children's education: In this section we tried to look into relation of toilet with enrolment and attendance of disabled children. Toilet is one of the basic facilities for any one. Most of the schools don't have working toilet. Normal children may use outside space for toilet but disabled children because of their movement restriction find it difficult to go outside. One more thing is important that even though we have toilet at schools, they are not adjustable to disabled children.



Above graphs show a positive correlation between toilets in school and enrolment & attendance of disabled children at school. Schools with working toilets attract more students to enrol in school. Attendance of CWSN in school with toilets is more than schools without toilet facility. School must provide toilets adjustable to disabled children, so that they may use toilet during school time with the help of baishakhi, wheel chair or cane.

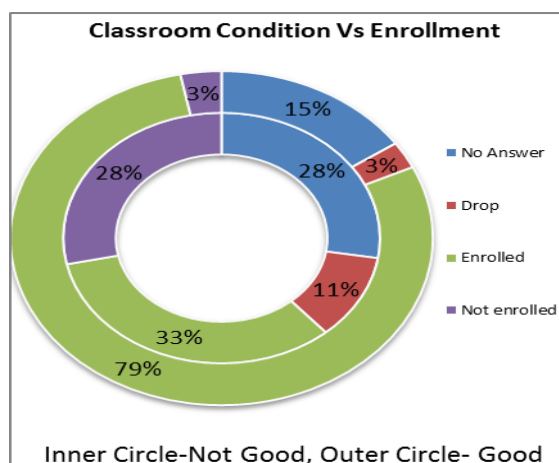
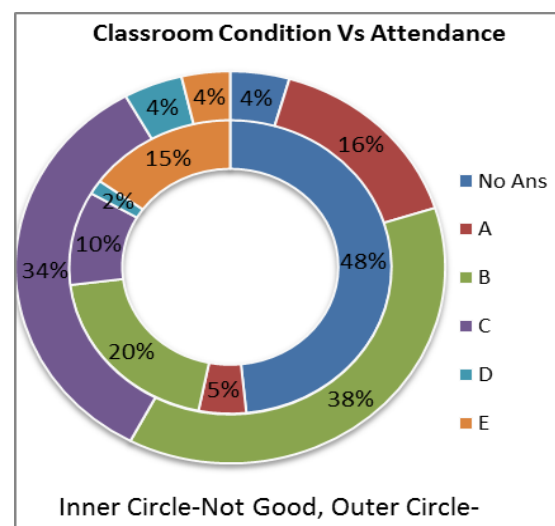
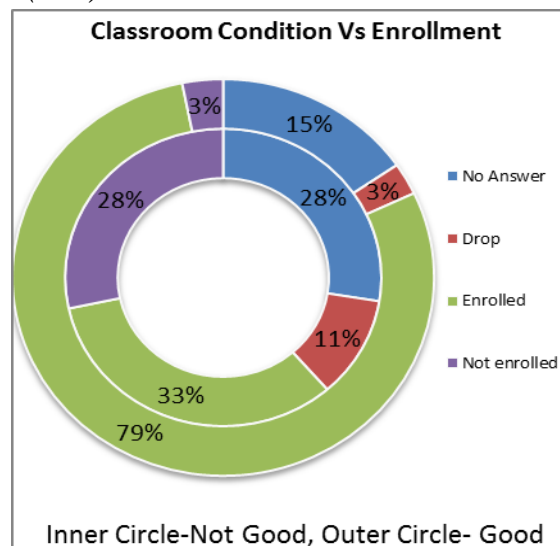
Impact of drinking water facility in disabled children's education: Drinking water facility is one of the basic facilities for any one. Most of the school do have working drinking water facility. Important thing is, that even though we have drinking water facility at schools but they are not adjustable to disabled children. In this section we tried to look into the relation of drinking water facility with enrolment and attendance of disabled children.





