

Awareness of Teachers in Special Schools and Parents on Schemes, Facilities and Concessions for Persons with Hearing Impairment

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Abstract

A study was undertaken in Mumbai city, aimed at, to compare the awareness of teachers in special schools and parents of the children with hearing impairment about schemes, facilities and concessions for Persons with Hearing Impairment. In the light of this objective, total 112 samples were taken out of which 56 were teachers, having minimum two years of experience of teaching in special schools of children with hearing impairment and 56 subjects were parents of those children with hearing impairment whose age range was from 12 to 18 years and studying in special schools.

The obtained data was analyzed in terms of percentage and the results were compared by using chi-square test and 't'- test between teachers and parents. The obtained results have indicated that there is a significant difference between teachers and parents in the awareness of schemes, facilities and concessions for persons with hearing impairment. The results also show low percentage of knowledge about these schemes, facilities and concessions to both teachers and parents. And less percentage of teachers (25%) and parents (10.7%) who are aware, when 50% taken as the cut off score of having the criteria for awareness. The study results, in turns indicating having a strong influence towards all round development in education of Children with Hearing Impairment.

KEYWORDS: Awareness, Persons with Hearing impairment(PWHI), Special Educators, schemes, facilities and concessions for PWHI, Awareness level.

INTRODUCTION

"To effectively communicate, we must realize that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others."

Anthony Robbins

(American advisor to leader)

In Latin, communication means to impart, share and make common the ability to communicate and to participate in communication sources on the giving and receiving of information language is central to everything we do. Both speech and language are parts of the larger process of communication. Due to difficulties in communication, speech and language, a large number of children with hearing impairment remain untouched by any sort of education. The facts and figures of children with hearing impairment are frightening. There are several reasons for poor educational level of so-called 'disabled' children in our country. Most of which are beyond the control of any individual. But lack of information on the parts of the parents and special educators is one of the main reasons. For an adult hearing impairment creates problems in maintaining an established

lifestyle i.e. retaining a job and in preserving satisfying personal and social relationships. Programmes in habilitation and rehabilitation, management seek to minimize such effects. Thus aural rehabilitation plays an important role in the life of persons with hearing impairment, but aural rehabilitation does not work automatically. The involvement of parents and special educators is essentially required.

Legislative Measures

Based on the sample data collected by the NSSO 58th round, an estimated 18.49 million persons were projected as disabled persons, in which speech impaired is 11.65% and hearing impaired are 16.55%.

The last decade of the 20th century saw the enactment of three legislations for the rehabilitation and welfare of people with disabilities.

1. Rehabilitation Council of India Act 1992:
2. Person with Disabilities Act, 1995
3. National Trust Act 1999:

The three legislations are comprehensive in spirit and together deal with all aspects pertaining to rehabilitation, from prevention, employment, long-term settlement, human resource development and research and documentation.

1. Rehabilitation Council of India Act 1992:

The Rehabilitation Council of India Act 1992 led to the establishment of the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI). The RCI is responsible for standardizing and monitoring training courses for rehabilitation professionals, granting recognition to institutions running courses, and maintaining a Central Rehabilitation Register of rehabilitation professionals. The RCI Act was amended in 2000 to give the RCI the additional responsibility of promoting research in rehabilitation and special education.

2. Person with Disabilities Act, 1995

The Persons with disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act was passed in 1995. This is an important legislation that provides for both preventive and promotional aspects of rehabilitation such as education, employment and vocational training, reservation, research and human resource development, creation of barrier, pre environment, inclusion and independent living.

3. National Trust Act 1999:

The National Trust Act 1999 provides for the constitution of a national body for the welfare of people with autism, cerebral palsy, mental retardation and multiple disabilities in the event of the death of their parents, procedures for appointment of guardians and trustier for persons in need of such protection, and support to registered organizations to provide need-based services in times of crisis to the families of the disabled.

- ❖ National Policy for Persons With Disabilities (2006)

The National Policy recognizes that persons with Disabilities are valuable human resource for the country and seeks to create an environment that provides them equal opportunities, protection of their rights and full participation in society.

❖ Schemes, Facilities and Concessions

Those schemes are ADIP, TEDC, DRS (Deendayal Rehabilitation) Schemes, SSA scheme, NHFDC etc.

The concessions and facilities include scholarships and fellowships for education and vocational training, job reservation in Government Sector, economic assistance for disabled persons and other welfare measures like rebate in income tax, loans at soft interest rates, travel concessions and specific poverty alleviation programmes for disabled persons.

