Perceptions of administrators& primary school teachers towards inclusive education in Peshawar, KPK Pakistan

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Abstract: *The problem under study was to know about the perceptions of Administrators and Teachers towards inclusive education in boy's primary schools of district Peshawar KP, Pakistan. The study was descriptive in nature. The population of the study comprised administrators(Headmaster, DEOs, ADEOs, and circle in charge) andallboys' primary school teachers in district Peshawar of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A sample of the 238 administrators and 346teachers was selected through random sampling with the help of raosoft sampling calculator. The main objectives of the study were; to find out the perceptions of administrators and primary school teacher towards inclusive education; to explore the effect of inclusive education on the life of children with disabilities and to identify difference between the perceptions of administrators and teacher A self-made questionnaire was used as data collection tool, having five point likert scales by descriptive analysis, and inferential analysisconsisting of independent T-test were used to summarize the responses .Analysis revealed that majority (78.6%) of respondents were in favor of inclusive education &Both findings and conclusion indicate that there is no difference found between the perceptions of administrators and teachers towards inclusive education & both were favor of inclusive education It was recommended that for effective implementation of inclusive education in-service teacher programs and arranging of seminars and conferences on inclusive education to improve their knowledge about ways of practicing and accepting inclusion for a better tomorrow for our Children with disabilities*

Key Words: *Inclusive education, Children with disabilities, perception, Administrators, teacher*

Introduction

Education is a human right and a strength for sustainable development. Every goal mentioned in the 2030 Agenda requires education to empower people with

the knowledge, skills and values to live in dignity, build their lives and contribute to their societies.

Today, more than 262 million children and youth are out of school. Six out of ten are not acquiring basic literacy and numeracy after several years in school. 750 million adults are illiterate, fueling poverty and marginalization.

The marginalization & stigmatization associated with disability have created unjust barriers to inclusion; a person with disability is left disempowered not just economically but also educationally. It is estimated that more than one billion people around the world have some form of disability. Approximate figures show that the situation is worrying with about 62 million children at primary school age having a disability around the world and 186 million children with disabilities who have not completed primary school education. According to WHO (2010) 2.5% Disability Prevalence in Pakistan among it 43.4% are Children with disabilities. In these CWDs 96% are out of schools.(Rieser, R. (2012).

Programmes like Education for All (EFA) is the manifestation the commitment of international community to give education to every child and adult to fulfill basic human rights and individual as well as national development. Still this programme did not give enough attention to the most neglected and marginalized group, called special children or children with disabilities. This group of children always remains out of circles of such programmes which are designed to provide education to all. (UNICEF, 2011)

Gradually, all over the world children with disabilities are educated in normal schools, governments are interested in inclusion and for this purpose policies and legislation are internationally executed (Lambe, 2007; Sharma, Forlin, &Loreman,2008; Richler, 2012).

Educational programmes for students with disabilities have traditionally been built upon the assumption that a variety of service delivery options needs to be available Inclusion is based on social justice and it supports the provision of equal opportunities in the field of education to all children without differentiating them on the basis of disability, Inclusion believes that those students who have some special needs should be given the prospect to fully involve in the environment of class room and they must be given instructions according to their abilities. (Al Zyoudi, 2006)

Bowerman, (2007), says that inclusion is a system which believes that all children irrespective of abilities should be given the opportunity of learning in the same environment with necessary support and attention. (p.2) Inclusion is not only placing normal and disable students together but it is a vision that all children whether normal or disable are important. Gokdere, (2012), concludes

that in inclusive education system disable students are given education in normal education system. They are kept in a very encouraging environment and the needed support services of the special students are provided. Defines inclusion as an educational system that educates disable children in normal classroom, in this system students are kept in a free environment where support services are provided according to the needs of the students.

According to Pijl, Mijer and Hegarty (1997:106-107), inclusion has different meanings for Different people referring to American experience they state that:

"Inclusion certainly means 'place', a classroom in a regular school building, and a seat in an age –appropriate general education classroom. It also means access to, and participation in, the general education instructional programme, either full-time or part-time. And it means bringing special education teachers or special education paraprofessionals into general education schools and classrooms to help make inclusion work. Beyond this broad conceptualization, however, inclusion can mean very different things in different schools and among different professionals" (p: 106-107)

They also added that "Inclusion will mean a change in the school climate; it is a statement that a diverse set of learners is not only welcome in the school but will also be accommodated by their teachers." (p. 108)

The Philosophy of inclusion is based on providing equal opportunities to all. Therefore the responsibility of a democratic society to have full access to public education facilities and should not be denied this on the basis of their disabilities.

