PERCEIVED ABILITIES OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS TOWARDS TEACHING HEARING IMPAIRED

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Abstract: **The purpose of the study is to determine the perceived abilities of English language teachers towards teaching hearing impaired in inclusive educational settings. A group of 184 English language teachers were selected randomly from the upper primary mainstream teachers' population, who are teaching in Puducherry schools. Survey research design was used to determine the perceived abilities of English language teachers towards teaching hearing impaired in mainstream schools, using the researcher developed perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired scale with 5 items to assess perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired. Reliability of the scale in terms of Cronbach alpha for the scale was found to be 0.87. Independent t test and F test (One-Way ANOVA) was used to quantitatively analyse the perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired. The findings of the study indicates that the teachers in the mainstream education fully acknowledge the inclusion process of hearing impaired as well as they equipped themselves to teach hearing impaired students and also revealed that English language teachers with experience in teaching hearing impaired have higher abilities in order to teach hearing impaired students in inclusive educational settings. This study suggested that the teachers should be given opportunity to undergo pre-service and in service training to teach hearing impaired to manage and to provide effective and quality teaching to hearing impaired in inclusive educational settings.**

Keywords: **Hearing Impaired, Perceived Ability and English Language Teacher.**

1. INTRODUCTION

Education for All is a universal dream and it is the most powerful instrument for social change. All the nations in the world are trying their best to fulfil this dream. In India, this dream is being fulfilled with the implementation of Integrated Education and Inclusive Education under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. This programme addresses the needs of 192 million children residing in 1.1 million habitations and special attention is being provided to include children with special needs in the chain of education, self reliance, prosperity and development. These children with special needs which were untouched by mainstream education until very recently are now entering into it, because of Integrated and Inclusive Education. We need to make our system more accommodative, flexible and warm, so that these children with special needs will get quality education. In this sense teachers are the most important agent of this change.

Among the disabilities, children with hearing impairment have a unique situation which may make the inclusion and teaching process slower and difficult. Language and communication are the primary concerns for teaching students with hearing impairment, when compared with other disabilities. Inadequate knowledge in language and communication negatively impacted the hearing impairer's developmental aspects. Moreover, if not dealt these with carefully, hearing impairment may delink the child from the modern technological society. Under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) programme, the inclusive education to children with special needs feature quality continuing teacher education to English

language teachers that has contributed to their current knowledge and skill development. Though English language teachers are provided continuing education in handling special needs children, literatures revealed that English language teachers in mainstream schools had wide variety of opinions with regard to teach English to children with hearing impairment. Without a doubt, the inclusive education to hearing impaired students is the most relevant and challenging task for English language teachers to teach them. Even the experts in the field of speech and language training have agreed that it is the difficult task for them to teach English to hearing impaired students with non-English tongue. However the most English language teachers would agree that recent developments in the education for hearing impaired students in inclusive classroom have helped them to fuel their teaching skills. Therefore, examining and analyzing this research problem entitled "Perceived Abilities among English Language Teachers towards Teaching Hearing Impaired" provided me an opportunity to conduct relevant research on a very unique and contemporary issue in the field of teaching hearing impaired.

1.1. Purpose of the Study:

To investigate the perceptions of English language teachers regarding their abilities towards teaching hearing impaired in inclusive educational setting

1.2 Objectives of the Study:

1. To study the difference in perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired between English language teachers from schools with and without hearing impaired

2. To investigate the difference in perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired between male and female English language teachers

3. To find out the differences in perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired among English language teachers with different age groups

4. To understand the differences in perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired among English language teachers with different lengths of teaching experience

1.3 Hypothesis of the Study:

1. There is no significant difference in the perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired among English language teachers from schools with and without hearing impaired.

2. There is no significant difference in the perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired between male and female English language teachers

3. There is no significant difference in the perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired among English language teachers with different age group

4. There is no significant difference in the perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired among English language teachers with different lengths of teaching experience

2. METHOD

2.1 Participants:

A group of teachers, who are teaching in mainstream schools of Puducherry region, were selected as the population for this research study. 184 teachers were selected as samples using two stage sampling technique i.e. selection of schools and selection of teachers. As the locale of the research study is Puducherry region, the schools with and without hearing impaired was selected from Puducherry region. Totally 60 schools with and without hearing impaired were selected for the study, using simple random sampling technique. From the selected each school with and without hearing impaired, all the mainstream teachers of English language who are teaching sixth to eighth standard were selected as samples for this study. The total numbers of English language teachers from the selected schools of Puducherry region were 184. Thus the sample for the study consisted of 184 English language teachers from schools with and without hearing impaired.