Disability: From paper to practice:

Government policy, legislative actions, schemes and provisions for the disabled give the impression of a State that is committed to Human Rights and Equal Opportunities. But the ground reality is quite different.

Various schemes have been offered for the welfare of the disabled population, but lack of adequate information about them ensures that stakeholders - disabled people, their families and organizations that work for them - are either unaware or cannot avail of the provisions therein. At times the process of availing of benefits of schemes is so cumbersome and time consuming that most people prefer to by pass them.

Significance of the Problem

It is imperative that the parents know where to get correct information on what types of help are available and necessary. They are mostly aware of the information related to treatment, facilities and concessions but not completely. Parents still hoping that deafness will be cured seek medical and other rehabilitation help. They will be referred to hospital or a clinic where after examination, the medical professionals will advice the parents on what treatment the child will require, and the other information concerns educational perspectives and opportunities for the deaf child. Educational information should be given by the teachers themselves, but either the teachers are not aware of the schemes, facilities or concessions or such services are not available at their end. To know accurately that either parent are not aware or teachers or both it is necessary to do some research in this concern.

Objective of the Study

1. To compare the awareness of teachers in special schools and parents on schemes facilities and concessions for PWHI.
2. To level of teachers in special schools and parents on compare the awareness schemes, facilities and concessions for PWHI.

Research Questions

- What percentage of teachers in special schools is aware of schemes, facilities and concessions for PWHI?
- What percentage of parents is aware of schemes, facilities and concessions for PWHI?
- What percentage of knowledge on schemes, facilities and concessions for PWHI, the teachers have?
- What percentage of knowledge on schemes, facilities and concessions for PWHI, the parents have?

Hypothesis of the Study

- There is no significant difference in the awareness of teachers in special school and parents on schemes, facilities and concessions for PWHI
- There is no significant difference in the awareness level of teachers in special school and parents on schemes, facilities and concessions for PWHI

Operational Definitions

- **Awareness:** - In the present study, awareness is defined as having knowledge of schemes, facilities and concessions for persons with hearing impairment and minimum 50% responses will be taken as adequate awareness.
- **Schemes:** - In this study, schemes are referred to those systematic arrangements which are provided to the persons with hearing impairment by the Central Government of India such as ADIP scheme, IEDC, NHFDC etc.
- **Facilities:** - Here the facilities are those educational, diagnostic and financial opportunity or equipment for doing something which are provided to the person with hearing impairment as per provision made by the Central Government of India.
- **Concessions:-** In the present study concession referred to that, things conceded or reduction in price for education, diagnosis or economical support to the Persons With Hearing Impairment as per provisions made by the Central Government of India.
- **Educational:-** Here, in the study educational refers to those, pertaining to education of children with hearing impairment.
- **Diagnostic:-** In the present study diagnostic refers to those activities, involves in identification and intervention of hearing impairment. In which intervention is related to testing of ear, fitment and purchasing aids and appliances, like hearing aid and ear mould etc.
- **Financial:-** Here financial are those, which is pertaining to money.
- **Parents:** - Parents are referred to those fathers and mothers, whose children are hearing impaired.
- **Special Educators:** - The special educators are those teachers, who are specially trained for teaching to the children with hearing impairment.
- **Persons with Hearing impairment:** - In the present study, persons with hearing impairment referred as those children and adults having the hearing loss of 60dB or more in better ear for the conversational range of frequencies as per PWD Act.

Limitations of the study

1. The study was restricted to parents and teachers only.
2. Present study was limited to the teachers of special school having minimum experience of 2 years.
3. The study was restricted to the parents of hearing impaired children of below 18 years age group.

4. Present study was limited to the schemes, facilities and concessions for hearing impaired children only.
5. The study was limited to educational, diagnostic & financial schemes facilities and concessions only.
6. The study was limited to the schemes facilities and concessions given by Central Government only.
7. The study was limited in Mumbai city only.
8. Reliability test was not done for the teachers and parents.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- ❖ A study of **B.L. Sharma** (2001) reported that- Though the PWD Act is in operation from February 1996 but the message of the Act has not percolated at the grass-root level. All advocacy efforts like seminars, workshops and meetings have been largely confined to metropolitan cities, State Capitals or major towns. The concern for the disability sector and commitment to implement the Act, in letter and spirit, in majority of implementing authorities is not visible. There is considerable increase in budgeted allocation in the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and by certain State Government. During the period 1996-1997 the allocation was only Rs. 650 Million which was increased to Rs. 2300 Million in 2000 and in 2001 it is Rs. 5500 Million. The percentage share of disabilities budget has also increased from 4.8% to 8%. This is appreciable. No action plan has been made and no time frame provided for implementing various provisions of this Act by majority of Ministries and States.
- ❖ **Dr. Bupinder Zutshi**, (Sep. 2004) conducted a case study of Disability status of Delhi Metropolitan Region. This study was supported by an educational grant from Ford Foundation.

