

# **Inclusive Education and Scholastic Achievement : A Study of Specially Abled Children in Kashmir**

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<b>ABSTRACT</b>
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*This study is an attempt to study the impact of inclusion on scholastic achievement of differently abled students. The researcher used descriptive method to accomplish the selected objectives. The research was conducted in the Kashmir region of Jammu and Kashmir State in India. Using a disproportionate stratified-cum-multistage sampling technique, 400 elementary school students were chosen as sample. The findings of the study revealed varied levels of institutional environment possessed by the schools ranging from unfavorable to favorable school environment. Specially abled children were found to possess different levels of scholastic achievement. Significant difference was also found between the students of inclusive and non inclusive schools on scholastic achievement.*

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**Key Words:** *Inclusive education, scholastic achievement, specially abledchildren, Kashmir*

## **Introduction**

According to the MHRD's 2003 Draft Scheme on Inclusive Education, inclusive education is a system in which all children, regardless of their disabilities, are given the opportunity to attend mainstream schools with adequate support services (Draft of Inclusive Education Scheme, MHRD, 2003). Inclusive system focuses on educating

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children with special needs together with the normal children in conventional schools. Inclusive education signifies diverse nature of the students and the variety each student carries to the class. In a really inclusive setting, each youngster has a sense of security and has a feeling of having belongingness. Learning objectives are defined with the involvement of children and their guardians, who also make decisions that have an impact on them. Additionally, with all other factors being equal, school staff has what is needed to sustain, support, and respond to the demands. In the latter half of the twentieth century, there was an increase in interest in integrating these pupils into traditional school settings. The current movement aims to create an educational system where all students are valued regardless of their disability, sex, race, etc. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993), the Jomtien World Declaration on Education for All (1990), and the World Conference on Special Needs Education all serve as catalysts for the international movement toward inclusive systems of education (1994).

Jammu and Kashmir has adopted policy of free and compulsory education for all very early but very less attention has been paid in this field so far. The state of Kashmir has been embroiled in political conflict for many years, which has gotten in the way of general education generally and inclusive policy specifically. On the other side Kashmir is different from other parts of country geographically forcing educational institutions to remain closed for three months thus increasing the problems of

education along with other fields. Lack of facilities for disabled is vivid. There are very few schools working in this field that too with minimum infrastructural facilities (**Imaniah, I., & Fitria, N. 2018**). Apart from the infrastructural facilities various issues like teacher pupil ratio, school climate etc are the big challenges that system of inclusive education faces. For the success and accomplishment of the aims of this system of education the effective and efficient strategies need to be adopted. The point of concern for inclusive education is not just dealing with the students with learning disabilities who need special care but it has to also deal with students without any disability so that they don't get affected by involvement of exceptional children. This area has been widely dealt with by the researchers and many researches' have been conducted and most of the research findings are in favour of inclusive education. **Dyson et al., (2004)** confirmed no great difference on academic performance as far as children with special needs and normal children are concerned.

Many research studies have made concentrated efforts on the scholastic achievement of the specially abled students in such environments. Very few studies are in existencethat aimed to find the effects of special education practices on the students from regular mode of education. The focus of this research study is to find out the influence of inclusive system of education on the scholastic achievement of specially abled children in Kashmir.

## **Statement of the problem**

*“Inclusive education and scholastic achievement – a study of specially abled children in Kashmir”*

### **Objectives:**

1. To assess the levels of institutional environment of the schools of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education.
2. To assess the levels of scholastic achievement of specially abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education.
3. To compare the scholastic achievement of specially abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education.

### **Hypothesis of the study**

1. Differently abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive system of Education do not differ significantly on scholastic achievement.

### **Operational Definitions of terms and variable**

**Inclusive Education** Inclusive education refers to the programmes and activities for special needs children to educate them along with normal children in schools.

**Scholastic Achievement** Scholastic achievement in this study means the cumulative marks gained by the differently abled children in the previous two year examinations.

