

EMPOWERING TEACHERS FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: A SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN PUNJAB'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to develop and evaluate a Teacher Support Programme (TSP) to facilitate the successful inclusion of children with disabilities (CWDs) in mainstream elementary classrooms across Punjab, Pakistan. Employing a qualitative research approach with an exploratory design, the study investigated the concerns of elementary school teachers integrating CWDs into their classes. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with purposefully selected regular teachers. Thematic analysis revealed key themes that informed the creation of a comprehensive TSP. This program, consisting of six stages, was implemented and evaluated in five schools across Punjab. The study underscores the crucial role of teachers in inclusive education and presents the TSP as a roadmap for achieving inclusive schools (schools for all) in Punjab. Future research could involve expanding the program within its implementation and incorporating the experiences of teachers facing different challenges, potentially leading to a more universally applicable TSP.

Keywords: TSP (Teacher Support Programme), CWDs (Children with Disabilities), ESP (Elementary School of Punjab), IE (Inclusive Education), Mainstream.

INTRODUCTION

The Quran describes the perfection of humanity as the highest creation of Allah. Sending down, therefore, around 124,000 prophets to educate them and their needs is also considered an uncommon event. This need for learning started right from the creation of man and has continued till today. In every field of knowledge, there are teachers who engage in teaching, while within the confines of informal educational institutions like mosques, schools, and universities, certified instructors teach their specific subjects. Teachers are often regarded as social change agents. This explains why, for the last decade, emphasis has been placed on improving teacher education by experts and

policymakers. On the other hand, reforms in education and policy have heightened the profile of teacher education programmes. Quality education will be a natural outcome of training quality teachers (Tasdemir & Asghar et al., 2020).

A human society becomes advanced in all respects. This study focuses culture versus technology. Perception about well-being is more than just physical health; it means good quality of life, which covers cultural, moral, economic, and social belongings. Various programs and initiatives world over exist to protect human rights, promote gender equality, support children's rights, maintain the rule of law, and promote social inclusion

and justice. Publicity is done through educational programs because the main instrument of spreading awareness is education (Caugh, 2004; Durdhawale, 2005). Teaching successful teaching teacher does not involve just attending formal classes or even organized workshops. Teachers are really going to their audience areas; teaching is involved in everyday activities. Ideally, the teacher is a role model for children invisibly; they idolize that person and work under very different conditions to 'become like'. Such a profession must hold an individual validity of its own. Thus, the demands on the profession go far beyond professional ethics because this would require a very high degree of personal moral and social value standards. Such a given mission also requires the capability of handling diversely specialized, highly technical specialist types of skill. Teachers in schools would therefore be able to develop professional competencies through programs such as teacher training initiated in pre-service and in-service development and follow-up professional education. According to Duffee and Aikenhead, the successful teacher training programs are the ones that produce competent teachers who nurture a constructive mind. Education is the pillar for economic growth in the nation as well as social prosperity in the society. The informed and productive citizens are governed by education. Apart from this, education acts as a springboard to some extent to immerse the marginalised and poor in poverty. Educated communities are prosperous and peaceful. National and worldwide educational goals must be set and worked toward so that young people might contribute socially and economically to the well-being of the nation. In essence, the educational structure of Pakistan stood at an abominable level but grew with the passage of time. Education, by all means, promotes social fragmentation, and thus mainly on the basis of ideologies, which are either religious or political; then, again, it deals with socio-economic class differences and cultural differences between city life and a tribal-influenced type of life in rural areas. Given these situations, it requires larger legislative and structural changes to be passed in order to make education a wrap for

everyone and a medium for social change (Chang, 2014). Likewise, education is a right; therefore, be it an able child or a disabled child; every nation gives equal rights to these special children. We can also consider establishing another program called inclusive education. The inclusive aspect intends to recognize and support the full participation of all students in all aspects of school life. While special schools cater to their needs, giving Children with Disabilities (CWDs) access to mainstream classrooms can be extremely rewarding. In such a paradigm of inclusion, however, the success of general education settings would largely depend on the training of the teachers working within such settings. Teachers have the capacity to vary their methodologies on behalf of every single student. Teachers, therefore, have a pivotal role in bringing forth this paradigm shift in inclusive classrooms. Policies, infrastructure, and schools are mushrooming in Punjab, so a comprehensive support mechanism for teachers should be formulated to ensure successful inclusion in all sectors. This study, therefore, proposes the design, implantation, and evaluation of such a mechanism to prepare all the teachers - not just the few for inclusion of Children with Disabilities (CWDs) in elementary schools of Punjab (Bashir et al., 2024).

LITERATURE REVIEW

It should prepare future generations with skills, experience, and other necessary characteristics that can battle the changes in pace and scale of a rapidly changing world, increasingly becoming technologically influenced. Teachers, being at the heart of education, play very critical roles in affecting the learning as well as achievement of students in a community. Lasley, Siedentop et al., (2006) Menon has a point "There must be a vision and mission statement about teacher education institution indicating the goals and objectives of teacher education, which dovetails with regional, national, and international requirements. This would give direction to the effective functioning of the institution and also help maintain relevant linkages with different components" (Menon, 2007).