The Center for Mental Health Schools (1998) in California University Also defines inclusion as the practice of providing education to normal and disables students of the same age at the same environment. The system of Inclusive education provides the opportunity to normal and special children to communicate with each other which help them to understand each other and also removes stereotypes regarding special education.

Inclusive education could be defined in many ways. But the central theme of this term is that to address different requirements of different types of students by providing students with suitable environment to their needs.

The National Center on Educational Restructuring and Inclusion defines inclusion as making the availability of support services certain to those who are disable either physically or mentally to be able to receive effective education along with their appropriate age in the nearly available schools for the purpose of preparing the students to play their role as a good citizen of the society. (City University of New York, New York National CenterOn Educational Restructuring and Inclusion, 1994)

According to Brownell, Ross, Colon and McCallum (2005), Inclusive education is a continuous process and it's not only about the inclusion of disable students into regular school environment. Its focal point is to influence reforms and policies which could accommodate the needs of different ethnic religious, social and cultural groups and also to support the uniqueness of each child.

Why Inclusive Education

Inclusive education is like all other human rights. According to Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 which states that "Everyone has the right to education."(UNESCO, 2005: 12) on the following basses inclusive education is required and acceptable (Dark and Light Blind Care, 2008:9)

- **Educational Justification**

   Inclusive education is to build up such methods at schools to educate all children and respond to the individual requirements and differences that all children could benefit.

- **Social Justification**

   Inclusive education could change behavior towards diversities through educating all children at one place. It could help to develop non-discriminatory society.

- **Economic Justification**

Establishment of Inclusive Education is economically less expensive than to establish separate schools for different groups of children. The right to education of all could only be achieved when all schools start to accommodate all students with different cultural and socio-economic background and in spite of differences in learning capabilities, attitudes and learning potential. (Puri and Abraham, 2004)According to Mitchell (2010, 27) Inclusive education is more favored on the following basis.

- Firstly, students with special educational needs could improve their self-esteem and could benefit educationally and socially. The students without special needs could gain from their education with different students. They could acquire the qualities to live in a diverse society and environment.
- Secondly, it is now considered the right of the children with special needs to be educated alongside those who have no special needs.
- Third argument for inclusive education is less expensive than establishing separate schools for different children in rural areas and bearing its transportation and accommodation expenses.

Administrators' Perception Regarding Inclusion

The Principal who act as the leader of the school play an important by brining positive change in the school environment. Fullan (1992), in his research regarding schools improvement is of the view that principal of the school is the main factor in promoting or creating hurdles in the way of change in the school. Principal is the key to successfully implementing any developmental strategy.(Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1992; Hall & Hord, 1987).

Several researches have been conducted to ascertain the attitude of principal towards inclusion of disable children. It IS important to be noted down that the behavior and perspective of principal or administrators is an important factor in the successful execution of inclusion. Praisner (2003) states that the behavior of the principals affects the overall programmes of inclusion.

Arick & Krug, (1993) find out that principals are considered to be the biggest support to the teachers in successfully implementing inclusive methods in the school. A large number of principles were supportive towards inclusion but they were doubtful of that all special needs children be included in regular school system.

According to DiPaola, Tschannen-Moran, & Walther-Thomas (2004) Administrative leadership is one of the most important factors affecting the behavior of teachers towards inclusion of disable children in the mainstream education system. Principals can assist their staff in many ways for successful implementation of inclusion. The school principals determine the environment of the school and also to ensure that all students including disable students are educated in less restraining surroundings and offered some suitable housing.

Objectives

1. To find out the perceptions of Administrators and Government Primary School teachers toward inclusive education
2. To explore the effect of Inclusive education on the life of Children with disabilities
3. To identify the difference between the perceptions of Teachers and Administrators

Research Hypothesis

- $H_0 1$: There is no Significance difference between the Perceptions of Primary school teacher and administrators towards inclusive education

Research Methodlogy

The main purpose of the study was to fine out the perceptions & difference between the perceptions of Primary School Teachers and Administrators towards inclusive education in boys' primary school teachers in District Peshawar of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan. The research was descriptive in nature.

Population of the Study

The population for the present study is comprised teachers of all the Government Boys primary schools teachers and administrators (ADEOs, AADEOs, and Circle in charge Headmasters) in district Peshawar

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Sample size of size of 238 administrators from a total of 619 and 346 school teachers from a total of 3465 was selected from 8 circles of Peshawar KPK by applying raosoft sampling formula.

Data collection instrument

The data was collected with the help of self-made questionnaire having five likert scale as strongly agree, not decided, Disagree & strongly disagree agree. The researcher used these points to explore the perceptions of Primary schools teachers and administrators towards inclusive education.

Analysis of data

Descriptive statistic was used to determine the participations of teachers and administrators towards inclusive educations.

