Institutional Differences in Role Conflict Dimensions among Special Education Teachers: A Comparative Analysis

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Abstract

The present research paper aims to examine the comparison of Role conflict between special educators teaching in public and private schools. The cross-sectional method has been applied in the study, and the research design adopted is descriptive in nature. Purposive sampling has been applied for selecting 200 teachers from government and private schools. Standardized tools for the assessment of Teacher's role conflict have been applied in the study. The collected data has been analyzed by applying SPSS, Mean, Standard deviation, t-test, and P-value, for testing the hypothesis in data analysis. The findings indicate that there is no significant difference in the role conflict faced by government and private special educators in schools, and all types of teachers are facing the same level of role conflict in varied ways. However, a significant difference was observed between work conflict and family conflict in both types of school education teachers. The suggestions emanating from this research comprises of school administration and education authorities should organize stress management workshops, and conferences, and recruit psychologists/counsellors for consultancy so that the teachers can cope with their role conflict.

Keywords: Role Conflict, Special Educator, Inclusive Education, Public School, Private School.

Introduction

Role conflict arises when an individual is asked to meet unrealistic targets which are not compatible with their workplace and household responsibilities. It happens when employees try to perform duties as per the multiple roles they have to perform. Moreover, these employees are asked to perform duties of different nature. The problem of role conflict can occur over a longer period, and it can also have a inter-linkage with situations (Creary & Gordon, 2016).

The role conflict experienced by teachers in schools is a complex and multifaceted issue. It takes place due to the various societal expectations and demands placed on educators and within the educational system ("Interpersonal relationship," 2022). Role conflict is a situation where a person has to deal with incompatible or contradictory expectations or demands from different roles that they hold. There are various types of roles such as societal expectations and demands placed on educators' conflict, such as intra-role, inter-role, person-role, and role overload. Intra-role conflict occurs when there are conflicting expectations within the same role ("Role conflict," 2023). Human motivation for achieving success and the stress that emanates from two powerful, unrealistic expectations that compete with each other leads to conflict. Based on case studies and surveys, role conflict has been linked to effects on interpersonal relationships and individual personality traits. When the "facet of a person's personality conflicts with other facets of that same person's personality," personality role conflicts gives rise to individual personality characteristic conflicts.

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Interpersonal relationships "having a relationship between two or more individuals that range from fleeting to enduring, which leads to role conflict," (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006).

Role conflict occurs when there are unrealistic demands placed upon an employee concerning their job or position. The employees experienced role conflict when they find themselves pulled in multiple directions, as they try to respond to the multiple roles. It is either for a short duration, or a longer duration, and it can also be connected to different situations. Therefore, it can be inferred that role conflict takes place when there are contradictory pressures on an employee relating to their different roles.

Private Schools/Institutions

The state contributes little or no financial assistance to the private organizations that are in charge of private schools. These schools have their administration, rules, and requirements that must be met. These educational institutions impose fees on students as per the policies of their private organizations and management committees. They charge relatively higher fees from the parents of their pupils (Sengupta et. al., 2019).

Public Schools

These schools are also known as public schools. These schools charge lesser school fees as all financial grants come from the government, in comparison to the private schools. In consultation with the education ministry, the government prepares the curriculum standards and policies to be implemented in these schools.

Special Education Teachers

These teachers teach on the areas of; intellectual disabilities, deaf-blindness, language disorders, hearing impairment, autism disability, multiple disabilities, orthopaedic, etc. Also, these teachers work with students of all age groups, who have a variety of psychological or physical issues, as well as learning or intellectual challenges is concerned. In addition to attending their pupil's specific requirements, they must oversee and encourage their development. Their educational qualification includes a Diploma in Special Education (DISE), B.Ed., M.Ed., in special education. These teachers are teaching in special schools and inclusive schools in the government and private sector (RCI Academic Reports, 2016).

Family Conflict: The term "family conflict" describes the strain, argument, or discord that develops among family members. Arguments, miscommunications, or even physical altercations may occur during this dispute, which can be brought on by a variety of things including disparities in personalities, values, views, or lifestyles ("Sociological Perspective,"2016).

Special School: A special school is an educational establishment created especially to offer resources, support, and instructions that are suited to the requirements of children with special education challenges. In order to address different physical, behavioural, intellectual, emotional issues, these schools provide customised teaching techniques, specialised programs, trained staff, and modified facilities, etc. The main objective is to establish an atmosphere that allows every student to grow and learn as much as possible.