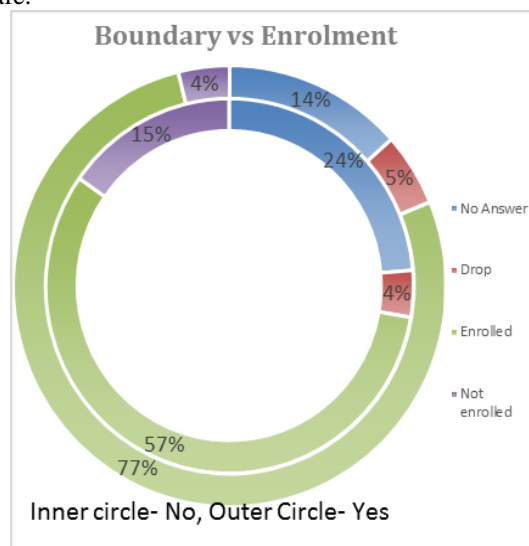
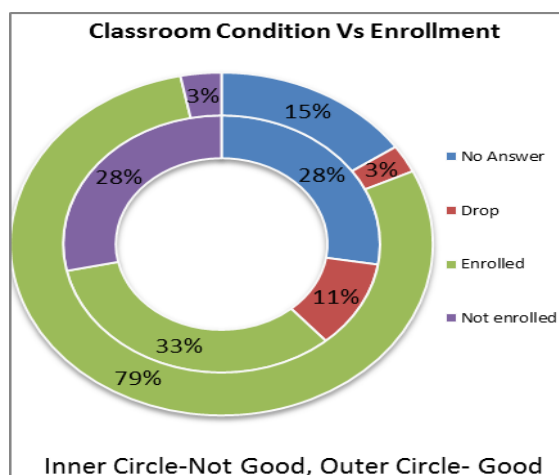
Above graphs show a positive correlation between drinking water facility in school, enrolment and attendance of disabled children at school. Schools with proper drinking water facility have higher ratio of CWSN enrolment. Regular attendance of CWSN is better in schools with drinking water facility. We must think to provide, drinking water facility adjustable to disabled children, so that they may use drinking water facility during school time without anyone's help.

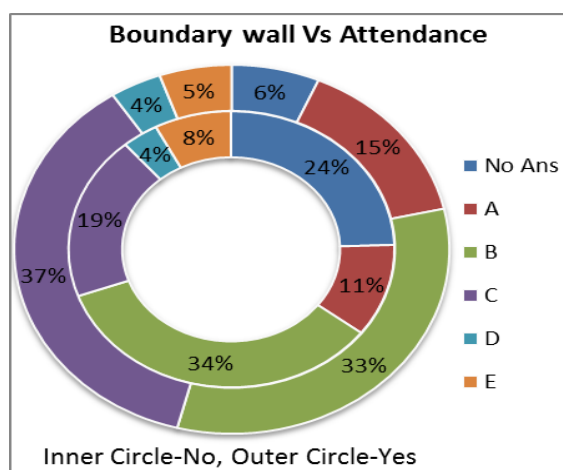
Impact of class room condition in disabled children's education: Class room condition needs to be adjustable for disabled children; physically disabled children may need space for putting their baishakhi or their wheel chair. Similarly visually impaired may need space to put his cane, Braille slate and abacus. Means a little more space is needed for them to adjust in class. In this section we tried to look into relation of class room condition with enrolment and attendance of disabled children.



Above graphs show a positive correlation between classroom condition in school, enrolment and attendance of disabled children at school. Schools with better classroom attract more students for enrolment of CWSN. Attendance of CWSN is better in schools having good classrooms.

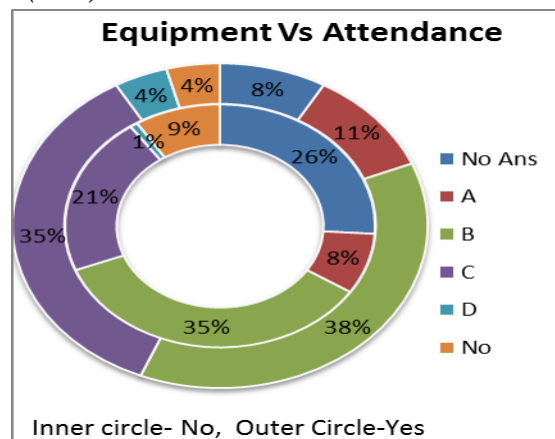
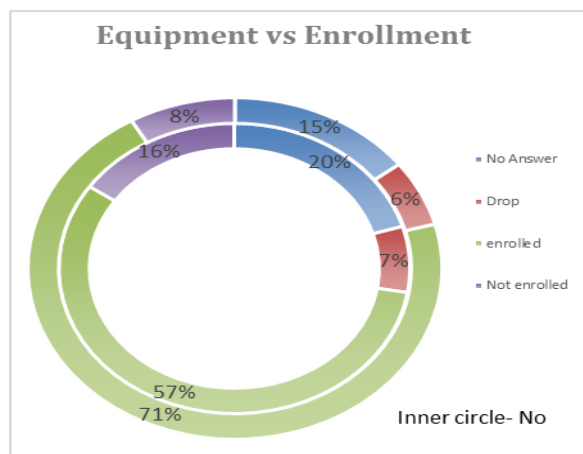
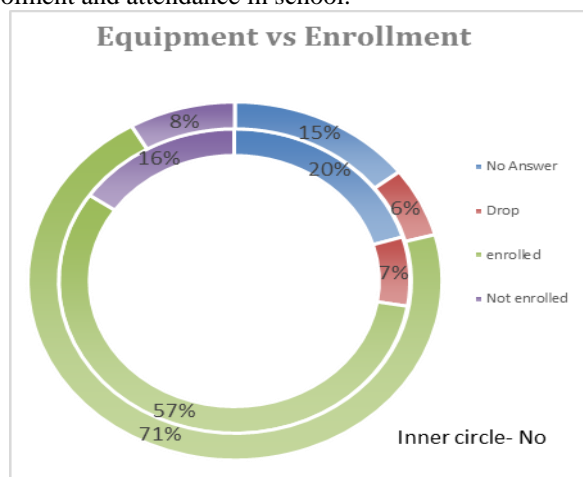
Boundary wall: Boundary wall secures children from attack of street animals, many reptiles and insects. It makes school look good and secure. It also save flowering plants and flower pot safe.





