

# Problems Faced by Special Teachers in Implementing Inclusive Education under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

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## Abstract

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*As free and compulsory elementary education for the children of age group 6 to 14 years become the fundamental right through inclusion of article 21A in part III of Indian Constitution, a recent initiative of Government of India to universalise elementary education has been taken as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). An endeavour has been made to implement the inclusive education through SSA. The responsibility of education of Children With Special Educational Needs (CWSEs) under SSA goes to special teachers appointed as Itinerant or Resource Teachers as well as regular counterpart, while the key persons to implement inclusive education under SSA are these special teachers. The present study carried out in Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh incorporates 20 special teachers as sample and as a tool investigator's made questionnaire based on six dimensions was used to analyse the data. Survey method and purposive sampling method was used to investigate the problems. Findings of the study reveals that special teachers face problems regarding non-cooperation of government officials which have the responsibility of inclusive education under SSA and financial problems were also reported by them. They also have fear of job insecurity and they found themselves under pressure due to over workload. All these problems revealed under investigation adversely affect the implementation of inclusive education under SSA.*

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## Introduction

Inclusive Education (IE) is a recent approach towards educating the

Children With Special Educational Needs (CWSEs) with that of normal ones within the same roof. This is

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possible only in flexible education system that assimilates the needs of the diverse range of learners and adapts itself to meet these needs. The principle of inclusive education was adopted at the “World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality” (Salamanca, Spain 1994) and was restated at the “World Education Forum” (Dakar, Senegal 2000). The recent and inclusive design of inclusive education is further supported by the United Nations Standard Rules on Equalization of opportunities for person with Disability Proclaiming Participation and Equality for All. Of late, a consensus has emerged among Indian intellectuals and pedagogues for adopting inclusive education in regular schools. Everyone knows India has its identification in the world as the teacher of the world Vishwa Guru due to its philosophy of value-based living and inclusive education is not an experiment to be tested but a value to be followed. All the children whether they are disabled or not have right to education as they are not only future citizens but the assets of the nation. By implementing inclusive education through SSA, India moves forward one step ahead.

- Inclusive education is about embracing all.
- Disability is a social responsibility— Accept it.
- No selection procedures to be adopted for denying admission to learners with disabilities.
- Accept differences...celebrate diversity.
- Inclusion is not confined to the disabled. It also means non-exclusion.

- Learn human rights... conquer human wrongs.
- Handicap is a social construct, deconstruct handicap.
- Make provisions – not restrictions; adjust to the needs of the child.
- Remove physical, social and attitudinal barriers.
- Partnership is our strength such as
- School-community; school-teacher;
- Teachers-teachers; teachers-children;
- Children-children; teachers-parents; school
- systems and outside systems.
- All good practices of teaching are practices of inclusion.
- Learning together is beneficial for every child.
- Support services are essential services.
- If you want to teach, learn from the child.
- Identify strengths not limitations.
- Inculcate mutual respect and interdependence. *NCF-2005*, p. 84.

As we know the teacher is one of the vital columns of the tri-polar system of education. Teachers will continue to play a crucial role in the formulation and implementation of educational programme (Education Commission 1964-66). The responsibility of implementing inclusive design in integrating Person With Disabilities (PWDs) into mainstream society largely depends upon the teachers particularly special teachers. In Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the responsibility of education of CWSENs goes to special teachers. Hence, special teaches are main implementing body of inclusive

education under SSA scheme. By extracting the suggested interventions and main functions of special teachers given in SSA-plan-manual, it has been concluded that special teachers are key persons to implement inclusive education under SSA.

In prevailing Indian situation, resources are insufficient, even to provide quality mainstream schools for common children it is unethical and impracticable to put CWSENs to test or to prove any thing in a research study to live and learn in the mainstream of school and community (Dash, 2006). Teachers view the inclusion of CWSENs into mainstream settings as difficult and stressful (Whiting and Young, 1995). The need for collaboration with several support staff has resulted in tension and confusion (Cant, 1994). However, the inclusion of CWSENs into regular classroom is viewed by some educators as contributing to increased workload (Dane, Berne-smith and Lathum, 2000). To make implementation of inclusive education under SSA successful, a joint endeavour of special teachers, government officials and parents of CWSENs is needed. However, stress for teachers was caused by the shortage of equipment and resources, the non-support of specialists to provide assistance for CWSENs and the parents' unwillingness to provide assistance to both teachers and the children (William & Gersch, 2004). Conway, (2005) indicated that teachers from both settings were also under pressure to provide additional programming, especially the individual education plan (IEP) for each pupil, with the assessment

tasks, modification of curriculum and the supervision. Having CWSENs in a regular classroom means additional work, this is appended onto teachers existing workloads (Forlin, 1998). If the number of CWSENs in one class is more than five then the class teacher is under pressure to plan and prepare for each individual student. The teacher wouldn't find enough time to prepare tasks for the CWSENs as well as the other regular children (Prochow *et.al*, 2000, cited by Mapsea, A. J.).

