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RESEARCH PAPER

Benefits of Implementing Single National Curriculum in Special Schools of Lahore city for Children with Intellectual Disability: Teachers' Perception

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PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT
	Single national curriculum (SNC) is an important issue across the Punjab Province of Pakistan. Making and implementing SNC is not only focusing the education of normal pupils, but also focusing students with disabilities (SWD). The field of special education experienced an increased discussion of curriculum for students with intellectual disabilities (SID). The present research aimed to know the benefits to implement first stage of single national curriculum for students with Intellectual disability and to know the differences about the benefits between public and private schools regarding SNC for students with ID based on demographic characteristics. Likert type researchers-made questionnaire with reliability) Cronbach alpha .922) was used. 90 special educationists from public and private schools were chosen through random sampling technique. The findings raised some benefits such as: SNC will bridge the social and economic disparities which will increase the acceptance of ID students. It was recommended that SNC should include areas of adaptive skills, motor, and vocational skills to get involved in work activities.

Introduction

Since Pakistan appeared on the map, the education system is divided in many sectors. Specially the school education is controlled and governed under Government sector, Private sector, Madrasa Nezam, Urdu medium, English medium, and schools for elite class. This ultimately became a reason for disparity and discrimination. The curriculum has a power to transform the youth in the desired form and it is only possible when we offer same kind of curriculum to the whole nation based on our ideology which is exactly taken from our religion. But unfortunately, it was not possible to offer national curriculum in letter and spirit to the whole nation although efforts were made in Pakistan to implement national curriculum but for one and other reasons the private school system and the elite class was successful in lunching and using the other curriculum in school education.

The present government of Pakistan has taken a remarkable initiative to bring reforms in the education system in the country by introducing and launching the agenda of Single national curriculum (SNC). This would be beneficial to unite the youth as nation. To align all the school systems on one curriculum may not be as simple as seems, there will be more resistance in adopting this SNC agenda in implementing by ignoring its outcomes. There is a fair and equal opportunity to get a high-quality education for all pupils and the importance of SNC is for everyone. It is valued for SWD, and it will be beneficial for them to be accommodated in the community. This study focuses on the implementing of SNC in special schools for SID: benefits and challenges (Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training).

Intellectual disability (ID) is a state that results in academic and functional limitations. It affects the biological and cognitive aspects of individuals differently. Based on their limitations in cognitive functioning are classified in four different level of supports. There are different sets of intervention based on foundational disciplines to understand the condition and all have different perspectives of treatment (McDermott et al., 2007).

The curriculum provides educational institutions with a framework for determining content to be taught, measurable goals. It is essential for schools to confirm the consistency and standardization of the education system to attain the said goals of national unity. It is a tool to determine national goals through learning process. It helps in transforming the pupils' abilities, skills, and knowledge for new modern world (Moore, 2014) &

In Pakistan we have variety of curriculum offered to different segments of society that is why it is divided, and we are failed to stand up as single united strong nation. Its dire need of hour to be united nation and SNC is hoped to make it possible.

The curriculum aims to promote the complete development of children (Egan, 1978) and to make sure the best possible elements for growth and development in a valuable, child-friendly, and inclusive environment where they are free to choose and act in a safe, guided, and healthy environment (Van den Akker, 2004). The content on social and moral development according to Islamic ideology should be added in early childhood care and education curriculum which enables the learners to become good citizens (Hohmann, 2002). The Early Childhood Care and Education provides a conducive learning environment where children have the freedom of discovery, thinking, imagination, questioning and experimentation; as they have ability to create novel ideas get solutions and novel ideas (Daries et al., 2009). Early Childhood Care and Education focus on developing children's body control, mobility, orientation, and skills in the overall environments. Similarly, it creates awareness about the importance of cleanliness importance of health and safety (Henderson, 2004). In addition, it focuses on development of imaginations ability to communicate and expressing ideas, feelings, observations, and creativity. Furthermore, it helps students to think new ideas and innovations (Henderson,

