



A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ATTITUDE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The attitude is the prime factor which opens the door to interest for a particular task like occupation which is very much important for a teaching profession. In a civilized society, all children need to be given equal opportunity to learn, irrespective of their being physically, cognitively or emotionally deformed in one way or the other. In a legitimate effort to achieve this goal, different types of schools such as normal schools, special schools etc. have come into being over a period of time. The concept of inclusive education is relatively new in which equal opportunity is given to all students to learn under a roof in the same compound irrespective of their physical, intellectual and emotional deformities. A study was conducted to know the attitude of secondary school teachers towards inclusive education. A descriptive survey method of research was used to collect the data of attitude of secondary school teachers towards inclusive education. The sample for the study consisted of 320 teachers randomly selected from secondary schools located at urban and rural areas of Faridabad district of Haryana state. The schools were selected on the basis of convenient sampling whereas simple random technique was followed to select the teachers. The investigator used 'Teacher's Attitude Scale towards Inclusive Education' prepared and standardized by Vishal Sood and Arti Anand for data collection. The findings of the study show that majority of teachers of secondary schools were found under moderate level of attitude towards inclusive education. The teachers of urban secondary schools were found to be more positive in their attitude towards inclusive education comparison to the teachers working in rural secondary schools. The female teachers of secondary schools were found to be more favourable in their attitude towards inclusive education than the male teachers. A significant difference of attitude towards inclusive education was found between the teachers of government and the private secondary schools.

KEYS WORDS: Attitude, Inclusive Education, Secondary School Teachers

INTRODUCTION

Attitude is a complex mental state involving beliefs, feelings, values and dispositions to act in certain ways. An attitude is a hypothetical construct that represents an individual's degree of like or dislike for something. It is generally a positive or a negative view of an individual for a person, place, thing, or event etc. The laymen as well as the scientist frequently use the concept of attitude in the description and explanations of human behaviour. Generally a common view of attitude is that it is comprised of three components. The first is a cognitive component, which consists of the ideas beliefs which an individual has about the object. The second component is an effective emotional component which refers to the feeling and emotions one has towards the object. The last and the third component of

attitude is a behaviour component consisting of one's action, tendencies towards the object.

According to Allport (1935), 'an attitude is a mental or natural state of readiness, organized through experience, existing a directive or dynamic influence upon the individuals response to all objects and situations with which it is related.'

In India, the ideal system of inclusive education is that the general education system should assume responsibility for the education and children with disabilities but the reality is different. The general education system is yet to be fully sensitized to the educational needs of children with disabilities and therefore the general system needs the assistance of specialist teachers for occasional help to make inclusive education work.

Undoubtedly the idea of inclusive education is certainly highly relevant to our current condition, where differences in

religion, faith, gender, ethnicity and ability are often seen as a threat rather than a source of richness and diversity. Inclusive education stands for improvement of schools in all dimensions to address the educational needs of all children.

The major support for inclusive education came from the 1994 World conference on Special Needs Education in Salamanca, Spain which emphasized that schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions.

The increasing integration of many disabled children into mainstream education since the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001) has led to an examination of the physical and educational needs of disabled children in and around the school buildings. A disability may be physical, cognitive, mental, sensory, emotional, and developmental or some combination of these. Disabilities are an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. Impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations.

There are individuals who learn very fast. There are others who do not learn very fast, but with reasonable teaching learning inputs, can learn prescribed tasks, may be over a relatively long time segment. There are some individuals who find it difficult to learn without special inputs. These are the individuals who have special learning needs which arise out of sensory, intellectual, psychological or socio-cultural deficits. For example, persons with visual, hearing or neuro-muscular impairments have learning problems. So have persons with a low level of intellectual functioning and those with disorders in psychological processes. These conditions, impairments or disabilities, impede the normal development of individuals intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusion is an educational approach and philosophy that provides all students with community membership and greater opportunities for academic and social achievement. Inclusion is about making sure that each and every student feels welcome and that their unique needs and learning styles are attended to and valued. Inclusion in education is an approach once thought only necessary for educating students with special educational needs. Now it is crucial that all teachers ensure inclusive practice for all students in their classroom. Inclusion means to educate the children with disabilities in ordinary classroom. Under the inclusion model, students with special needs spend most or all of their time with non-disabled students.

