

Perception of Pre Service Teachers Towards Inclusive Education

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ABSTRACT

A fundamental component of fair and high-quality education, inclusive education places a strong emphasis on meeting the needs of a variety of learners in regular classroom settings. Pre-service teachers' attitudes regarding inclusive education in relation to gender, location, and academic track are investigated in this study. The study used a descriptive survey approach and included a sample of 220 pre-service teachers using stratified sampling from four teacher education institutions in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, out of a total population of 600. In the present study, data collection has been completed using a structured questionnaire. The data were gathered systematically and analyzed under expert supervision. To ensure accuracy and reliability, the researcher employed descriptive statistical techniques along with the independent sample t-test for data analysis. The primary objective of this research was to examine the influence of demographic variables on pre-service teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education. The findings indicate that there is no significant difference in perceptions among pre-service teachers regarding inclusive practices. Furthermore, variables such as gender (male and female), location (urban and rural) and academic stream (arts and science) were considered to analyze variations in pre-service teachers' attitudes. Appropriate descriptive statistical tools were applied to interpret the data. The results reveal that pre-service teachers demonstrate a positive and consistent attitude toward inclusive education... NEP 2020 and the Draft National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCF-TE) 2023, it suggests that inclusive pedagogy, reflection exercises, and practical experience be used to further improve inclusive education components in teacher training programs.

How to cite this paper: Ms. Nagma Khatun | Mrs. Eliza Bhoi | Dr. Ashok Kumar Digal "Perception of Pre Service Teachers Towards Inclusive Education" Published in International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (ijtsrd), ISSN: 2456-6470, Volume-10 | Issue-1, February 2026, pp.232-239, URL: www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd100041.pdf



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KEYWORDS: *Inclusive education, Pre service teachers, perception, quality education, NEP 2020, (NCF-TE) 2023.*

INTRODUCTION

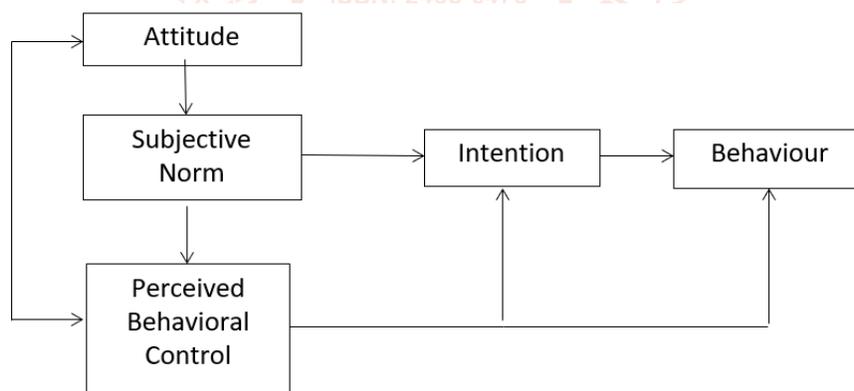
A fair and democratic educational system must include inclusive education, which is based on the ideas of social justice, equity, and accessibility. The Kothari Commission (1964–1966), which stressed the necessity of a single school system to guarantee equitable educational opportunities, is where it all began in India. The National Policy on Education (1986) and its 1992 Program of Action, which acknowledged the significance of integrating students with special needs into regular schools, further developed the idea. The shift from segregation to inclusion in educational theory and practice was made possible by these pioneering initiatives. This strategy was further reinforced by the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RCFCE) Act, 2009, which required all children aged 6 to 14-including those with disabilities-to have access to high-quality

