



Inclusive Education in 21st Century India

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ABSTRACT

Inclusive education means that all students attend and are welcomed by their neighbourhood school in age appropriate, regular classes and are supported to learn, contribute and participate in all aspects of the life of the school. Decroly founded a school for children with mild disabilities (behavioural disorders, learning disabilities, light mental retardations). He gradually invented his pedagogy. His responsibility of the school to manage teaching in such a way that the needs of all the children are met...An inclusive curriculum recognizes the need for the schools to organized with the individual differences of students in the mind and adopt flexibility to the enable all students to achieve their goals. In 1947, Govt. of India began an imitative in the education and rehabilitate of persons with disabilities. Inclusive education denotes that all children irrespective of their strengths and weaknesses will be part of the mainstream education. It is clear that education policy in India has gradually increased the focus on children and adults with special needs and that inclusive education in regular schools has become. The present paper tries to highlight the scenario of inclusive education in India and the role of teachers in inclusive setting.

Key words: Inclusive education, Mild disorder, Behavioural disorder

INTRODUCTION

Any child may experience a special need during the course of education years (UNESCO). Some children feel 'left outs' and never enter school or enter only for a few years and as repeaters, become 'drop outs' or more correctly 'pushed-outs' without their needs having been met. These children are a vivid illustration of the failure of school to teach rather than the pupils' failure to learn. A school system emphasizing Education for All Should ensure the right of all children to a meaningful education based on individual needs and abilities (Ture Johnson 2002).

Meaning of Inclusive Education

Inclusive education is defined as a learning environment that promotes the full personal, academic and professional development of all learners irrespective of race, class, colour, gender, disability, sexual preferences, learning styles and language.

In other words Inclusive column means all children in the some classroom, in the same schools. It means real learning opportunities for groups who have traditionally been excluded not only children with disabilities, but speakers of minority language too.

Need and importance

Inclusive education is very important because all children are able to be part of their community and develop a sense of belonging and become better prepare for life in the community as children and adults. It provides better opportunity for learning. There have been efforts internationally to include children with disabilities in the educational mainstream. We have learned that inclusive education is a better way to help all students succeed. Researches show that more students learn and perform better when exposed to the richness of the general education curriculum.

Differentiated instruction

All students learn differently and their individual needs should be taken care of. This is more so important for students with disabilities. Teachers meet everyone's needs by presenting lessons in different ways and using universal Design for Learning (UDL). One key teaching strategy is to break students into small groups. By using small groups, teaching can be tailored to the way each student learns best. This is known as differentiated instruction.

Reduced Stigma

People with disabilities have been stigmatized throughout history. In many culture, disability has been associated with curses, disease, dependance and helplessness. Stereotyping- people with disabilities may be presumed to be helpless, unable to care for themselves, or unable to make their own decisions. Inclusive in schools goes a long way in helping remove the negative stigma in society towards disabled people.



(Building self esteem and self worth

Self - esteem is a term used to describe how we view ourselves. Attending classroom settings that depict the true nature of the similarities and differences that exist in the world helps children appreciate diversity. It is essential that a child's education her/him to the reality of the world out there beyond the walls of just an academic environment. Playing as learning alongside with other children of different cultures as abilities assist children to grow in understanding people that are unique in skills due to physical, social or their challenges. The culture of respect for one another also grows when children are allowed to play with one another without segregation.

Better Academic performance

Research has shown that students together in the classroom improve academic excellence. Students set higher expectations for themselves due to the presence of others with diverse abilities. Students with disabilities challenge themselves to perform optimally like their classmate, while other students also spontaneously set a high standard for themselves.

Human Resource capitalization

Through inclusion policies in the education system, a country can expand its workforce by creating individuals policies in the education system, a country can expand its workforce by creating individuals who may be disabled through unfortunate circumstances but fully-abled and functional in productivity.

