

Teaching Technologies and Curriculum of 21st Century for Developing Inclusive Education in India

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abstract.

The emergence of the novel approach of inclusive education (IE) not only altered the concept of special education into mainstream classroom but also exhibited its gigantic effect on the harmonious development of child. The philosophy of inclusive education inculcates the students to permit them to have a sense of oneness, equality, safety, respected and also make all the children conscious about the pedagogical strategies applied in the classroom that have conscious effect on their harmonious development of personality. The fundamentals of values and beliefs are being considered as the core centre for creating interests among the students which in reflect develop their active participation in learning, social and peer interaction etc. The teaching techniques and curriculum should be so inclusive and flexible that must confer the feeling of interest, readiness, motivation and equality in the inclusive teaching learning. The basic aim and objective of inclusive education primarily aims at fostering all the children within the mainstream classroom, where all the children having different kinds of disabilities are warmly welcomed so that they can understand and develop their physical, cognition, emotional and social etc. to the full of their potential. In the current situations both the curriculum and teaching strategies should be so student centric that the children with different kinds of disabilities cannot face any kind of discrimination while getting education with normal ones in mainstream classroom.

Key Words: Teaching Technologies, Curriculum, Inclusive Education.

Introduction

In the whole globe, hence and now, education became a partner of life at every stage. Even, there is no one aspect where education does not play its marvelous role in determining the objectives of life. The world of science and technology wholly and solly altered the concept of conventional methodologies of education and introduced the innovative tools and techniques in order to get the objectives of education systematically. Education serves as a social function when it seeks to respond to the demands of individuals or communities

for education suited to their particular needs, aspirations and cultural traditions. Education is being considered as a tri-polar process, which includes teacher, student and curriculum but it should not be forgotten that new innovations conferred a key of progress to the student centered education system. Throughout the world, Children with Special Needs (CWSN) were neglected till the 18th century. The political reformers of France and America inspired political reformers and leaders in medicine and education to turn their attention towards the educational needs of such individuals with the idea of fraternity, equality and liberty (Chadda, 2003). The novel concept of inclusive education has completely changed the special classroom scenario into the inclusive one, where feeling, equal treatment and equal weightage are given to all the children. In India, schools are the mirror of society and they are the milestones in developing the new ways of progress and prosperity for the nation as a whole. Due to having diversified culture in India, the concept of diversity is prevailing in our school system. The roots and trunks of discrimination in these diversified classrooms had been flourished, but now prime concern in globalised world should be for equal care and attention for the learners under different diversities. These learners may include exceptional, slow learners, learning disabled, mentally retarded, visually impaired, gifted etc. The Sargent Report by the Central Advisory Board of Education in 1944 suggested children with disabilities should be entirely mainstreamed. To make quality education accessible to all the children it is mandatory to get a dramatic shift from exclusivity to inclusivity. Inclusive education implies that all children with different kinds of abilities and disabilities having in the same classroom with equal rear and care. By the keen attempts of National Policy for Persons with Disability 2006, it is revealed that the scaffold under the state, civil and private sector should give first priority to the dignified life of persons with disability.

Teaching technologies and inclusive classroom

Today in the world of technologies, new innovations in the way of education has emerged out, which in reflect created interests, motivation, positive attitude, readiness and enhancing aptitude of learners, who might be considered as future of the nation. The latest methodologies and techniques applied in the inclusive classrooms bears its positive effect on learners capabilities and are treated in the same manner which was not seen in the special education format. The individualized education programs (IEPs) and novel technologies can sometimes feel like overwhelming additions to your already-packed curriculum. However, in reality, technology tools can be a great solution for you when planning differentiated instruction for the diverse needs of your students, and can also be a valuable way for your students to become more independent learners. It is the supreme duty of teachers to willingly support students of diverse abilities and needs, cultural backgrounds, experiences and learning styles. As being teacher, it is mandatory for you to make use of strategies and resources that engage, motivate and encourage active participation and learning by all students. Indeed latest technology has tremendously altered the way of learning for children in the classrooms and also has enhanced

the maximum participation of learners in learning. Students with different learning disabilities or difficulties are those who experience particular difficulties that affect their school achievement are not due to a disability or impairment. (Ashman, 2005; Westwood, 2003). Learning disabilities of students having chronic academic problems are likely being disabled by dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, disgraphia etc. New teaching strategies developed for inclusive classrooms making very welcome to diverse learners in order to overcome the challenges. No two individuals are alike in the world, even if they have born from same parents, or whether they have been reared and cared in the same environment. The ultimate aim of inclusive education is to enhance greater participation of students with special needs in the culture and curricula of mainstream schools. So thinking hither and thither around inclusive education, some teaching techniques have been invented that are being accessible to all students who are different from each other to learn together in the same classroom. To make inclusive education equal treat for success and to teach students having diverse abilities in the same class the following teaching strategies may be used:

