

Perceived Challenges and Parental Involvement in Inclusive Education: An Exploratory Study of Primary Schools in Pakistan

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore the challenges perceived by teachers towards inclusive education in primary schools in Pakistan. It also highlighted the importance of parental involvement in promoting inclusive education. Despite promises, the local government seems to have failed to provide equal access to education for all children in Pakistan. Among various hindrances, negative attitudes of the public, particularly among teachers and parents towards inclusive education can be considered the most significant deterrents to inclusive education in primary schools in Pakistan. Using an exploratory qualitative research design, in-depth interviews were conducted with primary school teachers ($n = 15$ selected purposively) and parents ($n = 5$ selected purposively) having children with special needs. Having a pre-decided inclusion criterion, schools were selected using the purposive sampling technique. The findings of the study reveal that a successful inclusive education setup requires proper comprehension of inclusive education and diversified learning needs, responsible school management, and enhanced parent-teacher relationship. Schools are recommended to conduct awareness programmes for inclusive educational setups. There is also the need for teachers' training programmes to address the need for inclusive education in society.

Keywords: conducive environment, differentiation-learning strategy, inclusive education, professional development, teachers' attitude.

Introduction

In the educational setting, the term “inclusion” refers to “the continuous process of increasing the presence, participation and achievements of all children and young people in local community schools” (Qvortrup & Qvortrup, 2018, p. 803). Qvortrup and Qvortrup (2018) argued that inclusion has become a centre of focus during the last 10 years in various countries. A large number of students with disabilities are being frequently neglected in mainstream schooling globally because the term “inclusive education” lacks a clear definition (Florian, 2014). Shedding light on various definitions of inclusive education used worldwide, Florian (2014) concludes that it is important to focus on teachers’ practices because practices specify principles, assumptions and actions. The specification of principles, assumptions and actions have a focus on student learning as well as the relationships between classroom communities.

Finding a great variety in inclusive schools, Flem et al. (2004) conclude that variation in inclusive schools should be taken as a positive element rather than a problem. This is particularly because “inclusive schooling is to consider the learning needs of all the children; differences must not be hidden or denied, rather they should be brought into the open and made visible” (p. 96). The term “inclusive school” refers to the “school where all children are taught to understand and appreciate human differences. Teachers and administrators receive the support necessary to include all students in regular education classrooms” (Atta et al., 2009, p. 272). From this perspective, striving to address the diversity in a school includes addressing the students with special needs. Savolainen et al. (2012) discussed that inclusion of students with different educational needs within mainstream schools is being focused on educational policy and planning worldwide.

To promote inclusive education, the importance of parental involvement cannot be denied. Afolabi et al., (2013) consider parental involvement and support as a fundamental way to facilitate inclusive education. This notation relates to the parental involvement theory (Waluyandi et al., 2020) which advocates parental involvement as the leading factor for a favourable academic profile and emotion of a child. In the light of parental involvement theory, a large number of research studies found a significant correlation between parental involvement and students’ academic performance (Bakker & Denessen, 2007; Lv et al., 2019).

In Pakistan, as pointed out by Khan and Behlol (2014), teachers and school management have a positive attitude towards the inclusion of students with educational needs; nevertheless, they face certain challenges when it comes to the practical implementation of inclusive education. Similarly, awareness regarding the importance of parental involvement to promote inclusive education in Pakistan seems to be an uncovered area. This study aimed to explore teachers' attitudes and their perceived challenges towards inclusive education in primary schools in Pakistan. Despite promises, the local government seems to have failed to provide equal access to education for all children in Pakistan. Among various hindrances, the negative attitude of the public, particularly among teachers and parents, towards inclusive education can be considered the most significant reason for hampering inclusive education in primary schools in Pakistan. As teachers' positive attitude is mandatory for the success of inclusive education, similarly, parental involvement is also considered a significant player. According to Afolabi (2014), there is a meaningful relationship between parental involvement and the success of inclusive education, as such, parental involvement contributes to positive academic outcomes.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the perceived challenges faced by teachers to create an effective inclusion classroom?
2. What is the importance of parental involvement in promoting inclusive education?

Literature Review

Building inclusive schools is at the heart of educational policy worldwide to address the need for diversity rather than focusing on separate schools for impaired children (DeMatthews et al. 2021). Evans and Lunt (2002) state that if social responses are understood and cultures of difference are studied among schools, equity and inclusion of children with disabilities could be further fostered. Cultural frameworks of difference, success, and failure, as defined in human conceptions, attitudes, and beliefs, can influence how teachers engage with students.