The present study examines her conceptual and theoretical aspects of disability sector in India with a special focus on magnitude, prevalence rates, incidence rates, characteristics and composition of disabled person in India. Special focus has been given to identify available services and facilities for disabled persons through Government and Non-Government organizations with special reference to Delhi Metropolitan Region.

- Incidence rates has depicted significant declining trends during 1991- 2002 for all types of disability groups in lower and high age groups due to appropriate preventive measures like awareness generation and medical care support, but increasing incidence rate during 1991-2002 among the age groups of 15-29 years for locomotor impaired persons needs further in-depth analysis.
- As aspect significant proportions of disabled were from scheduled castes, schedules tribes and other backward classes. These groups require special attention through specific programmes to create awareness and support them though appropriate medical care and other rehabilitative measures.
- However several state governments are still lagging behind in implementing these provisions. The disability incidence rates were very low in Delhi as compared to the national average depicting appropriated measures like

awareness and medical care support for taking preventive measures for controlling disability.

Like in Delhi Incidence rates have declined due to awareness among people, in Mumbai it can be also done but the present study shows the awareness is not significant. So there is a need to spread the awareness.

- ❖ In PACS Programme background and discussion papers on poverty in India (March & June 2007) it is mentioned that-

Various schemes have been offered for the welfare of the disabled population, but little effort has been made to publicize them. Consequently, disabled people, their families and organizations that work for them are either unaware of the provisions or cannot avail of them. At times the process of availing of the benefits schemes is so cumbersome and time-consuming that most people prefer to bypass them.

Government official charged with implementing the schemes often fail to do so, particularly in rural areas. Detection and treatment camps are not held; Government hospitals that are supposed to treat disabled people often do not have the required medical expertise, and even the simple process of getting a medical certificate that declares a person officially disabled is a time consuming one.

- ❖ **Dr. Arun Banik** presented a paper “Need of awareness for parents on facilities and concessions of hearing impaired” at National Conference for Educator of the Deaf, Ri-Bhoi (Meghalaya), - 10-13th December, 2007, under this type of objectives.
- ❖ Study reported by **Banik and Dunbale** (2005) on ‘Mega serial of 48 episodes on all India Radio on aspects of hearing impairment’ for creating awareness. The study was conducted at Ali Yavar Jung National Institute for the Hearing Handicapped, Mumbai under a project of Material Development Department. In the project 48 episodes were broadcasted through popular Marathi Asmita Channel once in a week for one year. The topic includes various schemes, facilities and concessions, educational rehabilitation, causes & prevention, socio-economic rehabilitation and many other technical aspects of rehabilitation of hearing impairment. Later an audience survey pool was conducted with the support of All India Radio and it was found that approximately 2.40 Lakh (two corer and forty lakhs) people were benefited form this serial. Hence, keeping the example of such national institute activities, NGO, governmental organization should conduct such kind research work nation wide for creating awareness using various electronic media.
- ❖ Two studies conducted to assess public awareness about Disability Act and other government benefits among mentally ill patients are worth mentioning here.
 1. The first study conducted at RINPAS, Ranchi on awareness in guardians of mentally retarded individual shows that only 6% of them were aware of the act (Jahan and Singh, 2002).
 2. A study conducted by the Aditi Singh M.A., M.Phil (M & SP), Ph. D. Scholar & S. Haque Nizamie, Prof. of Psychiatry and Director; Central Institute of Psychiatry, Ranchi, India in 2004, among adult psychiatric

patients and guardians attending their institute shows almost similar results – Out of 20 participants, 12 were not aware of any kind of Government policy that provides some kind of concession to mentally ill patients. None of those who were aware was availing any facilities provided for disabled. Out of eight, three tried to acquire a disability certificate but failed due to lack of proper guidance and support. The major areas in which they faced difficulty due to their relative's disability were finance and discrimination in society and at work place. 80% of the participants felt the need for employment in a supported environment and medication at concessional rates of reimbursement. Their major area of concern was the care of the disabled after the death of present guardian.

