



Attitudes of Pre-service teachers towards the approach of Inclusive Education

Ms. Anuradha Ghosh¹ & Mr. Shuvankar Madhu²

¹ M.Ed., The University of Burdwan, M.A., B.Ed., Visva Bharati, West Bengal, India.

² Assistant Professor, Department of Education, The University of Burdwan, Burdwan, West Bengal, India.

Abstract

Presently, the concept of inclusive education came which beliefs in the idea that segregation is against the law of nature. But the adoption of this approach largely depends on the attitudes of teachers who can influence differently abled children to enter the classroom. The present study on the attitudes of pre-service teachers toward inclusive education was conducted following a descriptive survey methodology. The sample consists of 102 pre-service trainee teachers from B.Ed. collages situated in the Purba Bardhaman District. The study revealed that gender and streams of subjects had no impact on making differences in the attitudes of Pre-service teachers towards inclusive education. But depending on the location of Pre-service teachers' attitudes vary slightly. Moreover, we can see that there is a need for training and orientation courses related to inclusive education for rural Pre-service teachers to develop more awareness of inclusive education among them.

Keywords: Attitude; Pre-service Teachers; Inclusive Education.

1.Introduction

Inclusive education is a system of learning which include everyone in the classroom and also believe in the concept that segregation is against the law of nature. Over the last few years , there has been a paradigm shift in the Indian education system towards inclusive education to promote Education for all (Bhakta & College, 2017). In the history of education the system of education was divided into two systems which are special education and general education. Those who are differently able were admitted to special schools and those without any kind of disabilities were enrolled in general schools. However that view has been changed in recent times. Inclusive education encourages bringing all students together in one classroom and following the same curriculum regardless of their diversities (Aferdita & Stankovska, 2019). Ministry of Human Resource Development Draft Inclusive Education (2003) has defined inclusive education as a system that aims to provide favourable settings for achieving equal opportunities and full participation for all children with disabilities within the general education system. Now Inclusive education is playing a prime role in the education system all over the world which helps in educational reforms and prevents exclusionary practices (Singh, 2020) Inclusive education was adopted at the Salamanca Conference in 1994 and the importance of reaching people with special needs was reinforced during the Dakar World Education Forum in the year 2000. The Salamanca Statement stated the

intention of giving education to all groups of children (Lyakurwa, S.E, and Tungaraza, F.D. 2013). Like many other countries, india has adopted the Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education and a Framework for Action (1994). In this system, the school has to change its structure to include all of its students to be a part of it. The most imperative aspect of inclusive education is the attitude of classroom teachers toward children with special needs because it affects not only what happens in classroom settings but in the educational, social, and personal life of the children. Preparing future teachers for teaching in class has gone through a major paradigm shift in recent years. Now, teacher training institutions must prepare the Pre-service teachers in a way that they can deal with the increasing range of diverse learners (Sharma, U.et.al. 2006). So the attitude of teachers towards inclusive education is very important to analyze. Attitudes play a significant role in determining behaviour (Azjen & Fishbein, 1977). A good attitude can overcome all barriers and a bad one can defeat every advantage. pre-service training may be the best time to address the attitude of future teachers and possibly modify their attitudes about inclusive education as well as toward persons with disabilities. So in this specific study we are going to investigating educators and in particular pre-service teacher's attitude towards inclusive education.

2. Rationale of the Study

Inclusive education denotes that every educational institution should include all the children despite of their any kind of disabilities. It should include all types of children such as gifted, backward, and mentally retarded, learning disabilities, Socioeconomic disadvantages students, gender non-conforming students, etc. The Government of India has authorized the guideline Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 (PWD Act) to accomplish the goal of allocating access to free education in a proper environment to all students with disabilities till the age of eighteen years. This act aimed to endorse the integration of learners with disabilities in mainstream schools. UNICEF's (2000) report on the Status of Disability in India affirms that in India there are around 30 million children encountered with disability. The Sixth All-India Educational Survey (NCERT, 2000) reveals that 20 million school-aged children (6-14 years) out of 200 million need special education (Hazarika, 2020). A teacher is considered to be the most meaningful pillar in the field of inclusive education. To make inclusive education successful, specifically all the Pre-service teachers must have an understanding and awareness of the concept and policy of inclusive education. For this purpose attitudes of Pre-serviceteachers towards inclusive education need to be studied. In this regard Bhakta, D.K. (2017) pointed out in his study that 46% of total teacher-trainees had negative attitude towards inclusion of children with special needs in general education. Male teacher-trainees had more favourable attitude towards inclusive education which also found in the study of Lyakurwa, S.E, and Tungaraza, F.D. (2013) and it also revealed that overall Pre-service teacher's attitude towards inclusive education showed that the majority were not in favour of inclusive education. It has been reported that pre-service general educator and special educator both are enthusiastic to include children with disabilities into their classroom but special educators are very much concerned about practicing inclusion in education (Niharika and Vishwakarma, 2021). Landis, A.F. (2019) reported in her study that female students in the teacher education program are likely to be better educated about inclusion. Pre-service teachers of Malaysia find themselves anxious to involve in inclusive classroom setting as they didn't knew how to meet the needs of special need children due to lack of