Children with Special Needs

Children with Special Needs (CWDs) endure considerable prejudice and exclusion from the mainstream educational system, which results in negative consequences for their education. The international community has taken several steps to acknowledge education as a fundamental human right for all children. According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), Education is a core human right for everyone, including CWDs (Cohen, 1989). Inclusive education is the process of reacting to children's diversity by increasing classroom involvement and decreasing exclusion from education. Inclusive education refers to a system of education that meets the needs of all children, including CWDs, in mainstream classrooms (Lindsay, 2003).

Kuyini and Desai (2007) found that inclusive education is providing quality education to every child in mainstream schools to the greatest extent possible. This educational system focuses on children who are enrolled in schools but unable to learn; children who are not enrolled in schools but can be educated if schools are available. These are children with significant disabilities that require a specialised setting and have distinct learning demands. Inclusive education can be successful if all children are given a child-friendly and accessible learning environment to facilitate their participation in the mainstream school system. An inclusive school removes all barriers to allow all children to participate, both physically and symbolically, through culturally relevant curricula and support structures (Koller et al., 2018). Through its teachers' interactions with kids and the administration's interactions with parents, the school promotes collaboration and equality (Koller et al., 2018).

Teachers' Perceived Challenges towards Inclusive Education

The study conducted by Unianu (2012) reveals that teachers fail to understand the true essence of inclusive education. Therefore, "attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education should be developed in line with the educational system to have their effective input," (Unianu, 2012, p. 904). Teachers in regular schools are willing to volunteer their time to help with inclusive education if they are given the right training. Without the assistance of the school management, teachers are unable to ensure that CWDs are included. The majority of mainstream teachers in new schools have a favourable attitude toward including CWDs in regular courses

(Ewing et al., 2018). Professionally qualified teachers have a more receptive attitude toward the integration of CWDs. Teachers gain confidence after spending time with CWDs, the majority of teachers believe that including children with special needs is possible.

Ahmed et al. (2012) found that for inclusive teaching practices, perceived school support is one of the most supporting factors that increase the positive attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education. Zgaga (2019) revealed that teachers are influenced by a variety of factors, including inclusion policies, school culture, and the availability of resources to meet CWDs' requirements. Considering teachers' attitude as one of the most significant factors to implement inclusive education, Štemberger and Kiswarday (2018) conducted a study from the perspective of teachers' attitude having three levels including affective, behavioural, and cognitive attitudes. The findings of the study conclude that in-service training plays a significant role to increase the predominantly positive attitude towards inclusive education. Conducting a study to examine teachers' attitude towards inclusive education in Galović, et al. (2014) found not only a positive attitude but also their positive inclination towards the implementation of inclusive practices. Teachers welcomed children with physical, visual, hearing, and learning issues more than children with mental retardation or severe disabilities. Teachers must lead the movement in this area.

Nevertheless, most teachers are hesitant to implement inclusive classroom practices because they believe they will lack the necessary support and resources. This is especially true for students with impairments because the mainstream educational setup can be difficult to achieve in developing nations. DeBoer et al., (2011) found various variables associated with teachers' attitudes including training, type of disability, and experience with inclusive education. The study conducted by Zabeli and Gjelaj (2020) found various challenges faced by teachers for inclusive education. The challenges include inappropriate school infrastructure such as physical environment, preschool teachers' vocational training, educational tools, and syllabus, lack of resources and professional assistance such as logopaedic, psychologist, etc., lack of financial resources, lack of cooperation between institutions and parents and so on.

Parents' Attitude towards Inclusive Education

Afolabi et al. (2013) found parents as social actors while conducting a study on how ethnicity, culture, family characteristics, and socioeconomic background affects the school –parents' relationship in inclusive settings. Therefore, the study concluded that the involvement of parents is connected with the learners' positive outcomes, particularly students with additional needs in inclusive settings. Exploring parental attitudes towards inclusive education, Paseka and Schwab (2020) found that the attitude of parents towards the inclusive education of students with learning or physical disability was positive; nevertheless, their attitude towards behavioural or mental disorders were neutral. A study conducted by Runswick-Cole (2008), on the other hand, suggests that parents' views towards inclusive education were not satisfactory despite the shifts in policy since 1997. The viewpoint of parents regarding inclusion differed, as various parents were worried about barriers to inclusion.

