

Awareness of Inclusive Classroom Practices among Secondary School Teachers: A Survey Study

¹Dr. Suvarna Gorakshanath Shikare

¹ Associate Professor, Tilak College of Education, Pune

ABSTRACT

Inclusive education has emerged as a fundamental approach to ensuring equitable, quality, and accessible education for all learners regardless of their abilities, disabilities, gender, socioeconomic background, language, or cultural differences. The successful implementation of inclusive education largely depends on teachers' awareness, attitudes, competencies, and classroom practices. Secondary school teachers play a crucial role in creating inclusive learning environments that accommodate diverse learning needs and promote equal participation. The present study aimed to examine the awareness of inclusive classroom practices among secondary school teachers in Pune City, Maharashtra. A descriptive survey method with a quantitative research design was adopted for the study. A sample of 50 secondary school teachers was selected through simple random sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire consisting of items related to teachers' awareness of inclusive education, classroom practices, instructional adaptations, assessment strategies, collaboration, and professional development. The collected data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean score, and standard deviation. The findings indicated that the majority of teachers possessed a moderate level of awareness regarding inclusive classroom practices. Teachers demonstrated positive awareness of learner diversity and equal educational opportunities but reported challenges related to limited training, inadequate teaching resources, classroom management, and curriculum adaptation. The study emphasizes the importance of continuous professional development, institutional support, and inclusive teaching

resources to strengthen teachers' competencies. The findings provide valuable implications for school administrators, teacher educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers in promoting effective inclusive education at the secondary school level.

Keywords: Inclusive Education, Inclusive Classroom Practices, Secondary School Teachers, Teacher Awareness, Survey Study, Pune City.

I INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education is an important approach that ensures equal educational opportunities for all learners irrespective of their abilities, disabilities, gender, language, or socio-economic background. It promotes participation, equity, and respect for diversity by providing a supportive learning environment in regular classrooms. Teachers play a vital role in implementing inclusive education through appropriate instructional strategies, classroom management, and learner-centered practices.

Inclusive classroom practices involve differentiated instruction, cooperative learning, flexible assessment, curriculum adaptation, and the use of suitable teaching-learning resources to meet the diverse needs of students. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 also emphasizes equitable and inclusive education by encouraging schools to create learner-friendly classrooms that support every child's academic and social development.

Despite various policy initiatives, many teachers continue to face challenges such as inadequate professional training, insufficient teaching-learning resources, large class sizes, and limited institutional support while implementing inclusive classroom practices. Therefore, teachers'

awareness of inclusive education has become an important factor in ensuring successful classroom inclusion.

Pune City is one of Maharashtra's major educational centres, comprising government, aided, and private secondary schools with diverse student populations. Assessing teachers' awareness of inclusive classroom practices can help identify existing strengths and areas requiring improvement. The findings of the present study are expected to assist school administrators, teacher educators, and policymakers in planning effective professional development programmes and strengthening inclusive education at the secondary school level.

II CONCEPT OF INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM PRACTICES

Inclusive classroom practices refer to teaching methods and classroom strategies that provide equal learning opportunities to all students irrespective of their individual differences. These practices encourage teachers to recognize learner diversity and adopt instructional approaches that support active participation, collaboration, and meaningful learning. Inclusive classrooms focus on differentiated instruction, curriculum adaptation, flexible assessment, positive classroom management, and the use of appropriate teaching-learning materials. Such practices promote academic achievement, social inclusion, self-confidence, and mutual respect among learners while creating an equitable learning environment.

III NEED OF THE STUDY

Inclusive education has become an important objective of school education in India. The successful implementation of inclusive education depends largely on teachers' awareness and understanding of inclusive classroom practices. Teachers who possess adequate awareness can effectively address the diverse learning needs of students and create supportive classroom environments. Although several educational policies advocate inclusive education, its classroom implementation remains a challenge due

to inadequate training and limited instructional resources. Therefore, the present study aims to assess the awareness of inclusive classroom practices among secondary school teachers in Pune City and provide suggestions for improving inclusive teaching practices.

IV REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Previous studies indicate that teachers' awareness and professional competence are essential for the successful implementation of inclusive education. Ainscow (2005) emphasized that inclusive education requires schools to remove barriers to learning and ensure equal participation of all learners. UNESCO (2009) highlighted that flexible teaching strategies and supportive learning environments are fundamental principles of inclusive education. Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) reported that differentiated instruction and collaborative learning enhance classroom inclusion. Sharma, Loreman, and Forlin (2012) concluded that teacher training significantly improves teachers' confidence and effectiveness in inclusive classrooms. The National Education Policy (2020) also recommends teacher capacity building, flexible curricula, and learner-centered pedagogy for strengthening inclusive education. The review suggests that enhancing teachers' awareness through continuous professional development is essential for the effective implementation of inclusive classroom practices.

V OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study was undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To study the level of awareness of inclusive classroom practices among secondary school teachers in Pune City.
2. To identify teachers' awareness regarding instructional strategies used in inclusive classrooms.
3. To examine teachers' awareness of classroom management practices for inclusive education.
4. To identify the challenges faced by secondary school teachers in implementing inclusive classroom practices.

