



INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: CHALLENGES, PROVISIONS AND STRATEGIES

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Abstract

The concept of Inclusive Education starts from Spain in UNESCO's Conference in 1994. The focus was given on making Elementary Education a Fundamental Right for all. According to National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) 5% of our population of 102 crores is with disabilities. The Constitution of India ensures equality, freedom, justice and dignity of all individuals and implicitly mandates an inclusive society for all including persons with all disabilities. The 86th amendment of the constitution of India ensures right to education (RTE) to every child. Inclusive education is now seen as a paradigm shift of the disabled children from segregated education in separate schools to inclusive education in regular school along with non-disabled children. Inclusive education is based on the principle that school should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional linguistic and other condition. In Indian context, inclusion can be viewed from three perspectives—physical inclusion, social inclusion and cognitive inclusion. Teachers training programs, adapted curriculum, teacher's attitudes, materials and equipments provision and financial sources are essential for the successful implementation of Inclusive education. The present paper investigates the challenges of inclusive education and provisions of inclusive education and the strategies to strengthening Inclusive education.

Key Words: Inclusion, Inclusive Education, Disabled children, RTE Act 2009



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INTRODUCTION

The concept of inclusion has emerged from the ideas of providing equal opportunities to “all” children keeping in mind the diverse nature of their individual needs. The dictionary meaning of ‘inclusion’ is -to take in. or consider or to embrace. Inclusion is a concept that sees children with disabilities as full time participants in and as members of their neighbourhood schools and communities (Knight, 1999). All children can do well when the regular classroom environment is adjusted to meet their individual needs (Swarup, 2000). The basic idea behind inclusive education is that it enables all to participate together in society from the very beginning. Provision of such form of education inculcates a feeling of confidence in the minds of disabled children and provides them an access to the formal education system. Inclusive education gives an opportunity to non-disabled students to share with peers who are different in one way or another and to learn to accept and respect their “differences”.

Inclusive education is an unabashed announcement, a public and political declaration and celebration of difference. It requires continual proactive responsiveness to foster an inclusive education culture.(Corbett and Slee 2000: 134)

The inclusion of the disabled people in the society is a process that runs in two directions:to prepare disabled to become part of the society and prepare society to receive them . A school that promotes inclusive education is called an inclusive school. An inclusive school is a place where everyone belongs, is accepted,supports and ‘is supported by his or her peers and other mebers of the school community in the course of his or her educational needs met”(Stainback, Stainback and Forest 1989). Inclusive Education is a concept of effective schools where every child has a place to study and teachers become facilitators of learning rather than providers of information(Mani,2003).

UNICEF’s Report on the Status of Disability in India 2000 states that there are around 30 million children in India suffering from some form of disability. The sixth All-India Educational Survey(NCERT,1998) reports that of India’s 200 million school-aged children(6-14), 20 million require special needs education. While the national average for gross enrolment in school is over 90 per cent, less tha five per cent of children with disabilities are in school.

In the 1970s, the government launched the centrally sponsored scheme of IEDC. The scheme aimed to provide educational opportunities to learner with disabilities in regular schools and to facilitate their achievement and retention. Under the scheme, hundred percent financial assistance is provided for setting up resource centers conducting surveys and assessment of children with disabilities, purchase and production of instruction materials and training and orientation of teachers.

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA,2001) was lunched to achieve the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education. This adopts a zero rejection policy and it includes various schemes and programmes like Project Integrated Education for the disabled. Education must provide the child not only learning and vocational skills, but also develop self confidence, a positive attitude and a passion for life. A combination of skills and a belief in one’s own self, would inspire disabled children. The inclusive set up helps fine tune and sharpen the personality of the disabled child to be ready to swim the deep and dark waters of a tough and demanding world.

Inclusion can be viewed from three perspectives in Indian context.