Parental involvement

Parents-participation in the education of the child in inclusive system can ultimately define its success. There is mounting evidence that parental involve is a major strategy for effective practice of inclusive education and is critically vital for educating learners with special educational needs (SENS). The process of creating educational contents and other learning activities in an inclusive system ensures a significant contribution of parents through the planning stage. Parent can be actively involved in their child's education and other school activities. Parents love to witness the performance of their children during events such as debate, quiz competition, sports and other programs. It also drives a higher commitment to the school by the parents- school programme.

Historical perspective

In ancient India the persons with disabilities were given education in the communities in which they lived. Education was given in the main stream school alongside the non-handicapped peers in a gurukulam setting. Individualized instructions were given on based on the individual child's needs and age (Jeyachandran, 1960)

A few residential instructions were established by the members of the royalty at different locations as an act of dharma, a duty (Miles, 1994).

During the colonial period and after, special schools were established mostly in urban areas and were expensive. Their coverage was only 2% of the population in need (Range sayee, 1995). In the post independence years India had around 100 special schools for the persons with disabilities. The special schools were run by the government as well as non-government organization. These special schools were inadequate considering the mammoth population in need of special education.

Policies, Education, Plans and Programms of India Government

The policies of the Govt. opened up avenues for integrated education, now referred to as inclusive education, to provide education to every child in need.

- The Kothari Commission – 1964
- The National policy as education – 1968
- Integrated education for the Disabled Children – IEDC – 1974
- The national Policy on Education – NPE – 1986
- Continuous re orientation of pre-service and in-service teacher education programs by the ministry of education.
- Children with mild and moderate retardation to be placed in regular schools.
- Children with severe and profound disabilities to be placed in special schools.
- Residential facilities were also provided wherever needed in every district.
- Project for the integration of the Disabled (PIED) 1986, on the principle of Composite Area Approach (CAA) for special schools children being placed in mainstream schools.
- The program of Action (POA), 1992, made provisions for training of general teachers, Preparation of learning materials, education device support teacher and Staff and setting of resource centers.
- The revised IEDC scheme in 1992 to accommodate these provisions.

What is 'successful inclusion'?

Inclusive education has been defined in a myriad of different ways. Perhaps the most authoritative definitions come from United Nations agencies and from treaties such as the convention on the Right of persons with Disabilities (UN 2016), inclusive education means :

- A fundamental right to education.
- A principle the values of students' wellbeing, dignity, autonomy, and contribution to society.
- A continuing process to eliminate barriers to education and promote reform in the culture, policy, and practice in schools to include all students.
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Additionally, and most importantly, inclusive education means that students with disabilities and other disadvantages are taught with their peers in mainstream classroom for a majority of the school day. When most experts speak of 'inclusive education', this does not mainstream settings so long as they can adjust (integration) inclusive education begins with the assumption that all children have a right to be in the same educational space (Copley, 2018: Florian, Black- Hawkins and Rouse, 2017: Hehir, et : al. 2016; Schuelka and Johnstone, 2012 : UNESCO – IBE 2016).

The importance of inclusive education is defined in its positive outcomes for all children – both with and without disabilities or other disadvantages.

Process of inclusive education

- 1) Awareness rising on the right to education for all children at local, regional and national levels.
- 2) Parents support to understand their children's educational, social and sometimes medical needs.
- 3) Policies: Developing inclusive education policies, revising existing policies.
- 4) Teacher training programs to promote inclusive practices.
- 5) Specialised techniques for teaching children with a range of learning and communication styles and needs.

Initiative programmes taken by Indian Government:-

The central government has taken several initiatives to assess and improve the quality of teaching in the country as follows.

- (1) Giving scholarship to the meritorious students.
- (2) Arranging campaigns to promote the importance of education.
- (3) Offering free of cost mid-day meal in the government schools.
- (4) Establishing initiatives like the “ *Sarva Shiksha Abiyan*” .

Problem faced by the student in inclusive education:-

According to UNESCO (2017), there is a long list of barriers that binder inclusive education. The greatest barriers to inclusion are caused by society, not by particular medical impairments. A major problem identified by many students is physically getting into school and education system, the curriculum is one of the major obstacles or tools to facilitate the development of more inclusive system.