Parental Involvement in Promoting Inclusive Education

In the educational setting, parental involvement is strongly considered to play a vital role in the development of children. Assuming this, a large number of studies have recommended that parents are encouraged to find out ways to foster the development of their children. Studies conducted by Šukys et al., (2015) and Afolabi (2014) found a meaningful relationship between parental involvement and academic success of inclusive education. Based on the findings, the studies recommend that educational leaders should pay more attention to parental involvement in order to promote inclusive education. Šukys et al. (2015) highlight that focus on parents, particularly those who are less educated is vital; a second area of focus the authors emphasized on pertains to pedagogical knowledge related to the specific educational needs of the individual child. Findings of the study conducted by Afolabi et al. (2013) demonstrate parents as social actors and thus their involvement is a key player to bring positive outcomes for students with special needs in inclusive educational settings.

Methodology

Research Design

In this investigation, an exploratory qualitative research design was used. As figured out by Stevens et al. (2013), exploratory research studies are similar to

deductive work that involves a search for ‘clues’ to explore what is taking place or what happened. “A variety of sources might be used to provide insights and information, and the researcher/detective ‘follows where his or her nose leads’ in the search for ideas, insights, and clarification” (p. 53). This study used the exploratory qualitative research design by conducting in-depth interviews from the sampled teachers and parents to explore their perceived challenges towards inclusive education in primary schools in Pakistan. The purpose to conduct the in-depth interviews from the sampled parents was to explore their awareness regarding the importance of their involvement. Furthermore, this research design assisted the researchers to investigate the teachers’ experience with inclusive education in primary schools in Pakistan.

The targeted population of this investigation was the teachers currently serving in primary schools operating under the government of Pakistan. This study also targeted the parents having primary school going students with learning disabilities. Schools were selected using the purposive sampling technique. The inclusion criteria for the schools’ selection were as followed:

- Schools should have a primary section
- Schools should operate under the government of Pakistan
- Schools should have adopted the inclusive education policy

From the selected schools, 15 teachers were selected purposely making sure if they were currently catering for any student with special educational needs in their classes. Furthermore, subsequent to the school management’s consent, the teachers were asked to arrange interviews with the parents of students with special needs. Consent for conducting interviews was obtained from five parents who had children with special needs.

Predesigned interview guides for semi-structured interviews (one for teachers and one for parents), were used to record the interviews. Having the consent of both parents and teachers, the interview sessions were audiotaped, each of the interviews lasted around 30 minutes. Interview sessions with parents were intended to create rigour in the study. While conducting interviews the researcher utilised field notes and probes. According to Phillippi and Lauderdale (2018), “Field notes are widely

recommended in qualitative research as a means of documenting needed contextual information” (p. 381). The field notes were indexed in chronological order to keep track of dates and participants’ responses.

The recorded responses of the participants were compiled considering raw data, as most of the responses were received in the native language of the participants. The compiled data were then transcribed and coded to create categories. Allen (2017) believes that data coding is the process of transforming the collected observations and/or information into a set of cohesive and meaningful categories. While coding data, the data is summarised and re-presented to provide an organised account of the observed or recorded phenomenon. Various themes and sub-themes were then extracted from the categories and presented as findings of this investigation.

Findings and Interpretations

In this investigation, primarily four themes were extracted including Understanding of Inclusive Education, Management Responsibilities, Diversified Learning Needs, and Parent-Teacher Relationship.

Understanding of Inclusive Education

Equal Opportunities for All

The data reveal that in inclusive education, all students get equal opportunity whether it be children with special needs or those children who are considered as slow learners. According to one of the teachers:

"This means that real learning opportunities are provided for groups who have traditionally been excluded. This includes children with disabilities and children who are slow learners, or who...who don't participate in the class or we can say children who are not good in academics. So they all learn the same thing in the same environment and in the same classroom, that is inclusive education provided by schools."

Another teacher stated that in inclusive education equal opportunities are facilitated to all students. “We give them opportunities to enhance their skills and

give them extra time too for catering their needs.”

Learning Opportunities

School is the place that provides a conducive environment for children where they feel safe and able to enhance their skills. School plays a vital role in giving children a variety of learning opportunities under the guidance of teachers. One of the participant parent said:

"Schools provide learning opportunities for children who are unable to learn or slow in learning and are shy to participate in the class. All children in the class learn the same thing, in the same environment in the same classroom; therefore, inclusive education provides equal opportunities to all the children."

Inclusive education takes place in a common learning environment, which is a classroom where students from various backgrounds and abilities learn together in a welcoming environment. One of the teachers made the following remark:

"School which provides learning facilities for both types of students and provide basic comfort to the child if he or she faces any kind of problem. A school has to have a conducive environment for all because education is a right for every child."