2004) & Muzaffar, et.al. 2017). Reading writing skills is the basic task through which we can enhance the functional language of pupils reading writing skills will not only improve the language but also improve the cognitive abilities (Daries, et al., 2009). Developing emotional control in the early years is important. It is important for children to have positive experiences at this stage. To create a positive self-image in children, it is important to feel important, take active responsibility, listen to them and take care of them (Schweinhart et al., 2002). Since the introduction of the SNC for primary to 5th grade in August 2020, there have been conflicting views. Proponents pointed out that SNC will be helpful to unite education system in Pakistan. On the other hand, some of the people think that SNC is against the morality and the concept of inclusion. Most of these arguments are due to lack of awareness or suspicion. People usually confuse about curriculum guidelines with textbooks. It is important to understand that the three are different. Many other countries also have national curricula. Various curricula such as curriculum guidelines, basic curriculum standards and at least national curricula are used to define national curricula internationally (Doll, 1993). These curriculum vitae provide the necessary information about the goals and objectives for the teaching of certain subjects. They describe the minimum learning outcomes expected from students. The process of developing a curriculum development is practical (Goodson, 2013). It provides good curriculum guide also provides examples of activities, teaching materials and appropriate learning settings. Schools are free to choose the textbooks of their choice based on the instructions. Teachers can make adaptations in the environment, learning experiences, helping materials that meet the needs of their students based on social and economic changes in the circumstances (Kress, 2000, Muzaffar & Javaid, 2018). It implies changes in the curriculum Voogt & Pelgrum., 2005) while schools, teachers, and curriculum change cause to change curriculum (Priestley, 2011). Therefore, teacher and school settings have the capacity to influence the development (Apple, 2004; Roehrig, 2007) and implementation of curriculum (Brady & Kennedy, 2013).

Material and Methods

A descriptive survey was conducted for this study. The researchers used closed ended questionnaire for teachers measured on seven-point Likert scale.

The benefits for the implementation of a single national curriculum for students with intellectual disabilities in public and private special schools were assessed quantitatively. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to assess and compare the opinions of teachers working in private and public special schools in Punjab.

Population

The population of this study consists of teachers working in special education both at public and private schools in Lahore city.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Both male and female teachers working in special education in public and private schools in Lahore city were selected randomly. The sample size was 90.

Graph 1. Gender wise distribution of sample
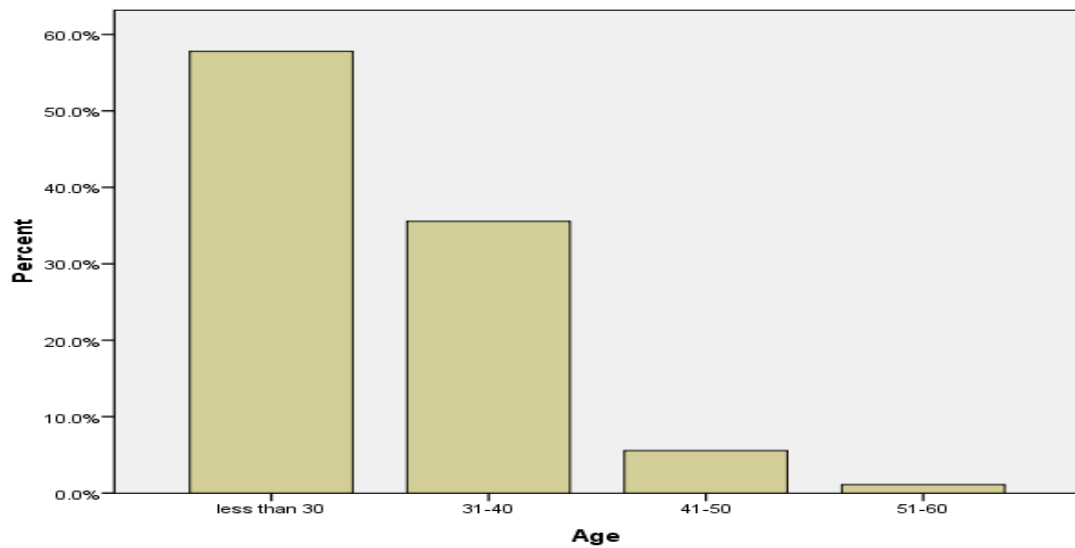
Graph 2. Age wise distribution of the sample

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Graph 3. School wise distribution

Instrument of the Study

Questionnaire was developed for schoolteachers to collect the data. Brief description of the tool was given as: The first section includes demographic questions about respondents' gender, age, position, qualifications and specialization areas, experience, and type of school (public and private). The second section comprised of 23 statements against given options. Reliability of the instrument was analyzed. The value of Cronbach's alpha was 0.922 that is in the acceptable limit (Fraenkel, et. al., 2012).