education in a welcoming setting. By emphasizing the inclusion of children from socioeconomically disadvantaged groups, children with disabilities, and those with diverse learning needs within the mainstream education system, The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has strengthened the commitment to inclusive and equitable education, building upon these reforms. By supporting universal access to high-quality early childhood care and education, curriculum flexibility to meet students' diverse learning needs, and teacher training in inclusive pedagogies, NEP 2020 lays out a complete vision of inclusive education. It acknowledges that training future educators with the proper attitudes, beliefs, and skills to support diverse classrooms is essential to the success of inclusive education.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 places significant emphasis on the professional development of pre-service teachers. One of its major objectives is to strengthen pre service teacher preparation by integrating inclusive practices within the national curriculum framework. The policy recognizes the importance of inclusive education and highlights the need for teachers to be adequately trained to address diverse learning needs in classrooms. In this context, the inclusion of the NCF-TE (2023) framework is particularly relevant, as it emphasizes the balance between theoretical understanding and practical application. This framework encourages teachers to move beyond traditional teaching methods and adopt inclusive pedagogical approaches that are responsive to learners' diverse abilities and backgrounds.

The successful execution of the policy vision is largely dependent on their preparedness and desire to adopt inclusive practices. Although numerous initiatives and awareness campaigns have been implemented in Indian teacher education institutes, it is still important to ascertain the extent to which pre-service teachers have assimilated these ideals. This study examines how pre-service teachers perceive inclusive education in relation to gender, location, and academic track in order to determine whether demographic factors have an impact on their attitudes and preparedness for inclusive teaching methods.

Theory of Planned Behaviour Model



Review of Related Literature

Krishna Kumar Rajak, & Dr. Pragya Gupta, (2024) study's findings indicate that opinions about inclusive education are generally neutral across gender, location, and stream. It draws attention to the beneficial impact that self-efficacy plays in fostering an inclusive mind set. This shows that pre-service teaching programs today might be successfully fostering inclusive beliefs for students from a variety of backgrounds.

Singh, S., & Singh, R. K. (2020) study looks at how influence of locality secondary teachers' perceptions

Theoretical Background of the Study

Icek Ajzen(1991) created the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), a psychological model that links a person's beliefs to their behaviour in order to forecast human behaviour. It suggests that an individual's desire to carry out a behaviour, which is impacted by three important factors-attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control-is the best indicator of that behaviour. In the context of pre service teachers perception towards inclusive education this theory can be interpreted as : Attitude refers to the pre-service teacher's assessment, whether favourable or unfavourable, of a particular behaviour. It is predicated on their perceptions of the repercussions of engaging in the conduct. Subjective Norms refers the pre-service sense of social pressure to engage in the behaviour or refrain from doing so. Their perceptions of what significant others-such as friends, family, or co-workers'-think of the conduct have an impact. Perceived behavioural control is the pre-service employee's conviction that they have control over how the behaviour is performed. Their perceptions of the opportunities, resources, and challenges associated with engaging in the behaviour have an impact.

Above three influences the intention to implement inclusive practices, which in turn affect actual inclusive teaching behavior once the pre service teacher enters the profession. Following diagram more insight to this theory.

towards inclusive education. An attitude scale is used in the descriptive survey approach. In Bihar, India, there are 120 instructors from both urban and rural schools. A clear perceived gap between urban and rural areas is highlighted by the survey. In order to encourage fair and inclusive teaching attitudes among educators, it emphasizes the necessity of capacity-building and awareness-raising programs in rural areas.

Hemendra Mistri. & Martin Skutil,(2022) conducted the study to determine relevant factors and evaluate Indian pre-service teachers' attitudes toward

inclusive education. The survey was administered to 217 B.Ed. students at Gujarat State University using the Teachers' Attitude towards Inclusive Education Scale. In general, participants had favourable opinions about inclusive education. Notably, opinions were strongly influenced by the greatest degree of education and the degree of inclusive education training. There were no appreciable differences found in terms of gender, age, prior teaching experience, or reported awareness of inclusion guidelines.

Sabita Mishra, (2024) carried out a study on Elementary School Teachers' Attitude Towards Inclusive Classrooms at the Elementary Stage, Considering Experience, Education, and Location. She used a descriptive survey using a questionnaire and attitude scale that included 70 elementary teachers from 20 schools in the Puri district's Nimapara Block. The study demonstrates that elementary teachers in Odisha have a generally positive attitude toward inclusive education, underlining the importance of on-going resources and guidance to go overcome impediments to successful implementation.

