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Journal homepage: [www.publishing.globalcsrc.org/jbsee](http://www.publishing.globalcsrc.org/jbsee)**The Status of Inclusive Education in Baluchistan: A Qualitative Investigation**<sup>1</sup>Samina Ashraf, <sup>2</sup>Rukhsana Bashir, <sup>3</sup>Ghulam Fatima<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Special Education, University of the Punjab, Lahore Pakistan,  
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**ABSTRACT**

The aim of this qualitative research was to get insight in to the existing condition of the inclusive schools working in the province of Baluchistan, Pakistan. Out of six divisions of Baluchistan, Quetta division was selected purposively. After conducting a survey, eight inclusive schools were taken as sample from the regular schools. An observation sheet containing the components of school ecology, instructional practices of teachers, curriculum adaptations, classroom management, infrastructure of schools, and use of teaching aids in the classrooms was prepared. In eight schools, 48 observations (three observations in grade three and four each) were conducted. The results reflected that most of the children were at the mild level of disability and teachers were paying attention to special children but due to lack of training in deaf education and unavailability of assistive devices, the anticipated outcomes were not being obtained. The conclusion was made and suggestions to the Department of Education, Government of the Baluchistan were given for the improvement of inclusive set up.



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Corresponding author's email address: [samina.dse@pu.edu.pk](mailto:samina.dse@pu.edu.pk)**Recommended citation:** Ashraf, S., Bashir, R., and Fatima, G. (2020). The Status of Inclusive Education in Baluchistan: A Qualitative Investigation. *Journal of Business and Social Review in Emerging Economies*, 6(2), 917-922**1. Introduction**

There are three different models of education for children with special needs in Pakistan; special education, integrated education and recently inclusive education. Special education is a separate system of education for children with disabilities (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019) based on the assumption that children with disabilities have needs which cannot be addressed within mainstream schools (Jha, 2008; Pijl, Meijer, & Hegarty, 2002). Integrated education is integration of children with special needs in regular schools. Inclusive education is a system of education whereby the participation of all children is enforced in regular schools including students with disabilities. Inclusive education denotes the philosophical revolution in the provision of educational opportunities for students with various disabilities

(UNICEF,2003 ;Schmidt & Cagran, 2006). It embraces the idea that instead of correcting only disabled child, regular (community) schools should be so flexible, diverse and welcoming to educate every type of child regardless of any discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, and disability, religious, cultural and social background ( Amor, Hagiwara, Shogren, Thompson, Verdugo, Burke & Aguayo,2019).The philosophy of inclusive education (IE) focuses on educational as well as social and psychological inclusion of the children with disabilities in mainstream society (Budnyk, & Sydoriv,2019).

In Pakistan, the paradigm of special education is shifting gradually towards inclusive education keeping in view the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (1973). This constitution enforces and confirms the full rights of children with disabilities as citizens of the country (Verma, Bagley & Jha, 2007). This paradigm shift got its peak point after the passing of United Nations Convention on the Right of persons with disabilities (Lang, Kett, Groce, & Trani, 2011), Millennium Developmental Goals (MDGs), and recently the United Nations presentation of the Sustainable Developmental Goals (Sachs, 2012). All these conventions address the provision of inclusive and quality education for children and youth including those who are with disabilities (Cottafava, Cavaglià, & Corazza, 2019). In case of persons with disabilities, addressing the individual needs is a front line goal of all these global conventions.

Baluchistan is constituted of an exclusive and unmatched territory in Pakistan due to its demographic, environment, landscape and natural economic legacies as compared to the most populace and fertile provinces of Sindh, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtun kha, The province has the lowest socio-economic outgrowth along with increased poverty level, low literacy rate and least industrial development. The entry in the political development process of the country by the province Baluchistan is not as old as of the other provinces. The province was given political representation only in 1970 while other provinces had elected their representative assemblies even before independence in 1947. In this situation the challenges of educational reforms are more difficult to meet (Rehman & Begum, 2013). The population is spread around the province in 22,000 settlements that range from the city of Quetta to a scattering of small communities and villages having less than 500 houses (Javaid & Jahangir, 2015). The province has rich diversity of its population due to the representation of its individuals from different ethnic groups (Latif & Hamza, 2009). Balochs as the majority are followed by Pashtuns. Other groups with various ethnic representations include Punjabis and Urdu speaking mainly in urban areas with the majority in Quetta, 'Hazarajats in Hazara and other ethnic groups. Majority of the ethnic groups are living in Quetta city, the capital of the province. British rulers developed Quetta in 19th century as a military town to maintain and support its military position in Baluchistan (Mir Balaach Baloch, 2012).