Data Collection

The researchers collected data for the study through departmental representative. The researchers visited the department following the SOPs due to the COVID-19 situation to introduce the purpose and nature of the study to the concerned authorities. The researchers then made appropriate appointments with the administrators to determine the appropriate times for administering the questionnaire. The researchers also collected data by using Google Forms, email, WhatsApp and other online networks due to the closure of the institute in the event of a COVID-19 epidemic.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data was first cleaned before the analysis. Out liars and pattern response were eliminated (Pallant, 2012). The researchers analyzed the data through various statistical

techniques. For the comparison to check the significance of difference between public and private sectors regarding benefits in implementing single national curriculum and various parameters, the researchers used descriptive and inferential statistics on Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 23.

Results and Discussion

After analyzing the data, the results were converted into table format and ready for interpretation.

Table 1
Identify the benefits related to students with intellectual disabilities for implementing first stage of single national curriculum

Benefits Related to students	Extreme ly agree	Moderately agree	Slightly agree	Not sure	Extremely disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly Disagree
1 Inclusion through SNC	23.3%	24.4%	25.6%	12.2%	2.2%	3.3%	8.9%
2 Acceptance will increase among students for students with intellectual disabilities.	21.1%	34.4%	20.0%	14.4%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%
3 Single national curriculum will remove social disparities.	16.7%	23.3%	33.3%	14.4%	3.3%	3.3%	5.6%
4 SNC will help students with intellectual disabilities in their emotional development	11.1%	26.7%	25.6%	20.0%	4.4%	2.2%	10.0%
5 SNC will help students with intellectual disabilities in their social development	18.9%	27.8%	27.8%	10.0%	3.3%	5.6%	6.7%
6 SNC will increase social integration among students with and without intellectual disability.	17.8%	38.9%	23.3%	8.9%	3.3%	3.3%	4.4%
7 SNC will increase understanding of culture among students with intellectual disability.	11.1%	37.8%	30.0%	8.9%	3.3%	2.2%	6.7%
8 SNC will give opportunities to students with intellectual disability to compete.	18.9%	28.9%	21.1%	11.1%	5.6%	4.4%	10.0%
9 SNC will increase accessibility for students with intellectual disability.	13.3%	30.0%	33.3%	10.0%	3.3%	3.3%	6.7%
10 Students with intellectual disability can get their equal rights through SNC.	17.8%	22.2%	24.4%	17.8%	2.2%	5.6%	10.0%
11 Equity in education for students with intellectual disability.	25.6%	25.6%	20.0%	13.3%	4.4%	2.2%	8.9%

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12	Equal opportunities in social mobility for students with intellectual disability.	8.9%	35.6%	17.8%	6.7%	4.4%	3.3%	3.3%
13	SNC will help students with intellectual disability in getting high quality education.	14.4%	23.3%	25.6%	12.2%	6.7%	5.6%	2.2%
14	SNC will help students with intellectual disability in inquiry-based learning.	2.2%	34.4%	26.7%	8.9%	5.6%	2.2%	0.0%
15	SNC will increase peer tutoring.	.0%	33.3%	21.1%	11.1%	5.6%	2.2%	6.7%
16	SNC will focus on values.	5.6%	25.6%	36.7%	12.2%	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%
17	SNC will Increase critical and creative thinking of students with intellectual disability.	12.2%	23.3%	32.2%	13.3%	5.6%	5.6%	7.8%
18	Increase group learning through SNC.	20.0%	28.9%	28.9%	5.6%	4.4%	4.4%	7.8%
19	SNC will give better outcomes for students with intellectual disability	14.4%	24.4%	23.3%	15.6%	6.7%	5.6%	10.0%
20	Job opportunities for students with intellectual disability.	10.0%	26.7%	15.6%	20.0%	7.8%	7.8%	12.2%
21	SNC will help in career building	8.9%	20.0%	21.1%	11.1%	4.4%	10.0%	4.4%

Table 2
Benefits related to teachers of students with intellectual disabilities for implementing first stage of single national curriculum

	ii) Related to teachers							
22	Opportunities for teachers to learn international trends in teaching.	24.4%	20.0%	24.4%	10.0%	3.3%	8.9%	8.9%
23	Help teachers in lesson planning	30.0%	14.4%	32.2%	2.2%	.7%	2.2%	2.2%

Table 3
Difference between the opinions of public and private teachers at special schools about the benefits to implement SNC for students with intellectual disabilities

Demographic Variable	Category	N	Mean Score	Df	t-value	Sig.
School	Private	16	135.2500	88	1.043	.675
	Public	74	126,3243	20.581		

Table 3. Explains that there is no significant difference was found (t=-1.043,df=88 and 20.581,sig=.675) between the opinions of public and private teachers at special schools about the benefits to implement SNC.

