Mainstream teachers' perception towards inclusive education in Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Inclusive education is burning issue of the present world and inclusive education is in its initial stage in Pakistan. This study was conducted to know the perception of mainstream school education teachers on different (psychological, social, academic, and general) and comparison of rural and urban areas mainstream teachers' perception towards inclusive education. Total 90 teachers were the participants of this study. Data were collected personally by researcher on self-developed questionnaire on four domain; Psychological aspect, social aspects, academic aspects and general aspect. The collected information were analyzed through percentage, mean, SD, and t-test. The overall results of the study indicated that the majority of teachers have positive perception towards inclusive education, but it is necessary for proper preparation, training and facilities for better implementation.

Introduction

Education is essential for the overall personality development of human beings. It not only plays an important role to change the attitude and behavior of the individuals but also important for all the civilized societies of the world (Shrivastava, 2005). Apart from that education is also a fundamental requirement of human beings because it is so essential for the growth of their minds and the awakening of the souls. Education gives awareness to the people so that they may lead their lives in a civilized, harmonious and composed manner. Indeed education polishes the softer sole of human nature and brushes aside all those brutalities which are characteristic of animal instinct (Rinaldi, 2006).

Pakistan has committed itself to the Education for All (EFA) commitments in the Jomtien Declaration (1990), which outlines an expanded vision for education, with a focus on quality, early childhood development and the needs of the poorest countries. Pakistan has been the first country to develop national fifteen-years Plan of Action for EFA, which constitutes as critical component of its education reform package. Pakistan is also a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, affirming free and compulsory education as a human right (Khan, 2004). Special needs children are also the part of our society, they have equal right to receive education without discrimination.

The concepts of special education advocates that there should be separate buildings for such under-privileged students and they must acquire education in a very segregated environment, with the passage of time special education system also started showing its drawbacks. The very first and foremost one is that the children who acquire education under this system are virtually cut off from the rest of the society. Their vision is narrowed and they cannot interact confidently with the world at large. Moreover special education is a very expensive scheme of studies. It is not very feasible in a country where even general education is not available to the majority of the masses (Hodkinson, 2006).

Special education requires specially trained teachers spate building specially designed syllabuses etc. moreover, According to World Health Organization (WHO) as referred by Shahzadi (2001) and Mohsin (2011) about 10 per cent of the total population of developing countries is suffering from some sort of disabilities. If 10 percent of the total population is disabled, it would not be possible for the government to set up an instauration for that ten percent of the total population, especially when the yielding product is not as effective and fruitful as one would expect (Elkins, 2005) and same time researches proved segregation had bad effect on the personality of children with disabilities..

Therefore it is proposed that children with disabilities should never be segregated from the rest of the population. We should introduce such system of education which is flexible enough to include all the students within its periphery. The students who acquire education in this system are able to maintain good social relations with the individuals around them. They are also able to protect their self-respect and dignity. They don't feel shy and uncomfortable in the society. In the long run, this leads to social justice and equal opportunities which is the hallmark of any welfare state (Deppeler, 2006)

But we need to positive attitude of the teachers may be special school teachers or , mainstream school teachers. For any system of education to be successful needs the crucial support from all stakeholders especially from teachers. Negative attitudes are the greatest of the impediments in the way of the inclusive education. Negative attitude can be of various sorts: social discrimination, lack of awareness.

The role of teachers in meeting the special needs of children with disabilities vary from one disability to other. However there are certain common roles. Such as identification of the children with disabilities in the classroom referring the identified to the experts for further examination and treatment, accepting the children with disabilities, developing positive attitude between normal children and disabled children, and placing the children in the classroom in proper places so that they feel comfortable

and are benefited by the classroom interaction (Griffiths &Weatherilt, 2006). So positive attitude for any program is necessary.According to Murphy (1996) negative teacher attitudes towards inclusion, once developed, are extremely difficult to change. This highlights the importance of pre-service teacher education which engenders positive attitudes towards inclusive education in beginning teachers (Forlin et al., 2001; Loreman, in press; Murphy, 1996; Sharma, Forlin, Loreman, & Earle, 2006).Cook et al. (2000) stated that recurring documentation suggested that educational opportunities were directly impacted by teachers' attitudes towards their students with or without disabilities. Positive attitudes towards people with disabilities were foremost on professionals' and families' lists of successful inclusion practices.

