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A study on attitude of prospective teacher educators towards inclusive education

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Abstract

Teachers play a vital role for the education of all types of children. Favourable attitude of teachers towards children with diverse background is a major aspect of teaching learning process and also for all round development of children in an inclusive setting. It is very essential to study inclusive education as a paper in pre-service training period so that the prospective teachers' must possess positive attitude towards inclusive education. This paper examined the attitude of prospective teacher educators' towards inclusive education. A self-made Attitude Scale was used as a tool for collection and administrated over fifty six 3 years Integrated B.Ed - M.Ed. prospective teacher educators of Rajendra College (Auto), Balangir selected by using stratified random sampling. The study found that most of the prospective teacher educators (>93%) have moderately favourable attitude towards inclusive education. Male Prospective teacher educators' attitude towards inclusive education is higher than the female Prospective teacher educators' and there is no significant difference between the attitude of male (M=93.90) and female (M= 91.53) Prospective teacher educators' towards inclusive education as the obtained t-value 0.33 is less than the table value 2.00 at 0.05 level of significance. Similarly There is no significant difference between the attitude of Arts (M=91.22) and Science (M= 93.47) Prospective teacher educators' towards inclusive education as the t-value 0.88 is less than the table value 2.00 at 0.05 level of significance. Science Prospective teacher educators' attitude is higher than the Arts Prospective teacher educators' towards inclusive education. This study also found that the attitude of 2nd year students is slightly higher than the 1st year students towards inclusive education. There is no significant difference between the attitude of 1st year (M=90.38) and 2nd year (M= 95.00) Prospective teacher educators' towards inclusive education as the t-value 0.04 is less than the table value 2.00 at 0.05 level of significance.

Keywords: Attitude, Prospective teacher educator, Inclusive Education

Introduction

Education is the core of equality and empowerment. Though the right to education and to equality of educational opportunities is guaranteed by the Constitution of India, it is disturbing to find that more than half of the population of children and youth with disability are denied these rights and do not receive adequate schooling in an appropriate environment. Inclusion is an educational approach and philosophy that provides all students with community membership and greater opportunities for academic and social achievement. Inclusive education, as an approach, seeks to address the learning needs of all children with a special focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion. To be inclusive in education means that all students in a school, regardless of their strengths or weaknesses in any area, become part of the school community. They were included in the feeling of belongingness with other students, teachers and support staff. In inclusive set-up, irrespective of their individual differences, the right of everyone is promoted. The concept of integrated or inclusive education represents the latest trends in the provisions of placement or alternative programmes suggested in the field of education to the exceptional and disabled children. Inclusive education is a philosophy built on the belief that all people are equal and should be respected and valued, as an issue of basic human rights. The main streaming and integration aim at bridging the differences between milder conditions of disability and the normal peers by providing access to equal educational opportunity under the least restrictive environment.

To ensure one's growth and development and to fulfill the individual potential, every child has a right to education. The path to achieve this goal is 'inclusive education'.

The Right to Education Act reflects the need for inclusion. As far as the field of education of children with special needs, inclusive education is a recent development. Inclusion remains a controversial concept in education because it relates to education and social values, as well as to our sense of individual worth. But to make 'Education for All' and 'Right to Education' a success, inclusive schooling is very significant. One of the major goals of inclusion is to prepare students to participate as full and contributing members of society. Looking from a different perspective, inclusion does not mean 'dumping'. Rather it gives a message, "Everyone belongs to school and everyone is welcome to the school." Inclusive education is the need of the hour keeping in view the population explosion and availability of limited resources to meet out educational and other demands of all members of population. But, the success of this concept entirely depends on teachers, their commitment and attitude towards special children who are to be imparted education in inclusive setting

Rekha Chavhan (2013) [3] found that majority of pupil-teachers possess medium level of attitude towards inclusive education. It was seen from the results that there is significant difference between male and female student-teachers' attitude towards Inclusive Education. Female student teacher has favorable Attitude towards Inclusive Education than male student teachers.

Sanjay Singh (2013) [6] conducted a study on preparation of teacher trainees towards inclusive education. This study aims to assess the attitude of male and female teacher trainees and rural and urban teacher trainees towards inclusive education. He found significant difference between the attitude of male and female teachers and no significant difference between the rural and urban teacher trainees towards inclusive education.

Dr. Narendranath Guria and Ritwiji Tiwari (2016) [5] conducted a study on attitude of upper primary school teachers regarding inclusive education. They found no significant difference between attitude of private and government school teachers towards inclusive education. The result of the study suggests that male teacher's attitude is more positive towards inclusion than that of female teachers.

Anil Kumar (2016) [2] conducted a study to assess the attitudes of teachers towards the inclusion of students with special need into regular classrooms. He found a significant difference in the attitude of teachers in relation to teaching level, gender, residence and their experience. The university and female teachers appeared to hold more positive attitude as compared to school and male teachers.