Above graphs show a positive correlation between boundary wall in school and enrolment and attendance of disabled children at school. Schools with boundary wall attract CWSN more students for enrolment and reduces dropouts. Attendance of CWSN in school is not affected by boundary wall.

Calliper's impact in enrolment of children at school: Callipers make physical environment of school adjustable to physically disabled children. Physically challenge children need aid and appliances as per their requirement to conduct routine things. Some orthopedically challenged children at school may move with baishakhi, some need wheel chair, some artificial limb to move around. So in this section we have tried to workout, how the school environment change for them with the help of aid appliances, and affect their enrolment and attendance in school.

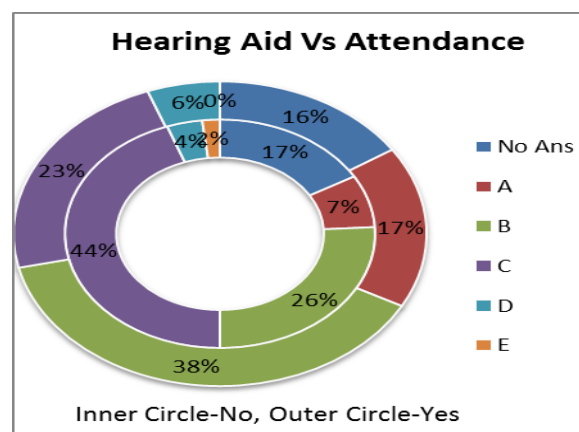
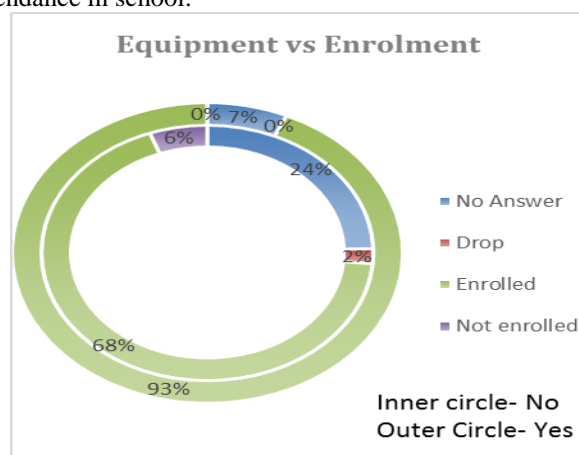


Above Graphs shows a positive correlation between availability of aid and appliances with enrolment and attendance of orthopedically disabled child at school.

- Aid and appliances motivate physically disabled child to be enrol in schools.
- Aid and appliances reduce dropout from schools.
- Aid and appliances improves their attendances in schools.

So Aid and appliances facilitates children with special need in attending schools, it makes them feel that now they may move around in school and it is also for them. Every part of the school should be designed in such a way that even orthopedically disabled child may feel comfortable when moving with Aid and appliances.

Hearing aid's impact in enrolment of children at school: Hearing aid is to make hearing impaired children to adjust and communicate. Hearing impaired children need aid and appliances as per their requirement to communicate with, person around them. So in this section we have tried to workout, how aid and appliances affect their enrolment and attendance in school.

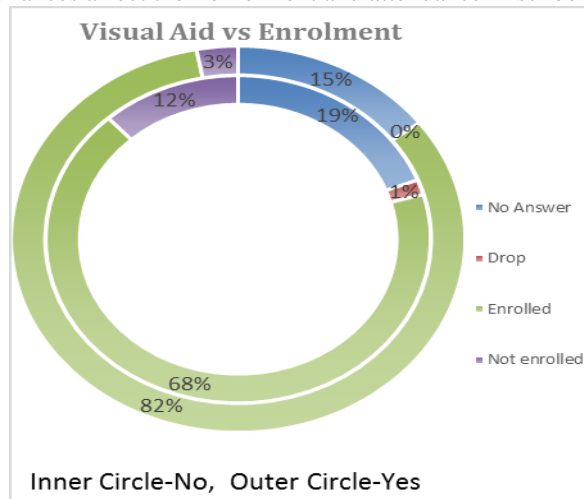


Above Graphs shows a positive correlation between availability of hearing aid with enrolment and attendance of hearing-impaired children at school.