exposure with the special need children in their teacher training programme (Nasir, M. S. 2019). We can observe similar result in the study of Mahdi, O.A. and Bukamal, H. (2019) but it also reported that Pre-service teachers of Bahrain Teachers College were generally positive and compassionate to children with disabilities and the attitudes of the Preservice teachers were also positive. Costello and Boyle (2013) reported in their study that pre-service teachers were positive in their attitudes towards inclusive education. It was observed that Pre-service teachers entering to the teaching profession with positive attitudes towards inclusive education are more likely to implement different strategies which promote an inclusive environment in the classroom. (Goddard, C. and Evans, D. 2018). Ngulube, B. Et. al. (2021) reported in their study that Pre-service teachers are aware of inclusive education, and they were willing to teach inclusively. Hamid, A.E.et.al. (2015) revealed that attitude of Pre-Service teachers towards including children with special need on general education class was positive. After analysing different literature from India and Abroad researchers found that some studies show a positive attitude as well as a negative attitude of Pre-service teachers toward inclusive education. We can remember the study of Costello et al., 2013; Hamid et al., 2015; Landis, 2019; shows that pre-service teachers have a positive attitude towards inclusive education. On the other hand negative attitude of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education also found in the study of Bhakta, D.K. 2017 ; Lyakurwa, S.E, and Tungaraza, F.D. 2013; and Nasir, M. S. 2019. So the researcher found a contradiction between the attitudes of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education and decided to investigate on it.

3. Objectives of the Study

For the in depth study of the present topic majorly four objectives were formulated which are described below:

To study the attitudes of Pre-service teachers towards inclusive education in compare to their gender.

To investigate the attitudes of Pre-service teachers towards inclusive education in compare to their locality.

To find out the attitudes of Pre-service teachers towards inclusive education in compare to heir streams of subjects.

4. Hypothesis of the Study

In association with the above-mentioned objectives, the following null hypotheses were formulated:

H0 1. There would be no significant differences between the attitudes of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education in respect to their gender.

H0 2. There would be no significant differences between the attitudes of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education in respect to their location.

H0 3. There would be no significant differences between the attitudes of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education in respect to their stream of subjects.

5. Design of the Study

The present study aimed to study the attitude of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education. After consulting many related studies, the investigator concluded that the descriptive survey method will be the most appropriate to successfully solve the present problem. In the study, all the methods which are essential for the research have been adopted thoughtfully.

6. Population

A population is defined as any group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common which is in the interest to the investigator. In the present investigation, the population or target group is pre-service trainee

teachers from B.Ed. collages situated in the Purba Barddhaman District.

7. Sample and Sampling

Measuring the entire population is not entirely possible. So, one has to draw a sample from the population concerned. So a small sample from the population was selected as representative of Pre-Service teachers. The representatives of Pre-Service teachers were selected through purposive or judgemental sampling techniques. So it was decided to select 102 Pre-Service teachers by purposive sampling method.

Table no.1: Detailed Descriptions of Samples as per Their Gender, Location and Stream

Teacher	Dimension	Categories	No. of Cases	Percentage
Pre -Service 102	Gender	Male	34	55.7377
		Female	68	74.72527
	Location	Rural	64	74.4186
		Urban	39	59.09091
	Stream	Arts	58	63.04348
		Science	44	73.33

8. Variables:

Dependent Variables: i) Attitude of Pre-Service teachers towards inclusive education.

Independent variables: i) Gender of Pre-Service and In-Service teachers

ii) Locality of Pre-Service and In-Service teachers

iii) Stream of Pre-Service and In-Service teachers

9. Data Collection Tool Used

For the present research work the investigator decided to construct a questionnaire. Only the roper selection of tools can ensure the reliability and validity of the data collected for the research. The name of the self-made data collection tool used in this study is: "Questionnaire on the attitudes towards the inclusive education."

