



## TEACHERS' PERCEPTION ABOUT PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN SELECTED CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AT SECONDARY SCHOOLS

**Aishwarya Swain**

*Ph.D. Research Scholar (Education), Rama Devi Women's University, Bhubaneswar*

**Dr. Sankar Prasad Mohanty**

*Associate Professor of Education and Head, P.G. Department of Education, Rama Devi Women's University, Bhubaneswar*

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### Abstract

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*This research paper is based on a study conducted to explore the perception of teachers towards participation of CWSN in curricular activities. This survey-based study deals with two objectives such as to study the perception of secondary school teachers about participation of CWSN in curricular activities; and to explore support services provided by the teachers to promote participation of CWSN. A sample of one hundred and three (N=103) teachers was selected from fourteen (N=14) secondary schools of Khordha District through purposive sampling technique based high density of CWSN. Data were analysed through quantitative mode using percentage. The findings revealed higher participation of CWSN in curricular activities as reported by all the teachers (100%). But the frequency of participation of CWSN was low except teaching learning practices. All secondary school teachers (100%) have reported that, CWSN participate in various curricular activities. It was interesting to find that, All the teachers (100%) consider curricular activities are significant for all round development of CWSN and provide support to CWSN for their participation in curricular activities. Apart from this the study found that more than half of the teachers prefer special schools over inclusive schools for better participation of CWSN in curricular activities and cited various reasons for this. The teachers also revealed various challenges faced by them.*

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**Keywords:** *Participation of Children with Special Needs, Curricular Activities, Perception, Secondary School Teachers*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Participation in various activities of school, plays a significant role in holistic development of both children with special needs (CWSN) and children without special needs. This participation is important both in curricular subjects and curricular activities. Because both aspects are interrelated and cannot be separated (NEP, 2020). Along with the curricular subjects there is a need of special attention on participation of CWSN in curricular activities. This helps to improve academic performance (Izam & Esa, 2015), various skills related to life (Argan, Wojcik, Cain, Thoma, Achola & Austin, 2017) and competency enhancement. Precisely, it can be said curricular participation helps in overall development of child especially for CWSN (Izam and Esa, 2015). When it is regarding participation of CWSN in curricular activities a range of challenges come across. Out of many challenges the negative attitude and perception towards CWSN are most encountered problems. In majority of literatures revealed the perception carried by stakeholders especially perception of teachers acts as a deciding factor for participation of CWSN in curricular activities. In some cases, due to lack of awareness (Temesgen, 2018) training, resources, negative attitude (Argan et al., 2017) and sense of responsibility, teachers do not show positive response towards participation of CWSN in curricular activities (Argan et al, 2017). Whereas in some other situation teachers shows positive attitude and encourage participation of CWSN. This positive attitude and efforts taken by the teachers can create a huge difference in participation by making them comfortable and needed.

Based on the previous researches, it can be interpreted that, teachers are playing a pivotal role in participation of CWSN leading to the development of CWSN in every sphere. Besides this the perception and attitude of teachers greatly affect the participation of CWSN. Which provides a scope for attempting to find answers to the following questions.

1. How do teachers perceive the participation of CWSN in curricular activities?
2. What are the support and services provided by the teachers for participation of CWSN?

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To study the perception of secondary school teachers towards participation of CWSN in curricular activities.
2. To explore the support services provided by the teachers for participation of CWSN in curricular activities.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Survey design was followed to conduct this study. One hundred (N=103) secondary school teachers were selected as sample from 14 different Secondary schools of Cuttack, Khordha and Puri Districts of Odisha through random sampling technique. Schools were selected

purposefully based on availability of CWSN. A self-Developed Questionnaire for Teachers was employed for data collection. Data were analysed quantitatively using percentage calculation. The responses received through different items in the questionnaire are analysed through content analysing using graphs.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

