

Research Paper

Cultural Barriers to the Implementation of Individualized Education Programs for Children with Intellectual Disabilities: Perspectives of Parents and Special Educators

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ABSTRACT

The successful implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) is fundamental to ensuring quality education for children with Intellectual Disabilities (ID). Although educational policies advocate individualized planning and collaborative decision-making, cultural factors may influence the effective implementation of IEPs. The present study examined cultural barriers affecting the implementation of IEPs from the perspectives of parents and special educators. A descriptive survey design was employed. The study included a sample of 60 respondents comprising 30 parents of children with Intellectual Disabilities and 30 special educators selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a self-structured questionnaire comprising 30 dichotomous (Yes/No) items assessing cultural beliefs, family attitudes, social stigma, communication, and awareness related to IEP implementation. Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Independent Samples *t*-test) were used for data analysis. The findings indicated that respondents consistently perceived cultural beliefs, limited awareness of IEP procedures, communication barriers, and social stigma as important barriers to the effective implementation of Individualized Education Programs. No statistically significant differences were observed in the perceptions of parents and special educators, male and female respondents, or urban and rural respondents. The study highlights the need to strengthen culturally responsive educational practices, family-school collaboration, parental awareness, and the professional development of special educators to support effective IEP implementation. The findings may assist policymakers, school administrators, teacher educators, and special educators in promoting inclusive educational practices that address cultural diversity and enhance educational outcomes for children with Intellectual Disabilities.

Keywords: *Individualized Education Program, Intellectual Disability, Inclusive Education, Cultural Barriers, Family-School Collaboration, Parents, Special Educators*

Inclusive education has emerged as an important approach for ensuring equitable access, participation, and meaningful learning opportunities for all learners, including children with disabilities. It is based on the principle that educational systems should respond to

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Received: August 05, 2026; Revision Received: September 22, 2026; Accepted: September 28, 2026

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learner diversity rather than requiring learners to adjust to rigid educational structures. The Salamanca Statement emphasized the responsibility of regular schools to accommodate children with diverse educational needs and identified inclusive schooling as an important means of reducing discrimination and promoting participation (UNESCO, 1994). This rights-based approach was further strengthened by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which recognized the right of persons with disabilities to inclusive education without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity (United Nations, 2006). In India, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, and the National Education Policy 2020 have similarly emphasized inclusive education, reasonable accommodation, equitable access, and appropriate educational support for learners with disabilities (Government of India, 2016; Ministry of Education, 2020).

Children with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) constitute a group of learners who may require substantial individualized educational support. Intellectual disability is characterized by limitations in intellectual functioning as well as adaptive behavior involving conceptual, social, and practical skills (Schalock et al., 2021). Such limitations may influence academic learning, communication, problem-solving, social interaction, self-care, and independent functioning. However, contemporary perspectives emphasize that educational outcomes should not be determined solely by an individual's limitations; rather, appropriate supports and opportunities should be provided to enable meaningful participation and development (Schalock et al., 2021). Consequently, educational programs for children with intellectual disabilities need to consider individual strengths, abilities, interests, learning characteristics, and support requirements.

Individualized educational planning represents an important mechanism for addressing these diverse learning needs. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) provides a systematic framework for identifying a learner's present level of performance, establishing individualized educational goals, selecting appropriate instructional strategies and accommodations, providing necessary support services, and monitoring progress over time. Individualized planning enables educational interventions to be aligned with the abilities and developmental needs of individual learners rather than relying exclusively on standardized instructional expectations. Effective inclusion similarly requires appropriate accommodations, flexible teaching approaches, curriculum adaptation, and individualized support to facilitate the participation of students with disabilities in educational activities (Salend & Garrick Duhaney, 1999).

The effectiveness of an IEP, however, depends considerably on collaboration among the individuals involved in the child's education. Parents and special educators are particularly important stakeholders in this process. Parents possess valuable knowledge about their child's strengths, preferences, behavior, communication, daily functioning, and support needs, whereas special educators contribute professional expertise related to assessment, educational planning, instructional adaptation, intervention, and progress monitoring. Family involvement in educational planning can contribute to more responsive services and improved educational experiences for children with disabilities (Turnbull & Turnbull, 2001). Similarly, effective family–professional partnerships are characterized by communication, respect, trust, commitment, equality, and shared decision-making (Blue-Banning et al., 2004).

