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## Status of Implementation of Inclusive Education Schemes for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in the State of Kerala

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***Abstract:*** *Inclusive education (IE) has gained popularity as a method of transforming education systems in the world to ensure that every student must receive a high-quality education. Since the emergence of IE, people have accepted it as a way for enhancing the educational environment, one that is receptive to SwIDs, the most underprivileged and marginalized group in society. The purpose of the present study was to investigate the status of the implementation of inclusive education schemes for SwIDs in the state of Kerala. Descriptive survey research method was employed and five hundred samples were selected from fourteen districts of Kerala state. Purposive sampling method under the Non-Probability sampling technique was used to select the sample. The data was collected from respondents through a rating scale developed by the researcher, and the same was analyzed and interpreted using appropriate statistical techniques. The findings of present research study revealed that it includes the level of awareness, availability, accessibility and advantages among headmasters | headmistresses, general educators, special educators, paraprofessionals and parents under inclusive education schemes for SwIDs are average. The findings demonstrated that stakeholders' awareness of IES has a considerable positive impact on the implementation of inclusive education schemes. In today's culture, the current school scenario corresponds to the average level of availability of various aids and technologies in schools allowing SwIDs to live independently. The majority of schools in which research has been conducted agree on an average degree of accessibility give a way to access, advantages to all, and the capability to use accessible equipment in the classroom. The study's findings show that the average amount of benefit derived from inclusive education schemes implemented in their schools, which provides better opportunities for studying and developing a better profession for SwIDs to live independently in the State of Kerala.*



***Keywords: Implementation, Students with Intellectual Disability, Inclusive Education Schemes.***

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Inclusive Education (IE) has moved into an advanced phase of educational reform in the twenty-first century, ensuring quality education and equitable opportunity for all learners around the world. IE has evolved in such a way that it can meet the educational needs of both disabled and non-disabled children in an accessible atmosphere where everyone is accommodated and participated in proper education. According to UNESCO, “the important objective of inclusive education is to sustain education for all, with special attention on creating a barrier-free environment to learners of disadvantaged groups, girls and women, children with disabilities, and out-of-school children. The whole purpose of IE is to make all children to get incorporated to education and be treated equally” (UNESCO, 2010). The current trend is to create an innovative education system where the values of all diverse learners would be considered in an accessible classroom regardless of culture, caste, disabilities, gender, and ethnicity towards ‘Education for All’ (EFA). “Fundamentally, it is quality education sustenance that offers the basis to fruitful inclusive education” (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). “Researchers proposed that, through the progress of culture of collaborative problem solving, inclusion of students with disabilities could serve as a substance for school-wide enhancement and produce benefits for non-disabled students” (Katzman, 2012). “An inflexible, integrated curriculum without opportunity for modification or flexibility does not sustain inclusive education in schools” (Schuelka, 2018). IE is a practice to develop a model of mainstream education system to meet the educational facilities for students with disabilities. Under the inclusive education method, students with disabilities spent most of their time without disabled students (Wikipedia, 2019). The success of IE demands effective collaboration and significant cooperation from all participants related with education of children with or without disabilities.

### **Rationale of the Present Study**

The present study is entitled as “Status of Implementation of Inclusive Education Schemes for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in the State of Kerala. The centrally funded scheme, SSA was the first initiative to make sure compulsory elementary education for children (6-14 years) with disabilities to accomplish UEE in an inclusive setting. The study intends to discover various initiatives and procedures are implemented in the state of Kerala using IE. The central government has sponsored many schemes for children with and without disabilities in the areas of education and mobility management like SSA, RMSA, DPEP, IEDSS, ADIP, and Samagra shiksha Abhiyan (SMSA).

However, in the present study the researcher intended to find out the implementation of two schemes namely Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SMSA) and Assistance to Disabled Persons Scheme (ADIP). It is because the preliminary stage of schemes like SSA, RMSA, DPEP, and IEDSS are now subsuming together under the scheme of Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SMSA) and further to find out the diverse levels of awareness, availability, accessibility and advantages of several provisions mentioned under these schemes and the status of its implementation in the state of Kerala.



### **Statement of the Problem**

The present study is concerned with the status of implementation of inclusive education services for individuals with intellectual disabilities in terms of awareness, availability, accessibility and advantages existing in current scenario of the state of Kerala from the viewpoint of Headmasters \ Headmistresses, General Educators, Special Educators and Paraprofessionals working in inclusive setting. Therefore, the study is entitled “Status of Implementation of Inclusive Education Schemes for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in the State of Kerala”.

