

Survey of Educators' Awareness in Establishing a Supportive and Accessible Learning Condition for Pupils with Disability in Mainstream Schools of the Anand Town, Gujarat

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Abstract

The title of present study is 'Survey of Educators' Awareness in Establishing a Supportive and Accessible Learning Condition for Pupils with Disability in Mainstream Schools of the Anand Town, Gujarat.' The central aim of this research focuses upon Conducive and Obstacle free classroom environments and Obstacle free school environment to study the awareness among the concerned teachers. (In this study, 30 general teachers of mainstream schools were selected in a convenient manner. The questionnaire as a tool for data collection was made by the researcher and got it validated by the experts. The data analysis was done using Windows-10's MS Office application software by the researcher. The results found that in the mainstream schools, the percent of educators' awareness was found to be 10%, 20% in relation to creating conducive & obstacle free classroom environment & obstacle free school environments for providing education to pupils with disabilities.

Keywords: Pupils with Disability, classroom/school environment, mainstream schools, conducive and obstacle free environment/climate

Introduction

"Pupils, who learn together, learn to live together." The concept of 'Inclusive Education' refers to the principle that all students should attend and be embraced by their local schools in age-appropriate, standard classrooms, and receive support to learn, contribute, and engage in all aspect of school days. Education is the key and a foundation of upgradation, growth to a nation for all types of pupils irrespective of rapid learners, slow learners, average learners or special educational -need learners. The review of past studies reveals the fact that- it's difficult to recognize those pupils with special educational needs due to unstructured strategies & policies which are the vital obstacles to access, equity, enrolment & participation into mainstream.

The United Nations' Millennium Development Goal 2 (MDG), UNESCO's (2010) Education For All (EFA), and the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG) on Quality Education collectively advocate for the global aspiration of augmenting access to foundational, high-calibre education for all learners. The international dedication towards realizing MDG-2, EFA, and SDG-4 has manifested tangible progress. According to the 2015 Millennium Development Goals Report, the net enrolment rate in primary education across the developing world has escalated by 8 percentage points since 2000, reaching a

commendable 91 percent, while the global population of out-of-school children has diminished by almost fifty percent, now estimated at approximately 57 million.

The National Policy on Education 1986 recommended 'removal of disparities' to achieve the goal line of providing unrestricted educational opportunity to each child by 2015. The central obstacles leading to above discussed points indicated that, there are shortage of services related to early recognition & intervention services, negative/improper attitudes of guardians/parents & educators, insufficient teacher training, inflexible curriculum, shortage of expert/professional to facilitate inclusion & proper teaching equipment at elementary & secondary school levels affecting the education & growth of the students with special needs.

Need for the Study

For creating a conducive and barrier-free environment for pupils with disabilities in mainstream field, the instructors in mainstream schools who engage with such students are acutely cognizant of the myriad impediments encountered by these pupils. Till date, no research has been conducted in this area, thus the current study- 'Survey of Educators' Awareness in Establishing a Supportive and Accessible Learning Condition for Pupils with Disability in Mainstream Schools of the Anand Town, Gujarat' is been conducted.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the knowledge of educators in creating conducive, obstacle free **classroom environments** for providing education to pupils with disability of mainstream schools in the Anand town of Gujarat
2. To study an awareness of educators in creating conducive, obstacle free **school environments** for providing education to pupils with disability of mainstream schools in the Anand town of Gujarat.

Research Questions

1. What is the percent of an awareness of educators in creating **conductive, obstacle free classroom environments** for providing education to pupils with disability of mainstream schools in the Anand town of Gujarat?
2. What is the percent of an awareness of educators in creating **conductive, obstacle free school environments** for providing education to pupils with disability of mainstream schools in the Anand town of Gujarat?

Review of Past Studies

The existing study strives to show obstacles of mainstream school experienced by "Pupils with Special Needs."

In his 1984 study titled "Retention of Movement Cues by Visually Impaired Persons," Toole, T. examined several factors, including visual impairments, kinaesthetic perception, mobility among the visually handicapped, college students, and motor development. The study involved a sample of 11 visually impaired and 11 sighted college students, and it was found that both groups were equally proficient in using the kinaesthetic system to remember distance and location cues. However, visually impaired students displayed significantly more variability in reproducing movements compared to their sighted counterparts.

In their 1991 study titled "Development of a School Building Model for Educating Students with Handicaps and At-Risk Students in General Education Classrooms," Jenkins, J.R., Jewell, M., Leicester, N., Jenkins, L., and Troutner, N.M. found that the cross-age tutoring program did not have any significant impact on oral reading or basic academic skills, including math, written expression, spelling, and reading achievement, irrespective of the type of student (regular, remedial, or special education).