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Meaningful parental participation also depends upon the quality of relationships established between families and educational professionals. Parents are more likely to participate constructively when communication is respectful, information is shared clearly, and their perspectives are valued during educational decision-making (Stoner et al., 2005). Family-centered approaches, therefore, recognize parents not merely as recipients of professional recommendations but as active partners whose knowledge and priorities should contribute to educational planning (Rosenbaum et al., 1998). Such collaboration becomes particularly important when educational interventions require consistent reinforcement in both home and school environments.

Despite the recognized importance of collaborative educational planning, the implementation of individualized education programs may be influenced by social and cultural factors. Social and cultural factors may influence the implementation of individualized education programs, despite the recognized importance of collaborative educational planning. Social and cultural factors. Social and cultural factors. Social and cultural factors. Culture shapes beliefs, values, expectations, communication patterns, family roles, and perceptions regarding disability and education. Families belonging to different cultural backgrounds may consequently understand disability, educational intervention, professional authority, and parental participation in different ways. Harry and Kalyanpur (1994) emphasized that cultural beliefs and family values need to be considered when professionals make educational decisions and provide services to children with disabilities. Harry (2008) similarly highlighted the importance of understanding cultural diversity in special education and recognizing that families may differ in their perceptions of disability, educational expectations, and support needs.

Cultural beliefs surrounding disability can influence whether families seek educational support, accept professional recommendations, participate in educational planning, or communicate openly about their child's needs. In some cultural contexts, disability may be interpreted through traditional, religious, social, or familial beliefs rather than solely through educational or developmental perspectives. Such differences do not necessarily constitute barriers in themselves; however, when family perspectives and professional practices are not adequately understood or reconciled, they may create difficulties in communication, trust, participation, and collaborative decision-making (Harry and Kalyanpur, 1994).

Social stigma and stereotypes concerning intellectual disability may further affect educational participation. Negative perceptions regarding the abilities and future potential of children with disabilities can result in reduced expectations, social exclusion, and fewer opportunities for participation. Earlier work on normalization and social inclusion emphasized the importance of creating opportunities for individuals with intellectual disabilities to experience socially valued roles, dignity, participation, and conditions of life comparable to those available to other members of society (Nirje, 1969; Wolfensberger, 1972). Addressing negative attitudes and social misconceptions, therefore, remains important for creating supportive educational environments for children with intellectual disabilities.

Communication represents another critical dimension of family–school collaboration. Differences in language, educational terminology, communication styles, and understanding of school procedures can make it difficult for some parents to participate meaningfully in educational planning. Cheatham et al. (2011) emphasized that communication between

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professionals and culturally and linguistically diverse family's needs to be clear, respectful, and culturally responsive. Similarly, parental participation in special education decision-making may be influenced by access to information, understanding of educational procedures, and opportunities to engage meaningfully with educational professionals (Trainor, 2010).

Parental knowledge and awareness also influence participation in educational planning. Parents who understand educational services, procedures, and their child's educational rights may be better positioned to communicate their concerns and advocate for appropriate support. Burke (2013) highlighted the importance of parental advocacy and suggested that knowledge and access to information can strengthen parents' capacity to participate in decisions concerning services for their children with disabilities. Thus, limited awareness combined with cultural and communication barriers may restrict meaningful parental involvement in the IEP process.

These issues acquire particular significance within the Indian context because of the country's substantial linguistic, social, and cultural diversity. Families may differ in their beliefs about disability, expectations regarding children's educational development, preferred forms of communication, family roles, and willingness or opportunity to participate in school-based decision-making. Although Indian policy frameworks promote inclusive and equitable educational opportunities (Government of India, 2016; Ministry of Education, 2020), successful implementation at the practical level also requires sensitivity toward the social and cultural contexts in which children and their families live.