Each student can fully participate in a learning environment that is tailored for all students and shared with classmates in the chosen educational setting. It is important to maintain a pleasant environment, foster a sense of belonging, and ensure that students are making progress toward their personal, social, emotional, and intellectual goals. One of the teachers said in this regard:

"What makes a school inclusive is a solid organisational structure with talented staff, where they accept all children and show understanding towards them and attend to the differences between them. Where they understand disabilities and diversities which can include the physical, cognitive, academic, social and emotional behaviour of the students. Slow learners might not feel comfortable with the normal children because normal children may think that

slow learners are not capable enough to study in the same institution. Even children with disabilities may think that they are not capable of studying with normal children."

The school is not only responsible for providing learning opportunities, but also for promoting diversity and encouraging teachers to promote a culture of diversity by becoming members of professional forums that assists teachers in being trained and encouraging diversity in the classroom. One of the parents commented, "An inclusive school promotes diversity and has trained teachers to cater to that."

Challenges Faced by Teachers

Facilities in School Environment

School management plays a vital role in respecting the needs of children and making it inclusive, because they are the ones who provide facilities which help children feel comfortable and happy. One parent from among the parents who was interviewed said, "Management appreciates students' efforts and always gets feedback from their students and tries to arrange the facilities, like extra support teachers, a comfortable place in class, etc." Some time management does not look into those areas which are important for the child who is physically disabled and is not able to walk. Inclusive means to cater to all the needs of the child, whether it is physical or mental. In this regard, one teacher stated, "We admit those students who have any learning problem and disabilities but the environment may not be fully conducive, I mean the proper support for movement of those students for instance sliding stairs, etc."

Training Session for Teachers

Students with visible or hidden disabilities will always work alongside their peers in a full-inclusion model. If a school uses the full inclusion approach, they will need to regularly monitor student progress and ensure that the plan is working for children, therefore skilled teachers are required for successful planning for the benefit of both the child and the school. This training should not just be available to teachers, but should also be available to teaching assistants. Teaching assistants can benefit from SEN training to help them gain the skills they need to focus on impaired pupils and provide any additional support. In this connection, one of the teachers said, "Management should arrange training sessions regularly because

sometimes trained teachers who know how to cater to the child with a disability can be absent and the teacher who fills in for her cannot conduct the same hands-on activity.”

Teachers should be provided with the appropriate tools and training to ensure that they are creating the best possible learning environment. Upskilling and obtaining further training would be very advantageous if you are a teacher who wants to promote student inclusion. The main task of management is professional development. Management should have chosen teachers with the necessary training to make the organisation more inclusive. As one of the teachers commented, “Inclusive schools require teachers who also deal with mental health issues and are experts in this field. Inclusive doesn’t mean one teacher for all but trained teachers to cater to the needs of specific disabilities.”

Diversified Learning Needs

Extra Support classes

Scholarly literature suggests that students with learning difficulties have lower self-esteem, therefore we must be cautious and strive to combat this. Students will hopefully have a feeling of belonging and participate in healthy peer interactions if they are allowed to mix and be a part of the class. However, there are times when children require additional assistance outside of the classroom, such as after-school tutoring for specialised courses. As one of the teachers commented, “Yes! it is and we give them opportunities to enhance their skills and give them extra time too for facilitating their needs.”

This does not preclude them from spending the majority of their school days in the main classroom. Partial inclusion may be preferable to full inclusion in situations where pupils might benefit from being taught outside of the main classroom for a variety of reasons. One of the teachers stated:

"Yes. On alternate days we pick out those students who require some extra time or learning support; we do cater to their needs and try to make them satisfied with our system, we are very concerned about weekly meetings and feedback from parents."

Conducive Environment for all Students

Lessons should continue to be tailored to the needs of all pupils. Differentiated learning opportunities meet each student's educational needs, optimize their learning settings, and allow them to achieve their full potential, "Yes absolutely its encourage and motivates them to excel in education because they get equal opportunities and get a sense of respect and not receive any image of discrimination". In an inclusive education system, a conducive environment is very important to make a child comfortable and also feel accepted by the teachers' continued motivation so that they could enhance their skills. One of the teacher participant stated:

"From what I know, an inclusive education system means each class is supposed to have one or two students with special needs so that they get the chance to enhance their skills and knowledge and improve their behaviour too. Motivation is the core element that helps a child with special needs to grow. "

Sense of Helping and Motivating Each Other

Students will not only have the opportunity to be a part of something, but they will also be able to practise important social skills with one another. Those with impairments or behavioural issues are not the only ones who benefit from group learning. It encourages all students to collaborate with a diverse group of people, thus promoting inclusivity. As one of the teachers stated: "Not at all; it's a very positive and reinforcing impact. It has the potential to develop the sense of equality and respect among children that they all are the same; this teaches the concept of equality in a very comprehensive manner."