Pakistani education policies place a high importance on teacher education. The National Education Policy (1979) highlighted the responsibility of teachers in implementing educational policies. The teacher was said to be the centre of the educational system. Pre-service teacher education in Pakistan has long been criticised for its poor quality, but it was never really considered until 2009. The relevance of pre-service teacher education in improving educational quality. The Government of Pakistan has initiated structured programs and initiatives for the improvement of pre-service teacher education (Ministry of Education Pakistan, 2009). The National Educational Policy continually updates curriculum content, methodology, assessment tools, teaching materials, and teacher resources (1998-2010). It necessitates adequate teacher training facilities.

The National Educational Policy (2017) states that effective teaching practices require content understanding together with specialized expertise and proper character development and these aspects develop best when taught in person. Since teacher education programs in their early stages should occur in person they must include field-based and practical learning components. The training process will receive improvement through distance and virtual learning methods that utilize monitoring and coaching practices. National education systems take their form from social cultural political and economic values which mirror the values and expectations of their societies.

History of Inclusive Education: A Journey towards Equity

According to philosophical standards and educational implementation inclusive education exists to let every student including those with differences participate in general education classrooms with all their peers. The concept developed substantially during the period from 2017 until the present. The world experiences an expanding educational space together with employment possibilities because of legal reforms and improved public understanding and ongoing scientific investigation.

Early Milestones

Inclusion became the chosen educational model for all children when the Statement of Salamanca was endorsed (1994). The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (2006) together with the Statement of Salamanca (1994) which bolstered inclusion for all children. These instruments provide continuous support for the all-important changes that have affected inclusive education over the past few years.

Legislative Developments

Since the year 2017, many countries have implemented or increased their legislation on inclusive education. For example, the FOR USE in the US and Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) reauthorization in 2017 focused on early childhood development and inclusion (turnbull et al., 2018). In the same way, India Right to Education Act (2009) also followed up with amendment in 2017 by enshrine the principle of inclusive education by providing for inclusive schools and teacher training. Such legislative initiatives indicate unfolding at the nationwide level of the perception of significance of the inclusion processes.

Technological Advancements

Technology is used in education particularly in supporting learning for children with disabilities. Current technologies which are useful by the disabled include the screen readers, text-to-speech software, and communication aids have become advanced and available in the market (Goguen et al., 2018). At the same time, growth of new technologies like online classes and other tools help to meet individual needs of students and increase effective differentiation of learning tasks (Hall et al., 2017).

Focus on Teacher Training

Adequate preparation of teachers is very important for the implementation of integration of children with disability. During the years teachers have been called to develop competencies regarding the integration of students with disabilities in regular classrooms (Ainscow, 2017). Even here, programs implemented address Universal

Design for Learning (UDL), differentiated instructions, cooperating and collaborating strategies, and the use of positive behavior for intervention and support (Gregory et al., 2019).

Challenges and the Road Ahead

Producing well-prepared and thoroughly familiarized teachers is the key to imply the inclusion of children with disabilities. In fact, for decades, various interested agencies have invited teachers either to develop their skills for mainstream inclusion of students with disabilities (Ainscow, 2017). These programs include UDL, differentiated instruction, collaboration, cooperative strategies, and PBIS (Gregory et al., 2019). In the past years, history has sided with inclusive education and it has been reasonably paving a way for others to learn the right and equitable opportunities. Meanwhile, legislative advances, technology advancement, and the attention on teacher training continue to form a new path toward an increasingly inclusive future. However, dealing with the insistent challenges and the development of mutual efforts is fundamental to ensure the continuity of progress (Aftab et al., 2024).

Challenges and Opportunities for Inclusive Education in Punjab

Even though problems persist in inclusive education, their defeat is possible for Punjab, Pakistan. The province has a total population comprising more than 1.8 million people with disabilities and this requires diverse educational supportive systems. Some initiatives have been made by the Special Education Department but have failed to establish an adequate number of special centers for most of them, particularly for physically handicapped people. On the contrary, some positive progress has been made in terms of diversely adapted curriculum such as using sign language for the hearing impaired and Braille for the blind. Physically disabled students are often required to take the same curriculum and examination as normal students, thereby putting them at a disadvantage in learning (Abbas & Thakur, 2017; Raof et al., 2023).

Currently, a huge gap exists in nearly all teacher training programs that do not include principles of inclusive education, thus making it impossible for teachers to effectively address the needs of disabled students. Recent studies show that teacher training is an important factor in enhancing inclusive practice, with workshops in Sindh being cited as having made a great difference in the practices of teachers. Universities in Punjab have promising initiatives in this respect, by introducing courses into the curricula on inclusive education or organizing seminars to foster integration in the institutions within provincial education (Aftab et al., 2024). Besides, with the 2016 bill on accessibility and inclusion of educational establishments, the government has made tangible efforts. Nevertheless, getting teachers to actually prepare and possess favorable attitudes is still a huge challenge. Therefore, there is a serious need for specific training programs and a national commitment to inclusive education so that every province adopts a similar approach (Muhammad et al., 2024).