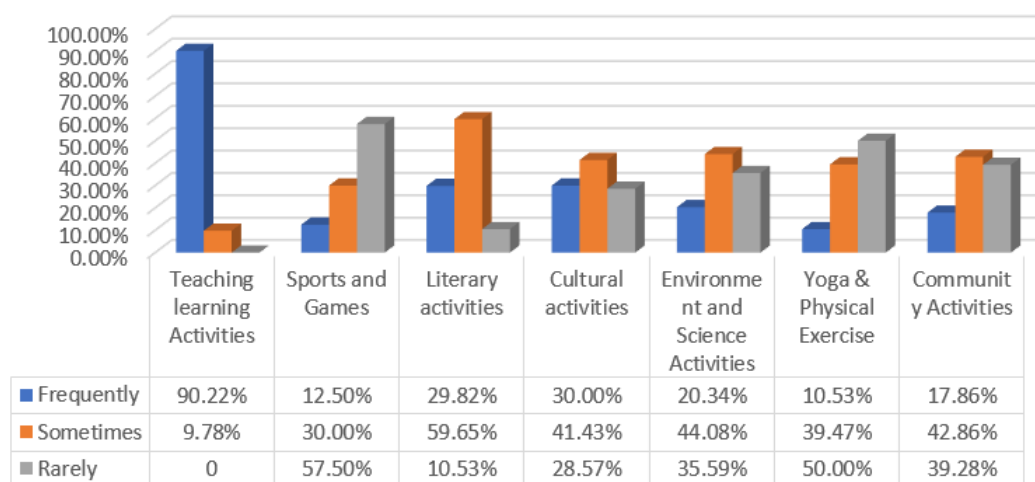
The results of this study are analysed as per the stated objectives. Which are based on perception of secondary school teachers about participation of CWSN in curricular activities and the support services provided by secondary schools for participation of CWSN in curricular activities. In addition to this, the result of this study has taken in issues and challenges faced by the CWSN during their participation in curricular activities.

### 1.0. Participation of CWSN in Curricular Activities as Perceived by the Teachers

The following results Comprise, perception of the teachers about participation of CWSN in various curricular activities, identification of their interest areas and impact of participation on their all-round development.

#### *Participation of CWSN in Curricular Activities as reported by the teachers*

#### Frequency of Participation



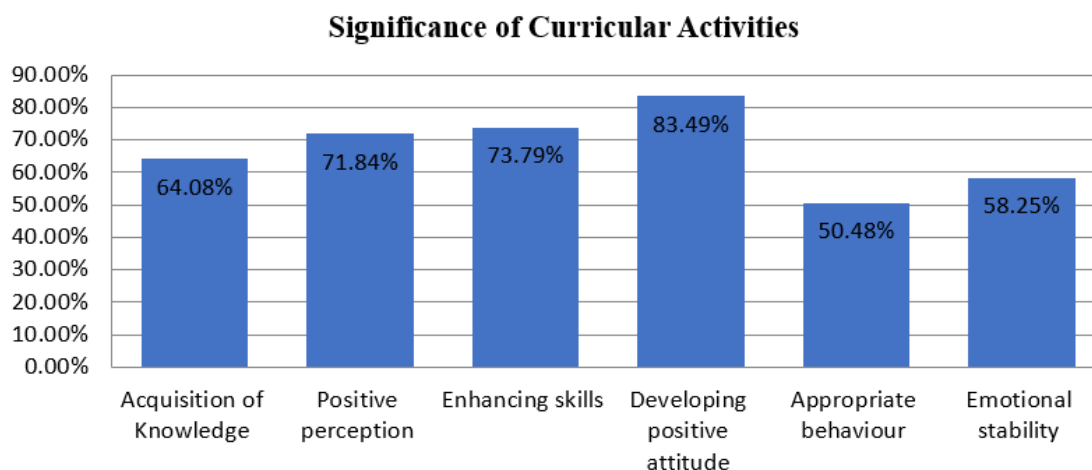
(Fig 1: Frequency of Participation of CWSN in different Curricular Activities)

The above figure depicts following results:

- i. All the teachers (100%) have opined that, CWSN participate in curricular activities. Out of which more than one-half (>50%) of the CWSN participate in Teaching learning Activities (89.32%), Cultural activities (67.90%), Literary activities (55.33%), Environment and Science Activities (57.28%), Community Activities (54.36%).

- ii. The frequency of participation of CWSN in all curricular activities except teaching-learning activities found very low i.e. less than 30 % of the CWSN participate in curricular activities frequently.