Beside the fact that Quetta is underdeveloped yet, it has many strong points including occupancy of 43 to 44 percent of the total area of the country and gigantic natural resources, but has low literacy rate (Abbasi,2014). Baluchistan has the smallest share of national educational institutions including those which are catering the needs of children with disabilities. There are only federal Government institutions and some private sector institutions to address the needs of children with disabilities in segregated settings (Mir Balaach Baloch, 2012).

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Different research studies, since last three decades, have highlighted many reservations in provision of education to students with disabilities in segregated settings. It has been proved by many research studies that providing education to students with various disabilities in segregated settings is restricting the learning experiences and quality of life and education of such students (Agran, Jackson, Kurth, Ryndak, Burnette, Jameson, & Wehmeyer, 2020). It is also costing high to government when establishing new schools for children with disabilities with limited financial resources. Therefore, it is desirable to conduct the study on existing inclusive education institutions which are working in the Quetta, the capital city of Baluchistan. This study is designed in larger interest of students with disabilities who are getting education in the regular/inclusive schools of Quetta as it will highlight the problems existing in those institutions. By minimizing those problems, the school administrators and teachers can work out on them, henceforth the quality of education in regular/ inclusive schools can be improved.

### **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

The primary objective of this study was to explore the situation of inclusive schools in Quetta focusing on school

ecology, instructional practices of teachers, curriculum adaptations made for teaching students with special needs in inclusive classroom , classroom management, infrastructure of schools, and use of teaching aids in the classrooms. The second objective of this study was to give some suggestions for the improvement of inclusive education in Quetta.

### 1.3 Procedure of the Study

The study was qualitative in nature. Out of six divisions of Baluchistan, Quetta division was selected purposively due to being capital city of the province and having greater number of inclusive schools. On the basis of survey only eight inclusive schools were selected by using purposive sampling technique. Out of these eight schools, three were from private sector and five from public sector. We selected 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade to collect the data on the components of instrument related to the classroom situation by conducting classroom observations using an observation sheet. The observations outside the classrooms were also conducted to observe the school environment and students teachers interaction outside the classrooms.

### 1.4 Instrument of the Study

An observation sheet consisting of six components was developed which was validated through taking opinions from 5 experts related to the field of inclusive education. The first component was school ecology/school environment; teachers' and students' interaction, safety and repair, administration role, academic positioning of students with disabilities i.e., students' attention to task and concern for achievement at school, guidance i.e., the quality of educational and professional guidance and personal counselling services accessible for students, and students' relationship with class fellows.

The second component was instructional practices of teachers: Its indicators were, 1) use of different instructional methods for teaching, 2) the efficiency and effectiveness of teacher classroom organization and use of classroom time. The third component was curriculum adaptation its indicators were, 1) types of adaptation made in the content , 2) adaptations made in the assessment techniques used by the teachers. The fourth component was classroom management. Its indicators were classroom seating arrangement, furniture, blackboard and general lay out of the classrooms. The fifth component was infra structure of schools including school building, design, classroom size including floors, etc. The last and sixth component was use of teaching aids in the classroom (use of relevant and latest teaching aids).

### 1.5 Data Collection Procedure

After the development of instrument, we conducted a survey with the help of Baluchistan University of Quetta to identify the schools in which students with special needs were enrolled. The permission from school administrations has been taken before conducting observations. From each school two teachers were observed; one from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and other from 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Each teacher was observed thrice during teaching three different subjects i.e., English, Urdu and Mathematics. Each observation was of 45 minutes. The purpose to observe in three different subjects was to see variation in the teachers' instructional practices and their classroom behaviour etc. Hence, total 48 observations were conducted in eight (8) schools. We conducted observations outside the class to collect the data related to school environment, school structure and other variables related to the school.

**Table.No.1: Detail of classroom observations in 8 schools**

School/	Classes	Subjects	Observations
SN1	Grade 3	English	3 (1= 45min)
	Grade 4	Urdu	
		Mathematics	
SN2	Grade 3	Urdu	3
	Grade 4	English	3
		Mathematics	3
SN3	Grade 3	Mathematics	3
	Grade 4	Urdu	3
		English	3
SN4	Grade 3	Urdu	3
	Grade 4	English	3
		Mathematics	3

SN5	Grade 3	English	3
	Grade 4	Urdu Mathematics	3
SN6	Grade 3	Urdu	3
	Grade 4	English	3
		Mathematics	3
SN7	Grade 3	English	3
	Grade 4	Urdu	3
		Mathematics	3
SN8	Grade 3	English	3
	Grade 4	Urdu	3
		Mathematics	3

SN=School number

## 2. Data Analysis

Keeping in focus purpose of the study, we took detailed observation notes (field notes) to collect rich data exposing majority of things occurring in the school environment. For the sack of data analysis, only those slices of the observations were analysed which were related to our research objectives. After editing, data were coded into different categories. Each school and teacher was also assigned alphanumeric codes. In case of schools, 8 schools were assigned codes from SN1 to SN8 and teachers were assigned codes as OT1 to OT48. Afterword, through repeated readings, the content analysis was made and six major themes emerged from the data.

