



Inclusive education and scholastic achievement – A study of especially abled children in Kashmir (INDIA).

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Abstract:

Kashmir is a state that has been facing political conflict from many decades which has acted as an impediment in the way of general education in general and inclusive policy in particular. On the other side Kashmir is different from other parts of country geographically forcing educational institutions to remain closed for three months thus increasing the problems of education along with other fields. Lack of facilities for disabled is vivid.

Key Words: Education, School, Inclusive Education, Scholastic Achievement.

1. Introduction

Jammu and Kashmir has adopted policy of free and compulsory education for all very early but very less attention has been paid in this field so far. For one to reach their full potential, for society to be equal and just, and for the country to prosper, education is central. In terms of economic progress, social fairness and equality, systematic advancement, national integration, and cultural preservation, it is fundamental for India to continue managing and educating itself on the international arena (Bhat and Geelani, 2023, p.1). There are very few schools working in this field that too with minimum infrastructural facilities (Imaniah, I., & Fitria, N. 2018). Apart from the infrastructural facilities various issues like teacher pupil ratio, school climate etc are the big challenges that system of inclusive education faces. For the success and accomplishment of the aims of this system of education the effective and efficient strategies need to be adopted. The point of concern for inclusive education is not just dealing with the students with learning disabilities who need special care but it has to also deal with students without any disability so that they don't get affected by involvement of exceptional children. This area has been widely dealt with by the researchers and many researches' have been conducted and most of the research findings are in favour of inclusive education. Dyson et al., (2004) confirmed no great difference on academic performance as far as children with special needs and normal children are concerned.

Most students are faced with extreme level of pressure by over accumulation of anxiety and thus face difficulty in making required progress in learning process (Bhat and Geelani, 2021, p.74). Many research studies have made concentrated efforts on the scholastic achievement of the especially abled students in such environments. Very few studies are in existencethat aimed to find the effects of special education practices on the regular education students. The focus of this research study will be to assess the impact of inclusive system of education on the scholastic achievement of especially abled children in Kashmir.

2. Literature

A literature review is an analysis of scholarly works, news stories, and different information relevant to a particularly problematic, field of study, or theory, and it offers a description, synopsis, as well as critical analysis of these works (Bhat, 2023, p. 39).

3. Statement of the problem

“Inclusive education and scholastic achievement – a study of especially abled children in Kashmir”

Objectives of the Study

The following objectives have been formulated for the present investigation:

1. To study the levels of institutional environment of the schools of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education.
2. To study the levels of scholastic achievement of specially abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education.
3. To compare the scholastic achievement of specially abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education.

4. Hypothesis of the study

1. Differently abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive system of Education do not differ significantly on scholastic achievement.

5. Operational Definitions of terms and variable

Following operational definitions have been formulated for the present research study.

Inclusive Education Inclusive education refers to the programmes and activities for special needs children to educate them along with normal children in schools.

Scholastic Achievement Scholastic achievement in this study means the cumulative marks gained by the

differently abled children in the previous two-year examinations.

Differently Abled Children Differently abled children for the present study refer to all the especially abled children enrolled in both inclusive and non-inclusive schools of Kashmir.

5. Methodology

The present investigation has been carried out by using descriptive approach. The details about the sample, sampling procedure, description of data collection devices, statistical treatment used in the present investigator are as under. The methodology of the study also includes the thoughts and writings of various authors in the stream of academic and research fields. Thus, the author utilized all resources available and carried out exhaustive studies for the present research paper (Bhat, 2019, p. 193112).

6. Population

The population for the present study consisted of all the differently abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive elementary educational institutions of Kashmir.

7. Sample

The sample for the present study consisted of specially abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive elementary schools of Kashmir. A sample of 400 elementary school students (200 children of inclusive and 200 children of non-inclusive elementary schools of Kashmir) from 56 inclusive and 4 non-inclusive elementary schools of Kashmir were selected by using disproportionate stratified-cum-multistage sampling technique. Since the union territory of J&K has very less number of special schools as compared to other states of India. Therefore, the investigator used disproportionate sampling technique.

8. Tools used

1. School Climate towards Inclusive Education (SCIE) questionnaire was developed by the investigator with the standard procedure of test construction. The school climate towards inclusive education questionnaire consists of various dimensions.
2. Information blank was constructed by the investigator for the collection of information regarding scholastic achievement of the sample subjects.

9. Statistical Treatment

The data collected from the field was put to various statistical analysis and both descriptive as well as inferential statistics like percentage statistics, S.D and t-test were used for the analysis and interpretation.

10. Results and Discussion:

Table 1: Showing the overall levels of Institutional environment of the schoolsof inclusive and non-inclusive system of education (N=60)

Levels of Institutional Environment	Inclusive Schools		Non Inclusive Schools	
	N	%	N	%
Favourable		-	1	25
Above Average	2	3.5	2	50
Average	33	58.92	1	25
Below Average	15	26.78	-	-
Un Favourable	6	10.71	-	-
Total	56	100%	4	100%

The table shows the percentage of levels of institutional environment of the schoolsof inclusive and non-inclusive system of education. A varied level of institutional environment was found to be possessed by the schools. 25% of the non-inclusive schools were found to possess favourable institutional environment whereas no inclusive school was found to fall in this level.50% non-inclusive schools where as only 3.5% inclusive schools were found to possess above average level of institutional environment. 25% of the non-inclusive where as 58.92% inclusive schools were found to have average level of institutional environment. 26.78% and 10.71% of the inclusive schools were found to possess below average and un- favourable level of institutional environment whereas no non-inclusive school was found to fall in these two levels of institutional environment.