10. Reliability

Reliability refers to the repeatability, stability or consistency of a tool. One form of Reliability is internal consistency, which determined by calculating coefficient/ ronbach's alpha statistic. This statistic uses inter-item correlations to determine whether the items are measuring the same domain. Cronbach's Alpha ranges in between zero to one. A detailed description of reliability score table is following table no. shows the cronbach's alpha value wise internal consistency.

Table no. 2 . : Cronbach's alpha table

Cronbach's alpha	Internal consistency
if Cronbach's alpha is $>.9$	Excellent
if Cronbach's alpha is $>.8$	Good
if Cronbach's alpha is $>.7$	Acceptable
if Cronbach's alpha is $>.6$	Questionable
if Cronbach's alpha is $>.5$	Poor
if Cronbach's alpha is $<.5$	Unacceptable

The investigator established the reliability of the tool by using the SPSS method to measure the internal consistency i.e. reliability of the measuring questionnaire. The calculated value of Cronbach alpha is .868 which indicates good reliability of the measuring instrument.

11.Validity

To verifying content the validity of the questionnaire content and construct validity was measured by the researcher.

12.Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Normal probability curve is a bell shaped and mesokurtic curve which is symmetrical on both side in its distribution from its average one. Hence, this distribution of sample was eligible for the parametric statistical calculation. From the above table no. 4.2, p value for Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test is **0.200** ($p > 0.05$). Therefore, the result indicates that the data is normally distributed. It is also evident from the table that p value for Shapira-Wilk Test is **0.07** ($p > 0.05$). So, it further asserts that the data is normally distribute

Table no. 3.Descriptive Statistics to Test Normality of the Data

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Total	0.065	152	.200*	0.984	152	0.07

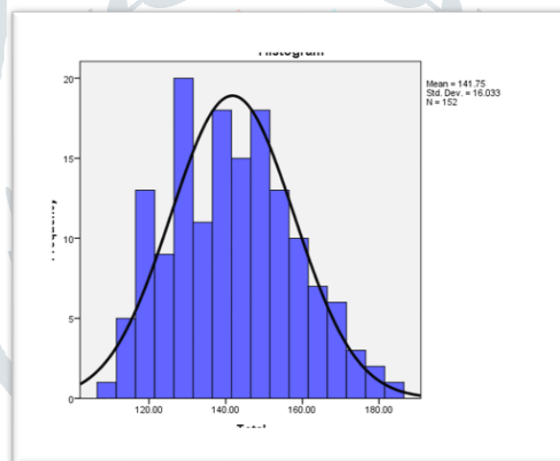


Figure.1 . Graphical representation (Histogram) of scores of attitude of Pre-service and In-service teachers towards inclusive education

In figure 4.1 the scores of Pre-service and In-service teachers towards inclusive education are plotted in histogram (N=152, M=141.75, S.D. =16.033). The bars in the histogram forms a distribution (pattern) which is quite similar to normal distribution. This nature of the data indicates that the scores are normally distributed.

13.Testing of Null hypotheses

In association with the above-mentioned objectives, the following null hypotheses were formed and tested with the help of inferential statistics.

H₀ 1. There would be no significant differences between the attitudes of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education in respect to their gender.

Table no. 4 . : Independent Sample 'T'- test of Attitudes of Pre-Service and In-Service Teachers towards Inclusive Education

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Total	Equal variances assumed	4.186	0.042	-0.196	150	0.845	-0.517	2.639	-5.732	4.699
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.189	111.47	0.85	-0.517	2.732	-5.93	4.897

From the above mentioned table number 4.6 we can interpret that in case of Levene's Test for Equality of Variances for the attitude of pre-service male and pre-service female teachers towards inclusive education calculated F value is .076 and p value is .783 ($p > 0.05$) hence Equal variances assumed between the groups. For testing the significance of difference between the mean score of attitude of pre-service male and pre-service female teachers towards inclusive education the calculated $t_{(100)} = -0.611$ and $p = .543$ ($p > 0.05$). Thus, 't' is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, we are unable to reject h_0 . Lastly, it can be interpreted that there is no significant difference between attitudes of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education in respect to their gender.

H_0 2. There would be no significant differences between the attitudes of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education in respect to their location.