Inclusion gives students with disabilities skill they can use in and out of the classroom. Inclusion rejects the use of special schools or classrooms to separate students with disabilities from students without disabilities. Fully inclusive schools, which are rare, no longer distinguish between "general education" and "special education" programs; instead, the school is restructured so that all students learn together. Inclusive education is about how we develop and design our schools, classrooms, programs and activities so that all students learn and participate together.

Inclusive education provides the places and the catalyst through which general and special teachers, students and parents come together to create quality democratic schools. Inclusive education gained momentum in India because of its

various international developments which advocate inclusive education such as Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, UN Standard Minimum Rules, 1993 but it was greatly influenced by the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO 1994). In India, it is based on the assumption that education is a basic requirement and it should be accessible to all regardless of disparities, difficulties and disabilities. India is committed to achieve the goal of education for all and inclusive education is now a way feature of various government documents and plans. But the fact remains that majority of disabled children don't have access to education. Since special educational institutions were unable to provide education to the vast majority of children with disabilities in India, the concept of integrated education emerged in the 20th century. In integrated education programmes, the specialist teachers provide most of the essential as well as supportive services whereas the general classroom teachers provide additional assistance to children with disabilities in the classroom.

The definition of inclusive education is given by UNESCO's Section for Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 2000) as, "Inclusive education is concerned with removing all barriers to learning, and with the participation of all learners vulnerable to exclusion and marginalisation. It is a strategic approach designed to facilitate learning success for all children. It addresses the common goals of decreasing and overcoming all exclusion from the human right to education, at least at the elementary level, and enhancing access, participation and learning success in quality basic education for all."

Inclusive education is a system of education in which all the students with special education needs are enrolled in general classes and are provided with special supportive services. This type of education is based on the diverse needs of pupils. In this system of education, there is a specialist who assists the classroom teachers in developing the best strategies for teaching those students who have learning disabilities, sensory impairments such as problems with visions and hearing etc. It makes use of different styles of teaching and provides quality education through appropriate use of resources, school organization and study plans as well as partnership with the community.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In olden days, special classes were arranged for students with special needs. Special teachers were appointed to teach these students separately, in smaller groups. However, the reality is that students in segregated special education classes have fallen further and further behind. Over time, it was learned that inclusive education is a better way to help all students succeed. The current attitudes of teachers toward inclusion of students with learning disabilities in regular education classrooms could help to develop remedies and supportive procedures that can be implemented to improve inclusion programs' outcomes. Understanding if a teacher does not have proper training or support to work in an inclusive setting, they may not have positive attitudes towards inclusion. In turn, this may affect their ability to teach in an inclusive environment and affect students' success.

Inclusive education is a process of enabling all children to learn and participate effectively under a roof and in a compound within mainstream school systems. It does not segregate children who have different abilities or needs. The central purpose becomes more challenging as schools accommodate students with increasingly diverse backgrounds

and abilities. As we strive to meet these challenges, the involvement and cooperation of teachers, parents, and community leaders is vital for the creation of better and more inclusive schools.

Secondary education plays an important role in shaping the future of a child and the teacher's attitude is most significant for inclusion of children with disabilities into mainstream. Thus teachers' attitude towards inclusive education, acceptance of social justice, equity and school effectiveness provide a sound rationale for the inclusion of students with disabilities into mainstream education in India.

The attitude is the prime factor which opens the door to aptitude and interest for a particular task like occupation which is very much important for teaching profession. Generally, the teacher education colleges supply trained human resources to schools but many teachers are unable to understand the concept of inclusive education. In general Teachers' attitude towards teaching profession depends upon many factors but positive attitude of a teacher towards inclusive education makes him/her effective in teaching of the students of special needs with normal students. So the researcher carried out a pilot study to know attitude of secondary school teachers towards inclusive education.

The research work provides some information regarding secondary school teachers' attitude, feelings, challenges and concerns regarding inclusive education. Therefore, it is essential to know the attitude of secondary school teachers towards inclusive education which will help the educational authorities, organisation and government bodies to think over restructuring of present curriculum and educational system.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study under investigation is entitled as "A Comparative Study of Attitude of Secondary School Teachers towards Inclusive Education".