These teachers have success stories in one-on-one teaching for deaf and disabled children in classrooms, thus allowing for more disabled children to be integrated into the mainstream classroom. Such successes should build on wider systemic approaches and additional teacher preparation opportunities toward the actualization of inclusive educational futures for Punjab and Pakistan. Current literature indicates the need for improved community relations and policy reform to bolster inclusive education (Shah, 2021).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of present study were as follows:

1. Investigate the areas in which teachers require assistance while incorporating CWDs into regular classrooms.
2. Investigate teachers' competencies, attitudes, and concerns about including students with disabilities in their classrooms.

3. Create a teacher support programme that addresses the concerns of elementary teachers.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions of the study were as follows:

1. What specific areas of professional development do teachers require to support the inclusion of CWDs in regular classrooms?
2. How do teachers' current skills, beliefs, and concerns impact their ability to effectively include students with disabilities?
3. What are the intended outcomes of the teacher support program in terms of improving teachers' inclusion practices?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The exploratory study deployed a qualitative methodology in order to identify key factors for the successful inclusion of Children with Disabilities in mainstream schooling. Semi-structured interviews involving 36 elementary school teachers (that is, T1, T2, T36) were held in the 12 districts of Punjab, all with some experience teaching CWDs. Topics addressed in the semi-structured interviews included the teachers' identified support needs, their existing competencies and attitudes toward inclusion, and any concerns they might have. These interview findings

explained the development of a comprehensive teacher support program.

Participants and Sampling

This qualitative study employed purposive sampling to select 36 elementary school teachers (T1, T2, T36) from across Punjab's 12 districts. All participants were regular teachers with experience including Children with Disabilities (CWDs) in their classrooms.

Data Collection

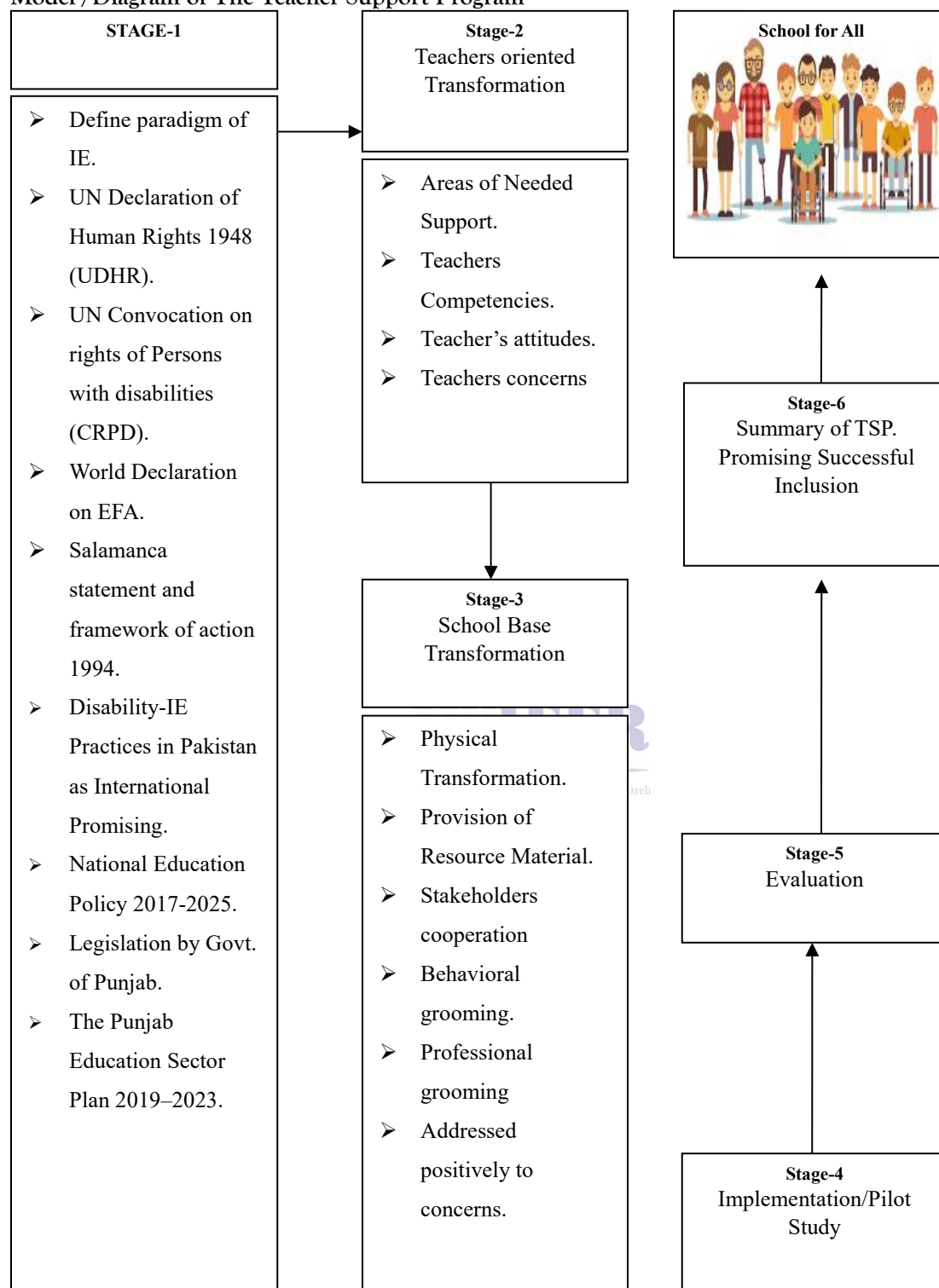
Data were collected through semi-structured interviews that had been validated by educational experts. The interview protocol was carefully designed and refined with the feedback from experts to answer the study's research questions. This verification ensured that the interview questions were clear and appropriate for the target audience.