Evaluation of the IEDC scheme in Maharashtra by TISS (Rane, 1983) identified linear approach of resource teachers modality, lack of trained manpower, lack of understanding of scheme by educational administrators, lack of orientation of general teachers, non-availability of appropriate learning materials suited to special educational needs, inadequate assessment and lack of awareness in community about the scheme as the factors adversely affecting its implementation. Similarly, Express Newslines (May 26, 2007) Lucknow stated that Itinerant Teachers faced problems in implementing inclusive education under SSA due to non-cooperation of regular teachers and parents of CWSENs. Although the researchers from different countries have reported different results which maybe reasons affecting successful implementation of Inclusive Education under SSA.

The present study tried to identify problems faced by special teachers in implementing inclusive education under SSA. The present study was undertaken by the investigator to identify problems

faced by special teachers at various dimensions such as availability of aids and appliances, non-cooperation of colleagues and society, non-cooperation of government officials, school administration, finance and job security and teacher's workloads. The study, it was thought, could provide a base for a further refinement of the schemes for successful implementation of inclusive education under SSA.

### **Objectives**

The present study was investigated with the following aims:

1. To identify problems faced by special teachers in implementing inclusive education under SSA.
2. To suggest measures to successfully implement inclusive education under SSA.

### **Method**

The present study was conducted in Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh (India) on special teachers working as itinerant and resource teachers under SSA with the purpose to identify problems faced by them in implementing inclusive education.

Descriptive survey method and purposive sampling technique was employed to conduct the study. The population of the study comprises of all special teachers working as Itinerant and resource teachers of Varanasi district. There were only 24 itinerant teachers and 3 resource teachers and hence a total of 27 special teachers were working in 8 blocks of Varanasi district under SSA. Out of these, 20 special teachers were selected from the different blocks of Varanasi district.

### **Tool Used in the Study**

As there was no standardised tool available to collect the data, a questionnaire was prepared by the investigator consisting of 25 items covering six different areas to collect different factual information from the sample. As the objectives of the study were to identify the problems faced by special teachers in implementing inclusive education under SSA at Varanasi, the items were carefully constructed by the investigator so that objectives could be achieved. The questionnaire covered areas such as

- 1) Availability of Aids and Appliances
- 2) Non-cooperation of Colleagues and Society
- 3) Non-cooperation of Government Officials
- 4) School Administration
- 5) Finance and Job Insecurity
- 6) Teachers' Workload.

The items were constructed in mother tongue Hindi to easily understand and responses can also be drawn out.

### **Collection of Data**

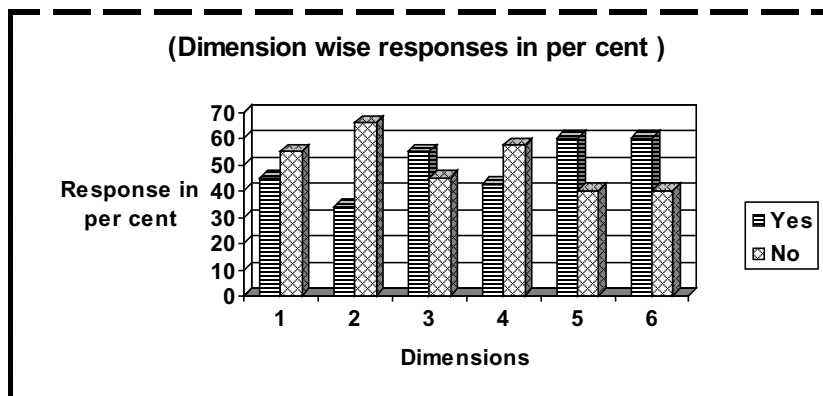
For the collection of relevant data, the investigator administered questionnaire and demographic data sheet and these were supplied personally to all the sampled teachers. The filled-in questionnaire and demographic sheet were collected. Data were critically examined, cleaned and quantified as far as possible and tabulated systematically for further analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

As the objectives of the research work was to identify problems of special teachers in implementing inclusive

Table 1  
**Responses of samples regarding various dimensions (1 to 6)**

Dimension No.	No. of Items	Sample	Responses			
			Yes		No	
			Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1	4	20	36	45	44	55
2	6	20	41	34.17	79	65.83
3	4	20	44	55	36	45
4	4	20	34	42.5	46	57.5
5	5	20	60	60	40	40
6	2	20	24	60	16	40



**Figure 1 :** Percentage (%) responses of all samples in 'Yes' and 'No'

education under SSA in Varanasi district, percentage (%) method was selected as an appropriate statistical method.

**The above analysis revealed that**

1. 45 per cent special teachers were facing problems regarding availability of aids and appliances whereas 55 per cent weren't facing problems.
2. 34.17 per cent special teachers were facing problems regarding cooperation of colleagues and

society whereas 65.83 per cent weren't facing problems.