Table 2: Showing the overall levels of Scholastic Achievement of differently abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education (N=400)

Grade	% of Marks	Inclusive School students		Non Inclusive School students	
		N	%	N	%
A1	91-100	-	-	-	-
A2	81-90	04	2%	02	1%
B1	71-80	19	9.5%	09	4.5%
B2	61-70	49	24.5%	11	5.5%
C1	51-60	90	45%	45	22.5%
C2	41-50	29	14.5%	101	50.5%
D	33-40	09	4.5%	32	16%
		200	100%	200	100%

The above table shows the overall levels of scholastic achievement of differently abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education. The findings recalls that out of 200 differently able children of non-inclusive system of education, 1% students fall under A2 category, 4.5% fall under B1 Grade, 5.5% students showed B2 Grade of scholastic achievement. The data also reveals that 22.5% differently abled students of non-inclusive system fall in C1 Grade and a very good percentage of 50.5% showed C2 Grade. 16% students of non-inclusive system were found to possess D Grade of scholastic achievement.

The statistical data further reveals that out of 200 differently abled children of inclusive system of education, 2% students fall in A2 Grade, 9.5% of the students fall in B1 Grade, 24.5% in B2 Grade, and 45% in C1 Grade of scholastic achievement. It was also found that 14.5% students of the inclusive system fall under C2 grade and 4.5% students fall under D Grade of scholastic achievement.

Table 3: Showing the mean comparison between differently abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education on scholastic achievement (N=400).

Group	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of significance
Children of Inclusive System	200	54.31	6.31	7.51	0.01
Children of non-Inclusive System	200	48.27	5.62		

The above table depicts the mean difference between differently-abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education. Significant difference was found between the two groups on the Scholastic Achievement and the difference was found significant at 0.01 level. As the mean difference of the children of inclusive system of education which confirms that the differently abled children of inclusive system of education have better Academic performance than the children of non-inclusive system of education.

The hypothesis no.1 “Differently abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education do not differ significantly on scholastic achievement” stands rejected.

11. Discussion:

On the basis of the levels of institutional environment it was revealed that both the schools of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education possess varied levels of institutional environment. 25% of the non-inclusive schools were found to possess favourable institutional environment whereas no inclusive school was found to fall in this level. 50% of non-inclusive schools were found to have above average institutional environment whereas only 3.5% inclusive schools were found to possess above average level of institutional environment. 25% of the non-inclusive schools stand 58.92% inclusive schools were found to have average level of institutional environment. 26.78% and 10.71% of the inclusive schools were found to possess below average and un-favourable level of institutional environment whereas no non- inclusive school was found to fall in these two levels of institutional Environment. **Panday (2009)** found that inclusive institutions lack infrastructure for running the system more with more efficiency.

On the basis of scholastic achievement, it was found that out of 200 differently abled children of non-inclusive system of education, 1% students fall under A2 category, 4.5% fall under B1 Grade, 5.5% students showed B2 Grade of scholastic achievement. The results also revealed that 22.5% differently abled students of non- inclusive system fall in C1 Grade and a very good percentage of 50.5% showed C2 Grade. 16% students of non-inclusive system were found to possess D Grade of scholastic achievement. The statistical data further revealed that out of 200 differentlyabled children of inclusive system of education, 2% students fall in A2 Grade, 9.5% of the students fall in B1 Grade, 24.5% in B2 Grade, and 45% in C1 Grade of scholastic achievement. It was further

found that 14.5% students of the inclusive system fall under C2 grade and 4.5% students fall under D Grade of scholastic achievement. **McCarty, (2006)** found that especially abled children when placed in inclusive classes performed better in their academics than the specially abled children enrolled in non-inclusive classrooms. **Rea, McLaughlin, and Walther-Thomas (2002)** have also confirmed that especially abled children when taught in inclusive settings earned high marks, committed no more behavior denials, enhanced school attendance and had than students studying in the non-inclusive system. The inclusive system of classrooms also provides good support including social support from classmates without disabilities, which in turn help in improving the academic performance to the children with special needs (**Pavri, S., & Luftig, R. 2001**). The study is in contrast with the study conducted by **Weiss and Lloyd (2002)** who found that children with differently abled children showed less academic performance when placed in an inclusive classroom. However, no description was given on how the performance was determined.

12. Educational Implications

Majority of the selected schools in Kashmir were found to have average instructional environment. Therefore, the physical aspect of the inclusive schools should be improved and the schools should be housed in the good buildings with suitable infrastructure for differently abled children and every school should have assistive and adaptive technologies so that the differently abled students shall feel safe physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually. Both the students of inclusive and non-inclusive schools were found to average level of scholastic achievement. Therefore, it is recommended that constructive pedagogy should be used in schools to enhance the academic performance of the differently abled students. It is also recommended that special training should be given to the teachers who are working in inclusive educational institutions to enhance the self-efficacy of the teachers so that students will get maximum benefit out of the education. Proper motivation, favorable conditions and remedial classes should also be organized for both inclusive and non-inclusive students to enhance their academic achievement.

Comparatively students of inclusive education showed better academic performance than non-inclusive students as usually children with mild and moderate disability are being enrolled in the inclusive schools where as children with severe disability are enrolled in the special schools. Therefore, it is recommended that special infrastructure should be developed the non-inclusive schools so that academic performance of the students are improved. It is also recommended in special schools, only those teachers should be appointed who have B.Ed. in special education.

13. Conclusion

In states like J&K, the learning environment and academic activities are very often challenged by Curfews, strike calls, shutdowns, encounters etc which disrupts daily classroom activities and teaching learning process (Bhat, 2018). All the studies conducted so far highlighted only a limited number of aspects. Hence, it was considered important to undertake the present study which is very in-depth and comprehensive (Bhat and Geelani, 2023, p.103).

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