

ATTITUDE OF PEERS OF DIFFERENTLY ABLED CHILDREN TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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Abstract

Education is very important in everyone's life. For all-round development education is very necessary. Inclusive Education is a recently developed approach in India which mainly focussing on educating the children with special educational needs in mainstream schools. The aim of this study was to find out the gender and locale differences in attitude of peers towards inclusive education and differently abled children. Participants were selected by Stratified random sampling. To collect the data for the study, tools were prepared and distributed among the secondary school students and data is collected and recorded. The results showed that the female peer students and rural Peers have more positive attitude towards inclusive education and differently abled children.

Key words: Attitude, Inclusive Education, Differently abled children, Peers of Differently abled children

Introduction

The Education for All (EFA) movement means there is zero rejection in the enrolment of the education system which means all are welcome to the mainstream educational system. At the world education Forum (Dakar, 2000), 164 governments pledged to achieve EFA and identified six goals to be met by 2015. After that, a lot of policies and programmes were introduced in India to accommodate all children to mainstream schools irrespective of any dissimilarity. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamic Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC), Inclusive Education for Disabled at Secondary Stage (IEDSS), Right to Education (RTE) Act, Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan etc, are some of these programmes.

Inclusive education is a recently developed term in India where all children irrespective of their disabilities, admitted in mainstream schools. It means all students attend and are welcomed by their neighbourhood schools in age-appropriate, regular classes and are supported to learn together. In inclusive setting, the students participate in all aspects of the life of the schools, classrooms, programmes and activities so that all students learn and participate together. Inclusive education is about ensuring access to quality education for all students by effectively meeting their different needs in a way that is responsive, accepting, respectful and supportive.

The students without disabilities have to play a major role and are considered as the backbone in an Inclusive classroom setting. They support the Differently abled Children to a large extent. The students face many difficulties in the classroom, but majority of the problems are solved by them with the help of Peers.

Objective of the Study

The present study was designed to achieve the following objective:

To study the difference in the attitude of Peers of differently abled children towards inclusive education

Literature review

Kaur (2018) studied perspective of teachers towards inclusive education in relation to organizational climate professional commitment and curricular adaptation in government schools of Chandigarh UT. From the total 115 government schools of Chandigarh 25 were selected randomly by the researcher and a total of 300 teachers were selected from these schools. The results showed that teacher's perspective towards Inclusive Education was positively and significantly correlated with organizational climate, professional commitment and curricular adaptation. The independent variables of the study i.e. Organizational climate, Professional commitment and curricular adaptation were also found to be interdependent. The inter correlation between them showed that friendly climate of the organization leads to high commitment and helps in better adaptation for children with special needs.

Kumar (2018) conducted a study entitled 'Mainstreaming the differently abled children through inclusive education'. The study investigate the perception of resource teachers, secondary school teachers, peers of differently abled children and parents of differently abled children on Inclusive education. The study also investigate the difficulties faced by differently abled children in their classroom. The major findings of the study are- the differently abled children face many difficulties in their class rooms. Insufficient adapted facilities in the class room, lack of training for the teachers, problems of curriculum transaction etc. affected adversely to the differently abled children. The study also find out that there exist different levels of perception on inclusive education among resource teachers, secondary school teachers, peers of differently abled children and parents of differently abled children.

Methodology

Mixed method was used in this study for data collection. To collect the data for the present study, tools were prepared and distributed among the secondary school students and informative data is collected and recorded. The objective of the study is to find out whether there exists a significant difference in the mean scores of the attitude of peers towards Inclusive Education and Differently abled children among the subsample based on Gender and locale.

Sample

Stratified random sampling technique was used for the collection of data for the study. The sample was selected from the students of secondary schools in Palakkad district. The sample for the study primarily comprised of 600 peers of differently abled students.

Tool used for the Study

To collect the data for the present study, attitude scale was developed as the tool to check the attitude of peers of differently abled children towards inclusive education. The tool was prepared and distributed among the secondary school students and data is collected and recorded.

Analysis of Data

The objective was to compare the mean score of the attitude of peers towards Inclusive Education and Differently abled Children based on gender and locale. Independent sample t-test was used to analyse the data. The mean and standard deviation of the scores of attitude obtained for the test of significance of difference between scores are given in Table 1&2

Table 1

The difference in the mean scores of Attitude of Peers towards Inclusive Education and Differently abled Children based on Gender