- Hearing aid motivate disabled child to enrol in school.
- Hearing aid reduces dropout from school.
- Hearing aid improves their attendance in school.

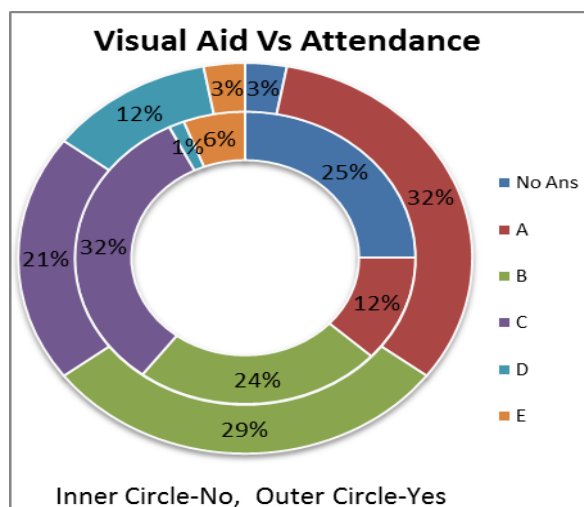
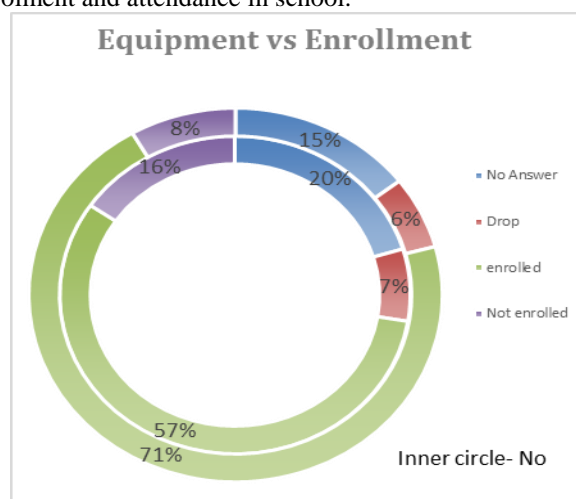
So hearing aid facilitates children with special need in attending schools, it gives them confidence that now they may communicate with their peers and teachers. If students feel that they are unable to communicate with or understand other person they become shady and suspicious. Every part of curriculum should be delivered in such a way and in such speed that hearing impaired children may assimilate the basic concept.

Impact of Aid and appliances of visually the impaired children's education: Braille slate, abacus and cane are the some equipment that make visually impaired children to adjust to routine work, reading and writing. Visually impaired children need aid and appliances to walk, read and write. So in this section we have tried to workout, how aid and appliances affect their enrolment and attendance in school.



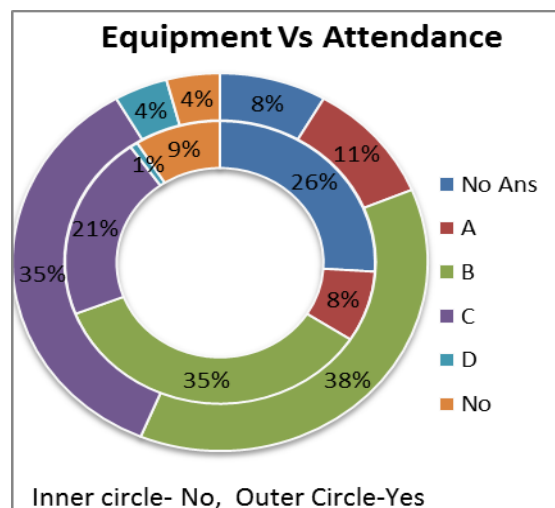
So Braille slate, abacus and cane facilitates children with special need in attending schools, it makes them feel that now they may read, write and communicate their ideas with their peers and teachers. If students feel that they are unable to communicate with or understand other persons they become suspicious. Every part of curriculum should be delivered in such a way and in such class room setting that visually impaired children may assimilate the basic concept. If there is some part in school where visually impaired students cannot go because of their disability, school doesn't attract them. Every part of school should be designed in such a way that even visually impaired children may comfortable move in campus with cane.

