

# Parental Perception Towards Inclusive Education

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## ABSTRACT

The parental perception about inclusion of their child with a disability has received limited attention from researcher. But they are one of the important stakeholders in the field of inclusive education and their perception significantly influences the success of inclusive education. Both the parents of disabled and parents of nondisabled perceived inclusive education from their own point of view which is further results from various factor like – teachers competencies , institutional infrastructure , benefits of their children , own value system , interpersonal communication with teachers etc. These factors either create a negative or positive attitude among the parents that's result in either success or failure of this inclusive design. The purpose of present study is to explore what factors influence the perception of parents towards inclusive and effect of educational qualification and income level on their attitudes towards inclusive education. The present research paper has used descriptive cum survey design as research methodology. The data was collected from 113 parents of disabled children and 150 parents of non-disabled children from 25 elementary schools of Bolangir district of Odisha by self-developed attitude cum perception scale. The major findings of this research paper was parents of disabled children also perceive teacher's incompetency to teach in inclusive setting is the main hindrance to inclusive education

**Keyword:** inclusive education, parents of disabled, parents of nondisabled, attitudes

## INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education is an global agenda at present which is also stated as the primary goal in NEP- 2020 , ensure to achieve inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning for all by 2030 (SDG-4) . Inclusive education is an educational model that envision to provide education to all where the children with and children without disability will study together in same classroom without any discrimination. Successes of any educational design depend upon its successful implementation. For successful implementation of inclusion of disabled children in normal school depend upon the positive attitude of all stakeholders (Teachers, students and parents)

There are wide number of researches has conducted on teachers and students attitude towards inclusive education but the parental attitude remained a neglected area or received less attention from researchers. Parents are the key stakeholder; they have the sole authority to take decision on what kind education their children should get and in which way. This decision influenced by their perception and belief system. So, positive perception of parents towards inclusive education is important for the success of inclusive educational design.

Research literature indicates a wide range of opinion of parents towards inclusive education. Some of the parents prefer and support inclusive education in other hand some parents prefers separate education for the disabled children. Attitude of both the parents depends upon how they perceive the inclusive design. Both the parents perceive inclusive education from multiple factor. Both the parents perceive inclusive design from their own perspective and separate set of factors. The parents of disabled children perceive the problem or challenges of inclusive educational settings from availability of quantity and quality of institutional infrastructures in school, teacher's competencies, own ideology or value for inclusion, inter –personal communication with school staffs and benefits or threats of inclusive education for their child. Similarly, parents of non-disabled children perceive the challenges of inclusive education design from their own value about inclusion, perceived benefit and threats of this design for their children. All these factors either contribute to creation of positive attitude or negative attitude towards inclusive educational design.

### **Attitude of patents of children with disability**

Parents of disabled children before sending their children to inclusive education see institutional and psycho-social aspects of inclusive education which may be conducive or threatening for their disabled child. Parents who are satisfied with the availability of institutional, professional and psychological factors in institution send their child to inclusive school. Whereas, non-availability of these institutional, professional and psychological factors leads to their negative attitude as a result they do not prefer to send their children to inclusive school.

Empirical findings support that lack of competency among teachers in the inclusive school develops negative parental attitude (Jackson, 2017). It creates a fear among the parents of disabled children that the incompetent teacher cannot fulfill the educational need of their children. This leads to their negative attitudes towards inclusive educational design (Desai & Pradhan, 2016; Sarao, 2016; Das, A.K., 2013). In the other hand, availability of sufficient teachers and trained teachers in schools develops a positive attitude in parents of disabled children towards inclusive design (Sesay, 2018; Tabassum et al., 2014). The inclusive infrastructure like - Braille, hearing aids, projector, adapted chair and table, Ramps, disabled friendly toilet etc.compensate for their disability and allow them to participate effectively in teaching learning process. Lacks of these inclusive infrastructures in schools create a negative attitude in parents of disabled children towards inclusive educational design. Whereas, unavailability of these inclusive infrastructures in school will lead to create a negative attitude among parents for inclusive education design (Chan, 2016; Jackson, 2017).

Good communication, friendly behavior and equal treatment by teachers with disabled children develop a positive attitude among parents of disabled children about inclusive education. On the other hand, stereo type attitude and unfriendly behavior by teachers and others schools' staffs with disabled children creates negative parental attitude towards inclusive educational design (Mohanty & Nanda, 2017; Limaye, 2016; Sarao, 2016).

### **Attitude of patents of children without disability**

Parents of non-disabled children feel or perceive that inclusive education will develop good social values among their children, it develops their positive attitude. On the other hand, when they find the existence of disabled children in classroom is harmful for their children or hampers the learning progress of their child, they show negative attitude.

It has been found that when a parent is from such a cultural back ground where equality is values, then he or she will have a positive attitude towards inclusive education (Sessay, 2018). In the other hand the stereo typical values in the conservative social context may cause for negative parental attitude towards inclusive education. It has been reported that when the parents values for development of skills and attributes like cooperation, adjustment, sharing, caring and tolerance among their children, they have a positive attitude for inclusive education (Sharma & Tory, 2019). On the other hand parental perception and belief that teacher's high importance and focus on disabled children only in inclusive class and neglect their children, which hampers learning progress of their non-disabled children, leads to their negative attitude towards the inclusive education design.

