



ROLE OF HEADMASTER IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Raut Ganesh Popat & Guide- Dr. Shobha Kagade

B.M.G.Vidyalay, Susare Tal-PathardiDist -Ahmednagar

Abstract

Inclusive Education is educating ALL students in age-appropriate general education classes in their neighbourhood school, with high quality instructions, interventions and supports so all students can be successful in core curriculum. School Headmasters are the leaders of the school. As a school leader headmaster play an important role in promoting and sustaining change in schools. Without their efforts, school can not change or improve to become places where all students are welcome and where all students learn essential academic and non-academic lessons in preparation for life in society. Research tell us the role of the school headmaster is pivotal in creating and promoting inclusive school cultures. The environment and culture of the school setting can have a direct impact on acceptance of students with exceptionalities. Including students with exceptionalities does not have a negative impact on the academic achievement of other students. Social benefits occur to both regular and exceptional students in inclusive education. It increases advocacy and more tolerant. Because of the high expectations that come with both the values and mandates to achieve inclusive schooling, schools today need highly accomplished leaders. Inclusive school needs headmasters who are familiar with new techniques and know that inclusive services and supports produce educational benefits for students with and without disabilities, teacher and families. No doubt there are some difficulties for headmasters in conducting inclusive education programs. Separate programs are costly. It require personnel to expend a tremendous amount of resources in determining eligibility. Separate programs result in some students receiving services and others being denied.

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Differences held great opportunities for learning. Differences after a free, abundant and renewable resource. I would like to see compulsion for eliminating differences replaced by an equally compelling focus on making use of these differences to improve schools. Barth (1990), p.514-515

Social inclusion is a multi-dimensional process and cross sectional concept which means to be mainstreamed in to various areas at national, regional and local levels. It lies, not only within one section of society. There is larger and infinitively more comprehensive aim to social inclusion that encompasses many areas of society and humanity.

Inclusive Education is educating ALL students in age-appropriate general education classes in their neighbourhood school, with high quality instructions, interventions and supports so all students can be successful in core curriculum. Inclusive schools have a collaborative and respectful school culture where student with disabilities are presumed to be competent, develop positive social relationships with peers and are fully participating members of the school community. (Maryland coalition for Inclusive Education.)

An inclusive education has three important aspects that are physical, academic and social. Physical inclusive education dedicates to provide education to all children within their local school. It dedicates to provide common and safe learning environments for all children where experience and integrated and valuable.

Academic inclusive education dedicates to personalised learning goals and subsequent supports for all students. It tries to provide dedication through collaborative planning and services. It provides appropriate instructions within the regular classroom.

Social inclusive education is helpful for student with disabilities and are not conditional members of their classes. There is a sense of belonging and being a part of the school community in which everyone is accepted and is supported by all members of the community.

Need of inclusive education schools-

Urban as well as rural school emphasises on a plan to improve their practices through becoming more and more inclusive. They do so for many reasons. Inclusive schools have community values of both diversity and an inclusive school culture. Schools that are effective with ALL their students. Schools are enriched when they reflects the diversity of society and when all learners, including those with disabilities and diverse culture, linguistic needs become integral members of the learning school community. Inclusive school also promotes inclusive decision making and participation in their school, creating variety of activities for parent, staff and students to become a part of the governance structure.

Students with disabilities; student who have diverse cultural and ethic heritages, students whose native language is not educational language, student who bring rich experiences to school but may have not been exposed to the learning experiences that are often presumed in school curriculum. These things require schools to monitor the progress of all students to monitor the progress of all students and to ensure that these students continue to learn with their peers in general education environment.

Importance of Headmaster's Role-

School Headmasters are the leaders of the school. As a school leader headmaster play an important role in promoting and sustaining change in schools. Without their efforts, school can not change or improve to become places where all students are welcome and where all students learn essential academic and non-academic lessons in preparation for life in society. Many students in urban and rural schools have been left behind, shunted aside and asked to learn with poor or inadequate buildings, materials and under qualified teachers. Moving school from current practices to inclusive practices requires the collective efforts of key stakeholders. Headmaster serves as catalysts for the key stakeholders. They play a unique role in helping students, staff and parents to think and act more inclusively. Their role is to guide and support the course of change, drawing together the resources and people necessary be successful.

Understanding more about in effective inclusive schools may help parent, educators and community members better support the work of the school in general and efforts of the school in particular. The role of headmaster in building a schools capacity to serve all learners well and the strategies and resources that successful headmaster use to develop an inclusive learning community in schools. Inclusive practices represent a considerable shift in practice for some schools.

Research tell us the role of the school headmaster is pivotal in creating and promoting inclusive school cultures. The environment and culture of the school setting can have a direct impact on acceptance of students with exceptionalities. Including students with exceptionalities does not have a negative impact on the academic achievement of other students. Social benefits occur to both regular and exceptional students in inclusive education. It increases advocacy and more tolerant attitudes.

