

The Role of Teacher as an Influential Factor in Inclusive Education

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ABSTRACT

Almost all the commissions have spoken about the education of children with disabilities since independence. The Kothari Commission (1964-66) stated that compulsory education as enshrined in the Constitution includes all types of children i.e. children with disabilities. The effort to teach children with disabilities in a classroom together with normal children is called inclusive education. The success and effectiveness of the inclusive education system largely depends on the school teachers. However, for the success and expansion of inclusive education, the cooperation and responsibility of not only the teachers but also the parents, the society, the school management system and the education department is essential. This paper is focused on the role of teachers in inclusive education. The paper also attempts to highlight the barriers to the success of inclusive education and provide some suggestions for promoting inclusive education.

Keywords:Inclusive Education, Teachers, Children with Disabilities, Special Needs.

Introduction

Inclusion is the ideological basis of the process of including students with disabilities in general education. Inclusion refers to a particular philosophy that believes all people are equal, honorable and valuable. Its spread extends beyond the school classroom to a larger society and life where every human being is an equal partner. It is an ongoing endless process where any child or adult can participate equally in all activities of the society. Therefore, for this purpose, the child will be able to study together in the academy irrespective of his / her race, religion, gender, culture or disability and will get the help of special equipment, special instructions and specially trained teachers as required.

Inclusion is a process that instructs all children to teach in school to the best of their ability. By this it means the acceptance of the child to everyone and empathy towards each other.

Currently, the issue of inclusion has gained worldwide recognition. UNESCO has held several international conferences on inclusive education for those who are deprived of education for various reasons, one of the most important of which is the Salamanca conference (1994). Inclusion in the Indian context means arranging for those who have been deprived for centuries as a result of caste, religion, culture, poverty and disability to be on par with the beneficiaries.

Objective of the study:

The objective of the present study is to focus on the role of teachers in inclusive education. It also attempts to highlight the barriers to the success of inclusive education and provide some suggestions for promoting inclusive education.

Methodology:

The present study is based on descriptive analytic method. All the data has been collected from secondary sources like articles, journals, websites etc.

Inclusive Education

Inclusive education is an effort to teach children with disabilities in a classroom together with normal children. This is not a special educational program, this is an idea. In fact, all children have some special needs, and their needs need to be addressed. Children need to be educated in a friendly environment without fear of punishment.

According to Michael F. Giangreco (1997), "Inclusive education is a set of values, principles and practices that seeks more effective and meaningful education for all students, regardless of whether they have exceptionality labels or not".

According to Advani and Chadha (2003), "Inclusive education aims to provide a favourable setting for achieving equal opportunity and full participation for all, thus bringing children with special needs well within the purview of mainstream education. It recognizes the diverse needs of the students and ensures equality education to all through appropriate curricula, teaching strategies, support services and partnership with the community and parents."

The idea of standard inclusive education is to create a general education system where all children with special needs are included in the general education system and have access to the same quality of education as their peers in the nearest school. For this, possible changes need to be made in school infrastructure, administrative system, teacher training, teacher selection, evaluation and curriculum design.

Objectives of Inclusive Education:

- In the field of education, students with special needs are given the same facilities as general students.
- To help children with special needs to develop self-confidence and personality development.
- Emphasis on meeting the specific educational needs of the child rather than class standards.
- Determining ways to improve the mentality of normal classmates and to build a cooperative attitude towards a classmate with disabilities.
- Gradually reduce the social distance through sharing of various facilities and on the basis of mutual understanding.
- In addition to traditional education, training in handicrafts and self-reliance.

Types of Inclusive Education:

Inclusive education is usually of two types. They are as follows:

1. Partial Inclusion:

When children with disabilities are taught in the general classroom most of the day in almost the same way as normal children and are transferred to a special place or resource room under the supervision of a special teacher for a short period of time depending on the specific disability, the procedure followed is called regular or partial inclusion.

2. Full Inclusion:

When in any case children with disabilities are forced to receive education as well as normal children without any special measures, it is called full inclusion.