The MHRD's 2014 Guidelines for Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs (CWSN) also address key challenges and issues in the education of CWSN. These include the assessment of children with special educational needs (CESN), a shortage of resource teachers, inadequately equipped resource rooms, the removal of architectural barriers, and ensuring quality access to education for CWSN, among others.

-Guidelines given in adoption by the United Nations General Assembly-13th December, 2006 with respect to UNCRPD.

Research Approach and Methods

Research Design: The design of the current study is survey-based. In contemporary scientific research, surveys are widely regarded as a fundamental and commonly used method for data collection. For gathering data, both purposive and random sampling techniques were employed.

Sampling: Total sample 30 regular teachers of mainstream schools were selected from Anand town of Gujarat state. A total of 30 educators from mainstream schools were chosen as respondents for data collection in this study.

Development of Tools: The questionnaire comprising of total 30 questions was designed as the main instrument for data collection in this study. A preliminary version of the questionnaire was created to evaluate the awareness of mainstream school educators regarding a barrier-free physical environment for children with disabilities in the following areas: 1. Conducive, Obstacle free classroom environment, 2. Conducive, Obstacle-free school environment.

Validation: To ensure the validity of the questionnaire, a validity test was conducted with the assistance of 8 judges, each with over 6 years of experience in the field of regular education for students with disabilities. The judges were provided with detailed instructions and asked to suggest modifications or add any questions they deemed relevant. Based on their feedback, the questionnaire was revised and finalized. The questions that were rated as highly appropriate (80% or more) by the judges, specifically 30 questions, were selected from key areas of obstacles after final revisions. To ensure accurate responses to the chosen questions, objective-type questions with four distractors were incorporated into the tool.

Scoring: A correct response to a question was awarded 1 point, while an incorrect response received 0 points. Therefore, a total of 30 samples were considered for this research study.

Data Compilation: For the present study, the final data compilation was done with the general educators working in the mainstream schools. Data collected by the researcher was done individually.

Data Analysis: After completion of the data collection process, the data were analysed by the researcher herself. For it, Windows 10 was used and with the help of MS-Excel Software. Through it, the percent of the data was extracted and analysed manually.

Results, Conclusions and Suggestions

In accordance with the established objectives and research questions, the data was analysed by determin-

ning the percentage of mainstream school educators demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of a conducive, obstacle-free environment with regard to: 1. Conducive, Obstacle-free **classroom environment**, 2. Conducive, Obstacle-free **school environment** shown under:

Table 1: Awareness of general educators has been shown to create Conducive, Obstacle free classroom environment for providing education to disabled pupils of mainstream schools in the Anand town of Gujarat state.

Sample	Sample Size	Arenas	Awareness	Lack of Awareness
General Educators	30	Conducive, Obstacle-free classroom environment	10%	90%

Explanation: It can be clearly observed from the above table that, in the mainstream schools 10% of the general educators awareness was found in creating conducive, obstacle-free environment for providing education to pupils with disabilities and 90% of the general educators were found to be unaware of the awareness, which is of concern in the matter. To provide education to pupils with disabilities, it's vital to be aware about –How to provide conducive and obstacle-free environment to them as the educators are the focal point of imparting an education to the pupils. In the present study, it's believed that the clatter/noise level of the classroom, ramp in the obstacle-free environment, relation of interpretation of different languages, etc. contributed to the above result. It seemed that the educators had a little awareness about creating a conducive classroom environment that creates less problems in pupils' educational achievement. Infact, it becomes mandatory on the part of an educator to be aware about creating and providing friendly, conducive and obstacle free climate to the pupils in the classroom.

Table 2: Awareness of general educators has been shown to create Conducive, Obstacle-free school environment for providing education to disabled pupils of mainstream schools in the Anand town of Gujarat state.

Sample	Sample Size	Arenas	Awareness	Lack of Awareness
General Educators	30	Conducive, Obstacle free school environment	20%	80%

Explanation: It can be seen from the above table that, in the mainstream schools, 20% of the average educators' awareness was found in creating an uninterrupted environment for providing education to the disabled educand and 80% of the general educators were found to be unaware about the awareness on the same!

Conclusion: It includes following points: -

1. The Government should do some educational promotion upon obstacles-free design and integrating

the field of low institution, academic research, suggestions and remedial measures to create conducive environment in the classroom.

2. From several policies/strategies and framework given by the legislation to accompany it, its needful to realize importance of providing obstacle free classroom and school environment to the pupils.
3. Proper induction programme, orientation programmes or training programmes should be provided to the general educators either in the form of workshop, seminars, symposiums or training at the schools.

Though some problems are there related to person with disabilities, pupils in the schools/classroom, India still is in a stage of progress of overall developments of the disabled pupils in a short time as per the planning made by the professionals. Our nation can develop, grow and upgrade its mark successfully in almost all arenas of work including the said topic given in the current study.

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