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Contribution of Special Education Teachers in Inclusive Classroom

The classroom ambience of school's teaching pedagogy should be systematically designed to provide every student with best learning opportunities in order to attain inclusion. In this regard, both types of teachers should work as a team, be receptive to philosophy of inclusiveness. They should be supported by the administration, and the teachers should be sensitive about meeting the wants of the children with disabilities.

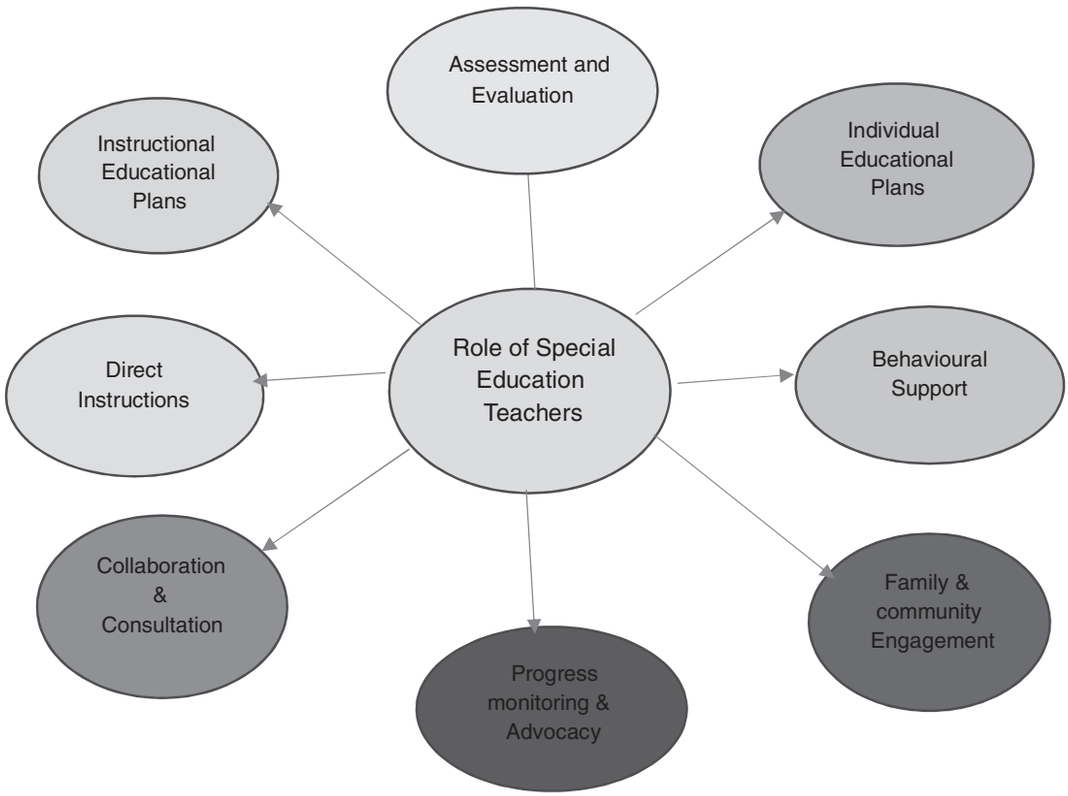


Figure 1.1 Role of Special Education Teacher

Challenges faced by Special Educator Teachers in the Classroom Setting:

These types of teachers contributed tremendously by providing support and ensuring the academic achievement of students with diverse learning requirements, disabilities, and exceptionalities. However, these educators are often confronted by numerous barriers that can impede their effectiveness and the progress of their students (Weiss et. al., 2014, Peter and Nderitu, 2014, Feldman and Denti, 2017). The major obstacles faced by these teachers is how to address the diversity of student needs within their classrooms (Peter and Nderitu, 2014, Feldman and Denti, 2017). Students with special needs can have a wide range of learning styles, cognitive abilities, physical limitations, and social-emotional challenges, which can make it challenging for teachers to design and implement their directions that effectively meets the particular needs of each student (Peter and Nderitu, 2014, Weiss et al., 2014).

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Rationale and Significance of the Study:

Due to the complexity and demands of their jobs, special education teachers' issues have drawn more attention. Role conflict has become one of these issues, especially when it comes to the aspects of work and family conflict. Teachers who must manage the demanding demands of their job with their domestic duties frequently experience role conflict, which is when the expectations of one position get in the way of meeting the obligations of another.

