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## Research Article

# CHALLENGES AND TEACHING STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY THE TEACHERS WORKING IN INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED CHILDREN

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### ABSTRACT

The Concept of inclusion has emerged from the ideas of providing equal opportunities to all children. Providing equal opportunities means does not mean providing similar facilities to all. It means providing equal opportunities keeping in mind diverse nature of the individual needs. Meaningful inclusion is a collaborative effort. When a collaborative effort is being taken to impart education to visually impaired, there will be a lot of challenges pertaining in it from the aspect of parents, visually impaired child and the teacher working in inclusive schools. In this study the investigator has selected 2400 samples using stratified random technique, to study the challenges faced by the teachers and teaching strategies adopted by them. It is revealed from the findings that teaching strategies and challenges faced by the teachers did not correlate. Further, this was found to be very low.

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### INTRODUCTION

The Constitution of India ensures equality, freedom, justice and dignity of all individuals and implicitly mandates an inclusive society for all including persons with disabilities. There has been an increasing recognition of abilities of persons with disabilities and emphasis is laid on mainstreaming them in the society based on their capabilities. The concept of inclusion has emerged from the ideas of providing equal opportunities to 'all' children keeping in mind the diverse nature of their individual needs. It is a concept of effective schools where every child has a place to study and develop all the talents to reach his full potential. The movement towards inclusive schooling gained momentum with the World Declaration of Education for ALL. Right to Education Bill (RTE) provides every child of the age of six to fourteen years a right to free and compulsory education in a neighborhood school till completion of elementary a right to free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school till completion of elementary education. Although the government is making efforts with several new initiatives, the inclusive education is still an evolving concept. Meaningful inclusion is a collaborative effort. It involves a team consisting of special education teachers, teachers in general education, parents, paraprofessionals, related services

personnel, administrators and the peers. The team members share their skills and perspectives.

#### Background of the Study

Arya Richa & Gupta Arun(2011) conducted a study on value pattern and academic achievement of sighted and visually impaired students studying in special schools and inclusive schools. Visually Impaired students studying in Inclusive School have Average Knowledge Value, Economic value, Aesthetic Value, Patriotic Value, Health Value and Social Value while they have low Capacity & Power Value and Religious Value. Visually Impaired students of Special Schools and Inclusive Schools differ significantly ( $p < .01$ ) in Knowledge value, Capacity & Power value and Religious value. Children of Special School possess high Knowledge value and Capacity & Power value in comparison to the Visually Impaired students in Inclusive School while Inclusive Schools Visually Impaired students have high Religious value in comparison to the students studying in Special School.

Revathy S & Premavathy vijayan(2015) investigated the effect of training package on developing visual skills of children with low vision. The study revealed that low vision skills such as visual closure, visual fixation and spatial relation and form constancy a majority of the children showed poor performance

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than other visual skills. There is no effect of gender, age group and grade level on the visual skills of children with low vision. The indigenous low vision kit was found to be effective in improving the visual skills of low vision children.

**Selvi A & Victoria Naomi G(2016)** conducted an experimental study on developing special ability among visually impaired students. It is revealed from the study that braille reading skill did not influence on distance estimation, mental rotation and delineation skill. Further, it was found from the study that gender did not influence the spatial ability of the students.

### Need and Significance of the Study

In India, more than 20 million children in the age group of 6 to 14 years require special needs in education, while national average of gross enrolment in the initial grades has crossed 90 per cent mark, less than 5 per cent of children with disabilities have reached the school system. At the primary stage, 94 per cent of the country's rural population has schooling facility within one kilometer and at upper primary stage it is 84 per cent. This indicates that our country has made impressive achievements in providing access to elementary education. In physical inclusion a disabled child receives consistent promotion, support and facilitation from the government. All the policies and government regulations have made education free and compulsory for all children. No institution can deny admission to a child with keys to Special Education.

But considering all these concepts in mind, the inclusive schools in Tamil Nadu is still lacking behind with the infrastructural facilities and man power on empowering the children with special needs particularly Visually impaired. Moreover, the parents of the children are not trained much on accepting and educating their children. But it is the duty of the every individual to do their responsibilities. Therefore the investigator has decided to study the challenges and strategies of inclusive schools in Tamil Nadu with respect Visually impaired children.

### Objectives

1. To find the level of challenges faced by the teachers working in inclusive schools
2. To find the level of teaching strategies adopted by the teachers working in inclusive schools
3. To find whether there is any significant association in challenges faced by the teachers working in Inclusive schools with respect to their educational Qualification
4. To find whether there is any significant association between the teaching strategies and educational qualification of teachers working in inclusive schools.
5. To find whether there is any significant relationship between the teaching strategies adopted and challenges faced by the teachers working in inclusive schools.

Hypotheses are formulated based on the above objectives.

**Method** : Survey method is used for the study.

**Population**: Population of the present study comprises of all the visually impaired children studying in inclusive schools, their parents and the teachers (Special educators) in Tamil Nadu.

**Sample**: Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample from each zones of Tamil Nadu i.e. North, West, South and central. In this study, 2400 samples were selected in each category. i.e. visually impaired children, their parents and teachers working in inclusive schools.

### RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS USED

The following research instruments were used for collecting the data

- i. Personal Data form
- ii. A scale on "Challenges faced by the teachers working in Inclusive schools"
- iii. A scale on "Teaching Strategies adopted by the teachers working in Inclusive schools".

