

Exploring the Consequences of Inclusion of CWSN in MCD Schools of Delhi

Ms Sonia Gupta: Research scholar
School of Education
Indira Gandhi National Open University Delhi
Email - soniagoel2003@gmail.com

1 ABSTRACT:

Children are precious, irrespective of their physical status or mental. Each child is special in their way. Understanding them, their skills, and honing them is a real mean task. For Children with Special Needs (CWSN), it isn't as easy as it is for the rest of them. They need specially trained teachers, who understand them and treat them just like the rest of them and are well equipped to teach CWSN. With the growing privatization of schools, finding schools that help support students who belong to the CWSN category, especially those who cannot afford to join private schools and depend on Public schools, isn't easy. In this case, the help provided by the government in providing education to these children and allotting special teachers at local schools to teach CWSN is the main focus of this paper.

Keywords: Child With Special Needs, CWSN, Municipal Corporation Delhi Schools, MCD, Delhi Schools

2 INTRODUCTION:

What is Special Education? Special education is a form of educating students belonging to the category of children with special needs (CWSNs) such that it doesn't cause hindrance to their education irrespective of their differences, disabilities, and special needs.

Why inclusive education is necessary? Inclusive education is to bring all kinds of students under one roof and providing them equal opportunities in the education process. Inclusive education was started to involve children with special needs in the regular curriculum schools to give the same opportunities as the regular children, to allow and provide them the same opportunities during and post-schooling, so that they do not depend on specialized services alone.

While inclusive education is understandable, getting to know the target group of inclusive education is important. Who is the target group of inclusive education? With the right to education (RTE) Act (2009), education was made a fundamental right of every child. As such, even the students with disabilities have the importance as any other child.

But according to data collected in 2013, Net Enrollment Ratio (NER) is 88.1 for primary, 70.02 for upper primary, and Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) is 66.4 for secondary and 39.3 for Sr. secondary classes in India. And the education system is only able to help 12.02% of CWSN to pass out as graduates. Research shows that most of the students drop out of class V.

In India, about 1.7% of the total children population falls under the category of CWSN. 75% of them aren't enrolled in schools. The cause of non-enrollment and drop out is to be noted. For a country with more than 60% population being young adults, their welfare, their educational background and their skillset become a priority to the country. Developing and honing these qualities is a must. Note: the young adults do include the population of CWSN, thus their education is also important.

3 OBJECTIVES:

Understanding and comprehending Inclusive education, the following are the aims of this study:

1. Understanding CWSN and their difficulties at schools
2. Comprehending the data of admission rate of CWSN
3. To study the effects of the implementation of Inclusive education
4. To study guidelines set for parents and teachers to improve the retention rate of CWSN at schools

4 CSWN AND DISABILITIES

Before going on in detail about CWSN, let us first understand a few terms related to CSWN.

CSWN or children with special needs are the children with disabilities or impairment. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, impairment refers to "Inability to Function normally" and disabilities refers to "physical, mental or cognitive abilities of a person are impaired and makes a person unable to engage in certain tasks or actions or daily activities".

Based on the above definition, how can you differentiate between CWSN and Regular Children? Children with physical disabilities can be differentiated easily but when it comes to children with mental and cognitive disabilities, judging that they belong to CWSN requires skills and understanding of human IQ (Intelligent Quotient).

Depending on the IQ, Mental Retardation has been classified into below:

| Levels of mental retardation | Range of IQ |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| Mild Retarded | 50-75 |
| Moderate Retarded | 35-49 |
| Severe Retarded | 20-34 |
| Profound Retarded | Below 20 |

Table 01: Classification Of Levels of Mental Retardation

Physical Disimpairment can be classified in below categories:

1. Hearing and Speech Impairment
2. Speech Impairment
3. Locomotor Impairment
4. Multiple Impairment
5. Learning Disability
6. Emotional and Behavioural Disability

4.1 DETECTION AND TREATMENT:

Early Childhood Care and Development is a potent part of the education of a child recognized by both the state and the central government. Early recognition and mediation helps in educating a child of special needs. But the issue of labeling their child as a special case is worrisome to most parents. Labeling a child as a special case makes them a deterrent to the normal lifestyle, cuts off their ties to the world in ways a regular child approaches and excludes them from normal activities in life. So it is very important to detect the special children at an early age give them the proper education to help them lead a better life, a life without any hindrance, in the society.

Assessment of a child and their special needs can be done by a professional at school or by a certified Psychiatrist.

