



INNOVATION IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION OF THE DISABLED

Deepa Jain, Ph. D.

Tagore Shiksha Mahavidyalaya, Indore



Scholarly Research Journal's is licensed Based on a work at www.srjis.com

The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 and the Programme of Action (1992) gives the basic policy framework for education, emphasizing on correcting the existing inequalities. It stresses on reducing dropout rates, improving learning achievements and expanding access to students who have not had an easy opportunity to be a part of the general system. The NPE, 1986 envisaged some measures for integrating of children with physical and mental handicap with the general community as equal partners, preparing them for their normal growth and development and enabling them to face life with courage and confidence.

The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Integrated Education for the Disabled Children (revised 1992) is presently being implemented in States and UTs in over 90,000 schools benefiting over 2,00,000 children with disabilities. The scheme was introduced with a view to providing educational opportunities for children with disabilities in general schools, to facilitate their retention in the school system. It provides for facilities to students with disabilities including expenses on books and stationery, expenses on uniforms, transport allowance, reader allowance, escort allowance, hostel accommodation and actual cost of equipment. The scheme also supports the appointment of special teachers, provision for resource rooms and removal of architectural barriers in schools.

The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) has set time-bound targets for the achievement of Universal Elementary Education (UEE) by 2010. With “zero rejection’ as its cornerstone, the programme provides support for the inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools at the elementary level. SSA has a provision for the inclusive education component @ Rs.1200 per child with special needs per annum. Under the programme, over 20 lakh children with disabilities have been identified and over 15 lakh children with disabilities in the age group 6-14 years have been enrolled in general schools. The increase in enrolment at the elementary level is expected in the coming years to lead to as urge in the demand for secondary education. This will include children with disabilities. It will also support a wide range of approaches, options and strategies for education of children

with special needs. This includes education through open learning system and open schools, non formal and alternative schooling, distance education and learning, special schools, wherever necessary, home based education, itinerant teacher model, remedial teaching, part time classes, community based rehabilitations (CBR) and vocational education and cooperative programmes.

The National Action Plan for Inclusion in Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities (IECYD) developed by the MHRD (November -2005) emphasizes the inclusion of children and young persons with disability in all general educational settings from Early Childhood to Higher Education. The goal of the Action Plan is –“to ensure the inclusion of children and youth with disabilities in all available general educational settings, by providing them with a learning environment that is available, accessible, affordable and appropriate.”

Children with disabilities constitute one of the largest groups that are still outside the fold of the general education system. Under the existing IEDC Scheme it has not been possible to cover all disabled children primarily because implementation has been based on receipt of viable proposals from the implementing agencies. No conscious effort has been made to target all disabled children. As SSA supports inclusion of children with special needs at the early childhood education and elementary education level, it is desirable to introduce a scheme for the disabled children at secondary stage. The scheme for IEDSS is therefore envisaged to enable all children and young persons with disabilities to have access to secondary education and to improve their enrolment, retention and achievement in the general education system. Under the scheme every school is proposed to be made disabled-friendly.

Need & Importance of the Study-

Disability affects hundreds of millions of families in developing countries. Currently around 10 per cent of the total world's population, or roughly 650 million people, live with a disability. In most of the Organization for Economic Co- operation and Development (OECD) countries, females have higher rates of disability than males.

Having a disability places you in the world's largest minority group. As the population ages this figure is expected to increase. Eighty per cent of persons with disabilities live in developing countries, according World Facts and Statistics on Disabilities and Disability Issues imates that 20 per cent of the world's poorest people have some kind of disability, and tend to be regarded in their own communities disadvantaged. Statistics show a steady

increase in these numbers. The reasons into as the most the UN Development Program (UNDP). The World Bank estclude:

Disability rates in the population are higher among groups with lower educational level in the countries of the Organization for Economic Co- operation and Development (OECD). On average, 19 per cent of less educated people have disabilities, compared to 11 per cent among the better educated. ***Ninety per cent of children with disabilities in developing countries do not attend school, says UNESCO***

Innovation in teaching strategies

Disabled children will present you with some unique and distinctive challenges. Not only will these students demand more of your time and patience; so, too, will they require specialized instructional strategies in a structured environment that supports and enhances their learning potential. It is important to remember that disabled students are not students who are incapacitated or unable to learn; rather, they need differentiated instruction tailored to their distinctive learning abilities. Use these appropriate strategies with learning disabled students: Provide oral instruction for students with reading disabilities. Present tests and reading materials in an oral format so the assessment is not unduly influenced by lack of reading ability.

- Provide learning disabled students with frequent progress checks. Let them know how well they are progressing toward an individual or class goal.
- Give immediate feedback to learning disabled students. They need to see quickly the relationship between what was taught and what was learned.
- Make activities concise and short, whenever possible. Long, drawn-out projects are particularly frustrating for a learning disabled child.
- Learning disabled youngsters have difficulty learning abstract terms and concepts. Whenever possible, provide them with concrete objects and events—items they can touch, hear, smell, etc.
- Learning disabled students need and should get lots of specific praise. Instead of just saying, “You did well,” or “I like your work,” be sure you provide specific praising comments that link the activity directly with the recognition; for example, “I was particularly pleased by the way in which you organized the rock collection for Karin and Miranda.”