Amit Sharma, Deepa Chri and Sugra Chunawala (2017) [1] found higher positive attitude of middle school teachers in India towards inclusion of students with 'orthopedic challenge' while concerns about inclusion of students with disabilities related to vision, speech and hearing. Also they found some negative attitudes of teachers towards pedagogic challenge in inclusive classrooms. Importance of technology in inclusive classrooms was supported by teachers with prior experience with students with disabilities.

Need of the study

Inclusive education is a challenging issue now a day, it is very necessary to maintain an inclusive environment in the present set up. Effective teaching depends upon the attitude of teachers, because they are responsible to built productive

citizens. As the base of the teaching profession depends upon the pre service training so that it is very much essential to trained the prospective teacher educators on inclusive education. The positive attitude would help the prospective teacher educators to maintain a learner friendly environment because they are trained in the concept of inclusive education. That's why the study of the attitude of prospective teachers towards inclusive education is very important, who will enter to the teaching field in near future. This also directs a fruitful effect on learning of the students. Hence, the present paper is justified to study the attitude of prospective teacher educators towards inclusive education.

Objectives of the Study

Main objectives of this study are

- To study the attitude of Prospective teacher educators towards inclusive education.
- To compare the attitude of male and female Prospective teacher educators towards inclusive education.
- To compare the attitude of Science and Arts Prospective teacher educators towards inclusive education.
- To compare the attitude of 1st year and 2nd year Prospective teacher educators towards inclusive education.

Hypotheses of the Study

On the basis of objectives, following hypotheses are formulated:

- **H1:** There is no significant difference between the attitude male and female Prospective teacher educators towards inclusive education.
- **H2:** There is no significant difference between the attitude of Science and Arts Prospective teacher educators towards inclusive education.
- **H3:** There is no significant difference between the attitude of 1st year and 2nd year Prospective teacher educators towards inclusive education.

Methodology

Selection of Research Method

The Descriptive Survey Method has been applied for the present study. This method is designed to obtain precise information concerning the current status of the phenomena and to draw valid general conclusions from the facts discovered.

Population and Sample

All the Prospective Teacher Educator of 3 years Integrated B.Ed - M.,Ed of Rajendra College (Auto), Balangir are the population of this present study. Out of these, 56 teachers are selected for this study by using stratified random sampling technique.

Tool Used

A self made Attitude Scale was used as a tool for data collection and administration. In this scale, there are five areas namely 'curriculum and method', 'Support to children with disability', 'Readiness of Prospective Teacher Educator', 'Learners Need 'and 'Classroom Setting'. The scale have five points having the responses 'Strongly Agree', 'Agree', 'Undecided', 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree'. The scale consisted of 25 items in which 19 items are favorable and 6 items are unfavorable.

Delimitation of the Study

Keeping time and resource constraints in view, the study is delimited to 3 years Integrated B.Ed - M.Ed Teacher Education Department of Rajendra College (Auto), Balangir.

Analysis and Interpretation

The resulting data are analyzed objective wise by using appropriate statistical treatment. The sample was divided into three groups (favourable, moderately favourable and unfavourable) based on statistical measure of mean. The results have been explained below:

Table 1: Attitude of Prospective Teacher Educators towards ‘curriculum and method’

SL. No	Statement	Mean	SD
1	Curriculum as per students need	2.53	1.28
2	Easy and Cost effective TLM	3.02	1.11
3	Appropriate use of methods	3.04	1.00
4	Use of multisensory approach	3.81	1.04
5	Teaching Science	3.39	1.09
6	Int. B.Ed & M.Ed to promote inclusive education	3.75	1.14
Pooled Average		3.26	1.11

Table 1 describes the attitude of Prospective Teacher Educators towards ‘curriculum and method’. It is revealed from the present table that most of the Prospective Teacher Educators are in the support of using multisensory approach (3.81) and the curriculum prescribed for integrated B.Ed & M.Ed (3.75) which promote inclusive education.

Table 2: Attitude of Prospective Teacher Educators towards ‘Support to children with disability’

SL. No	Statement	Mean	SD
1	Inclusive classroom	3.93	1.12
2	Adjustment with peers	3.58	0.91
3	Teacher’s Responsibilities	4.37	0.64
4	Implementation of UDL	3.86	0.90
Pooled Average		3.93	0.98

Table 2 shows the attitude of Prospective Teacher Educators towards ‘Support to children with disability’. It demonstrate

Table 5: Attitude of Prospective Teacher Educators towards ‘Classroom Setting’

SL. No	Statement	Mean	SD
1	Classroom practice	4.56	0.63
2	Suitable classroom environment	3.47	1.09
3	Improvement of normal children	2.72	1.19
4	Implementation of Inclusive education in classroom	2.72	1.19
Pooled Average		3.61	1.0

Table 5 describes the Attitude of Prospective Teacher Educators towards ‘Classroom Setting’. This table shows highly positive attitude towards classroom practice (4.56). The level of attitude of prospective teacher educators

that most of the Prospective Teacher Educators are in the support of the statement ‘teacher’s Responsibilities’ with highest mean score 4.37. Prospective Teacher Educators are also in favor of Inclusive classroom (3.93) and the implementation of Universal design for Learning (UDL) with mean score 3.86.