How can an assessment be made? The assessment process is done as the following questions:

1. Understanding the Child's Identity that, includes their hobbies, likes and dislikes, skills, and other characteristics
2. Special Needs of the child. Cause of child being included into CWSN category
3. The circle of trust and support for the child, including family, friends, with aspects like dreams, needs and concerns of family members
4. Child's daily routine activities
5. Getting the first-hand experience at the child's routine activities and comprehending below,
 - a. Communication skills

- b. Locomotive skills and cognizant behavior
- c. Social Skills
- d. Memory and comprehensive skills
- e. Decision-making skills
- f. Participation in activities
- g. Dependency on others
- h. Empathy

6. Finally setting a plan and future goal with resolving issues from Q. 5.

4.2 DIFFICULTIES FACED BY CWSN AT SCHOOLS:

Despite detection, assessment, and precautions Children with Special Needs do require help when they join the school. They are constantly treated as different, isolated, bullied, and degraded for their disabilities.

Discrimination is not just done by their co-students but also sometimes by the teachers. And if they are unable to score better grades during exams, such students are usually referred to (by the head of the institution) to quit school or rejoin special schools. This pathetic state has grown with both rise in the privatization of schools and a lack of proper teaching staff in government schools. With these problems, the percentage of drop out has been increasing. According to the table below, we observe that the dropout from Class V to Class X has increased between the year 2014 – 2015.

| Years Classes | I | II | III | IV | V | VI | VII | VIII | Total |
|---------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 2010-11 | 66,869 | 62,250 | 67,789 | 69,011 | 68,448 | 62,423 | 60,268 | 45,318 | 5,02,376 |
| % of Total (I-VIII) | 13.31 | 12.39 | 13.49 | 13.73 | 13.62 | 12.42 | 11.99 | 9.02 | 100 |
| 2011-12 | 1,08,623 | 1,08,496 | 1,16,399 | 1,13,793 | 1,11,542 | 96,131 | 92,978 | 83,535 | 8,31,497 |
| % of Total (I-VIII) | 13.06 | 13.04 | 13.99 | 13.68 | 13.41 | 11.56 | 11.18 | 10.04 | 100 |
| 2012-13 | 3,22,078 | 3,23,081 | 3,53,704 | 3,36,422 | 3,07,497 | 2,59,432 | 2,41,630 | 2,04,798 | 23,48,642 |
| % of Total (I-VIII) | 13.71 | 13.75 | 15.05 | 14.32 | 13.09 | 11.04 | 10.28 | 8.71 | 100 |
| % of Total (I-XII) | 12.55 | 12.59 | 13.79 | 13.11 | 11.99 | 10.11 | 9.42 | 7.98 | 91.58 |
| 2013-14 | 2,98,625 | 3,43,149 | 3,79,357 | 3,64,245 | 3,35,768 | 2,75,583 | 2,70,890 | 2,36,523 | 25,04,140 |
| % of Total (I-VIII) | 11.92 | 13.70 | 15.14 | 14.54 | 13.40 | 11.00 | 10.81 | 9.44 | 100 |
| % of Total (I-XII) | 10.69 | 12.28 | 13.58 | 13.04 | 12.02 | 9.86 | 9.70 | 8.46 | 89.66 |
| 2014-15 | 2,43,916 | 2,85,093 | 3,39,328 | 3,48,274 | 3,23,461 | 2,59,288 | 2,50,706 | 2,29,965 | 22,80,031 |
| % of Total (I-VIII) | 10.69 | 12.50 | 14.88 | 15.27 | 14.18 | 11.37 | 10.99 | 10.08 | 100 |
| % of Total (I-XII) | 9.52 | 11.13 | 13.25 | 13.60 | 12.63 | 10.12 | 9.79 | 8.98 | 89.04 |

Source: Veera Gupta (2016). IAFOR Journal of the Social Sciences. Volume 2 – Issue 2 – Winter 2016. Page no: 65

Observing above, the role of parents and educators and their opinion towards including CSWN into mainstream schools with the idea of inclusive education is important.

4.3 IMPLEMENTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION INTO INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM:

International treaties accepted and adhered to by the Indian Government related to the right to education of CWSNs are as below:

1. UNCRC (The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989) - Signed by India in 1992:
 - Art. 2: no discrimination will be done based on grounds of disability
 - Art. 23: every child has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity, and self-reliance
 - Art. 28: every child has the right to compulsory education
2. UNCRPD (The UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities) 2006 - signed by India in 2007
 - Art. 7: Person with disabilities have the right to enjoy all of the human rights and fundamental rights as other children without discrimination, what is best for the child, freedom of expression rights
 - Art. 24: education systems are to be inclusive at all levels. They are allowed access to good quality and free education at school (primary and secondary), modest accommodation and help in the general education system

These treaties were referred to as implementing the Indian National Plan of Action for Children 2016 and SGDs of 2020 for children.