Inclusive education is burning issue of the present world and inclusive education is new in Pakistan, so there is dire need to know the attitude of teachers towards inclusive education so that we can make inclusive education system successful and useful through implementation by teachers because teachers are considered as agent of change in our society. The research study was aimed at measuring the attitude of the parents and teachers towards inclusive education. Perceptions of teachers may well act to facilitate in the implementation of inclusive education in Pakistan.

The main objectives of the study were to 1) measure the perception of mainstream school education teachers on different (psychological, social, academic, and general) and comparison of rural and urban areas mainstream teachers' perception towards inclusive education. This research provided us the research-based findings for teachers which will be helpful to improve the inclusive education learning environment of the school. Consequently, the researcher believes that inclusive education can help in-service teachers to develop, practice and improve specific instructional skills, strategies and modes in small group teaching-learning situations. The combination of personal instruction, observe others and personal reflection can enhance the development of several teaching qualities which the training is based.

The findings and results of this study also helpful for Governments organizations' and Non-Governments organizations' who are working in the field of inclusive education, increasing intake and reducing dropout rate. This research project was important since it helped to create a successful model of an inclusion program. This model could be utilized in the near future as inclusion programs were to be implemented. The study added the knowledge base teaching in several areas. This study is also beneficial for the teachers training institution in the enhancement of the inclusive education learning training programmed in the institutions.

Methodology
Participants

There were 90teachers (45 from rural and 45 from urban areas) participated in this study. The sex ratios of participants' were male 67% and female 33%. The ratio of teachers according to urban and rural area schools were 48% and 52%, respectively. According to academic qualifications, there was only 0.6%) teacher with matric, 1.7% were intermediate, 37.8% were graduate, 58.9% were post-graduate and 1.1% were above MPhil/post-graduate level There were 36.6%, 24.3%, 23% and 16.1% of teachers with 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years and above 16 years of experience, respectively, have experience in in the mainstream institutions. The purposive sampling technique

was used to select the sample of all types of teachers.The detail distribution of sample is provided in annexure 1.

Instrumentations; To achieve the objectives of study questionnaire for teachers was developed. The original questionnaire was developed and used by Ghaffar (2011) and modified form was used in this study.

*Questionnaire for teachers;*One questionnairefor teachers was designed to know attitude of teachers regarding inclusive education. There were of the four domains of questionnaire for teachers; psychological, social, academic and general domains. There were total 36 questions and each question was responded on five point likert scale; 5 for Strongly Agree (SA), 4 for Agree(A), 3 for undecided(UND), 2 for disagree, and 01for strongly disagree(SD)

Data collection and Analysis; Data were collected by researcher on self-developed questionnaire. The collected information were organized, tabulated and interpreted with respect to frequency. The information were analyzed through percentage, mean, SD, and t-test.

Results

The distribution of respondents to the nine items dealing with teacher's views about different aspects of child's education regarding psychological domains (numbers, percentages, means and standard deviations) is given in Table 1.

It is clear from above table that 10.6% of teachers strongly agree, 38.9% of teachers agree, 3.9% of teachers are neutral, 43% of teachers disagree and 2.8% are strongly disagree with the 1st statement i.e., "inclusion increase self confidence in the SEN students". The mean score of this statement is 2.89 with standard deviation of 1.17. The mean value is less than 3, which indicates that the teacher's overall view about this statement is almost neutral (or towards a bit agrees). The 2nd statement (inclusion negatively effects onself-respect of the SEN students) have mean value of 2.71 with standard deviation of 1.27. Here 16.1% teachers strongly agree, 42.8% agree, 2.8% neutral, 20.6 disagree and 7.8% are strongly agreed about this statement. The mean value indicated that the teachers opinion toward agreed (Table 1).

The mean value of 3.03 with standard value of 1.31 shows more variations in response of the 3rd statement (normal students feel inferiority complex in inclusive setting) as other items (statements) regarding psychological domain. There were 37% teachers agreed and 44.4% disagreed. Therefore, in this statement the response of teachers was neutral which is also confirmed by the mean value of 3.04 (Table 1).