Jogeswari Dash, Subhasmita Purohit, Sabita Padhy, & Subhashree Hota, (2019) study on, "A Study on Attitude of Prospective Teacher Educators Towards Inclusive Education," was to investigate the perspectives of aspiring Odisha teacher educators. 56 students from Rajendra Autonomous College in Balangir participated in the study, which employed a self-created attitude measure. The findings of the present study indicate that a large proportion of participants demonstrated a positive attitude toward inclusive education. Approximately 93% of the respondents showed supportive views regarding the implementation of inclusive practices in educational settings.

Indira Vijaysimha. (2023) examined on "Teacher Capacities, Attitudes and Inclusion of Teachers from the Adivasi Communities" the attitudes and practical difficulties faced by educators from tribal (Adivasi) groups in Odisha with regard to inclusive education. Using qualitative information acquired from group discussions and breakout sessions, the study identified key obstacles such distant school locations, multigrade classroom settings, and a lack of context-sensitive tools. The conversations also emphasized the necessity of inclusive policies that are adapted to the linguistic and contextual realities of tribal communities, as well as culturally sensitive teacher training.

Anannya Chakraborty, Amit Kaushik, and Vimala Ramachandra (2024) investigated the attitudes and practices of educators when it comes to

formative evaluations for children with impairments in a private inclusive coeducational school in New Delhi. The researchers used observations and interviews as part of a qualitative case study methodology. Teachers acknowledged the value of inclusive assessments, but they encountered obstacles such inadequate accommodations, a lack of professional development, and little parent collaboration, according to the findings. In order to guarantee the successful inclusion of students with impairments in formative assessments, the study underlined the necessity of focused teacher training and improved teacher-parent collaborations.

Ramandeep Kaur and Raveena H. Salian (2024) examined the attitudes and difficulties that thirty primary and secondary school teachers in Karnataka, India, faced. The study, which used a mixed-methods approach that included surveys and interviews, discovered that although many teachers had favourable opinions about inclusive education, they faced major obstacles like a lack of specialized training, limited support services, and a shortage of instructional materials. Because there were no behavioural or psychological treatments available in schools, teachers found it especially difficult to assist pupils with severe difficulties. The report emphasized that in order to support successful inclusive education, continuous infrastructural upgrades and teacher training are required.

Asit Kumar Mantry and Biswabhusan Pradhan's 2023 conducted a study on "Attitude of Elementary School Teachers towards Inclusive Education: A Study on Jammu and Kashmir, India," investigated the perspectives of 100 elementary school teachers in the Jammu district on inclusive education. The researchers found no discernible changes in opinions according to gender or school location using a survey method and statistical analyses such as mean, standard deviation, and t-tests. Nonetheless, a notable distinction was noted in terms of educational background, with more qualified educators demonstrating more favourable sentiments on inclusive education. The study emphasized how teachers' views of inclusion are influenced by their level of education.

Ambuj Sharma, Reena Malik, and Henrietta Nagy(2022) conducted a study titled "Exploring the Teachers' Perception towards Educational Inclusion: A Study of Teachers in Pune, India," aiming to investigate university teachers' perceptions of including students with disabilities in higher education. Using digital questionnaires to survey 309 university instructors from public and private universities in Pune, the study analysed data

using ANOVA, t-tests, and descriptive statistics. Teachers' opinions of inclusiveness did not significantly correlate with factors like years of experience, gender, or degree level, according to the data. Nonetheless, a noteworthy positive correlation was shown between the number of interactions instructors had with children with disabilities and their perceptions of them, indicating that first-hand experience strengthens favourable attitudes about inclusion.