5. To suggest measures for strengthening awareness and effective implementation of inclusive classroom practices among secondary school teachers.

VI HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The following hypothesis was formulated for the study:

Null Hypothesis (H₀)

H₀₁: Secondary school teachers do not possess a significant level of awareness regarding inclusive classroom practices.

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁)

H₁₁: Secondary school teachers possess a significant level of awareness regarding inclusive classroom practices.

VII SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The present study is significant because inclusive education has become one of the major priorities of the Indian education system. The success of inclusive education depends largely on teachers' awareness and effective implementation of inclusive classroom practices. Assessing teachers' awareness provides valuable information about their understanding of learner diversity, instructional adaptations, classroom management, and inclusive assessment practices.

The findings of the study will help school administrators identify the professional development needs of teachers and organize appropriate in-service training programmes. The study will also assist teacher education institutions in strengthening pre-service and in-service teacher preparation related to inclusive education. Furthermore, curriculum developers and policymakers may utilize the findings to formulate strategies that support the implementation of inclusive education in accordance with the recommendations of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

The study also contributes to educational research by providing empirical evidence regarding teachers' awareness of inclusive classroom practices in secondary schools of Pune City. It serves as a useful reference for researchers

interested in inclusive education, teacher education, educational psychology, and school improvement.

VIII RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology provides the scientific framework for conducting systematic investigation and obtaining reliable conclusions. The present study adopted a quantitative approach to examine the awareness of inclusive classroom practices among secondary school teachers in Pune City. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analysed using appropriate statistical techniques.

Particular	Description
Research Method	The study employed the Descriptive Survey Method, which is appropriate for collecting information regarding teachers' awareness of inclusive classroom practices. This method enabled the researcher to study the existing level of awareness without manipulating any variables.
Research Design	The present investigation followed a Quantitative Research Design. Quantitative data collected through a structured questionnaire were statistically analyzed to obtain objective findings regarding teachers' awareness of inclusive classroom practices.
Population	The population of the study consisted of all secondary school teachers working in recognized government, aided, and private secondary schools in Pune City, Maharashtra.
Sample	A sample of 50 secondary school teachers was selected from different secondary schools in Pune City. The respondents represented diverse teaching experiences, subject specializations, and school management types.
Sampling Technique	The Simple Random Sampling Technique was employed to select the respondents. Every secondary school teacher in the selected schools had an equal opportunity to be included in the

	study, thereby minimizing sampling bias.
Research Tool	A Structured Questionnaire was developed by the researcher to assess teachers' awareness of inclusive classroom practices. The questionnaire covered dimensions such as awareness of inclusive education, instructional strategies, classroom management, assessment practices, learner participation, collaboration, and challenges in implementation.
Statistical Techniques	The collected data were analyzed using Frequency, Percentage, Mean Score, and Standard Deviation. These statistical techniques were employed to summarize the responses and interpret the level of awareness among secondary school teachers regarding inclusive classroom practices.

IX DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data collected from 50 secondary school teachers through the structured questionnaire were systematically organized, classified, tabulated, and analyzed to assess their awareness of inclusive classroom practices. The analysis was carried out using appropriate statistical techniques, namely frequency, percentage, mean score, and standard deviation, to summarize and interpret the responses objectively. The statistical findings provide insights into teachers' awareness of inclusive instructional strategies, classroom management, learner participation, and challenges associated with implementing inclusive education. The analysis also identifies areas requiring professional development and institutional support for strengthening inclusive classroom practices. The results are presented in the following tables, accompanied by suitable interpretations, to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of teachers' awareness and perceptions regarding inclusive education in secondary schools of Pune City.

Table 1: Overall Awareness of Inclusive Classroom Practices among Secondary School Teachers (N = 50)

Level of Awareness	Frequency	Percentage
High	16	32%
Moderate	26	52%
Low	8	16%
Total	50	100%

Interpretation

The table shows that the majority (52%) of secondary school teachers possess a moderate level of awareness regarding inclusive classroom practices. About 32% demonstrate a high level of awareness, whereas only 16% have a low level of awareness. This indicates that most teachers have satisfactory awareness but require additional professional development for effective classroom implementation.

Table 2: Awareness of Inclusive Instructional Strategies

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Highly Aware	18	36%
Moderately Aware	24	48%
Slightly Aware	8	16%
Total	50	100%

Interpretation

The findings reveal that 48% of teachers are moderately aware of inclusive instructional strategies, while 36% are highly aware. A smaller proportion (16%) reported limited awareness. This suggests that teachers possess basic knowledge of inclusive teaching methods but require further training to effectively apply them in classroom situations.

Table 3: Awareness of Classroom Management Practices for Inclusive Education

Response	Frequency	Percentage
High	17	34%
Moderate	25	50%
Low	8	16%
Total	50	100%

Interpretation

The table indicates that half (50%) of the teachers possess a moderate level of awareness regarding inclusive classroom management practices. Thirty-four percent reported high awareness, while 16% demonstrated low awareness. The findings indicate the need for strengthening teachers' classroom management skills in inclusive settings.