In 2016, with six years of struggle and patient waiting, the government passed a new act, the Rights of Person with Disability (RPWD) act. This act ensured the inclusion of People with Disabilities firmly into the system. The rights enlisted in the RPWD Act are as below:

- Equality and Non-discrimination
- Women and Children with Disabilities rights
- Community life
- Protection from cruelty, abuse, violence, exploitation and inhuman treatment
- Protection and safety
- Home and family rights
- Reproductive rights
- Accessibility to voting rights
- Access to justice
- Legal capacity and Guardianship rights
- Adult education, inclusive educational rights
- Vocational training and self-employment
- Equal opportunity policy.
- And many more.. are listed in the act.

With the passing of the RPWD act in 2016, a set of recommendations were made to the government. The recommendations are as below:

1. RTE act must be amended to suit the RPWD act to include education concerns of CWSN.

2. A coordinating mechanism must be put up under the Ministry of HRD to bring all education programs under one head for children with disabilities
3. Allotting specific and adequate finances in education budgets to fulfill the needs of the CWSN.
4. Improving the data systems to make them sturdy, trustworthy, and helpful for planning, execution, and monitoring.
5. Improving schools environments to support CWSN
6. Expanding the use of IT in educating CWSN
7. No single special child must be left behind
8. Changing teaching practices to help diverse learners
9. Overcoming stereotypical ideologies and building a positive environment for CWSN in schools and beyond
10. Growing sturdy and stable partnerships among Government, Society, Private Sector and Local communities to help CWSN.

4.4 GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS:

Parents are meant to be the first pillars the child depends on to grow up. Thus parents have to first understand their child's skills and disabilities. Rather than thinking of them as disabilities, it would be better to think of them and hiccups in life's path that can easily be solved, provided they are involved in the process of solving the issues. They should genuinely accept their child as a special kid and provide them extra care and nurturing required. They should genuinely involve themselves in the learning process of their child and if they do doubt the system they should clarify their doubts with the teachers and head of the institute. Critical information about the child can only be provided for by the parents like behavioral patterns of a child outside the school, their skill set, the emotional and cognitive development at home, etc,. Providing appropriate knowledge to help the teachers in effective lesson planning, execution and assessment. Conducting sessions with teachers and peers to help them comprehend the knowledge about disabilities and strategies.

The role of a teacher or the school in a child's life is just as important as the role of their parents. The Role of School can be told as below:

- School buildings must be planned and must fit the requirements of each and every student. For example; elevators or ramps must be installed to help accommodate physically challenged children.
- A child can release its pent-up or residual emotions in large spaces like the playground. Otherwise, they might grow into one indisciplined child.
- All the teachers are required to learn various teaching techniques to help different types of children with different disabilities like speech, hearing, visual and locomotor, so that they aren't discriminated and learning becomes more fun and easy for every child.
- Teachers will be trained to design and chalk out syllabi to teach to different students.

- Teachers need to have better empathy skills to understand tutor all the children with compassion.
- Implementing 'Buddy System' or 'Peer Strategy' in classes and promoting helpful nature among students.

4.5 EFFECTS OF IMPLEMENTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN MCD SCHOOLS:

The possible outcomes of Inclusive education are based on the views of society and teachers. How well the parents accept that their children mesh with Special children? How well the teaching staff treats them? The benefits of inclusive education is that:

1. They will be treated as equals with the regular students.
2. There will be no discrimination based on their abilities
3. They will have the same education provided to them as the regular students thus equal opportunities at a job.
4. Equal opportunities to live life fully and enjoy all the rights of being human.
5. Students (regular or special) learn to improve their empathetic and emotional skills as they form new bonds irrespective of the nature of the child being normal or special.
6. As they learn to accept the strength and weakness of others, the possibility of the strong preying on the weak is reduced thus reducing abuse and discrimination in the world
7. By making children help each other out, they can be taught to forge bonds that last a lifetime.

These are only possible provided the parents and teachers follow the guidelines provided to them and they do not discriminate between a normal child and a special child.

5 CONCLUSION:

Children are special, whether they are born with disabilities or not. They have their innate special qualities that are valuable to society. A child might belong to the CWSN category but might have brains like Einstein or musical skills of Beethoven or smartness of Sherlock Holmes or Artistic skills or Da Vinci or even better might be a better human being. Understanding their needs and helping them grow up of a duty of parents and society.

Inclusive education as a measure is a great opportunity for the CWSNs but the society must be open-minded about special children, also they need to be educated about the new measures taken by Government to help CWSN. It might take a few years to reap the proper benefits of Inclusive education but the trying and being patient with the clear picture of goal in mind, a better India, an educated India.

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