The above mentioned research instruments were constructed and developed by the investigator.

### Establishing Validity

Lickert's item wise analysis was used to find the validity of A scale on "Challenges faced by the teachers working in inclusive schools" and "Teaching Strategies adopted by the teachers working in inclusive schools". The maximum and minimum scores for the above mentioned scales were '1' and "25" respectively.

### Establishing Reliability

Test and retest method was used to find the coefficient of reliability for the above mentioned two scales, and it was found to be **0.876**, which is highly reliable.

**Statistical Techniques Adopted**: Descriptive statistics, critical ratio, ANOVA and Correlation analysis are used for analysing the data.

### Analysis of the Data

#### Level of Challenges Faced by the Teachers Working in Inclusive Schools

Total Sample	Mean	Standard Deviation
2400	16.05	4.697

The level of challenges faced by the teachers working in inclusive schools is **very low**.

#### Level of Teaching Strategies Adopted by the Teachers Working in Inclusive Schools

Total Sample	Mean	Standard Deviation
2400	15.47	5.178

The level of teaching strategies adopted by the teachers in inclusive schools is **Very low**.

### Hypothesis wise Testing

There is no significant association in challenges faced by the teachers working in inclusive schools with respect to their educational Qualification.

**Table 1.0**

Educational Qualification / Challenges	Low	Average	High	Chi square Value	Degrees of freedom	Significance at .05 level	Remarks
Illiterate	72	604	166				
School Education	159	1102	297	1.752	2	0.416	Not significant
<b>Total</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>1706</b>	<b>456</b>				

It is inferred from the above table that , at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is **accepted**. Thus, the challenges faced by the teachers working in inclusive schools did not associate with their educational qualification.

*There is no significant association between the teaching strategies adopted by the teachers working in inclusive schools and educational qualification of teachers.*

**Table 2.0**

Educational Qualification / Challenges	Low	Average	High	Chi square Value	Degrees of freedom	Significance at .05 level	Remarks
Illiterate	144	544	154				
School Education	281	971	306	1.241	2	0.538	Not significant
<b>Total</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>1515</b>	<b>460</b>				

It is inferred from the above table that , at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is **accepted**. Thus, the teaching strategies adopted by the teachers in inclusive schools did not associate with their educational qualification.

*There is no significant relationship between the teaching strategies adopted by the teachers working in inclusive schools and challenges faced by the teachers.*

**Table 3.0**

Variables	R value	Significance at .05 level	Degrees of freedom	Remarks
Challenges & Strategies	0.019	0.361	2399	Not Significant

It is inferred from the above table that, at .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is **accepted**. Thus, there is no significant relationship between challenges faced and teaching strategies adopted by the teachers working in inclusive schools.

**Findings**

1. The level of challenges faced by the teachers working in inclusive schools is **Very low**.
2. The level of teaching strategies adopted by the teachers working in inclusive schools is **Very low**.
3. Challenges faced by the teachers and teaching strategies adopted by them in inclusive schools are not correlated significantly.
4. Teaching strategies adopted by the teachers in inclusive schools did not associate with their educational qualification.
5. Challenges faced by the teachers working in inclusive schools did not associate with their educational qualification.

**Interpretation**

- i. It was found from the study that the challenges faced by the teachers working in inclusive is **Very low**. This may be due to the teachers working in inclusive set up would not have concentrated much individually among visually impaired children. So that, they would

not have that much of difficulties in handling classes. This may be due to the low level of strategies adopted by them in method of teaching and teaching aids used in their teaching.

- ii. The challenges faced by the teachers and the teaching strategies adopted by them are not correlated significantly. This proves that the teaching strategies did not play any role on challenges faced by them.
- iii. The educational qualification of the teachers working in inclusive schools did not associate significantly with the challenges faced and the teaching strategies adopted by them, this may be due to the fact that either Diploma or Degree did not play any role on level of challenges faced by them. Again it is the mentality, concern and interest of the teachers working in inclusive schools. Therefore, it is statistically proved that educational qualification and challenges faced by the teachers working in inclusive schools did not associate significantly.

**Educational Implications**

The teachers in the inclusive schools may be trained individually with respect to their specialisation, instead of appointing the special educators in general in inclusive schools. The special educators may be trained on how to teach the low vision and fully blind pupils individually.

Moreover, the infrastructure facilities for improving the quality of instructions, co-curricular and extracurricular facilities may be developed in schools.

The teachers may be trained technically i.e. handling of ICT softwares for the low vision and fully blind pupils, to cater the needs of the visually impaired children.

**CONCLUSION**

The concept of enhancing the quality of inclusive schools in present scenario is a challenging task for the teachers. This may be done by reducing the challenges faced by the teachers in this set up and training the teachers to adopt teaching strategies by them. Ultimately this can strengthen a school community to benefit all children. "Inclusion" does not simply mean the placement of students with disabilities in general education classes. This process must incorporate fundamental change in the way a school community supports and addresses the individual needs of each child. As such, effective models of inclusive education not only benefit students with disabilities, but also create an environment in which every student, including those who do not have disabilities, has the opportunity to flourish. Moreover, blindness and low vision has a negative impact on the development of blind people's. Therefore, this study has made an attempt to find the challenges faced by the teachers and teaching strategies adopted by them in inclusive schools.

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