***Perception of Teachers towards Significant effect of Curricular Activities in all round development of CWSN***

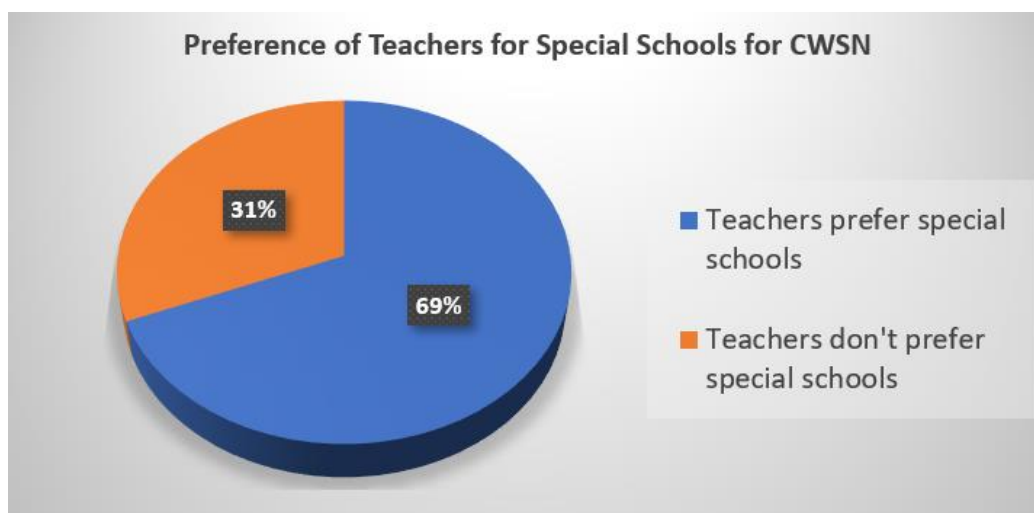


(Fig 2: Perception of Teachers towards Significance of Curricular Participation of CWSN)

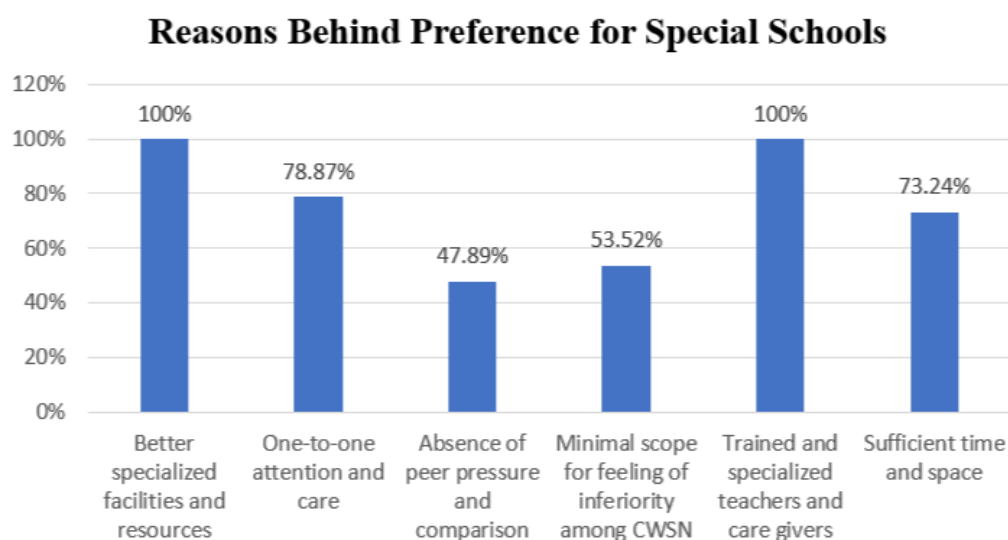
The above figure explains following results:

- i. All the teachers (100%) consider participation of CWSN in curricular activities very significant for all round development of CWSN.
- ii. Out of which more than one-third (>70%) of the teacher believe participating in curricular activities develops positive attitude (83.49%) among CWSN; whereas 73.79% and 71.84% teachers opined that curricular activities play significant role in enhancing skills and developing positive perception respectively.
- iii. In addition to that 64.08% teachers believe curricular activities helps in acquisition of knowledge. Apart from that the role of curricular activities in building emotional stability (58.25%) and behaviour development (50.48%) of CWSN was found to be less significant impact as reported by the teachers.

***Perception of Teachers towards participation of CWSN in Curricular Activities in terms of Special School and Inclusive Schools.***



(Fig 3: Perception of Techers towards Special Schools for better Curricular Participation of CWSN)



(Fig 4: Reasons cited by the Techers towards Preferential choice for Special Schools)