- **Physical Inclusion:** Receives consistent promotion, support and facilitation from the government. All the policies and regulations have made education free and compulsory for all children. No institution can deny admission to a child with disability on account of his/her disability. The Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) focuses on enrolment, retention and achievement of all children.
- **Social Inclusion:** It is only happening in sections of the society. Research studies show that in lower socio-economic strata, there is greater acceptance of persons with disabilities (PWD). With minimum expectations from PWD and for acceptance they do not move beyond denial (Bhan, S., Mehta, D., and Chappoo, Y., et al). Efforts are being made by educating people through direct instruction and media to bring attitudinal changes in the society.
- **Cognitive Inclusion:** Cognitive inclusion is possible only if the subject matter is broken down into smaller learning units and teacher makes sure that all the children to the expected level of mastery learn each of the micro units of a lesson. Each student is given equal opportunity to learn, understand, retain, and reproduce the information at an appropriate time and in appropriate manner.

Objectives

1. To understand the aims of Inclusive education
2. Identify the importance of Inclusive Education
3. Identify the quality indicators of inclusive education
4. Identify the challenges of Inclusive Education
5. Understand the strategies for teaching in Inclusive settings

Aims of Inclusive Education

The goal of inclusive education is to eliminate all barriers in order to achieve learning. Inclusion promotes quality and equity education for all, without any type of barrier or exclusion.

- Educational opportunities and educational experiences of normal peers in the school should also be extended along with them to the disabled children.
- Disabled children should participate and interact in the natural environment with society, neighbours and the normal people.

- The unfavourable attitude of the society towards disabled should be eradicated and the personality of the disabled should be shaped to make them creative citizens working for the progress of the nation.
- The aim of inclusive education is to provide education to the children in different abilities in general community at all levels and prepare them for normal growth and enable them to face life with their normal counterparts.

Importance of Inclusive Education

Inclusive education is a development approach seeking to address the learning needs of all children, youth and adults with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion. Inclusive education model is a means to achieve Education for All (EFA).

- Inclusion benefits the inclusive classrooms for all as well as children with special needs.
- Affords a sense of belonging environment in which to grow and learn
- Evolves in feelings of being a member of a diverse community.
- Enables development of friendships
- Enhances self-respect
- Provides affirmations of individuality
- Provides peer models
- Provides opportunities to be educated with same peers.

Quality indicators of Inclusive Education

Teacher competencies (teaching basic skills, class management, professional consultation and communication, referral, individualized teaching, interaction skills, orientation strategies for entry into mainstreaming, identification and assessment of children, goal setting, adjusting curricula, promoting classroom climate, resource managing, evaluation and monitoring), teacher education programmes, Government, Curriculum and the role of the community are the quality indicators of Inclusive education.

Challenges of Inclusive Education

For Inclusive education to be meaningful, schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching

strategies, resource use and partnership with their communities(UNESCO 1994). Teachers do not have support they need to make inclusive education successful. Inadequate financial provision remains one in the major obstacles in the implementation of meaning ful programs. Teachers training programme, adapted curriculum, teachersáttitude materials and equipments provision and financial sources are the major challenges in the implementation of inclusive education.

1. **Problems for classroom teachers-** a class room teacher is expected to select educational methodology to best suit each student. This is a challenging goal for one teacher who potentially has more than 30 students in each of five to seven classes. Most students can be grouped with other students whose educational needs are similar. this may reduce the planning required to two or three groups. If add special needs students who have severe learning delays, developmental issues, or who speak little or no English, this task an feel almost insurmountable – especially if the inclusive classroom does not include a co-teacher.
2. **Problems for Special Education teachers-** The biggest problem for special education teachrs who have students in inclusive classrooms is available to every student. Students may have to be pulled out of class a few times a week for additional services, which also impacts the ability of the child and classroom teachr to maintain pace.
3. **Problems for students-** In a classroom of 30 students with one or two special educationstudents, it can be difficult for the classroom teacher to give the individual time and attention the student require and deserve.
4. **Expenses-** Funding is a major constraint to the practice of inclusion. Teaching students with disabilities in general education classrooms takes specialists and additional staff to support student’s needs. Financial difficulties is another barrier of inclusive ducation, lots of funds are required for physical infrastructure, teaching programme and further provision of jobs for disabled
5. **Lack of trained teachers-** Inclusive system need trained teachers who can handle the persons with disabilities in normal classroom but teachers are taught about special education not about inclusive education.
6. **Cooperation-** One of the barrier associated with inclusion education is a lack of communication among administrators, teachers, specialists, staff, parents, and

students. Open communication and coordinated planning between general education teachers and special education staff are essential for inclusion to work. Time is needed for teachers and specialists to meet and create well-constructed plans to identify and implement modifications and accommodations and specific goals for individual students.

