

Effect of Awareness Programme on the level of Awareness of Elementary School Female Teachers toward Inclusive Education

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Abstract:

Inclusive education can be seen as a stepping stone for a future inclusive society. It is a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all children, youth and adults through increasing participation in education, cultures and communities and reducing and eliminating exclusion within and from education. The present study was planned to examine the effect of interventions on the level of awareness of elementary school female teachers of Dibrugarh district, Assam toward inclusive education. For that purpose, 75 elementary school female teachers were selected as sample. A questionnaire on awareness about inclusive education was used for data collection. One group pre-test/ post-test field experimental design was used to complete the study. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as Mean, S.D., and t-test. The main findings of the study show that elementary school female teachers' level of awareness was enhanced towards inclusive education after their exposure to some interventions.

Keywords: Inclusive Education, Awareness Programme.

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INTRODUCTION:

Inclusion of children with special needs has become a matter of priority in many countries around the world with the declaration of UNESCO's Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (1994). In that line the Government of India has also formulated various policies, schemes and programmes for inclusive education at the national level. The Right to Education Act, 2009 has brought a new hope for education of the children with special needs. Schemes such as Integrated Education for the Disabled Children (IEDC), District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Rashtriya Madhyamic Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) contain provision for supporting the education of such children. University Grants Commission (UGC) is also implementing a scheme under which a financial assistance is provided as per the prescribed norms, to universities for organizing special education programmes for B.Ed/ M.Ed (Special Education).

To support the entire process, NCERT is addressing issues of curriculum and pedagogy for inclusive education. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, which is a nodal Ministry for disability issues in India estimates the number of children having special needs as 5%. The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights & Full Participation) Act, 1995 provides that every child with a disability shall have access to free education up to 18 years of age. The National Curriculum Framework for School

Education (NCERT, 2005) has recommended inclusive schools for learners with special educational needs by making appropriate modifications in the content, presentation and transaction strategies, preparing teachers and developing learning friendly evaluation procedures.

Teachers are called the backbone of a nation. Inclusive societies and education system can only be achieved if teachers are aware of the nature of the situation and are committed to work for it. In order to generate awareness about different aspects of inclusive education among teachers, an effective action plan is needed. Developing a positive attitude by creating awareness toward children with special needs is not a one-day task, but a gradual and continuous effort like successful dissemination of public awareness programme and other similar activities. So, the researcher felt that awareness programme can play an effective role in creating awareness, removing negative attitudes and fostering positive ones among the teachers toward children with special needs.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

Considering the above discussion the investigator has entitled the problem as “Effect of Awareness Programme on the level of Awareness of Elementary School Female Teachers toward Inclusive Education”

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OBJECTIVES:

1. To develop and implement interventions to enhance the level of awareness of elementary school female teachers of Dibrugarh District, Assam toward inclusive education.
2. To study the effect of interventions on the level of awareness of elementary school female teachers of Dibrugarh District, Assam toward inclusive education.
3. To study the effect of the interventions on the level of awareness of elementary school female teachers of Barbarua Educational Block of Dibrugarh District, Assam towards inclusive education.
4. To study the effect of the interventions on the level of awareness of elementary school female teachers of Lahowal Educational Block of Dibrugarh District, Assam toward inclusive education.
5. To study the effect of the interventions on the level of awareness of elementary school female teachers of Tengakhat Educational Block of Dibrugarh District, Assam toward inclusive education.

HYPOTHESES:

The following hypotheses were framed for the present study:

- H1: The interventions will have significant effect on enhancing the level of awareness of elementary school female teachers of Dibrugarh District, Assam towards inclusive education.
- H2: The interventions will have significant effect on enhancing the level of awareness of elementary school female teachers of Barbarua Educational Block of Dibrugarh District, Assam towards inclusive education.
- H3: The interventions will have significant effect on enhancing the level of awareness of elementary school female teachers of Lahowal Educational Block of Dibrugarh District, Assam towards inclusive education.
- H4: The interventions will have significant effect on enhancing the level of awareness of elementary school female teachers of Tengakhat Educational Block of Dibrugarh District, Assam towards inclusive education.

METHODOLOGY:**Population:**

The population of the study includes all the elementary school female teachers of Dibrugarh District of Assam, India.

