

Inclusion of Hearing Impaired Children in Inclusive School: A Survey to Determine Teacher's Attitude

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Abstract

Education for all and inclusion of disabled students in mainstream schools is the topic of interest for all the researchers of this technological world. The present study was conducted in the Punjab, Pakistan, to find out and compare teacher's attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired in inclusive school. As the researcher intended to take data from whole Punjab so N = 210 teachers working in different public and private schools were approached via google form and selected as sample of study through convenient sampling technique. A teacher attitude questionnaire developed by Galisand Tanner (1995) was used as tool of study to assess teacher's attitude towards effective strategies for meeting the needs of all students, the support in their district for educational change, and inclusive education. The statistical analysis of the collected data demonstrated that there was no significant difference on the basis of gender of teachers. But there is significant difference found among teachers based on their work experience and age of the respondents. It was also found out that there was significant correlation among the responses of all teachers in all domains of the constructed tool of study so it was concluded that work experience and age factors influence attitude of any person and teachers, school administration and professionals should use this factor in attitude formation and concept formation.

Keywords: inclusion, hearing impaired, teacher's attitude, inclusive school

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Introduction

World's population is suffering from deafness/ hearing loss more than 5% including 4322 million adults and 34 million children and by 2050 this number will be increased up to 900 million hearing impaired people around the globe. In this way it can be said that out of every 10 individuals there one person who is suffering from hearing impairment (Young, 2020). Deaf people face hearing impairment and they use sign language to communicate with any other personnel. In adults the condition of deafness is referred to the condition that exceeds 32-40 decibels hearing loss is labeled as disable hearing loss. Experts suggest that the impacts of deafness and hearing impairment can be minimized in reference to their academic achievement if the suffered individual is early diagnosed and assessed for his hearing impairment. For example Callow-Heusser, (2011), elaborated that early intervention and management of hearing impairment may minimize the social and verbal developmental delays and can improve educational outcomes and language acquisition for hearing impaired children.

Literature related to hearing impairment determines various effects of hearing loss for example economical, emotional, cognitive, functional, social and verbal are few affect that hearing impaired individual may face (National Research Council, 2004). The most common and major effect of hearing impairment is communication between hearing and hearing impaired individuals. The speech development in children with congenital hearing loss is often delayed. A lot of factors are there that are the reasons of communication gap comorbid with hearing impairment. Hearing impaired individuals bear this communication gap due to their feelings of loneliness, Low self-concept and other psychological determinants (Marschark et al., 2015).

Since the past two to three decades, there is a significant inclination of the whole community of the globe towards placing the students with disabilities in mainstream schools rather than in the school designed for the rehabilitation and education of children with special educational needs. This move has been referred in different terminologies such as integration then mainstreaming in the past and now it is called inclusion. Inclusion is referred as the

integration of the students who are facing disabilities of any sort is now the part of the general education classroom. The textbooks and syllabus being taught in inclusive and general schools is same but special support and teaching strategies are given to special students for their effective learning (Pujari & Annapurna, 2015). The basic purpose of integration/ inclusion movement was to follow the motto of basic human rights, equity, anti-discrimination and social justice. All the children with special educational needs to provide them education and access to all the facilities and rights that all the other children of the regular schools are having and to give them all facilitation without discrimination of age, residential area, Sex, sect, race or any disability on the basis of content, teaching strategies, curriculum and any other educational provisions (King & Ryan, 2019).

Inclusion means to provide structural setting to the special needs students in general classroom with the support and guidance of teachers from special education in accordance with development of individualized educational plan of every student (Borders et al. 2018). Khursheed, Inam & Abiodullah, (2020) stated that special needs students may seek better and effective learning if they give a chance to get education along with their healthy peers in a normal and general education classroom.

Research has shown that there are variety of opinions in literature related to the relationship between teacher's gender and their attitude towards inclusive education (Van Reusen et al., 2001). A lot of researches support the idea that there is no correlation between the two constructs in a similar study conducted by Avramidis & Norwich (2002) demonstrated that gender is not much important factor in the provision of inclusive education in a broadened perspective that there is a correlation between the two constructs. Borders et al, (2018), however some studies found that teachers may exhibit differently, however some study demonstrated that there is a strong correlation between the two constructs and some teachers were more favorably interested and inclined towards the inclusion of students with disabilities with the normal students.