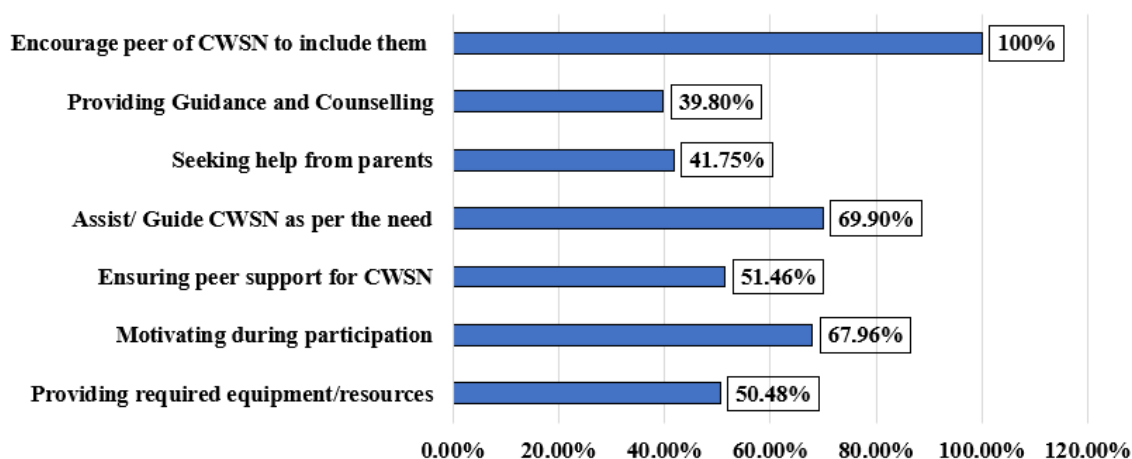
Figure 3 and Figure 4 reflects following results:

- i. One-half (68.93%) of the teachers believe that the participation of CWSN in curricular activities would be better if they are enrolled in special schools rather than inclusive schools. Out of them one-half (60.56%) of the teachers opined that this is applicable only for the CWSNs with severity
- ii. The reasons behind preferential choice of teacher towards special schools are specialized facilities and resources provided by the special schools (100%); availability of trained and specialized teachers and care givers (100%) in special schools; one -to-one attention and care (78.87%); sufficient time and space for CWSN (73.24%); minimal scope for feeling of inferiority among CWSN (53.52%) and absence of peer pressure and comparison (47.89%).

### 1.1 Support and Services Provided by the Teachers for Curricular Participation of CWSN

This part of the results deals with various supports and services provided by the teachers for better participation of CWSN in Curricular Activities.

#### Support and Services Provided by Teachers



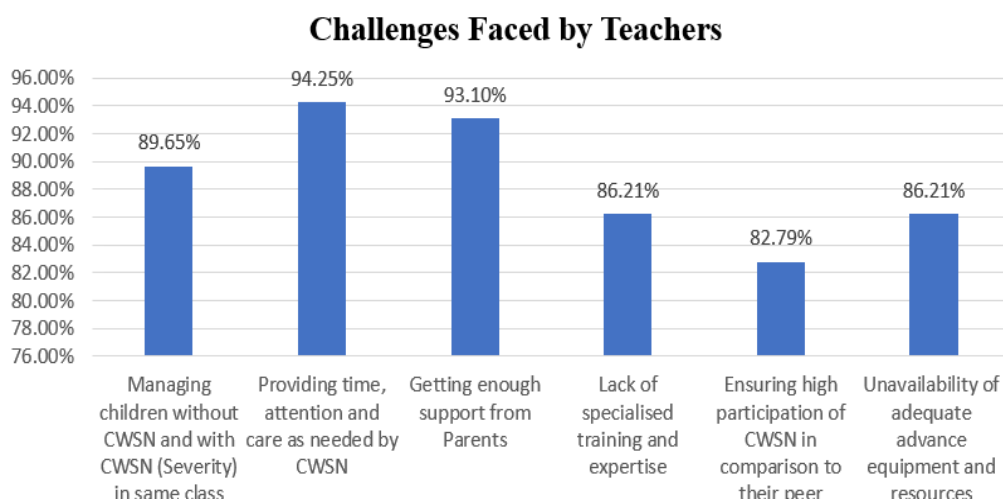
(Fig 5: Support and Services Provided by the Teachers for better Participation of CWSN)

From the above figure it is evident that:

- i. All teachers (100%) said that, they provide support to CWSN for their participation in curricular activities.
- ii. As high as 100% of the teacher extends their support by providing required equipment and resources; 67.96% motivating and assisting CWSN during their participation, 51.46% teachers give efforts to ensure peer support for CWSN.
- iii. Besides a less percentage of teachers provide their support by consulting with the parents of CWSN (41.75%) and by providing guidance and counselling (39.80%).

### 1.2 Challenges Faced by Teachers while Ensuring participating of CWSN in Curricular Activities

This section of the result deals with various challenges faced by the teachers while ensuring participating of CWSN in Curricular Activities as depicted in the figure 7.



