

Awareness and Attitudes of Primary Grade Teachers (1-4th Grade) Towards Inclusive Education

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Abstract : The present research aimed at studying the awareness and attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education. The sample consisted of 60 teachers, teaching in the primary section (1st - 4th) of regular schools affiliated to the SSC board in Mumbai. The sample was selected by Multi-stage cluster sampling technique. A semi-structured self-constructed interview schedule and a self-constructed attitude scale were used to study the awareness of teachers about disability and Inclusive education, and their attitudes towards inclusive education respectively. Themes were extracted from the interview data and quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS package. Results revealed that teachers had some amount of awareness but an inadequate amount of information on disabilities and inclusive education. Disability to most (37) teachers meant "an inability to do something". The difference between disability and handicap was stated by most as former being cognitive while handicap being physical in nature. With regard to Inclusive education, a large number (46) stated that they were unaware of the term and did not know what it meant. The majority (52) of them perceived maximum challenges for themselves in an inclusive set up, and emphasized on the role of teacher training courses in the area of providing knowledge (49) and training in teaching methodology (53). Although, 83.3% of teachers held a moderately positive attitude towards inclusive education, a large percentage (61.6%) of participants felt that being in inclusive set up would be very challenging for both children with special needs and without special needs. Though, most (49) of the teachers stated that children with special needs should be educated in a regular classroom, but they further clarified that only those should be in a regular classroom who have physical impairments of mild or moderate degree.

Keywords : attitude, awareness, inclusive education, teachers

Conference Title : ICSRD 2020 : International Conference on Scientific Research and Development

Conference Location : Chicago, United States

Conference Dates : December 12-13, 2020