Design and Method of the study:

In the present study one group pre-test and post- test field experimental design was used. For that purpose a venue was arranged at the Department of Education, Dibrugarh University of Assam, India. The design includes three operational stages. The first stage includes pre-testing of subjects' awareness about inclusive education. The second stage includes experimental treatment for a period of three days, everyday five hour duration. The experimental treatment comprised the use of interventions through awareness programme. The interventions involved distribution of literature, lectures by experts, use of charts and posters and documentary show on inclusive education etc. The third stage included post-testing of the same group using the same tool after a gap of one months of experimental treatment phase. This was done to check the retention of knowledge and information given in treatment phase.

Sample and Sampling Technique:

The sample of the present study comprised 75 elementary school female teachers from Barbarua, Lahowal and Tengakhat Educational Blocks of Dibrugarh District of Assam, India. The sample was drawn by using purposive sampling technique.

Tool used in the study:

To test the level of awareness of elementary school female teachers toward inclusive education, a self-developed multiple-choice questionnaire was used. The questionnaire includes 35 items in all and was divided into four aspects of study like- awareness about different types of disabilities, differences in learning, inclusive education and strategies for successful inclusion. The items of the test were verified by experts and hence it possesses content validity. Reliability of the tool was determined by using test-retest method. The reliability co-efficient of the tool was 0.74. The tool was administered twice on the subject i.e. before and after the treatment phase. The scoring of the tool was very easy. One mark was given for each correct answer and zero for each wrong answer. So, the highest obtainable score on the questionnaire could be thirty five (35) and lowest could be zero (0).

Statistical Techniques used:

For analysis of data Mean, Standard Deviation and t- test were used

RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

H1: The interventions will have significant effect on enhancing the level of awareness of elementary school female teachers of Dibrugarh District, Assam toward inclusive education.

Table 1

Table shows Difference between the Mean of Pre-test and Post-test Scores on Awareness of Elementary School Female Teachers of Dibrugarh District, Assam toward Inclusive Education

Sl. No.	Group	No. of Teachers (N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	t' value	Level of significance
1.	Pre-test	75	21.08	5.748	4.49	Significant at 0.05 level
2.	Post-test	75	26.37	4.425		

The effect of interventions on awareness of elementary school female teachers toward inclusive education was examined by comparing the mean pre-test and mean post-test scores as is shown in Table- 1. The Table- 1 represent the scores of Mean, SD, and t- value for awareness of elementary school female teachers toward inclusive education before and after awareness programme. The pre-test Mean and S.D. scores were found to be (N=75, M=21.08, SD= 5.748) respectively and that of the post-test (N=75, M=26.373, SD=4.425) respectively. The t- value was (t= 4.49).

From the table it is observed that the calculated t- value ('t'= 4.49) is greater than the table value (1.96 at 0.05 level of significance). So, it is significant at (0.05) level of significance. It may be inferred that the awareness of elementary school female teachers toward inclusive

education before and after the implementation of awareness programme was found to differ significantly. Elementary school female teachers' post-test score was higher than their scores on pre-test. Thus, it indicates an increase in the level of awareness of elementary school female teachers after the implementation of interventions through awareness programme. Hence, the awareness programme found to have a significant positive effect on awareness of elementary school female teachers toward inclusive education.

H2: The interventions will have significant effect on enhancing the level of awareness of male elementary school female teachers of Barbarua Educational Block of Dibrugarh District, Assam towards inclusive education.

Table 2

Table shows Difference between the Mean of Pre-test and Post-test Scores on Awareness of Elementary School female Teachers of Barbarua Educational Block of Dibrugarh District, Assam toward Inclusive Education

Variable	Group	No. of Teacher (N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' value	Level of significance
Female	Pre-test	25	14.64	3.238	6.00	Significant at 0.05 level
Teacher	Post-test	25	24.52	4.992		

The effect of awareness programme on awareness of elementary school female teachers of Barbarua educational block was examined by comparing the mean pre-test and mean post-test scores as is shown in Table- 2. The Table- 2 represents the scores of Mean, SD, and t- value for awareness of elementary school female teachers toward inclusive education before and after awareness programme. The pre-test Mean and S.D. scores were found to be (N=25, M=14.64, SD= 3.238) respectively and that of the post-test (N=25, M=24.52, SD=4.992) respectively. The t- value was ($t = 6.00$).

From the table it is observed that the calculated t- value ($t' = 6.00$) is greater than the table value (1.96 at 0.05 level of significance). So, it is significant at (0.05) level of significance. It may be inferred that the awareness of elementary school female teachers of Barbarua educational block toward inclusive education before and after the implementation of awareness programme was found to differ significantly. Elementary school teachers' post-test score was higher than their scores on pre-test. Thus, it indicates an increase in the level of awareness of elementary school female teachers after the implementation of interventions through awareness programme. Hence, the awareness programme found to have a significant positive impact on awareness of elementary school female teachers of Barbarua educational block about inclusive education.