Calliper's impact in enrolment of children at school: Callipers make physical environment of school adjustable to physically disabled children. Physically challenge children need aid and appliances as per their requirement to conduct routine things. Some orthopedically challenged children at school may move with baishakhi, some need wheel chair, some artificial limb to move around. So in this section we have tried to workout, how the school environment change for them with the help of aid appliances, and affect their enrolment and attendance in school.



Above Graphs shows a positive correlation between availability of aid and appliances (Braille slate, abacus and cane) with enrolment and attendance of visually impaired child at school.

- Braille slate, abacus and cane motivates disabled child to enrol in school.
- Braille slate, abacus and cane reduces dropout from school.
- Braille slate, abacus and cane improves their attendance in school.

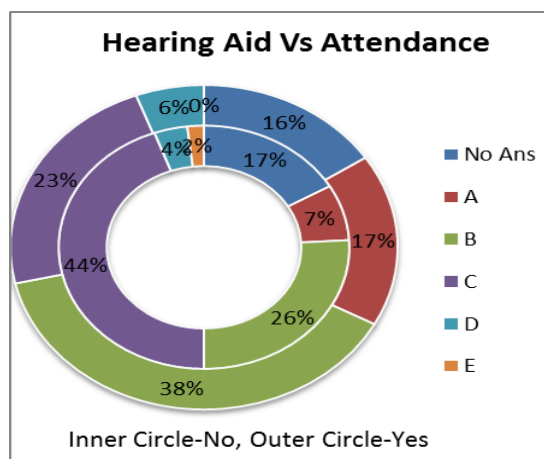
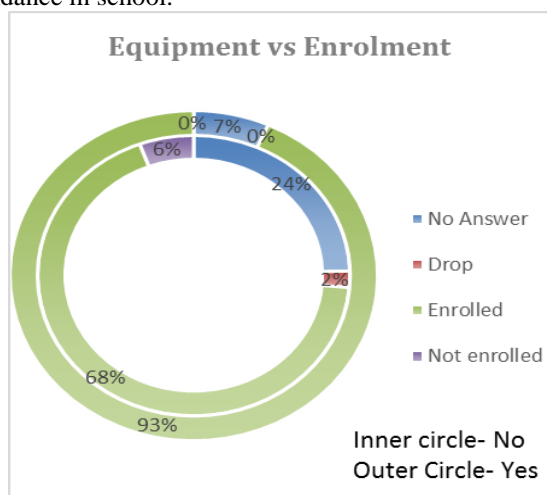


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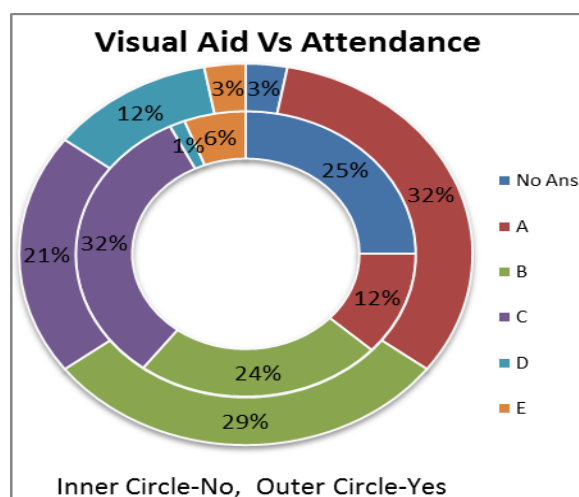
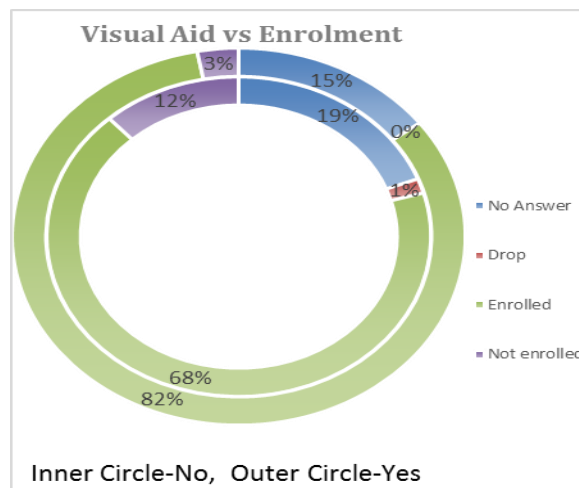
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Impact of Aid and appliances of visually the impaired children's education: Braille slate, abacus and cane are the some equipment that make visually impaired children to adjust to routine work, reading and writing. Visually impaired children need aid and appliances to walk, read and write. So

