



**A STUDY OF THE EFFECT OF THE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AWARENESS
PROGRAMME ON SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS**

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Abstract:

Inclusive education can prove to be a powerful instrument in increasing the literacy rate in India by providing equal opportunities for education for all. Since inclusive education is recommended, no child is denied education based on race, origin, colour, ethnicity, gender, religion, intellectual ability, disability, etc. Being successful in inclusion is based on the teachers' awareness of the special needs of children with disabilities. This paper focuses on an inclusive education awareness programme, implemented by secondary school teachers. Methodology pre-experimental design single group pre-test, post-test design was adopted. Convenience sampling was adopted for the selection of the sample 17 secondary school teachers have joined this programme 10 have responded. The questionnaire was prepared based on five modules by the researcher and validated by experts. Implementation of inclusive education of awareness programme using online mode for 10 hours, including recorded video lectures, recorded experts' lectures, and reference materials. Data were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics mean, standard deviation, t-test, and Regression. Findings revealed that this awareness programme enhanced the awareness of secondary school teachers toward Inclusive Education.

Keywords: *Inclusive Education, Pre-Experimental Design, Secondary School Teachers, Inclusive Education Awareness Programme.*

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Introduction:

Inclusive education is the process of reinforcing the capacity of the education system to welcome and reach out to all learners (UNESCO, 2017). Inclusive education can prove to be a powerful instrument in increasing the literacy rate in India by providing equal opportunities for education for all. As we know, teachers play a vital role in the teaching-learning process. They are the ones who mould students' personalities. They bring out their hidden talent by providing opportunities to take part in different activities and also teach life skills so that individuals make a place in their society. So, we can say that to be successful, inclusion is based on the teachers' awareness of the special needs of children with disabilities.

A teacher is like a source of knowledge, prosperity, and enlightenment from which anybody can be benefited. Overall, well-trained and skilled teachers are required to fulfil all needs of every individual. **Maheshwari and Shapurkar (2015)** indicated that teachers had little awareness but an inadequate amount of information on disabilities and inclusive education. Moreover, he mentioned that most teachers understood disability as "an inability to do something". **Das, R. (2021)** reported that not all secondary school teachers were aware of the term



Inclusive Education. Whereas, some teachers were not aware of children with special education needs. The article also mentions that children with disabilities could do better in education and score higher than average children if they are provided with proper educational needs and means. This occurs due to a lack of awareness of the methodologies of inclusive education. **Gurjar, M. (2019)** indicated teachers' awareness is limited to inclusive education. **Sharma & Samuel (2013)** suggested that only a few teachers were aware of the provisions provided by the government. Most of the teachers blamed the students' attitude and home environment for performing poorly in their studies. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct awareness programmes from time to time. Once a child is admitted to school, the role of a teacher is to shape the life the child begins. Teachers play a crucial role in the teaching-learning process, job and in short, nurturing a successful human being. A teacher helps students to become good citizens of the country because teachers know that students are the future of any country.

This paper focuses on the effectiveness of awareness programmes regarding inclusive education through which students with and without disabilities both will benefit. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan 2001, aimed at universal elementary education in the country. Right to Education Act 2009, aimed at free and compulsory education for elementary school 6 to 14 years old students. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPWD) Act 2016 also defines inclusive education as a system of education wherein students with and without disabilities learn together and the system of teaching and learning is suitably adapted to meet the learning needs of different types of students with disabilities. However, in the current scenario in India, 75% of children who have disabilities never go to school (Agarwal, K. 2020). Due to a lack of awareness among teachers, when schools admit children with disabilities, the teachers who are unaware of the legislation ignore the CWSN which increases dropouts. Knowledge of this awareness programme helps teachers identify and recognize the needs of children with disabilities. In traditional situations, a large number of students also create difficulty for the teacher.

Inclusive Education is a relatively new approach that is against the typical and traditionally fragmented education systems, which develop different identities by segregating students concerning their abilities (**Abbas & Naz, 2016**). Since then, the Indian government has taken initiatives to give opportunities and facilities to CWSN.