## 3. Results

The following results were found after conducting the study:

### Theme. 1: School Ecology/Environment

In almost all schools we observed that interaction between students and teachers was weak but a good relationship and interaction was observed among the students with disabilities and their peers without disabilities. This relationship was stronger during break times, game periods and free periods. The attitude of non-teaching staff towards students with special needs was satisfactory. In government schools it was neither good nor bad. It is observed that most of the students with hearing and physical impairment were mainstreamed and placed in regular classrooms.

### Theme.2: Infrastructure of Schools

The condition of school buildings was not pretty good especially of public sector schools of peripheral areas of Quetta. The boundary walls of the six schools were not well built. Only two schools (one public and one private) were having proper school boundary walls. In three schools there were no proper classrooms for students with and without special needs. They were sitting on muddy grounds having empty wheat sacks under them. In other three schools, the classrooms were properly structured. In remaining two schools the students were sitting in corridors on benches.

### Theme.3: Instructional Practices of Teachers

We observed that except two schools, in all schools teachers were using group teaching methods. The teachers were using speech to communicate. They were not using sign language to facilitate students with hearing impairment in their classrooms. Only in two schools the teachers were using sign language taking help of the black boards.

### Theme.4: Curriculum Adaptations

In all the schools the teachers were teaching same curriculum to all students including students with special needs. However, minor modifications in curriculum for students with hearing impairment had been made. The students with hearing impairment were provided little bit adapted curriculum by the teachers. The level of students' response was same for the whole class including students with special needs.

### Theme.5: Classroom Management

The general layout of the classrooms was poor. In all the classes students with special needs were sitting in the front row of the classroom. The classrooms were small in size and these were very congested. In most of the schools, students were sitting on the muddy grounds. The floors of two schools were cemented but were uneven and broken, which could have been harmful for the students with physical and visual impairment. There was no sound treated

classroom in schools. The schools were mostly noise polluted.

#### **Theme.6: Use of Teaching Aids in the Classrooms**

In one school only, the teacher was using audio visual aids during teaching to the students. According to the teachers they were not being provided with latest equipments and teaching aids by the school management. The teachers were using oral/spoken method during teaching to all students.

#### **4. Discussion**

The finding of the study revealed dissatisfactory condition of inclusion of students with different disabilities in Quetta. The absence of any proper school committee to support inclusion of students with disabilities has been observed in these schools. The findings are in line with a research study conducted recently by Stelitano, and Bray (2020). The study also highlighted enrolment of only students with mild disabilities in all schools. It is assumed that teachers are not trained or schools are not ready to include students with moderate and severe disabilities (Gallagher, Floyd, Stafford, Taber, Brozovic, & Alberto, 2000).

The attitude of teachers is a very important aspect for the inclusion of students other than mild disabilities. Training teachers to teach in inclusive settings will actually recuperate the status of inclusive education by overall improvement in educational outcomes for all students (Boyle, Scriven, Durning & Downes, 2011). We observed lack of use of technological resources by the majority of teachers. Use of latest technology and pedagogies can also facilitate the inclusion of students with disabilities at school level. Hasselbring and Glaser (2000) have stated in their study that use of computer and other technology resources are beneficial not only for students with mild disabilities but also for students with moderate and severe disabilities. There is no doubt that in Quetta, inclusion of students with disabilities, at an ideal level will take plenty of time. However, till then there is no harm in co-existence of special and inclusive education (Florian, 2019).

#### **5. Conclusion**

On the basis of findings, it can be concluded that the condition of inclusive/regular schools in Quetta is very pathetic. It seems that education of children with special needs has never been so important for the provincial Government of Quetta. Three types of school systems were observed in Quetta; the private schools for children belonging to the upper class; the public sector schools for the lower and middle class of the society and the Madrasahs, or religious schools. The students with special needs were found in all above mentioned schools of Quetta (Due to the prevalence of students with special needs in all social classes). In this study, we selected those schools where both children with and without special needs were enrolled. All of the schools were teaching general curriculum to the students with and without special needs. An important point needs to be highlighted that in all inclusive schools, students with mild disabilities were included. The buildings of the schools, classrooms and furniture were not adapted considering the needs of special students. The teachers were not aware of latest pedagogies and teaching strategies although some of them were qualified and experienced.

#### **6. Recommendations of the Study**

On the basis of findings following recommendations are made:

- It is strongly recommended that Ministry of Education and Ministry of Special Education both should pay attention on the education of students with special needs.
- The Government should conduct training courses to train the regular school teachers for teaching to students with special needs.
- Latest instructional technology should be utilized by all teachers in inclusive schools.
- Government should establish the Department of Special Education at University of Quetta to produce the experts in the field of special education.

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