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study attitude of secondary school teachers towards inclusive education.
2. To study Government secondary school teachers' attitude towards inclusive education.
3. To study private secondary school teachers' attitude towards inclusive education.
4. To study the difference between male and female teachers' attitude towards inclusive education working in secondary schools.
5. To study the difference between secondary school male and female teachers' attitude towards inclusive education working in private secondary schools.
6. To study the difference between the government and private secondary school teachers' attitude towards inclusive education.

HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant difference between Government and private secondary school teachers' attitude towards inclusive education.
2. There is no significant difference between male and female teachers' attitude towards inclusive education.

Population of the Study

Population is a parent group from which a sample is to be framed **Sharma (1989)**. Population for the present study comprised of teachers teaching in secondary schools located in Faridabad district of Haryana state.

Sample of the Study

The sample for the present study consists of 320 teachers teaching in secondary schools located in Faridabad district of Haryana. The schools and the teachers were selected by simple random sampling technique. There were equal numbers of male and female teachers selected from government and private secondary schools located in urban and rural areas of Faridabad district of Haryana state.

TOOL USED IN THE STUDY

The investigator used 'Teacher's Attitude Scale towards Inclusive Education' prepared and standardized by **Vishal Sood and Arti Anand** for data collection for the present study.

PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION

Data collection is an integral part of the quantitative research. The investigator visited the selected schools and the principals of selected schools were approached to seek permission for administration of the tool on the selected sample for collection of the data. The time schedule was prepared for each school and principals of those schools were informed accordingly. As per the time schedule, the investigator visited the schools for administration of the tool on secondary school teachers. Before administering the tool, investigator put the subject at the ease by explaining the purpose of administration and motivated them to give their responses or opinions honestly. The respondents were assured that the information provided by them would be kept secret and is not related to their academics. Before the administration of the tests, the instructions given in the tool were read out. Sufficient time was given to them to complete the work. After the administration of the test, scoring was done with the help of scoring key.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The study is delimited to Secondary school teachers only.
2. The study is delimited to the secondary schools located at Faridabad district of Haryana state only.
3. The study was delimited to the 320 teachers, working in secondary schools.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The investigator used the mean, standard deviation, z-test and t-test for analysis and interpretation of the data. Besides, frequency table and graphical representation of the data were also done for more clarity of results.

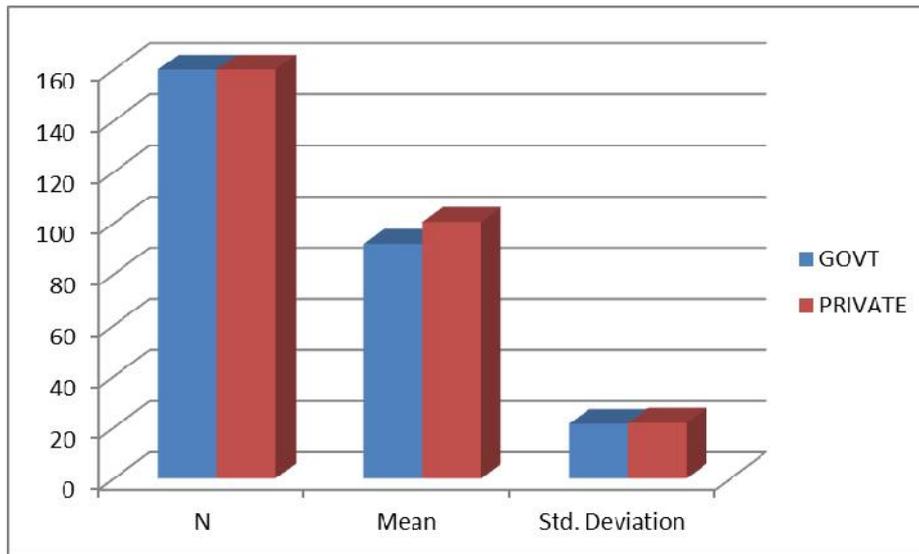
Comparison between Government and Private Secondary School Teachers' Attitude towards Inclusive Education

The table 1 shows mean, standard deviation (SD), t-ratio, standard error of mean of the data of government and private secondary school teachers' attitude towards inclusive education. Mean comparison of attitude between Government and Private school teachers' towards inclusive education is given here:

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-ratio	Remarks
Government School	160	91.775	21.403	1.6921	3.58	Significant
Private School	160	100.412	21.782	1.7220		

The table -1 shows that the mean scores of attitude of 160 teachers of government secondary schools towards inclusive education was calculated to be 91.775 with standard deviation 21.403 while the mean scores of 160 private school teachers was calculated to be 100.412 with standard deviation

21.782. Thus, it is clear that the mean score of attitude of private secondary school teachers towards inclusive education is higher than the mean score of attitude of Government school teachers towards inclusive education.