The means value of 3.15 with standard deviation of 1.23 in the 4th statement (SEN students don't feel inferiority complex in inclusive setting due to their disability) is the sign of teachers' view toward disagree. The 9.4% teachers were strongly agree, 30.6% agree, 5.6% neutral, 44.4% disagree and 10.0% teachers strongly disagree this statement (Table 1).

The mean values of statements 5, 6, 7, 8, was remain 2.04, 2.27, 1.93 and 2.06, and h standard deviations 0.96, 1.07, 0.88 and 1.04, respectively, indicatedthat teachers' opinions about these statements were toward agreement. There were 58.9%, 54.4%, 57.8% and 52.2% of teachers agreed about the statements "mild SEN students should be taught with mainstream students", "inclusion creates competition trend among the students with and without disabilities", "assign tasks according to the SEN students disability and special education need" and "SEN students parents don't feel inferiority complex due to inclusive setting", respectively (Table 1).

All the teachers were strongly agreed that SEN students should not be labeled "stupid, lame, crippled or blind" with mean value of 1.59 and standard deviation of 0.80 (Table 1).

Social Aspects; Teachers' views about social aspects were collected from teachers. The detail responses are presented in Table 2.

The researches approved that children with special needs experienced stress and tension within their society.They have problems in participationof social activitiesInclusion can reduce social stigmas and improve academic achievement for many students. In the second of the questionnaire teachers responses regarding social domain were strongly agree with the range of mean value from 1.57 to 2.24 expect the statement "SEN students will be isolated inclusive setting" where teachers' views were neutral (3.04±1.26).

The mean value of statement "SEN students should compete in plays and games with normal students (indoor games)" is 2.17 and standard deviation is 1.02 which showed that teachers were in favor that SEN students should compete in plays and games with normal students.

There were 25%, 68.3%, 1.1%, 5.0%, 0.6% teachers strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree, respectively, with the statement "students learn to exchange of little articles in inclusive setting".

The mean was 1.89 (close to agree) with standard deviation of 0.71 about the responses of teachers towards that students learn to know the rights of each other.In the social aspects, SEN students also have the rights of recreational activates, SEN students can become friends of the normal students, Inclusion creates team work among the student with and without disabilities, SEN students help each other in mainstream classrooms and continuous academic support/ assistance make the SEN students fruitful citizens, percentage of agreed was maximum for all the teachers' views.

Continuous academic support/assistance make the SEN students fruitful citizens, SEN students also have the rights to participate in recreational activities, Students learn to exchange of little articles in inclusive setting, Students learn to know the rights of each other, SEN students help each other in mainstream classroom, Inclusion creates team work among the student with and without disabilities, SEN students should compete in plays and games with normal students (indoors games), SEN students becomes friends of the normal students and SEN students will be isolated inclusive setting with mean values of 1.57, 1.67, 1.88, 1.89, 2.03, 2.05, 2.17, 2.24 and 3.04, respectively.

Academic Aspects; All children have rights to learn. Most of special needs children come with good IQ except children with intellectual disabilities. Special needs children can also achieve higher grade. Healthy environment help to achieve maximum performance special needs children. Teachers' views and perception about different academic aspects were collected and analyzed and presented in table 3 with mean and standard deviation values.

The above table depicted that the maximumteachers were in favor that inclusive setting help to increase academic skills among children with special needs. The man value of statement 1 was 2.04 which showed that majority of teachers agreed that SEN students have the freedom to receive the education with normal students, and same in statement 2, majority of teachers agree that curriculum modification is necessary for inclusion.

The mean value of statement 3 is 2.26 and SD is 1.08 which indicate that majority of teachers agreed that the specific

trainings teaching methods are necessary for inclusion. , 42.2 % teachers agreed that inclusion creates problems for the evaluation /assessment methods for the academic performance of the students' inclusive setting.