Nowadays, a cooperative learning environment gives children opportunities to improve their skills and also helps them to be socially involved with everyone with respect and acceptance. As one of the parents mentioned, "No, I don't think so; children now have the awareness that they are also normal and have some minor learning disability issues so the normal kids enjoy helping them and befriending them."

Teacher-Child Relationship

It is vital to get to know your students and consider their requirements

when providing educational resources. Teachers have to ascertain that all pupils are actively engaged in lessons and participating in assigned tasks. If teachers perceive a difficulty in student involvement and achievement, they should consider examining the desired learning outcomes and how they could change their lesson plans and try different strategies. As one of the parents stated, “She is very much comfortable with the class teacher and shares everything with her. He loves to bring gifts for her and tries to make her happy.” Traditional training is not always the greatest option for youngsters with visible disabilities or learning problems. The curriculum should be adjusted to make classes more adaptive to accommodate these students. To keep students interested, this might be accomplished by making lessons more immersive. Many teachers have negative attitudes about children with disabilities since they do not know how to teach them. As one of the parents mentioned: "Her relationship is not good with two of the teachers because sometimes teachers do not give her a chance to speak so in this case, she complains directly to the teacher that I am also a part of the class, I want to participate too."

Parent-Teacher Relationship

Children with Special Education Need

Identifying disability at an early age and working on that is very important. Parents should play an active role in deciding their future and choosing the best learning environment for their kids. As one of the parents stated, “My child has a speech and language problem; this is a neurological condition that makes it physically hard to speak. We found this out when she was 2.5 years old and when she started speaking full sentences.” It is important to accept children with a disability and encourage them to do well in the field of education and other walks of life. Such children should not be discouraged or demotivated because they need moral and emotional support. One of the parents said, “When I enrolled my child in class 1, he was unable to respond properly and then the teacher called us to tell us that he was not participating and not giving answers to the teacher’s questions.”

Parents Involvement

A positive learning outcome in inclusive education depends on home and school collaboration. Parents’ involvement helps the child to boost confidence and develop self-esteem. One of the parents said the following: "I go daily after school to pick him up and consult with his class teacher regarding any problem. I am

making sure that through a mute video, I ask him what the person in the movie communicated so in this way he learns *lip reading*"

Extra support from parents is also required for these children to improve their skills and make them able to compete with society. As one of the parents mentioned, "I arrange speech therapy classes for my girl on Saturday and Sunday. Family members make a lot of conversation with my daughter, so through responding, this disability may be solved somehow."

Parents Satisfaction

Parents have a critical part in the difficult and dynamic process of inclusion, which begins with parents' decision to place their child in a mainstream setting. One of the participant parent stated the following:

"She is intellectually strong and only has a speaking problem; so at the school which we found, all children are disabled, so we thought that rather than enrol her there, why not enrol her with normal kids which could help her a lot to overcome this disability as students learn from other students. Though the school which caters to kids with a disability is far from my house, when I came to know about this school that helps SWD, I enrolled her and Alhamdulillah I am satisfied with the services provided by the school."

Management also plays a vital role in the admission procedure of the child with a disability. The welcoming attitude shows and determines that education is the same for all. One of the parents said, "When my child was selected for the admission test, the principal motivated us to get enrolled as she promised us that she would help him to boost his self-esteem and make him realize that he is part of our school."

Parents Teachers Bonding

Teachers have expectations for their student's academic achievement, attendance, and behaviour in and out of the classroom. If these expectations are consistent and articulated, there will be a synergy, and classroom interaction will have a significant impact on the student's learning outcomes. One parent stated,

“The school arranges such activities which help in proper speaking and encourage her to participate in poetry camps, speech competitions, etc., and also invites parents to be a part of such event and we can see our child progress.” Parents want teachers to instruct and lead their children’s learning for them to succeed. Teachers expect parents to help their children’s learning and instruction at home. They also each have expectations for the child/student they share in common. As one parent mentioned:

"A teacher usually speaks louder and supports the student by giving students continuous guidance about the completion of the task. The teacher may use Mic where there are above 25 students. The teacher also meets me after school to guide me about homework tasks too and I try to help her out."