### **Operational Definitions**

**Status:** The term status refers to the extent of Awareness, Availability. There is accessibility and advantages of several provisions under inclusive education services (IES) for the students with intellectual disabilities in the state of Kerala.

**Implementation:** Implementation refers to application of several provisions under IES for students with intellectual disabilities in the state of Kerala.

**Inclusive Education Schemes (IES):** IES refers to all schemes that are centrally sponsored under inclusive education. However, in the present study the researcher targets to find out the implementation of two schemes namely Samagra shiksha abhiyan (SMSA) and Assistance to Disabled Persons scheme (ADIP). It is because the preliminary stage of schemes like SSA, RMSA, DPEP, and IEDSS are now subsuming together under the scheme of Samagra shiksha abhiyan (SMSA).

**Students with Intellectual Disability:** “Intellectual impairment is a condition marked by considerable limits in both cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior, which encompasses a wide range of social and practical skills. This condition appears before the age of 22” (AAIDD, 2021).

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To find out the Awareness on Inclusive Education Schemes (IES) for students with intellectual disabilities among stakeholders working in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala
2. To find out the Availability of Inclusive Education Schemes (IES) implemented for students with intellectual disabilities in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala
3. To find out the Accessibility of Inclusive Education Schemes (IES) for students with intellectual disabilities in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala
4. To find out the Advantages of Inclusive Education Schemes (IES) from the stakeholders responsible for providing inclusive education for Students with intellectual disabilities in the state of Kerala

### **Research Questions**

1. How far the headmasters \ headmistresses, general educators, special educators, paraprofessional and parents working in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala were aware about inclusive education schemes?



2. What are the inclusive education schemes (IES) available for students with intellectual disabilities in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala?
3. To what extent the inclusive education schemes (IES) are accessible for students with intellectual disabilities in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala?
4. Does the inclusive education schemes (IES) gives advantages for students with intellectual disabilities in point of view of headmasters \ headmistresses, general educators, special educators, paraprofessional and parents working in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala?

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The present study is intended to form a descriptive research study. Descriptive research comprises of surveys or fact-finding investigations of diverse types. The main purpose of descriptive research study is to deliver a correct portrayal or depiction of the status/features of a condition\occurrence. Descriptive study is element-finding research with appropriate understanding.

### **Sampling Technique**

The sampling technique is a very significant pace in conducting any research study. The Investigator selected the sample through the Purposive Sampling method under the Non-Probability sampling technique. The data was collected from headmasters \ headmistresses, general educators, special educators, paraprofessionals, and parents of inclusive schools in fourteen districts of the state of Kerala.

### **Target Population**

The present study has been conducted on the Status of Implementation of Inclusive Education Schemes for Students with Intellectual Disability in the state of Kerala. The target population in this study is covered under the 14 districts in the State of Kerala.

### **Sample Size**

A total number of 500 samples were selected for the present study. The sample is organized under five categories:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Headmaster \ Headmistresses	100
Para- Professionals	100
General Educators	100
Special Educators	100
Parents	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>



### **Variables of the Study**

In the present study, investigator used variables like category, age, gender, educational qualification, experience, types of service, locations of school, income, types of family, socio-economic status, and employment status.

### **Research Tool**

Tools play an important role in a research study and it is the single element in gathering of data, the vivacious roots of every research work. Tools enable investigators to gather, establish, investigate, picture, and make known study outcomes. The development of a suitable tool is of vital significance for fruitful research. The tools are introduced to study the problem; it is significant that a tool designated should accomplish the purpose for what it is established. Various tools are already available to collect the data necessary for a research study. In the present study, the investigator will develop the tool Rating Scale for Inclusive Education Schemes (RIES). Rating scale was developed to collect the data from the sample. The tool is divided into five parts. Part one of the tool aims to collect demographic data. Second, rating scale for awareness, third rating scale for availability, fourth rating scale for accessibility and fifth rating scale for advantages.

### **Validity**

The items of the present tool were designed based on the various provisions as mentioned under the four domains of IE schemes. The developed tool was distributed among 50 qualified and experienced professionals having expertise in special education, inclusive education, educational schemes, and sound knowledge regarding IE schemes. The content validity of tool has carried out by 50 qualified experts.