3. 55 per cent special teachers were facing problems regarding cooperation of government officials whereas 45 per cent were not facing problems.
4. 42.5 per cent special teachers were facing problems regarding school administration whereas 57.5 per cent were not facing such problems.
5. 60 per cent special teachers were facing problems regarding finance

and security whereas 40 per cent weren't facing such problems.

6. 60 per cent special teachers were facing problems regarding teachers' work load whereas 40 per cent weren't facing such problems.

**Note:** Items no 18 and 21—problems regarding (i) inadequate salary, and (ii) incentive and awards) have responses of special focus whose responses are as follows:

- (i) 100 per cent special teachers reported that they didn't get an attractive salary as per their work.
- (ii) 80 per cent special teachers claimed that they didn't get any incentive or awards for their work whereas 20 per cent hadn't such claim.

### Discussion

On the basis of above analysis, it can be said that special teachers were not facing problems regarding availability of aids and appliances because under SSA there is a provision to grant Rs 5.00 lack per district for the purpose from the utilisation of Rs 1200 per child as SSA fund (SSA Plan Manual, page 24-25) and obviously this fund was being utilised properly and hence they were not facing any problems regarding availability of aids and appliances for teaching-learning of CWSEs.

Special teachers were not facing any problem regarding school administration and non-cooperation of colleagues and society because Rs 1.00 lac was being granted to make the community aware of the needs and potential of disabled children and obviously this very fund was being utilised.

Special teachers were facing problems regarding non-cooperation of government officials in the implementation of inclusive education under SSA maybe due to lack of understanding of scheme by educational administrators (Rane, 1983), lack of awareness, attention and attitude of government officials because there is no fund granted for the training and awareness programme under SSA scheme for them.

Special teachers were facing problems regarding finance and insecurity of job because, they were appointed on contractual basis with consolidated remuneration of Rs 6500 per month only while on the other hand newly appointed permanent regular teachers of government scale were getting approximately Rs 18000 per month. The Special (Resource) Teachers, instead of receiving 15 per cent of their basic salary as their allowance, received only Rs 75/- per month (Singh and Prabha, 1987). Nowadays standard as well as cost of living had gone up and to survive in this little amount is too difficult.

Teachers were facing problems regarding their workload because they were assigned 8 to 10 schools to visit twice in a week and simultaneously they were assigned some other non-teaching and administrative works like collection of data, polio drops feeding, etc., beside main works. The above problems are also corroborated by few studies.

Stress for teachers was caused by the non-support of specialists to provide assistance for children with moderate and severe disabilities, and the parents'



unwillingness to provide assistance to both teachers and the children (Williams and Gersch, 2004).

The inclusion of students with SENs into regular classrooms is viewed by some educators as contributing to increased workloads, (Daane, C. J., Beirne Smith, M. and Latham, D. 2000) while teachers in New Zealand spend large amounts of time in planning and preparation of lessons, and in teaching children. Apart from teaching, most teachers also have to complete other professional and administrative tasks (Campbell and Neill, 1993; cited by Mapsea, A.J. 2006).

### **Conclusion**

Following conclusions could be drawn from the present study:

- Most of the special teachers weren't facing problems regarding availability of aids and appliances, school administration and non-cooperation of colleagues and society.
- Majority of special teachers were facing problems regarding non cooperation of government officials, finance and security and teachers' workload.
- All special teachers were not satisfied with their salary.
- Most of the special teachers did not get any incentive or awards for their work.

### **Educational Implications**

1. The problems of special teachers that need to overcome in order to implement inclusive education under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan successfully can be identified.

2. The adequate essential information maybe provided to the policy makers and government officials to correct the scheme for successful implementation of inclusive education.
3. Sufficient information may be provided about all areas where special teachers are not satisfied.
4. Major hurdles of the scheme can be identified which affects the successful implementation of inclusive education.

### **Suggestive measures**

For successful implementation of inclusive education under SSA, the drawbacks of schemes should be eradicated for its proper functioning by

- solving problems (not identified here) of government officials which may be a cause of non-cooperation, their cooperation will indeed provide acceleration to the success of the scheme;
- providing attractive packages to special teachers because one can't give one's best in their financially stressful living conditions;
- changing the nature of the job from contractual to permanent because in this nature of job conditions employee's tendency is only to finish the tenure of job, not to take it as challenge or responsibility;
- reducing the responsibility of 8 to 10 schools to 1 or 2 because visiting 8 to 10 schools twice in a week is a very tedious job and only visit is not sufficient but to spend time there with great dedication is required for the successful implementation of the scheme; and

- making arrangements of awards and incentives to best performers because reinforcement and a level of motivation also enhance a person's performance and undoubtedly it will provide a momentum to successful implementation of inclusive education under SSA.

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