A number of studies indicated the awareness programme effectiveness for teachers, pre-service teachers, and future teachers. **Pingle & Garg, (2010)** suggested that to understand the students with disabilities, training of teachers is necessary. Similarly, **Paul, S. (2017)** suggested that the professional competency building self-instructional package in learning inclusive education concepts has raised the level of knowledge on Inclusive Education concepts among the B. Ed teacher trainees. **Zagrodnik et al. (2017)** found that understanding attitude, confidence, willingness capacity, and skills of pre-service educators have been developed through service-learning in pre-service teacher educator programmes. **Gisele L. (2019)** conducted a study on the development of a teacher training module using a universal learning design and found that after gaining knowledge the school has admitted an autistic child in their school and appointed a counsellor as well. According to all studies, the present study is also effective for secondary school teachers. Results revealed that secondary school teachers enhanced the awareness of inclusive education.

Significance of the study:

- It is a synchronous and asynchronous awareness programme on inclusive education.

- This programme is flexible, time-saving, economical, and encourages the use of online study and online assessment.
- The findings of this study can provide a lens through which more focused strategies can be developed to enhance the level of awareness among teachers.
- It will enable the teachers to identify the needs of children with disabilities. It can develop various cooperative learning strategies in inclusive schools.
- It will help develop a positive attitude and competencies for inclusion.
- It can enable the teachers to overcome barriers of the environment within and outside the classroom.
- The findings can provide a lens through which a higher level of awareness among teachers can be developed.

Objectives:

- 1) To assess the effectiveness of an awareness programme on inclusive education among secondary school teachers.
- 2) To study the effectiveness of awareness programme towards inclusive education among secondary school teachers on the basis of educational qualification.
- 3) To study the effectiveness of awareness programme towards inclusive education among secondary school teachers on the basis of teaching experience.

Hypothesis:

- 1) There is no significant difference of mean score on inclusive education awareness of the experimental group at pre and post-test level.
- 2) There is no significant difference of scores in the pre-test and post-test of awareness on inclusive education experimental group with respect to educational qualification.
- 3) There is no significant difference of mean scores of inclusive education awareness on the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group with respect to teaching experience.

Conceptual Definitions:

1) Effectiveness:

Effectiveness is the ability to produce the desired output.

2) Awareness:

Awareness means knowledge of the existence of something.

3) Inclusive Education:

Inclusive education means an education where there is no discrimination based on caste, religion, sex, lineage, origin, language, ability, and disability. Everyone can get an education in the mainstream.

4) Secondary School teachers:

Those teachers who teach in classes IX and X are called secondary school teachers.

5) Mumbai suburban district:

Mumbai suburban district refers to the stretch from Bandra to Dahisar, from Kurla to Mulund, and from Kurla up to Trombay Creek.

Operational Definitions:

1) Effectiveness:

In this study, effectiveness refers to the exceptional result as a consequence of the implementation of the awareness programme.

2) Inclusive Education Awareness Programme:

It means a plan developed for Secondary School teachers to create awareness about inclusive education using online platforms like Google Classroom synchronous and asynchronous modes of training.

3) Inclusive Education:

In the present study, Inclusive education means all types of children which has given below:

- Physical Challenges:
 - Sensory impaired
 - Locomotor
 - Neurological disorder
 - Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
- Intellectual Challenges:
 - Autism
 - Learning difficulties
 - Mentally challenged
- Emotional and Behavioural deviation:
 - ADHD
 - Juvenile Delinquency

Analysis of the Data:

1. For the descriptive analysis, the data analyzed using descriptive statistics i.e., percentage, mean, median, Standard deviation, Skewness, and Kurtosis, will be represented graphically.
2. For the inferential analysis, the hypothesis was analyzed using the appropriate statistical techniques such as a t-test.

Variables:

Independent variable: Inclusive Education awareness programme

Dependent variable: Awareness of inclusive education.

Moderator Variables:

1. Gender
2. Educational Qualification
3. Teaching Experience

Sample of the Study:

For the present study, the researcher has adopted convenience sampling. A total of 10 secondary school teachers have been selected from Mumbai suburban region.

Tool of the study:

Awareness Programme of Inclusive education questionnaire (APIE) was prepared by the researcher and consists of 25 questions based on five aspects; introduction to inclusive education, historical & policy perspective, the concept of children with special needs, addressing environmental barriers and facilitators and development

teaching-learning strategies. It includes four options, for each right option, the score was ‘2’ and the wrong was ‘0’.

Delimitations of the study:

The study is confined to Secondary school teachers only.

The study is limited to the Mumbai suburban only.

Methodology:

Pre-Experimental Design: The Single Group, pretest-posttest design

O1 X O2

O1= pre-test O2=post-test

Analysis of the data: For the present study researcher has adopted descriptive statistics that are mean, median, mode, standard deviation, and inferential statistics i.e., t-test.