They have less access to facilities, such as fewer resource rooms and, a well-equipped laboratory, other facilities, etc. With fewer training centers, fewer job opportunities, and no permanent vacancies in schools, they faced subtle discrimination at the hands of their colleagues.

The purpose of this study is to compare the role conflict experiences of special education teachers in public and private schools, with an emphasis on the ways in which work-family conflict appears in each context. It is essential to comprehend these distinctions in order to create focused support networks, enhance the wellbeing of educators, and eventually improve the academic performance of students with special needs.

Review of Literature:

The review of literature conducted for the research paper is discussed as follows:

Kaur and Kaistha (2020) conducted a study intended to assess job participation and role conflict among elementary school teachers of Punjab. The study comprised of 72 elementary school instructors. Primary data was gathered by applying job participation and role conflict scales. According to the study's findings, instructors' job participation does not change based on gender roles, role conflict among teachers varies significantly. A favourable association was observed between occupational participation and role conflict.

Kumar and Manjunath (2022) determined how role conflict in multiple dimensions influenced the professional growth of teacher educators. The researcher randomly selected 360 teacher educators from various teacher training institutes affiliated with Bangalore and Mysore University. They were administered role conflict and professional development scales. Data was processed using correlation and regression. Pearson's product and moment correlation coefficients revealed total role conflict scores were strongly and negatively connected to all aspects of professional growth, including overall professional development scores. Family-related conflict, self-conflict, work-related conflict, professional growth-related conflict, health-related conflict, and social-related conflict variables all significantly predicted the professional development of teacher educators (63.9%).

Mantry & Pradhan (2023) studies the level of role conflict among government higher secondary school teachers in Jammu municipality based on their gender, academic stream, and teaching experience. The descriptive survey method was used in the current investigation. The data were gathered from 200 teachers using the convenience sample method. The responses were gathered using a standardised measure called the 'Teacher's Role Conflict Scale,'. The main findings demonstrate that there is a difference in the role conflict of senior secondary school teachers with respect to their teaching.

Singh (2024) explored the effects of role conflict, professional dedication, and job satisfaction on teacher educators. The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of role conflict on professional dedication

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and job satisfaction. This study included 100 teacher educators who had taught in B.Ed. course in colleges located in Kanpur. Descriptive research design was used. The data gathering instrument was a questionnaire. The finding was that role conflict was significantly associated with job happiness, neither role conflict nor job satisfaction were significantly associated with professional dedication. Job satisfaction served as an indirect mediator between role conflict and professional engagement.

Research Objectives:

The primary objectives of this study are outlined as follows:

1. To compare the level of role conflict between male and female special education teachers in schools.
2. To examine the differences in role conflict among special education teachers working in public and private schools.
3. To compare the extent of family conflict experienced by special education teachers employed in government and private schools.
4. To analyze the differences in work-related conflict among special educators working in public and private schools**.**

Hypotheses of the Study

1. (H_{01}): There is no significant difference in the level of role conflict between male and female special education teachers.

2.(H_{02}): There is no significant difference in the level of role conflict between public and private school special education teachers.

3. (H_{03}): There is no significant difference in the level of family conflict between government and private school special education teachers.

4. (H_{04}): There is no significant difference in the level of work-related conflict between public and private school special educators.

Research Methodology

Data Collection: Before collecting data, the researcher took permission from the District Education Officer of Chandigarh (U.T.) to collect data from teachers of different Government Schools and Private schools of Chandigarh (U.T.), and some NGOs. The primary data for the study was collected by the investigator herself. Also, permission was sought from various school's Principals and Directors, and thereafter, then the investigator approached the teachers.

The research design for the study was descriptive. Data was collected from 30 schools located in Chandigarh UT. A sample of 200 teachers from public and private schools of Chandigarh were chosen for the study. Purposive sampling was used to gather the data. Data was gathered by the researcher from teachers at private special education schools and institutions as well as from government special education facilities.

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The study is based on quantitative data and applied descriptive methods. Role conflict level was measured by arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and inferential statistics (T-test), and testing for hypothesis (P-test). Subsequently, the data collected was analyzed and processed through the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The research investigator used the teachers' role conflict scale, which comprised of various dimensions. Role conflict, gender, work conflict, and teaching experience are measured using the arithmetic mean, standard deviation, inferential statistics (T-test), and hypothesis testing (P-test). The data collection was analyzed and processed through the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The primary data had been collected from special schools such as Prayas Rehabilitation Center for Special Children, Government Rehabilitation Institute for Intellectual Disabilities (GRIID), Vatika High School for Deaf & Dumb, IIAHP (Autism Treatment Centre), Sorem School (Society for Rehabilitation Mentally Challenged), and some government schools. The researcher gathered information from 100 special education teachers spread all over schools, located in Chandigarh. The private schools included Ankur School, D.A.V Model School, Shivalik Public School, The Tribune School, Doon International School, D.A.V Public School, Ishwar Singh Dev Samaj Senior Secondary School, Sri Guru Harkrishna Model, and Saint Xavier's School, Moti Ram Arya School, etc.

