

Editorial**Teachers' Perspective of Inclusive Education: A Central Agenda for Successful Implementation**M. Tariq Ahsan ^a^a*Institute of Education and Research (IER), University of Dhaka, Bangladesh*

Teachers are considered to be the central factor for the successful implementation of inclusive education (IE). Globally, teacher preparedness for inclusive classrooms has now been placed in the top priority for educational reform initiatives so that both pre-service and in-service teachers can be prepared adequately to face the new challenges of diversity focused inclusive classrooms. As inclusive schools are now welcoming all children, irrespective of their disability, race, gender, social background and ethnicity (Booth & Ainscow, 2002), teachers are facing various challenges to meet the learning needs of all learners in the same classroom (Forlin, 2008, 2010). It has been reported by several studies (Ahsan, Deppeler & Sharma, 2013; Ahsan, Sharma & Deppeler, 2012; Forlin, Loreman, Sharma, & Earle, 2009; Kim, 2011) that inadequate preparation of teachers may lead to less confidence and contribute to negative attitudes among teachers to teach in inclusive classrooms. It is evident through the findings of extensive research studies that measuring teachers' attitudes (Kim, 2006; Romi & Leyser, 2006; Savolainen, Engelbrecht, Nel and Malinen, 2011; Soodak, Podell & Lehman, 1998, Weisel & Dror, 2006) towards and teaching-efficacy (Moeller & Ishii-Jordan, 1996; Paneque & Barbetta, 2006; Romi & Leyser, 2006; Sharma, Loreman & Forlin, 2012) for IE could be two important variables to predict how well they are prepared and how they may perform in diversity focused inclusive classrooms. Hence, it is important to identify the factors that may increase the confidence as well as develop positive attitudes of teachers and then address those issues during the teacher preparation period. The articles selected for publication in the Volume 3, Number 1; July 2015 issue of the AJIE shed light on the issue of teacher preparedness for IE in three different country contexts. AJIE reviewed 08 articles for this issue.

The first article, authored by Hussien and Al-Qaryouti presents general education teachers' level of self-efficacy in teaching inclusive classrooms in Oman. In this article, relationship between demographic variables (i.e. teachers' gender, knowledge, skills, teaching experience) and the dependent variable (i.e. their self-efficacy) was examined in this study. Findings of the study indicated that teachers of Oman had high levels of perceived self-efficacy in classroom management, and moderate levels in collaboration and assessment. Male teachers had higher level of confidence than females, which is similar to the findings of Ahsan et al. (2012; 2013) in Bangladesh context. Besides, the study also found that a positive correlation exists between efficacy and attitude scores. The implication of the finding is very similar to the context of developing countries like Bangladesh (Ahsan, 2012). Hence, developing countries may benefit from the findings of this study.

The second article, written by Lartec, et al. reports on the effectiveness of the IE subject in the pre-service teacher education curriculum as perceived from the student teachers'

perspective of a university in the Philippines. Findings of the study indicated that the student teachers view the subject as generally very effective. Based on this study, a recommendation could be made that including course on IE in the teacher education can contribute to better teacher preparedness for diversity focused classrooms.

Finally the third article, authored by Tasnuba and Tsokova focused on exploring the primary school teachers' teaching efficacy, attitude, sentiment and concern towards the inclusion of children with disabilities in regular classrooms of an NGO known as 'BRAC'. The study found a significant difference in BRAC teachers' concern based on students' disability type. The study found a significant positive relationship between teaching efficacy and attitude and concern, which is similar to the finding of the first article. The study suggested several recommendations that include: collaboration between government and BRAC to improve the level of teacher efficacy and positive attitude towards inclusion of children with disabilities, providing school support, resources, and extensive training opportunities. The findings may have implications for other NGOs in Bangladesh as well as developing countries. Collectively, these three articles have provided a number of policy and curriculum reform ideas to make teacher education more inclusive.

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