Data Analysis

Following the acquisition of informed consent, the researcher interviewed each participant alone in a location of their choosing. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Thematic analysis was applied to the transcripts, with individual responses from participants coded to identify recurring themes and sub-themes according to the objectives of the study on teacher competencies, attitudes, and concerns regarding the inclusion of children with disabilities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

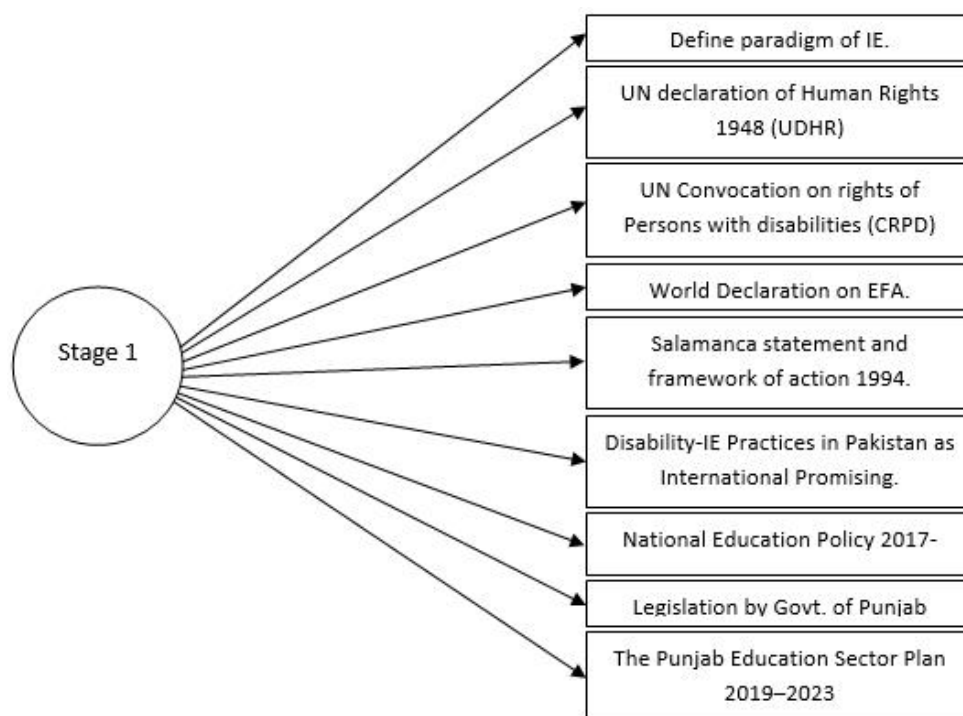
Model /Diagram of The Teacher Support Program



Stage 1: Paradigm of Inclusive Education

Inclusive education brings all students to learn under one educational setting in shared classrooms and schools. Through this

method disabilities students receive meaningful learning experiences which create simultaneous learning benefits for minority language students.



UNICEF's work to promote IE: Through government-backed initiatives UNICEF helps establish and control inclusive education frameworks which close learning gaps for disabled children.

UN Declaration of Human Rights 1948 (UDHR): To close the divide between policy and program implementation UNICEF supports its partner countries in program monitoring and evaluation.

Article 25 of UNDHR (Total 30 Articles): People together with their families should maintain a respectable living standard while facing illness disability loss and death as well as unmanageable situations that stop them from working. Social care and support must be specialized for mothers and children to maintain their well-being. Every child faces a right to social security benefits no matter what situation they were born into.

UN Convention on the Rights of PWDs (CRPD): On December 13th 2006 the United Nations General Assembly based in New York opened the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) for signatures. Eighty countries joined the Convention by signing and forty-four countries accepted the Optional Protocol

through authorization. History was made on this day because the Convention obtained more than eighty signatures from United Nations member states within its initial period of signature. The Convention became the initial treaty of the 21st century that regional integration organizations could sign. The Convention became operational on May 3rd, 2008 following its entrance into force.

World Declaration on EFA: Every human being must have access to personalized educational options which adapt to their learning requirements. Human growth alongside development and social participation depends heavily on essential skills which consist of literacy together with numeracy followed by problem-solving capabilities. The skills grant people the ability to choose wisely and improve their life quality and maintain continuous education. (Adopted by the World Conference on Education for All, Jomtien, Thailand, 5- 9 March 1990).