Data collection:

Table no. 1 Comparison of mean score on inclusive education awareness of secondary school teachers in the experimental group at pre and post-test levels.

Experimental	N	Mean	SD	df	t Value	Level of significance
Pre-test	10	23	9.0554	9	5.57	p<.001
Post-test	10	38.4	3.5024	9		

*t critical value (df=9) =3.25 at 0.01

Analyzing Table no. 1, we see that the post-test mean score (38.4) is greater than the pre-test mean score (23) by a significant margin. There was a statistically significant difference between the two groups (t= 5.57, df=9, p0.001), suggesting that the inclusive education awareness programme influenced teachers' attitudes.

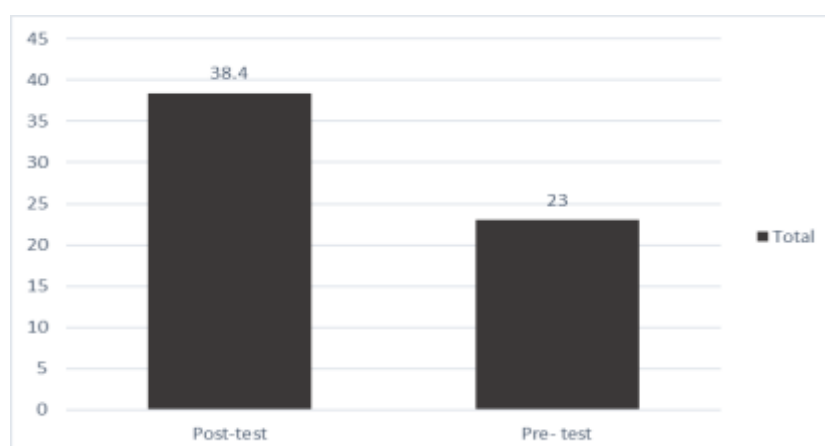
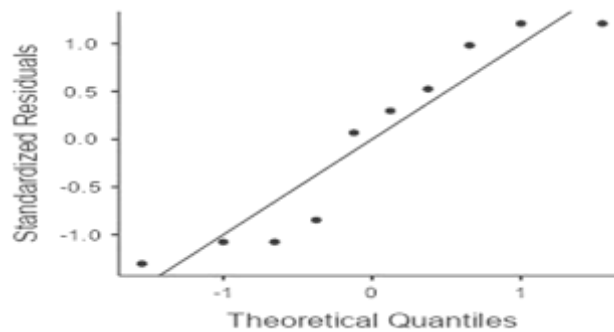


Figure 1: Bar Graph of mean score of pre-test and post-test of Experimental Group

Figure 1 shows a bar graph of pre- and post-test scores for teachers in the experimental group, and from this data we may infer that there were statistically significant differences between the two groups. For educators, the post-test ranged from a high of 42 to a low of 16.



The close proximity of the data points to the regression line indicates a strong correlation between the explanatory and response variables.

Thus, we reject H₀, the hypothesis that there is no change in the mean score of the experimental group from pre- to post-testing on the knowledge of inclusive education.

Table no. 2 Comparison of mean score on inclusive education awareness of secondary school teachers in the experimental group at pre and post-test level on the basis of educational qualification.

Educational qualification	N	Experimental	Mean	SD	df	t Value	P Value	Level of Significance
Graduate	4	pre test	23.5	12.15	3	3.08	0.05	Significant at 0.05
		post test	37.8	5.26	3			
Post Graduate	6	Pre test	22.67	2.10	5	4.33	0.00	Significant at 0.05
		post test	39.00	7.66	5			

*t critical value (df=3) =5.84 at 0.01 & 3.18 at 0.05

*t critical value (df=5) =4.03 at 0.01 & 2.57 at 0.05

Table 2 shows that there was a statistically significant difference between the experimental groups before and after learning about inclusive education (order of 23.5, 37.8; P0.05), and that the same was true for the post-graduate experimental groups (order of 22.67, 39.00; t=4).

Therefore, the second hypothesis, which stated that there would be no significant difference between the experimental group's pre- and post-test scores on the issue of inclusive education, is false.

Table No. 3 Comparison of mean score on inclusive education awareness of secondary school teachers in the experimental group at pre and post-test level on the basis of teaching experience.