The majority (42.2 %) were in favor that inclusion will be academically successful education system for special needs children. The mean value of statement 6 is 1.67 indicated that there is dire need for additional training for teaching SEN students. The mean values of statements 7 is 2.24 indicated that inclusion improves academic performance of SEN students,

The responses of statement 8& 9 are also problematic, 44.4 %& 29.4 % responded that inclusion decrease SEN students' academic performance and intelligent students don't show better performance inclusive setting, this show that inclusive education setting is not simple, it should be taken with care with proper training and setting.

The results showed that SEN students need special educational assistance during in inclusive classroom and our educational system is not fully fulfills the requirements of the inclusive education system.

General Aspects; There were four general aspects regarding teachers' views. In this section teachers' perception was recorded mainly on need of extra help, disciplinary problems, appointment of special needs teachers for special needs children.

The table 4 depicted that the teachers' perception in all the general aspects were favorable. The minimum mean value 1.46 was observed for ".All special educational facilities should be provided to SEN students for successful inclusion" in general aspects. The maximum value of 2.77 which indicated that the SEN students can learn with more pleasure in mainstream class room.

The perceptions of urban and rural teachers' towards inclusive education are important. The comparison of perceptions about rural and urban is presented in table 5.

The above table depicted that there was significant difference between means of rural teacher's perception and urban teachers' perception. In mainstream urban schools, the mean value of rural teacher's perception was 2.32 with standard deviation 0.38 and significantly greater mean value (2.52 with standard deviation of 0.44) of rural teacher's perception was found for special education schools in psychological domain.

In social, academic and general aspects, the urban area teacher's perception were observed non-significantly different regarding rural schools teachers. The mean values of urban teachers were 2.03 and 2.09, respectively in social aspects. Mean values of 2.37 and 2.40 for rural school teachers and special urban school teachers , respectively, were found for academic aspects according to rural area teacher's views. With regard to general aspects, mean values of teacher's views were 2.05 and 1.99 for rural and urban special education schools, respectively. The maximum mean value of 2.52 with standard deviation 0.44 was found in teacher's view regarding urban schools for psychological domain. Minimum mean of 1.99 with standard deviation of 0.38 was observed in teachers' view with respect to urban special education schools of psychological domain.

Conclusion

Inclusive education area has now significant important in the present and future world. The concept of inclusive education needs to be understood and conceptualized for changes to be brought about in existing teaching methodologies to benefit all children including those with disabilities. Based on the findings following   conclusions   were   drawn.

Teachers were in favor that mild special educational needs students should be taught with normal students and they also have perception that inclusion creates competition trend among the students with and without disabilities. Teachers were in favor that that assign tasks according to the special educational needs student's disability and special educational need.

Teachers were in favor that trainings about specific teaching methods are necessary for inclusion.The attitude of rural mainstream schools teachers and rural special education schools teachers have different attitude on psychological aspects of inclusive education but they have same attitude on academic, social and general aspects of inclusive education. Mainstream schools male teachers and special education schools male teachers have different attitude on social aspect of special education and have same attitude on psychological, academic and general aspects of inclusive education.

Suggestions and recommendations

The researcher after analyzing the data and drawing conclusion researcher suggest and recommend the followings: There is need to change the attitude of female teachers for mainstream and special education and regarding social aspects, there should be significant changes in regular classroom for inclusion procedures. Special educational needs students should be taught with normal students. The futures research studies should explore the factors behind the different attitude of public mainstream schools teachers and public special education schools teachers on psychological and social aspects of inclusive education. The futures research studies should explore the factors involve in the attitude of rural mainstream schools teachers and rural special education schools teachers on psychological aspects of inclusive education. The futures research studies should explore the factors behind the attitude of Mainstream schools female teachers and special education schools female teachers on academic aspect of special education.