**Differently Abled Children** Differently abled children for the present study refer to all the specially abled children

enrolled in both inclusive and non-inclusive schools of Kashmir.

### **Methodology**

The present investigation has been carried out by using descriptive approach. The details about the sample, sampling procedure, description of data collection devices, statistical treatment used in the present investigator are as under.

### **Population**

The population for this study comprised of all the differently abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive elementary educational institutions of Kashmir.

### **Sample**

The sample for this research study consisted of specially abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive elementary schools of Kashmir. A sample of 400 elementary school students (200 children of inclusive and 200 children of non-inclusive elementary schools of Kashmir) from 56 inclusive and 4 non-inclusive elementary schools of Kashmir were selected by using disproportionate stratified-cum-multistage sampling technique. Since the union territory of J&K has very less number of special schools as compared to other states of India. Therefore, the investigator used disproportionate sampling technique.

### **Tools used**

1. School Climate towards Inclusive Education (SCIE) questionnaire was developed by the investigator with the standard procedure of test construction. The school

climate towards inclusive education questionnaire consists of various dimensions.

- Information blank was constructed by the investigator for the collection of information regarding scholastic achievement.

### Statistical Techniques Used:

The information collected from the field was put to various statistical analysis and both descriptive as well as inferential statistics like percentage statistics, S.D and t-test were employed for the analysis and interpretation.

### Results and Discussion:

**Table 1: Showing the overall levels of Institutional environment of the schools of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education (N=60)**

Levels of Institutional Environment	Inclusive Schools		Non Inclusive Schools	
	N	%	N	%
<b>Favourable</b>		-	1	25
<b>Above Average</b>	2	3.5	2	50
<b>Average</b>	33	58.92	1	25
<b>Below Average</b>	15	26.78	-	-
<b>Un Favourable</b>	6	10.71	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table shows the percentage of levels of institutional environment of the schools of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education. A varied level of institutional environment was found to be possessed by the schools. 25% of the non-inclusive schools were found to possess favourable institutional environment whereas no inclusive school was found to fall in this level. 50% non-inclusive

schools where as only 3.5% inclusive schools were found to possess above average level of institutional environment. 25% of the non-inclusive where as 58.92% inclusive schools were found to have average level of institutional environment. 26.78% and 10.71% of the inclusive schools were found to possess below average and un- favourable level of institutional environment whereas no non-inclusive school was found to fall in these two levels of institutional environment.

**Table 2: Showing the overall levels of Scholastic Achievement of differently abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education (N=400)**

Grade	% of Marks	Inclusive School students		Non Inclusive School students	
		N	%	N	%
A1	91-100	-	-	-	-
A2	81-90	04	2%	02	1%
B1	71-80	19	9.5%	09	4.5%
B2	61-70	49	24.5%	11	5.5%
C1	51-60	90	45%	45	22.5%
C2	41-50	29	14.5%	101	50.5%
D	33-40	09	4.5%	32	16%
		<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>

The above table shows the overall levels of scholastic achievement of differently abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education. The findings recalls that out of 200 differently able children of non-inclusive system of education, 1% students fall under A2 category, 4.5% fall under B1 Grade, 5.5% students showed B2 Grade of scholastic achievement. The data also reveals that 22.5% differently abled students of non-inclusive system fall in

C1 Grade and a very good percentage of 50.5% showed C2 Grade. 16% students of non-inclusive system were found to possess D Grade of scholastic achievement.

The statistical data further reveals that out of 200 differently abled children of inclusive system of education, 2% students fall in A2 Grade, 9.5% of the students fall in B1 Grade, 24.5% in B2 Grade, and 45% in C1 Grade of scholastic achievement. It was also found that 14.5% students of the inclusive system fall under C2 grade and 4.5% students fall under D Grade of scholastic achievement.

