

Name of Head Teacher: SL-21

Age: Under 30 years

Qualification: Bachelors in Education

Years of Experience as a Head Teacher: less than 1 year

Years of regular Teaching Experience: 1-5 years

School Type: Rural Lahore, Primary School

Professional training and Certifications: Has received one professional training in past 1 year but none related to inclusion.

NIC Group: NIC Group 3

Background:

SL-21 was a Head Teacher at a Primary school in Lahore (Rural). It is a co-education school with 28 teachers and around 189 students enrolled. The school has basic facilities like electricity, clean water, internet, but no computer lab or library.

Understanding of Inclusion:

The head teacher grasped the concept of Inclusion very well and were able to understand the burdens that many children were facing due to poverty, disabilities, societal stigmas, etc.:

“Inclusion or inclusiveness means that all students no matter what issues they are having should be included in the school and should be freed of their personal problems for them to make their education the priority. Education is the right of every child and only through education can a child make a better future for himself. Some children cannot use this right or are not able to avail this right completely because of the burden of any problem on their shoulders. The issue of inclusion may arise from any kind of disability or even emotional or psychological issues and these problems act as a bridge between a child and his education. A child will do better in studies only if he is stress free and is not facing any kind of personal problems or else he will score low. So, to me inclusion means every child should feel included in his school and that can only happen when no personal problems are bothering him.” SL-21-3rd

Actions Related to Inclusion:

The head teacher was able to identify a student who was the only male in the entire family and was forced into labour due to poverty and not having a father. The head teacher arranged for a job for the mother as well as enrolled her in the national social security program for more financial support and it resulted positively for the child:

“He was the only male in his family and he had to support his mother and three older sisters. He used to come to school only sometimes and most of the times he would be out trying to earn for his family. When I investigated the case of this young boy I observed that because of his poor background he used to stay quite and alone and he never made friends. His uniform was also torn from certain areas. He was always confused and mostly looked sad and he never had lunch with him. His grades were also always low and he was a poor student. I realized that because of his financial problems he was not able to give his complete attention to studies. To help this boy I offered the child’s mother a job as a maid in a nearby private school at a good pay. I also arranged some regular funding on behalf of the teachers to the mother so that she could have a regular income. I also helped her enroll in the Benazir income support program that helped her with some money. The outcome of this action was successful because I saw that child secure better marks as now he could give his complete attention and focus to his studies and I also saw a boost in his confidence. I talked to the boy about this matter and he was happy and described that the burden was relieved from his shoulders.” SL-21-3rd

Course completion: Completed 100% of the course with all activities.

Course Participation:

Initial Condition: The Head teacher was moderately confident in their ICT skills at the start but had a positive outlook on enrolling in the blended course

Head Teacher in NIC Interaction: The head teacher enjoyed the NIC meetings and the discussions.

Feedback on Course and nature of NIC meetings: The head teacher admired the course a lot, especially the data collection but found understanding difficulties of students as challenging. They preferred fortnightly NIC meetings and blended online and face-2-face meetings.

In Course Activities:

Data Collection: Made portfolios for students with regular updates and enjoyed this part of the course the most.

Interaction with Teachers: Improved communications with the teachers and involved them regularly in keeping track of troubled children.

Interaction with Students and Parents: Involving students and parents and getting to know their difficulties due to inflation and trying to support them as much as they can.

Issues Identified through the PDSA cycle: Identified a male child who was forced into child labour due to poverty

Success: arranged for a job for the child's mother and support in social security programs

Outcome: the attendance of the child and his interest in the school increased.

Headline:

The head teacher found collection of data as the most enjoyable part of the course:

Head teacher uses data to pinpoint a child suffering from child labour

"I think for me collecting the data was the part I would say that I liked the most. That is because recording the data of students in a complete manner turned out to be very helpful as it helped in a very successful data record of students. This was because all the details and information and personal records of student were recorded individually in his portfolio... Many issues have been resolved in such a way and the result of so many students has improved because of this." SL-21-3rd

Used personal connections and social awareness to help financially impoverished parents:

The head teacher understood that poverty and inflation was really affecting parents and as a result, the children. Apart from the child forced into child labour, the head teacher arranged for other methods to help parents in subtle ways as mentioned here:

"OK so overall I found out that mostly the students in my school are from poor backgrounds. I noticed that there were some activities in school in which the children would have to spend some money and I thought that this would be a huge financial burden on the parents. The activities are not expensive but I mean that they will think that school is a burden since it is costing them money even if it is not a lot. So I encourage teachers that if they want to have activities like this then they should ask the donor agencies for funds so first we can provide the students with the things they would need like if it is a competition then we can get them colours and sheets to draw." SL-21-3rd

The head teacher wants to maintain the change they saw beyond the scope of the course:

1- Improvement in environment

2- Long-lasting change

The head teacher was very eager to maintain the positive environment in the school due to the inclusive changes they brought to the school despite financial challenges:

“Well I told you that there is a student that we are able to help a lot because of all these changes or we will not put these changes back as it is also making the environment of the school better and making the children like this student realized his true potential so it is very helpful for the teachers and it is for the students but I also mentioned details because we also faced a hard time in teaching the students. If the students are kept in good conditions then it will be easier for the teachers too.” SL-21-3rd