It is said that role of teachers attitude towards inclusive education is very important to make it successful. A positive attitude of teachers in accordance to the students with special

educational needs is the key of successful implementation of inclusive education. Provision of inclusive education in many countries has proved that inclusive education is a challenge for them as this program is failed in many schools. Inclusive education demand extra change in administration and infrastructure along with positive attitude of the institution (Batten, Oakes & Alexander, 2014). The role of teacher is vital in insuring fruitful learning for the students with Special educational needs (Ziaullah, 2012).

Ameye et al. (2015) negative effects of teacher's attitude towards inclusive education foster damaging effects towards inclusive education implementation. There are other variables that may affect the implementation of inclusive education. It is concluded that lack of training of teachers related to inclusive education, experiences of teachers with special needs children, workload and amount of time to be in contact with the community, bring multiple challenges in the social, occupational, cognitive and emotional life of hearing impaired children. The inclusion of hearing impaired children in mainstream school is the most challenging task because there is a communication barrier between hearing impaired children and hearing children and teachers.

Inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive school with hearing children is a challenging task for the teachers as well as administration because of communication gap between hearing impaired children and hearing children and their teachers. Evins (2015) of the University of Arizona conducted a study to compare the five hearing children and five hearing impaired children on the basis of their social behavior, communication participation and academic achievement. The results of the study clearly demonstrated that there is no significant difference in the hearing children and hearing impaired children in all above areas so it can be concluded that inclusion and grouping of hearing impaired children with the students of hearing children is a possible model to practice. In the light of above discussion, We believe that inclusion of students with hearing impairment is very important to enhance their quality of daily living and to minimize the existing communication gap between hearing and hearing impaired community.

Purpose of the study was to explore the attitude of teachers of Punjab province (Special Education Teachers and General

Education Teachers) towards inclusive education based on effective strategies for meeting the needs of all students, the support in their district for educational change and the attitude of teachers towards inclusive education on the basis of gender, age, teaching experience and the level of teaching.

Methodology

This was an exploratory research study as its major purpose was to assess the perspectives of teachers towards inclusive education. Survey-based method was used to collect detailed information regarding the attitude of teachers towards inclusive education. Population of study was all the teachers working in government special education schools and the public education schools of Punjab province. 1000 Google forms of the “Teacher Attitude qQuestionnaire” were sent in different whatsapp and facebook groups of teacher of Punjab province and the response rate of respondents was 21%. Sample of N=210 was selected as sample of study for this study through convenient sampling technique. Gender of teacher, age, level of teaching and teaching experience was asked from the sample before filling the scale. A detail of the demographic variables is given in table 1.

Teacher Attitude Questionnaire (TAQ) developed by Galis and Tanner (1995) was used as tool of study to collect the data. This questionnaire comprise of three sub-themes effective strategies for meeting the needs of all students, the support in their district for educational change, and inclusive education. It is 24 items six point Likert scale. TAQ was adapted and modified according to the geographical and cultural variations. For this purpose, it was applied on 05 senior professionals of special education school and 05 senior experts of general education schools to assess reliability of the scale.

Reliability analysis of the research questionnaire was found, with the Cronbach’s alpha whose value 0.85 this is greater than 0.7 and it specifies that this research questionnaire has good internal consistency reliability. The questionnaire was sent to 1000 respondents and the respond rate was 21%. N=210 respondents from all over the Punjab province recorded their responses via google form. Consent of the respondents was taken via consent

form before filling the questionnaire. Instructions to sending the questionnaire, confidentiality and privacy of responses were assured to the respondents before filling the questionnaire so that they take part in the study without any confusion or stress.

Results

The results of the study discussed as follows:

Table 1

Frequency distribution of demographic variables of the study

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Below 30 Years	112	53%
31 - 40 Years	85	41%
41 - 50 Years	13	6%
Total	210	100%
Level of Teaching		
Primary	162	77%
Elementary	21	10%
Secondary	27	13%
Total	210	100%
Gender		
Male	61	29%
Female	149	71%
Total	210	100%
Working Experience		
Below 10 Years	180	86%
Above 10 Years	30	14%
Total	210	100%

The above table showed that 53% of the respondents having below 30 years age, 41% having 31 – 40 years age and 6% of the teachers. 77% of the respondents were teaching at primary level, 10% of respondents teaching at elementary level and 13% of teachers were teaching at secondary level. 29% of respondents were male and 71% of teachers were female. 86% of respondents having below 10 years working experience and 14% of teachers having above 10 teachers experience.

Table 2

Teacher's attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom on the basis of effective strategies for meeting the needs of all students.

