Comparing Inclusive Practices in Urban and Rural Schools in Pune.

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Abstract

The overall goal of inclusive and child friendly education is developing educational settings where all learners are welcome, participating and treated equally.

Present Research focuses on present situation of the schools regarding inclusion of differently abled students. It also gives clear-cut idea about barriers faced by teachers in implementation of strategies necessary for successful inclusion. Existing situation of physical and human resources in schools in Pune Urban and Rural has been find out using survey method. Different tools and techniques like observations questionnaires, test etc. are used. Data collected was analyzed. Urban schools have more facilities regarding human resources, than rural schools but improvement is needed as far as means of schools of both the categories is considered. Urban schools are comparatively superior in providing support for inclusion of differently abled students, but lot of efforts are still required for both the types of schools in this respect

Introduction:
Inclusive education, which has its origin in special education, originally set out to meet the needs of learners who were being traditionally excluded from the school or were otherwise marginalized within the classroom. A series of shifts from focusing on the differently abled child as a problem to focusing on changes in the management of the classroom revealed surprising changes in learning. The results demonstrated benefits to those who were traditionally excluded from learning as well as all the others in the classroom. Today inclusive education or ‘inclusion in education’ is a conceptual approach aimed at achieving quality education by making changes to
accommodate all learners regardless of their physical, social or psychological differences.

The major support for inclusive education came from 1994 World Conference on Special Needs Education held in Salamanca, Spain. It was concluded in the conference that – “Schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions.”(Puri, Madhumita, Abraham George)

Indian Society is naturally more inclusive than segregationist in nature. Starting from Gurukul System to western model of day-care system, efforts have been made to bring people in, rather than to keep them out. About 1.40 million (NIEPA, 2005) children with disabilities are in regular schools. Govt. of India has to accelerate the new scheme of Inclusive Education to achieve the target of Education for All (EFA) by 2010. (Ministry of Human Resource and Development, India)

**Need and Importance of the Research**

Survey of various studies conducted on inclusive education in India & abroad helps to understand more about inclusion & its importance today. It clearly emphasizes how important the role of school and teacher is, in dealing with inclusion, and making it successful.

Research is done about concept & differentiation between segregation & inclusion. Methods & techniques are developed for Special education, but for inclusive education few efforts about program & curricula can be listed out especially in India. Providing access to education is only the first stage in overcoming exclusion or discrimination. There is a need for a shift in perspectives and values so that diversity is appreciated and even welcomed, while teachers are given skills to provide all children, including those with different learning needs, with quality education. Inclusive education is still often seen as a matter of providing education for children with different abilities in a regular school setting.

In the present scenario, it is seen that the previous system of education - general schools and special schools is now changing as inclusive schools. In this respect it becomes essential to assess the existing inclusive practices in the schools. Assessing the knowledge and acceptance level of teachers in the schools is needed.

Attitudes of the teachers towards inclusion are also of much importance. We need to develop awareness about inclusion in the teachers. A survey in this respect is thus needed. It is also essential to sensitize teachers, the requirements of children with special needs through a program in inclusive education.

**Objective of the Research:**

To compare Physical and Human Recourses in urban and rural schools in Pune with respect to inclusion of differently abled students.

Inclusive Practices (Operational definition)

Inclusive practices is about – Physical resources and Human resources -

- Modifications in infrastructure for inclusion of differently abled students.
- Essential material for inclusion of differently abled students.
- Technological support required for inclusion differently abled students.
- Availability of special teachers, Para-teachers, and counselors required for inclusion differently abled students.
- Knowledge and acceptance and attitude of teachers for inclusion differently abled students.
Inclusion means that all students in a school, regardless of their strengths or weaknesses in any area, become part of the school community.

**Urban Schools**
All the English and Marathi medium schools situated in Pune city.

**Rural Schools**
All the English and Marathi medium schools situated outside Pune city and are in Pune district.

**Physical resources:**
Are the Resources in urban and rural schools in Pune that include necessary infrastructural modifications, essential material, and technological support required for inclusion of differently abled students.

**Human resources:**
Are the Teachers, principals and Para teachers working in urban and rural schools in Pune, and the study of human resources (teachers) regarding their knowledge and acceptance, and attitude about inclusion of required for inclusion differently abled students.

**Assumptions**
- All the Teachers have knowledge about inclusion.
- It is assumed that all the teachers have honestly responded to the questionnaire questions.

**Research Questions:**
- What sort of Physical and human resources are available in the schools to cater the needs of differently abled students?
- What is the current status of training of the school teachers with respect to inclusion of differently abled students?