There were 82 (44.6%) teachers from schools with hearing impaired and 102 (55.4%) teachers from schools without hearing impaired i.e. nearly half of the sample were drawn from schools without hearing impaired. There were 57 (31%) males and 127(69%) females, aged in the range of 25-33 years (12%), 34-42 years (38.6%), 43-51 years (31.5%), and 52-60 years (17.9%). There were 20 (10.9%) teachers had less than 5 years teaching experience, 69 (37.5%) teachers had the range of 5-10 years of teaching experience and 95(51.6%) teachers had more than 10 years of teaching experience. (See Table 1)

2.2 Survey Instrument Used:

Data were collected by means of a questionnaire consisting of demographic characteristics and factors related to the perceptions of teachers regarding their abilities towards teaching hearing impaired. It is a self-report instrument using 5 factors, five point, forced choice Likert scale, (Not at all True of me to Very True of me). In the demographic section, the respondents had to report their sex, age, and teaching experience. The development of the perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired scale was informed by earlier studies on abilities in teaching hearing impaired and measures teachers' perceptions in relation to abilities in teaching hearing impaired. This scale consists of five factors related to abilities in teaching hearing impaired in inclusive educational setting. These factors were constructed, after a thorough discussion and consultation with five subject experts in the field of hearing impairment. Then, this scale was administered to a sample of 30 teachers. Reliability of the scale was estimated by Cronbach Alpha coefficient and it was found to be 0.87.

2.3 Procedures:

After the development and standardization of perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired scale, this scale was administered to 184 teachers of mainstream schools with and without in Puducherry region, after getting due permission from the directorate of school education, Puducherry. The researcher visited each school with and without hearing impaired in Puducherry region for collecting data. Teachers were requested to enter their name, sex, age, and teaching experience, in the place provided in the scale. Instructions were also directed in the first page of the scale and teachers were requested to follow those instructions, while responding to the factors in the scale. Teachers were further requested and advised not to leave any factors in the tool. 184 set of tools were distributed to the teachers of school with and without hearing impaired, selected as mentioned earlier in the sample and sampling procedure. 184 set of tools properly filled in were received back. Hence 184 sets of tools were scored according to the scoring procedure explained in the development and standardization of tool, which were used for the final study. For the analyses and interpretations of the data, the researcher utilized independent t test and One Way ANOVA.

3. ANALYSES AND INTERPRETATION

HYPOTHESIS: 1

Ho: There is no significant difference in the perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired among English language teachers from schools with and without hearing impaired.

From the table, it is perceived that the calculated t values for the factors confident in ability (t = 2.225), capable of teaching hearing impaired (t = 2.742), capable of meeting the challenges (t = 2.716), capable of achieving goals (t = 2.146) and capable of solving problems (t= 2.023) are found to be significant at 0.05 levels. Since the calculated t values are greater than the table values at 0.05 levels, the null hypothesis 2 is rejected. Therefore it is inferred that there is no significant difference between teachers from schools with and without hearing impaired in their perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired. In other words English language teachers from schools with hearing impaired perceived that they are capable of teaching hearing impaired, confident in their ability to teach hearing impaired, capable of meeting the challenges, achieving goals, solving problems in teaching hearing impaired, whereas english language teachers from schools without hearing impaired perceived that they are incapable of teaching hearing impaired.

HYPOTHESIS: 2

There is no significant difference in the perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired between male and female English language teachers

From the table, it is perceived that the calculated t values for the factors confident in ability (t = 0626), capable of teaching hearing impaired (t = 0.727), capable of meeting the challenges (t = 0.248), capable of achieving goals (t = 0.453) and capable of solving problems (t = 0.808) are found to be significant at 0.05 levels. Since the calculated t values are greater than the table values at 0.05 levels, the null hypothesis 3 is accepted. Therefore it is inferred that there is no significant difference between male and female English language teachers in their perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired. In other words male and female English language teachers perceived that they are capable of teaching hearing impaired, confident in their ability to teach hearing impaired, capable of meeting the challenges, achieving goals, solving problems in teaching hearing impaired.

HYPOTHESIS: 3

There is no significant difference in the perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired among English language teachers with different age group.

From the table, it is perceived that the calculated F values for the factors confident in ability (F = 0.389), capable of teaching hearing impaired (F = 0.070), capable of meeting the challenges (F = 1.362), capable of achieving goals (F = 2.695) and capable of solving problems (F = 1.045) are found to be significant at 0.05 levels. Since the calculated t values are greater than the table values at 0.05 levels, the null hypothesis 4 is accepted. Therefore it is inferred that there is no significant difference among English language teachers with different age groups in their perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired. In other words English language teachers with different age groups perceived that they are capable of teaching hearing impaired, confident in their ability to teach hearing impaired, capable of meeting the challenges, achieving goals, solving problems in teaching hearing impaired

HYPOTHESIS: 4

There is no significant difference in the perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired among English language teachers with different lengths of teaching experience.

From the table, it is perceived that the calculated t values for the factors confident in ability (F = 1.601), capable of teaching hearing impaired (F = 0.507), capable of meeting the challenges (F = 1.688), capable of achieving goals (F = 2.170) and capable of solving problems (F = 3.031) are found to be significant at 0.05 levels. Since the calculated t values are greater than the table values at 0.05 levels, the null hypothesis 5 is accepted. Therefore it is inferred that there is no significant difference among English language teachers with different lengths of experience in their perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired. In other words English language teachers with different lengths of experience perceived that they are capable of teaching hearing impaired, confident in their ability to teach hearing impaired, capable of meeting the challenges, achieving goals, solving problems in teaching hearing impaired.

4. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. The mean score (X = 14.54) for the total sample revealed that English language teachers perceived that they are capable of teaching hearing impaired in inclusive educational settings.

2. Setting as a factor strongly influences the abilities of English language teachers in order to teach hearing impaired.

3. Gender, Age and Teaching Experience has no impact on the abilities of English language teachers in order to teach hearing impaired.

5. CONCLUSION

Results have shown that schools with hearing impaired have scored higher on all the factors of perceived abilities towards teaching hearing impaired in comparison to teachers from schools without hearing impaired and males, whereas the gender, age and teaching experience do not bring any significant impact in the perceived abilities among English language teachers towards teaching hearing impaired.. This trend indicates that the teachers in the mainstream education fully acknowledge the inclusion process of hearing impaired as well as they equipped themselves to teach hearing impaired students. Most importantly, this study revealed that English language teachers with experience in teaching hearing impaired have higher abilities in order to teach hearing impaired students in inclusive educational settings. This study suggested that the teachers should be given opportunity to undergo pre-service and in service training to teach hearing impaired to manage and to provide effective and quality teaching to hearing impaired in inclusive educational settings.

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APPENDIX - A

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of Respondents

	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Teaching Experience	Schools with Hearing Impaired	82	44.6
	Schools without Hearing Impaired	102	55.4
Gender	Male	57	31.0
	Female	127	69.0
Age	25-33 Years	22	12.0
	34-42 Years	71	38.6
	43-51 Years	58	31.5
	52-60 Years	33	17.9
Experience in Years	Below 5 Years	20	10.9
	5-10 Years	69	37.5
	Above 10 Years	95	51.6

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviations for Schools with and Without Hearing Impaired

Variables	Schools without Hearing Impaired				t	Sig.
	Yes		No			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Confident in Ability	3.52	1.416	3.07	1.352	2.225	0.027*
Capable of Teaching Hearing Impaired	2.94	1.477	2.39	1.228	2.742	0.007*
Capable of Meeting the Challenges	2.90	1.223	2.41	1.213	2.716	0.007*
Capable of Achieving Goals	3.23	1.299	2.82	1.270	2.146	0.033*
Capable of Solving the Problems	3.20	1.242	2.84	1.115	2.023	0.045*
Total	15.79	5.272	13.54	4.323	3.186	0.002*

*$P<0.05$

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Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviations for Gender

Variables	Gender				t	Sig.
	Male		Female			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Confident in Ability	3.18	1.403	3.31	1.396	0.626	0.532
Capable of Teaching Hearing Impaired	2.53	1.416	2.69	1.349	0.727	0.468
Capable of Meeting the Challenges	2.60	1.252	2.65	1.238	0.248	0.804
Capable of Achieving Goals	3.07	1.237	2.98	1.324	0.453	0.651
Capable of Solving the Problems	2.89	1.160	3.05	1.194	0.808	0.420
Total	14.26	4.915	14.67	4.888	0.520	0.604

*$P>0.05$

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviations for Age

Variables	Age								df	F	Sig.
	25-33 Years		34-42 Years		43-51 Years		52-60 Years				
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Confident in Ability	3.09	1.411	3.25	1.391	3.24	1.393	3.48	1.439	3, 180	0.389	0.761
Capable of Teaching Hearing Impaired	2.68	1.427	2.58	1.327	2.67	1.431	2.67	1.362	3, 180	0.070	0.976
Capable of Meeting the Challenges	2.36	1.177	2.69	1.249	2.48	1.143	2.94	1.391	3, 180	1.362	0.256
Capable of Achieving Goals	2.68	1.249	2.87	1.218	2.98	1.383	3.55	1.227	3, 180	2.695	0.047
Capable of Solving the Problems	2.73	1.162	3.01	1.153	2.93	1.296	3.27	1.039	3, 180	1.045	0.374
Total	13.55	5.492	14.41	4.487	14.31	5.188	15.91	4.693	3, 180	1.232	0.300

*$P>0.05$

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviations for Teaching Experience

Variables	Teaching Experience						df	F	Sig.
	Below 5 Years		5-10 Years		Above 10 Years				
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Confident in Ability	2.75	1.446	3.36	1.393	3.32	1.378	2, 181	1.601	0.205
Capable of Teaching Hearing Impaired	2.35	1.309	2.70	1.354	2.65	1.397	2, 181	0.507	0.603
Capable of Meeting the Challenges	2.25	1.118	2.55	1.255	2.77	1.242	2, 181	1.688	0.188
Capable of Achieving Goals	2.50	1.318	2.96	1.181	3.15	1.352	2, 181	2.170	0.117
Capable of Solving the Problems	2.40	1.142	3.12	1.105	3.04	1.220	2, 181	3.031	0.051
Total	12.25	5.330	14.68	4.477	14.93	4.996	2, 181	2.565	0.080

*$P>0.05$