



## IMPORTANCE OF COMPETENCY IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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### Abstract

*Inclusive education is an important part of education system . It had been proven that disabled children can learn with the regular children with some extra help. They will acquire a free environment and new experiences with their friends. That would ultimately contribute to their all round development. For such type of integration the teacher needs extra skills and competencies. To maintain the environment with diversities teacher needs to take into account individual differences and apply differentiated instructions. Hence there is a need to study the needs of special children and enhance the competencies among the special educators to make a growth & development of special children which will increase the enrollment of disabled children in the schools and would contribute towards the growth of the society.*

**Keywords:-** *Inclusive Education, special education , competencies, special educators.*



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### Introduction

Inclusive education provides opportunity to students with some or any kind of disabilities to study with regular /normal students with some kind of support/aids or some special training. In the inclusive education special children and normal children study, sit and play together with some special help to the special children. By such kind of help special

Children have the chance to get mixed and normalized with regular children. They both possess a good kind of interaction which outcomes in social development and emotional bonding. They learn to help each other and understand the needs of the special children. Inclusive education provides the recognition of equal rights for all students and equal opportunities for all children with special needs. Their education is provided in the least restrictive and most effective environment. The least restrictive environment which disabled children need can only be provided in general school. Thus inclusive education refers to education of disabled children in common with other in general schools with provision for extra help for the disabled. It refers to integrating the physical and extra help for the disabled. It means to integrate the physically and

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mentally handicapped children with the non-disabled children in regular classroom and providing specialized services to meet their special needs. This results into good social interaction and would be helpful for the special children's ' development. The students which are eligible for inclusive education are the students having minor disabilities like partial problem in loco motor activities, visual & auditory impairment , students having learning disabilities such children are provided extra help and help them to integrate and regularize with the mainstream of children.

### **Theoretical Background of Inclusive Education**

There was a sea change in attitudes and global initiatives on equalization of opportunities and education for all in the recent years. This change was mainly because of a growth in the understanding of children with disabilities which results into change in attitude towards children with disabilities and stressing the importance of integrating them in appropriate environment , suited to their special needs. This was followed by various Acts of Parliament which were strengthened by fiscal support ensuring implementation .foundDuring the British period primary and mass education did not receive serious attention. It was only in 1953 , at National Policy level , with the creation of the Central Social Welfare Board that the Government started playing a role on a broader scaler. In 1974, The National Policy for children declared " Children as a supremely important asset of the nation whose nurture and solicitude are the responsibility of the nation " and the National Children's Board came into existence. In 1960s the Ministry of Education which had been responsible for the education of disabled children was bifurcated and the Ministry of Social Welfare was created now known as the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Special education turned into the form of inclusive education in National Policy on Education ,1986 and its program of action. NPE , 1986 brought the education of special children under the Equal Opportunity provision. It primarily focused on inclusion of children with special needs in regular schools. It made the provision of special children to mainstream them in neighborhood regular school and support their participation in the schooling process. It also made a policy on financial support for the initiatives taken

For educating children with special needs. It not only made a provision of inclusive education but also provided options such as home-based education and open-schooling. It provided the

physical access to schools for special children. The provisions were also made for special education and therapists with cross-disabled training for inclusive education. Assistive devices and appropriate technology-based tools , as well as adequate and language-appropriate teaching-learning material should be made available . **NPE** has given a premium importance for inclusive education and thus improvements in inclusive education are going on by researches and taking the help of special educators the developmental strategies in inclusive education are further made.

### **Related Reviews**

Several studies have shown that there is inadequacy of teacher training in India especially pertaining to inclusive education provisions for all students ( Bindal & Sharma , 2010 ; Sharma & Desai ,2002 ; Swaroop , 2001). Other studies show that teachers who have received training are still concerned about implementing inclusion ( Sharma & Desai, 2002) and yet some are able to translate training into actual instructional practices to promote inclusion of those with disabilities( David & Kuyini, 2012).

Many regular school teachers were concerned that inclusion might interfere with their ability to teach in the traditional manner i.e. deliver classroom instruction via a didactic approach ( Jangira , Singh & Yadav, 1995) Anecdotal evidence suggested that teachers found it difficult to accept the notion that social skills and peer relationships were equally important as academic subjects in a school relationship. The Persons with Disabilities Act , 1995 signaled the need for a number of new roles and responsibilities for regular school teachers. Thus if the spirit and intent of the Act were to be translated into practice , it was expected to positively impact on the delivery of services and the educational status of 12.6 million children with disabilities in India.