Teaching strategies for Inclusive Education

Inclusive Education is a challenge for the teacher. The teacher must ensure maximum learning for all and equal opportunities for all. The teacher must ensure maximum learning for all and equal opportunities of learning for all. The teacher must ensure the participation of each student. Another one is peer tutoring. Sometimes a child learns better when taught by peer. Multi-sensory teaching allows the maximum use of senses for learning.

- **Team teaching:** team teaching is an approach in which two or more teachers join together, plan together, teach together and evaluate together. Inclusive schools, the regular education teacher and special education teacher work together in providing services to disabled children. It is the joint responsibility of both the teachers.
- **Peer tutoring:** peer tutoring involves one-to-one instruction from a student to another in the tutoring role and the tutee who receives instruction. Peer tutoring meets the individual needs of the child with disabilities by providing remedial or supportive instruction.
- **Cooperative learning:** It is a strategy used by teachers in which they make groups of numbers of students to achieve a common goal.
- **Language experience approach:** This approach integrates the development of reading skills with the development of listening, speaking and writing skills.
- **Multi-sensory Approach:** Multi-sensory approach is based on the premise that for some children learning is facilitated if content is presented through several modalities.
- **Breakthrough to literacy programme:** This is a programme in which if a child cannot retain the material through reading, he/she can write it to retain it.
- **Task Analysis:** Through task analysis strategy the child learns the material by breaking up into small components. The components are broken, sequenced and transacted by the teacher to the child.

- **Modifying materials and activities:** Various other activities like discussions demonstrations, simulation, role playing dramatic improvisation activities are used by the teacher in the classroom.
- **Word analysis skills:** word analysis can be done through synthetic method and analytic method. Phonetic analysis teaches a student to attack an unfamiliar word.
- **Assistive Technology:** Teachers can create an effective environment in the classroom by using technology various types of Assistive technologies are now available to students with disabilities. Assistive technology is technology used by individuals with difficulties in order to perform functions that might otherwise be difficult or impossible.

Reforms in Curriculum

Traditional curriculum cannot help inclusive education. It is necessary to bring required changes in curriculum. Multilevel and flexible curriculum, cooperative curriculum, providing reading material, simple curriculum, participation in games, use of teaching aids adequate facilities are some of the areas where we need to work

National Curriculum Framework 2005 also focuses on the reforms in curriculum for inclusive education. It stresses on the need to explore the abilities of children. Innovative and special strategies can be devised and used by teacher. Teaching –learning processes must be based on planning so that the need of all children can be fulfilled. Children often learn language easily through special interaction. Braille and sign language can be used for special children. The school must have adequate playground, resource room etc. Activities must be planned, selected and executed in such a manner that individual attention is provided to each child.

Inclusive Class room

Students with special needs are educated in regular classes for nearly all of the day, or at least for more than half of the day. Whenever possible the students receive any additional help or special instruction in the general class room.

Inclusive Education System in Kerala: A Status Study conducted by SCERT Kerala in 2014

This study submits the following suggestions put forward by Headmasters, Teachers, Resource Teachers, Students, Old students, Non -teaching Staff and Parents