### **Reliability of Tool**

A pilot study was initiated to establish the reliability of the research tool. A total of 40 samples. The reliability of the tool was tested by using the Test-retest method and Cronbach's Alpha scores were found out as 0.951. Thus, it indicates the high reliability of the tool. **K.S Test for Normality:** The test indicates that the data is normal.

### **Data Collection**

Investigator identified the sample by means of purposive sampling technique. A total number of 500 samples were selected from fourteen districts of the state of Kerala, for the present study. In the present study, data collection procedure was carried out in four stages to help the purpose of the study. In the present study, data collection procedure was carried out in four stages to help the purpose of the study.

**First Stage:** Obtaining permission from selected schools.

**Second Stage:** Approaching inclusive schools

**Third Stage:** Collection of data.

**Fourth Stage:** Data processing, Analysis and final report writing procedures.

### **Consideration of Ethical Issues**

- The investigator has described about all the matters associated to research to all the concerned persons.





- The concerned schools were informed about the research study and got consent from the authorities of the specific organizations.
- Confidentiality relating to the response data was assured.
- Every effort was made to safeguard the purpose and nature of the research was maintained as pure and clear as possible.

### **Data Analysis**

The responses on data collected were tallied and tabulated. In order to answer the research questions of present study and variables; several descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used with assistance of SPSS program. The collected data were processed and analyzed with data analysis procedures.

### **Major Findings**

The method used in the study is exploratory as it utilizes scoring of the variables. The collected data contains both the qualitative and quantitative data. Accordingly, the study uses both qualitative and quantitative techniques for the analysis of data. The statistical analysis comprised of two stages. The first stage examined the descriptive statistics of the measurement items and assessed the reliability and validity of the measure applied in this study. The second stage tested the proposed research model and this involves assessing the contributions and significance of the manifest variables path coefficients. The data were analysed via SPSS 20.0 for Windows. Descriptive statistics were used to describe and summarize the properties of the mass of data collected from the respondents. Parametric statistics like one-way ANOVA and Z-test were used for comparison of the factors considered between different levels of the demographic variables. A level of 0.05 was established a priori for determining statistical significance. The following section presents the findings of the current study in response to the sub-research questions and the formulated objectives.

To find the level of awareness, availability, accessibility and advantages on Inclusive Education Schemes (IES) for students with intellectual disabilities among stakeholders working in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala, the respondents are asked 40 questions on five-point Rating scale. The responses are scored as 1 for 'Strongly disagree', 2 for 'Disagree', 0 for 'Uncertain', 3 for 'Agree' and 4 for 'Strongly agree'. The total score of the 40 questions (after carrying out convergent validity test) for all 500 respondents is found out, based on which we calculate the mean % score of level awareness on Inclusive Education Schemes were calculated.

This score is classified into one of the four groups:

1. Poor or low if the mean % score is less than 35%,
2. Average if the mean % score is between 35 to 50 per cent,
3. Good or medium if the mean % score lies in the interval 50 to 75% and
4. Excellent or high if the mean % score is above 75%.

### **Research Question: #1**

How far the headmasters \ headmistresses, general educators, special educators, paraprofessional and parents working in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala were aware about inclusive education schemes?



Table: 4.1 Mean, standard deviation for the awareness on the inclusive education schemes

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Mean % score</b>
Awareness	500	23.82	6.83	47.64

**Interpretation**

From table (4.1) it is found that the Mean value and Mean score value of level of awareness of Inclusive education schemes for student with intellectual disabilities among headmasters | headmistresses, general educators, special educators, paraprofessional and parents working in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala are respectively 23.82 and 47.64 with the standard deviation value of 6.83. From the results, it concluded that the mean score (47.64) of level of awareness about inclusive education schemes among headmasters \ headmistresses, general educators, special educators, paraprofessional and parents working in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala is more mean value (23.82). Therefore, the researcher concluded that the level of awareness on Inclusive Education Schemes (IES) for the students with intellectual disability is average (score lies in the interval 35 to 50% which is average).

**Research question: # 2**

What are the inclusive education schemes (IES) available for students with intellectual disability in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala?

Table No.4.2 Mean, standard deviation for availability of inclusive education schemes

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Mean % score</b>
Availability	500	23.87	7.36	47.74

**Interpretation**

From table (4.2) it is found that the mean value and mean score value of level of availability of Inclusive education schemes for student with intellectual disabilities among headmasters \ headmistresses, general educators, special educators, paraprofessional and parents working in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala are respectively 23.87 and 47.74 with the standard deviation value of 7.36. From the results, it concluded that the mean score (47.74) of level of availability about inclusive education schemes among headmasters \ headmistresses, general educators, special educators, paraprofessional and parents working in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala is more mean value (23.87). Therefore, the researcher concluded that the level of availability on Inclusive Education Schemes (IES) for the students with intellectual disability is average (score lies in the interval 35 to 50% which is average).