**Table 3: Mean comparison between differently abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education on scholastic achievement (N=400).**

Group	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Significance
Children of Inclusive System	200	54.31	6.31	7.51	0.01
Children of non-Inclusive System	200	48.27	5.62		

The mean difference between children with disabilities in inclusive and non-inclusive educational systems is seen in the above table. On the Scholastic Achievement, there was a significant difference between the two groups, and the difference was significant at the 0.01 level. As shown by the mean difference of the students in inclusive systems of education, it is clear that students with disabilities in inclusive systems of education perform academically better than students in non-inclusive systems.



The hypothesis no.1 “Differently abled children of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education do not differ significantly on scholastic achievement” stands rejected.

### **Discussion:**

On the basis of the levels of institutional environment it was revealed that both the schools of inclusive and non-inclusive system of education possess varied levels of institutional environment. 25% of the non-inclusive schools were found to possess favourable institutional environment whereas no inclusive school was found to fall in this level. 50% of non-inclusive schools were found to have above average institutional environment where as only 3.5% inclusive schools were found to possess above average level of institutional environment. 25% of the non-inclusive schools stand 58.92% inclusive schools were found to have average level of institutional environment. 26.78% and 10.71% of the inclusive schools were found to possess below average and un-favourable level of institutional environment whereas no non- inclusive school was found to fall in these two levels of institutional Environment. **Panday (2009)** found that inclusive institutions lack infrastructure for running the system more with more efficiency.

On the basis of scholastic achievement it was found that out of 200 differently abled children of non-inclusive system of education, 1% students fall under A2 category, 4.5% fall under B1 Grade, 5.5% students showed B2 Grade of scholastic achievement. The results also revealed that 22.5% differently abled students of non- inclusive system

fall in C1 Grade and a very good percentage of 50.5% showed C2 Grade. 16% students of non-inclusive system were found to possess D Grade of scholastic achievement. The statistical data further revealed that out of 200 differently abled children of inclusive system of education, 2% students fall in A2 Grade, 9.5% of the students fall in B1 Grade, 24.5% in B2 Grade, and 45% in C1 Grade of scholastic achievement. It was further found that 14.5% students of the inclusive system fall under C2 grade and 4.5% students fall under D Grade of scholastic achievement. **McCarty, (2006)** found that especially abled children when placed in inclusive classes performed better in their academics than the specially abled children enrolled in non-inclusive classrooms. **Rea, McLaughlin, and Walther-Thomas (2002)** have also confirmed that especially abled children when taught in inclusive settings earned high marks, committed no more behavior denials, enhanced school attendance and had than students studying in the non-inclusive system. The inclusive system of classrooms also provide good support including social support from classmates without disabilities, which in turn help in improving the academic performance to the children with special needs (**Pavri, S., & Luftig, R. 2001**). The study is in contrast with the study conducted by **Weiss and Lloyd (2002)** who found that children with differently abled children showed less academic performance when placed in an inclusive classroom. However no description was given on how the performance was determined.

## **Educational Implications**

Majority of the selected schools in Kashmir were found to have average instructional environment. Therefore, the physical aspect of the inclusive schools should be improved and the schools should be housed in the good buildings with suitable infrastructure for differently abled children and every school should have assistive and adaptive technologies so that the differently abled students shall feel safe physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually. Both the students of inclusive and non-inclusive schools were found to average level of scholastic achievement. Therefore, it is recommended that constructive pedagogy should be used in schools to enhance the academic performance of the differently abled students. It is also recommended that special training should be given to the teachers who are working in inclusive educational institutions to enhance the self-efficacy of the teachers so that students will get maximum benefit out of the education. Proper motivation, favorable conditions and remedial classes should also be organized for both inclusive and non- inclusive students to enhance their academic achievement.

Comparatively students of inclusive education showed better academic performance than non-inclusive students as usually children with mild and moderate disability are being enrolled in the inclusive schools where as children with severe disability are enrolled in the special schools. Therefore, it is recommended that special infrastructure should be developed the non-inclusive schools so that academic performance of the students are improved. It is

also recommended in special schools, only those teachers should be appointed who have B.Ed. in special education.

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