- ❖ **B. L. Sharma** (2001) reported in his study that Complaint redressal mechanism has not only been successful in terms of providing relief to the aggrieved disabled persons but it has also created awareness about the rights of the disabled at various levels of Government. The office of Chief Commissioner of Disability soon after its creation in October 1998 took up matters pertaining to deprivation of rights, violation of the Act, laws and orders passed for the PWDs from time to time. In the first 6 months, only 65 complaints were received. As awareness increased among PWDs about their rights and about the existing of office of CCD, the number rose to 529 in the year 1999. This further increased to 800 in year 2000. During the year 2001 out of total 1118 complaints received 803, 72% were decided.
- ❖ **Bupinder Zutshi** (2004) reported that frequently in Delhi about 51.5% of the disabled can function without aids/appliances, while 20.9% cannot function even with aids and appliances and another 21.3% can take self care with the help of aids and appliances. Significantly 6.3% of the disabled have neither tried nor have access to aids and appliances and hence cannot take self-care in case of urban areas. Thus as compared to the national average aids and appliances have been provided to a majority of the disabled person in Delhi.

Methodology

A survey type of research design was selected for the present study. The methodology chosen for the study was as follows:

The sample comprised of 56 teachers having minimum two years of experience of teaching in special schools of Children with Hearing Impairment, and 56 parents' whose Children with Hearing impairment in the age range of 12 to 18 years, studying in special schools. Random Stratified sampling techniques were used in selecting sample.

The tool used for the present study was a questionnaire having multiple types of questions. The questionnaire was developed as a part of research tool and later it was validated by group of professional judges for finalization. The questionnaire has questions in 3 areas such as (i) Schemes, (ii) Facilities and (iii) Concessions respectively. In the questionnaire, each area comprises of three sub-areas (i) Educational (ii) Diagnostic (iii) Financial schemes, concessions & facilities.

The subjects were selected randomly from the schools selected from each zone of the greater Mumbai comprising of Eastern, Western, Southern and Central zones respectively, covering all over Mumbai. The questionnaire was distributed to all the selected subjects and they were given time approximately 4-7 days with the request to

read the questions carefully and subsequently to fill the questionnaire (i.e. to tick the correct answer out of four multiple answers) accordingly. Later the researcher collected the filled in questionnaire from the subjects by hand. The duly filled questionnaires were given scoring i.e. one mark was given to the correct answer and zero mark was given to the incorrect or no response answer. At last 't'-test and chi-square tests were administered for analysis of data.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

Awareness on overall schemes, facilities and concessions

Objective : To compare the awareness of teachers in special schools and parents on schemes facilities and concessions for PWHI.

Hypothesis : There are no significant difference in the awareness of teachers in special school and parents on schemes, facilities and concessions for PWHI.

Table: Overall percentage of teachers and parents aware of schemes, facilities and concession for PWHI

Subject	Total No. of Subject	No of Respondent got above 50%	% of Respondent	Significance at 2 tail
Teacher	56	14	25.0	0.048
Parent	56	6	10.7	

As shown in Table 4.4, that, 14 out of 56 teachers i.e. 25.0% teachers and 6 out of 56 parents i.e. 10.7% parents respectively responded above 50% questions and scored accordingly on schemes, facilities and concessions.

The result obtained, solves the research question –1, that 25.0% of teachers are aware of schemes, facilities and concessions for PWHI and research question – 2, that 10.7% of the parents are aware of schemes, facilities and concessions for PWHI.

The Chi-square test shows that there is a significant difference between teachers and parents in the awareness of schemes, facilities and concessions for PWHI. This rejected the null hypothesis.