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Annexure 1

Questionnaire For Teachers

Name------------------------Age--------- (years), Sex/M-F---------- Location/U-R---------Academic Qualifications---------------------- ---Professional Qualifications----------------Professional Qualifications --------------------Experience in special education- ----------Experience in normal education----------- School---- -------------------------------------

Table 1 Teachers' attitude on psychological aspects of inclusive education

Aspects of child's education	SA %	A %	N %	DA %	SDA %	Mean	SD
1. Inclusion increase self confidence in the SEN students	10.6	38.9	3.9	43.9	2.8	2.89	1.17
2. Inclusion negatively effects to the self respect of the SEN students	16.1	42.8	2.8	30.6	7.8	2.71	1.27
3. Normal students feel inferiority complex in inclusive setting	11.1	37.2	2.2	36.7	12.8	3.03	1.31
4. SEN students don't feel inferiority complex in inclusive setting due to their disability	9.4	30.6	5.6	44.4	10.0	3.15	1.23
5. Mild SEN students should be taught with normal students	26.1	58.9	2.8	9.4	2.8	2.04	0.96
6. Inclusion creates competition trend among the students with and without disabilities	21.1	54.4	2.2	20.6	1.7	2.27	1.07
7. Assign tasks according to the SEN students disability and special educational need	30.0	57.8	3.3	7.2	1.7	1.93	0.88
8. SEN students parents don't feel inferiority complex due to inclusive setting	30.0	52.2	2.2	12.8	2.8	2.06	1.04
9. SEN students should not be labeled (stupid, lame, crippled, blind)	52.2	42.2	1.1	2.8	1.7	1.59	0.80

5 for Strongly Agree (SA), 4 for Agree(A), 3 for undecided(UND), 2 for disagree, and 01 for strongly disagree(SD)

Table 2 Teachers' attitude on social aspects of inclusive education

Aspects of child's education	SA %	A %	N %	DA %	SDA %	Mean	SD
1. SEN students should compete in plays and games with normal students (indoors games)	25.0	52.8	2.2	20.0	0.0	2.17	1.02
2. Students learn to exchange of little articles in inclusive setting	25.0	68.3	1.1	5.0	0.6	1.88	0.71
3. Students learn to know the rights of each other	25.6	64.4	5.0	5.0	0.0	1.89	0.71
4. SEN students also have the rights for recreational activities	42.8	50.6	3.9	2.2	0.6	1.67	0.71
5. SEN students becomes friends of the normal students	21.1	55.0	2.8	20.6	0.6	2.24	1.03
6. Inclusion creates team work among the student withand without disabilities	25.0	58.9	3.3	11.7	1.1	2.05	0.92
7. SEN students help each other in mainstream classroom	25.0	57.8	6.1	11.1	0.0	2.03	0.87
8. SEN students will be isolated inclusive setting	13.9	27.8	6.1	44.4	7.8	3.04	1.26
9. Continuous academic support/assistance make the SEN students fruitful citizens	52.8	42.8	1.1	1.7	1.7	1.57	0.76

5 for Strongly Agree (SA), 4 for Agree(A), 3 for undecided(UND), 2 for disagree, and 01 for strongly disagree(SD)

Table 3 Teachers' perception on academic aspects of inclusive education

Aspects of child's education	SA %	A %	N %	DA %	SDA %	Mean	SD
1. SEN students have the freedom to receive the education with normal students	29.4	54.4	1.1	12.8	2.2	2.04	1.01
2. Curriculum modification is necessary for inclusion	27.2	44.4	5.0	17.2	6.1	2.31	1.21
3. Specific trainings teaching methods are necessary for inclusion	21.1	55.6	4.4	4.4	4.4	2.26	1.08
4. Inclusion creates problems for the evaluation /assessment	18.3	42.2	5.0	28.9	5.6	2.61	1.23
5. Inclusion will be academically successful education system	14.4	41.7	6.1	29.4	8.3	2.76	1.25
6. Teachers need additional training for teaching SEN students	44.4	50.0	0.6	4.4	0.6	1.67	0.75
7. Inclusion improve academic performance of SEN students	21.7	55.0	3.9	16.7	2.8	2.24	1.06
8. Inclusion decrease SEN students academic performance	13.9	44.4	4.4	34.4	2.8	2.68	1.17
9. Intelligent students don't show better performance inclusive setting	21.1	29.4	3.3	32.8	13	2.88	1.41
10. SEN students need special educational assistance during in inclusive classroom	32.8	62.2	0.6	3.3	1.1	1.78	0.72
11. Our educational system, fulfills the requirements of the inclusive education	6.1	35.0	5.0	31.1	22.8	3.29	1.32

5 for Strongly Agree (SA), 4 for Agree(A), 3 for undecided(UND), 2 for disagree, and 01 for strongly disagree(SD)