Anil Kumar (2016) study "Exploring the Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusive Education System: A Study of Indian Teachers" and This study explores teachers' attitudes toward the inclusive education system. The sample consisted of 100 teachers from different schools. The main objective of the research was to understand teachers' opinions regarding inclusive education. For data analysis, statistical tools such as the t-test, mean, and standard deviation were used. The attitude scale toward inclusive education was adapted from Wilczenski (1992) and used to measure teachers' perceptions. The study also examined the impact of demographic variables such as gender, teaching level, and years of experience. The results revealed that female teachers showed a more positive attitude toward inclusive education compared to male teachers, particularly at the school level.

Rubee Mamgain's 2024-conducted a study on the concept of self-efficacy and teachers' attitudes toward the mainstreaming of children with disabilities. The research was carried out in 613 government primary schools, where data were collected from teachers using standardized tools. To measure teachers' perceptions, two instruments were used: the Teachers' Attitude toward Inclusive Education (TAIE) scale and the Teachers' Efficacy for Inclusive Practice (TEIP) scale. These tools helped in understanding both teachers' beliefs about inclusion and their confidence in implementing inclusive practices in regular classrooms. The result show that urban area instructor attitude are more positive than rural area instructor In this research the teachers self efficacy not significantly impact the variable like-gender and prior experience

Mohanty and Patnaik (2023). The study emphasizes that instructors' confidence and willingness to adopt inclusive pedagogies are determined by the caliber and applicability of their training, independent of their gender or experience. The authors urge policymakers to concentrate on capacity-building initiatives to improve readiness and practical competence, and they support the incorporation of

inclusive education materials into all curriculum for teacher preparation.

Appraisal of Review of Related Literature

Numerous researches have been carried out to find out how pre-service and in-service instructors view inclusive education. The overall trend of these studies demonstrates that while most educators have a generally favourable attitude toward the idea of inclusive education, a variety of institutional and individual factors significantly affect their readiness and effectiveness in implementing it. The views of pre-service teachers toward inclusive education vary significantly by gender, geography, and academic path. Female teachers generally show a more supportive attitude toward inclusive practices than their male counterparts. This is reflected in their higher average scores on attitude assessment tools. When locality is considered, educators from urban areas often demonstrate slightly more favourable perceptions. This may be linked to their greater exposure to inclusive classrooms and better access to professional resources and training facilities. Differences are also observed across academic streams. Pre-service teachers from the arts background tend to express more positive views on inclusion compared to those from the science stream. One possible reason is that arts education places stronger emphasis on human values and social understanding. However, these variations are usually not statistically significant, indicates that although certain patterns can be noticed, they may not be strong enough to show a clear measurable impact. Overall, the quantitative data indicates that attitudes are influenced by academic and demographic characteristics; yet, teacher preparedness and institutional support remain vital for the successful incorporation of inclusive education.

Objectives

1. To compare the perception of male and female pre-service teachers towards inclusive education
2. To compare the perception of urban and rural pre-service teachers towards inclusive education
3. To compare the perception of arts and science pre-service teachers towards inclusive education.

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference in the perception of pre-service teachers according to gender
2. There is no significant difference in the perception of pre-service teachers according to locality

There is no significant difference in the perception of pre-service teachers according to subject stream

Methodology

Research Design

A descriptive survey research design was applied for this study in order to evaluate pre- service teachers' opinion towards inclusive education. For this investigation as it allows for the collecting of quantitative data through the structured questionnaire that provides insights into the participants' attitudes, beliefs, and understanding of inclusive education identifying demographic factor example gender, stream, locality and assess their readiness to implement inclusive practice in future classrooms.

Population

600 pre-service teachers enrolled in Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programs at four teacher education branches of four different government colleges, affiliated colleges and university in Bhubaneswar made up the study's target group. The population was recruited from a range of academic years and the number of students enrolled in these colleges. Below table give an overview on population of this study.

Table No-1: Overview on population

SI No	Name of the college	Total no of seat
1.	Nalini Devi Women's College	300
2	Rajdhani College Bhubaneswar	100
3	Buxi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar Autonomous College	100
4	Rama Devi Women's University	100
	TOTAL	600

Sample

The study used stratified random sampling for representation of population. Every college was regarded as a stratum, and participants were chosen at random from each stratum according to the total number of students enrolled in that college. By using this technique, the sample was guaranteed to represent the population's varied makeup.