Expectations from the Headmasters-

Because of the high expectations that come with both the values and mandates to achieve inclusive schooling, schools today need highly accomplished leaders. Inclusive school needs headmasters who are familiar with new techniques and know that inclusive services and supports produce educational benefits for students with and without disabilities, teacher and families. These benefits occur in many areas of academic and non-academic development and tend to be related to administrative supports, professional knowledge and skills, and the attitudes of the teacher.

Headmasters know this work requires collective efforts and commitment. Effective headmasters establish collaborative teams, bringing together key stakeholders who represent different perspectives and roles in the school community. The team provides leadership

throughout a continuing cycle of planning, implementation, evaluation in the school change process. The headmaster brings resources and administrative connections to the table to address needed changes rules or policies. Headmaster help identify and approve changes that supports more inclusive practices. These changes may focus on organizational resources like schedules, the use and assignment of personnel, strategies used to assign student to classes, resources available for professional development, and the focus and type of professional development activities.

While these technical changes are important to create the conditions for change, there are deeper changes that are requires for change to be sustained. At the core of all change efforts lie the beliefs, attitudes, practices, and characteristics of the school that defines its culture. These deeper aspects of an organization can take longer and are more difficult to change. Researchers have found that school change is a cyclical process. Schools can expect to experience slow, steady progress, and some amount of the “two steps forward, one step back” phenomenon as both surface and deep changes are underway (Fullan, 1993). While headmasters in inclusive schools act as mediators, coaches, cheerleaders, and emotional supporters to those involved in the process of change, it is fundamentally a team effort. Parents, community patrons, school staff, educators, and students themselves must have a voice in the process.

Common features of headmasters of inclusive schools-

There are several characteristics associated with the headmasters who led inclusive schools. They are not afraid to say “no” to something different and tend to be actively engaged in pushing for innovative solutions to issues that exclude learners who differ in their abilities, culture and language. They act as proponents of inclusive practices within their schools.

Headmasters in inclusive schools “go the extra mile” to work with staff, parents, and community members. They work with personnel in their school to resolve differences and find workable solutions. These principals work hard to build trust and promote changes by sharing information honestly with all involved.

They routinely get involved at the ground level with students, teachers, parents, and community members to address issues confronting their school. They are genuinely interested in being where the action is so that they can understand the issues first-hand.

Headmasters in inclusive schools use information gathered from reports, teachers, parents, and community members to develop reasoned approaches for action and help generate new meanings about the changes ahead. They mobilize teams of teachers and parents to inform their decision-making.

Effective headmasters share leadership with staff at all levels of the organization. They know that teams of people who share the same goals will be more effective than one administrator working alone. These headmasters create time for teams to meet, plan, and teach together.

Headmasters in inclusive schools have a strong sense of direction and infuse their core values, beliefs, and attitudes into building an inclusive culture in their school. The pace and number of changes must be carefully weighed so as not to overwhelm teaching staff.

How do headmaster support inclusive school?

While responding to the increasing diversity in our schools is a growing challenge, it is not a new one. School leaders have faced issues associated with a diverse student body for as long as public schools have been in existence. Students with disabilities may increase the diversity within a classroom, but they are far from the only reason that schools are in search of practices that are effective in “making things work” for their entire student body. Inclusion serves as a philosophical compass, guiding schools in their journey to create a caring, supportive, and effective learning community. As described by Stainback and Stainback (1990), “An inclusive school is a place where everyone belongs, is accepted, supports, and is supported by his or her peers and other members of the school community in the course of having his or her educational needs met”.

How does such a learning community come to be? What do educational leaders do to guide all members of the school community so that school practices are compatible with such a philosophy? Schools have traditionally focused on the majority of the students, those in the centre.

Educational leaders promoting an inclusive vision understand that they must attend to the margins, students who traditionally are separated out into “special” programs; uncategorized, unlabelled, yet unsuccessful students in the regular classroom; students who come from families that do not speak educational language; as well as high performing students who push the margins in the other direction. As described by Leonard Burrello and colleagues (Burrello, Lashley & Beatty, 2001), “These students...present educators with a grand opportunity to create new learning for themselves and examine their invitation to learning for all students.

In order to address the needs of students “at the margins”, the educational leader must guide the school to increase its capacity to respond to the varying learning styles and abilities of its students. The principal must also work to create and maintain a school climate in which all students can feel a sense of identity, belonging, and place. A critical component of

achieving these goals is to identify and replace those existing practices that undermine these outcomes.

Difficulties of Headmasters in Inclusive Education-

No doubt there are some difficulties for headmasters in conducting inclusive education programs. Separate programs are costly. It require personnel to expend a tremendous amount of resources in determining eligibility. Separate programs result in some students receiving services and others being denied. They fragment a student's day. Separate programs blame and label students. They enable educators and students not to change. Separate programs prevent transfer of educator and student knowledge back to integrated environments.

Conclusion-

The above discussion clearly indicated that the headmaster of the inclusive school has key and centre role in inclusive education. He can increase school capacity of school by coordinating with people parent teacher and student. He has a pivotal role in educating ALL students. Headmasters serves as a catalyst for the key stakeholders.

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