Table 4 Teachers' attitude on general aspects of inclusive education

Aspects of child's education	SA %	A %	N %	DA %	SDA %	Mean	SD
1. SEN students need extra help and attention	27.8	63.3	1.1	6.1	1.7	1.91	0.82
2. Inclusion creates more disciplinary problems	17.8	44.4	3.9	30.6	3.3	2.57	1.19
3. Special education should be appointed in mainstream school	32.8	57.2	2.8	5.0	2.2	1.87	0.86
4. All special education facilities should be provided to SEN students for successful inclusion	37.2	56.1	2.2	4.4	0.0	1.74	0.71
5. Students perceive the problems of each other SEN students	17.2	62.8	5.6	13.3	1.1	2.18	0.91
6. Special students improve their behavior by imitation	21.1	60.0	5.0	12.2	1.7	2.13	0.94
7. SEN students learn with more pleasure in mainstream class room	10.0	42.8	12.2	30.6	4.4	2.77	1.12

5 for Strongly Agree (SA), 4 for Agree(A), 3 for undecided(UND), 2 for disagree, and 01 for strongly disagree(SD)

Table 5 Comparison of urban and rural mainstream schools teachers

Domain	N	Mean	SD	t	Prob.
Psychological	45	2.39	0.36	-0.01 NS	0.992
	45	2.39	0.47		
Social	45	1.99	0.36	-1.68 NS	0.097
	45	2.14	0.46		
Academic	45	2.46	0.39	0.59 NS	0.553
	45	2.40	0.47		
General	45	2.05	0.26	1.96 NS	0.053
	45	1.93	0.33		

MSS = Mainstream schools, SES = Special education schools NS = Non-significant (P>0.05); * = Significant (P<0.05) ** = highly significant (P<0.01) N = Number of observations (respondents); SD = Standard deviation

Psychological Domain

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly disagree	Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
1.　　Inclusion increase self confidence in the SEN students					
2.　　Inclusion negatively effects to the self respect of the SEN students					
3.　　Normal students feel inferiority complex in inclusive setting					
4.　　SEN students don't feel inferiority complex in inclusive setting due to their disability					
5.　　Mild SEN students should be taught with normal students					
6.　　Inclusion creates competition trend among the students with and without disabilities					
7.　　Assign tasks according to the SEN students disability and special educational need					
8.　　SEN students parents don't feel inferiority complex due to inclusive setting					
9.　　SEN students should not be labeled (stupid, lame, crippled, blind)					
SOCIAL DOMAIN					
10.　　SEN students should compete in plays and games with normal students (indoors games)					
11.　　Students learn to exchange of little articles in inclusive setting					
12.　　Students learn to know the rights of each other					
13.　　SEN students also have the rights for recreational activities					
14.　　SEN students becomes friends of the normal students					
15.　　Inclusion creates team work among the student with and without disabilities					
16.　　SEN students help each other in mainstream classroom					
17.　　SEN students will be isolated inclusive setting					
18.　　Continuous academic support/assistance make the SEN students fruitful citizens					
ACADEMIC DOMAIN					
19.　　SEN students have the freedom to receive the education with normal students					
20.　　Curriculum modification is necessary for inclusion					
21.　　Specific trainings teaching methods are necessary for inclusion					
22.　　Inclusion creates problems for the evaluation /assessment					
23.　　Inclusion will be academically successful education system					
24.　　Teachers need additional training for teaching SEN students					
25.　　Inclusion improve academic performance of SEN students					
26.　　Inclusion decrease SEN students academic performance					
27.　　Intelligent students don't show better performance inclusive setting					
28.　　SEN students need special educational assistance during in inclusive classroom					
29.　　Our educational system, fulfills the requirements of the inclusive education					
GENERAL DOMAIN					
30.　　SEN students need extra help and attention					
31.　　Inclusion creates more disciplinary problems					
32.　　Special education should be appointed in mainstream school					
33.　　All special education facilities should be provided to SEN students for successful inclusion					
34.　　Students perceive the problems of each other SEN students					
35.　　Special students improve their behavior by imitation					
36.　　SEN students learn with more pleasure in mainstream class room					