**Research Hypothesis:**
There is difference in knowledge level of urban and rural school teachers about inclusion of differently abled students.

**Null hypothesis:**
There is no significant difference between means of achievement tests of urban and rural teachers groups.

**Scope of Research**
The coverage of this study is English and Marathi medium, urban and rural schools in Pune district.
The survey is regarding physical and human resources for inclusion of differently abled students

**Delimitations of the Research**
1- The study will be delimited to schools situated in Pune District.
2- The study is delimited to examination of teachers' knowledge and attitude about inclusive education only.

**Limitations of the Research**
The impact of school teachers IQ, Interest in learning, age, experience of teaching has not been considered.

**Population**
All the schools in rural and urban Pune are the population for studying Inclusive Practices. All the school teachers from Rural and Urban schools in Pune are the population for assessing attitudes and knowledge of school teachers about Inclusive Education.
Sampling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Size of sample</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Method of sampling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rural and Urban Schools in Pune Principal from urban &amp; rural schools in Pune</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>To compare Physical and Human Resources in urban and rural schools in Pune with respect to inclusion of differently abled students.</td>
<td>Random</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Teachers from urban &amp; rural schools in Pune</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td>Random</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
<td>Random</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tools and Techniques of Research

**SURVEY**

- Observation (Schools)
- Interview (Principals)
- Attitude Scale (Teachers)
- Questionnaire (Teachers)

In all the Research tools and techniques used in the present research are:
1- Observation in schools by the researcher using a Likert scale.
2- Semi-structured interview of the principals of various schools about Inclusive practices in their schools.
3- Attitude scale measuring teachers’ attitude towards Inclusive Education.
4- Knowledge and acceptance test on Inclusive Education for teachers in Urban and rural schools.

**Method of Research**

In the present research, researcher explores the facts and learns the phenomenon from as many perspectives as possible. A complete survey is being conducted using observations, interviews, and questionnaires, etc. to collect rich and adequate information. Existing practices are studied in depth.

Survey – Surveys in Education are usually concerned with collecting information about school facilities, practices, problems, students, teachers or instructions. Survey data are usually collected using interviews, questionnaires and observations. Existing Inclusive Practices and the barriers faced by teachers and administrators in implementation have been assessed by survey.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data:
Observation: Criteria-1 School Building Modifications and other Infrastructural Facilities – Scores about all the sub points regarding school building are tabulated and results were analyzed.
a) Building Structure  
b) Size of classrooms/seating arrangement  
c) Benches/blackboard  
d) Stairs/Ramps  
e) Toilets/playground/library/laboratory  
f) Resource room

Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria-1</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>c</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>e</th>
<th>f</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban Schools</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Schools</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Criteria – 2- Other material essential for successful inclusion of differently abled students

The criteria was scaled regarding the following areas

- a- Material used for orthopedically impaired as Wheel chairs/canes/sticks
- b- Material used for hearing impaired
- c- Material used for visually impaired
- d- Special material used for learning disabilities
- e- Special material for gifted
- f- Special material for Mentally challenged

Criteria -2  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria-2</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>c</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>e</th>
<th>f</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban Schools</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Schools</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Criteria -3 - Technological support required

- a- Material required for VAK modalities
- b- Modified computers
- c- A central technology room providing all the technological support.
- d- Speech therapy room

Criteria -3  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria -3</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>c</th>
<th>d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban Schools</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Schools</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of total mean of the facilities in the schools regarding Inclusion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Total Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>55.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>44.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis of facilities in the schools regarding inclusion shows the means 55.4 for urban schools and 44.17 for rural schools. It shows that urban schools have more facilities than rural schools as far as the inclusion of differently abled students is concerned. It also shows that lots of efforts are required to do in both the schools (urban and rural) regarding modifications in physical resources. Training of available teachers about inclusion of differently abled students is the most essential factor that has to be taken into consideration.

Interview:

Interview questions were categorized as:
1. Concept and Importance of Inclusion
2. Barriers faced in implementing, and overcoming challenges
3. Category easier to accommodate
4. Modifying curricular and co-curricular activities
5. Teacher training and selection
6. Impact of both the students (general and those with different abilities).
7. Guidance and counseling, tie-ups, and required support
8. Involvement of parents in schooling of differently abled students
9. Teachers’ attitude about Inclusion.
10. Reforms in curriculum, government authorities.