Existing literature has established the importance of family involvement, family–professional partnerships, parental advocacy, culturally responsive communication, and inclusive educational practices (Blue-Banning et al., 2004; Burke, 2013; Cheatham et al., 2011; Stoner et al., 2005). Nevertheless, there remains a need to examine cultural barriers specifically in relation to the implementation of individualized education programs for children with intellectual disabilities and to understand these barriers simultaneously from the perspectives of the two stakeholders who are directly involved in educational planning—parents and special educators.

Against this background, the present study, entitled “Cultural Barriers to the Implementation of Individualized Education Programs for Children with Intellectual Disabilities: Perspectives of Parents and Special Educators,” seeks to identify cultural barriers influencing IEP implementation and examine how parents and special educators perceive these barriers. By considering the perspectives of both stakeholder groups, the study aims to contribute to the development of culturally responsive practices, stronger family–school partnerships, improved communication, and more effective implementation of individualized educational interventions for children with intellectual disabilities.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) has received considerable attention in the fields of special and inclusive education because of its importance in providing individualized educational support to children with disabilities. Existing literature highlights that successful IEP implementation depends on collaborative planning, active parental involvement, culturally responsive educational practices, and effective communication between families and educational professionals.

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Individualized Education Programs and Inclusive Education

The concept of individualized educational planning developed from the recognition that children with disabilities require educational interventions tailored to their unique strengths, needs, and learning characteristics. Nirje (1969) introduced the principle of normalization, emphasizing that individuals with disabilities should have opportunities to participate in ordinary educational and community environments. Expanding this perspective, Wolfensberger (1972) argued that socially valued roles and inclusive educational experiences enhance the quality of life and social participation of persons with disabilities.

Research on inclusive education further demonstrates that individualized planning contributes significantly to academic achievement and social participation. Salend and Garrick Duhaney (1999) reported that effective inclusion requires curriculum adaptation, instructional flexibility, collaborative teaching, and individualized support services. These findings suggest that IEPs are not merely administrative documents but practical frameworks that guide individualized instruction and promote meaningful participation of children with disabilities in educational settings.

Family–School Collaboration in IEP Implementation

Family participation has consistently been recognized as one of the strongest predictors of successful IEP implementation. Turnbull and Turnbull (2001) emphasized that parents should be viewed as equal partners in educational planning because they possess valuable knowledge regarding their children's developmental needs, strengths, and everyday experiences. Their study concluded that collaborative decision-making improves educational planning and enhances children's developmental outcomes.

Similarly, Blue-Banning et al. (2004) identified trust, respect, effective communication, equality, commitment, and shared decision-making as essential characteristics of successful family–professional partnerships. Stoner et al. (2005) further reported that parents value educational professionals who communicate openly, provide timely information, and actively involve families in educational decision-making. Rosenbaum et al. (1998) reinforced these findings by demonstrating that family-centered educational practices improve parental satisfaction and contribute to better educational and developmental outcomes for children with disabilities.

These studies collectively indicate that effective implementation of individualized education programs depends upon collaborative relationships in which families actively participate throughout assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation.

Cultural Influences on Educational Planning

Culture significantly influences educational beliefs, parental expectations, communication patterns, and perceptions of disability. Harry and Kalyanpur (1994) highlighted that educational planning should acknowledge family beliefs, cultural values, and social expectations because these factors directly influence parental participation in educational decision-making. Failure to recognize cultural diversity may reduce communication, trust, and collaboration between educators and families.

Harry (2008) similarly argued that culturally diverse families often possess different understandings of disability, educational goals, and parental responsibilities. The study emphasized that culturally responsive educational practices improve relationships between

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schools and families while supporting equitable educational opportunities for children with disabilities.

Cheatham et al. (2011) found that language differences and culturally inappropriate communication frequently limit meaningful parental participation in special education planning. Their findings emphasized that educational professionals should adopt culturally sensitive communication strategies to ensure that families understand educational procedures and actively contribute to decision-making.

These studies collectively suggest that cultural responsiveness is essential for strengthening family–school collaboration and improving the effectiveness of IEP implementation.