Educational qualification	N	Experimental	Mean	SD	df	t Value	P Value	Level of Significance
Less than five years	6	pre test	25.7	8.80	5	4.04	0.01	Significant at 0.05
		post test	39.7	1.51	5			
More than five years	4	Pre test	19.0	9.02	3	3.51	0.039	Significant at 0.05
		post test	36.5	5.00	3			



*t critical value (df=3) =5.84 at 0.01 & 3.18 at 0.05

*t critical value (df=5) =4.03 at 0.01 & 2.57 at 0.05

Analyzing Table No. 3, we can deduce that there was a significant difference between the pre- and post-test mean scores (order of 25.7, 39.7; $t= 4.04$; $P0.05$) of the experimental group on awareness of inclusive education based on less than five years of experience, and that there was a significant difference between the pre- and post-test mean scores (order of 19.0, 36.5) of the experimental group based on more than five years of experience.

Accordingly, we cannot accept Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between pre- and post-test scores of the experimental group on inclusive education awareness with respect to teaching experience.

Discussion:

This study's sample selection presented numerous challenges for the researchers. For starters, the researcher informed her WhatsApp group and email contacts about the programme via a pamphlet she distributed". The educator at the high school level finally spoke up. The programme was well received by many educators. Researchers discovered a secondary school teacher had problems accessing Google Classrooms during the course of the study. Researchers collaborated using a WhatsApp group to provide classroom management tips from Google. The instructor's hectic agenda also made time management difficult. Some educators continued their studies while working full-time. Few people enrolled in training or education programmes. There was no means for everyone to assemble simultaneously or in a central location at that time. Therefore, it was most practical to administer the campaign via a web-based system. Researchers also gave recorded video lectures and reference materials via WhatsApp groups for teachers to use as needed for smoother study. There were numerous difficulties that researchers had to encounter in order to collect data, remain persistent, overcome all impediments, and ultimately succeed.

The purpose of the study was to inform and engage the experimental group's secondary school educators on inclusive education. Because it was a programme, of course! The five sections of this course could provide secondary school educators with useful information. A secondary school teacher discovered module 1 while participating in an awareness initiative. Disability, impairment, and individual variations in the experience of disability were all new concepts introduced as part of this movement.

Teachers in secondary schools have said that integration education, which permits distinct classrooms inside the same school, leads to discrimination based on sex, ethnicity, colour, religion, and ability, while special education is a system of segregation. With this information, local schools can accommodate students of all abilities and ages and provide them with a well-rounded education.

The second module provided instructors of secondary schools with an introduction to historical and political viewpoints. Specifically, it includes the RCI Act of 1992, the Persons with Disabilities Act of 1995, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, and the Right to Education Act of 2009. learned the goals and responsibilities of legislative organisations.

Module 3 introduced secondary school educators to the needs of students with impairments, including those in the areas of vision, hearing, movement, cognition, and the nervous system. There, educators learned to recognise the signs of children with special needs and how to make their classrooms more welcoming to them.

The topics covered in Module 4 were Obstacles to Inclusive Education, Supporters of Inclusive Education,

Barrier-Free Learning Spaces, Universal Design for Learning, and Early Detection and Intervention. Teachers of secondary school students grew in their understanding of the challenges facilitators face and the methods they use to overcome them in this programme. Moreover, universal learning design principles include numerous methods of expression, multiple means of expression, and different means of engagement to make teaching and learning processes more successful.

In the fifth unit, educators at the secondary level learned about several methods for fostering an inclusive learning environment in the classroom. Educators praised the usefulness of these methods.

Results:

1. The research shows that inclusive education awareness programmes work. The initiative is helping secondary school educators learn more about how to create welcoming classrooms for all students.
2. There is a large range in teachers' pre- and post-test understanding about inclusive education in the secondary level, and this is not necessarily related to how well they teach. This proved that the inclusive education awareness campaign had the desired effect on educators.
3. Before and after taking the test, teachers at secondary schools have widely varying levels of familiarity with inclusive education. Researchers here discovered that the inclusive education awareness programme did a good job of making educators more aware of the issue.

Conclusion:

Teachers play an essential part in the educational process by identifying student traits, unearthing latent abilities, and facilitating the development of students' skills. increase. Teacher accountability rises when students come from a wide range of backgrounds. It follows that educators have a growing part to play in creating welcoming classrooms for all students. So, educators need to be well-equipped to deal with any kind of challenge they may face in the classroom. Based on the results of this research, it appears that this awareness-raising programme had a positive effect on econdary school teachers' understanding of inclusive education.

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