Table no. 5 : Independent Sample 't'- Test Attitudes of Pre-Service Rural and Urban Teachers towards Inclusive Education

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Total of pre-service	Equal variances assumed	.076	.783	-.611	100	.543	-2.14706	3.51449	-9.11970	4.82558
	Equal variances not assumed			-.614	67.073	.541	-2.14706	3.49544	-9.12384	4.82972

In obedience to the table no.- 4.8 we can illustrate that in case of Levene's Test for Equality of Variances for the attitude of pre-service rural and pre-service urban teachers towards inclusive education calculated F value is .055 and p value is .815 ($p > 0.05$) hence Equal variances assumed between the groups. For testing the significance of difference between the mean score of attitude of pre-service rural and pre-service urban teachers towards inclusive

education the calculated $t_{(100)} = -0.3.870$ and $p = .001$ ($p < 0.05$). Thus, 't' is significant at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, we are rejecting H_03 . Finally, it can be interpreted that there is significant difference exist between attitudes of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education in respect to their location.

H_03 . There would be no significant differences between the attitudes of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education in respect o their stream.

Table no. 6 : independent sample 'T' - test of Attitudes Pre-Service Science and Arts Teachers towards Inclusive Education

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Total of pre-service	Equal variances assumed	1.834	.179	-.049	100	.961	-.16379	3.35135	-6.81277	6.48518
	Equal variances not assumed			-.048	86.554	.962	-.16379	3.40617	-6.93442	6.60684

As reported in the data of Table no. 4.10, it is observed in case of Levene's Test for Equality of Variances for the attitude of pre-service science and pre-service arts teachers towards inclusive education calculated F value is 1.834 and p value is .179 ($p > 0.05$) hence Equal variances assumed between the groups. For testing the significance of difference between the mean score of attitude of pre-service science and pre-service arts teachers towards inclusive education the calculated $t_{(100)} = -0.049$ and $p = .961$ ($p > 0.05$). Thus 't' is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, we are unable to reject the H_04 . Finally, it can be interpreted that there is no significant difference exist between attitudes of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education in respect to their streams of subjects.

14. Major Findings

On the basis of investigation and interpretation of results the investigator draws the Following major findings of the study

- The study depicts, the differences in the attitudes of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education in respect to their gender is not found .The findings of the present study were supported by Thaver et al.,2014.
- The study shows that differences exist in attitudes of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education in terms of their location. The results shows that Pre-service urban teachers have higher mean score than Pre-service rural teachers, may be this situation happened due to greater exposure of urban Pre-service teachers than rural Pre-service teachers.
- We can observe from this study that differences are not present in the attitudes of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education in respect to their streams of subjects.

15. Conclusion

It can be concluded from the findings of the present study that rural Pre-service teachers have a less positive attitude towards inclusive education than urban Pre-service teachers. Rural pre-service teachers need the training to deal with all types of children in inclusive classrooms. Teacher education institutions in India need to give adequate emphasis to this aspect. It is important that rural pre-service teachers must be exposed to students with disabilities. The majority of rural pre-service teachers in this study revealed that they did not have any contact with differently able children. The study also pointed out that gender wise and stream wise differences in the attitude is not present among the Pre-service teachers of Purba-Bardhaman district. This study reveals that inclusive education is very much important factor in today's society and it has some practical implications for teacher-trainees and to the teacher training institution as well. Finally, we can say that we have to develop a more positive attitude of Pre-service teachers towards inclusive education through re- framing teacher education programs. It suggests that there is a need of training, orientation course related to inclusive education for rural Pre-service teachers to develop more awareness of inclusive education.

16. Limitation of the Study

- In the present study the Kolmogorov testing of Normality has been conducted to the total attitude score only.
- The respondents were not much willing to respond as the questionnaire was distributed digitally and certain number of respondents were technologically challenged.
- Age of the teachers was not considered in this study as a categorical variable.
- For demining the reliability of the scale, the researcher used only Cronbach's alpha. It should have been more appropriate if taste- retest was used.

17. Educational Implication

This study investigated the attitude of Pre-service teachers towards inclusive education. Based on research findings and conclusion this study suggests little educational contribution. Which are enlisted below:

- The present study will be effective to understand the attitude of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education so that there will be a clear understanding of whether any lag in the behaviour of the teachers are present and effective remedies can be find out.
- As the study revealed that rural Pre-service teachers have a less positive attitude towards inclusive education than urban Pre-service teachers in the Purba-Bardhaman district, so, the teacher training institutions should organize some exchange programs between rural and urban institutions to discuss the views on inclusive education.
- As schools across the country and the world move towards more inclusive models of education, pre-service teachers must be prepared to meet this challenge through a sound knowledge base and development of appropriate attitudes towards Inclusive Education.

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