Sr.	Statements	SDA	DA	DS	AS	A	SA	Mean	SD
1	It is important to make modifications in the curriculum for students who need adaptations to benefit in general classroom.	0	1	1	6	45	47	5.38	.676
2	Students' progress should be graded based on classroom performance rather than only with standardized tests.	1	8	1	9	52	29	4.93	1.06
3	Our school or our district has a broad continuum of services for meeting the needs of all students.	2	3	2	11	55	27	4.97	.958
4	Inclusion of students with mild disabilities into regular classes is generally an effective strategy.	2	7	2	12	45	32	4.83	1.23
5	I have input into the programme of students with disabilities who are placed in my classroom.	1	6	1	11	42	39	5.07	1.06
6	Remedial classes are needed in regular school for children with disability	1	1	1	6	45	46	5.29	.863
7	Keeping academic expectations consistent for all students is important.	1	1	1	5	44	48	5.34	.828
8	Maximum class size should be lowered when including students with disabilities.	0	2	2	8	45	43	5.24	.850
9	The inclusion of students with disabilities into the regular classroom can be beneficial to the other students in the class.	2	10	4	16	44	24	4.59	1.29

(SDA=Strongly Disagree, DA=Disagree, DS=Disagree Somewhat, AS=Agree Somewhat, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree)

Table 2 explored regarding teacher's attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom on the basis of effective strategies for meeting the needs of all students, 98% of teachers showed positive attitude and only 2% showed negative attitude in first statement which show ($m=5.38$, $SD=.676$). 90% of teachers showed positive attitude and 10% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in second statement which shows ($m=4.93$, $SD=1.06$). 93% of teachers showed positive attitude and 7% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in third statement which shows ($m=4.97$, $SD=.958$). 89% of teachers showed positive attitude and 11% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in fourth statement which shows ($m=4.83$, $SD=1.23$). 92% of teachers showed positive attitude and 8% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in fifth statement which shows ($m=5.07$, $SD=1.06$). 97% of teachers showed positive attitude and 3% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in sixth statement which shows ($m=5.29$, $SD=.863$). 97% of teachers showed positive attitude and 3% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in seventh statement which shows ($m=5.34$, $SD=.828$). 96% of teachers showed positive attitude and 4% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in eighth statement which shows ($m=5.24$, $SD=.850$). 84% of teachers showed positive attitude and 16% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in ninth statement which shows ($m=4.59$, $SD=1.29$).

Table 3

Teacher's attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom on the basis of support in their district for educational change

Sr.	Statements	SDA	DA	DS	AS	A	SA	Mean	SD
1	I have support from my school management (i.e. Principal etc.) to try new ideas and implement creative strategies.	1	8	6	15	48	22	4.62	1.17
2	Students should be served in regular classes regardless of disability.	2	4	3	15	62	14	4.70	1.02
3	I have opportunities to talk and plan with my colleagues on a regular basis.	1	2	1	10	46	40	5.15	.953
4	It is important to keep behavioral expectations the same for all students.	1	5	2	7	48	37	5.09	1.02
5	My school/district is a strong supporter of inclusive education.	0	4	1	11	58	26	5.00	.891
6	Special education provides a valuable service for students with disabilities.	2	4	4	12	48	30	4.85	1.13

(SDA=Strongly Disagree, DA=Disagree, DS=Disagree Somewhat, AS=Agree Somewhat, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree)

Table 3 explored regarding teacher's attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom on the basis of support in their district for educational change, 85% of teachers showed positive attitude and 15% showed negative attitude in first statement which show (m=4.62, SD=1.17). 91% of teachers showed positive attitude and 9% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in second statement which shows (m=4.70, SD=1.02). 96% of teachers showed positive attitude and 4% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in third statement which shows (m=5.15, SD=.953). 92% of teachers showed positive attitude and 8% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in fourth statement which shows (m=5.09, SD=1.02). 95% of teachers showed positive attitude and 5% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in fifth statement which shows (m=5.00, SD=.891). 90% of teachers showed positive attitude and 10% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in sixth statement

which shows ($m=4.85$, $SD=1.13$).