Parental Advocacy and Educational Participation

Parental knowledge and awareness influence the extent to which families participate in educational planning and advocate for appropriate services. Trainor (2010) reported that family engagement. Trainor (2010) found that access to educational information, understanding of educational policies, and opportunities to participate in school decision-making affect family engagement. This engagement is influenced by access to educational information, understanding of educational policies, and opportunities to participate in school decision-making. Parents who possess adequate knowledge of educational procedures are more likely to contribute meaningfully to the development and implementation of individualized education programs.

Burke (2013) further demonstrated that parental advocacy enables families to secure appropriate educational services and participate more effectively in decision-making processes. These findings emphasize that empowering families through information, advocacy, and collaborative partnerships strengthens the implementation of individualized education programs and improves educational outcomes for children with disabilities.

Research Gap

The available literature demonstrates that successful implementation of individualized education programs depends on family–school collaboration, parental participation, effective communication, and culturally responsive educational practices. Previous studies have extensively examined inclusive education, family-centred services, parental involvement, and professional collaboration in special education (Blue-Banning et al., 2004; Burke, 2013; Turnbull & Turnbull, 2001).

However, relatively limited empirical research has specifically examined cultural barriers influencing the implementation of individualized education programs for children with intellectual disabilities, particularly within the Indian context. Furthermore, few studies have simultaneously explored the perspectives of both parents and special educators regarding these cultural barriers. Existing research has generally focused on family participation or professional practices independently rather than examining how cultural beliefs, social stigma, language differences, family expectations, communication barriers, and awareness collectively influence collaborative educational planning.

Therefore, the present study addresses this gap by examining cultural barriers affecting the implementation of individualized education programs for children with intellectual disabilities from the perspectives of both parents and special educators. The study is

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expected to contribute to the development of culturally responsive educational practices, strengthen family–school partnerships, and provide evidence for improving individualized educational planning in inclusive and special education settings.

Objectives of the Study

The present study was undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To compare the perceptions of parents and special educators regarding cultural barriers affecting the implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for children with Intellectual Disabilities.
2. To compare the perceptions of male and female respondents regarding cultural barriers affecting the implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for children with Intellectual Disabilities.
3. To compare the perceptions of rural and urban respondents regarding cultural barriers affecting the implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for children with Intellectual Disabilities.

Hypotheses of the Study

The following null hypotheses were formulated for the present study:

1. There is no significant difference between the perceptions of parents and special educators regarding cultural barriers affecting the implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for children with Intellectual Disabilities.
2. There is no significant difference between the perceptions of male and female respondents regarding cultural barriers affecting the implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for children with Intellectual Disabilities.
3. There is no significant difference between the perceptions of rural and urban respondents regarding cultural barriers affecting the implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for children with Intellectual Disabilities.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The present study adopted a descriptive survey design to examine the cultural barriers affecting the implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for children with intellectual disabilities (ID). The descriptive survey method was considered appropriate as it facilitates the collection and analysis of data regarding the perceptions of parents and special educators of cultural factors that influence IEP implementation.

Participants

The study was conducted on a sample of 60 respondents, comprising 30 parents of children with intellectual disabilities and 30 special educators who work with these children. Participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in developing and implementing individualised education programmes.

Research Instrument

The Cultural Barriers to IEP Implementation Scale (CBIIS) consisted of 30 self-structured dichotomous (Yes/No) items distributed across five domains: (i) Cultural Beliefs regarding Intellectual Disability, (ii) Family Attitudes and Expectations, (iii) Social Stigma and Community Practices, (iv) Communication and Collaboration, and (v) Awareness and Knowledge regarding Individualized Education Programs. Higher total scores indicated greater perceived cultural barriers to IEP implementation.

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The questionnaire included five domains:

- Cultural beliefs regarding Intellectual Disability
- Family attitudes and expectations
- Social stigma and community practices
- Communication and collaboration
- Awareness and knowledge regarding Individualized Education Programs

Responses were recorded using a dichotomous response format, with respondents selecting either “Yes” or “No” for each statement. The questionnaire comprised 30 items, and higher total scores indicated greater perceived cultural barriers to the implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

Each “Yes” response was assigned a score of 1, and each “No” response was assigned a score of 0. The total score ranged from 0 to 30, with higher scores indicating greater perceived cultural barriers to IEP implementation.