The study's sample consisted of 220 pre-service instructors in total. The sample size was found to be

representative of all institutions and sufficient for statistical analysis. Below table shows the demographical variables of sample.

Table No -2: Demographical variables of sample

SI No.	Demographic Variable	Sample	
1	Gender	Male	155
		Female	65
2	Locality	Rural	44
		Urban	176
3	Stream	Arts	133
		Science	87
Total		220	

Tool & Techniques

The researcher created a self-constructed attitude measure questionnaire after consulting with experts to learn how pre-service teachers felt about inclusive education. There are fifty statements on inclusive education on the attitude scale. The following choices were available on the 5-point Likert scale used to create these statements: Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Strongly Agree (5), and Agree (4). Both an online form and a paper-based questionnaire were utilized to acquire the data. Data analysis was done using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Perception of pre service teachers towards inclusive education with reference to their gender-

To achieve this objective, pre-service teachers' perception about inclusive education were examined in relation to their gender. A standardized perception scale was used to gather the data, and responses were categorized by gender (male and female). For every group, descriptive data like the mean and standard deviation were calculated. To determine whether there was a statistically significant difference in perception between male and female pre-service teachers, an independent samples t-test was employed. This test was used because it is appropriate for comparing the means of two independent groups on a continuous variable.

Table -3 Group statistics on pre service teachers' perception in reference to their gender

Gender	Sample	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degree of freedom	t-value	Level of significance
Male	155	174.81	17.79	218	0.1224	No Significant Difference
Female	65	178.91	18.15			

Above table signifies that the study employed an independent samples t-test to look into how pre-service teachers view inclusive education based on gender. 65 female and 155 male pre-service teachers' from both first and second were included in this study as sample. Male pre service teacher's mean score is 174.81 and standard deviation is 17.79 and female pre service teachers' score is 178.91 and standard deviation is 18.15. The calculated t-test value is 0.1224 with 218 degree of freedom which is higher than 0.05 significance level . This indicates that there is no statistically significant variation in pre-service teachers' perceptions between male and female participants. Despite having a little better mean score, female pre service teachers' did not significantly

differ from male pre service teachers'. Thus, gender does not significantly affect pre-service teachers' perceptions of inclusive education.

Perception of pre service teachers towards inclusive education in reference to their locality

This objective was to investigate whether pre-service teachers' perceptions of inclusive education varied considerably depending on whether they were in an urban or rural area. The analysis involved computing descriptive statistics, such as the mean and standard deviation, for each group to observe overall trends an independent samples t-test was used to determine whether the perception gap between pre-service teachers in rural and urban areas was statistically significant. By comparing the mean scores of two independent groups on a continuous variable, this test was suitable for determining how locality affected the groups' perceptions of inclusive education.

Table -4 Group Statistics on Pre Service Teachers' Perception in Reference to their locality

Locality	Sample	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degree of freedom	t-value	Level of significance
Rural	44	176.65	16.16	218	0.1839	No Significant Difference
Urban	176	177.08	17.00			

The above table illustrates that the study employed an independent samples t-test to look into pre-service teachers' perspectives of inclusive education based on locality. 44 rural and 176 urban pre-service teachers' were included in the sample. The mean score and standard deviation for pre-service teachers in rural areas are 176.65 and 16.16, respectively, whereas those in urban areas are 177.08 and 17.00. The computed t-test value is 0.1839 with 218 degrees of freedom, exceeding the significance limit of 0.05. This implies that there is no statistically significant variation in pre-service teachers' opinions between rural and urban pre service teachers'. Despite having a bit superior mean score of urban pre service teachers' did not substantially differ from rural pre service teachers'. Thus, locality does not significantly affect pre-service teachers' perceptions of inclusive education.