1. Use of multimedia and computer assisted instruction

The use of technology in the inclusive classrooms became a major factor for improving and enhancing the learning. The new ways of interacting and communicating of children having disabilities were became softy and feasible while new technologies were used in the mainstream classrooms. To open the new doors of world of education new teaching technologies viz: computer programmes can be individualized and automatically adjusted to the students cognitive, developmental and Intelligence level etc. Today in the classroom a teacher can use numerous multimedia approaches of instruction such as audio, video internet etc. which bear a marvelous effect on teaching learning process. The great advantage by applying these instructional approaches for the students is that the chances of forgetting the learnt material is reduced and make the comprehensive use of senses and more the senses are stimulated more the chances of retaining the material is. Multimedia in the classroom also includes Power Point presentations that are created by the teachers. Multimedia activities indulge students in project work, enhancing them to express knowledge, making able to solve and building knowledge.

2. Team teaching

The special education teacher may brief the regular teacher on the IEP (Individual Educational Plan) of the learning disabled students. Throughout the year the two teachers can refine their team teaching skills and can become a finely tuned instrument of education serving all the students in an enhanced classroom organization. For e.g. if a blind student writes his/ her answer in Braille the general teacher may require the help of specialist to correct the answers.

3. Cooperative learning

Working with one another by making small groups in the classroom or outside the classroom, where everyone has right to share his/her viewpoints regarding the project to maximize their learning is known as cooperative learning. This learning occurs within peer groups in order to get a common goal. Cooperative learning is the instructional exercise of small groups so that students can work together to maximize their own and each other's learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1989). Cooperative learning is a strategy used by group/ number of students to achieve a common goal with mutual collaboration and support.

4. Peer –tutoring

This involves one-to-one instruction from one student in the tutoring role to another student. In this method, students teach each other on one-to-one basis. Therefore, when a student from the same class provides instruction to another student of the class the technique is called peer-tutoring. Sometimes peer tutoring may prove to be quite effective and both the student and the peer tutor may gain from the process.

The accessibility in the classrooms for laboratory classes and field work of students with a wide range of physical abilities and disabilities should be taken care off. The safety and security of all students must be guaranteed.

5. Other teaching pedagogies

1. Delivery methods use multiple modes to deliver content. Alternate delivery methods, including lecture, discussion, hands-on activities, Internet-based interaction and fieldwork each needs to be made accessible to students with a wide range of abilities, disabilities, interests, and previous experiences.
2. Students are provided printed materials through electronic formats and web based material should be presented in very lucid, instinctive and consistent mode. Different types of graphics and pictures presented on web pages are considered of higher importance because all the contents must be entertained.
3. A gigantic role is being played by the interaction of students with each other and with the institution. It expands the scope of asking questions in the classroom, and enhance students to make group discussion, group work and other network based communications.
4. Accessibility of accruing effective input is provided by feedback.
5. There should be multiple ways for students when they are exhibiting their knowledge. Against conventional teaching strategies of different subjective tests and papers, modern trends of teaching pedagogies like; group work, demonstrations, portfolios, PPT and other sources should be made accessible to every student for demonstrating their knowledge.

Inclusive curriculum for inclusive teaching learning

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”. (Nelson Mandela). In the 86th Constitutional amendment education was considered as a fundamental right of every citizen of India and the law was passed by parliament in 2002. Parliament has also passed a law of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act and was successfully implemented. Inclusive Education has been defined as “the acceptance of all pupils within the mainstream education system, taught within a common framework, and identified as the responsibility of all teachers” (Thomas, 1997). An inclusive curriculum keeps into consideration all the locally relevant themes and contributions by marginalized and minority groups. It ignores dual narratives of good and bad, and permits for adapting the curriculum to the learning styles of children with different kinds of disabilities who are specifically taught in special classrooms.