Table 3: Attitude of Prospective Teacher Educators towards ‘Readiness of Prospective Teacher Educator’

SL. No	Statement	Mean	SD
1	Training on inclusive education	4.44	0.93
2	Inclusive education as a challenge	3.46	1.21
3	Effectiveness of training	4.19	0.99
4	Separate teaching	3.39	1.18
5	Implementation of inclusive education	2.56	1.34
Pooled Average		3.60	1.13

Table 3 defines the attitude of prospective teacher educators towards ‘Readiness of Prospective Teacher Educators’. Training on inclusive education (4.44) and Effectiveness of training (4.19) are supported by most of the Prospective Teacher Educators. Implementation of inclusive education is least supported by prospective teacher educators with mean score 2.56.

Table 4: Attitude of Prospective Teacher Educators towards ‘Learners Need’

SL. No	Statement	Mean	SD
1	Benefits of inclusive schooling	4.04	0.93
2	Innovative step for child development	4.32	0.93
3	Addressing learners need	4.11	0.94
4	Attention towards girl child	3.86	0.96
5	Collaborative effort	4.30	0.94
6	Parents Satisfaction	4.00	0.78
Pooled Average		4.10	0.91

Table 4 shows the Attitude of Prospective Teacher Educators towards ‘Learners Need’. Innovative step for child development and Collaborative effort are highly supported by Prospective Teacher Educators with mean score 4.32 and 4.30 respectively. Other statements are also shows positive attitude of prospective teacher educator with polled average 4.10.

Table 6: Levels of Prospective Teacher Educators’ attitude towards Inclusive Education

SL. No	Indicators	Mean	SD	Categories of Attitude		
				Favourable	Moderate Favourable	Unfavorable
1	Curriculum & Method	3.26	1.11	1(1.79%)	54(96.42%)	1(1.79%)
2	Support to children	3.93	0.98	2(3.57%)	51(91.07%)	3(5.36%)
3	Readiness PTE	3.60	1.13	1(1.79%)	52(92.86%)	3(5.36%)
4	Learners Need	4.10	0.91	2(3.57%)	52(92.86%)	2(3.57%)
5	Classroom Setting	3.16	1.0	1(1.79%)	54(96.43%)	1(1.79%)
Pooled Average		3.61	1.02	1.4(2.50%)	52.6(93.9%)	2(3.57%)

Table-6 shows levels of Prospective Teacher Educators' attitude towards Inclusive Education it is leveled in 3 categories like favourable, moderate favourable and unfavourable. It reveals from the table that 93.9% of the

prospective teacher educators are of moderate favourable attitude category towards inclusive education whereas 2.50% are of favourable attitude category and 3.57% are of unfavourable category.

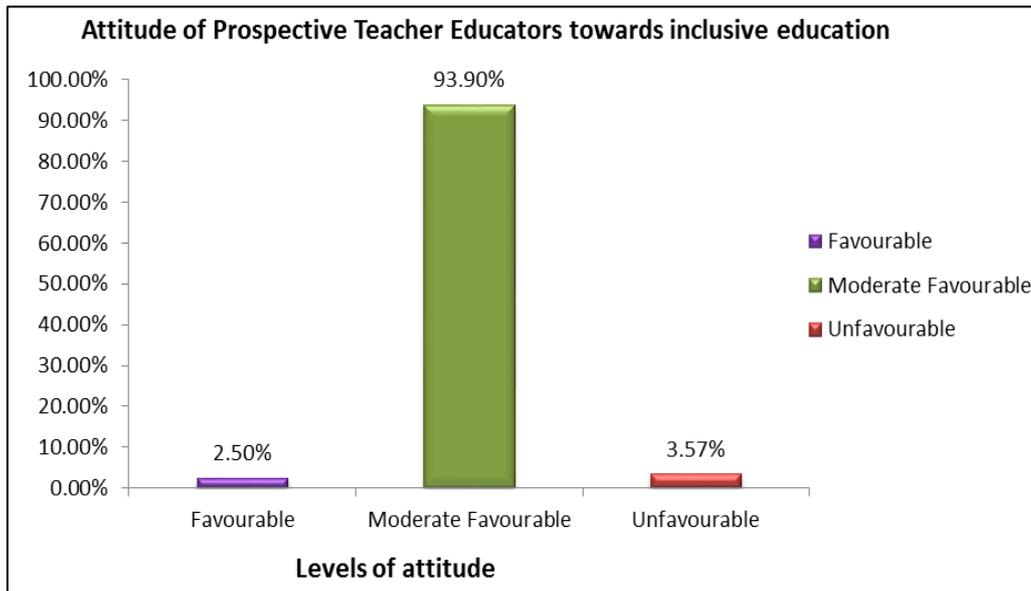


Chart 1: Mean Score of Prospective Teacher Educators based on the level of attitude.