Importance of Inclusive Education:

Inclusive education has gained special importance in almost all countries of the world. Education has evolved from segregation to inclusive education. Therefore, the special importance of inclusive education in modern education and social system is as follows:

- Although disability is initially a family problem, it gradually becomes a social problem. Inclusive education eliminates the feeling of inferiority between children with disabilities and their parents.
- By participating in this education, children with disabilities no longer feel isolated from society. As a result, they become aware of their responsibilities and duties as members of the society and build self-confidence.
- As a result of inclusive education, a spirit of cooperation towards children with disabilities is developing among the common people as well.
- This education is very important for each child to learn according to their individual characteristics, interests and abilities.
- Inclusive education has created a new era for children with disabilities, where they will be able to start a healthy life with the same opportunities as normal children.
- Inclusive education results in students with disabilities learning together with normal students as well as developing social qualities in them. They develop qualities such as cooperation, empathy and compassion.
- This education is conducive to the actual and effective use of human and educational resources.

Role of Teachers in Inclusive Education:

Inclusive education is an education system that speaks of creating opportunities for children with disabilities in general schools as well as normal children. Needless to say, the effectiveness and success of this system largely depends on the school teachers. The special responsibilities that teachers have to fulfill in this case are as follows:

- In inclusive learning, the main task of the teacher in the classroom is to provide safety to the disabled children so that no student disturbs the disabled students in any way. It is the responsibility of the teacher to have all the students talk to the disabled child.
- Sometimes the teacher has to make some refinements in his / her specific curriculum keeping in view the real needs. In this case, there is a special need for flexibility of the teacher, sense of judgment and sense of reality.
- It is the important responsibility of the teachers in the school to give the parents an idea about the progress or backwardness of the students in the field of education or the different methods followed in the field of education.
- The first bench should be reserved for children with disabilities in the classroom, so that the teacher can keep a close eye on them at all times.
- The teacher should keep an eye on the students with disabilities to get the necessary special facilities in the classroom and to maintain a conducive learning environment in the classroom.
- It is the responsibility of the teacher to bring to the notice of the school administration the progress of the students in the school, any special problem and any additional material or arrangement required for the education of the disabled children.
- Teachers must take special education management training. At present Special B.Ed. training is being imparted in different parts of the country.

- Teachers have to strive for the implementation of inclusive education with a positive attitude.

Barriers to Inclusive Education:

The barriers to the success of inclusive education are as follows:

- Lack of proper training and services for teaching staff.
- Lack of knowledge about disadvantaged and special students and lack of knowledge about their teaching methods is one of the obstacles to the success of inclusive education.
- Classroom organization and number of students are not conducive to inclusion.
- Different researchers have different opinions about its effectiveness. According to some researchers, reading with normal students disrupts the self-assessment of students with disabilities.
- General education teachers do not want to be properly involved in inclusive education, so there is a lack of appropriate mentality to support it.
- Both general teachers and special teachers lack the collaborative skills that are needed to make inclusive education a success.
- Inappropriate curriculum is one of the obstacles to the success of inclusive education, which may not meet the needs of a wide range of diverse learners.

Some suggestions for promoting Inclusive Education:

- The success of inclusive education largely depends on school teachers, so the necessary arrangements need to be made for the training and acquisition of skills for general school teachers.
- Parents and others in the community need to participate in these educational activities. As a result, the number of students will increase and the attitude of the society towards the disabled will also change.
- The need to recruit multiple educators who are doing research on the education of persons with disabilities while composing the curriculum for inclusive education, then the advantages and disadvantages of students with disabilities can be given importance.
- District Rehabilitation Centers, Integrated Child Development Project staff, local health centers, special schools, Braille related organizations all need to move forward through mutual cooperation and communication for the success of this education system.
- Parents need to give advice to their normal children so that they can extend a helping hand to their classmates with disabilities at school.
- Special financial assistance should be provided to students with disabilities and their parents to create interest in education.
- Emphasis should be placed on the necessary infrastructural improvements inside and outside the school classroom and provision of necessary teaching materials for the success of the teaching-learning process.

Conclusion

Inclusive education is now more successful after the passage of The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (2009). The Kothari Commission (1964-66) formulated an action plan for students of all levels, with a special section referring to the inclusion of children with special needs. The Planning Commission adopted a program for inclusive education in 1971. The National Policy on Education (1986) explicitly calls for the inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream education. The Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 recommends free education for children with special needs until the age of 18. In 2006, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was involved in the implementation of inclusive education. In the context of inclusive education, the National Curriculum Framework (2005) stated that all children should be given the opportunity to study together, regardless of their religion, and caste. Inclusive education basically includes the education of those who are deprived of the mainstream of education. This education helps to bring equality among the students and give equal opportunity to all.

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