



EXISTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PRACTICES IN INDIA

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Abstract

In Inclusive Education each child should have the opportunity to experience meaningful challenges, exercise choice and responsibility, interact collaboratively with others, and be actively engaged in developmental, academic, non-academic, inter and intra personal activities as part of the educational process. Implementation of the plans, programmes and actions depend upon continuous community support, broad planning, training and evaluation. An adapted school environment is needed to suit the need of every child with disabilities.



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Introduction

Both full-fledged inclusive education programs and quasi-inclusive program are being practiced in various forms by different organizations in India. At present, at least 7 implementing strategies of inclusive education are observed in India. They are listed as follows:

1. Resource models where children with disabilities study in general school and stay in hostels meant for non-disabled children.
2. Resource models where children with disabilities study in general schools and hostels of the nearby special schools.
3. Resource models where children with disabilities study in general schools and stay with parents at home.
4. Semi – resource models or cooperative models where children with disabilities are taught only by the resource teacher in a separate class in a general school.
5. Itinerant model where a resource teacher visits the child in his/her local school and the child stays with parents.
6. Multi – category resource model where disabled children of different kinds are educated in a general school by the regular teachers and a particular locality.
7. Multi-category itinerant model where one special teacher attend to the needs of disabled children of different categories in a particular locality.

An ideal inclusive education concept aims at facilitating total integration of the child in the community. The upcoming inclusive education programs in India are avoiding separation of children with disabilities from their families for the purpose of education.

Curriculum flexibility and classroom techniques in an inclusive setup

The classroom techniques are need based considering intra and inter individual difference

1. Games designed to build community
2. Involving students in solving problems
3. Songs and books that teach community
4. Openly dealing with individual differences
5. Assigning classroom jobs that build community
6. Teaching students to look for ways to help each other
7. Utilizing physical therapy equipment such as standing frames, so students who typically use wheelchairs can stand when the other students are standing and more actively participate in activities.

Curricula should be adapted to children's needs, not vice-versa. Schools should therefore provide curricular opportunities to suit children with different abilities and interests.

Children with special needs should receive additional instructional support in the context of the regular curriculum, not a different curriculum. The guiding principle should be to provide all children with the same education, providing additional assistance and support to children requiring it.

The acquisition of knowledge is not only a matter of formal and theoretical instruction. The content of education should be geared to high standards and the needs of individuals with a view to enabling them to participate fully in development. Teaching should be related to pupils' own experience and to practical concerns in order to motivate them better.

In order to follow the progress of each child, assessment procedures should be reviewed. Formative evaluation should be incorporated into the regular educational process in order to keep pupils and teachers informed of the learning mastery attained as well as to identify difficulties and assist pupils to overcome them.

For children with special educational needs a continuum of support should be provided, ranging from minimal help in regular classrooms to additional learning support programmes within the school and extending, where necessary, to the provision of assistance from specialist teachers and external support staff.

Appropriate and affordable technology should be used when necessary to enhance success in the school curriculum and to aid communication, mobility and learning. Technical aids can be offered in a more economical and effective way if they are provided from a central pool in each locality, where there is expertise in matching aids to individual needs and in ensuring maintenance.

Capability should be built up and research carried out at national and regional levels to develop appropriate support technology systems for special needs education. States that have ratified the Florence Agreement should be encouraged to use this instrument to facilitate the free circulation of materials and equipment related to the needs of people with disabilities. Concurrently States that have not adhered to the Agreement are invited to do so in order to facilitate the free circulation of services and goods of educational and cultural nature. School management

Local administrators and school heads can play a major role in making schools more responsive to children with special educational needs if they are given necessary authority and adequate training to do so. They should be invited to develop more flexible management procedures, to redeploy instructional resources, to diversify learning options, to mobilize child-to-child help, to offer support to pupils experiencing difficulties and to develop close relations with parents and the community. Successful school management depends upon the active and creative involvement of teachers and staff, and the development of effective co-operation and team work to meet the needs of students.

School heads have a special responsibility in promoting positive attitudes throughout the school community and in arranging for effective co-operation between class teachers and support staff. Appropriate arrangements for support and the exact role to be played by various partners in the educational process should be decided through consultation and negotiation.

Each school should be a community collectively accountable for the success or failure of every student. The educational team, rather than the individual teacher, should share the responsibility for the education of special needs children. Parents and volunteers should be

invited to take an active part in the work of the school. Teachers, however, play a key role as the managers of the educational process, supporting children through the use of available resources both within and outside of the classroom.

Benefits of Inclusive Education

Spending the school day alongside classmates who do not have disabilities provides many opportunities for social interaction that would not be available in segregated settings (Sasso, Simpson & Novak, 1985).

Benefits for Students with Special Needs

1. Children with SEN have appropriate models of behaviour. They can observe and imitate socially acceptable behaviours of the students without special needs. (Brown et al., 1983, 1989a)
2. Teachers often develop higher standards of performance for student with SEN (Brown et al., 1989a; Snell, 1987)
3. Both general and special educators in inclusive settings expect appropriate conduct from all students.
4. Students with SEN are taught age appropriate functional components of academic content, which may never be part of the curriculum in segregated settings (e.g. science, social studies, etc.).
5. Attending inclusive schools increases the probability that students with SEN will continue to participate in a variety of integrated settings throughout their lives (Ryndak & Alper, 1996).

Benefits for Students without Special Needs

1. Students without SEN have a variety of opportunities for interacting with their age peers who experience SEN in inclusive school settings.
2. They may serve as peer tutors during instructional activities (Slavin, 1990).
3. They may play during recess and leisure time.
4. They may play the role of a special 'buddy' during lunch, in the bus or playground.
5. Children without SEN can learn a good deal about tolerance, individual difference, and human exceptionality.
6. They learn that students with SEN have many positive characteristics and abilities.
7. Students without SEN have the chance to learn about many of the human service profession such as special education, speech therapy, physical therapy, recreation

therapy, and vocational rehabilitation. For some, exposure to these areas may lead to career choices.

8. Inclusion offers the opportunity for students without SEN to learn to communicate, and deal effectively with a wide range of individuals. This also prepares them to fully participate in a pluralistic society when they are adults ((Ryndak & Alper, 1996).

Source: Position Paper of the National Focus Group on education of children with special needs, NCERT,2011

Conclusion:

Inclusive education not only benefits the children with special needs but also it gives an opportunity to a children to participate in all curriculum activities and they get an opportunity to understand each other by supporting each other. The main aim of the teacher should be all the round development of all the children of the class. By using digital recorder for notes, reducing the amount of spelling words adm having enrichment activities prepared and by incorporate sensory elements like visual, auditory, and kinesthetic and writing letters in salt trays can create interest in child in learning.

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