Validity and Reliability

The draft questionnaire was submitted to experts in special education and educational research to establish content validity. Based on their suggestions, necessary modifications were incorporated to improve the clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the items.

The reliability of the instrument was established through a pilot study using Cronbach's alpha. The obtained reliability coefficient was 0.877, indicating satisfactory internal consistency and confirming that the instrument was reliable for collecting data in the present study.

Data Collection Procedure

Prior permission was obtained from the concerned educational institutions before data collection. The questionnaire was administered to parents and special educators using Google Forms. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and informed consent was obtained before data collection. Confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents were maintained throughout the study.

Data Analysis

The collected data were coded and analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were used to summarise the demographic characteristics and response patterns. Inferential statistics comprising the Independent Samples *t*-test were employed to examine differences in perceptions among respondent groups. Statistical significance was tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

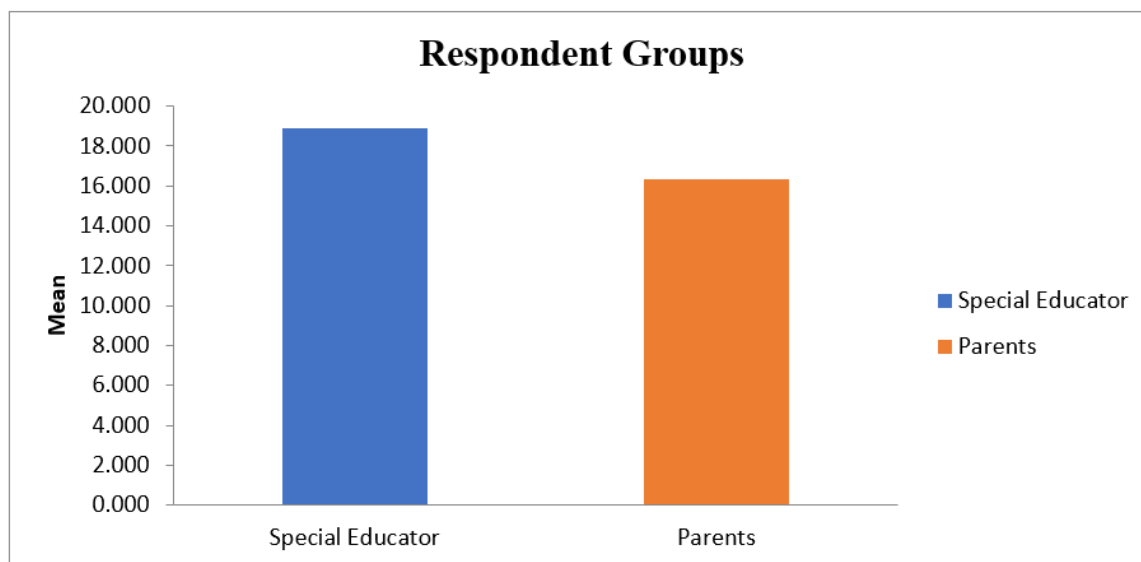
The hypotheses formulated for the study were tested using the Independent Samples *t*-test at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings are presented below.

Hypothesis 1: Comparison between Parents and Special Educators

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Table 1. Comparison of Perceptions of Parents and Special Educators Regarding Cultural Barriers to IEP Implementation

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	p-value
Special Educator	30	18.900	8.624	1.231	.223
Parents	30	16.367	7.256		



The findings indicate that special educators ($M = 18.90$, $SD = 8.62$) reported slightly higher perceptions of cultural barriers than parents ($M = 16.37$, $SD = 7.26$). However, the difference was not statistically significant ($t = 1.231$, $p = .223$). Therefore, H_{01} was not rejected.

