

Inclusive Education-implication for Teacher Education

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ABSTRACT

Inclusion works best when there is a fundamental change in the approach of classroom management. Inclusion in education recognizes the fact that every child is special in one way or the other. The teacher with such an approach realizes that each child has learning ability at different level. The National knowledge commission (NKC) says that gender equity must be ensured in the educational systems. Stimulation exercises about disability may be fun but they have profound educational value. In order to stimulate disability condition, non-disabled children in the general classrooms may be blind folded for some time, their ears plugged for sometime and they can also be asked to walk using one leg, write without the help of thumb etc. Modification of curricular context and transactional strategies to ensure inclusion. Cooperative learning approach is considered to be an effective teaching. Learning process in the classroom especially when the class has children of different abilities.

Keywords: Inclusive education, knowledge commission, disability

“Everyone has the right to education. Education should be free at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education should be compulsory” (Article 268). Education as a birth right of every individual (UNESCO) Education is regarded as a powerful, economic and political transformation of a country. Three historic development in the 1990s paved Ways for the emergence of the concept of inclusion. First, the movement on “Education for All (EFA) which originated from the international conference jointly organized by the World Bank. According to the World Bank Peters (2003a) there is an estimated 40 million children with disabilities who are out of school children UNESCO (2005).

Inclusion is not a programme but an ideology

As proposed by the SSA, inclusion assumes that the overall system of education becomes effective

in order to encourage” school for all therefore, inclusive education is an ideology not a mere programme. It is a concept of effective schools where every child has a place to study and teachers become facilitators learning rather than providers of information. Inclusion has different connotations in different nations. For some countries, refining the entire educational system is the objective of inclusion where as for some others, entry of a special needs child in general classroom itself is inclusion.

As far as India is concerned, the ideal system of inclusion is that the general education system itself should make education of children with disabilities as its integral part. This implies that the general classroom teachers should be equipped with skills to address the educational need of these children with minimum or no assistance of special teachers. It is a process that empowers persons with disability.

Why inclusion?

More than 90% of children with disabilities are found in the rural areas in India. The special schools are only a few in numbers and cannot serve all. Therefore inclusive education is needed to provide equal educational opportunities to them in their own localities. The extent of disability in each category ranges from mild to severe and profound cases.

Therefore the reality in India focuses on the need for inclusive education.

In large countries like India, Lack of educational access may be a driving force to expand education in order to bring children with disabilities who are currently unreachable.

Characteristic of inclusive education

1. Children with disabilities are enrolled in local general schools.
2. All Categories of children with disabilities and all levels (mild to severe cases) are enrolled in schools.
3. A special teacher is appointed for a block or for a cluster of schools and should pay visit to schools. Where all assistive and assessment devices are available.
4. Frequent in-service programmes are organized to improve the skills of general classroom teachers in teaching children with disabilities.
5. Children with disabilities are enrolled local general schools.
6. Children with disabilities are sometimes brought to the resources centre if necessary.
7. All general classroom teachers in the school are oriented to the educational needs of children with disabilities.

When does inclusion of all children work best?

Inclusion works best when there is a fundamental change in the approach of classroom management. Inclusion in education recognizes the fact that every child is special in one way or the other. The teacher with such an approach realizes that each child has

learning ability at different level. In a classroom the inclusion of all children takes place and they are not categorized on the basis of colour, creed, intellect, disabilities etc. A true teacher who believes in inclusion facilitates peer to peer learning. As this type of Learning is non-threatening in nature, the teachers expected to promote peer group learning, true teachers will adopt a multi-sensory approach in learning. The learning should be experimental to the student.

The multi sensory approach is not only useful for children with disabilities but for other children with too who experience learning problems.

Barriers in the implementation of the concept of inclusion

In inclusive approaches in India, three types of services are directly or indirectly required by the disabled child.

(i) **Essential services:** The most essential services in an ideal inclusive setting are to be provided by the general classroom teachers, non-disabled children and parents as well. In an ideal inclusive setting, the general classroom teachers provide these services to disabled children. Essential services are used here because the disabled child cannot function well in an inclusive setting without these vital services.

(ii) **Support services:** The second type of service required in inclusion is the support service given by the fully qualified special teachers. These teachers provide necessary material support and occasional academic support to children with disabilities and also provide the needed consultancy to regular classroom teachers. The support materials are compulsory but providing academic support by special teachers need not be made mandatory. The support services include the following:

- ⊙ Identifying children with disabilities in the community.
- ⊙ Teaching skills peculiar to disability whenever necessary.
- ⊙ Assisting general classroom teachers if needed.
- ⊙ Arranging Assessment for children with disabilities.

- ⊙ Arranging learning materials for children with disabilities.
- ⊙ Arranging aids and appliances.
- ⊙ Monitoring the progress of the child through classroom teachers.

(iii) **Peripheral services:** The third type of service is the one-time peripheral service which is adhoc nature. The types of peripheral services are as follows:

- ⊙ Issuing medical report
- ⊙ Providing social benefits
- ⊙ Arranging sponsorship to educational activities.
- ⊙ Counselling to parents.

These peripheral services are to be arranged by the heads of institutions offering inclusive programmes.

Types of barriers inclusion

Two types of barriers exist inclusion one is the attitudinal barrier and the other is the physical barrier.

1. Lack of exposure resulting in attitudinal barrier:

Lack of exposure towards disability issues results in attitudinal barrier. For example assuming that disabled children have additional abilities the cannot be on par with no-disabled children etc. contribute to mental barriers of the teacher. These attitudes may be changed by organizing sensitization programmes for a greater number of persons with disabilities.

2. Accessibility inclusive education: In terms of accessibility, physical barriers to attend schools should be addressed. Access is the first step for any kind learning experience. For a person with locomotors disability, movement is the major concern. Unless the educational institution becomes barrier free, children with disabilities may not be able to a access education, even if it is offered at policy level.

Recommendations for implementing inclusive curriculum in teacher preparation programme. Teacher education has witnessed a tremendous growth in the last decade. The joint committee

also put forth several recommendations for the implementation of inclusive curriculum in teacher preparation and also for regulating such human development programmes. The salient recommendations are as follows:

1. Once the curriculum on special education is included in the general curriculum. At least one staff member from each teacher preparation institution to have in-depth knowledge in special education.
2. Availability of a resource room consisting of basic assistive devices (Brailier, Sample Hearing Aids, Teaching- learning materials for mentally refunded children) be made desirable in general teacher education.
3. The RCI inspection team for teacher education counsel may include a nominee from the NCTE.
4. The joint committee recommended that B.Ed. general education and B.Ed special education may be considered equivalent for concern opportunities, salary, promotion etc.

CONCLUSION

Inclusive approaches of the present emphasis the need for a twin track approach to ensure effective participation of persons with disabilities in the main stream. Education may not become a reality without the creation of proper environment for learning and therefore provision of appropriate services -both human resources and materials to the child to facilitate learning is very vital. The National knowledge commission (NKC) says that gender equity must be ensured in the educational systems. Stimulation exercises about disability may be fun but they have profound educational value. In order to stimulate disability condition, non-disabled children in the general classrooms may be blind folded for some time, their ears plugged for sometime and they can also be asked to walk using one leg, write without the help of thumb etc. Modification of curricular context and transactional strategies to ensure inclusion. Cooperative learning approach is considered to be an effective teaching. Learning process in the classroom especially when the class has children of different abilities.

Inclusion is all about effective education and by making the schools inclusive, the education becomes more effective.

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