Sample	N	Mean	SD	't' value
Female	271	109.17	11.21	3.296
Male	329	105.93	12.60	

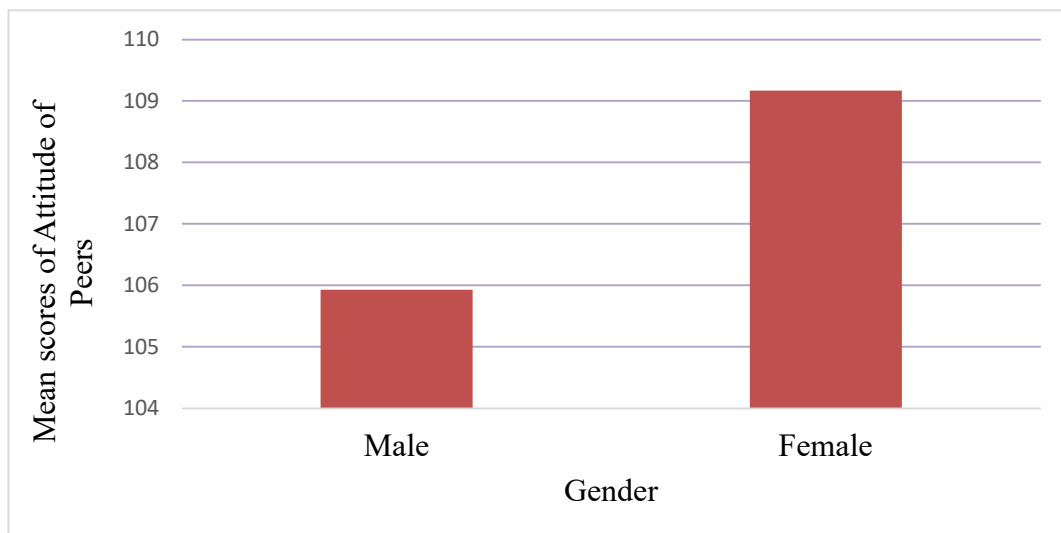


Figure 1. Bar Diagram showing the significant Difference in the Attitude of Peers between the Sub Samples Based on Gender.

From table 1, it can be seen that the t value is 3.296, which is significant at 0.01 level. It reflects that the mean scores of attitude of male and female peers of differently abled students differ significantly. Further the mean score of attitude of female peers towards inclusive education and differently abled children is 109.17 which is higher than that of male peers 105.93.

It can, therefore, be said that the female peers have higher attitude towards inclusive education and differently abled children than the male peers in their class room situation.

Table 2

The difference in the mean scores of Attitude of Peers towards Inclusive Education and Differently abled Children based on Locale

Sample	N	Mean	SD	't' value
Rural	391	109.88	11.05	7.170
Urban	209	102.74	12.60	

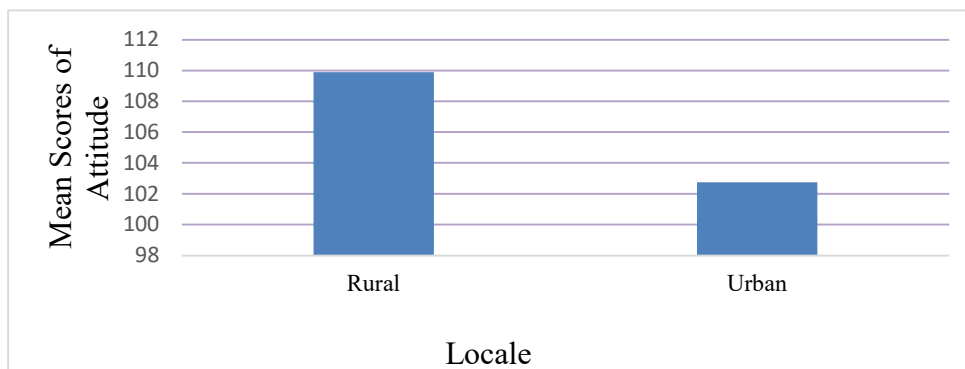


Figure 2. Bar Diagram showing the significant Difference in the Attitude of Peers between the Sub Samples Based on Locale.

From table 2, it can be seen that the t value is 7.170, which is significant at 0.01 levels. It reflects that the mean scores of Attitude of rural and urban Peers of differently abled students differ significantly. Further the mean score of Attitude of rural Peers towards Inclusive Education and Differently abled Children is 109.88 which is higher than that of urban Peers 102.60.

It can therefore be said that rural Peers have higher Attitude towards Inclusive Education and Differently abled Children than urban Peers.

Conclusion

There exists significant difference in the Attitude of Peer students towards Inclusive Education and Differently abled Children based on gender and Locale. The female peers have higher attitude towards inclusive education and differently abled children than the male peers in their classes. Also, the rural Peers have higher Attitude towards Inclusive Education and Differently abled Children than urban Peers. The positive attitude of Peers towards Inclusive Education help the Differently abled Children to lessen their difficulties in their classroom. It is essential that the peers and teachers have a clear understanding of Inclusive Education. The Peers need to realise the problems and issues of Differently abled Children, it help to develop the mainstreaming of Differently abled children. From the lower class itself, awareness classes should be provided to the Peers to improve their Attitude on Inclusive Education.

Limitations of the Study

- The study is limited to the Palakkad district only.
- The sample size is limited to 600 only.
- The study is limited to Aided and Government schools only.

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