Barriers faced in implementing, and overcoming challenges

Open discussion regarding barriers faced in implementing Inclusive Education focused on many aspects. Various aspects are discussed in detail by almost all principals. Principals of both the types of schools (Urban & Rural schools) stressed on many common factors that they feel are the important barriers or challenges in the path of successful inclusion of differently abled students. Variety of responses is obtained from principals of urban and rural schools. These responses are categorized as:

a) Teacher–pupil ratio (class strength)
b) Training of teachers
c) Support from society
d) Availability of special teachers
e) Time management
f) Detection of child with special needs
g) Red-tapism
h) Workload of school teachers
i) Teachers’ attitude
j) Developmental aspects of differently abled students
k) Parental support
Questionnaire:
Analysis of Inclusive Practices through questionnaire to the teachers about their knowledge, acceptance, and training regarding Inclusion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table: Four parts of questionnaire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-1- Previous training about Inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part -2-Knowledge about Inclusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-3-Acceptance of the concept of Inclusive Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-4-Personal opinions about Inclusive Education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistical Interpretation of part 2 with the t-test
Significance of difference of mean of scores of knowledge test for urban and rural teachers:
Mean of the scores of the tests of both the groups (urban and rural) were calculated followed by calculation of Standard deviation. Then t-value is calculated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge Test on Inclusive Education</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Level of significance (0.01)</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban teachers</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>14.67</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>H₀ accepted H₂ rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural teachers</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>14.68</td>
<td>5.48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Personal opinions about Inclusive Education.
According to 48% teachers from urban schools and 54% teachers, their knowledge about inclusive education is at low level, while 39% teachers from urban schools and 36% teachers feel that their knowledge about inclusive education is at average level.

Attitude scale
A-Attitude regarding responsibility and commitment towards inclusion
Percentage of teachers showing positive attitude regarding responsibility and commitment towards inclusion is 48% for urban school teachers and 50% for rural teachers.

B- Attitude towards special needs of students in inclusive set up.
According to 55% urban teachers and 60% rural teachers show overall positive attitude towards special needs of students in inclusive setup.

C- Attitude towards training and curriculum in teacher education.
According to 68% urban teachers and 60% rural teachers they are lacking the skills required for dealing the differently abled students.

D- Assistance of special education teachers, infrastructural facilities.
Percentage of teachers showing positive attitude towards assistance of special teachers is 41% for teachers of urban schools and 45% for teachers from rural teachers. Both the types of teachers (urban and rural) are not satisfactory about infrastructural facilities.

**Major findings of the Research**

1. Modifications and infrastructural facilities provided in urban schools are moderate while the same in rural schools is not satisfactory. Urban schools have more infrastructural facilities than rural schools.
2. In case of material for HI, VI and orthopedic impairment many rural schools are provided with essential material by government.
3. Technological facilities in urban schools are more than that of rural schools but as far as successful inclusion of differently abled students is concerned both the types of schools have very less modifications done technologically.
4. Urban schools have more facilities regarding human resources than rural schools but improvement is needed as far as means of schools of both the categories is considered.
5. Urban schools are comparatively superior in providing support for inclusion of differently abled students, but lot of efforts are still required for both the types of schools in this respect.

**Discussions**

The purpose of the study was assessing inclusive practices in urban and rural schools in Pune. Findings of this research gave some important facts and practical implications.

Objective of the present research was to compare between physical and human resources in urban & rural schools in Pune about inclusion of differently abled students. Analysis shows that urban schools have more infrastructural facilities (building, technological resources etc.). The results are in agreement with the SSA. Evaluation report of India, 2010. (In terms of lack of electricity, technological facilities, trained teachers etc.).

Talking about attitudes of teachers this research indicates that both the school teachers (urban & rural in Pune) show overall a positive attitude regarding inclusion of differently abled students. Similar findings are observed in other research. (Loreman et al., 2005; Romi&Leyser, 2006; Woodcock, 2008). (M. Tariq Ahsan, Umesh Sharma, Joanne M. Deppeler, Faculty of Education, Monash University, Australia), (Ahmed BawaKuyini1 and Ishwar Desai 11 University of Melbourne).

These findings are in sharp contrast to the existing studies. (Regular primary school teachers’ attitudes towards inclusive education: a review of the literature, Anke de Boera*, Sip Jan Pijlb& Alexander Minnaerta)

Findings of the study have various implications in Indian context. Regarding status of urban and rural schools for inclusion of differently abled students, the study indicates the need of reforms in infrastructural and human resources essential for success of inclusion of differently abled students in schools.

This study also indicates the importance of knowledge of laws and rules regarding inclusion of differently abled students, prior training on differently abled students.
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