- When necessary, plan to repeat instructions or offer information in both written and verbal formats. Again, it is vitally necessary that learning disabled children utilize as many of their sensory modalities as possible.
- Encourage cooperative learning activities when possible. Invite students of varying abilities to work together on a specific project or toward a common goal. Create an atmosphere in which a true “community of learners” is facilitated and enhanced.
- Open Door provides a *happy, stress-free* learning environment where the child is *not judged or ‘pushed’* to perform. The methods of instruction at Open Door are based on techniques specifically used with disabled children and adapted to fit the needs of the individual child. Since disabled people are particularly unable to cope with stress, the methods used at Open Door have been especially effective in modifying difficult and unwanted behavior.

Disabled children are visual learners and benefit most from a structured environment. Open Door provides as structured an environment as possible, both in physical terms and in the daily schedule. Each student knows exactly what activity is to take place, where, and what is expected of him. The activities focus on decreasing unwanted behaviors, increasing attention span, motivating and stimulating language development, improving socialization skills and cognitive skills, self-help and daily living skills, and independent work behaviors. Pre-academic and academic skills are also taught.

Disabled children often have an uneven pattern of development. Keeping this in view, we work with the child’s interests and emerging skills, rather than their deficits. The curriculum emphasizes the development of independence at the individual’s highest level of potential. It emphasizes the progression of teaching skills in a distraction-free environment, and works to move the skill to increasingly integrated settings in the community

Suggestions-

- a. Early detection and identification: A concerted drive to detect children with special needs at an early age should be undertaken through PHCs, ICDS, ECCE centres and other school readiness programmes. Identification of children with special needs should become an integral part of the micro-planning and household surveys.
- b. Functional and formal assessment of each identified child should be carried out. A team should be constituted at every block to carry out this assessment and recommend most appropriate placement for every child with special needs.

- c. Educational Placement: As far as possible, every child with special needs should be placed in regular schools, with needed support services.
- d. Aids and appliances: All children requiring assistive devices should be provided with aids and appliances, obtained as far as possible through convergence with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, State Welfare Departments, National Institutions or NGOs.
- e. Support services: Support services like physical access, resource rooms at cluster level, special equipment, reading material, special educational techniques, remedial teaching, curricular adaptation or adapted teaching strategies could be provided.
- f. Teacher training: Intensive teacher training should be undertaken to sensitize regular teachers on effective classroom management of children with special needs. This training should be recurrent at block/cluster levels and integrated with the on-going in-service teacher training schedules in SSA. All training modules at SCERT, DIET and BRC level should include a suitable component on education of children with special needs.
- g. Resource support: Resource support could be given by teachers working in special schools. Where necessary, specially trained resource teachers should be appointed, particularly for teaching special skills to children with special needs. Wherever this option is not feasible, long term training of regular teachers should be undertaken.
- h. Individualized Educational Plan (IEP): An IEP should be prepared by the teacher for every child with special needs in consultation with parents and experts. Its implementation should be monitored from time to time. The programme should test the effectiveness of various strategies and models by measuring the learning achievement of children with special needs periodically, after developing indicators.
- i. Parental training and community mobilization: Parents of children with disabilities should receive counselling and training on how to bring them up and teach them basic survival skills. Strong advocacy and awareness programmes should form a part of strategy to educate every child with special needs. A component on disability should be included in all the modules for parents, VEC and community.
- j. Planning and management: Resource groups should be constituted at state, district levels to undertake effective planning and management of the programmes in collaboration with PRIs and NGOs. An apex level resource group at the national level

to provide guidance, technical and academic support to children with special needs under SSA may be constituted.

- k. Strengthening of special schools: Wherever necessary, special schools may be strengthened to obtain their resource support, in convergence with departments and agencies working in that area.
- l. Removal of Architectural barriers: Architectural barriers in schools will be removed for easy access. Efforts will be taken to provide disable-friendly facilities in schools and educational institutions. Development of innovative designs for schools to provide an enabling environment for children with special needs should also be a part of the programme.
- m. Research: SSA will encourage research in all areas of education of children with special needs including research for designing and developing new assistive devices, teaching aids, special teaching material and other items necessary to give a child with disability equal opportunities in education.
- n. Monitoring and evaluation: On-going monitoring and evaluation should be carried out to refine the programme from time to time. For this, appropriate monitoring mechanisms should be devised at every level and field tested at regular intervals.
- o. Girls with disabilities: Special emphasis must be given to education of girls with disabilities.

References-

*Country Profile on Disability INDIA Japan International Cooperation Agency
Planning and Evaluation Department, March 2002*

*Open Door Teaching Methods Training Centre & Programmes.,autism@vsnl.com.Access at 15March
2011.*

<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/special-education/new-teacher>.accces at 15March 2011.