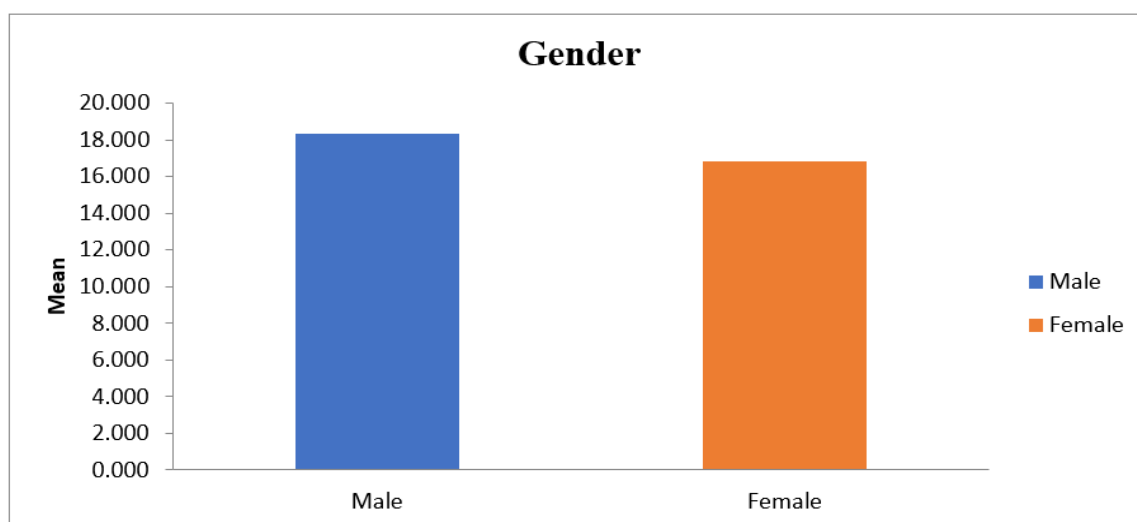
The findings suggest that both parents and special educators perceive similar cultural challenges in implementing IEPs. This agreement indicates that issues related to cultural beliefs, family attitudes, social stigma, communication, and awareness of IEPs are commonly recognized by both stakeholder groups. The result is consistent with previous studies emphasizing collaborative family–school partnerships and shared responsibility in special education (Blue-Banning et al., 2004; Turnbull & Turnbull, 2001).

Hypothesis 2: Comparison between Male and Female Respondents

Table 2. Comparison of Perceptions of Male and Female Respondents Regarding Cultural Barriers to IEP Implementation

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	p-value
Male	31	18.355	8.612	.719	.475
Female	29	16.862	7.371		

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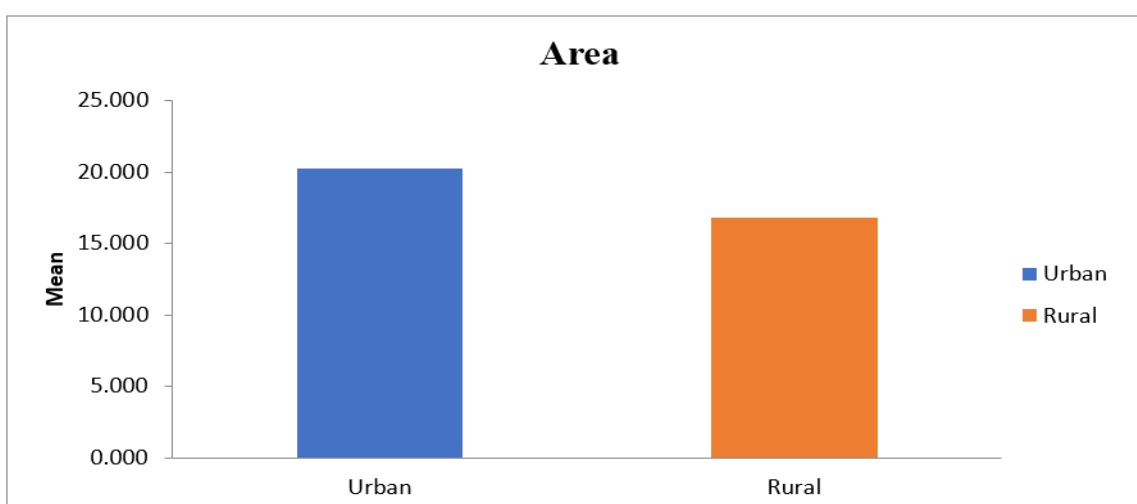
Male respondents obtained a marginally higher mean score than female respondents. However, the difference was not statistically significant ($t = 0.719, p = .475$). Therefore, H_{02} was not rejected.