The teachers have reported the following problems and challenges of inclusive education as:

- 1) Lack of training in inclusive education
- 2) Lack of confidence to teach inclusive settings
- 3) Problem of establishing linkage with special schools, lack of adequate leadership from headmaster and
- 4) Problem of mobilizing the community to participate in inclusive education programme.
- 5) Lack of confidence to teach in inclusive settings.

Role of teacher in inclusive education:-

The main roles of the regular classroom teacher are to plan, co-ordinate, schedule and evaluate curriculum and instructional outcomes within a secure and positive classroom environment for all students, including those with disabilities. Maintain communication with students, parents or guardians.

Teachers have major roles in the EFL classroom:-

- 1) To create the conditions under which learning can take place : the social side to teaching.
- 2) To impart, by a variety of means, knowledge to their learners : the task – oriented side of teaching.
- 3) Act as a team member on assessment and IEP committees.
- 4) Advocating for children with disabilities when they are in general education classroom and in special programs.
- 5) Counseling and interacting with parents of students with disabilities.

Teachers are the key actor to successfully implementing inclusive education. Proper knowledge and educational qualifications are required from them as well as a high commitment to students' individual needs.



Teachers Responsibilities:-

Special Educators

- 1) Early identification
- 2) Using multiple techniques
- 3) Developing and individualized education programs (IEPs)
- 4) Designing appropriate curriculum
- 5) Working with regular teacher

General Educators

- 1) Peer collaboration
- 2) Peer coaching
- 3) Team teaching
- 4) Teacher mentors

Role of parents inclusive education

Various researches have posited parental participation in education figures as one of the most important aspects of current education reforms and also as fundamental principles of contemporary concept of inclusive education. The findings of numerous studies indicate that parental involvement in various schools programs has significantly contributed to the success of inclusive school programme. Parents play an important role to create inclusive schools:

- 1) Encouraging positive attitude and Engagement
- 2) Awareness of Rights
- 3) Advising curriculum Adaptations and teaching methods.
- 4) Providing Resources
- 5) Supporting inclusion beyond schools

Role of Peers

Peer supports are strategy that involves placing student in pairs or in small groups to participate in learning activities that support academic instruction and social skills... Peer supports provide teachers with a learning tool to enhance instruction for students with and without disabilities.

The following are three innovative ways that peer supports can be used to meet the instructional and social needs of student with disabilities in the general education setting. However, each of these models require upfront planning that includes selecting the right type of strategy, utilizing it at the right with perhaps individualized outcomes all aligned with the lesson goals.

Collaborative learning

- An instructional strategy used to reinforce skills taught by the teacher this teaching method allows time for practice, revised and opportunities for students to use higher – level thinking skills.
- Peer modeling is another support that can be used to help students learn academic, processes and classroom routines.
- Cross- age peer support is another strategy that assists with the learning in the general education settings. This approach typically involves older students, usually high school age, which provide instructional support for elementary or secondary students.

CONCLUSION

A society is richer when all children are valued. An inclusive school comes up with such idea where effective supports are given to all learners regardless of ability, emphasizing on individual requirements and making sure those requirements are met. On the other hand it does not demand that all students learn the same thing at the same time, in the same way. Inclusive education happens when children with and without disabilities participate and learn together in the same classroom, and as per recent researches, joining classes alongside peers who do not have disabilities, makes learning process easier. The lives of the Differently- abled students are already restricted by various social and physical barriers like superstitions and individual health problems, in such a scenario inclusive method of education comes as a rescue which approaches to educate student with special educational needs alongside creating awareness on what inclusions can be made that can add to the benefit of their learning as well as benefitting the society at large. The implementation of such method in its real term needs a lot of effort from the government as well as the people. Effective policies need to be adopted for the betterment of the education system, and hence to build a system that can cater to all types of students. A proper re-structuring of curriculum is needed alongside the recruitment of such teachers who possess the skills and abilities to meet the various needs of the students within the classroom. The purpose of this kind of education system is to reach out to maximum number of students and provide them with equal opportunities, so that they can shape up their future in a proper manner. Inclusive method of education is believed to have the qualities of



promoting integration within the community alongside establishing successful outcomes in the field of education, employment and society building.

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