Salamanca Statement and Framework of Action 1994: The document from United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization requires worldwide implementation of tactical measures for inclusive education advancement. During

June 1994 the World Conference on Special Needs Education gathered 92 national delegates alongside 25 international organizations during its Salamanca Spain meeting. A new Statement on inclusive education for children with disabilities received introduction along with a Framework for Action at the conference. The main component of this framework ensures schools should serve all children irrespective of their physical intellectual or social emotional or linguistic requirements. Through the Framework for Excellence in Education the statement promotes education integration between children with disabilities and non-disabled peers.

Disability-IE Practices in Pakistan as International Promising National Education Policy 2017-2025 & National and International Commitments for Special and IE:

The laws and constitution of Pakistan require government institutions and public society to defend equal access to education without prejudice for all children including Children with Disabilities (CWDs). The legal structure of Pakistan together with the national constitution mandates fair treatment of children with disabilities (CWDs) so they can access their right to education. Key legal provisions include:

Article 25-A of the Constitution

Guarantees the right to education for all children. Section 38(d) under Pakistan's constitution requires the state to meet essential requirements for sick or unemployed people alongside those who are infirm or need any type of disability care and provides educational support.

1. The 1981 Ordinance on Employment and Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)
2. Supports the inclusion of PWDs in education and employment.
3. The Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2012 (ICT), Section 3.2.f Contains provisions for special education.
4. The Punjab Free and Compulsory Education Act 2014 through Chapter 1 and Article 2.d constructs an education

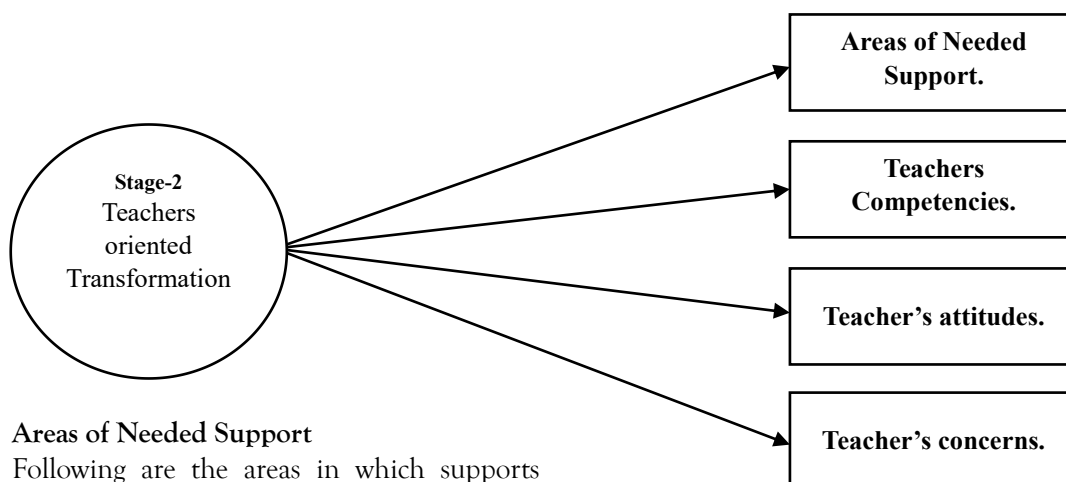
definition that includes special education teaching thus facilitating access for CWDs.

Challenges and Prospects of IE in Pakistan:

Several obstacles prevent the nation from shifting away from typical special education toward inclusive education (IE). Today's modern university campuses and colleges hamper student accessibility because they lack essential features needed for disabled students to move between buildings. Children with special needs who have mobility impairments obtain limited access to independent school attendance. Staff members who work with children with disabilities show inadequate preparedness to support them because they lack training on inclusive educational methods. Educational institutions currently lack proper accommodations because their curricula along with teaching materials do not fulfill the specific learning needs of students with disabilities. The limited budget of schools hinders their ability to implement necessary improvements in infrastructure as well as teaching resources that facilitate inclusive learning.

Targets for IE as per NEP 2017-2025: CWDs will achieve complete workforce participation by 2025 based on projections from 5% to 100% participation. A minimum of 50% of all formal colleges and schools along with universities need to create inclusive educational settings that will support enrollment and retention and help children with disabilities complete their educational path.

Stage 2: Teachers Oriented Transformation



Areas of Needed Support

Following are the areas in which supports should be provided:

Physical Infrastructure: Physical facilities at schools must include automated entry gates together with ramps for wheelchairs and stair handrails and easily accessible bathrooms equipped with necessary aids and dedicated restrooms for disabled students in addition to reserved designated parking and adaptive learning settings.

Helping and Mobility A/V Aids: Education institutions must provide necessary assistive and mobility aids including wheelchairs and walkers together with clippers or crutches and bathroom chairs and easy chairs and individual student tables as part of their support system.

Parents Cooperation: Parental support should actively include transporting students to and from school and offering accessible equipment within budget as well as helping educators communicate with the students while making important decisions and addressing health-related queries.

Head Teacher Support: School leaders should support an inclusive environment using Non-Salary Budget for financial support while providing certificates along with scholarships and must engage stakeholders and advocate to higher authorities for mentoring staff and implementing inclusive policies.