Table 4

Teacher's attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom

Sr. No	Statements	SDA	DA	DS	AS	A	SA	Mean	SD
1	Regular teachers must spend a great deal of time with students with disabilities.	1	5	2	17	57	18	4.81	.930
2	Efforts are made to provide opportunities for mutual planning and collaboration among personnel in my school/ district.	2	16	8	19	37	18	4.25	1.39
3	Students should be grouped in ways which allow a wide variety of abilities in each class.	2	11	5	21	43	18	4.43	1.27
4	All students should be included in regular class to the greatest extent possible.	2	15	8	7	37	31	4.51	1.46
5	Slow learners should receive special help outside the regular classroom.	2	7	7	15	46	23	4.59	1.22
6	Opportunities for staff development are provided by my school that meets the needs for professional growth.	1	5	2	11	53	28	4.99	.968
7	Inclusion in the regular classroom will not hurt the educational progress of the student with a disability.	1	6	4	10	58	21	4.82	1.05
8	Placement of a student with a disability into a regular classroom is not disruptive to students without disabilities.	2	11	10	15	48	14	4.37	1.26
9	It is possible to pay attention to all students in an inclusive classroom	2	14	12	18	41	13	4.19	1.30

(SDA=Strongly Disagree, DA=Disagree, DS=Disagree Somewhat, AS=Agree Somewhat, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree)

Table 4 explored regarding teacher's attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom, 92% of teachers showed positive attitude and 8% showed negative attitude in first statement which show ($m=4.81$, $SD=.930$). 74% of teachers showed positive attitude and 26% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in second statement which shows ($m=4.25$, $SD=1.39$). 82% of teachers showed positive attitude and 18% showed negative attitude towards inclusion

of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in third statement which shows ($m=4.43$, $SD=1.27$). 75% of teachers showed positive attitude and 25% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in fourth statement which shows ($m=4.51$, $SD=1.46$). 84% of teachers showed positive attitude and 16% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in fifth statement which shows ($m=4.59$, $SD=1.22$). 92% of teachers showed positive attitude and 8% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in sixth statement which shows ($m=4.99$, $SD=.968$). 89% of teachers showed positive attitude and 11% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in seventh statement which shows ($m=4.82$, $SD=1.05$). 77% of teachers showed positive attitude and 23% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in eighth statement which shows ($m=4.37$, $SD=1.26$). 72% of teachers showed positive attitude and 28% showed negative attitude towards inclusion of hearing impaired children in inclusive classroom in ninth statement which shows ($m=4.19$, $SD=1.30$).

Table 5

Comparison on the basis of gender of respondents toward inclusion of hearing impaired student in inclusive classroom

Gender	N	M	df	t	Sig
Male	61	117.38	208	1.112	0.267
Female	149	115.30			

*P < .05 Level of Significance

There was no significant difference exist among teachers on the basis of gender of respondents toward Inclusion of Hearing Impaired Student in Inclusive Classroom. So it can be concluded that gender of teacher does not affect the teaching style of teachers and all the teachers were highly dedicated towards integration of hearing impaired students.

Table 6

Comparison on the basis of working experience of respondents toward Inclusion of hearing impaired student in inclusive classroom

Working Experience	N	M	df	t	Sig
Below 10 Years	180	115.9722	208	-2.585	0.048
Above 10 Years	30	115.4667			

*P < .05 Level of Significance

There was significant difference found on the basis of working experience of respondents toward Inclusion of hearing impaired student in inclusive classroom. It can be said on the basis of this research that experience and working with the children with hearing impaired brings an attitudinal change among teachers.

Table 7

Comparison on the basis of age of respondents toward inclusion of hearing impaired student in inclusive classroom

Age Groups	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	680.117	2	340.058	2.527	0.022
Within Groups	31052.783	207	150.013		

*P < .05 Level of Significance

There was significant difference exist on the basis of age of respondents toward Inclusion of Hearing Impaired Student in Inclusive Classroom. It can be said on the basis of this research that age and time spent with the children with hearing impaired brings an attitudinal change among teachers.

Table 8

Comparison on the basis of teaching level of respondents toward inclusion of hearing impaired student in inclusive classroom

Groups	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	517.634	2	258.817	1.716	0.182
Within Groups	31215.266	207	150.798		

*P < .05 Level of Significance

There was no significant difference exist on the basis of the teaching level of respondents toward inclusion of hearing impaired student in inclusive classroom. It can be said on the basis of current study that all teachers are highly concerned for the disable children and as they are strongly agree towards the effective strategies for meeting the needs of all students and the support in their district for educational change so all the teachers are strongly agree that hearing impaired children have the right to get their education with their hearing peers in inclusive school.