Table4
Difference between the opinions of public and private teachers at special schools about the benefits to implement SNC for students with intellectual disabilities

Demographic Variable	Category	N	Mean Score	Df	t-value	Sig.
Gender	Male	28	31.1	88	2.013	.505
	Female	62	68.9	20.581		

Table 4. Explains that there is no significant difference was found (t=2.013,df=88 and 20.581,sig=.505) between the opinions of both male and female teachers working in special schools about the benefits to implement SNC.

Findings

Findings are drawn on combining the agreement on positive options and or disagreement.

1. 73.4% participants overall agreed about benefits of inclusion through single national curriculum.
2. 75.5 % participants overall agreed that acceptance will increase among students for students with intellectual disabilities.
3. 73.3 % participants overall agreed that Single national curriculum will remove social disparities.
4. 63.4% participants overall agreed that SNC will help students with intellectual disabilities in their emotional development.
5. 74.5% participants overall agreed that SNC will help students with intellectual disabilities in their social development.
6. 80% participants overall agreed that SNC will increase social integration among students with and without intellectual disability.
7. 78.9% participants overall agreed that SNC increase will understanding of culture among students with intellectual disability.
8. Most of the participants 68.9% overall agreed that SNC will give opportunities to students with intellectual disability to compete.
9. 76.6% participants overall agreed that SNC will increase accessibility for students with intellectual disability.
10. 64.4% participants overall agreed that Students with intellectual disability can get their equal rights through SNC.
11. 71.2% participants overall agreed about the benefits of equity in education for students with intellectual disabilities through single national curriculum.

12. Most of the participants 72.3 extremely agreed about equal opportunities in social mobility for students with intellectual disabilities through single national curriculum.
13. More than 63.3% respondents agreed that SNC will help students with intellectual disability in getting high quality education.
14. More than 73.3% respondents overall agreed that SNC will help students with intellectual disability in inquiry-based learning.
15. More than 74.3% participants fully agreed that SNC will increase peer tutoring.
16. More than 77.9% participants fully agreed that SNC will increase critical thinking and creativity in students with ID.
17. Approximately 32.2% respondents extremely agreed that SNC will increase problem solving in students with ID.
18. Approximately 77.8% participants extremely agreed that there will be increase in group learning among students with intellectual disabilities through single national curriculum.
19. More than 62.1% participants fully agreed that SNC will give better outcomes for students with intellectual disability.
20. More than 52.3% participants fully agreed that SNC will increase job opportunities for students with intellectual disability.
21. Most of the participants 60% extremely agreed that SNC will help in career building.
22. Approximately 68.8 % respondents agreed that there will be opportunities for teachers to learn international trends in education through single national curriculum.
23. Approximately 76.6% respondents extremely agreed that SNC will help teachers in better lesson planning.
24. There is no significant difference was found (t=-1.043,df=88 and 20.581,sig=.675) between the opinions of public and private teachers working in special schools about the benefits to implement SNC.
25. There is no significant difference was found (t=2.013,df=88 and 20.581,sig=.505) between the opinions of both male and female teachers working in special schools about the benefits to implement SNC

Conclusions

The findings of this study have raised some benefits which are as follows: SNC has bridged the social and economic disparities which will increase the acceptance of ID students which will help in making comprehensive education possible in Pakistan. For students with ID, quality and equity in education can be improved and students have equal opportunity to compete and have better opportunities in the future. Help students learn in groups and improve critical and creative thinking. SNC will also help students develop social and emotional behaviors. Teachers can learn international trends in the teaching

process. Teachers can get better access to lesson plans and access the curriculum through the SNC. It is also concluded that there are no significant differences in the opinion of private and public-school about the benefits of implementing the SNC. Male and female participants also did not differ significantly about the benefits of implementing SNC in special schools for students with ID.

Recommendations

1. There should be training programs for teachers and administrators to implement SNC.
2. SNC should include areas of adaptive skills, fine motor, gross motor, vocational training programs, various essentials to get involved in work activities.
3. Teachers should be allowed to adapt the classroom environment, instructions, and syllabus according to the needs of the child.
4. Government should provide resources to the special schools so that they can design the necessary materials for these children in accordance with the SNC.
5. School infrastructure should be tailored to the single national curriculum.
6. Schools should be provided with adaptive technology that help students with in getting high quality education.
7. There should be added functional curriculum in SNC for students with ID that focuses on independent living and professional skills.
8. The government should take private schools into confidence to implement the Single National Corrections for students with.
9. There should be awareness program for parents to understand about SNC

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