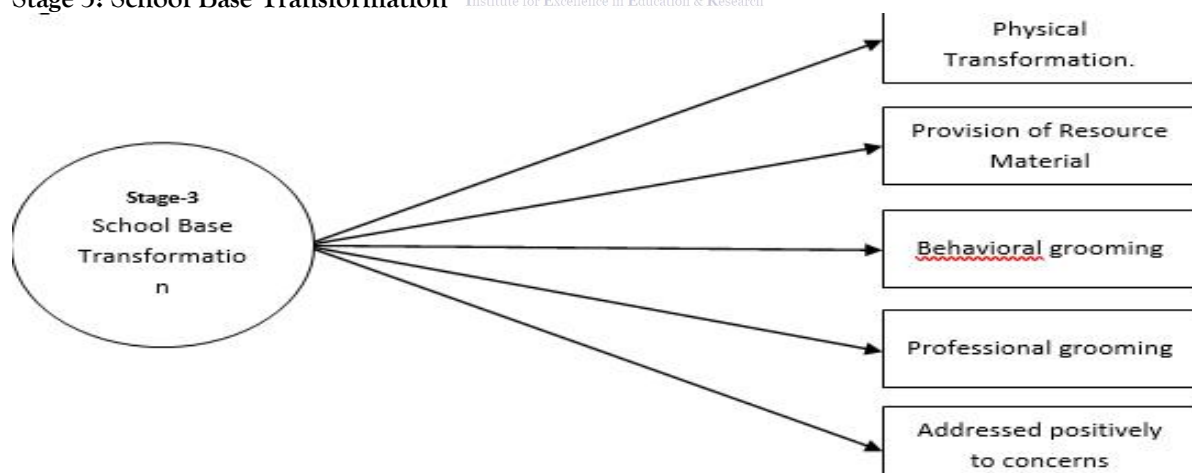
Professional Training for IE: Educational institutions must provide targeted training to teachers to enhance their inclusive education competence while teaching them to remove incorrect disability ideas as well as teaching proven educational models and increased but updated degree requirements alongside early career training and performance skill development and professional stress relief.

Moral Support from Colleagues: Her coworkers' moral support functions to strengthen teamwork by sharing work-related experiences along with academic knowledge through building good team dynamics which helps staff maintain their individual ethical values by receiving respect and emotional care and maintaining stable mental health through colleague collaboration.

Competencies, Attitudes and Concerns

Competencies	Attitudes	Concerns
Flourish tolerance and inclusivity among students.	Eradicate negative attitudes.	The uncertainty about how assistive devices will be provided to students remains unresolved.
Teachers should offer instruction about classroom requirements that serve CWDs effectively.	The proper mix between care and kindness needs to be preserved.	Overcrowded schools.
Educational institutions must develop various teaching approaches to enhance their flexibility.	Enhance teachers' self-efficacy.	Inadequate relevant training sessions.
A respectful cultural environment alongside positive engagement should emerge at schools.	The program should motivate participants to join training activities.	Absence of a comprehensive teacher support program for inclusive education.
Teachers should transform essential curricula or create new plans which enable every student to access educational material.	Strengthen relationships with key stakeholders.	A vital official document of the Punjab government presents its position on inclusive education. Taking actions which go beyond simple documentation proves dedication in its true form.
Incorporate supplementary instruction on disabilities and implement flexible scheduling in timetables.		Unnecessary parental interference and lack of awareness.
Staff members should team up to exchange their professional skills and teaching knowledge.		Officials' responses towards inclusive education practices.

Stage 3: School Base Transformation



Physical Transformation: The school should implement changes to infrastructure by adding ramps and accessible washrooms and railway systems and allocating adjustable classroom seating for children with disabilities.

Provision of Resource Material: The delivery of mobility aids includes wheelchairs together with crutches, walkers and washroom chairs as well as easy chairs.

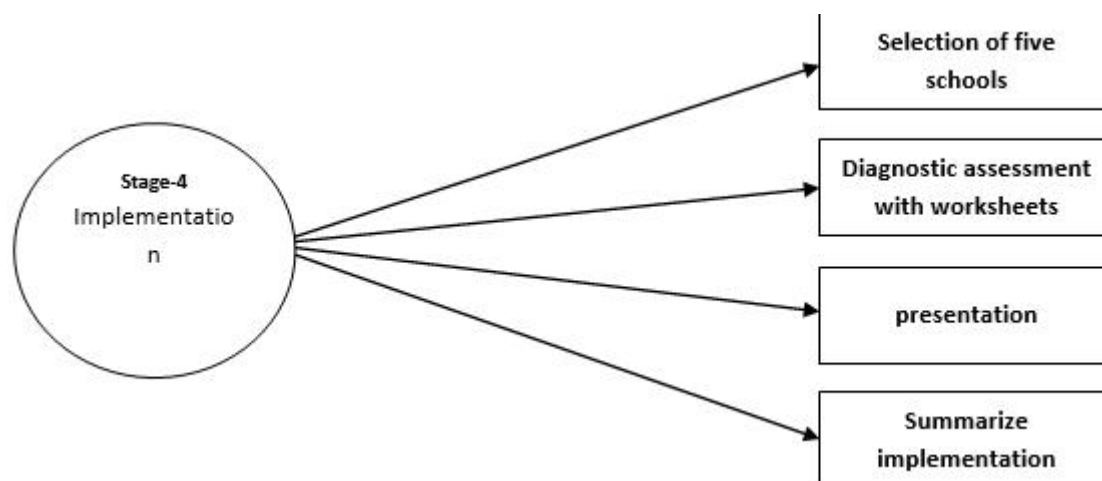
Behavioral Grooming: The handling of CWDs with positive attitudes and friendly demeanor leads to the development of positive associations between classroom

colleagues and staff members alongside the headmaster and immediate officers and visiting officers.