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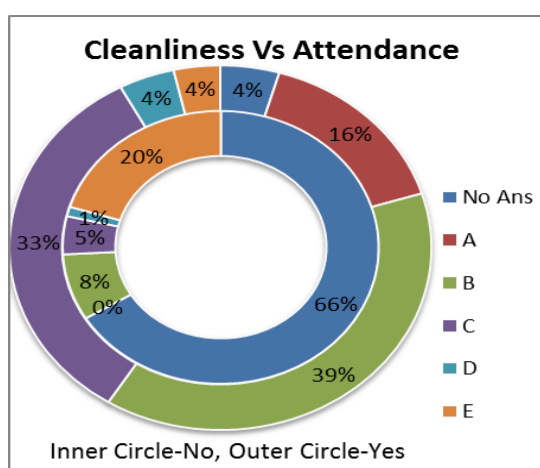
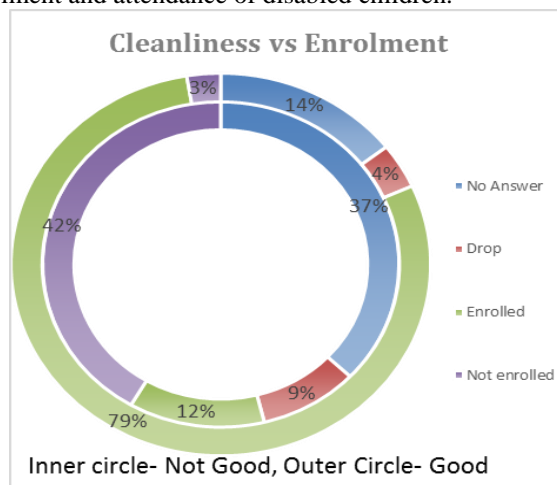
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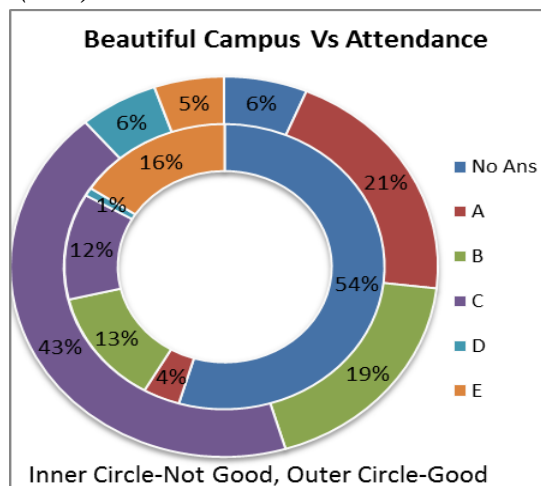
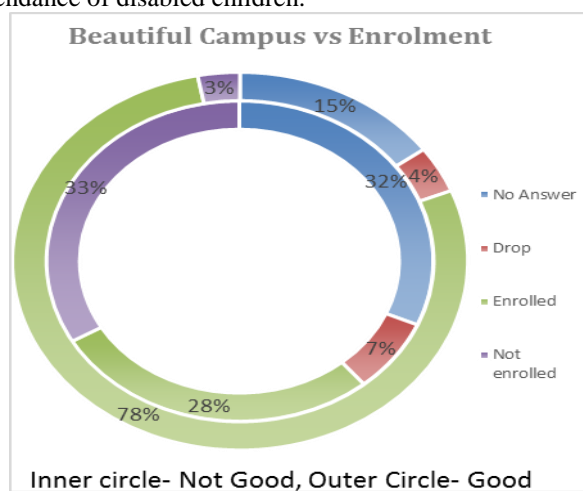
Impact of cleanliness of school in disabled children's education: Cleanliness ensure hygienic environment, ensure better health, which is more important for disabled children, because they are prone to infection. So if schools and class room are neat and clean it gives school a good look which motivate children and parents. A neat and clean school and

classroom are conducive for making learning environment. In this section we tried to look into relation of cleanliness with enrolment and attendance of disabled children.



Above graphs show a positive correlation between cleanliness in school and enrolment & attendance of disabled children at school. Clean and hygiene school environment attracts more and more CWSN to enrol in school. Attendance of CWSN is good in clean schools.