Discussion

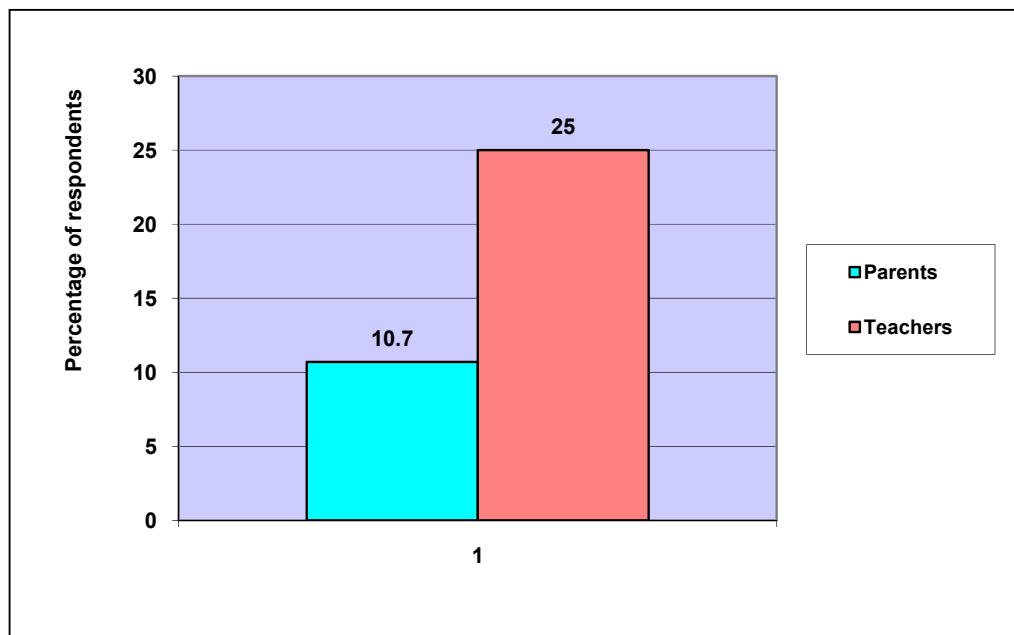
Overall, teachers are more aware than parents on the aspects of schemes, facilities and concessions provided by the Government of India. However, difference of awareness level, were shown in the present study among the teachers and parents of the hearing impaired children. Teachers are the important pillars in the education system. Adequate knowledge on matters of rehabilitation is always necessary to work in the field. They are always in touch with the parents for various activities such as regular progressive assessment. Doubts from the parents' side to be clarified, invites them to be a part of the educational activities, to conduct regular parents meeting in the school and disseminate information with update technological development to the parents as and when necessary. Hence, teachers are supposed to be more aware on the various ongoing activities in the filed. The information can be transferred to the parents to clear out their doubts and also to make a good future planning for the development of higher education of hearing impaired children.

Further, improper implementation of all governmental schemes, facilities and concessions for the welfare of rehabilitation may be one of the major reasons for lack of awareness in the society. Central Government needs to take further responsibility

to increase such publicity activity in order to bring a greater effect into the rural areas. Study done by Banik and Dunbale (2002) on creating awareness through All India Mega Serial of 48 episodes on aspects of hearing impairment showed that 2.40 crores population benefited in Maharashtra through the programme in rural areas. Present study also suggests that such kind of regular activities is necessary to create more and more awareness among the mass population on schemes, facilities and concession throughout India especially in rural areas.

Any scheme introduced by the Government, a copy of it should be distributed to every State. It should be the responsibility of the school authorities too that they collect the information time to time from the Government to update their knowledge about new schemes, facilities and concessions for persons with hearing impairment.

Graph: Overall percentage of teachers and parents aware of schemes, facilities and concession for PWHI



The overall awareness level of teachers and parents on schemes, facilities and concession for PWHI

Parameters	Respondent	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Significance
Overall Knowledge about schemes, facilities and concessions for PWHI	Teachers	56	37.35	21.49	0.001
	Parents	56	24.24	19.86	

Table shows that the teachers have 37.35% knowledge about schemes facilities and concessions. The parents have 24.24% knowledge about schemes facilities and concessions, as shown in the table.

The study findings indicated the answer to the research questions of the followings:



- that the teachers have 37.35% knowledge about schemes facilities and concessions.
- the parents have 24.24% knowledge about schemes facilities and concessions.

The t-test value also shows that –

- There is a significance difference between teachers and parents in the awareness level of schemes, facilities and concessions.

Hence, the present study revealed that these results rejected the null hypothesis.