Professional Development: Be ready to attend refreshes and in service training courses to provide guidance for newly joined and more qualified teachers.

Concerns Address Positively: Show positive reactions to all concerns that come your way. Develop thorough plans to address these issues instead of experiencing hesitation or frustration. Determine detailed strategies to address issues instead of wasting time through fear and disappointment.

Stage 4: Implementation/Pilot Study of TSP (Future Planning)



The TSP framework will go through practical implementation steps along with testing procedures in chosen educational institutions.

Selection of Five Schools: Five schools will be selected according to their geographic areas and student diversity characteristics and their willingness to take part.

with Braille books and sign language interpreter services will receive deployment throughout the school.

Diagnostic Assessment with Worksheets: Worker-Designed Diagnostic Assessments Using Worksheets will determine student requirements and readiness through structured assessment instruments.

Classroom Implementation: Real classrooms will benefit from teachers implementing inclusive strategies which will get continuous support and monitoring.

Comprehensive Presentation:

The presentation will deliver a complete assessment to teachers alongside administrators to show them both inclusive education approaches and available resources.

Feedback Collection: Academic and observational feedback assessment processes will determine which aspects of the program succeed and where further development needs to occur.

Teacher Training Workshops:

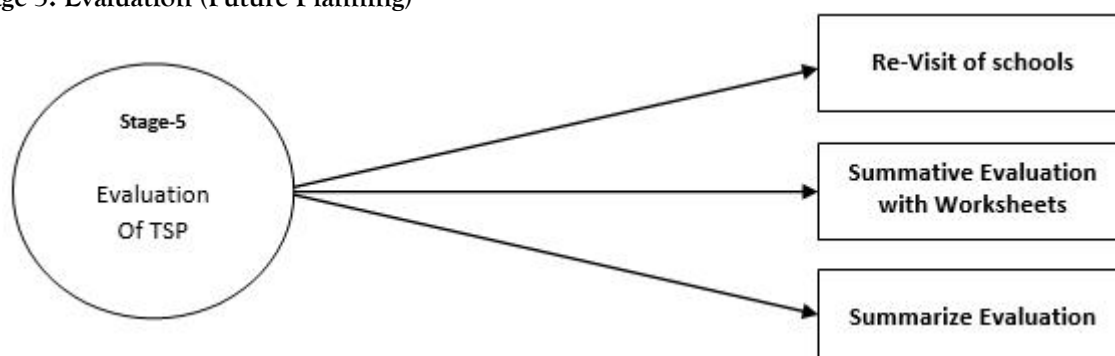
Teacher Training Workshops will teach teachers about inclusive education principles through direct training on relevant methods and tools.

Summarize Implementation: The recommendations based on the pilot study results will be presented as a summary report that includes essential findings together with recommended areas of improvement.

Deployment of Learning Tools: Assistive learning tools including digital resources along

Program Refinement: The program will receive refinements according to pilot results to boost its program quality performance.

Stage 5: Evaluation (Future Planning)



Re-Visit of Schools: The researchers will return to schools that took part in the pilot stage to evaluate implementation progress while collecting additional findings.

Developing Evaluation Criteria: Establish clear parameters for assessing teacher performance, student engagement, and overall impact.

Summative Evaluation with Worksheets: The summative evaluation process relies on worksheets to monitor student achievement and program successfulness through standardized assessment techniques.

Assessing Teacher and Student Performance: Both qualitative and quantitative research methods should be used for studying teacher and student performance in inclusive education practices.

Surveying Stakeholders: Standardized surveys and interviews will collect feedback from the school community members consisting of teachers, students, parents and administrators.

Identifying Challenges and Solutions: Program Evaluation will emphasize both existing problems and productive solutions for strengthening future implementation of solutions.

Summarize Evaluation: The Evaluation Result should be consolidated into a complete report which presents essential insights and solutions.

Scaling Up Strategies: Based on evaluation results establish a plan to apply the program in additional educational institutions.

Stage 6: Promising Successful Inclusion

In short, the teachers will need an extensive development program because they sit at the heart of inclusion achievements while serving as its primary enablers in the upcoming educational scene. Such a program development will be acknowledged as fundamental for delivering necessary skills and resources to teachers who must handle student diversity in inclusive classrooms. The program provides educational direction for reaching Inclusive Education (IE) objectives in schools to fulfill the promise of "school for all." Teachers will receive tools through the program that addresses their practical difficulties to successfully deliver inclusive learning methods. Staff members will instantly understand how properly designed support systems directly help them deliver individualized learning experiences to students from every background. The ongoing development of this program maintains significant importance for accomplishing IE's extensive goals particularly through establishing accessible learning environments for every student. The program constitutes a critical development for achieving inclusive education in schools by providing targeted support to every student's potential development.