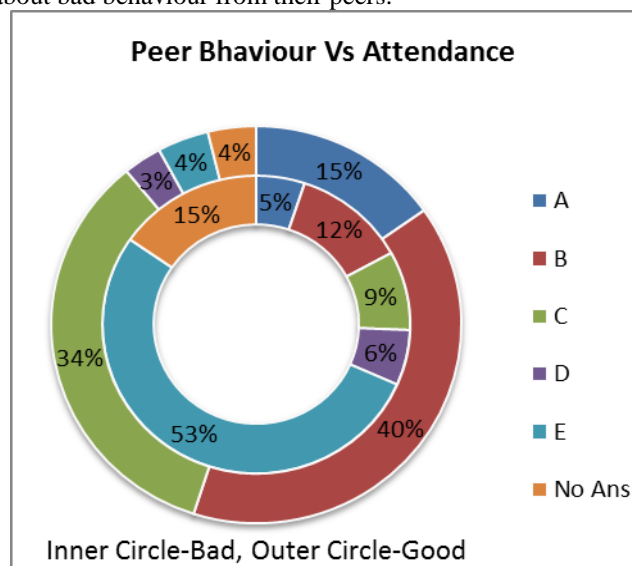
Impact of inclusive/good school in disabled children's education: Good school attract students of all categories. Beautiful school create positive attitude in students, parents and teachers. Beautiful school gives peace of mind and create environment for new ideas. In this section we tried to look into relation of inclusive/beautiful school with enrolment and attendance of disabled children.

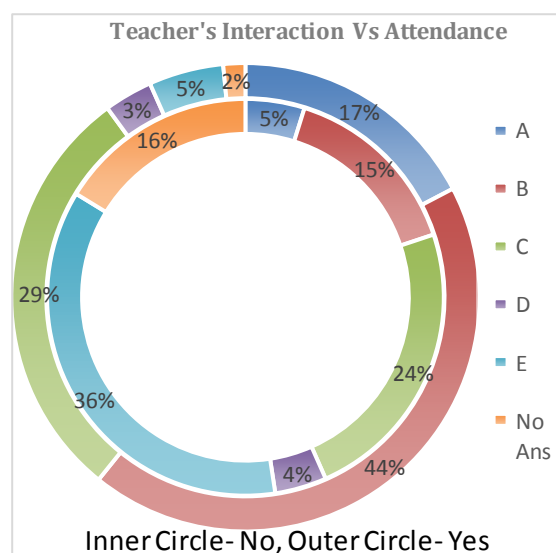
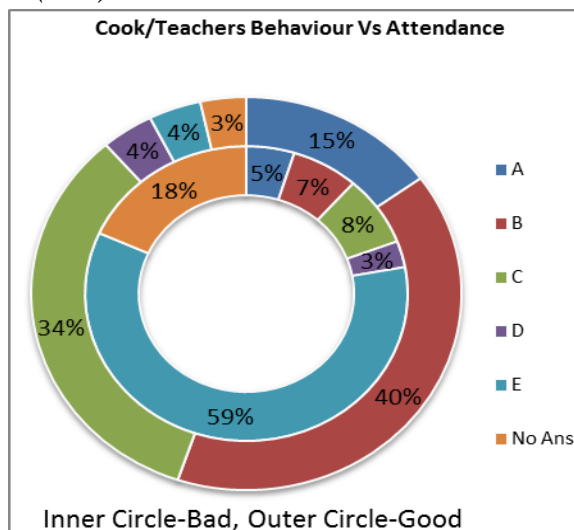
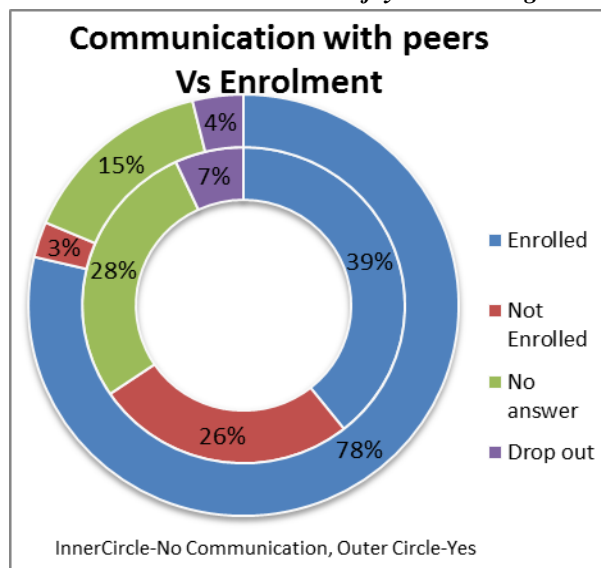


Above graphs show a positive correlation between beautiful school and enrolment & attendance of disabled children at school. Beautiful school campus attracts more and more CWSN to enrol in school and reduces dropout. Attendance of CWSN is higher side in beautiful schools.

Peer's Behaviour: Children express themselves better with their peers. Children, who do not feel comfortable at school, mostly don't interact with peers. During our field visit some of the disabled children (non-hearing impaired) were found at home during school timing. Parents told us that he doesn't speak even at home, so no need to send to school. We have not studied this feature but we think that since no one listen them, so they stop saying. They feel segregated and excluded. So we tried to analyse this feature.