Mahftha highlighted in his study the characteristics of teachers and standard of teacher preparation and rehabilitation. Most of the country focus on personal , professional , scientific standards of teachers. The study indicated that the skills, knowledge and abilities of teachers. The role of the teacher is now changed it becomes transmitting knowledge to experiential learning of the students and engaging with them, guiding them and supporting them to search useful and meaningful information. This study adding other aspects by exploring the competencies of teachers in special education colleges and schools in Maharashtra regarding their innovations in classroom teaching.

Alsarhid was studied to analyze previous studies on the professional competence of teachers in the Arab region , using analysis approach on a sample of 30 research papers published between the years of 1986 and 2010. The study concluded that the most prominent and required professional competencies of the Arab teacher are planning and implementing lessons, assessment , humanitarian relations, academic follow-up, general knowledge , student acceptance , ability to deal with students and understanding their characteristics and developmental and social needs , wide scope of knowledge , linking scientific subjects to everyday life , serving society and the active engagement with parents and teacher committees. Furthermore , Alsarshid emphasized in his study on the importance of using the most advanced techniques when teaching ,as well as developing the rules and instructions that give importance to professional development in the teaching process and setting quality standards and including them within the necessary for the job promotions.

### **Methodology & Procedure**

#### **Objectives of the study**

- 1) To examine the need to develop the competencies among teachers.
- 2) To locate the areas of competencies .

#### **Research Questions**

- 1) What is the present status of special teachers ?
- 2) What are the competency areas required for special educators ?

#### **Procedure**

For the present study a survey was undertaken to locate the special education colleges and checked the present status of special teachers in Maharashtra. It was deeply studied about the needs of special education colleges and the requirements of special educators. Researcher had found some competency areas which needs to be focused to grow in competencies. Present study will be applicable to all the special educators in Maharashtra.

#### **Present status of Special Education**

In Maharashtra near about 80-90 special education colleges are found. Special education is an emerging area in educational research. Many researches were done on the various aspects of special education but very few researchers on competencies of teacher in inclusive classroom. In contemporary Indian Society education is constantly evolving with new strategies and

innovative methods to meet the needs of students in inclusive classroom. But still we cannot say surely about the competencies of the teachers in special education.

### **Non-availability of Resources**

One of the major problem of special educators is non-availability of resources. They do not get sufficient amount of materials as well as other training aids. When a comparison is done of the facilities provided by the state government to children with special needs and the actual enrolment of such students in schools show complete apathy towards their education. If over 10,000 visually impaired students are enrolled in standard I to XII only 2000 Braille books are given by the government . The statistics is worse for students with other disabilities. So the government should make a legislation and provide substantial amount of equipments to the special education schools and colleges. The impact of well-directed legislation in the long run would be profound and liberating (p.273-274) Baquer & Sharma(1997). The person with disabilities (PWD)Act 1995 related to the inclusion and full participation of students with disabilities in regular school. To facilitate the inclusion of students with special needs into regular schools ,it is urged policymakers ,educators parents and other service providers to consider the premise that special education should be seen not only in the context of special education but also as an integral part of regular education.

### **Lack of competencies**

Second thing is ,there is a lack of proper guidance to the special educators which directly reflects to the development of section children. They are trained graduates but still some of the teachers do not have sufficient skills or competencies about how to treat & teach special children. They need in-service training and help of special doctors ,therapists to solve the problems they are facing . Special educators need to develop the competencies on their own by the reflection and study as a part of professional development. If a teacher wants to be a good special educator she needs to enhance her skills and competencies in different competency areas.

### **Possible contribution in the field**

In today's a technological era teacher needs to prepare child as per the nature of contemporary society . In special education which is an embryonic stage teacher's role is very important as per the students' point of view. Without a teacher special child cannot learn. In inclusive set up , school teachers are appointed for general teaching but not specially for a special child.

Unfortunately competencies of teachers are not checked whether he/she can deal with the special child or not. Same curriculum and co-curricular activities are conducted for normal students and disabled students. Even sometimes we had noticed that there is no provision for special child and their evaluation system. In the emerging Indian Society the government made a policy provision for the development of special school and special child but the problem is many people are unaware about policies made by government . Hence to examine the need to develop competencies present research was needful. Present research also locates the areas of competencies required for the special educators.

### ➤ **Conclusions**

Special education is totally dependant on special educators. Special teachers play important role in the development of special children. Inclusive education has given a premium importance in the educational policies of NPE Act. So for mainstreaming of special children there was a need for research on competencies of the special teachers. Hence present study was done .

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