FINDINGS

The research initiative developed and assessed Teacher Support Programme (TSP) for implementing successful Children with Disabilities (CWDs) inclusion strategies in primary schools across Punjab. The study revealed important outcomes from semi-structured interviews among 36 elementary teachers in 12 districts that used qualitative thematic analysis.

1. Teachers' Concerns about Inclusive Education:

Teachers voiced their anxiety about their lack of training and small amount of both practical support and available resources to accommodate Children with Disabilities in normal class settings. Mainstream school teachers faced obstacles because they lacked assistive technology and specialist educational materials and classroom modifications for implementation.

2. Training and Professional Development:

Educational professionals noted that inclusive education training was deficient within their professional improvement programs. Most teachers lacked any sort of official training about classroom modifications as well as adapted teaching methods and assistive technology usage. In-service training programs should implement Universal Design for Learning (UDL) education and behavioral strategies while making curriculum modifications.

3. Teachers' Attitudes and Self-Efficacy:

Teachers displayed different reactions to inclusion with both positive and negative attitudes emerging from the teaching population. Teachers considered inclusive education an additional challenge since their institutions and administrators did not provide needed backing.

4. Infrastructure and Classroom Accessibility Issues:

The research investigation identified major physical obstacles that existed in educational institutions. A majority of educational buildings failed to provide essential facilities such as wheelchair ramps as well as accessible washrooms and assistive devices and

program-specific learning environments for students with disabilities. Mainstream educational participation of children with disabilities became restricted because of these barriers.

5. Parental and Community Involvement:

Educational personnel described their students' parents as uninvolved in their educational progress. Most parents showed ignorance about educational rights of their children and became uninvolved in their educational development. Educational professionals identified deep communication between teachers and parents as the main element that produced better student academic results.

6. Limited Governmental and Policy Implementation:

The National Education Policy (2017-2025) together with Punjab Education Sector Plan (2019-2023) support inclusive education but teachers reported poor execution of policies at their school level. The educators requested that the government establish specific guidelines accompanied by monitoring tools and financial support for actively promoting inclusive learning programs.

7. Effectiveness of the Teacher Support Programme (TSP):

The TSP framework proved effective in achieving comprehensive solutions to the identified challenges because it composed of six stages. The program delivered both training for teachers alongside transformation strategies for schools together with professional development opportunities that created positive effects on teachers' readiness and instructional effectiveness as well as their teaching attitudes.

CONCLUSION

The research project has developed the Teacher Support Programme (TSP) for promoting the inclusion of CWDs into primary schools in Punjab and conducted an evaluation. The research was based on semi-structured interviews with 36 elementary teachers and a number of significant findings emerged. Concerns were raised about non-

training and limited resources to support CWDs in the mainstream classroom. The teachers indicated a lack of inclusive education training in their professional development initiatives. Attitudes towards inclusion were mixed, yet many teachers saw it as increased hassle due to little support from the institutions. Major barriers to CWDs' participation were poor school infrastructure and accessibility. Parent and community participation was also limited, which impacted student progress negatively. Some policies exist that support inclusion; however, their implementation at the school level was poor. Although the TSP framework was conceptualized with six stages, it was implemented successfully to alleviate training barriers, transformation strategies, and professional development in order that teachers can become more ready and effective while positively shifting their attitude towards inclusion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

An analysis of this research leads to the creation of these proposed recommendations to improve inclusive education in Punjab:

1. Comprehensive Teacher Training Programs:

The Punjab Education Department should create continuous professional development (CPD) programs that help teachers learn inclusive instructional approaches. Differentiated instruction combined with assistive technology implementation forms part of the training program along with behavioral management strategy education. The initial education of future teachers must add inclusive education components to their programs for developing effective preparation methods.

2. Improvement of School Infrastructure and Resources:

The government needs to equip schools with all necessary accommodations including accessible ramps for wheelchair users and disability-friendly bathrooms and sensory-sensitive learning spaces. Every school must contain assistive technology that includes screen readers as well as text-to-speech

software and communication boards and Braille materials and sign language interpreters. The government should devise a financial system which helps rural institutions obtain essential accessibility equipment despite their limited capabilities.

3. Policy Implementation and Administrative Support:

The Punjab government needs to enforce exclusive education guidelines across all educational institutions with regulatory enforcement. A supervisory institution needs to maintain oversight over the application of inclusive measures within educational facilities at every academic level. Successful implementation of inclusive education programs by schools should lead to financial payments from government sources.

4. Parent and Community Engagement:

The educational institutions should schedule seminars for parents to teach about inclusive education and defend disability rights. The establishment of parent-teacher collaboration depends on regular meetings between teachers and parents as well as sponsored parent counseling sessions and home-school teamwork. Community organizations together with NGOs should provide supplementary resources along with training possibilities for teachers and families.

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