Education is a lifelong process which starts from birth and continues till death and plays a tremendous role in in the facilitation and acquisition of knowledge, values, skills etc. Not only education puts a strong back behind teaching learning process but also curriculum has a massive role to play in educational institutions. Curriculum is a corner stone of whole educational system that provides learning opportunity to all the children and identifies their capabilities, potential, uniqueness and develops them to the fullest. Curriculum does not only emphasis on the subject learning which is held in the classroom but it also laid emphasis on the activities outside the the classroom as well, so that all the children must be developed to the fullest. Curriculum is a sum total of experiences that are achieved by the students through a variety of activities such as in the classroom library, laboratory, play grounds, in informal contact between teachers and pupils. The curriculum as defined by Prof. William Davis 'a systematic organization of instructional content and related activities designed to provide students with a sequence of meaningful learning experiences.' A learner is considered as the center of learning process but this centre is adorned by the curriculum and without curriculum the system of education is a vehicle without wheels. Like as vehicle without wheels cannot run, similarly education system without curriculum can not function. In creating inclusive culture within a classroom a teacher plays a marvelous role because they have control over pedagogies, and hoe the content is delivered. Inclusive education can be defined as ‘the disabled and non-disabled young people learning together in colleges and universities, with appropriate networks of support’ (Bradley & Healey, 2004). The term inclusion by itself indicates that the students belonging to different disabilities are participating in the mainstream institutions in accordance to their needs. At the same time, accessible Curricula refers to the designing of programmes/courses and educational materials barrier-free (fully accessible for all) without affecting the content and standard. If course content is well designed, disabled students will be able to gain access to it. The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) proposed the National Curriculum Framework as a means of evolving a national system of education. The National Curriculum Framework (NCF 2005) is one of the four National Curriculum Frameworks published in 1975, 1988, 2000 and 2005 by the National Council of Educational Research and

Training NCERT in India. It underscores the significance of making curriculum “an inclusive and meaningful experience for children” stating “this requires a fundamental change in how we think of learners and the process of learning”. In spite of special treatment of differently abled, inclusiveness creates a classroom where diversity is being valued and respected. Different types of accommodations and special learning needs should be ignited and taken into consideration by the institutions. The segregation and stigmatization in any institution should be avoided and every student must be cared for their privacy.

Education of disabled people has marched a long way; from special to integrated and now, from integrated to inclusive. “Education for all” is the slogan of this millennium. Quality education not only ensures an all-round development but also produces masterminds who can contribute for the growth of the nation. The growth and development does not mean the development of a single individual rather the development of all sections and all groups in the society.

Democratic atmosphere in inclusive classrooms

There is a definite and strong interaction between a human and the environment, which has had a significant impact on the human personality at all times. A human can only develop fully in the social environment, taking over experience of the surrounding social environment; knowledge, attitudes, and skills are obtained, value orientation behaviour is formed, social roles are acquired by a child (Špona, 2001). “The learning environment is a purposefully organized physical, social, and informative set of circumstances, in which a pupil forms and implements his/her experience: knowledge, skills, and attitudes towards himself/herself and the surrounding world” (Šūmane, 2012). Fishers (2005) believes that the positive environment is formed by the following components: 1. loyalty – to promote a sense of belonging, to accept each person, and to be confident of a group’s ability to think and learn; 2. trust – to involve group members in the decision-making process and to entrust each person certain responsibility by agreeing on learning outcomes; 3. support – to provide assistance and encouragement in the learning process, committing to promote individual’s growth and learning; 4. dynamic tension – to strive for objectives energetically and enthusiastically and to preserve moral principles when confronted with learning difficulties; 5. expectations – to set goals, to be clear about assumptions, opinions, and learning outcomes; 6. communication – to exchange information about successes and failures and to create joint commitments within a group when sharing knowledge.

Some basic features of democratic classroom:

1. Democracy does not aim at inequality and discrimination of any kind, it is mandatory for a teacher that he should create democratic classroom environment by which all the students are involved on regular basis and in developmentally appropriate ways. Democratic attitude in the classroom also laid emphasis on shared decision making that increase the accountability of assisting to make the classroom right place of learning.