Variables: The researcher has used two types of variables. The school teachers were independent variables, and role conflict dimensions, like family conflict, work conflict, are dependent variables.

Tools: Madhu Gupta and Indu Nain constructed, standardized, and validated teacher's role conflict scale. It consisted of 28 items related to dimensions such as Family Conflict, Work Conflict, Professional Growth Conflict, Self-conflict, Health Conflict, and Social Conflict, etc. A five-point scale is used with responses such as Always, Frequently, Rarely, Never, and Not Applicable, with corresponding scores of 4,3,2,1,0, respectively.

Reliability of the Scale: The scale's reliability was computed using the test-retest method with N=100 and a gap of 4 weeks. The test-retest reliability for various dimensions varies from .64 to .77**.**

Validity of the Scale: The unanimity of 20 judges about the items was taken as an indicator of the face validity of the scale. For content validity, the dimensions were administered to twenty experts to assess the relevance of the items to the category to which they belonged. Items having 80% of agreement were selected. The inter-dimensional coefficients of the scale are significantly high. The correlation coefficients between the dimensions of TRCS ranged from .523 to .797.

Limitations of the Study

Despite the significance of the findings, the study is subject to the following limitations:

- Sample Size: The study included a sample of 200 special education teachers.
- Time Constraints: The data was obtained within six months, which may have contributed to the limited options for longitudinal analysis.
- Participants: The study only included special education teachers as participants. As a result, the findings may not apply to general education teachers.

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- Education Levels Covered: The study focused on instructors teaching at the preparatory to middle school levels.
- Sampling Method: The participants were chosen through a purposive sampling technique.

Interpretations of Results

Table 1 Comparison of Role Conflict between Male and Female Special Education Teachers in Schools

	Gender	N	M	SD	t-value	p- value	Remarks
Role Conflict	Male teachers	62	12.4084	7.19615	-.615	.539	Not significant
	Female teachers	138	12.7174	7.08446	-.611	.542	

As per the above Table No. 1, female special education teachers are more than male teachers. The statistical analysis depicts the differences between the male and female special education teachers in schools. The obtained value of the mean of the male special educator teachers is 12.4084, and the female special educators' mean value is 12.7174; it is a statistically minor difference**,** which suggests that both male and female special educators experienced nearly the same average level of role conflict. In practical terms, gender does not appear to significantly influence the perceived role conflict among special education teachers in the sample under study. Both groups faced similar pressures, expectations, and possible role-related stressors in their work environments. The standard deviation is 7.19615 of male teachers and the female special educators' standard deviation value is 7.08446. It implies that both groups revealed a moderate and nearly equal range of role conflict. Therefore, the p-value is .539. The null hypothesis is rejected as the p-value of .539 is higher than the significance level of 0.05. This implies that there is no significant difference observed between male and female teachers in special schools. Both types of teachers faced the same levels of role conflict.

Table 2 Comparison of Role Conflict between Public Special Education and Private Special Education Teachers

	M	SD	t-value	p-value	Remarks
Public Special Educators (100)	56.0000	14.43481	1.458	.146	Not Significant
Private Special Educators (100)	53.0500	14.18306			

Table No. 2 depicts that in group statistics analysis, the role conflict between the Public Special Educator Teachers and Private Special Educator Teachers in school has been analysed. The obtained value of the mean of public special Educators is 56.0000 and the private special educators' mean value is 53.0500, which indicates that the public-sector special educators are experiencing slightly higher pressures or conflicting demands in their roles. The standard deviation of public special educators' value is 14.43481, or the private special educators' value is 14.18306. It was observed that the degree to which individual teachers' experiences deviate from their group's average is effectively the same, indicating comparable diversity of experience

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within each sector. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted as the p-value of .146 is greater than the significance level of 0.05. It implies that there is no significant difference in role conflict between the public and private special education teachers in schools. Both school teachers are experiencing the same intensity of role conflict.