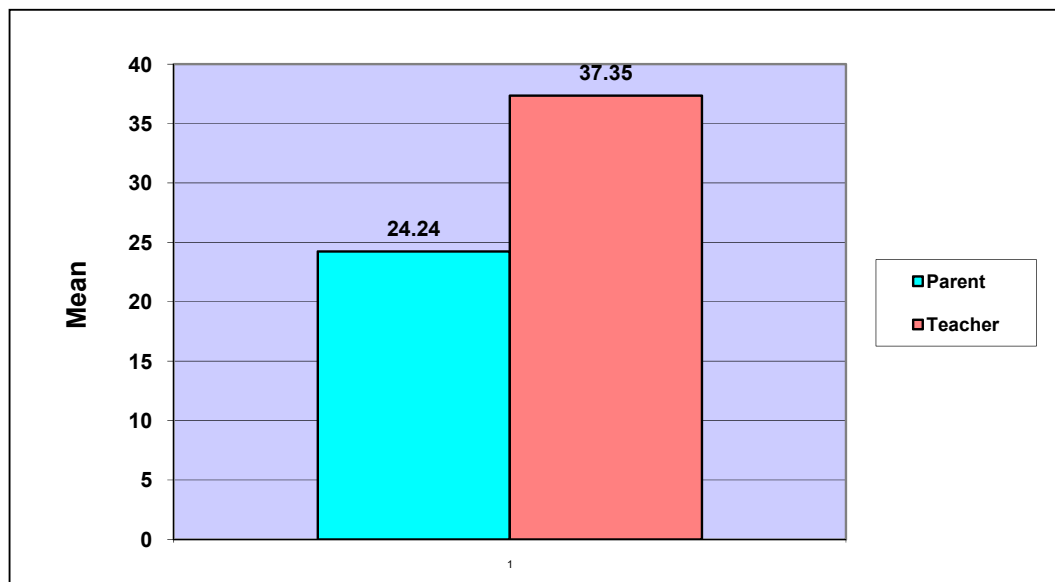
Discussion

Overall teachers have more knowledge of schemes, facilities and concessions than parents. But still both parents and teachers have very less knowledge in comparison to teachers. These study results gives the impression that information regarding schemes, facilities and concessions is not reaching to 50% population adequately, which supports the study of Dr. Bhupinder Zutshi (2004).

Most of the teachers informed the researcher in the present study that creating awareness it is not the job of a teacher in the school. Why should I know all these schemes, facilities and concessions for PWHI? It is the responsibility of social workers and hence, school authority should necessary needful to appoint a Social Worker in the school as per the provision made by the Education Department.

However as a professional and authority in the field ours main duty is to imparting knowledge. A teacher makes the future of a child. After all, first is the child then it is hearing impairment, and hence the responsibilities of teacher's increases very much. And not only teachers but parents are also equally responsible and should know each and every aspect of their child's need, particularly those, which are directly or indirectly related to the child's education, and future. It is not the responsibility of any one person but a team as a whole to generate awareness on schemes, facilities and concessions, because it is the beginning of rehabilitation of a hearing impaired child.

Graph :The overall awareness level of teachers and parents on schemes, facilities and concession for PWHI



Here, this study suggest everyone to spend 5 minutes in a day, 150 minutes in a month, 1800 minutes in a year, then you see how much people of the world will be benefited !

In pursuance of obligations of PWD Act, Government at various levels has taken a number of initiatives. However, despite the statutory provisions on schemes, facilities and concessions, administrative orders etc the benefits meant for Persons with Disabilities do not reach them. In order to address this critical problem Chief Commissioner of Disability devoted its attention on creating awareness about the Act and facilities made throughout India through workshops, seminars, orientation programmes and awareness programmes in all States / Union Territories including districts and Talukas. In these workshops Government functionaries, local NGOs, parents, teachers and professional were the target groups (B.L. Sharma, 2001). However, much has not done, much is needed and much needs to be done in future.

The publicity awareness campaign for the parents can be done through various means in a convenient manner such as:

1. On-line guidance / internet programme
2. Scrolling messages through T.V
3. Through Film /T.V. / Radio / Video Shows etc.
4. Through traditional cultural programmes such as dance drama, mime, puppet, folk songs etc.
5. Through Tele Guidance / Tele conference programme
6. Distribution of Pamphlets / booklets / poster banners etc.in Primary Health Centers
7. Through using print media
8. Through exhibition /workshop / seminar etc.
9. Through social welfare show programme like Satyamev Jayte
10. Utilizing the platform of Lokpanchayat,.

Hence, the present study also suggest the same way to follow the procedure recommended by Banik (2005) for creation of mass media education among teachers and parents to have adequate awareness in this on the schemes, facilities and con

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