Graph-1: Showing Mean and S.D. of Government and Private school Teachers' Attitude towards Inclusive Education

Graph-1 shows that the attitude of private secondary school teachers towards inclusive education is higher than the mean score of attitude of Government school teachers.

The calculated t-value between the mean scores of attitude towards inclusive education of government and private secondary school teachers is calculated to be 3.58 which is greater than the tabulated t value (1.96) at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, it is clear that the Government and the Private secondary school teachers differ significantly on their attitude towards inclusive education. Analyzing the data it is clear that two groups differ significantly on their attitude towards inclusive education.

Discussion: On analyzing the data it is clear that two groups i.e. the teachers of government and private secondary schools differ significantly on their attitude towards inclusive education. A significant difference of the mean scores of attitude of teachers towards inclusive education was found between the Government and private school teachers working in secondary schools. Private school teachers were found to be

more favourable towards inclusive education. Thus from the conformation of the result from the above table, the hypothesis, "Which reads as, the Government and the Private school Teachers working in Secondary schools do not differ significantly on their attitude towards inclusive education is rejected. The private school teachers were found having a little more favourable attitude towards inclusive education. The reason behind that they pay more concentration towards their job responsibilities and are more considerate towards inclusive education.

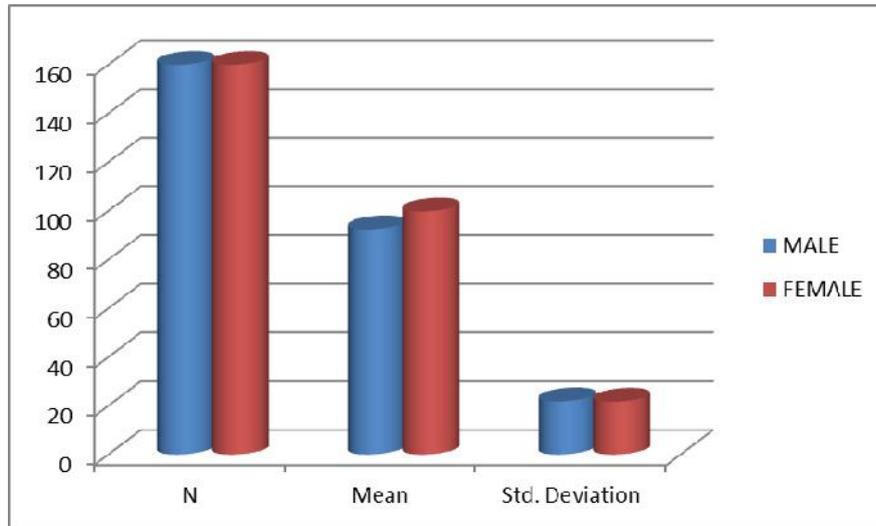
Comparison between Male and Female Teachers Attitude towards Inclusive Education

The table 2 shows mean, standard deviation (SD), t-ratio, and standard error of mean of the data of male and female teachers' attitude towards inclusive education. Mean comparison of attitude towards inclusive education between male and female teachers' working in secondary schools is given below:

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-ratio	Remarks
Male Teachers	160	92.450	21.7908	1.72272	2.12	Significant
Female Teachers	160	99.737	21.6459	1.71126		

The table 2 given above shows that the mean score of attitude towards inclusive education of 160 male teachers was calculated to be 92.450 with standard deviation 21.7908

while the mean scores of attitude towards inclusive education of 160 female teachers was found to be 99.737 with standard deviation 21.6459.



Graph-2: Showing Mean and S.D. of Male and Female Teachers' Attitude towards Inclusive Education

The graph -2 shows that the mean score of the attitude of female teachers towards inclusive education was found to be higher than the mean scores of attitude towards inclusive education of male teachers. Thus, it is clear that the female teachers are more favorably disposed to their attitude towards inclusive education in comparison to their male counterpart.