(Fig 6: Challeges faced by the Teacher ensuring Curricular Participation of CWSN)

Figure 6 depicts following results:

- i. More than one-third (>70%) of the teachers revealed that, they face many challenges while making CWSN participate in curricular activities.
- ii. Majority (94.25%) of them found difficulty in providing extra time, attention, and care to CWSN as required by them due to their busy schedule.
- iii. In addition this other common challenge were not getting enough support from parents for better participation of CWSN (93.10%); difficulty in managing CWSN with their peer without disability (89.65%); developing specialized pedagogy (88.50%) for CWSN; unavailability of adequate advance equipment and resources and lack of specialized training to manage CWSN in an inclusive setting (86.21%). Teachers also reported that despite of all efforts they could not motivate CWSN in Curricular Participation significantly (82.79%).

## DISCUSSION

The analysis of the result revealed an imposing outcome regarding participation of CWSN in Curricular Activities. All the teachers opined that CWSN in their school participate in curricular activities. Whereas of the participation was found to be high in teaching learning activities rather in co-curricular activities like games and sports, literary activities, cultural activities, environment and science activities, yoga & physical exercise, and community activities. The findings of related to lower participation rate in physical activity align with the findings of the study conducted by Nyquist, Moser, Jahnsen (2016). In addition to this it was found that except teaching learning activities the frequency of participation of CWSN in all others activities was low (Eriksson, Welander & Granlund, 2007; See & Su-Lynn, 2018) in all other curricular activities. Besides this, the study outcome also disclosed that all the teachers

have a positive perception towards beneficial effect of curricular participation on the development of CWSN (Hussin, Adam, Hamdam & Ya'kub, 2017; Belly-Ranger, Carbonneau, Brunet & Duquette, 2016). The findings of the study conducted by Temesgen (2018) found to be in-congruent with findings of the present study where teachers were unaware about the usefulness of participation of CWSN in co-curricular activities. It was also found that the perception of teachers towards participation of CWSN in inclusive setting was surprising. More than half (68.93%) of the teachers believed that CWSN can better participate in special schools rather in regular inclusive schools as they may not receive individualized special care, attention, facilities, and trained teachers as like specials schools (Mohanty & Nanda, 2017). Further they revealed in special schools CWSN may get less chance of being bullied by peer and may have a feeling of inferior in comparison to their peer. Majority of the teachers mentioned special schools may work better for CWSN with severity of physical condition. Despite this majority of the teachers opined that they continuously encourage and motive CWSN (Argan et al., 2017) for their better participation of in curricular activities. In can comprehended that, the perception of teachers found to positive towards their efforts made for promoting participation of CWSN in curricular activities (Eriksson et al., 2007). They also provide required resources and assist them for participation. The findings of the study also revealed many challenges faced by the teachers while dealing with CWSN. Which includes difficulty in classroom management and lack of specialized facilities, specialised pedagogical methods (Kentiba, 2015), required resources, parental support (Anaby, Hand, Bradly, DiRezz, Forhan, DiGiacomo & Law, 2013). Lack of specialized training (Mohanty & Nanda, 2017; Saikia, 2016; Rajeswari & Chander, 2014) and managing extra care and time (Argan et al., 2017) for the CWSN are the other challenged as reported by the teachers.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### ***Present Status***

It is observed that, the frequency of participation of CWSN in all curricular activities except teaching-learning activities is very low. Majority of the teachers (more than 50%) prefer special schools over regular inclusive schools for better participation of CWSN in curricular activities in case of CWSN with higher severity. Most of the teachers (more than 70%) revealed that, they face various challenges for enabling CWSN participate in curricular activities. Which includes managing extra time for providing attention, and care to CWSN; managing CWSN along with their peer without disability (89.65%) in inclusive class; getting co-operation from parents: developing individualized pedagogical strategies (88.50%); lack of teacher training and inadequate advance equipment and resources for CWSN



### **Action Plan**

The outcome of the study will help curriculum implementors to take required measures to increase the frequency of participation of CWSN in curricular activities. Policy planners and administrators may identify gaps between inclusive policy and inclusive practices. Policy planners and administrators require may plan for providing better individualised facilities for CWSN as provided by the special schools. The results of the study can also provide scope to the study Policy planners and administrators to organise specialised training programmes for the teachers in inclusive schools to cater the need of CWSN for their better participation in curricular activities.

### **CONCLUSION**

The study reveals a mixed outcome regarding the participation of CWSN and about the perception of teachers towards curricular participation of CWSN. In majority of cases teachers have positive perception towards significance effect curricular activities for the development of CWSN and for their inclusion. There are some factors still exist that hinders frequent participation of CWSN in curricular activities. There is a need to bridge these gaps to ensure higher participation rate of CWSN in Curricular Activities.

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