Table 9

Correlation of different domains toward inclusion of hearing impaired student in inclusive classroom

CORRELATIONS		DOMAIN-I	DOMAIN-II	DOMAIN-III
Effective strategies for meeting the needs of all students	Pearson Correlation	1	.390**	.355**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	210	210	210
The support in their district for educational change	Pearson Correlation	.390**	1	.434**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	210	210	210
Inclusive education	Pearson Correlation	.355**	.434**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	210	210	210

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

All three domains which were used in this study one was “effective strategies for meeting the needs of all students”, second was “the support in their district for educational change” and the last one was “Inclusive Education” having highly positive correlation. It can be said on the basis of current study that all teachers are highly concerned for the disable children and as they are strongly agree towards the effective strategies for meeting the needs of all students and the support in their district for educational change so all the teachers are strongly agree that hearing impaired children have the right to get their education with their hearing peers in inclusive school.

Discussion

Adequacy of educational responses in reference to the diverse needs of students with special educational needs creates an organizational culture that leads towards inclusive centers. Different authors define inclusion in different ways e.g. To provide the right of getting education for everyone, To equip every student with equal opportunities, hurdles that the students face in the process of learning and to promote participation of or students in physical and social contacts. inclusive educational centers should offer such facilities and support that provide all children the right to get their education, To flourish their Individual characteristics and strengths and to minimize their difficulties, paying special consideration to those groups that have done great efforts previously for educational system but now that have been excluded from educational system (Rosa & Angulo, 2019).

Education for all is the right of every individual so it must be encored and promoted. We must eradicate the common attitude of exclusion rejection and discrimination must be minimized that is very common in today’s society. In this sense, positive relationship and effective learning get prioritization for all students flourish and get promoted. Inclusive schools should work as an inclusive community in the provision of respect and dignity in the culture of coexisting culture of diversity. Inclusive school must show welcoming notes to all the students with special needs in spite of their impairments (Alasim, 2018). They should accept them should assure them that all the individuals of the educational system have

dignity, esteem, recognition for them and are trying to provide best services for their improvement. They have to make arrangements for them to provide various educational strategies teaching and evaluating models and forms of administration. Thus making them able to use their full potential and achieve their highest level of possible performance (Prakash, 2012).

We have to take consideration to this phenomena that the hearing impaired children have special educational needs regardless of their degree of hearing loss. The functionality of hearing Impairment is very critical in many aspects of normal life especially in the development of communication and in the development of language and speech. Studies show that women show better life skills knowledge and attitude as compared to men. More vigilant, active and willing towards arrangement of awareness campaign related to social economy student network (SESN) and to promote inclusion program and inclusion in the curriculum (Mapolisa & Tshabalala, 2013).

This relates with the attitude of early Childhood education teachers, showed a positive attitude towards the inclusion of material and content related to disabilities in the curriculum as well as improvement and facilitation in the acquisition of competencies incompatibilities to work with SESN. This significantly Positive attitude of both groups concluded that teachers of both infant and primary education are in great favour of inclusive education and had a better attitude for the provision of inclusion. It is find out death the teachers of early childhood education and primary education are fully equipped with specific preparation related to their educational task and therefore they have best knowledge and great compatibility then the teachers in higher stages (King & Ryan, 2019).

Young teachers have inclination towards the acquisition of skills and knowledge. The younger teachers feel themselves satisfied and well prepared to serve the children with special educational needs due to the trainings they received in this context and because of this other members of the community. Best of them with the value more positively attainment of skills and knowledge they receive to deal with the children with diverse needs. In this sense the teachers who have received adequate knowledge and trainings to deal with the students with special educational needs

value the attainment of specific competencies and scales not positively, They believe that knowledge resources and strategies can bring a positive change in the provision of better training and rehabilitation to the children with special educational needs as well as in the dealing of hearing children (Marschark et al., 2015).

Conclusion

It was concluded on the basis of the findings of the study that majority of the teachers of Punjab were strongly agreed towards effective strategies for meeting the needs of all students, the support in there district for educational change and inclusive education. Along with this it was also found out in this study that there was no significant difference in the responses of teachers based on their gender but there was a significant difference in the responses of teachers based on their experience of teaching and their age. It is also found out in this study that there was a positive correlation between the responses of all three domains of the teacher attitude questionnaire. So it was concluded that teachers in education department of Punjab were highly concerned about the inclusive education and they want that inclusive education should be in practice so that all the hearing impaired children may get there education with their hearing peers so that communication gap between hearing impaired and hearing community may be minimized.

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