The critical ratio between the mean scores of attitude towards inclusive education between male and female teachers of secondary schools is calculated to be 2.12 which is greater than the tabulated t-value (1.96) at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the hypothesis, which reads as, the male and the female teachers working in secondary schools do not differ significantly on their attitude towards inclusive education, is rejected. Thus, it is clear that two groups differ significantly on their attitude towards inclusive education.

Discussion: On analyzing the data it is clear that the male and the female teachers of secondary schools differ significantly on their attitude towards inclusive education.

Female teachers were found to be more favourable towards inclusive education. Thus from the conformation of result, it is clear that the male and the female teachers working in secondary schools differ significantly on their attitude towards inclusive education. The reason behind it may be that the female teachers of secondary schools pay more attention to their jobs as a teacher to work in either circumstance in an inclusive system.

Comparison between Urban and Rural Secondary School Teachers' Attitude towards Inclusive Education

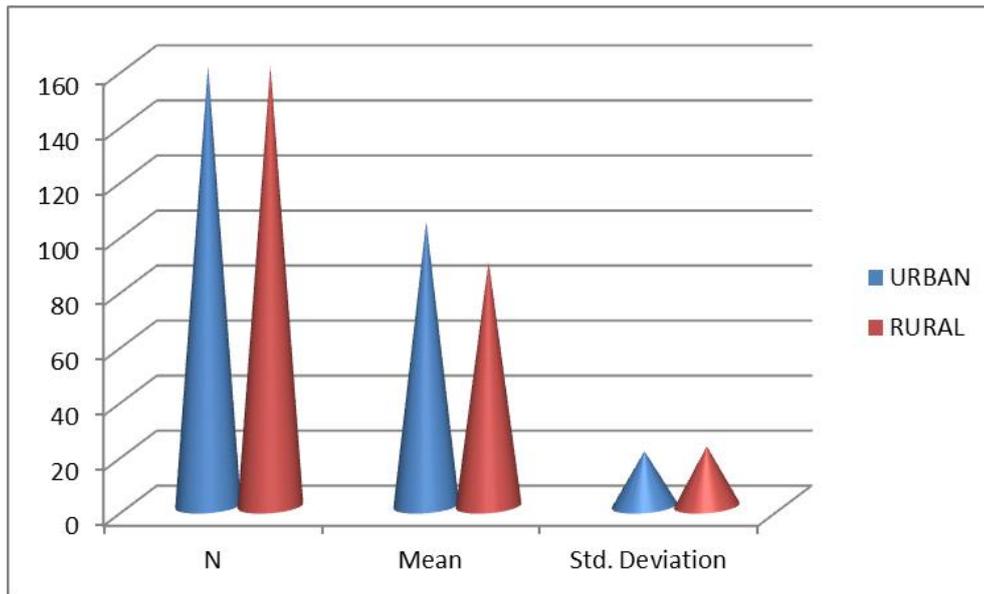
The table-3 shows mean, standard deviation (SD), t-ratio, standard error of mean of the data of urban and rural secondary school teachers' attitude towards inclusive education. Mean comparison of attitude between Urban and Rural secondary school teachers' towards inclusive education is given here:

Table-3: Mean Comparison of Attitude between Urban and Rural Secondary School Teachers towards Inclusive Education						
Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-ratio	Remarks
Urban	160	103.362	19.873	1.5711	6.40	Significant
Rural	160	88.825	21.652	1.7117		

The table -3 shows that the mean scores of attitude of 160 teachers of urban secondary schools towards inclusive education was calculated to be 103.362 with standard deviation 19.873 which is greater than the mean scores of 160 rural school teachers i.e. 88.825 with standard deviation 21.652. Thus, it is clear that the mean score of attitude towards inclusive education of urban secondary school teachers is

higher than the mean score of attitude towards inclusive education of rural secondary school teachers.

Graph-3 shows that the mean score of attitude of teachers towards inclusive education of urban secondary schools is higher than the mean score of attitude of teachers towards inclusive education of urban secondary schools.



Graph-3: Showing Mean and S.D. of Urban and Rural school Teachers' Attitude towards Inclusive Education

The calculated t-value between the mean scores of attitude towards inclusive education of urban and rural secondary school teachers is calculated to be 6.40 which is greater than the tabulated t-value (1.96) at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, it is clear that the urban and the rural secondary school teachers differ significantly on their attitude towards inclusive education.