H3: The interventions will have significant effect on enhancing the level of awareness of elementary school female teachers of Lahowal Educational Block of Dibrugarh District, Assam toward inclusive education.

Table 3

Table shows Difference between the Mean of Pre-test and Post-test Scores on Awareness of Elementary School female Teachers of Lahowal Educational Block of Dibrugarh District, Assam toward Inclusive Education

Variable	Group	No. of Teacher (N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' value	Level of significance
Female	Pre-test	31	24.06	3.424	1.61	Not Significant at 0.05 level
Teacher	Post-test	31	25.95	3.043		

The effect of awareness programme on awareness of elementary school female teachers of Lahowal Educational Block of Dibrugarh District, Assam was examined by comparing the mean pre-test and mean post-test scores as is shown in Table- 3. The Table- 3 represents the scores of Mean, SD, and t- value for awareness of elementary school female teachers towards inclusive education before and after implementation of awareness programme. The pre-test Mean and S.D. scores were found to be (N=31, M=24.06, SD= 3.424) respectively and that of the post-test (N=31, M=25.935, SD=3.043) respectively. The t- value was ($t = 1.61$).

From the table it is observed that the calculated t- value ($t' = 1.61$) is less than the table value (1.96 at 0.05 level of significance). So, it is not significant at (0.05) level of significance. It may be inferred that the awareness of elementary school female teachers of Lahowal Educational Block of Dibrugarh District, Assam toward inclusive education before and after the implementation of intervention strategies was found do not differ significantly. Elementary school female teachers' post-test score was same with their scores on pre-test. Thus, it indicates no increase in the level of awareness of elementary school female teachers after the implementation of intervention programme. Hence, the awareness programmed was found to have no significant positive impact on awareness of elementary school teachers toward inclusive education.

H4: The interventions will have significant effect on enhancing the level of awareness of elementary school female teachers of Tengakhat Educational Block of Dibrugarh District, Assam toward inclusive education.

Table 4

Table shows Difference between the Mean of Pre-test and Post-test Scores on Awareness of Elementary School female Teachers of Tengakhat Educational Block of Dibrugarh District, Assam toward Inclusive Education

Variable	Group	No. of Teacher (N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	't' value	Level of significance
Female	Pre-test	19	24.68	3.96	2.64	Significant at 0.05 level
Teacher	Post-test	19	29.53	4.03		

The effect of awareness programme on awareness of elementary school female teachers of Tengakhat Educational Block of Dibrugarh District, Assam was tested by comparing the mean pre-test and mean post-test scores as is shown in Table- 4. The Table- 4 represents the scores of Mean, SD, and t- value for awareness of elementary school female teachers towards inclusive education before and after implementation of awareness programme. The pre-test Mean and S.D. scores were found to be (N=19, M=24.68, SD= 3.96) respectively and that of the post-test (N=19, M=29.53, SD=4.03) respectively. The t- value was (t = 2.64).

From the table it is observed that the calculated t- value ('t' = 2.64) is more than the table value (1.96 at 0.05 level of significance). So, it is significant at (0.05) level of significance. It may be interpreted that the awareness of elementary school female teachers of Tengakhat Educational Block of Dibrugarh District, Assam toward inclusive education before and after the implementation of interventions was found to differ significantly. Elementary school female teachers' post-test score was higher than their scores on pre-test. Thus, it indicates an increase in the level of awareness of elementary school female teachers after the implementation of intervention programme. Hence, the awareness programme was found to have significant positive impact on awareness of elementary school female teachers of Tengakhat Educational Block of Dibrugarh District, Assam toward inclusive education.

CONCLUSION:

In spite of various efforts of the government of India, the inclusive education is at its infancy stage. By analyzing recent research studies, it is observed that teacher awareness plays a vital role in inclusion of children with special needs in general classroom. That is why, it is very essential to create awareness among teacher community for better and fruitful results of inclusion. The results of the present study revealed that awareness programme plays a significant role on enhancing the level of awareness among teacher community toward inclusive education. So for success of inclusive education system in our country collaborative, cooperative program or works among Government, school authorities, teachers, special educators, community representatives and also parents of children with and without special needs are essential.

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