Data analysis shows that good behaviour of peers in class/school have positive correlation with attendance of disabled children at school. It makes an inclusive environment for disabled children. It supports them emotionally and feels perfect in class/school. It helps them to make friend, share their problems, ideas, thought, mutual respect, working together, playing together. Peer behaviour is most important for CWSN because they may easily share problems with friends. During field survey disabled children were asked about the behaviour of other children of school. Then behaviour was coded in two level, i.e. Bad, Good. Empirical data indicated that every fifth CWSN reported about bad behaviour from their peers.





Graphs analysis shows that good behaviour of peers in class/school have positive correlation with enrolment and attendance of 'children with special needs' at school.

Good behaviour makes an inclusive environment for children with special needs. It supports CWSN emotionally and make them feel safe at class/school. It helps them to make friend, share their problems, ideas, thought, Mutual respect, working together, playing together. Peer behaviour is most important as they are close to each other, and may be first to share problems with each other. It is good to be heard, as it build confidence of expressing. They may have a little understanding problem, so it is suggested to communicate with CWSN in variety of ways. It is suggested to experiment with different communicating skill, so that CWSN may try something different to surprise. If they started communicating, some difficulties in understanding them may be resolved.

Analysis shows that peers' behaviour has a positive significant impact on enrolment/attendance of disabled children. A good friend in classroom can change not only attendance in school but learning too. Good friends are best to express ideas and problem. Sometime children express and share their problem with friend not for solution but to feel good. Good friends are support in class, who may enrich disabled children with ideas, books, copies, and material. A good friend gives opportunity to play games, a disabled child may play with ease. Such cordial relation builds confidence and comfort to CWSN.

Behaviour of Teachers and Cooks: During the field survey CWSN were asked about behaviour of teachers and cooks at school, every fifth CWSN reported about bad behaviour from cook and teachers. If teachers have created a healthy environment in school, then students will share problem with ease. For this school has to ensure no discrimination on the basis of caste, religion, region, language, parental status, gender and physical/mental condition of children. School has to ensure that there should not be any kind of physical or mental punishment to children. Teachers should know to respect individuality of student and have disability responsive education method. Following graphs, show availability of teacher for interaction, affects students presence in school.

Graphs shows that there is a strong positive correlation between behaviours of teachers/cook with 'children with special needs' attendance. So if teachers are taking care of children at school, love them, support them, they come to school. If they feel discriminated, they will not come to school. School has to be inclusive, that too from all point out view like culture, caste, language, etc. Cooks behaviour is very much important as they are the one to serve meal, and children wishes to get good behaviour from them and wish equal share of meal, that too with love and dignity. They don't want to be discriminated in class, in evaluation, in asking question and in getting attention of teacher.

Graph shows that teachers' interaction with disabled children has positive correlation on psyche of children. If teachers talks to children or give them opportunity to express and share their problem, it improves disabled children attendance at school. If there is fear free environment then children feel free to share their personal as well as educational problem with teachers. Such environment makes children comfortable and adjustable.

School Environment impact on disabled children education:

- It has been found that availability of Teaching Learning Material(TLM) and attendance of disabled children at school. Schools with TLM & education material (Audio/Visual), ICT, books show significantly higher enrolment and attendance. Materials reflect that teachers are trying to make

learning process, child friendly. It also improves class and school environment.

- It has been found that design of school building and infrastructural resource/facilities like- ramps, toilets, drinking water, classroom, playground, roads, distance from school play important role in enrolment and attendance of CWSN. School campus should be designed in such a way that even orthopedically and visually disabled child may feel comfortable when moving around, Means school building should be inclusive.
- School must have inclusive 'daily use facility' for all kind of children. It should have toilet and drinking water facility, which even an orthopedically and visually impaired students may use without anyone's support.
- School system should supply aid and appliances at the time of admission to all needy children, so that children may come to school without any hindrance. (at present mostly children get aid and appliances in the middle or towards end of the academic session)
- Schools should have books and study material needed for visually, hearing and mentally challenged children. Books, other than text book should also be provided.
- Different kind of study material needed, like:- audio for visually impaired children, video for hearing impaired and mentally retarded children should be arranged.
- To increase classroom interaction Sports/games for these students should be arranged so that they may play sports/games with their peers in class/school and develop healthy relationship.
- Academic excellence of such children be shared with parents, this will create a good environment at school as well as at home for such children.
- Good behaviour of peers/teachers/support staff (cook) in class/school have positive correlation with attendance of disabled children at school.

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