The findings indicate that gender does not significantly influence perceptions regarding cultural barriers affecting the implementation of IEPs. Both male and female respondents demonstrated a comparable understanding of issues related to disability beliefs, communication barriers, parental participation, and awareness of IEPs. These findings suggest that interventions designed to improve IEP implementation should address all stakeholders irrespective of gender.

Hypothesis 3: Comparison between Urban and Rural Respondents

Table 3. Comparison of Perceptions of Urban and Rural Respondents Regarding Cultural Barriers to IEP Implementation

Area	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	p-value
Urban	14	20.286	7.640	1.428	.159
Rural	46	16.826	8.017		



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Urban respondents reported a relatively higher mean perception score than rural respondents. However, the obtained difference was not statistically significant ($t = 1.428$, $p = .159$). Therefore, H_{03} was not rejected.

The findings indicate that area of residence does not significantly influence respondents' perceptions of cultural barriers affecting IEP implementation. Although educational and social contexts may differ across geographical locations, respondents from both rural and urban settings recognized similar challenges related to cultural beliefs, family expectations, social stigma, communication, and awareness of IEPs. These findings imply that culturally responsive interventions should be implemented across both urban and rural educational settings.

Summary of Findings

The results revealed no statistically significant differences in perceptions of cultural barriers among parents and special educators, male and female respondents, or urban and rural respondents. Although slight variations in mean scores were observed, respondents across all groups demonstrated a similar understanding of the cultural challenges affecting the implementation of individualized education programs for children with intellectual disabilities. These findings underscore that cultural barrier, including beliefs about disability, family attitudes, social stigma, communication difficulties, and limited awareness of IEPs, are recognized consistently across different stakeholder groups and demographic characteristics.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the cultural barriers affecting the implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for children with intellectual disabilities from the perspectives of parents and special educators. The findings indicate that cultural beliefs regarding disability, social stigma, communication barriers, family attitudes, and limited awareness of IEPs continue to influence the effective implementation of individualized educational planning. Although these factors were recognized by the respondents, the statistical analysis revealed no significant differences in perceptions between parents and special educators, male and female respondents, or rural and urban respondents.

The absence of significant group differences indicates that cultural barriers are commonly experienced across various stakeholder groups and demographic backgrounds. The absence of significant group differences indicates that various stakeholder groups and demographic backgrounds commonly experience cultural barriers. across various stakeholder groups and demographic backgrounds. The absence of significant group differences suggests that various stakeholder groups and demographic backgrounds commonly experience cultural barriers. across various stakeholder groups and demographic backgrounds. The absence of significant group differences indicates that various stakeholder groups and demographic backgrounds commonly experience cultural barriers. across different stakeholder groups and demographic backgrounds. This shared understanding suggests comprehensive and collaborative efforts to strengthen IEP implementation rather than designing separate interventions for specific groups. Building culturally responsive educational environments requires greater awareness of disability, effective communication between schools and families, and active participation of parents throughout the educational planning process.

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The study further emphasizes that successful implementation of IEPs depends not only on educational policies but also on meaningful family–school partnerships. Parents and special educators should work collaboratively to identify children's individual strengths, establish realistic educational goals, monitor progress, and address cultural factors that may hinder participation in the IEP process. Schools should encourage inclusive practices that respect cultural diversity and recognize the experiences of families from different social and linguistic backgrounds.

The findings also reinforce the importance of professional development for special educators in culturally responsive teaching and communication. Training programs should equip educators with the knowledge and skills required to work effectively with culturally diverse families, facilitate shared decision-making, and promote inclusive educational practices. At the same time, awareness programs for parents can enhance their understanding of IEP procedures, educational rights, and the value of active participation in their children's education.