Perception of pre service teachers towards inclusive education in reference to their Stream

To explore this objective, the study focused on identifying any potential disparities in the perception of inclusive education between pre-service teachers' from Arts and Science streams. The participants were grouped based on their academic background, and their responses on the perception scale were analyzed accordingly. After summarizing the data using descriptive statistics, an independent samples t-test was used to determine whether the observed differences in mean scores between the two groups were statistically significant. **This analysis was intended to reveal whether the academic stream influences pre-service teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education.**

Table -5 Group Statistics on Pre Service Teachers Perception in Reference to their stream

Stream	Sample	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degree of freedom	T - value	Level of significant
Arts	133	175.21	15.25	218	0.8709	No significant Difference
Science	87	177.08	17.72			

Above table illustrates that the study applied an independent samples t-test to analyse pre-service teachers' stream based perspectives on inclusive education. 133 arts and 87 science pre-service teachers' from both first and second were included in this study as sample. The mean score for pre-service teachers in the arts is 175.21 with a standard deviation of 15.25, while the mean score for pre-service teachers in science is 177.08 with a standard deviation of 17.72. With 218 degrees of freedom, the computed t-test value is 0.8709, exceeding the significance level of 0.05. This suggests that there is no statistically significant difference in pre-service teachers' judgments between arts and science pre service teachers'. Despite having a little better mean score of science pre service teachers' did not significantly differ from arts pre service teachers'. Thus, stream does not significantly affect pre-service teachers' perceptions of inclusive education.

Result and Discussion

The study looked at pre-service teachers' attitudes regarding inclusive education in relation to academic stream, gender, and location. Male and female pre-service teachers' perception scores did not differ significantly, according to statistical analysis, while the mean score for females was marginally higher. It

was also found that there was no significant difference between students from the arts and scientific programs or between students in rural and urban areas. These results suggest that pre-service teachers' perceptions of inclusive education may not be significantly influenced by personal demographic criteria such as gender, location, and educational

background. Instead, the general consciousness and mindset seem to be more a result of common experiences in the teacher education setting, like exposure to inclusive pedagogies, fieldwork, and curricular integration. This supports the idea that, irrespective of personal backgrounds, systematic training and organized exposure to inclusive practices are more important in forming favourable opinions about inclusive education (Mohanty & Pattanayak, 2023).

Educational Implication

This study gives useful ideas for training future teachers and improving inclusive education. It shows that student-teachers have almost the same attitude toward inclusive education, no matter if they are male or female, from city or village areas, or from different subjects. This means that all teacher trainees should get the same good training in inclusive education.

Teacher training colleges should include inclusive education in a simple and practical way. Not only book knowledge, but also real practice is important. Activities like school visits, teaching practice, classroom role-play, and real teaching experiences help future teachers learn how to teach all types of students together.

The study also shows that positive thinking about inclusive education can grow in every group of students. This means that if teacher training is planned well, it can prepare new teachers to handle different learners easily and to create classrooms where every child feels welcomed and respected.

Way Forward

To make inclusive education more successful, teacher training programmes must clearly include inclusive practices in their courses. Future teachers should not only learn from books but also take part in regular workshops and practical training sessions. Internships in inclusive schools can help them gain real experience in handling classrooms where students have different needs. Training should also give student-teachers chances to work directly with children who have special needs. This helps them understand these children better and builds confidence in teaching them. For future research, studies should include students from different areas and backgrounds so that the results can be useful for more people. At the same time, special programmes should be started to develop positive thinking, kindness, and understanding toward inclusive education. Pre-service instructors should also receive training on using assistive technologies to help special child. Lastly, to keep teacher candidates current and ready for inclusive teaching, it is

important to provide ongoing professional development.

Conclusion

In a time when inclusive education is not only a governmental objective but also a moral requirement, this study offers positive news: pre-service teachers are entering the teaching profession with an accepting and open mind set, irrespective of their gender, location, or academic program. It appears that future educators are starting to share a value for inclusivity, as evidenced by the lack of notable disparities in perspective. This reflects not only their individual origins but also the training and learning environments they encounter during their early years of teacher education.

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