Results and Discussion
Table-01
Primary school teacher & Administrators perceptions toward Inclusive Education

Items	Agree %	Not decided %	Disagree %
children with disabilities(Mild and Moderate Disability) should be a part of regular schools	78.6	2	19.4
Teaching to children with disabilities with normal students in same classroom is a difficult task	36.5	3.3	60.2
Teaching to children with disabilities in same classroom effect the classroom environment	33.3	3.3	63.5
Teaching to children with disabilities in regular classroom adversely on effect the performance of normal students	24	3.1	72.9
Induction of children with disabilities in regular schools encourage normal students	76.9	3.3	19.9

Table-01-Illustrated the administrators and Teachers perception sregarding inclusive education in Peshawar. More than half of the respondents (78.6%) were agreed that children with disabilities should be a part of mainstream schools. 36.5% respondents were agreed that teaching to children with disabilities a difficult task. 64% of primary school teacher and administrators were agreed that placement of children with disabilities would not negatively affects the classroom environment and 77% were agreed that it encourage children with disabilities.20 % respondents were agreed that Parents of children without disabilities may not like the idea of placing their children in the same classroom where there are student with disabilities.

Table-02: Inclusive education & Children with Disabilities life

Items	Agree %	Not decided %	Disagree %
Induction of children with disabilities in regular schools encourage children with disabilities	83.5	4.2	12.3
Inclusive education can improve quality of life of children with disabilities	85.6	1.9	12.5
Children with disabilities learn more In inclusive setup	78.4	3.4	18.2
Inclusive education also create awareness among teachers and normal students about the needs and rights of children with disabilities	84.3	4.1	11.7
Inclusive education create concept of self-help among children with disabilities	70.9	2.6	26.6
Normal students reject children with disabilities in regular schools/classroom	12.6	2	85.4
Parents of children without disabilities may not like the idea of placing their children in the same classroom where there are student with disabilities	11.8	5.1	83.1

Table-02 illustrated that majority of the respondents (83.5%) were agreed that inclusive education encouraged children with disabilities.85.6% of respondents were agreed that inclusive education positively impact on the life of children with disabilities and learn more in inclusive environment.

84.3% of respondent were agreed that inclusive education is a source of awareness about the rights and duties of children with disabilities.
Only 12.6 % of the respondents were agreed with the statement that Normal students reject children with disabilities in regular schools/classroom. A small portion (11.8%) of respondents were agreed with the statement that Parents of children without disabilities may not like the idea of placing their children in the same classroom where there are students with disabilities.

A total of 346 primary school teacher and 238 administrators participated in the study. To explore the difference between the perception of administrators and teachers a simple independent T-test was followed, which illustrate (M=2.629 and SD =.332033) mean and standard deviation for Primary school teacher and (M=2.5714 and SD=51835) for administrators.

Result also indicated that there were no significant difference(*p-0.000)*found between the perceptions of rural and urban teacher towards inclusive education. The rural and urban areas of Peshawar were not far away from each other and both areas teachers having a same qualification, same nature of duty and schools facilities.

Conclusion

Present study was conducted with the purpose of to identifying the perceptions of administrators and Primary schools teachers towards inclusive education, from result it was point out that majority of the respondent's hold positive perceptions toward inclusive education, and they were agreed with the concept and implementation of inclusive education. It is evident that children with disabilities can learn more in inclusive environment and it is useful not only for children with disabilities but also for normal student as well. They were the view that children with disabilities not adversely effect on the classroom environment. The study highlighted that for successful implementation of inclusive education , the capacity of present teachers need to enhance on disability issues, like types of disabilities, special teaching methodologies and sign language and no special teacher were necessary in government primary schools for children with disabilities. It is also find out that the Inclusive education is the demand of modern time and it is beneficial for the promotion, awareness of right and needs of children with disabilities. From the study it was also highlighted that there is no significance difference among the perceptions of Administrators and Primary school teachers.

Recommendations
Below mention recommendation are on the basis of findings
- The study recommends that for the successful implementation of Inclusive education government arranged in-services training programs for teaching and non-teaching staff to update their knowledge, skills and inculcate positive attitude toward inclusive environment
- Government may arrange seminars, awareness sessions and workshop on Inclusive education to create positive perception particularly in policy makers.

- Capacity of the teachers need to be enhance on disabilities, special teaching methodologies, Brill, jaws software, communication skills and sign language
- It is also recommend that Prevailing educational policies and practices need to be improved in order to facilitate inclusion of children with disabilities in regular school i.e. education policies, school management, facilities and support services, curriculum, admission policies, schools building accessibility, evaluation and assessment procedures, etc

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