Table 7: Comparison of male and female Prospective Teacher Educators' attitude towards Inclusive Education

Category	N	Mean	SD	't'	Remarks
Female	36	91.53	9.32	0.33	Not Significant
Male	20	93.90	8.01		

It is found from the table no. 7 that Mean and Standard Deviation of male prospective teacher educators are 93.90 and 8.01 respectively. Similarly same for female prospective teacher educators are 91.53 and 9.32 respectively. The obtained t-value 0.33 is less than the table value 2.00 which indicates no significant difference between the attitude of male and female prospective teacher educators towards inclusive education. Male prospective teacher educator's attitude towards inclusive education is higher than the female prospective teacher educators.

Table 8: Comparison of Arts and Science Prospective Teacher Educators' attitude towards Inclusive Education

Category	N	Mean	SD	't'	Remarks
Arts	27	91.22	10.63	0.88	Not Significant
Science	29	93.47	6.84		

Table no. 8 shows that there is no significant difference between the attitude of Arts (M=91.22) and Science (M=93.47) Prospective teacher educators' towards inclusive education as the t-value 0.88 is less than the table value 2.00 at 0.05 level of significance. Science Prospective teacher educators' attitude is higher than the Arts Prospective teacher educators' towards inclusive education.

Table 9: Comparison of 1st Year and 2nd Year Prospective Teacher Educators' attitude towards Inclusive Education

Category	N	Mean	SD	't'	Remarks
1 st Year	32	90.38	8.48	0.04	Not Significant
2 nd Year	24	95.00	8.83		

Table no. 9 indicates Comparison of 1st Year and 2nd Year

Prospective Teacher Educators' attitude towards Inclusive Education; it reveals that the attitude of 2nd year students is slightly higher than the 1st year students towards inclusive education. There is no significant difference between the attitude of 1st year (M=90.38) and 2nd year (M= 95.00) Prospective teacher educators' towards inclusive education as the t-value 0.04 is less than the table value 2.00 at 0.05 level of significance.

Findings and Discussion

Major findings of this study are

1. Most of the teachers have moderate favourable attitude towards inclusive education.
2. Male teachers' attitude towards inclusive education is higher than the female teachers. Again there is no significant difference between the attitude of male and female Prospective Teacher Educators' towards inclusive education and the 1st null hypothesis is accepted here. The finding was in conformity with the study of Shane and Christopher (2013) and another study by Ms. Rubee Mangain (2015).
3. Science Prospective teacher educators' attitude towards inclusive education is slightly higher than the Arts Prospective teacher educators' towards inclusive education. Again there is no significant difference between the attitude of science and arts Prospective Teacher Educators' towards inclusive education and the 2nd null hypothesis <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100006742605664> is accepted here.
4. The attitude of 2nd year students is slightly higher than the 1st year students towards inclusive education and the 3rd hypothesis is accepted.

Suggestions

- To develop the attitude, pre service training should be provided for prospective teacher educators in the concept of inclusive education.

- To develop the attitude towards inclusive education it is necessary to face the real classroom situation with diversified learners.
- Pedagogical knowledge on inclusive schooling must be provided to improve the attitude of prospective teacher educators.
- Authorities of training institutions should organised brain storming programmes for prospective teacher educators.
- Student teachers need to be sensitized towards awareness about inclusive education through various learning programmes.
- The policymakers, administrators and prospective teacher educators need to get oriented towards inclusive education.

Conclusion

To conclude, it is said that teacher is the key person to implement the inclusive education effectively in schools. Thus, it is very necessary to develop knowledge and skills in pre service training period to operate inclusion. Thus, an endeavour should be made to develop in teachers, the necessary attitude, skills and competencies required to deal effectively with children with various special educational needs. The prospective teacher educators with favourable attitude towards inclusive education will help in achieving that goal. The prime objectives of this paper is to compare the attitude of prospective teacher educators on the basis of their gender, stream and academic year, It was found from the present study that male prospective teacher educators have slightly favourable attitude than the female prospective teacher educators and Science prospective teacher educators have better attitude than Arts prospective teacher educators. This study also reveals that the 2nd year prospective teacher educators have more positive attitude towards inclusive education as comparison to the 1st year prospective teacher educators.

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