Table 3 N, Mean, Standard Deviation, and p-value of Work Conflict between Public and Private School Special Educators Teachers

	School Type	N	M	SD	t-value	Sign (2-tailed)
Work Conflict	Public Educators	100	7.2600	2.08796	-4.237	.000
	Private Educators	100	9.2000	2.47436		

It is evident from the Table No. 3 that the work conflict of public teachers mean value is 7.2600 and the work conflict of private school teachers mean value is 9.2000. It revealed that private educators experienced a higher level of work conflict on an average compared to public educators. Work conflict can include disagreements with colleagues, lack of support, or difficulty balancing responsibilities. The standard deviation of work conflict in public teachers is 2.08796 and in private teachers is 2.47436. It indicates greater diversity in work conflict levels among private school teachers. This indicates that some private school teachers face a lot of friction, while others don't. The value of "t" scores of the two groups between both school teachers is -4.237, therefore, the p-value of both schools' teachers is .000, which is lower than 0.05. Therefore, it shows that there is a significant difference between the work conflict of teachers in public and private schools. Hence, the mean value of private school teachers is higher than government school teachers. This means that private teachers performed more duties than public school teachers.

Table 4 Table indicating the N, Mean, Standard Deviation, and p-value of Family Conflict between Government teachers and Private teachers

	School Type	N	M	SD	t-value	Sign (2-tailed)
Family Conflict	Government	100	15.4200	74.781	12.800	.000
	Private	100	10.8600	35.051		

It is evident from the above table 4 that the family conflict of government teachers is 15.4200 and the family conflict of private school teachers is 10.8600. It was observed that public school teachers reported higher family conflict than private school teachers. The standard deviation of family conflict in government teachers was 74.781 and in private teachers it was 35.051. The value of "t" scores of the two groups between both school teachers is 12.800, which is higher than the table value at 0.05 level (1.96). Therefore, the p-value of both schools' teachers is .000 which is lower than 0.05. It implies that there is a significant difference between the family conflict of teachers in government and private schools. The results revealed that government teachers faced more family conflict than private teachers because government school teachers have to perform many duties like election duties, census duties, miscellaneous, etc.

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The Main Findings of the Study:

1. It means that there is no significant difference in role conflict between male teachers and female teachers in public special teachers and private special education teachers in schools.
2. It means that there is no significant difference in role conflict between public special education and private special education teachers.
3. It means there is a significant difference in family conflict between public special education teachers and private special education teachers.
4. It means there is a significant difference in work conflict between public special education teachers and private special education teachers.

Suggestions: The suggestions of the study are as follows:

1. Clarity of Role in Professional Development

Regular workshops and training should be conducted by school administrators, both in public and private institutions, to help special education teachers fully comprehend their duties and responsibilities. This can improve job satisfaction and lessen role conflict.

2. Regularly Evaluate the Well-Being of Teachers

Regular evaluations should be used by schools to track special education teachers' stress levels, role clarity, and job satisfaction. The results should then be used to guide administrative choice.

3. Acknowledge and Honour Good Instructors

Programs for recognition can raise spirits in both industries. It is important to recognise and recognise special education instructors who successfully carry out their responsibilities and support inclusive education.

4. Promote Public School Support System

Owing to bureaucratic restrictions and larger student- teacher ratios, role and job conflict may be more noticeable in public schools. Therefore, upgrading support systems (e.g., hiring assistants, cutting paperwork) could reduce stress and enhance the learning environment.

Conclusion

The findings of the study, that there is no significant difference between special education teachers in private and government schools. And no significant difference was observed between male and female teachers. Both teachers faced the same level of role conflict in the schools. Moreover, both school teachers were facing work conflict and family conflict of teachers. Teachers have to perform various roles at home, workplace, and in society, etc. As a consequence of role conflict, teachers are not able to concentrate on their career, academic growth, and students' overall development, etc. Government authorities should take some initiatives to lessen their role conflict such as creating opportunities for teachers to discuss their roles, responsibilities, and concerns, etc. (Saif, 2013).

To ensure that the roles and responsibilities of teachers are well-defined and communicated in a proper way. Moreover, it will provide ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance their

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skills adapt to evolving educational practices, and promote collaboration among teachers, allowing them to work together on curriculum development, instructional strategies, and classroom management, etc. School heads should organize time-to-time workshops, capacity-building programs, meditation, and yoga classes, and impart skill-enhancement classes to improve further their teaching skills. In a nutshell, teachers can play their roles more enthusiastically.

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