General Suggestions

- Curriculum need to be revised appropriately for CWSN.
- Include more vocationalized subjects.
- Learning experiences should be given to the children according to their cognitive abilities. The transactional methods should be changed accordingly.
- There should be quality use of ICT.
- In place of the existing evaluation, new strategies and materials are to be developed.
- Human resource and physical facilities need to be improved
- Early detection measures should be provided in Panchayath/Sub districts level.
- There should be scientific measures to detect learning problems among children.
- The Education Should leads to self reliant
- Thrust should be given for communication and daily living skills.
- Work sheets and activities shall be designed in such a way that parents can involve in the studies of their children.
- Opportunities about higher education and employment for CWSN should make available. Guidance on the source of employment also given to the parents.
- General school teachers may be given orientation in handling CWSN.
- Enough number of Resource teachers may be appointed to ensure that every general school has a resource teacher.
- Curriculum transaction process with special reference to CWSN may be included as an agenda for SRG meeting.
- TLM preparation workshops may be organized for Resource teachers to enhance their ability to develop the same.

Regarding various aspects of CWSN

I. INFRA STRUCTURAL FACILITIES

1. Infrastructural facilities such as ramp and rail, adaptive toilet, resource room etc may be improved.
2. Classroom infra structural facilities are to be improved such as adapted seats, writing boards, computers and accessories etc.

II Curriculum

1. Directions may be given in the H.B of teachers for using simple language.

2. Make the presentation in such a way that, it is easily understood by the students
3. The pictures in curriculum may be made more clear
4. The activities given in the textbooks may be made more simple by the teacher
5. The evaluation may be done in accordance with the ability of CWSN.

III Curriculum Transaction

1. Favourable environment may be provided to CWSN for better participation in process oriented classroom.
2. They may be encouraged to participate in sports and youth festival activities
3. Provide more learning aids to ensure the participation of CWSN in classroom process.
4. Ensure the help of peers and teachers to CWSN in participating group activities
5. CWSN friendly software may be made available in computers for better utilization of the same.
6. Text books and other curriculum based materials are to be modified. They are to be re- structured in a manner that multi level and multi grade activities and content – presentations also to be included.
7. The resource teachers may be given training in other areas, other than their specialization to deal with all types of CWSN.
8. Resource rooms and aids and appliances may be provided to all general schools where a reasonable number of CWSN are studying.
9. Facilities may be made in general schools for giving Co-curricular training to CWSN.
10. As the resource teacher is specialized only in one school subject he/she is not able to adapt learning activities in other subjects, hence he/she may be provided training for the same.
11. General teacher may be given training in adapting learning activities in their subject.
12. Provide sufficient adapted teaching-learning equipment to all schools where CWSN are studying.
13. All the teachers in general schools must undergo either a certificate course or a diploma in inclusive education and those teachers are to be called for yearly boost-up trainings. Policy decisions may be taken for the same.

IV Human Resources problem

1. Ensure the service of therapist where ever necessary
2. Strengthen the CWSN PTA to ensure their availability so as to ensure their assistance.

3. Ensure the accountability and efficiency of resource teachers in helping the general teachers for inclusion.
4. Awareness campaigns are to be strengthened.
5. Mixed co-living camps are to be promoted. The duration must be extended. The mode of camp may be residential.

V Evaluation/Medical assessment

1. Provide training to Resource teachers on new trends in screening for medical assessment of CWSN.
2. The teachers should present the content in a simplified form.
3. Medical assessment should be made justice. The process of assessing the children and giving certificate are to be reviewed.

Conclusion

All Children of the world have the right to education. Inclusive education is human right education. The future schools will be inclusive schools. We must prepare teachers who can teach in settings that are inclusive, meeting the needs of all students. This will require different model of teacher education. Techniques and technology such as integrated curriculum, co-teaching, collaborative learning arrangements, instructional objectives, evaluation techniques should be implemented in teacher education programme so that outcome will be that student teachers will understand and appreciate diversity of human abilities, to deal with an adapt to change, develop learners and solving their problems, acquire creative problems skills and learn to view situations from different perspectives etc. Attitude of of teachers play a vital role in achieving successful social interaction among teachers and students and win their attention in favor of the required educational modality. Teacher attitudes have been considered as one of the major factors guaranteeing the success of inclusion of students with special needs. To bring about equity in education at the local level, community participation is necessary. The United Nations and its agency UNESCO have played significant role in promoting inclusive education.

References

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