Parents of children without disabilities' positive or negative attitude are also influenced by nature or magnitude of disability of disabled children with whom their child will study. It has been reported that parents of non-disabled children have positive attitude for educational inclusion of mild or moderate level disabled children in normal school but have negative attitude for inclusion of sever disabled children as they believe their child will learn undesirable behavior from extreme disabled children. It has been found that the negative parental attitude develops due anticipation of physical harm done by disabled students to their children (Godwin, 2013; Raffrty& Griffin 2005). Similarly, their attitude towards inclusive design also depends upon nature of disabled children to be included. It has been found that parents have positive attitude for inclusion of locomotors, visually and hearing-impaired children in normal class but negative attitude for inclusion of mentally retired and emotionally disturbed children in inclusive education (McCoy and Banks, 2012).

### **Effect of socioeconomic status on parental attitude**

The attitudes of both parents of disabled and non-disabled children are formed by perception about various aspects of inclusive design. But their attitude and perception are not uniform. Research literature supports that parental socio-economic status is a significant predictor of their attitude. Socio-economic status as a composite variable includes both income and educational status. Research literatures support that educational qualification of parents of disabled children has significant effect on their attitude cum perception towards inclusive education. It states that highly educated parents have more positive attitude towards inclusive education and less educated parents have negative attitude. It has been found that parents from high income group have more positive attitude toward inclusive education (Bang & Kim ,2002; Leyser& Kirk, 2014) and parents from low economic status have less positive attitude towards inclusive educational design (Most &Ingber, 2016).

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. To find out the attitude cum perceived challenges of parents of differently abled children towards inclusive education in relation to income and educational qualification
2. To find out the attitude cum perceived challenges of parents of non-disabled children towards inclusive education in relation to income and educational qualification

### **Hypotheses**

**H<sub>01</sub>** There exists no significant difference in attitude cum perceived challenges of parents of differently abled children towards inclusive education among high (Above 20,000), moderate (up to 20,000/- P.M) and low income (up to 10,000/-P.M) group parents.

**H<sub>1</sub>.** There exists significant difference in attitude cum perceived challenges of parents of non-disabled children towards inclusive education among high (Above 20,000), moderate (up to 20,000/- P.M) and low income (up to 10,000/-P.M) group parents.

**H<sub>2</sub>.** There exists significant difference in attitude cum perceived challenges of parents of differently abled children towards inclusive education among highly educated (studied above graduation), moderate educated (studied up to intermediate) and less educated (up to 8<sup>th</sup> standard)

**H<sub>3</sub>** There exists significant difference in attitude cum perceived challenges of parents of non-disabled children towards inclusive education among highly educated (studied above graduation), moderate educated (studied up to intermediate) and less educated (up to 8<sup>th</sup> standard).

### Method and participants

The preset study was conducted by Descriptive method with Survey design. All the parents of both disabled children and nondisabled children of odisha constitute the population of present study. 113 parents of differently abled children and 150 parents of non disabled children from bolangir district were selected as sample for data collection through purposive sampling technique. The strata for both parents of differently abled and non disabled children are Income level and educational status. Two attitudes cum perceived challenges Inventories; one for parents of differently abled children and one for parents of non disabled children.

### Findings and discussion

In relation to income status of parents of disabled children, who are from low income group, i.e. monthly income is up to 10000/- per month perceives more challenges and have more negative attitude than both moderate and high income group parents. Educational qualification wise, it is evident that parents of Differently abled children who have studies up to 8<sup>th</sup> standard (less educated) perceive inclusive design as more challenging than both moderate and highly educated parents. Parents of high income group perceive teachers' competencies and infrastructural related dimension as more challenging as compared to middle and low income group, the low income group parents perceive ideology and threats related challenges more in compare to moderate and high income group parents, but the middle income group parents perceived communication related dimensions as more challenging than low and high income group parents. Similarly, highly educated parents perceive teachers competencies and infrastructure as more challenging for their children where as less educated parents perceived communication with staff, threats of inclusive education and own ideology as more challenging.

In case of parents of children without disability, the result is similar less educated perceived more threats and have negative ideology towards inclusive education than moderate and highly qualified parents. But, income levels of parents of nondisabled only have effect on value system no significant effect found on perceived threats related challenges.

### Conclusion

The parents who have children without disability fear that their children may neglected and get little attention by the teacher which will hamper their academic progress because of the inclusion of disabled children in same classroom. But, educated parents as they are aware of this design and its benefits for their children they have supportive and welcoming attitude for the children with disability. Whereas, parents of children with disability concerned about competencies of teachers to handle their children

needs along with non-disabled peer, attitude of school staffs towards their children and inclusive infrastructure to help easy access of their children to regular school. Presence of all these factors creates a positive attitude among parents of disabled children towards inclusive design.

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