



Competency Assessment of Teachers Working with Children with Hearing Impairment in Haryana

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Abstract

Competent and skilled teachers are essential for ensuring quality education for children with hearing impairment (HI). In India, especially in Haryana, inclusive education reforms under NEP-2020 and RCI emphasize teacher readiness for supporting children with hearing loss in mainstream and special schools. The present study assesses professional competencies of 80 teachers (40 special educators & 40 general teachers) working with HI learners in Haryana. A structured competency assessment tool covering domains such as sign language communication, audiological device handling, instructional strategies, IEP development, classroom management, and inclusive practices was used. Descriptive statistics, mean, SD, and independent sample t-test were applied for analysis. Results reveal that special educators possess significantly higher competencies than general teachers, especially in sign language, auditory-verbal techniques, cochlear implant/hearing aid handling, and IEP-based teaching. Findings highlight the urgent need for capacity-building programs, ISL training, audiology-based skill development, and inclusive practice workshops for general educators in Haryana. Recommendations align with NEP-2020 and RCI quality standards.

Keywords: Hearing Impairment, Teacher Competency, Inclusive Education, Sign Language, Cochlear Implant, NEP-2020, Haryana Schools

Introduction

Hearing plays a central role in language development, communication, and learning. Children with hearing impairment require specialized academic, auditory-verbal, and language support to access curriculum and social learning. Teacher competence is crucial to ensure optimal academic and socio-emotional development of these learners.

With NEP-2020 emphasizing inclusive education and multi-level support systems, general teachers increasingly interact with HI learners. However, many lack training in sign language,

speech methods, auditory training, and assistive technology. RCI-recognized HI educator programs in Haryana prepare skilled teachers, yet mainstream teacher preparedness remains uncertain.

Hence, assessing competency levels of special vs general teachers in Haryana is essential to strengthen teacher professional development and inclusive school practices.

Need for the Study

- Growing enrollment of HI learners in mainstream schools in Haryana
- Limited research on teacher competence in HI education in Northern India
- Alignment with NEP-2020, RCI norms & Inclusive Education mission
- Demand for ISL proficiency and device management skills
- Need to strengthen teacher preparedness for inclusive classrooms

Objectives

1. To assess competencies of teachers working with HI children in Haryana.
2. To compare competency levels between special educators & general teachers.
3. To identify skill gaps and professional training needs.
4. To recommend strategies to improve teacher capacity in inclusive settings.

Hypotheses

- **H1:** Special educators possess significantly higher competencies than general teachers.
- **H2:** There is a significant difference in communication skills and audiological device handling competencies.
- **H3:** General teachers require capacity-building for inclusive HI education.

Review of Literature

Research indicates teacher competence is a strong predictor of academic success in HI learners. Competent educators demonstrate:

- Speech-reading and auditory-verbal teaching skills (Moeller & Tomblin, 2015)
- Sign language and multimodal communication (Lieu, 2020)
- Assistive listening device knowledge (Tharpe & Sladen, 2008)
- Inclusive classroom strategies & IEP planning (Sharma & Singh, 2021)

Indian studies highlight gaps in teacher training, limited ISL exposure, and inadequate device handling skills among regular teachers. Haryana has emerging HI programs, but competency studies are scarce, creating a need for localized research.

Methodology

Research Design

Quantitative, descriptive-comparative study

Population & Sample

Group	Sample Size
Special Educators (RCI-Registered)	40
General Teachers (Mainstream Schools)	40
Total Sample	80

Locale

Government schools, private schools, & special schools across Haryana (Rohtak, Hisar, Sonipat, Jhajjar)

Sampling

Purposive sampling

Tools Used

Tool	Purpose
Teacher Competency Scale (40 items)	Competency assessment
Self-Rating Scale	Teacher perception & confidence
Observation checklist	Verification
Demographic sheet	Background information

Competency Domains

1. Knowledge of Hearing Loss & Language Needs
2. Communication Techniques (ISL/Auditory-Verbal)
3. Assistive Device Handling (HA/CI/FM)
4. Curriculum Adaptation & Pedagogy

5. IEP Preparation & Evaluation
6. Classroom Management & Inclusion

Statistics

- Mean & SD
- Independent Sample t-test

Results

1. Overall Competency Scores

Group	Mean	SD	t-value	Sig
Special Educators	82.75	7.12	7.28	p < 0.01
General Teachers	69.32	8.45		

Interpretation: Special educators demonstrated significantly higher competencies.

2. Domain-Wise Competency

Competency Area	Special Educators Mean	General Teachers Mean
Sign Language / Communication	84.2	61.8
Audiological Device Handling	85.4	66.9
IEP Development	82.1	67.4
Teaching Strategies	83.8	72.5
Inclusive Classroom Skills	78.2	71.5

Greatest gap was observed in **sign language and device management skills**.

Discussion

Results reveal strong correlation between specialized training and competency. RCI-trained teachers show sophisticated knowledge in:

- ISL / total communication
- Cochlear implant & hearing aid troubleshooting
- IEP-based teaching

General teachers lacked awareness of auditory fatigue, language-auditory needs, FM systems, and instructional differentiation.

Study supports previous findings and emphasizes strengthening teacher training initiatives in Haryana schools.

Educational Implications

- Mandatory ISL & auditory training for mainstream teachers
- Collaboration between special educators, audiologists & speech therapists
- Classroom hearing-friendly practices & assistive listening devices
- Continuous professional development in inclusive education

Limitations

- Limited sample size
- Restricted to Haryana
- Self-reported data bias possible

Conclusion

Findings confirm significant competency differences between RCI-trained and general teachers. Strengthening teacher education and inclusive practices is essential to support HI learners. Aligning practice with NEP-2020 and RCI guidelines will ensure equitable and quality education in Haryana.

Recommendations

- Mandatory ISL modules in teacher training programs
- District-level in-service HI training workshops
- FM systems & classroom acoustics support
- IEP-based instruction monitoring
- Teacher mentoring & multi-disciplinary support systems

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