Table 4: Challenges Faced in Implementing Inclusive Classroom Practices

Challenge	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of Professional Training	44	88%
Large Class Size	40	80%
Inadequate Teaching Resources	38	76%
Limited Time	35	70%
Lack of Administrative Support	33	66%

Interpretation

The table reveals that lack of professional training (88%) is the most significant challenge faced by teachers, followed by large class size (80%) and inadequate teaching resources (76%). These findings suggest that successful implementation of inclusive education requires greater institutional support and continuous professional development.

Table 5: Strategies Suggested for Strengthening Inclusive Classroom Practices

Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Regular Teacher Training	46	92%
Availability of Teaching Resources	42	84%
Curriculum Flexibility	39	78%
Administrative Support	37	74%
Parent-Teacher Collaboration	35	70%

Interpretation

The findings indicate that regular teacher training (92%) is considered the most effective strategy for strengthening inclusive classroom practices. Teachers also emphasized the importance of adequate teaching resources, flexible curriculum, and administrative support for successful implementation.

Table 6: Overall Mean Awareness Score of Secondary School Teachers

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Awareness of Inclusive Classroom Practices	50	79.84	6.82

Interpretation

The mean awareness score of 79.84 indicates that secondary school teachers possess a satisfactory level of awareness regarding inclusive classroom practices. The standard deviation of 6.82 shows moderate variation among teachers' responses, suggesting relatively consistent awareness levels across the sample.

X HYPOTHESIS ANALYSIS

Null Hypothesis (H₀): Secondary school teachers do not possess a significant level of awareness regarding inclusive classroom practices.

Based on the statistical analysis, the overall mean score (79.84) indicates that teachers possess a satisfactory level of awareness regarding inclusive classroom practices. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. The findings confirm that secondary school teachers in Pune City have a significant level of awareness of inclusive classroom practices, although further professional development is required for effective implementation.

Figure 1: Overall Awareness of Inclusive Classroom Practices



XI RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study reveal that the majority of secondary school teachers possess a moderate level of awareness regarding inclusive classroom practices. Teachers demonstrated satisfactory understanding of learner diversity, inclusive instructional strategies, classroom management, and equitable learning opportunities. However, the implementation of inclusive practices is constrained by inadequate professional training, insufficient teaching-learning resources, large class sizes, limited instructional time, and lack of administrative support.

The statistical analysis further indicates that continuous teacher training is considered the most effective strategy for strengthening inclusive classroom practices. The findings are consistent with the recommendations of the National Education Policy (2020), which emphasizes teacher capacity building, learner-centered pedagogy, and equitable education. Overall, the results suggest that while awareness among teachers is encouraging, sustained professional development and institutional support are necessary for effective implementation of inclusive education.

XII MAJOR FINDINGS

1. Most secondary school teachers possess a moderate level of awareness regarding inclusive classroom practices.
2. Teachers demonstrate satisfactory awareness of inclusive instructional strategies and classroom management.
3. Lack of professional training is the most significant challenge affecting the implementation of inclusive education.
4. Large class size and inadequate teaching-learning resources also hinder inclusive classroom practices.

5. Regular teacher training is considered the most effective strategy for improving inclusive education.

6. The overall mean awareness score indicates that teachers have satisfactory awareness of inclusive classroom practices.

7. The study confirms that secondary school teachers require continuous professional development to strengthen inclusive teaching competencies.

XII EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

1. Regular in-service training programmes should be organized to enhance teachers' competencies in inclusive education.
2. Teacher education institutions should strengthen pre-service preparation related to inclusive classroom practices.
3. Schools should provide adequate teaching-learning materials and assistive technologies for inclusive classrooms.
4. School administrators should encourage collaborative planning, peer learning, and professional support among teachers.
5. Curriculum planners should promote flexible and learner-centered instructional approaches.
6. Parent-school collaboration should be strengthened to support inclusive educational practices.
7. Educational authorities should implement the recommendations of NEP 2020 for equitable and inclusive education.

XII CONCLUSION

The study concludes that secondary school teachers in Pune City possess a satisfactory level of awareness regarding inclusive classroom practices. However, successful implementation of inclusive education requires continuous professional development, adequate teaching resources, supportive school leadership, and effective policy implementation. Strengthening teachers' awareness and competencies will contribute to creating inclusive learning environments where every learner receives equal educational opportunities and meaningful participation. Inclusive classroom

practices are essential for achieving equitable, quality, and learner-centered education in accordance with the vision of the National Education Policy 2020.

REFERENCES

- [1] Ainscow, M. (2005). Developing inclusive education systems: What are the levers for change? *Journal of Educational Change*, 6(2), 109–124.
- [2] Florian, L., & Black-Hawkins, K. (2011). Exploring inclusive pedagogy. *British Educational Research Journal*, 37(5), 813–828.
- [3] Government of India. (2020). National Education Policy 2020. Ministry of Education.
- [4] Sharma, U., Loreman, T., & Forlin, C. (2012). Measuring teacher efficacy to implement inclusive practices. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 12(1), 12–21.
- [5] UNESCO. (2009). Policy guidelines on inclusion in education. UNESCO.
- [6] United Nations. (2015). Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. United Nations.