2. Provides an ongoing forum where students' thoughts are valued and where any need of the group can be addressed.
3. Building a supportive structure within the boundary of democracy that calls forth students, where thoughts and ideas are valued and respected.
4. Peer culture has a desirability quality on the lines of democracy, because mostly students are working with their teachers in continuation for the promotion and development of moral culture and values of the classroom.
5. Democratic environment in the classroom means that everyone is to be given equal right in group work, discussion, project work, problem solving sessions and their privacy should be protected in and outside the classroom.

Democratic classroom interactions include “active engagement of students with their own learning, co-operation, practices of respect, recognition of equal worth and entitlements” (Fearnley-Sander, Moss & Harbon 2001). In democratic schools everybody has the right to full information and to critical participation in creating school policies and programmes. In addition, the democratization process of the school culture has a lot to do with the educational practices developed in each school. The different methodological strategies used in inclusive classes allow students’ increased participation and involvement in the teaching-learning process. It also can improve interactions and cooperation, promotes self-directed learning and conflict resolution. Families are drawn closer to the school and they can strengthen their support for the teaching and learning task.

Inclusive education and its national importance

India is among the world’s largest countries, which is a secular country but instead of that no efforts are lagging behind in providing free education to all children until they attain the age of 14 years. According to my opinion nation without education is syntax without water. India is a country of diversity and the discrimination on the basis of caste, religion, disability, religion and gender, etc is existed here since past and still existed which play a major role in achieving the social inclusion including inclusive education.

Participation of any individual in the social development should never be neglected. This social exclusion partially or wholly puts a hurdle in the way of progress and prosperity of society. Inclusive education which is considered as an integral part of education, has totally endeavored to avoid these trends which is harmful not only for the society but for the nation as a whole. The main objective of inclusive classroom teachers is to integrate education, to modify curriculum, to enhance parents positive educational attitude toward the disabled students are the various focal points of successful inclusive education. The implementation of the inclusive education programme is not an easy task to accomplish. The chances of failure are more seeming if the

programme of inclusive education is not carefully implemented. There is an urgency of making teachers well trained with special skills, making curriculum of general format, inclusive teaching methods, and flexible evaluation system so that all the children in the school should be benefitted.

The system of inclusive education primarily aims at providing quality education to all the children and is a qualitative instrument in changing and diminishing the attitudes of discrimination. The social life of a child outside the family starts when he comes in contact with others residing in the society and develops social relationship and interactions. The children with different abilities play together in the playground by which their thinking, feeling and ideas become pure and interacted. Education is the single most effective instrument for social and economic transformation. Education opens up opportunities for individual and group entitlements, productive employment and participation in various arenas of social life. India is actively pushing forward with its agenda for revamping and restructuring education towards inclusive education. Inclusion involves all inclusive education in Indian context, students having the right to be truly included, to actively participate with others in the learning experiences provided, to be valued as the member of school community and to have access to a system that delivers a quality education that is best suited to their unique competencies, skills and attributes. An inclusive leaning society should foster collaboration, problem solving, self directed learning and critical discourse (Skrtic et al. 1996). So in the field of education the concept of inclusive education totally changed the paradigm shift of special education into the inclusive one where whole the nation is being conferred education irrespective of their abilities and disabilities.

Conclusion

The concept of inclusive education is a new discovery in the field of education for educating children having different kinds of learning difficulties with normal ones in the general classroom. Inclusive education aims a integrated development of children with special needs and normal children through mainstream schooling. Currently all the government schemes of inclusive education chiefly aims at universalization of primary education. Inclusive education is not only the alternative measures for CWSN for want of separate special schools for these children but it is a scientific well thought strategy for their overall development. Various initiatives for teaching of CWSN along with normal children in main stream schools popularly known as IE are being taken at different bit still more than 90% are seen out of mainstream schools. The curriculum should be so flexible that the child may grow according to his/ her learning characteristics. The curriculum goals should also not be formed so rigidly, it should be student friendly and context oriented. There is no discrimination as per the constitution of India, while educating disabled children with normal one's and they have equal right to gat education according to their needs and capabilities. It is the supreme duty of every stakeholder of the society that there should be no single child outside the school. Differently abled children should be treated equally as the normal children and instead of looking them in sympathy their talents and abilities should be recognized for their self-respect and welfare of the society.

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