Overall, the study contributes to the growing body of literature on inclusive and special education by highlighting the influence of cultural factors on IEP implementation. The findings provide useful evidence for educators, school administrators, policymakers, and researchers in developing strategies that strengthen family–school collaboration, reduce cultural barriers, and improve educational outcomes for children with intellectual disabilities.

Educational Implications

- Schools should adopt culturally responsive educational practices that respect the diverse cultural beliefs, values, languages, and traditions of families to facilitate effective implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).
- Parent–school collaboration should have regular meetings, open communication, and shared decision-making. It should strengthen parent–school collaboration through regular meetings, open communication, and shared decision-making to promote active parental participation in IEP planning and implementation.
- Special educators should receive continuous professional development on culturally responsive pedagogy, family engagement, and effective communication strategies for working with culturally diverse families.
- Parent awareness programs should be organized to enhance understanding of intellectual disabilities, the purpose of IEPs, and the importance of parental involvement in supporting children's educational progress.
- School administrators should establish structured mechanisms for regular review and monitoring of IEPs, ensuring collaboration among parents, special educators, and other professionals.
- Inclusive schools should promote community awareness initiatives to reduce stigma and misconceptions associated with intellectual disabilities and encourage positive attitudes toward inclusive education.
- Educational policymakers should formulate and implement policies that support culturally responsive inclusive education, strengthen family–school partnerships, and ensure adequate resources for effective IEP implementation.
- The findings of the study may serve as a useful reference for teacher educators, researchers, and policymakers in designing interventions that improve culturally

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responsive educational planning and enhance educational outcomes for children with intellectual disabilities.

Limitations of the Study

- The study was limited to 60 respondents, comprising 30 parents of children with Intellectual Disabilities and 30 special educators; therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to all stakeholders.
- The study was confined to a selected geographical area, which may limit the wider applicability of the findings.
- Only parents and special educators were included in the study. The perspectives of general educators, school administrators, therapists, and other professionals involved in IEP implementation were not examined.
- The study focused exclusively on children with Intellectual Disabilities and did not include other disability categories.
- Data were collected using a self-structured questionnaire administered through Google Forms. The findings are based on respondents' self-reported perceptions, which may be influenced by individual experiences and response bias.
- The study examined only cultural barriers affecting IEP implementation. Other factors, such as institutional support, teacher competency, availability of resources, and policy implementation, were beyond the scope of the study.

Future Research Directions

- Future studies may be conducted with larger and more diverse samples from different states and regions of India to improve the generalizability of the findings.
- Similar research may be undertaken by including other stakeholders, such as general educators, school administrators, therapists, and psychologists, to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the cultural barriers affecting IEP implementation.
- Comparative studies may be conducted across different disability categories, including Autism Spectrum Disorder, Hearing Impairment, Visual Impairment, and Multiple Disabilities, to examine whether cultural barriers vary across disability groups.
- Future researchers may employ mixed-methods or qualitative research designs, such as interviews, focus group discussions, and case studies, to gain deeper insights into the experiences of parents and educators regarding IEP implementation.
- Longitudinal studies may be undertaken to examine the long-term impact of culturally responsive educational practices on the successful implementation of Individualized Education Programs and the educational outcomes of children with Intellectual Disabilities.
- Experimental and intervention-based studies may be designed to evaluate the effectiveness of parent training programmes, teacher professional development, and culturally responsive communication strategies in improving family–school collaboration and IEP implementation.
- Future research may explore the influence of socio-economic status, educational background, digital literacy, and institutional support on parental participation and the implementation of Individualized Education Programs.
- Comparative studies between government and private schools, as well as urban and rural educational settings, may provide further evidence for developing context-specific strategies to strengthen culturally responsive IEP implementation.

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Acknowledgment

The author(s) appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Pal, N.K. & Kumar, M. (2026). Cultural Barriers to the Implementation of Individualized Education Programs for Children with Intellectual Disabilities: Perspectives of Parents and Special Educators. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 14(3), 2505-2519. DIP:18.01.228.20261403, DOI:10.25215/1403.228