**Research question: # 3**

To what extend the inclusive education schemes (IES) are accessible for students with intellectual disability in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala?



Table No.4.3 Mean, standard deviation for accessibility on inclusive education schemes

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean % score
Accessibility	500	21.80	7.32	43.60

### Interpretation

From table (4.3) it is found that the Mean value and Mean score value of level of accessibility of Inclusive education schemes for student with intellectual disabilities among headmasters \ headmistresses, general educators, special educators, paraprofessional and parents working in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala are respectively 21.80 and 43.60 with the standard deviation value of 7.32. From the results, it concluded that the mean score (43.60) of level of accessibility about inclusive education schemes among headmasters \ headmistresses, general educators, special educators, paraprofessional and parents working in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala is more mean value (21.80). Therefore, the researcher concluded that the level of accessibility on Inclusive Education Schemes (IES) for the students with intellectual disability is average (score lies in the interval 35 to 50% which is average).

### Research question: # 4

Does the inclusive education schemes (IES) gives advantages for students with intellectual disability in point of view of headmasters \ headmistresses, general educators, special educators, paraprofessional and parents working in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala?

Table No.4.4 Mean, standard deviation for the advantages on the inclusive education schemes

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean % score
Advantages	500	22.72	6.87	45.45

### Interpretation

From table (4.4) it is found that the mean value and mean score value of level of awareness of Inclusive education schemes for student with intellectual disabilities among headmistresses, general educators, special educators, paraprofessional and parents working in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala are respectively 22.72 and 45.45 with the standard deviation value of 6.87. From the results, it concluded that the mean score (45.45) of level of awareness about inclusive education schemes among headmasters \ headmistresses, general educators, special educators, paraprofessional and parents working in inclusive setting in the state of Kerala is more mean value (22.72). Therefore, the researcher concluded that the level of awareness on Inclusive Education Schemes (IES) for the students with intellectual disability is average (score lies in the interval 35 to 50% which is average).

### Recommendations of the Study

1. The stakeholders must raise other contribution to handle SwIDs to make sure successful implementation of inclusive education schemes in the state of Kerala.





2. The stakeholders must collaborate in order to bring improvement among SwIDs in inclusive settings.
3. The headmasters \ headmistresses, general educators, special educators, paraprofessionals and parents must know about all the norms and rules under the schemes for the successful implementation.
4. All the pre-service teacher education programs must include a section on inclusive education schemes.
5. The study recommends that the headmasters \ headmistresses, general educators, special educators, paraprofessionals and parents should take appropriate measures in order to change inappropriate behaviors and learning new academic behaviors.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

1. The study has been fixated on 500 samples. Effort can be made to conduct the study on more samples.
2. Future investigations may be done in other languages.
3. Future researchers may include the samples from associated conditions of students with intellectual disabilities.
4. This type of study should also continue in the other parts of India by taking students from different schools.
5. Similar quantitative studies can be conducted in different areas of disabilities.

### **Limitations of the Study**

- Merely 330 inclusive schools located over fourteen districts in the state of Kerala made up the sample used for the present study.
- Beyond following their strategy to talk with respondents after school time, the researcher ran into a barrier when everybody else wanted to return home.
- Due to the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic, the investigator could not meet the study participants in personally.

### **3. CONCLUSIONS**

The researcher was envisioned to investigate the status of implementation of inclusive education schemes among students with intellectual disabilities in the state of Kerala. The findings of the present research study revealed that it includes the level of awareness, availability, accessibility and advantages among headmasters | headmistresses, general educators, special educators, paraprofessionals and parents under inclusive education schemes for students with intellectual disabilities are average. It is clear from result that the level of awareness has a significant positive influence on implementation of inclusive education schemes among headmasters \ headmistresses, general educators, special educators, paraprofessionals and parents regarding inclusive education schemes are average. The existing school situation agrees to the average level of availability of various aids and equipment in schools for students with intellectual disabilities for an independent living in present society. It is felt that the present study will contribute to the current research in the arena of inclusive education schemes and support to uphold meaningful reintegration of SwIDs. It also looks



forward to the future research studies to draw and shape up on the present study by overwhelming its limitations.

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