Discussion: On analyzing the data it is clear that two groups i.e. the teachers of urban and rural secondary schools differ significantly on their attitude towards inclusive education. A significant difference of the mean scores of attitude of teachers towards inclusive education was found between the urban and rural secondary school teachers. The mean score of attitude of teachers towards inclusive education, working in secondary schools situated in urban area was found to be greater than the mean score of attitude of teachers towards inclusive education, working in secondary schools located in rural area. Thus from the conformation of the result from the above table, it is clear that the urban school teachers were found having a little more favourable attitude towards inclusive education. The reason behind that the urban school teachers may be more considerate towards inclusive education than the rural school teachers.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- The mean score of attitude of private secondary school teachers towards inclusive education is higher than the mean score of attitude of Government school teachers towards inclusive education.
- The private school teachers were found having a little more favourable attitude towards inclusive education than the government school teachers. The reason behind that they pay more concentration towards their job responsibilities and are more considerate towards inclusive education.
- The mean score of the attitude of female teachers towards inclusive education was found to be greater than the mean scores of attitude towards inclusive education of male teachers. Thus, it is clear that the

female teachers are more favorably disposed to their attitude towards inclusive education in comparison to their male counterpart.

- On analyzing the data it is clear that the male and the female teachers of secondary schools differ significantly on their attitude towards inclusive education.
- Female teachers were found to be more positive towards inclusive education because of their dedication and attention to their jobs as a teacher to work in either circumstance in an inclusive system.
- The mean score of attitude towards inclusive education of urban secondary school teachers is higher than the mean score of attitude towards inclusive education of rural secondary school teachers. Thus, it is clear that the urban and the rural secondary school teachers differ significantly on their attitude towards inclusive education.
- A significant difference of the mean scores of attitude of teachers towards inclusive education was found between the urban and rural secondary school teachers. The mean score of attitude of teachers towards inclusive education, working in secondary schools situated in urban area was found to be greater than the mean score of attitude of teachers towards inclusive education, working in secondary schools located in rural area. The reason behind that the urban school teachers may be more considerate towards inclusive education than the rural school teachers.

CONCLUSION

Attitude is concerned with an individual way of thinking, acting, viewing and behaving which is formed as a result of some kind of learning experiences. The Government and the Private secondary school teachers differ significantly on their attitude towards inclusive education. It has been found that there exists a significant difference of between urban and rural school teachers' attitude towards inclusive education. A

significant difference was found between male and the female teachers' attitude towards inclusive education. The data shows that the private school teachers were more positive than the government school teachers. The female teachers were found to be more favourable towards inclusive education than the male teachers. The urban teachers were found to be having more positive attitude towards inclusive education than the rural secondary school teachers. Thus there exists gender difference, locale difference and difference of type of schools in the attitude of secondary schools.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

On the basis of the findings of the study the following educational implications can be given for the teachers in carrying out their responsibilities:

- In inclusive system of education, be conscious of duty of equal care to all the normal and special students in all educational activities in and out of school.
- Demonstrate the highest standards of professional behaviour being a courteous and sensitive manner when interacting with students, parents, staff and the public.
- Collaborate in the development of school plans, policies and programs for all round development of each and every student without doing any differentiation between normal and the special students.
- Treat all students equitably, including those with disabilities or other special needs.
- Meet the individual learning needs of students and assist each student to maximize his or her learning outcomes.
- The teacher should effectively manage and implement programs for child protection and student welfare.
- Perform duties efficiently, effectively with honesty, integrity and fairness at all times.
- Provide all sorts of facilities for all students in schools and there should not be any form of corporal punishment or engage in any form of behaviour which could cause physical or emotional abuse to students.

SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. A similar study on a larger sample may be repeated.
2. A similar study on pupil teachers and stake holders belonging to other district may be undertaken.
3. A comparative study on large sample of attitudes of private and Government school teachers towards inclusive education should be under taken.

4. A study may be conducted to know the effectiveness of pre-service and in-service teacher education in order to develop positive attitudes towards inclusive education.
5. Attitude plays a significant role in selecting a job of teaching. A similar study may be conducted to know the pros and cons of different attitude of teachers towards inclusive education.

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