Discussion

Inclusive education is the process of designing and constructing schools, classes, programmes, and activities in such a way that all children can learn and participate in the same way. The approach of reacting to the diversity of pupils in the classroom by increasing classroom participation and reducing exclusion from education is known as inclusive education (Cohen, 1989). Inclusive education means ensuring that all students have equal access to high-quality education by effectively meeting their various needs in a responsive, welcoming, courteous, and supporting manner. Students participate in educational programmes in a similar learning environment with support to lessen and eliminate obstacles that could lead to failure (De-Matthews et al. 2021). In this study, semi-structured interviews were used to explore the challenges faced by teachers and the importance of parental involvement.

Evans and Lunt (2002) elucidate that inclusive education entails offering high-quality education to as many children as feasible in mainstream schools. Teachers play a vital role in fostering inclusive education in a community, but they sometimes become angry with specific students and fail to respond correctly. According to a research conducted by Kuyini and Desai (2007), the most effective strategy for changing instructors’ attitudes toward including CWDs in regular classrooms is pre-service teacher training, and the study shows that proper training is required to learn how to incorporate differentiation strategies into our planning

because inclusive education takes place in a common learning environment, or an educational setting where students of various backgrounds and abilities learn together. These findings are aligned with the reviewed study conducted by Zabeli and Gjelaj (2020) which highlights various challenges faced by teachers for inclusive education.

An inclusive school removes all barriers to allow all children to participate, both physically and symbolically, through culturally relevant curricula and support structures (Koller et al., 2018). The school does so to promote collaboration and equality (Koller et al., 2018) through its teachers' strong bonds with students and the administration's dynamics with parents. The findings indicate the same, that not only the learning environment provided is important for the students with special needs, but the overall school culture plays a vital role to enhance their capabilities. This teaching model is founded on the concept that all children belong to the main classroom, as evidenced by research. In a full-inclusion paradigm, students with visible or hidden disabilities will always work alongside their peers. If a school adopts the full inclusion method, it must monitor students' progress to ensure that the policy is effective. If a full inclusion plan is too much to cope with for a disabled child, a partial inclusion plan can be implemented, focusing on other facilities that the disabled child can use and feel comfortable with while at school. This research also identifies that the relationship not only of child and teacher is important but the relationship with teacher and parents is also important to create a conducive environment for their child, both indoors and outdoors. This is so because both parties have equal responsibilities to encourage the child and make him or her comfortable with society. This finding is similar to the findings of research conducted by Šukys et al. (2015) and Afolabi (2014) that found a meaningful relationship between parental involvement and the academic success of inclusive education.

Conclusion & Recommendations

In conclusion, it could be stated that this study has helped the researcher to explore the challenges faced by teachers and parents' awareness regarding their involvement in inclusive education. Through this study, it shows that teachers are satisfied with the inclusive education system; nevertheless, they face various challenges. However, teachers sometimes ignore the participation of students with disabilities and do not use the differentiation strategies to cater to the child's learning needs. Moreover, the school management is not working on the infrastructure to

make it more conducive for inclusive education. The relationship between children and teachers is satisfactory and parents felt comfortable sending their kids to the school which caters to both students with or without disabilities. The coordination between teachers and parents is the foremost principle for having a strong solid structure of an inclusive education system. Parents are aware of their child's disability from an early age which makes them able to decide which system is better for their children. Nevertheless, there should be more focus on parental involvement so that the children can do even better at school.

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that teachers should use a differentiation strategy to cater to the children with disabilities and on the other hand, the school should not only provide a learning platform but also provide proper infrastructure for those who are facing physical disabilities. Moreover, parents whose children have any disability should not only rely on school but also provide them with a conducive environment outside the school premises to work on their other skills. Bonding between parents and teachers is another most important factor to make the children confident and make them able to have a strong position in a community. A successful model on inclusive education requires a continued professional development course for the teacher who plays an important role in a child's overall cognitive, intellectual, social, and moral development.

This study was limited to the primary school setting in the context of Pakistan; hence, future researchers are suggested to focus on other settings to explore the phenomenon in more depth for better understanding in the respective field, i.e. inclusive education.

Schools should conduct awareness programmes for the importance of parental involvement with children suffering from any difficulties so that all children have an equal right to get admission in the same school where normal children are enrolled in facilities. Schools should also pay attention to the mentioned challenges faced by the teachers in the inclusive educational setting.

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